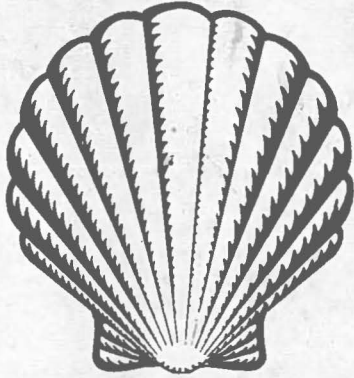


AP 6. S53

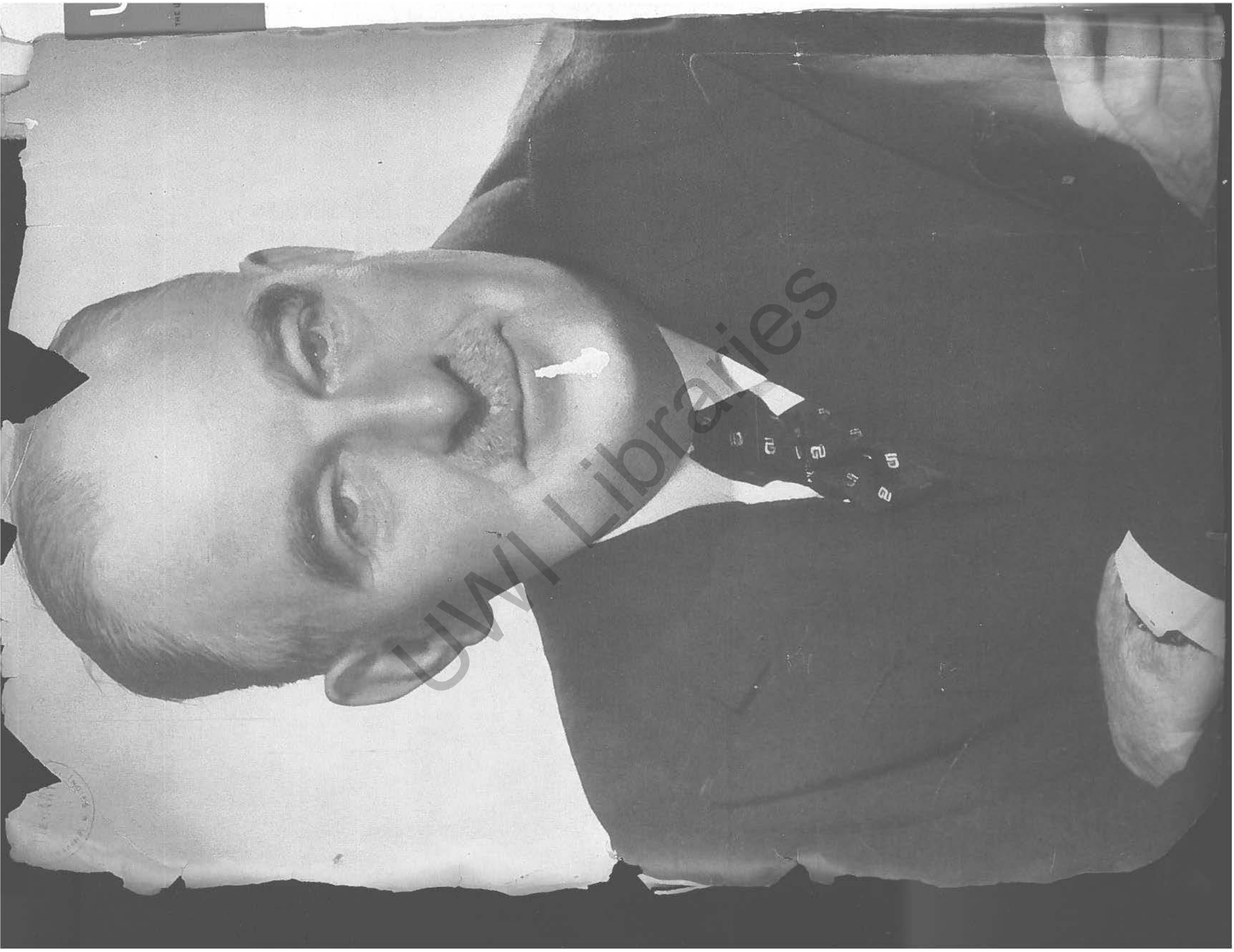
Vol 4 #6



MARCH
1956



uboTimes



UBOTIMES

THE HOUSE MAGAZINE OF
THE UNITED BRITISH OILFIELDS OF TRINIDAD LIMITED
TRINIDAD-BRITISH WEST INDIES

VOL. 4 NO. 6

MARCH 1956

THE advent of UBOTOPICS with its up-to-date coverage of local news has necessitated a change in the composition of UBOTIMES. The items of local interest which filled a large part of the quarterly magazine have now become redundant as they will be presented to readers weekly through the medium of the new publication.

We have been fortunate in persuading Mr. Ray E. Johnson, a well known authority on ornithology, to prepare a series of articles on Trinidad birds, the first of which appears in this issue. Also in this issue is a coloured plate of the double hibiscus, the first of a collection of illustrations of local flowers which will now be a feature of UBOTIMES. It is also hoped to keep in touch with ex-members of the Staff who have now retired by including, from time to time, details of the various interesting activities they are pursuing since they left the Oil Industry.

The Editorial Board is keenly aware of the necessity of maintaining reader interest in the magazine and will appreciate receiving suggestions from readers for future articles or series of articles.



PEERAGE

FOR

SIR FREDERICK GODBER

SIR FREDERICK GODBER, Chairman of the "Shell" Transport and Trading Company was created a Baron in the New Year's honours list and has taken the title of Baron Godber of Mayfield, in the County of Sussex.

The whole of his long and distinguished career of more than 50 years has been devoted to the services of Shell. He joined the Staff of The Asiatic (now The Shell) Petroleum Company in March, 1904, at the age of 16, and in 1919 he went to the United States of America where he remained for 10 years and gained rapid promotion, being appointed President of the Roxana Petroleum Corporation in 1921, and a Director of Shell Union Oil Corporation in the following year. On his return to the United Kingdom in 1929 he was appointed a Managing Director of the Group's main operating companies, a position he held until 1946 when he took up his present post of Chairman of the "Shell" Transport and Trading Company, Ltd., in succession to the second Viscount Bearsted.

During the second World War, he played a vital part in organising and maintaining the supply of petroleum products to the Allied Forces and for his services he was knighted by King George VI in 1942. In 1947 he was created a Grand Officer in the Order of Oranje Nassau for his services as Chairman of the "Help Holland" Council and he was elected an Honorary Bencher of the Middle Temple at the beginning of 1954.

Sir Frederick has always taken a keen personal interest in the Group's staff and in fostering a spirit of international friendship that prevails throughout the world-wide Shell community.

ON OTHER PAGES

Trinidad Birds	4
Their Lordships' House	8
Oil from Under the Sea	10
Shell & The Oil Industry	13
Know Your Company — Survey Section	16
Plastic Tank Waggon	17
Point Fortin Discovery Well. FW.4	18



Trinidad Birds

By RAY JOHNSON, M.B.O.U.

The author has lived in Trinidad for the past 20 years. Mr. Johnson is a member of the British Ornithologists Union, a world-quoted authority on Ornithology and has contributed articles to such magazines as *Field*, *Illustrated London News*, *Life*, *Country Life* and various other Journals. He has also exhibited photographs in the International Wild Life Exhibitions and the Royal Photographic Society's Annual Exhibitions. His illustration on Trinidad Birds appear in Barruel's new book of "Birds of the World". All copyright reserved by author.

BIRDS OF OPEN AREAS

Some ago a popular method of writing about birds and of wild life was according to their environments: hence such titles as "Birds of the Hedgerow", "Moorland Birds", etc. This method which presents the study of wild life in a simple manner for beginners, has been recently used by the author in her little book on the Birds of Jamaica, and has been adopted for this series of articles; it is not perfect by any means but I have sometimes come across such things as rare birds in houses, but it does unconsciously introduce the ecology in which habitat is so important. Environment decides the identity of a bird, though of course other factors must be considered as, size, shape, colour generally, colour of tail and beak, flight, song, and what the bird is capable of. Each of this should be done on a comparative basis, from the knowledge of established well known birds of various sizes, etc. as the Kiskadee, House Wren, and Ani.

Everybody knows the *Kiskadee* (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) which is a member of a very large family of Tyrant Flycatchers, only

found in the New World. These birds are in no way related to the Old World Flycatchers, an entirely different family. There are over 30 species of Tyrant Flycatchers in Trinidad, some found in swampy lands, some in open areas and towns and some in deep forest. They are solitary and often fly for insects from a perch. Generally the plumage is modest, of olive greens, browns and greys with yellow on the under parts.

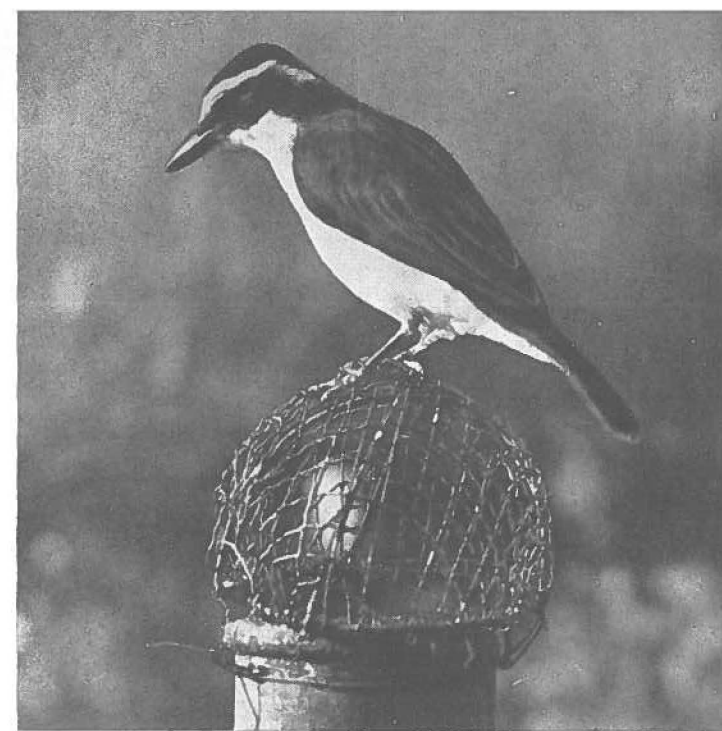
Sometimes birds not closely related have almost the same plumage and size, whereas others closely related are not similar. The two Kiskadees are an example of the former. The Broad-billed Kiskadee of the country, not found in urban areas, is about the same size and colour as the one we know so well but has a broad boat-shaped bill which is not easily seen. The *Broad-billed Kiskadee* (*Megarhynchus pitangua*) has however an entirely different song: a sort of rolling note, which he frequently uses, and his nest is an open one of sticks quite unlike the large, untidy grass ball of the common species. The *Streaked Flycatcher* (*Myiodynastes maculatus*), about the size of a Kiskadee is also a noisy bird. It is dark brown above and can easily be recognised by its streaked underparts. Similar in size again, but a quiet bird

with a faint twitter for a song is the *Grey-breasted Kingbird* (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) brown and olive green, with grey head on the upper parts and yellow beneath, which completely hawks for insects from the top of a low tree or a shrub. Quiet in song and habits this bird can be almost as aggressive as the *Streaked Flycatcher* when it has young. The remaining large Flycatcher of the open country is the *Scissors Tail* (*Muscivora tyrannus*) which appears in the middle of the year, and with very long swallow tail, shorter in the female, ash-grey upper parts, black head and pure white underparts which hardly be mistaken. This bird arrives in Trinidad after the breeding season,

Often when a pair of Golden Orioles are making their hanging nest, a pair of fairly small birds will be seen perched in a nearby tree singing their sharp penetrating song of "Wipperty quick" and "Peedle-de-dee" for hours, stopping only to make occasional flights to the nest. These birds are *Black-banded Petcharies* (*Legatus leucophalus*) which commonly take over the nests of Orioles. They are not parasitic but rear their own young. They are about 5½ inches in length and inconspicuous in appearance, dark olive green above and streaked yellowish-white beneath. The little Flycatcher frequently seen even in towns, and common in open country is the *Tufted Petchary* (*Elaenia flavogaster*). Dusky olive-brown above, with conspicuous wing bars, it is a noisy bird, especially at nesting time, with a song that is a rather loud, sharp trill following a hoarse, scolding whistle. This bird in addition to insects, also feeds on small berries.

True birds of the open countryside are the Finches or Seed-eaters. Unlike the Tyrant Flycatchers they are World-wide in distribution, but they are closely allied to the Tanagers, a purely American Family. Their chief character is the shape of the bill which is stout and conical, and usually short excepting the largest Finch, the *Saltator*. In sizes they range from the *Pygmy Seed-eater* which is about the size of a House-wren to the *Saltator* which is near the size of a Kiskadee. The *Grey-breasted Saltator* or *Pitch Oil* (*Saltator coerulescens*) is common in open country and in suburban gardens. His song amongst a mixture of notes frequently brings in a sound like "Pitch-oil".

The most attractive of the seed-eaters is the *Beezing Finch* (*Volatinia jacarina*) a glossy blue-black bird about the size of a House-wren, the female being olive-brown on the upper parts and brownish-buff streaked below. This little male bird, especially during the breeding season, stations himself on some low bush and makes short flights of a few feet upwards every few seconds and calling "Zi-zi" at the height of the flights returns to the same perch. The *Grey Seed Finch* (*Spermophila intermedia*) is considered to be one of the best song birds in Trinidad. Its song



is musical, varied, and well sustained but like all the Finches the song lacks volume. A little larger than the previous species, the male is ash-grey on the back, white beneath with a whitish bill, while the female is olive-brown above and dark fawn beneath. Smallest of our Grass-birds and about 4 inches in length is the *Pygmy Seed-eater* (*Spermophila minuta*). The male is greyish brown above and chestnut beneath while the female is rust-brown above and tawny beneath. The song of about ten clear notes is rather like that of the *Lesser Thick-billed Finch*. A well distributed bird in open country is the *Lesser Thick-billed Finch* (*Orzoborus angolensis*). This bird which is about the size of the *Grey Seed Finch* has a particularly short and thick bill. The male is black with a chestnut abdomen, while the female is umber coloured, paler beneath. The song is quite attractive but weak. The most highly prized songbird in Trinidad, judging from its current price of \$50 is the *Larger Thick-billed Finch* or *Twa-Twa* (*Orzoborus crassirostris*). Fully an inch longer than the previous species it is black while the female is olive-grey above

Top Left — Author pointing out Humming Bird's nest.

Top Right — Kiskadee.

Bottom — from Left to Right — Streaked Flycatcher; Vireo; Saltator; Ruby Topaz Humming Bird; Ground Dove; Parson Tanager



and fawn beneath. Another grass-bird getting scarce because of bird-catching is the *Yellow-bellied Seed-eater* or *Silver Beak* (*Spermophila nigricollis*). This bird is found in semi-open areas. About the size of the Lesser Thick-billed Finch the male is easily recognised by his black head, olive green upper parts, pale yellow underparts and whitish beak. The female is brownish above and buff and yellow beneath with a dusky bill. The song is sweet, but weak and short. The *Black and White Seed-eater* (*Spermophila bouvionides*), uncommon some years ago is now very common at certain seasons, due no doubt to clearances and increases in grass areas. The bird is common from April until September. It is the size of the Grey Seed Finch, the male being black above with white cheeks and underparts, but the female with brown back and fawn and yellow underparts is not as easy to recognise. The song is a trill which can become monotonous so that there can be no sane reason for caging this bird.

The large American Family of Tanagers is closely related to the Finches but distinguished with longer and more slender bills. The *Blue Tanager* (*Thraupis episcopus*) with grey back and blue wings and under parts can hardly be mistaken for another bird. It is common in the open country and towns. The black *Parson* (*Tachyphonus rufus*) is about the same size and usually accompanied by his brown mate. The male shows patches of white on his shoulders in flight. Although common in the country the parson is not usually found in towns. Again similar in size is the *Palm Tanager* (*Thraupis palmarum*) which frequents urban areas. This bird is olive green with dark brown on the flight feathers. It is a busy and active bird and a fruit eater like all the Tanagers. The *Silver Beak Tanager* (*Ramphocelus carbo*) is common in the country. It is about the size of the Tanagers mentioned, the male being dark crimson above with crimson and black underparts, but though these colours may appear black in certain lights the bird may be recognised by the largely widened base of the lower beak which is silver coloured. In the female this is grey, and she is not as richly coloured but being a Tanager she is usually in company with the male. There is a smaller and rather lovely Tanager in the country which is communal and always found in small flocks of about eight or ten at anytime of the year. Its movements are very quick and it is always on the move. This is the *Ash-bellied Tanager* (*Tanagra mexicana*) with a plumage that is a mixture of wedgewood blue and black, and lemon-yellow abdomen. Even for a Tanager the song is short and faint, rather like the simplest call of the Sucrier. The *Semp* (*Tanagra violacea*) is a good and varied songster in a family where most members have little song. About the size of a small finch, the male is handsome, being glossy purple above with orange-yellow underparts and the female is still quite bright in her yellowish-green plumage.

The American Orioles, many of which build long pendulous nests of grass, are conspicuous anywhere in Trinidad. The *Yellow Tail* (*Ostinops decumanus*), black in plumage with bright yellow tail and typical sharply pointed bill, is quite a large bird being 18 inches in length. It nests in colonies of hang-nests as the *Yellow-rumped Cornbird* (*Caccicus cela*) which is two-thirds its size, and has a yellow rump in place of a yellow tail. They are the nests of this bird that you see in the Pink Pou tree in front of Sangre Grande Police Station. Both birds are very noisy with a variety of notes sounding like popping corks and creaking gates. The *Golden Oriole* (*Icterus nigrogularis*) is quieter, with a soft, sleepy song which can often be heard at dawn, but his alarm note is loud and a typical song of an oriole. A yellow bird, with black wings and tail, and the size of a Kiskadee, his solitary hang-nest is common even in urban areas. The *Rice Grackle* (*Psomocolax orzivorus*) strangely appears in looks and ways similar to the European Rook, as the smaller Icteridae resemble Starlings. He is black, and about the size of the Yellow rumped Cornbird, and he is parasitic, using the Yellow-tail usually as host. The *Glossy Cowbird* (*Molothrus bonariensis*) is black and near the size of a Kiskadee. He is also parasitic usually

using the House Wren as host, and he is a bird of the open savannah country. The *Boat Tail* (*Holotris laticauda*) black with white eye is common in developed areas. He is identified by his keeled tail. In the Savannah the *Soldier Bird* (*Leistes militaris*), black with scarlet breast cannot be considered uncommon. He has a typical Oriole song. The female is barred on the upper parts and is tinged scarlet with fawn beneath.

Humming Birds can usually be identified as Humming Birds by their small sizes, flight and habits; but to identify a particular one of the 17 species in Trinidad can sometimes be difficult with the females in many cases differing from the males, and the young in various stages of maturity. We are so much impressed by the brilliant colouring of Humming Birds in bright light that we are apt to overlook other important characteristics as shape, size, beak, and so on. In sunlight the colouring is generally brilliant and iridescent, but so often we see these birds silhouetted against the sky, or in dull light, appearing to be blackish or dark blue. No dull light however will conceal the ruby head and golden orange throat of the male *Ruby Topaz* (*Chrysolampis elatus*), a small humming bird of open cultivation and gardens, and as his plumage is bright so is the plumage of his mate dull for she has a dull green back with dusky grey underparts. The humming bird so often described as dark blue is the *Common Emerald* (*Saucerottia tobaci*) which is brilliant green and has a straight bill. The *White-breasted Emerald* (*Agyrtina brevirostris*) is brilliant green and bronze on the upper parts with white underparts and straight bill, and not even bad light can obliterate these characteristics. A larger humming bird equal in length to a small finch is the *Violet-tailed Mango* (*Anthracoceros nigrocollis*) with a slightly decurved bill, and mainly green in colour with throat, breast and abdomen black. The female is different in being white beneath, with a black band down the centre. A picture of this humming bird has been accepted as the emblem of the Zoological Society of Trinidad and Tobago. The nests of all the humming birds of the open areas are small cups of vegetable down, in forks of twigs or saddled on twigs, but some of the forest humming birds have very different nests. The male humming bird takes no part in nesting operations and is probably polygamous.

The Antbirds are one of the interesting Families of American Tropical Birds. Mostly birds of the forest, some species are to be found in open areas. The little bird barred something like a Plymouth Rock fowl which frequents low bush is the male *White-barred Bush Shrike* (*Thamnophilus doliatus*). His mate is rufous above and orange-buff beneath. The birds are more frequently heard than seen, the song being a rolling call, a deliberate chah-chac-chah..... The *Black-crested Ant Shrike* (*Shakesphorus canadensis*) has a similar song, but has a black crest and is slate coloured underneath, and with the typical contrast of the Antbirds the female is brown with chestnut crown.

The small *Spinetail* (*Synallaxis cinchonera*) is another bird of the undergrowth more frequently heard than seen. It is an inconspicuous brown bird with chestnut on the wings, but it makes a huge, most conspicuous nest of sticks, with an entrance tunnel, often decorated with a dried snake's skin or even silver paper. The song is a quite loud and often repeated "wichee" which is much more deliberate than a similar song of the Vireo. This bird is the popular host of the only parasitic cuckoo in Trinidad: the *Wife-sick* (*Tapera naevia*) which constantly repeats a call scunding like its common name. The Wife-sick is common enough, but being a skulker of the low bush is not often seen; he is however a handsome bird of some 6 inches in length with reddish-brown head and crest and back streaked with black, with white underparts. The *Coucou Manioe* (*Piaya cayana*) is a more typical cuckoo. He is mainly chestnut in colour with grey beneath and has a very long white-tipped tail which takes up almost two-thirds of his entire length of 17 inches. Not a typical cuckoo in appearance is the *Common Ani*

or *Tick Bird* (*Crotophaga ani*) which is black with a parrot-like bill: a common bird which is always in flocks and shares a communal nest.

The only true thrush of open and surburban areas is the *Bare-eyed Thrush* (*Turdus nudigenis*) which is common and easily identified by the yellow ring around the eye. Though usually singing a sort of "Who are you" he is a fine songster. Another fine singer closely related to the thrushes is the *Mocking-bird* (*Mimus glivus*) a slender, rather delicate looking grey bird which has become quite common in recent years. His song is varied, sweet and mellow with volume. Related also to the thrushes are the *Vireos* though they are smaller birds of around 5 inches in length and noted, not as fine songsters but for the tiresome repetition of short phrases. The *Caribbean Vireo* (*Vireo virescens*) is a common small greyish bird with yellowish white underparts, a distinguishing mark being a buff stripe over the eye above which is a dark line. The song is a monotonous "Wee-chee". Another interminable and monotonous song which can be heard through most of the year is that of the *Yellow-breasted Pepper Shrike*. It is a penetrating song going something like "What are you doing tomorrow" but there are many versions. This bird (*Cyclarhis guianensis*) is the size of a Vireo but is handsome with dark green back, yellow and white underparts and has a chestnut line along the side of the head.

The little *Sucrier* (*Coereba luteola*) with sooty-black upper parts, yellow breast, curved bill, and white stripe above the eye is probably the commonest Trinidad bird and is seen everywhere, in forests, in open country, and even in houses raiding the sugar. It represents the Honey-creepers a family of very beautiful small song-birds with usually curved bills which has such members as the Grampo, Turquoise Honey-creeper, and others. Chiefly, however these are forest-haunting birds.

Although various species of Parrots are sometimes seen in open and even urban areas (a flock of Amazon Parrots has been resident in the Tranquillity area of Port-of-Spain for very many years) they must generally be considered as birds of wooded areas and swamps. The little *Lovebird* (*Forpus passerinus*) is however often seen in open bush areas. About the size of a small finch he is entirely grass green, with some blue on the wings. These birds are frequently in fairly large flocks. One evening some years ago I was given a pair of Lovebirds and I put them in a cage for the night. After releasing them in the morning they came back frequently through the open door of the cage for food, bringing other Lovebirds with them. On the next night there was about a dozen of them in the cage waiting to be shut up for the night. They were let out the next morning, and again frequently returned in varying numbers: and so this continued for many months until we left the boarding house to live elsewhere. This took place in the Tranquillity district of Port-of-Spain where these little birds had not been previously noticed.

The *Yellow Warbler* (*Dendroica aestiva*) may be seen from September to April. It is about the size of a small finch, the male being yellowish-olive on the upper parts with bright yellow streaked with chestnut underparts, but the female is duller with less, or even no streaks. This bird is a migrant from North America and belongs to the Family of American Warblers, small insectivorous birds of rather delicate build.

The *Rufous-winged Ground Dove* (*Columbigallina rufipennis*) is the commonest Dove here. It is wine-coloured with a grey head and about 7½ inches in length.

Two Owls are birds of open areas. There is the *Pygmy Owl* (*Glaucidium*) whose "Pol-pol-pol . . ." call can be heard even in the daytime. He is only about 6 inches in length and brown in colour, broadly streaked with white on the under parts. Then there is the white and tawny *Barn Owl* (*Tyto alba*) which screams at night.

Top — Yellow Tail at nest.
Bottom — Spinetails at nest.





The Chamber of The House of Lords

panelling, historical frescoes, crimson and gold furnishings, and the glittering throne dominating it all. On either side rise the scarlet-covered rows of benches, the idea, it has been said, of Cardinal Wolsey (famous contemporary of Henry VIII) who, when he was Lord Keeper

that too must be in the forefront of the mind of a new peer (the word means "equal" as well as signifying a member of the House of Lords) when he takes his seat for the first time.

Before the new peer can sit in the House of Lords, however, there are many formalities to go through. After he receives the Letters Patent from the Queen, creating him a peer, he consults with the Garter King of Arms, an official with a mediæval title, on the name and on the coat of arms he will adopt. When the name has been decided upon, it is published in

To anyone outside Britain, the House of Lords, like many another British institution, can be puzzling, but as a symbol of the historic pageantry for which that country is famed it can also be fascinating.

The tourist, when he takes the Houses of Parliament into his programme, finds it exciting to see the Peers' high Gothic chamber (rebuilt after fire in the last century) with its dark

of the Great Seal (an office later united with that of Lord Chancellor) had the Chamber refurnished to match his Cardinal's hat.

The dignity and the sense of history will be among the tourist's main impressions; and

Their Lordships' House

the London Gazette, and from that moment the new baron is known as Lord X or Lord Y — and not (a typical British inconsistency) as Baron X or Baron Y. He is also entitled to have the words "Right Honourable" in the front of his name.

On certain State occasions, such as the opening of Parliament by the Queen, a baron is entitled to wear a crimson velvet mantle edged with miniver — an old name for ermine — and on his head a plain circlet of silver gilt surmounted by six silver balls. For his introduction into the House of Lords, however, he will wear a less elaborate scarlet robe, usually borrowed for the occasion, covering his twentieth-century lounge suit.

The ceremony of introduction is short, but elaborate and most dignified. A new peer must be introduced by two other peers of the same rank; and the three slowly enter the Chamber following brilliantly garbed officials. They make ceremonial obeisances to the empty throne, take the oath of allegiance to the Queen, and doff their black cocked-hats three times to the Lord Chancellor, who presides over the House of Lords in long wig and black gown.

The Lord Chancellor sits in front of the throne on the traditional Woolsack, symbol of the days when Britain grew rich through her wool industry. Although some years ago it was light-heartedly suggested that the unfortunate Chancellor should sit on a coalsack, as being a more up-to-date emblem of industrial Britain, he still retains his more comfortable and historic seat.

After this ceremony, the new Peer can take his seat on the scarlet benches. The Government Benches are on one side, the Opposition on the other, and yet another group of benches are for the Independents who do not align themselves with any political group.

Although there is only room for 300 peers in the House of Lords, there are in fact nearly 900; but the vast majority very rarely attend the House, whose work is dealt with by some 80 or 90 regular attenders in a leisured and polite atmosphere quite different from that of the House of Commons. One peer himself expressed the atmosphere recently when he said: "We all have tea together after the debates and call each other by our Christian names".

Apart from the Royal Dukes and Church dignitaries, membership of the House at the end of 1955 was made up of 21 Dukes, 27 Marquesses, 133 Earls (former Prime Minister Attlee is one of the latest of these), 103 Viscounts and 537 Barons. The majority of the active peers are "first creation" peers — the distinguished statesmen, politicians, diplomats, administrators and representatives of industry and commerce, who have been honoured with a peerage for their services to the nation. It is they who give added prestige to House of Lords debates in contributing influential and expert advice.

The main function of the House of Lords is as a Second Chamber in discussing legislation, and sending amendments to the House of Commons. Their powers in this century have been severely limited and apart from influencing public opinion through debates, their chief power is to delay for not more than one year the passing of a Bill they dislike.

The composition of the Lords has been the subject of debate for over fifty years, and reform is under consideration by the present Government. Even the defenders of the old regime agree that the hereditary principle is "indefensible in theory". The only "life peers" — those whose titles do not go to their descendants — are the eminent judges needed in the House of Lords to carry out the additional function of the House as the highest legal Court of Appeal.

As it is, one prominent peer has said that the House of Lords is the only institution in the world made efficient by the absenteeism of the great majority of its members.

It is felt in many quarters that its gradual evolution into a Second Chamber more in line with the modern world can bring it added prestige; but, whatever its future may be, the pomp and pageantry which the British love so well is likely to remain in our time.



Picture by courtesy of B.W.I.A.

The Gulf of Paria, between Trinidad and Venezuela, is a relatively sheltered stretch of water, rarely deeper than 75', while the actual chosen location was only some six miles from the nearest land and some 16 miles from the operational base at Point Fortin.

Based on experience gained in other parts of the world and to suit these local conditions, it was decided to drill the well from a small self-contained platform which could house a rig, equipment and material sufficient for a limited time of independent operation. Conditions in Trinidad made it feasible for crew changes to be brought from shore in launches every eight hours in contrast to both the Gulf Coast, where helicopters are often used, and Borneo, where the short distance offshore and the heavy swell have made an aerial ropeway an effective means of communication. Meteorological research showed that the marine well could rely on weather good enough to ensure such regular daily communication with the shore during the drilling period, so the platform size was reduced to a minimum and daily supplies of equipment and material were brought out by tug and barges.

that, should production be found, the platform can be used for tanks and gas separators; moreover, by means of directional drilling several wells may be drilled from the one platform.

Shortly after World War II the supplies of cheap surplus naval vessels were used in an effective method of reducing the large initial outlay of permanent self-contained platforms. To house the drilling rig and its essentials a small piled platform is constructed on the location while all other material, equipment and living quarters are housed in the war surplus craft, renamed drilling tender by the oil industry, anchored nearby.

A serious problem for this method, in exposed waters, is the difficulty of continuing drilling, when the seas became rough, hence use of the drilling tender is less likely to find favour as the locations extend further and further out to sea.

Finally, in recent years, there have been many advances on the old drilling barge idea with the result that there are several very expensive but completely mobile barges or platforms now in operation. Using these reduces the rigging up and tearing down

contained permanent platforms, 29 small platforms—drilling tender rigs and five mobile devices were operating. Similarly, in other countries such as Venezuela, the Persian Gulf and Borneo marine drilling is also in progress. Nevertheless, the fact remains that all these devices and their operation cost enormous amounts of money and can only be economically justified by the discovery of rich and extensive oilfields. Some idea of the economic picture involved can be gained from the authoritative statement made recently that in the 8 years from 1947 to 1955 the American oil industry had spent some US \$700,000,000 and recovered only US \$125,000,000.

Oil from under the sea . . .

WHILE new oil-producing countries such as those in the East still have vast areas of their land to be explored and on, others, like the U.S.A. and Trinidad, with a longer history of exploration and production have been pushed in their search for oil reserves to the shores of the sea and beyond into the self.

It had long been recognised that, in many places, oil-bearing structures similar to those found on land nearby, might be found under the sea; but the multitude of new problems encountered in proving them and the attendant exorbitant cost long retarded development.

In the 1930's American operators began geophysical exploration in the Gulf of Mexico but, owing to the intervening World War I, it was not until 1947 that the first true marine producer was completed. Seven years later, towards the end of 1954, the drilling of the first marine well in Trinidad's territorial waters

In contrast, in other parts of the world marine drilling may take place more than fifty miles offshore in deep water subject to fierce storms. To combat these conditions other methods of providing a base for drilling have gradually evolved and these may be divided into three main types, namely, the self-contained platform, the small platform—drilling tender combination and the self-contained mobile barge.

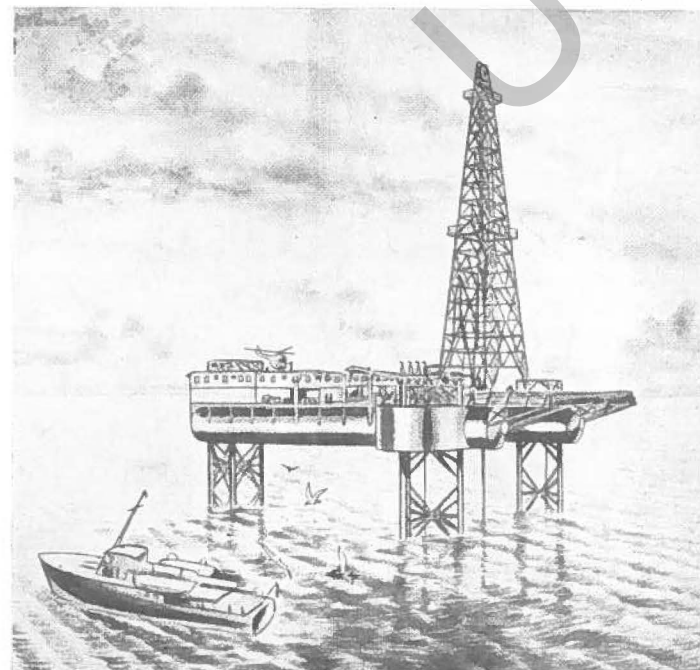
The first marine wells were drilled from self-contained permanent type platforms built on piles, capable of standing all likely wind and wave forces and large enough to carry all the necessary equipment, stores and crew living quarters. Their cost is enormous and being permanent the material used in the platform itself is, to a large extent, not recoverable if the location has to be abandoned. This is an important consideration when wildcatting in unknown territory, but is partly offset by the fact

time between wells and obviates all the irrecoverable material left on abandoned locations by the other methods. Submersible barges are one important variation on this latest method—in principle the unit moves over the location and sinks part or all of a lower hull onto the sea floor by flooding ballast tanks. The drilling equipment and quarters are generally housed in an upper, above water, hull; although one design has all the main prime movers and pumps in the submerged hull itself. Similarly, individual designs have a variety of methods of stabilizing the structure both whilst moving between locations and when settled on site. A barge of this type suitable for drilling in water depth of about 14' is at present operating off Point Ligoure, drilling wells for the Antilles Petroleum Company.

There has been an enormous expansion in marine drilling recently—in the Gulf of Mexico area alone, last year, 5 self-

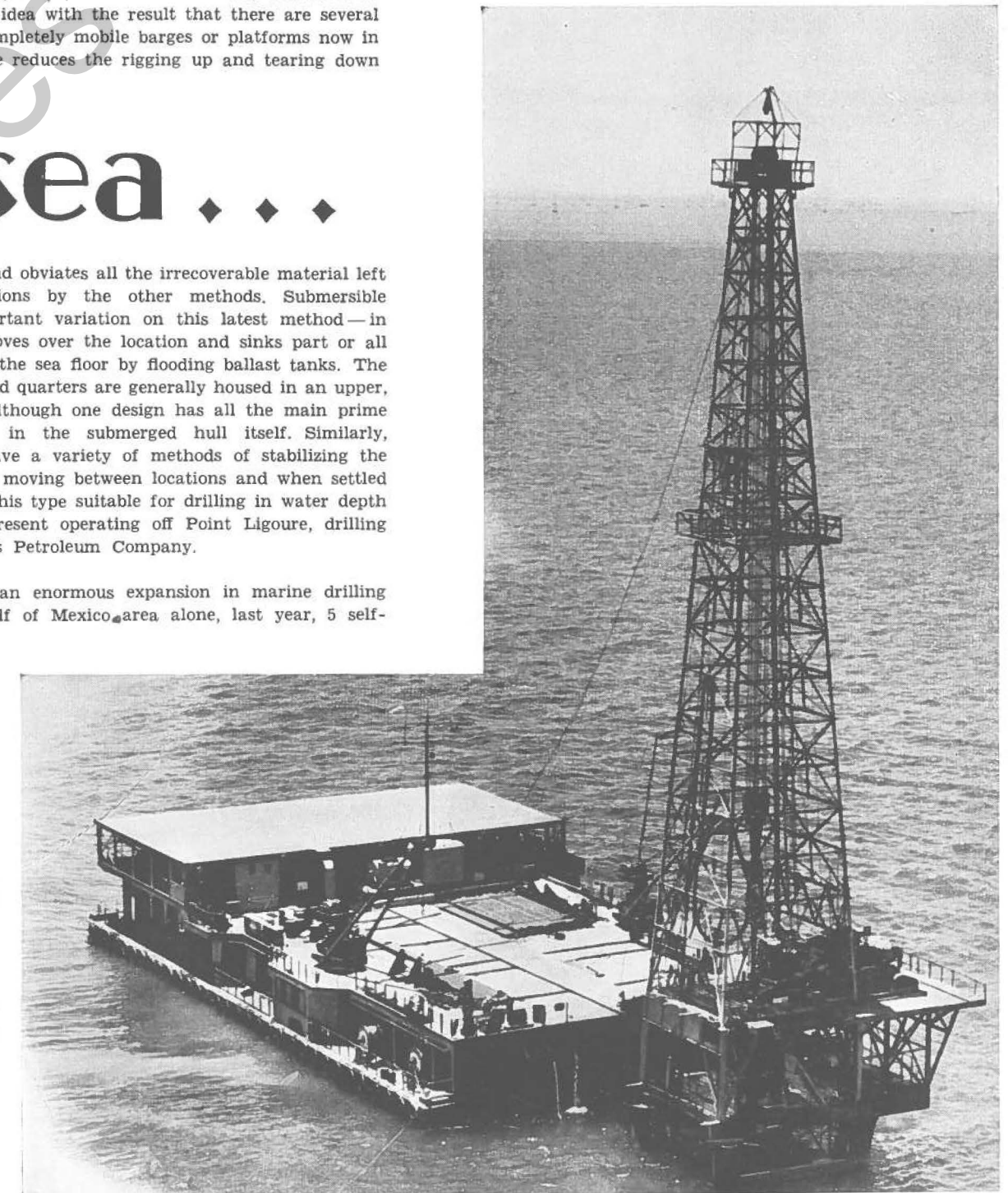
The idea of drilling from platforms or barges had been used from the beginning of the century to tap reservoirs below swampy lands, but of conditions at sea in depths of up to 100', up to twenty or more miles from the coast and the mercy of storms sometimes of hurricane force, there was little experience in the industry. Driven by world demand for oil, the industry felt its way into these new surroundings, investing enormous sums of money in research, new equipment and material. Today the massive platforms, barges or similar structures, the complicated systems of supply and crew movements contribute to make a marine well several times more expensive than its counterpart on shore. The greater risk capital involved has made it common practice for operators in the U.S.A. to combine exploration, to explore and test offshore areas, sharing both expenses and profits—if any.

Similarly, the local Trinidad Northern Areas, Ltd., was formed by B.O.T., T.L.L. and the D'Arcy Exploration Company to acquire certain land holdings and marine leases. A few years ago it decided to undertake a marine venture and having chosen a location to be drilled, T.N.A. had to face the problem of how to drill.



Right :
Typical small permanent platform and drilling tender.

Left :
Impression of one of the newest mobile platforms.



Oil

The Gulf of Paria, between Trinidad and Venezuela, is a relatively sheltered stretch of water, rarely deeper than 75', while the actual chosen location was only some six miles from the nearest land and some 16 miles from the operational base at Point Fortin.

Based on experience gained in other parts of the world and to suit these local conditions, it was decided to drill the well from a small self-contained platform which could house a rig, equipment and material sufficient for a limited time of independent operation. Conditions in Trinidad made it feasible for crew changes to be brought from shore in launches every eight hours in contrast to both the Gulf Coast, where helicopters are often used, and Borneo, where the short distance offshore and the heavy swell have made an aerial ropeway an effective means of communication. Meteorological research showed that the marine well could rely on weather good enough to ensure such regular daily communication with the shore during the drilling period, so the platform size was reduced to a minimum and daily supplies of equipment and material were brought out by tug and barges.

from under the sea . . .

WHILE new oil-producing countries such as those in the Middle East still have vast areas of their land to be explored and mined, others, like the U.S.A. and Trinidad, with a longer history of exploration and production have been pushed in their search for more oil reserves to the shores of the sea and beyond into the deep.

It had long been recognised that, in many places, oil-bearing structures similar to those found on land nearby, might be found under the sea; but the multitude of new problems involved in proving them and the attendant exorbitant cost long retarded development.

In the 1930's American operators began geophysical exploration in the Gulf of Mexico but, owing to the intervening World War II, it was not until 1947 that the first true marine producer was completed. Seven years later, towards the end of 1954, the drilling of the first marine well in Trinidad's territorial waters began.

The idea of drilling from platforms or barges had been used from the beginning of the century to tap reservoirs below swampy lands, but of conditions at sea in depths of up to 100', up to twenty or more miles from the coast and the mercy of storms sometimes of hurricane force, there was little experience in the industry. Driven by world demand for oil, the industry felt its way into these new surroundings, investing enormous sums of money in research, new equipment and material. Today the massive platforms, barges or similar structures used, the complicated systems of supply and crew movements contribute to make a marine well several times more expensive than its counterpart on shore. The greater risk capital involved in it is common practice for operators in the U.S.A. to combine to explore and test offshore areas, sharing both expenses and profits—if any.

Similarly, the local Trinidad Northern Areas, Ltd., was formed in 1954, B.O.T., T.L.L. and the D'Arcy Exploration Company to explore certain land holdings and marine leases. A few years ago they decided to undertake a marine venture and having chosen a location to be drilled, T.N.A. had to face the problem of how to do it.

In contrast, in other parts of the world marine drilling may take place more than fifty miles offshore in deep water subject to fierce storms. To combat these conditions other methods of providing a base for drilling have gradually evolved and these may be divided into three main types, namely, the self-contained platform, the small platform—drilling tender combination and the self-contained mobile barge.

The first marine wells were drilled from self-contained permanent type platforms built on piles, capable of standing all likely wind and wave forces and large enough to carry all the necessary equipment, stores and crew living quarters. Their cost is enormous and being permanent the material used in the platform itself is, to a large extent, not recoverable if the location has to be abandoned. This is an important consideration when wildcatting in unknown territory, but is partly offset by the fact

that, should production be found, the platform can be used for tanks and gas separators; moreover, by means of directional drilling several wells may be drilled from the one platform.

Shortly after World War II the supplies of cheap surplus naval vessels were used in an effective method of reducing the large initial outlay of permanent self-contained platforms. To house the drilling rig and its essentials a small piled platform is constructed on the location while all other material, equipment and living quarters are housed in the war surplus craft, renamed drilling tender by the oil industry, anchored nearby.

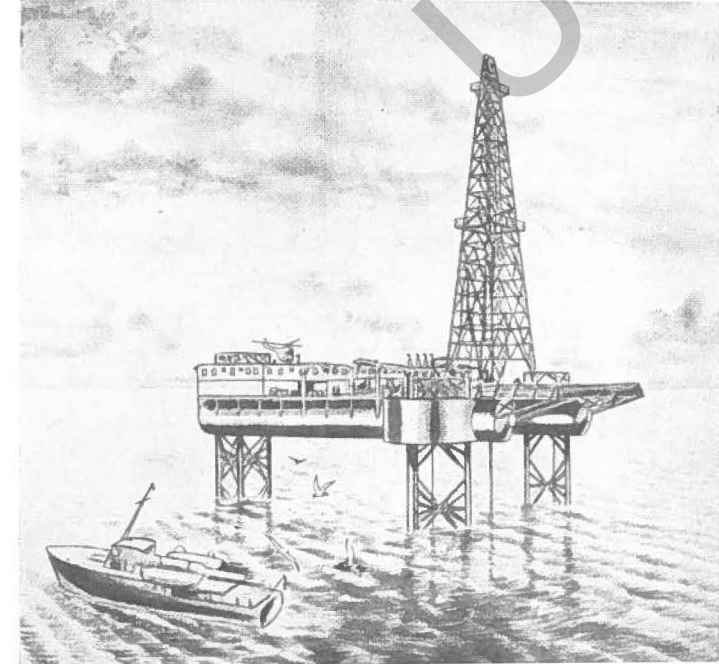
A serious problem for this method, in exposed waters, is the difficulty of continuing drilling, when the seas became rough, hence use of the drilling tender is less likely to find favour as the locations extend further and further out to sea.

Finally, in recent years, there have been many advances on the old drilling barge idea with the result that there are several very expensive but completely mobile barges or platforms now in operation. Using these reduces the rigging up and tearing down

time between wells and obviates all the irrecoverable material left on abandoned locations by the other methods. Submersible barges are one important variation on this latest method—in principle the unit moves over the location and sinks part or all of a lower hull onto the sea floor by flooding ballast tanks. The drilling equipment and quarters are generally housed in an upper, above water, hull; although one design has all the main prime movers and pumps in the submerged hull itself. Similarly, individual designs have a variety of methods of stabilizing the structure both whilst moving between locations and when settled on site. A barge of this type suitable for drilling in water depth of about 14' is at present operating off Point Ligoure, drilling wells for the Antilles Petroleum Company.

There has been an enormous expansion in marine drilling recently—in the Gulf of Mexico area alone, last year, 5 self-

contained permanent platforms, 29 small platforms—drilling tender rigs and five mobile devices were operating. Similarly, in other countries such as Venezuela, the Persian Gulf and Borneo marine drilling is also in progress. Nevertheless, the fact remains that all these devices and their operation cost enormous amounts of money and can only be economically justified by the discovery of rich and extensive oilfields. Some idea of the economic picture involved can be gained from the authoritative statement made recently that in the 8 years from 1947 to 1955 the American oil industry had spent some US \$700,000,000 and recovered only US \$125,000,000.



Right :
Typical small permanent platform and drilling tender.

Left :
Impression of one of the newest mobile platforms.



Survey Section



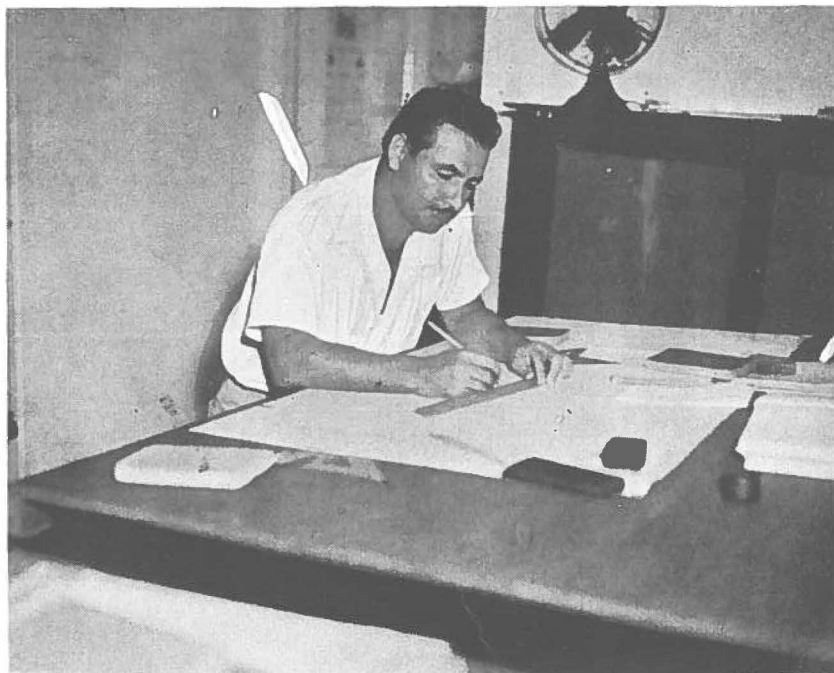
horizontal and vertical control, based on Government Trigonometrical Stations and Bench Marks or Tidal observations, have to be established and Seismic or Gravity Survey lines run. The areas in which exploratory work is most often carried out are generally undeveloped and bush camps have to be established, the sites of which change as the Survey progresses. If after careful and exhaustive studies of the results of the various Geological surveys, the area is considered suitable for further exploration, wildcat wells are then programmed. After the location of the well site proposed by the Geological Department has been approved it has then to be staked and also the access road built, and it is essential that the Surveyor finds the most direct and economic route. This entails taking longitudinal and cross sections and when the terrain is rough contouring on either side of the proposed road centre line so that the amount of earthwork can be calculated. The Surveyor will also recommend the moving of a location to a suitable alternative site if, for topographical or other reasons, the original site is impracticable.

Surveyors are among the first of the employees engaged by Companies in their search for oil and in this article we shall attempt to give readers a brief idea of the activities of the Survey Section of The United British Oilfields of Trinidad, Limited.

MR. G. CARR BROWN is Chief Surveyor and responsible to the Chief Engineer for the administration and efficient operation of the Section. The Headquarters are in Point Fortin where, two Assistant Surveyors, Messrs. E. M. Iosca and P. H. Henderson, one Junior Surveyor, Mr. E. Maturah, a Computer/Draughtsman and a Clerk are also employed.

A field office is maintained at Catshill staffed by three Assistant Surveyors, Messrs. V. R. Pinard, V. A. Monceaux and V. O. Bosse.

When working for an oil-producing Company in Trinidad the Surveyors' work starts as soon as an option of Lease or Exploration Licence has been obtained and Geological parties are ready to operate. Boundaries, hori-



Once the fact has been established that there is oil in commercial quantities, exploitation wells are planned to a specific uniform spacing, and the area to be developed is contoured by Plane Tabling so as to plan more easily road development and routes for Service and transmission lines. Coincidental with the development of an area of commercial production must be the establishment of a base of operations. If the newly discovered production is within a reasonable distance of a well established base the provision of a suitable pipeline will be adequate to take care of the additional production. It is then the duty of the surveyors to stake the shortest possible route for this pipeline. As frequently happens however in the never-ending search for oil, production is discovered in isolated areas and the surveyors are called in to map the surrounding countryside and plan sites for residential and industrial areas, water reservoirs, etc.

Here in Trinidad, of course, most of the pioneering work in the preparation of base headquarters has now been done but every extension either of tank farms, industrial and residential areas, roads, drainage, etc., calls initially for the services of a surveyor. The Survey Section is also responsible for the staking of lots and building sites and the supervision of the preparation of plans for submission to the Government for approval.

Government regulations stipulate that all Surveys in connection with Oil Mining Lease boundaries and placing of permanent boundary markers and all transactions purporting to grant or transfer the title of any interest in land must be done by Licensed Surveyors.

In addition to the actual field work the Surveyors are required to keep accurate records of all work done and carefully index them so that they can be easily located for future use. They do the computations of the surveys made by them or are responsible for the accuracy of them if done by a subordinate, and they also do a certain amount of plotting.

The Computer/Draughtsman, Mr. G. Maharaj, assists in the computations and plotting and keeping up-to-date all survey plans and indexes. He is also called upon to prepare surface occupation plans, and when required other plans and sketches. There are also three Draughtsmen attached to the Draughting Section of the Geological Department employed in the preparation of plans and tracing and keeping of them up-to-date.

The general clerical work of the section such as preparation of payrolls, submission of monthly forestry returns to Government, filing, etc., is the responsibility of the clerical assistant, Mr. R. D. Gopee.



On opposite page :

Top Left — Mr. G. Carr Brown approves the plans.

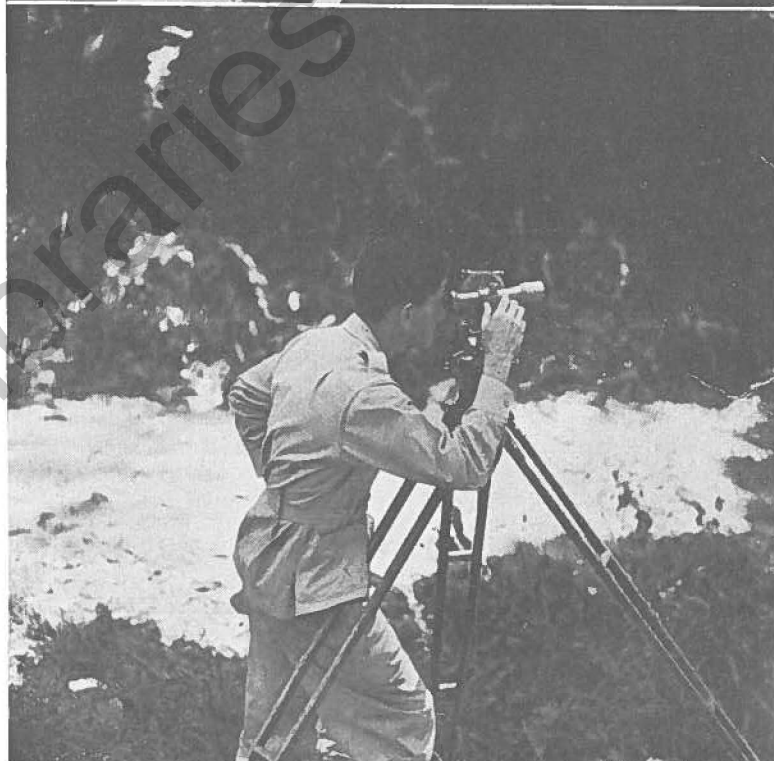
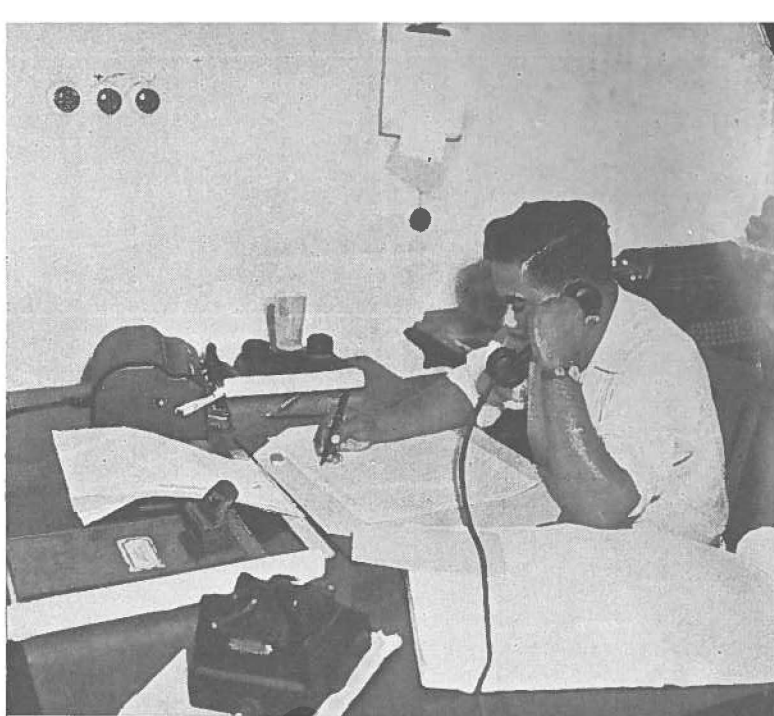
Bottom Right — Mr. E. M. Mosca checks some maps.

On this page :

Top — Mr. R. D. Gopee verifies the payroll entries.

Centre — Mr. V. R. Pinard checking a line to a location.

Bottom — Mr. V. O. Bosse plane tabling a new area. Note the large snake, killed on location, coiled round the stake carried by the man on the left.



the second in a series
of three articles on
SHELL and the

Oil INDUSTRY

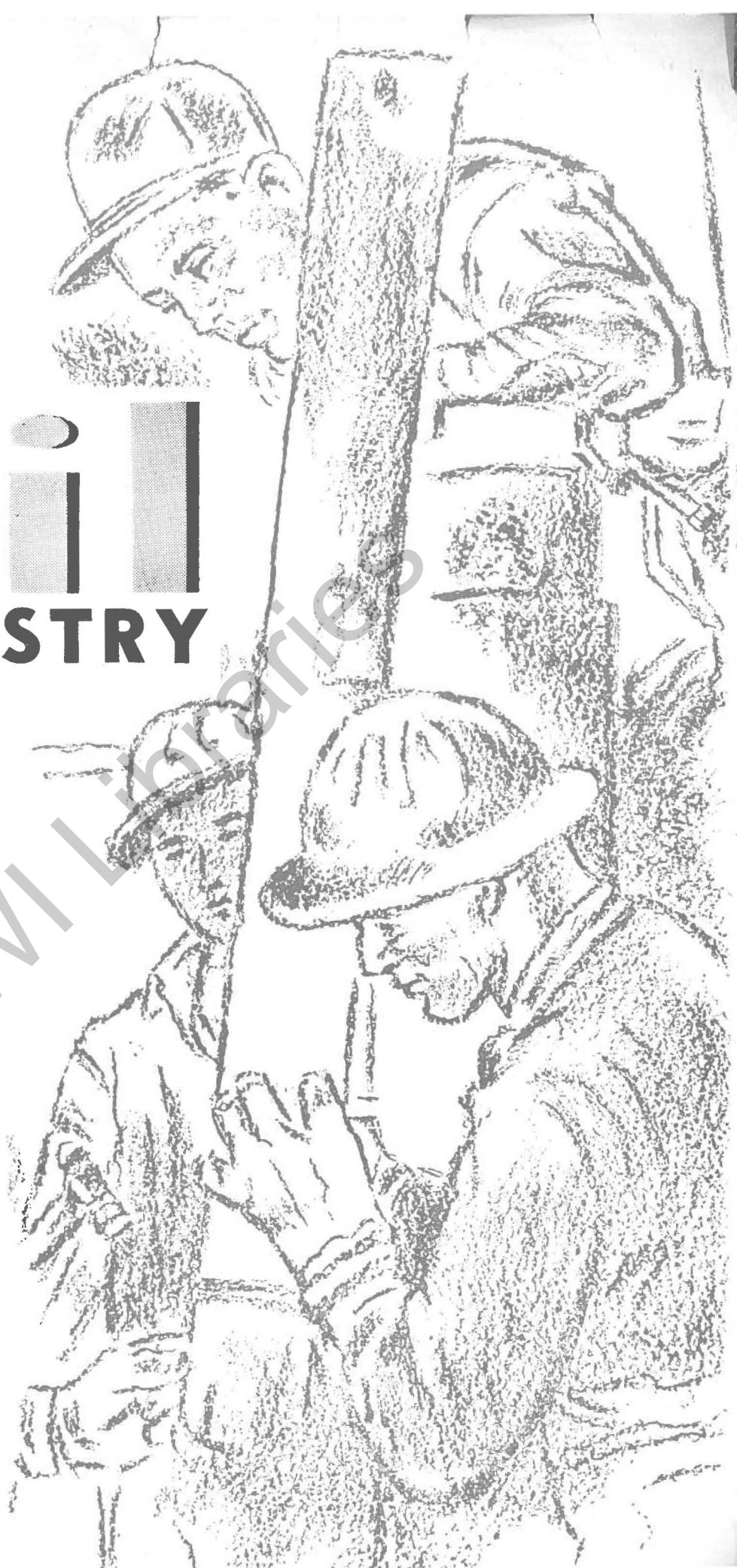
In our previous issue we gave
readers details of the progress of
the independent units of Shell
and Royal Dutch prior to their
amalgamation in 1907.

Growth from 1907 Onwards

A period of wide expansion by the
merged companies followed, and Group
policy was to extend its spheres of activity
to add new sources of crude oil, while
growing refineries under central con-
trol could be organised to serve world
markets. Producing interests were suc-
cessively acquired in Roumania (1907),
British Borneo (1909), Russia (1910),
Cuba (1912), Venezuela, Mexico, and
California (1913), while those in the East
Indies were extended. The Central Geo-
logical Department of B.P.M. was estab-
lished at The Hague in 1911.

The entry into the domestic oil in-
dustry in the U.S.A. was a bold step. A
geological survey was carried out in Okla-
homa in 1908, and trading began in 1912
with the acquisition of a marketing com-
pany in California — the American Gaso-
line Co. — where oil-producing properties
were bought soon after. Operations were
extended to the Mid-Continent area where
Standard Petroleum Co. began — also in
1912 — to develop oilfields and a pipeline.

Samuel's prediction of the use of oil
shipping began to come true when a
Naval Commission under Admiral Fisher
in 1912 recommended oil fuel for the Navy,
though at first this chiefly affected the
Royal Persian Oil Co.



During this time Shell was becoming well-known as a petrol, and various speed records were set up on it, including a journey from Peking to Paris. Marketing methods also developed and by 1914 in the U.K. horse transport was being scrapped as fast as motors became available.

First World War

During the first world war the oilfields in Venezuela were developed and their great potential began to be apparent. The refinery at Curacao was planned for the processing of Venezuelan crude in 1915 and came on stream in 1918. The California business was enlarged and, with the construction of Martinez refinery and pipeline and marketing facilities, brought under the Shell Co. of California in 1915. Roxana began refinery construction, and the Wood River plant was completed in 1918. A refinery was built in Sarawak, and further production obtained from Sumatra. But, against this progress, the properties in Roumania were destroyed in 1916 and those in Russia expropriated in 1917. By 1920 Royal Dutch/Shell production was 10 million tons out of a world total of 112 million.

Inter-War Years

The twenties saw a further growth in all directions. Markets expanded and Shell products became universally known. In 1919 Alcock and Brown used Shell for their historic first crossing of the Atlantic, and by 1920 Sir Marcus Samuel (who had been knighted in 1898) was able to say that :—

“A very remarkable expansion has taken place in the consumption of liquid fuel brought about by the realisation at last of its immense superiority as a fuel for steamers.”

Bunkering stations were being established at ports all over the world.

In the U.S.A. the Shell Union Oil Corporation was formed in 1922 to consolidate Shell interests there with those of the Union Oil Co. of Delaware, and the American business increased rapidly. The Shell Co. of Canada and Shell Development Co. followed in 1925 and 1926. By 1929 American activities had spread to the East coast, and the Shell Chemical Corporation was formed.

Further interests were also acquired in other parts of the world. In 1919 the Group acquired a controlling interest in Compania Mexicana de Petroleo “El Aguila” S.A. (Mexican Eagle Oil Co.) and other “Eagle” companies (the Mexican assets were, however, expropriated in 1938). In 1920 Shell-Mex Ltd. was set up as a joint marketing company in the U.K. for the “Shell” and “Eagle” groups. In 1921 there was further expansion in Venezuela, and concessions were acquired in Argentina, and in 1922 the British Malayan Petroleum Co. was formed for production in British Borneo. The manufacture of chemicals was started in Holland by “Mekog” in 1929, and the chemicals from petroleum industry started operation in the U.S.A. at the same time.

Other joint marketing organisations were set up; in 1928 The Consolidated Petroleum Co. Ltd., jointly owned by Shell and Anglo-Iranian, took over the marketing subsidiaries of both Groups in the Near East and in East and South Africa, and Burmah-Shell Oil Storage and Distributing Co. of India Ltd. began marketing for Shell and Burmah Oil Co. Ltd. in India. In 1931 Anglo-Iranian joined Shell and Eagle in joint marketing in the U.K.

through Shell-Mex and B.P. Ltd. The Iraq Petroleum Co., in which Royal Dutch/Shell holds a 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ % interest, was set up in its present form in 1929.

There was also great growth in refining activity over the whole of this period and a number of new refineries were established in both hemispheres.

The inter-war period was thus marked by an expansion in all spheres, and the accompanying chart shows the general growth in production of the various areas.

By 1939 Royal Dutch/Shell production had grown to 30 million tons out of a world total of 289 million, and the Group's sea-going tanker fleet was made up of 198 vessels of nearly 2 million d.w.t.

Sir Marcus Samuel retired from the Chairmanship of “Shell” Transport and Trading in 1920 and soon afterwards was created Lord Bearsted. He was succeeded by his son, who inherited the title in 1927. The other main architect of the Group, Sir Henri Deterding (who had been knighted in 1920), relinquished his appointment as General Managing Director of the Royal Dutch in 1937. His successor was Mr. J. E. F. de Kok.

Second World War

With the second World War and the invasion of Holland, the head office of Royal Dutch was moved to Curacao, with a nucleus staff in London. Properties in the East Indies were destroyed and access lost to Roumania. There was intense activity in co-operation with the Allied Government to provide supplies of all products where they were wanted, notably aviation and motor gasoline and fuel oils. The efforts of the Group's U.S. refineries were of particular importance, especially in the production of large quantities of high octane aviation fuel, and butadiene for synthetic rubber was produced by Shell Chemical Corp. All tankers came under Government control, and the Group's losses through enemy action were heavy, totalling 95 ships of 887,000 d.w.t.

Recent Developments

After the war great efforts were necessary to restore damaged property, and to provide the extra production, transport, refining and other facilities to meet the new pressure of demand. There were large increases in output in all areas (see chart), especially in Venezuela, and the war losses of the fleets were made good by 1947.

Exploratory drilling was started in Tunisia and Nigeria in 1951, and in Algeria and underwater in British Borneo and Trinidad in 1954, but that in Ecuador (where drilling started in 1945) was abandoned in 1950. New production was obtained from the Schoonebeek field in the Netherlands and from Colombia in 1945, from New Guinea in 1947, and from Canada in 1953, while that from Iraq (by I.P.C.) has sharply increased since 1951.

There has been large-scale refinery construction and expansion, notably in the U.K. at Stanlow and Shell Haven (where, by 1954 the total Group crude capacity had grown to 10 million tons), at Pernis in Holland, now the largest in Europe, at Rouen and elsewhere in Europe, at Cardon in Venezuela, Geelong in Australia, Bombay and in many other parts of the world. Plants for the production of chemicals from petroleum came into operation at Stanlow and Pernis in 1949, Rouen in 1951 and Berre and Montreal in 1953.

The name of the Asiatic Petroleum Co. was changed in 1946 to THE SHELL PETROLEUM COMPANY Ltd.,

and that of Shell Union Oil Corp. in the U.S.A. to Shell Co. in 1949.

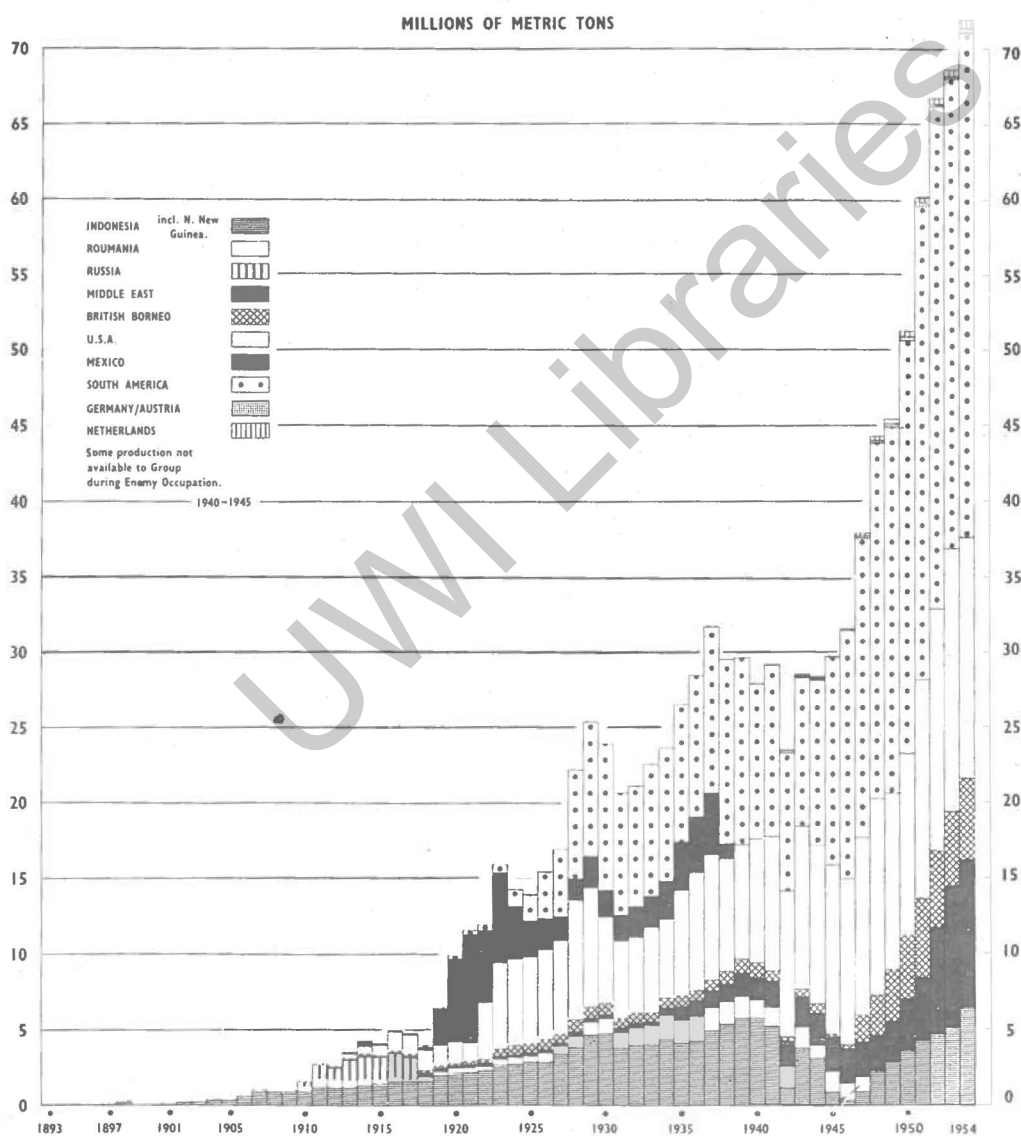
At the end of 1954 Royal Dutch/Shell production (excluding special supply contracts) amounted to 71 million tons out of a world total of 708 million tons.

After Mr. de Kok's death in 1950, Mr. J. B. Augessler (the son of the original Kessler) was appointed General Managing Director of the Royal Dutch. In 1949, on his appointment to the Chairmanship of the Board of Directors, he was succeeded as General Managing Director by Mr. B. Th. W. van Hasselt, who was succeeded in 1952 by Jonkheer J. H. Loudon.

laws of many countries. The histories and the present functions of these companies differ widely, but between them they cover every department of the petroleum industry — exploration, production, refining, transportation, manufacture of chemicals and other products from petroleum, marketing and research — in nearly every country in the world outside the Communist sphere.

The Group is thus in the first rank of the industry. It has widely distributed sources of crude, refineries situated in both producing and consuming centres, the largest merchant fleet under one house flag, distribution organisations throughout the free world combined with

ANNUAL GROSS CRUDE OIL & NATURAL GASOLINE PRODUCTION OF THE ROYAL DUTCH/SHELL GROUP 1893-1954



The present Chairman of "Shell" Transport and Trading is Lord Godber of Mayfield, who succeeded the late Lord Bearsted in 1946.

The Group Today :

The Royal Dutch/Shell Group of Oil Companies now comprises several hundred companies, established under the

bunkering and aviation services, a growing manufacture of chemicals, and research stations for the development of all of these spheres.

The search for new sources of oil and for extensions to known oil producing areas is being carried on in 16 different countries, and in 1955 there were some fifty geological and one hundred geophysical parties in the field.



UWI Libraries

DOUBLE - SUNSET HIBISCUS

SHELL AND THE OIL INDUSTRY—Continued

Recent developments have been the finding of oil in Nevada and South Dakota, Saskatchewan, near the Hague, and underwater off Louisiana. Exploratory drilling is taking place in Nigeria, Tunisia, the Sahara and East Africa and underwater off Trinidad, British Borneo and Qatar. Offshore concessions have also been acquired in Texas.

In spite of heavy withdrawals by production, the Group's proved reserves were larger at the end of 1954 than they were at the beginning of that year.

Tankers owned by Group companies at the end of 1954 totalled 219 vessels (200 d.w.t. and over) aggregating 2,300,000 d.w.t. or 5.9% of all world tonnage. Vessels on charter (including vessels chartered by S.M.S. and Shell Oil Co.) totalled 270 ships of some 4,800,000 d.w.t. Thus the total fleet owned or chartered by the Group comprises 489 vessels of 7,100,000 d.w.t. or about one-fifth of the total of all world tanker tonnage.

Cargoes carried range over all types of products including crude oil, aviation fuels, gasoline, kerosine, white spirits, gas oil, diesel and fuel oil, chemicals and numerous grades of lubricants. These cargoes are loaded at some 50 loading ports and discharged to about 300 terminal points in some seventy different countries.

A large building programme has been planned and at the end of 1954 a further 53 ships of 1,110,000 d.w.t. were scheduled for delivery in 1957. The Group's present programme the first of which was announced in September 1955 calls for a further 43 tankers with a total of more than 1,000,000 d.w.t. Of these ships twenty-one are allocated to British yards, fourteen to Dutch and eight to German.

Refining :

The Group owns, either wholly or partially forty refineries in twelve different countries the largest of which is that on the Island of Curacao which has a capacity of 10 million tons per annum. The Pernis refinery in Holland was enlarged in 1953 and is now the largest in Europe. A new refinery is being built at Anacortes on the N.W. Coast of U.S.A. and expansion programmes are in progress elsewhere. Group refinery throughputs have more than doubled since 1946.

Chemicals :

The Group has fifteen plants for the manufacture of chemicals situated in six different countries and further extensions are planned. Early in 1955 Shell acquired the firm of Petrochemicals Ltd. which gives it an entry into a chemical field in the U.K. complementary to its present interests.

Staff :

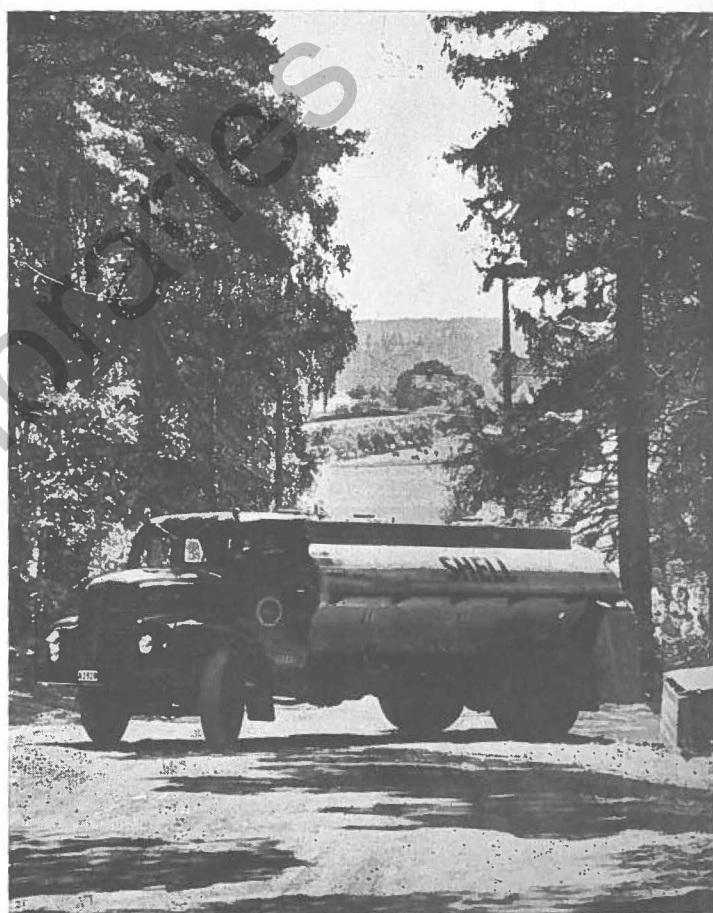
Group Companies employ over 250,000 men and women all over the world, utilising wherever possible the services of the nationals of the Countries in which they are operating.

(As a matter of convenience, the expression "Shell" and or "Group" is used in this issue to denote The Royal Dutch/Shell Group of Companies or, in an adjectival sense, as relating to that group.)

Plastic Tank for Gasoline Truck

FIRST of its kind in Scandinavia, a new 1,364 gallon petrol lorry with the largest plastic tank in Europe, has recently been brought into service by Shell in Sweden.

Made of fibre-glass reinforced plastic the tank shell, not including manlids, footvalves, outlet cocks and piping, has a bare weight of only 440 kilos (970 lbs.), about half as much as a similar tank made of steel. This difference in weight is important as the Swedish authorities do not permit an axle load of more than 6,000 kilos (13,230 lbs.).



The new bulk petrol lorry on its way from Ekero village to Stockholm.

Due to the saving in weight the new road tanker can carry about 600 litres or approximately 132 Imperial gallons of petrol more than the same type of vehicle equipped with a conventional steel tank — an additional payload of about 10%.

In addition to the tank, the cabin of the new lorry, a Leyland Comet '90', is also made of glass-fibre reinforced plastic. The Swedish firms co-operating with Shell in the construction of these new type facilities were AB Malmo Flygindustri and AB Bofors-Nobelkrut.

Point Fortin Discovery Well

—F.W. 4

BEFORE a distinguished gathering which included the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce, The Hon. Albert Gomes, C.M.G., Mr. F. J. Stephens, one of the Managing Directors of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group and a Director of U.B.O.T., Ltd., unveiled a plaque at the site of Well F.W. 4 to commemorate the completion of the first commercial oil-producing well in Point Fortin. The well was completed in September 1912 and to date has produced 11,150 barrels of oil, by no means a record figure, but one which is of historic importance because it demonstrated that oil was present in commercial quantities in the area and which consequently helped to found an industry in Trinidad upon which the prosperity of the Island largely depends.



Mr. F. T. Stephen unveils the plaque commemorating the first commercial producer in Point Fortin.

In his speech, Mr. G. L. Reid, General Manager of U.B.O.T., Ltd., gave the gathering some interesting technical data, and then went on to say—

“Apart from these facts, which are of primary interest to the oil industry, the significance of this occasion is that it commemorates the effective commencement of all the extensive oil developments in the region of Point Fortin and in the County of St. Patrick as a whole. When one looks around at Point Fortin today, with its position as the third most important commercial centre in Trinidad, one realises the progress which has been made in the last 45 years and particularly in the last five years or so. I am sure that all the responsible inhabitants of this district are fully aware that their progress in the past and their present economic

existence—I think I may say prosperity—is entirely upon the foundations laid by the early in the oil industry.

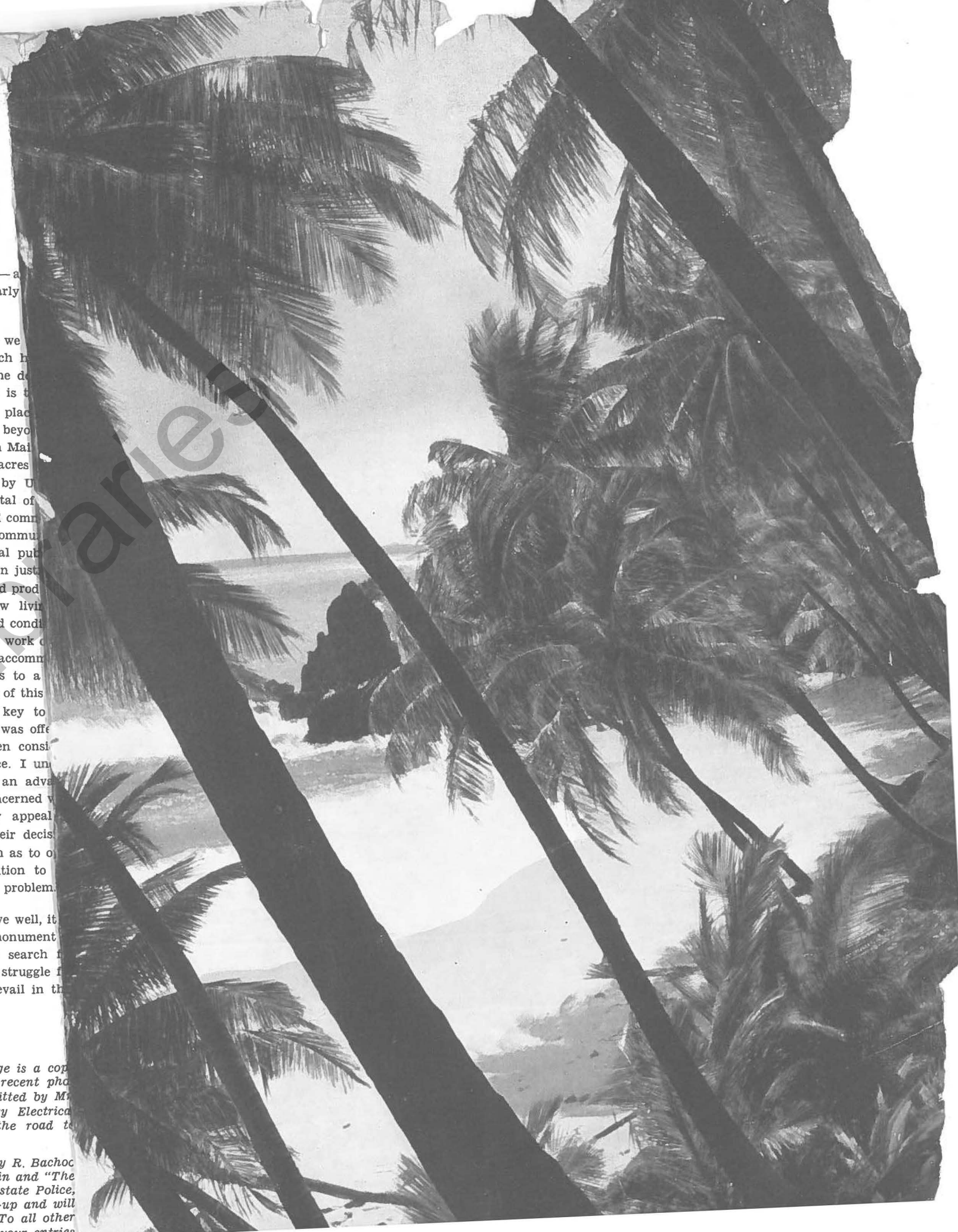
“It is also not without significance that we stand near the centre of the region which has been earmarked as the site of the extension of the development area of Point Fortin township—indeed this is the direction in which such extension can take place. An area of some 150 acres, stretching from beyond the Guapo/Cap de Ville Road to the Point Fortin Mail Office—an area which would provide about 100 acres of usable space—was offered to Government by U.B.O.T. 2½ years ago for 99 years at an annual rental of £100. This land has been laid out and developed into residential and commercial plots for the accommodation of the local community, not just U.B.O.T. employees but the general public as well. These people, the majority of whom can justly include themselves among the more useful and productive members of Trinidad's population, are now living in many cases in very crowded and sub-standard conditions and in other instances many miles from their work to the lack of more conveniently situated accommodation. Improvement in their circumstances is to a large extent dependent upon the development of this area in the reasonably near future. Since the key to the problem in the shape of the necessary land was offered by Government have, quite understandably, been considering what would be involved in its acceptance. I understand that these studies have now reached an advanced stage. Accordingly, on behalf of all those concerned with the future of Point Fortin, I respectfully appeal to Government to take early steps to reach their decision. We all venture to hope that this will be such as to open the way for a significant further contribution to the solution of Trinidad's all-important housing problem.

If F.W. 4 has not been an outstanding remunerative well, it is for that very reason, all the more appropriate as a monument to the determination, resourcefulness and the constant search for improved techniques which are characteristics of the struggle for oil under the difficult geological conditions which prevail in the Island.

* * * *

Reproduced on the opposite page is a copy of the prize-winning entry in our recent photographic competition. It was submitted by Mr. A. M. R. Slootweg of the Refinery Electrical Section under the title of “On the road to Toco”.

“Last Train to San Fernando” by R. Bachoc of the Electrical Section, Point Fortin and “The Last Toil” by Teeluckchan of the Estate Police, Penal were adjudged equal runners-up and will share the second and third prizes. To all other contestants we say “Thank you for your entries and better luck next time”.



UWI Libraries