

A PLEA FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
OF  
NEGROES ON THE CANAL ZONE

arranged by  
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D E D I C A T E D  
T O   T H E  
I S T H M I A N   N E G R O   Y O U T H

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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

Current discussion of education reveals the presence in the field of two trends of educational thought which are struggling for supremacy. One emphasizes the development of the individual's powers as the primordial preparation for life and the other stresses the performance of life's activities as a basis for participating efficiently in a practical world. In other words, on the one hand are those who advocate merely academic training while on the other hand are those who view vocational training as the only possible method of preparing for the work of the world. Both sides can produce very plausible and convincing arguments to support their methods and procedures; furthermore, rapidly changing conditions make the trends in education untenable. To our way of thinking, however, these two trends need not be antagonistic to each other as one fits the individual for a place in a highly industrialized world while the other looks to a self realization, to a world of interests and satisfactions that lie above and beyond the mechanical and materialistic activities of a vocation.

We are really dealing with two types of educational experiences both of which are essential to fullness of growth, efficiency of action and completeness of character. Both are good, both are necessary; one complements the other. One looks to the control of the material world but requires for maximum effectiveness the enriched mind, refined sensibilities, the discipline and the culture provided by the other.

Here, on the Canal Zone, occupational training somewhat takes the place of industrial instruction in our Colored Schools and is carried on as far as the time and means at the students' disposal permit. A serious attempt is being made to prepare the individual to perform efficiently the labors of his environment so that the standard of work in these various occupations may be lifted to a higher and more desirable level. Some attention is being given to the development of bodies of knowledge, attitudes, habits and appreciations that make up the fabric of a well-rounded life. However, this program of training is limited in scope. It leads to an incomplete stage of development. Education must proceed by an active route to higher levels in the Canal Zone Colored Schools not because we aim at knowledge merely for the sake of knowledge, but because we must aim at far more knowledge for our boys and girls if they are to cope successfully with the complexities of a scientific, industrial age.

The seven addresses reprinted in this booklet with the permission

of the Canal Zone Colored Teachers Association were presented at a series of Parents-Teachers' Meetings held at La Boca, Silver City, Gamboa, Red Tank and Gatun during the months of September and October under the sponsorship of the said association. The first six addresses provide a conspectus of the achievements of the Canal Zone Colored School program. These addresses point out how far education has come from the stage where it was regarded by some educators as "merely an attempt to keep the colored pupils under continual adult supervision"; they go much further in that they tend to evidence the valuable function which the school is actually performing in affording interesting experiences to children by transmitting group culture and loyalties, also developing habits that should prove helpful in the solution of life problems. The manner in which our pupils have accepted and applied the instructions outlined in the first six addresses and the vista which the address on "Looking Forward" opens before our group inspire us to make ample use of a classic expression by Dr. R. R. Marett, Rector of Exeter College, Oxford: "To consider ourselves in the light of what we may reasonably hope to become is our first and last duty as self-directing beings." Throughout the first part of this booklet runs an undertone to the effect that the present school program is elastic. This being true, the very absence of finality leaves ample scope for our present and succeeding generations to carry on the ceaseless quest for higher education on behalf of the Negro children on the Canal Zone.

Throughout the course of human existence man has had to act long before he could think; He has had to react to his physical environment long before he had the capacity or the leisure to try to understand it and those who have cherished ambitions for mankind are unanimous in including higher education as one of the principal objectives. Higher education is at the moment highly essential in helping towards a better understanding of the fundamental problems of life itself which mankind has still to solve with the complex questions it entails of freewill and survival. Higher education is now a vital need so as to enable our youngsters to have more control over their future development; to make them more conscious of their responsibility to society thus extending their powers of rational insight and control.

There are so many predetermined tendencies that manifest themselves in our local life that only higher education will afford the opportunity of bringing experimentation to bear on the wealth of possibilities of the hundreds of our youths who graduate annually from the Canal Zone Colored Schools. At present our limited educational program imposes on them certain uniform and fixed habits that insist on rigid conformity to uninspiring environments, instead of providing them with a range for the variability and initiative on which the possibility of a higher culture rests.

The characteristics of the American set-up under which our pupils are living now and with which they will be identified in increasing measure are numerous, colorful and changing. Consequently, our youth is now characterized by a certain restlessness and striving which may be interpreted as the groanings of the spirit within them. They seek accurate information; they feel the need of creative opportunity and they seem to be ready to accept their responsibilities in the development of a higher status of life.

Upon the secondary school rests the responsibility for the orientation of the youth of our communities. We realize that the first essential for successful educative effort is that a community as a whole should have a true estimate of the nature and value of education. That we have developed such an evaluation cannot be gainsaid. We plead for higher educational training which, while making us happy in ourselves, also makes us most capable of rendering a higher quality of service to our fellowmen.

Continuous readjustment by degrees is the ideal at which educators generally aim. Gradually, the aims and objectives of the Canal Zone Colored Schools have been readjusted to the stage where higher education is the next logical degree of change. Our present concentration on higher education is not to be considered antagonistic to the present conception of education, but merely an effort for advancement complimentary to the system now in use.

One sure means of preventing crimes is by disseminating the seeds of virtue and knowledge through an educational system which assists pupils to set themselves free from the yoke of their own nature, subordinating the impulses of their body to the guidance of their developing mind. Higher education among our group will transcend the present condition of the educated by making their life more rational, more serviceable and more attracted by goodness and beauty than it has heretofore been. Today, as the Canal Zone Colored Teachers Association joins the Panama Canal West Indian Employees Association, the Isthmian colored press and other agencies that have from time to time urged the instituting of higher education for Negroes on the Canal Zone, another potent force is added to that progressive element in our colored community which confides in the knowledge that in seeking higher education they do so that both manliness and godliness may come to serve as ideals on which our youths may model their lives.

The State is the official agent of education. As such it has become the recognized duty of the State to insist not only upon a certain minimum of education for every future citizen — this does not necessarily imply only elementary education — but education of a standard that tends to promote the general progressiveness of the environment. Can the State stop short at elementary education when

the practical needs of our present day life imposes upon each individual of our community the most exacting industrial and technical competition?

We are not unmindful of our status on the Canal Zone as an alien group, but we are also mindful of the fact that our presence here is to perform a fundamental service which has contributed and is still contributing to the comfort and well being of other members of the Isthmian population. At present, while we do not undertake to make comparisons between ourselves and others on the Canal Zone, it would seem that our reasonable educational development should be considered a by-product of the Canal whose construction, maintenance and defense must of necessity be the first consideration. If we express gratitude — and this we certainly do — to the Canal Zone Government for the progressive school system now serving our people, we should also voice the hope that those in authority on the Canal Zone will show a greater consideration for the Negro's personality — both for what he is and for what he may become.

Scientific observation and experience have proved that in each of us lie infinite values and limitless possibilities. There are many instances among us which attest the ability of our group to attain and achieve nobly. We also have among us numerous pupils whose exceptional mental power would undoubtedly make it worth while for the State to bestow upon them a higher education than that embodied in the elementary or junior high school training. Any denial of opportunity to develop one's God-given possibilities is to dwarf a human soul and no dominant group should pursue a policy that ignores the Christian philosophy that every human being is an end in itself — never the mere means to some other's end. Democracy upholds that principle and its application as an instrument of government is guaranteed by the democratic Constitution of the United States.

Furthermore, American devotion to education represents too glowing a page in the history of democratic government for the local authorities not to accept and favorably act upon this plea for higher education. At this particular time we are all horrified at how hideous maladjustments — educational and political — have fast been making a shambles of the world. With the increased importance of the Canal both as a military and commercial enterprise of the United States, a far-sighted governmental policy would dictate that special attention be given to the general intelligence and technical training of the entire Canal Zone citizenry. Higher education for Negroes would certainly implement this policy at the same time that it would contribute to the enrichment of each "Silver Settlement" in particular and the Isthmian life in general.

GEORGE W. WESTERMAN

## A PLEA FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Elmer S. Smith

*Give to our children the chance to arise,  
To hitch their dream-waggon to achievement's blue skies,  
To climb life's steep ladder, through higher school grades  
By learning professions as well as the trades.*

*Give to our boys and our girls who aspire,  
The motive to revel in ambition's fire,  
The wide road of learning make clean for their feet  
That they too may profit by learning's full treat.*

*Give these our boys who have courage to climb,  
Opportunity to attain their ambitions in time;  
To feel they're not fettered by dread circumstance,  
Nor left to the wiles and the changings of chance.*

*There are many of them worthy and longing to try  
The Alps of advancement. For these boys, we sigh;  
For they never will have, unless someone will give,  
The break to go farther — the real chance to live.*

*Their ambitions flare skywards, then hopes fade away  
Like the bright tinted twilight at closing of day.  
For there's NO HOPE and NO GOAL awaiting ahead —  
So they cease to aspire — They shuffle instead.*

*Give to these boys and these girls who await,  
The chance to grow broader, to conquer hard fate.  
The widening that higher schools brings to their life —  
The chance to fight better the world's bitter strife..*

## THE NINTH GRADE

(A. L. B. Morgan, Principal, La Boca School)

It is a privilege to me to begin a program which will reveal to you the facts about the work that goes on in the Canal Zone Colored Schools. We are not conceited, but we feel that the information you get from us will be infinitely more accurate than what you will get from strangers, some of whom visit our schools every two or three years. As one who has worked for the Division of Schools for over twenty years; I believe I am in a position to say something about the various phases of development as I have seen them through the years. On this occasion I shall refer briefly on the latest phase — The Ninth Grade.

The Ninth Grade in the Colored Schools, now entering its second year, has been a long-felt need. For several years parents and interested persons have been asking and hoping for higher education for the colored children of the Canal Zone. I do not know the reason why this opportunity was not given but I do know that the Division of Schools, after making great efforts, succeeded in obtaining an additional year for Colored Schools. It is on the benefits of this extra year that I intend to comment.

The Ninth Grade, as you know, is the first year of High School. Heretofore the Colored Schools gave six years of elementary training and two years of Junior High School Training, or what is termed in the educational world, 6-2. Since last year, however, it has been 6-3, or six years of elementary school, and three years of Junior High School, the Ninth grade being the third year.

What has this additional year done for our boys and girls? There are several answers to this question. Firstly, it has enabled them to make a reasonable choice of temporary vocations, by which means they will be able to earn money to further their education if they have the ability and the desire to, when the time comes. Secondly, it has broadened their views; made them cognizant of their condition, implanted self-reliance and determination in them, stimulated a desire for improving themselves, and taught them how to adopt intelligent measures to bring about this improvement. If we compare the Ninth Graders of last year, with the eighth grade graduates of the preceding years, at corresponding graduation periods, we will see, without any microscopic aid, the difference between the two groups. Thirdly, the Ninth Grade has helped the students academically. In Mathematics, English and Spanish they are far in advance of their predecessors. The Course in Mathematics places emphasis on those skills that the students need most in life. The text, "Living Mathematics," well deserves the name. The course in English has enabled them to speak and write better English. The book covering this course is entitled "English Ex-

pression," and the topics are treated in such a manner that a natural, correct way of expressing themselves has become almost a routine for the students. The value of this extra year in Spanish is shown in the fact that more than forty percent of the Ninth Grade graduates who went to the Spanish Schools entered the sixth grade. One or two entered the National Institute where a good knowledge of Spanish is required. This was not so in former years.

Again, those who are employed are more efficient and better prepared than those of former years. Consultations with different employers reveal this fact. Fourthly, the Ninth Grade has helped the students economically. It is gratifying to note that more than seventy percent of the Ninth Graders of last year, through the influence of the schools, secured part-time employment between November, 1941, and June 1942, at the Commissaries, Clubhouses, Restaurants and with the Building Division, their earnings being: \$4,922, \$2,031 and \$766, respectively. It is hardly necessary for me to say that these earnings contributed very largely to the raising of the economic standards of their home. As graduates, many of them have found regular employment with the institutions mentioned in the capacities of Sales-clerks, Cashiers, Waitresses, Office-helpers and Carpenters. Many are working for the Army and the Navy in similar positions, at salaries much bigger than the average. A follow-up of these students from time to time fills us with a great degree of satisfaction.

Finally, the Ninth Grade has helped the students socially. The students graduated from the Ninth Grade last year with a better understanding of the social world. Their class organization and the social activities associated with it gave them experiences that were partly lacking in the eighth grade.

A resumé of this additional year's activities, then, shows that the students were benefitted vocationally, morally, academically, economically, and socially.

The Ninth Grade program can in no wise be regarded as perfect. It has more room for improvement. A final examination reveals how it can be improved. This examination has also shown, vividly, those students who are fully capable of furthering their education when the opportunity arises. That this additional year has done, and is still doing, much for our boys and girls is the opinion of all the teachers, whether or not they teach the Ninth Grade. In conclusion, I wish to stress the point that the course of study in the Ninth Grade is very elastic and that we feel an occasional modification will, in time, give it the perfect shape we would like it to have.

## THE COMMISSARY TRAINING COURSE

(Horace V. Parker, Teacher of Mathematics, English and  
The Commissary Training Course)  
(Silver City School)

The Commissary Training Course is one of the most recent additions to the Canal Zone Colored Schools and it is one that has been, perhaps, most widely discussed and least understood. It is my conviction that why the Commissary Training Course has been somewhat criticized by some of the people of our communities is that they lack a clear knowledge of what the course really implies. I, and I am sure many of you, have sometimes heard people say, "Oh, this Commissary Course isn't much after all. Our children are only being taught to work in the Commissary." The Commissary Training Course may really be defined as a course in salesmanship — a dignified and honorable profession that is even now taking its merited place of respectability in a busy world.

Salesmanship may indeed be classified as the most universal of occupations for we are all involved in the process of selling ourselves or our ideas at sometime or the other. Whenever we try to make an excellent impression on someone we are selling our personality to that one; whenever we try to convince someone that our opinions and ideas are correct, we are endeavoring to sell our opinions and ideas to that one.

Commissary Training as taught in our schools is really a commendable and fascinating field of study. It includes many excellent features that are of much educational value to our students. Among them is a thorough knowledge of merchandise. This includes the origin, composition and manufacture of various selling commodities. The students of this course find much interest in such lessons as a detailed study of food values, the origin and development of canning, the manufacture and care of different kinds of cloth, the geographical sources of most of our food plants, and the climatic conditions under which they thrive best.

In their studies of spicies the students learn that condiments, now so common with us that we scarcely give them a thought, were once among the most important articles of commerce; that the spice trade was a leading factor in determining the rise and fall of states, in provoking wars, and in discovery and exploration. In the boundless kingdom of books they watch the chemists in their laboratory discover the existence and virtues of vitamins and thrill as they change a rough giant of the forest into chiffons, velvets, satins and taffetas of silk-like rayon. There is no doubt that lessons of this kind include a lot of study and research work which must contribute immensely to the educational development of our students. The students also develop

skill in intelligent buying, for if they are given knowledge which will enable them to direct and assist buyers in the proper selection of food and wearing apparel, it is bound to react favorably in their personal selections of food and clothing.

On the Atlantic Side the students are taken in groups to the Mount Hope Plant where they are conducted through the different departments by a guide who explains points of interest. Those of you who have had the privilege of visiting such departments of the plant as the Cold Storage with its vast supply of foods, the Wholesale Housewares, the Industrial Laboratory, the Bakery and Coffee House, can testify to the educational benefits and wholesome experiences that are derived from trips of this kind.

Lessons in courtesy and an understanding of human nature also form an integral part of this course. In every walk of life one discovers people of various dispositions and temperaments. This is particularly true in salesmanship where meeting different types of people is part of a day's work. Learning to associate with people on an amiable basis for mutual benefit is, therefore, one of the essential phases of Commissary Training. This kind of training which involves courtesy, tolerance, unselfishness and respect of the rights of others is sure to contribute favorably in adjusting the student to a respectable and useful social life. In fact, knowing how moot a question of concern is the conduct of some of the younger members of our group, I do not hesitate in saying that this kind of training is enough to justify your whole-hearted approval of the Commissary Training Course.

The Division of Schools has supplied the schools with various books on Salesmanship written by leading and recognized authorities in this branch of study. Every student of the Commissary class will tell you that he has found these books very interesting and informative. The Commissary Division has willingly and generously given its co-operation whenever required. It was largely through the joint efforts of Mr. C. A. Batalden, Director of Vocational Training of our schools, and Mr. Richard L. Sullivan, Director of Training of the Commissary Division, that the students were granted the privilege of visiting the Mt. Hope Plant. It is also through this spirit of co-operation that a large supply of bulletins, magazines and articles on salesmanship has been supplied the schools.

As most of you are aware, a part of the Commissary Training Course also includes part-time employment in the Commissary stores. This part-time work serves the dual purpose of giving the students actual working knowledge in selling technique and procedure, and in putting to practical use all the theoretical knowledge they have acquired in the classroom. For this part-time training they are actually paid. Here, then, is a unique situation in which the students are given

work as part of their training activity and are yet paid to take the training.

Arithmetic, English, and Spanish are also given to the students of the Commissary Training Course. In arithmetic particular emphasis is placed on business methods and principles as well as on speed and accuracy in the fundamentals. In English, in addition to instruction in grammar and composition, particular emphasis is placed on functional English which includes the ability to express one's self courteously, correctly and in a well modulated voice.

In Spanish the students not only receive grammatical training but are encouraged to acquire the habit of conversing whenever the opportunity arises. Our graduates have all found their knowledge of Spanish serving them well. Those who do not have conversational command of the language are satisfied that they have a good foundation on which to build.

Most of our students who graduated last year have been employed by various departments. All of them are doing satisfactory work. This is due to the fact that they are not only helped to develop technique and skill in salesmanship, but receive instructions along channels which will be of material benefit to them in whatever kind of employment they choose to pursue.

## THE COURSE IN HOUSEHOLD ARTS

(Hannah R. Webster, Teacher of Household Arts, Red Tank School)  
(Ivy Babb, Teacher of Household Arts, Gamboa School)

The school is a testing ground of situations which may face our children when they enter into the battle of life to conquer or be conquered. We were once led to believe that Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic were the all-important tools to be used in attaining success in life. Today, through researches, the modern educator has arrived at the conclusion that the child should be equipped to fit himself into community life by making definite contributions to the home and to assist in the raising of the worthwhile standards of his group.

Ten years have elapsed since the course in Household Arts was first introduced in our Colored Schools to enrich the educational background of the girls. The road to the wholehearted acceptance, by the parents, of this course has been blocked with grave misunderstandings, unfounded fears, and unwarranted attacks. The objectives of the course have not been grasped by the "conscientious objectors" whom, we feel, have not been influenced by malicious intentions but have been misinformed.

The course offered our girls is not merely important for its practical utility but for its cultural significance. Let us peer into the Home-making Course.

"Home-making," according to Maude Calvert, "is a partnership job that involves the art of living, playing, and working together in a family group." Our girls are shown that an ideal home situation presents strong evidences of love, understanding, and companionship among the members of the family group. Worthwhile ideals are presented to the junior high school girls whose roles in the important play of home-life are clearly dramatized by classroom demonstrations.

Through her home-making course your girl now falls into the habit of making sound inventories of her home conditions. She is stimulated readily to recognize, approve, and maintain the ennobling aspects of home life. She becomes critical in a constructive manner. Are you, parents, measuring up to the task of successfully passing the acid test of child examination? When your girl believes that she should offer criticism if it is helpful and given in a tactful manner so as to avoid heartaches and misunderstandings, do you create a short-circuit in her concepts by openly and wantonly criticizing your neighbors, your church, and your school system without familiarizing yourself with the true facts and entertaining a sincere desire to be helpful and tactful? If the noble ideals formed in the child through stimulating classroom associations are not mirrored in the home life, the child becomes unhappy — the home no longer becomes the haven of con-

cord but will be transformed into a barrier to halt the child who is valiantly pursuing a search for the true ideals of noble living.

Some of the important objectives in the Home-making course are: (1) training towards home-membership; (2) building right attitudes towards home-life and the part each should play in making the home an enjoyable place in which to live; (3) recognizing the part the family should play in the social life of the community.

**COOKING:** The materials used for the cooking classes are supplied by The Division of Schools. There is a charge account at the Commissary of three cents for each pupil in the seventh grade and the eighth grade, and four cents for each ninth grade pupil for each cooking class. Monthly, an account of supplies taken and the kind of lessons taught are forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools.

In the cooking classes we aim at: (1) training the girls to understand and appreciate the part that diet plays in health; (2) developing sound judgment in the selection of foods; (3) teaching the girls to plan, prepare, and serve well-balanced foods; (4) observing the highest standards of cleanliness in the handling of food.

**SEWING:** The cultural training incorporated in the sewing course makes this type of instruction invaluable. In addition to the skills gained in measuring, cutting, sewing, patching, mending, and darn-ing, the girls are taught the fundamental principles of color harmony and designing. Thrift is emphasized by encouragement in renovating old dresses and the use of scraps to make appealing articles.

At the end of the ninth grade the girls are required to make their own graduation dresses, this project being a fitting climax to the sewing course.

**HOME NURSING:** That the school is ready to adjust itself to changing situations is shown in the inclusion of Home Nursing in the curriculum to prepare our students for emergencies that may arise from the present war. Fully equipped beds are provided for demonstrations. The course calls for the teaching of: (1) the principles of personal hygiene, personal attire, and personal health; (2) proper bed-making; (3) the care of the sick; (4) the preparation and serving of different kinds of sick diets; (5) skill in applying first-aid principles.

**CLUBHOUSE TRAINING:** The Clubhouse training course is of immense value in character building in addition to the practical experiences gained in order that the girls may become more efficient employees. This course emphasizes the importance of personal appearance, the development of a pleasing personality and the ability to get along with employers, fellow-employees, and patrons, by devotion to duty, observance of courtesy, and respect for authority. This

training is excellent for our girls whether they entertain at home or serve as employees and it deserves the support and cooperation of every parent and guardian.

Throughout the course in Household Arts cleanliness is stressed and the old adage, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" is very much in evidence. These girls are not helping the janitor, as some misguided sources have given out, but are developing skills that will make them more capable helpers in their own homes. We are training your girls to be the noble home-makers of the future. Are you cooperating to make our task easier?

Here are some ways in which you, parents and guardians, can help the school and your children: (1) never, if possible, miss a parent-teacher program, at which you can learn about the various activities of your children's school life; (2) pay frequent visits to the Household Arts classes to observe what is being done; (3) encourage your girls to be respectful to teachers and to practice at home the skills acquired in the school laboratory; (4) never utter disrespectful things about the teachers in the presence of your children, you thus severely impair the morale of the school; (5) remember, that there are two sides to every story, and that the pupil will generally paint a rosy picture of her side.

In conclusion let me remind you that we, the teachers, and you, the parents and guardians, are partners in the vital work of preparing your girls for the future. Our girls will determine the pattern of life of the generations to come. The brilliance of the future of our race depends to a great degree on the work accomplished by both partners in guiding the youthful home-makers of to-morrow.

## THE COURSES IN CARPENTRY AND TAILORING

(R. T. Ellis, Principal, Red Tank School)

Within the past few years the tendency to bring parents into closer touch with the actualities of the school has been intensified. This is being done to prevent misunderstandings and to develop a more intelligent cooperation by supplying data that will serve as a basis for a correct evaluation of the work of the school. With this in mind I shall strive briefly to clarify the situation with regards to carpentry and tailoring.

In the history of civilization peoples and nations are distinguished largely by the work of their artisans — workers in wood, stone, metals and in other substances. The skill of the modern artisan is a product of the evolution of skill and knowledge through thousands of years of development. He delves in wood and in metals and in many substances unknown or unworkable in past ages.

Thousands and thousands of workers whose proficiency in specific skills and crafts entitle them to the classification of artisans are today employed in manufacturing and mechanical industries. Carpentry is not only one of the most useful but represents one of the pleasanter forms of practical exercise of the occupations of artisans which, today, are legion.

It is always an asset for anyone to have some knowledge of carpentry. If you have never worked in wood you have missed a lot. It is great fun. It is the hobby that pays 500% in profit and at the same time provides wholesome enjoyment. Who has not sometimes or other bemoaned the lack of the knowledge necessary and the skill required to mend a chair, fix a table or do some odd jobs about the house?

Being cognizant of these deficiencies and in aiming to remove them, those in authority in the Schools Division have made it possible for the student to acquire the necessary elementary knowledge and the initial skills in carpentry. Every person having been made in the likeness of his Creator has within him the creative instinct. This subject of carpentry, therefore, provides unlimited opportunities for mechanical skill combined with artistic expression.

At present the chief aim is to get the student to acquire sufficient skill in carpentry to enable him to perform the most frequently used operations of the trade in a way that will satisfy the demands of the Building Division of The Panama Canal.

The student is taught to recognize and know the names and classification of the principal tools of the trade. He is taught to care for and to adjust these tools, as well as how to use them. He is given in-

struction in the basic fundamentals of the trade and given instruction as how to use in their simpler applications common wood-finishes. He is also given a working knowledge about the materials necessary in the trade.

Apart from those specific skills the student learns in a general way how to calculate strains and weights, about the laws of the mechanics and how to apply them; the strength of various kinds of woods and the elementary principles of architecture. He is also taught to measure and figure accurately.

Theoretical knowledge and practical application go hand in hand. Many and varied textbooks are available while competent instructors are provided in persons who have acquired much practical experience by working with the Building Division of The Panama Canal and elsewhere.

Those of you who have never visited the shop should do so. You will be agreeably surprised at the large and varied assortment of tools therein provided. Many projects are planned to give the students the opportunity of putting theory into practice during their training which is both intensive and extensive.

A few years ago due to the foresight of the teachers of the Red Tank School tailoring was introduced as an extra-curricular activity in that school. One of the teachers, Mr. L. E. Osborne, volunteered to instruct the boys. Mr. Lawrence Johnson was very sympathetic towards the proposition and gave all help possible. Later, the Schools Division, having been convinced of the value of such a course, incorporated it into the curriculum.

This course, as well as that of carpentry, is elective.

In tailoring the boys are given the basic elementary skills that lead up to the making of trousers. They learn how to do basting and felling. The art of making button-holes is then taught. After that they go on to cross-stitching and to the sewing of seems which gives them the opportunity of familiarizing themselves with the sewing machine. The making of pockets is now attempted after which they are taught to measure, cut, fit and sew their pair of trousers.

The course in tailoring does not end with the making of trousers as facilities and opportunities are provided for the apt pupils to obtain lessons in the making of coats. Some students have even mastered the technique sufficiently to enable them to make well-fitting coats.

In an economical way the course is also proving its worth since many boys earn "pin money" by taking in jobs. In fact I have known boys who have refused employment with The Panama Canal because they can earn more money by working on the trade.

The various attitudes and skills developed in both of these courses

are invaluable. They are providing opportunities for the student to develop his hands as well as his brains and the carry-over from school to home is proving of immense value.

We are quite aware that this is not Utopia but we hope to be in a position where facilities will be such that our boys will be able to acquire a high degree of skill in all the operations of the trades thereby fitting themselves for intelligent participation in industrial activity. Seen in this perspective your appreciation of the efforts of the school must be more sympathetic and your cooperation more prompt and ready.

And now with the basis for proper evaluation I am sure nothing will be done to impede, but only to help the efforts put forward by the school to assist my boy, your boy and our boys in measuring up to their responsibilities in the industrial life of any community of which they form an integral part.

## SCHOOL GARDENING

(J. C. Webster, Principal, Silver City School)

A healthy mind should be clothed in a healthy body. In the absence of the proper foods to supply the necessary vitamins there cannot be a healthy body. What the eugenic child is to the fullgrown and physically well-developed individual, school gardening is to agriculture.

In the Bible appears the very significant statement: "The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." Some rationalists consider the story to be fictitious; be that as it may, it is logical to conclude that agriculture is the most ancient of vocations.

School gardening is only one phase of agriculture which, if properly taught in our schools, cannot fail to be one of the most valuable contributions to community life. Every person should have at least one hobby, either for pleasure or for profit. Gardening, in normal times, is treated as a hobby in our schools but, at this critical stage in world affairs, assumes the aspects of a dire necessity. Here, on the Canal Zone, where our boys and girls have so much leisure, there is a definite need for a variety of hobbies. Why, then, not gardening as a hobby?

"Knowledge is power," someone more erudite than I has stated. I make bold to say, "Applied knowledge is power." A school garden is a practical laboratory in which the students gain first-hand information concerning the principles of nature study, agriculture, and botany. Gardening is easily correlated with arithmetic, geography, drawing, composition and bookkeeping. Through this course the pupils discover that wealth is inherent in the soil.

Let us now view the school garden from an educational standpoint. Teachers and pupils go to the garden where lessons on the clearing of the land, lining out of plots, forking and bedding, application of manures, preparation of seed boxes, sowing of seeds, and setting out of seedlings are given. These lessons are closely related to the work in general science and offer golden opportunities for the scientific study of roots, leaves, soils, and plant life in general.

To those who wish education in our public elementary schools to be more practical, the school garden at once makes two very forceful appeals. In the first place, gardening is a manual art in the pursuance of which the student is converted to the concept that there is dignity in labor. The student of the garden is bound to find out how much pleasure comes from the formation of a habit of careful manual work with the result that gardening is sure to contribute something to the prevention or correction of those undesirable tendencies which show themselves in a distaste and even a contempt for work done with the

hands under physical strain. This fear of manual work is inspired by a misconception of freedom. After our forefathers were liberated from slavery, they harbored the peculiar and strange conviction that they should do no more manual work. This impression has been handed down to the present generation which now swings the pendulum to the other side of the clock — we get away from manual work as far as we can.

School gardening is most practical in the sense that it is useful. It represents a training center which supplies rich material for research work in the science classes. The student is led to understand the reasons for the various processes in relation to the general and local circumstances of soil and climate. School gardening, rightly understood, is a branch of nature study rather than a professional training for an industry. It is also a study which aims at producing visible and tangible results which appeal to the practical and utilitarian instincts.

In Jamaica, promising boys are sent from the local schools to well-equipped training centers from which those with the greatest aptitudes are sent to the Hope Agricultural College where they are rounded out to be efficient agriculturists. Here, in Panama, the present administration has included agriculture in its program and, as an incentive, has secured three scholarships tenable at Ames Agricultural College in the United States.

From the economic angle the school garden eloquently justifies its inclusion in the curriculum. On leaving school our normal boys should have a good working knowledge of the setting out of a garden. If the necessity should arise the boys would be able to grow their own crops and supply some, if not all, of the vegetables needed for family consumption. We depend upon the commissaries for our vegetables but, at times, conveniently forget that the commissaries obtain a large proportion of such foods from the gardens of the Canal Zone.

The Chinese gardeners on the Canal Zone depend solely on the products of their gardens for a living. They do not only supply all they need for home use, but supply the markets of Colon, Panama City, the villages of the Canal Zone and the commissaries, receiving large financial returns.

In England, broad baronial acres, once reserved for sport, are now put under cultivation to help win the war. In the United States victory gardens are now the order of the day in every community. The following are some of the slogans: "Dirt in your fingers, sun on your back, dig for Victory!" "Turn the good earth, sow the seed, plant for Victory!" "Weed and water, rake and hoe, grow for Victory!" "Food builds courage higher, food makes work come easier, food brings victory nearer, garden for Victory!"

It is argued that we cannot obtain land on the Canal Zone for

garden purposes. The time may come when there may be a change in present policy and sufficient land may be made available. What, then? The student will have left school with a basic knowledge of gardening that will enable him to swing quickly into action. Therefore, the time to learn is now. Even if there is not an immediate application of the knowledge gained the cultural value of the course will be a justifiable compensation.

If a garden is to contribute to a "better fed" nation it should contain a variety of vegetables. Grow what you like to eat but hitch your garden to a meal-plan; meals that have plenty of leafy vegetables, tomatoes, berries, and beans are "blue-ribbon" feasts. They help to win top honors in vigor that you need to ensure success in your work and victory in your endeavors.

It is my belief that I have made clear to you some of the things we are doing in school gardening. Our classes are of forty-minute duration. Although gardening is now a vital phase of modern education, our critics, some of whom are unable to distinguish between a banana and a plantain, say we spend two and a half hours, each period, in "digging, digging, and digging."

Officials of the Canal Zone, teachers, parents and guardians, it is to us that the Canal Zone is looking for help in designing the cultural patterns emanating from school gardening for the present and succeeding generations. May we, therefore, be cooperatively equal to our responsibilities and be highly successful in our task.

## NEW TECHNIQUES IN THE OPERATION OF THE CANAL ZONE COLORED SCHOOLS

(E. L. Fawcett, Principal, Gatun School)

Education, as we know it today, is the product of years of thought and work. Thousands of dollars and many years of educational research have been spent in discovering the techniques we now use in the Canal Zone Colored Schools. However, to be able to appreciate what is being done we need to trace briefly the development of education.

One of the biggest problems for our parents, our grandparents, our great, great grandparents, and so on way back to pre-recorded history has been that of teaching us the skills, the understandings, the attitudes, and the appreciations that would be helpful to us throughout our lives. In short, education of the young has been always one of the foremost problems for all families, all peoples, and all races.

There have been many ideas and concepts developed and presented regarding the education of the young. At one time it was the sole responsibility of the family. Later, the church assumed the major responsibility, and, still later, the state felt the need for participation in this vital activity. Today our schools are the result of the efforts and thoughts of these various agencies. In a measure, all of them to a greater or lesser degree, enter into the total program of education.

In the development of concepts regarding school methods and procedures, several systems have been developed and used. Careful observation and educational research have clearly defined the advantages and disadvantages of certain methods and procedures. In the first place, all of us are an adaptive organism, and respond to any situation through the nervous system. The five senses—hearing, seeing, smell, touch, and taste, carry the impressions to our nervous system. Medicos, psychologists, and keen observers have been aware of this fact for many years, but our schools have been slow in taking advantage of this knowledge.

To the majority of people, learning or impressions are conveyed only through the two senses of sight and hearing. Hence, textbooks, reading, recitations, memorization, and rote learning have dominated classroom procedures. The picture of a successful classroom has been four walls, more or less decorated; rows of desks filled with children, and a teacher giving instructions to recite, to open and close books, and drilling on instructions on courtesy and good behavior, with the rod or rule playing an important part.

In education, as in other fields of human endeavor, the picture is rapidly changing. The intelligent teacher realizes and appreciates that children learn through the five senses, instead of only through

two; that all the individual experiences of children are important in the educative process; that they are not born lazy or with bad habits; and that these habits are learned either before they come to school, or during their development after they come to school. The education of the child is an activity involving the school, the home, the church, and the community. However, due to the complexities of modern life the school is being looked upon more and more as the agency that must assume the major responsibility in this very important work.

In the field of attitudes, perhaps the home is more important in determining the child's likes, dislikes, and feeling about situations than any other one agency; but if the school is to assist and play its assigned important part in the education of the child, it will have to provide experiences that are educative. It is with this aim in view that the Division of Schools, in their desire to improve the colored schools, recently introduced the kindergarten. The rich, varied, wholesome and meaningful experiences received in this worthwhile activity will not only serve to give our pupils a richer and fuller school life, but will help to open for them the road to the fairyland of books. Children, like ourselves, respond to those situations that seem worthwhile, or that fill a felt need and desire.

Abolishing the use of the rod is an important reform in our schools. It is the feeling in all our communities, however, that the more children are whipped the better behaved they will be and the more they will learn. This concept of learning through the use of the whip is a product of the old philosophy of education in which the teacher was a sort of dictator and the students slaves. Today we believe that learning in school should be a happy and worthwhile experience for our children. We think not only of the fact that the child, for example, could not do an arithmetic problem, but of other factors that may be responsible for his inability to do the problem. The pupil's mental, emotional, physical and social life must always be taken into consideration. Unfortunately, nevertheless, progress in this direction has been so slow in the colonies that we have been clinging to this old tradition of learning long after it was abolished in the progressive schools of the United States and the British Isles.

Gradually, we aim to create in our students such desirable attitudes of obedience and respect, cooperation, appreciation and responsibility that may influence and eventually control behavior and eliminate the necessity for corporal punishment which, incidentally, can still be administered by the principal in his office. The time when we shall be able to abolish this form of punishment from the Colored Schools and have our pupils behave not because they are made to behave, but because they want to behave, will be for us the beginning of a new era in our history on the Canal Zone.

Unfortunately, many of our people do not understand or appreciate what has been going on in the schools in the past decade, or what the basic principles are underlying learning. Hence, they

have sometimes taken a critical or antagonistic view when attempts have been made to change methods and procedures to which they have been accustomed for years. If you spare the time to keep in touch with what is happening throughout the United States and the entire world, you will notice that educational methods and procedures are changing rapidly, with a view to increasing the efficiency of schools. In the light of what has been said let us evaluate our Ninth Grade program. The part-time employment program and the focus of learning around certain occupations that have worthwhile, interesting, and arresting materials for study and the development of useful skills, provide an incentive for the child to study and learn. He realizes the need for the information which he is getting and using while he is in school. He learns skills and learns to appreciate situations through actual employment experiences.

A person needs a broad background and years of employment experience and study before many of the concepts presented in books become real to him. An unusual number of the concepts in books are unreal to children because they do not have the background to understand the situations that are printed in the book. Reading, writing, English, Spanish, and other subjects receive much more constructive emphasis under this new program than they have ever received before. We are concerned with putting the student in adjustment with the world in which he must live and generating in him adaptability to a constantly changing world. We have discarded the old method of just reading so many paragraphs or so many pages in a book. To-day our children read in order to get a complete idea and hence they may have to read several chapters or many training bulletins, or even a whole book or several books. Thus reading in itself is probably increased greatly over the old system. This is also true for all the other subjects.

You will probably be surprised to know that there is in educational literature from the United States and elsewhere numerous articles dealing with the need for a 'similar educational plan to that which we now have in the Ninth Grade,' where study and part-time employment are combined to provide the maximum educational experiences.

It is obvious that a program of this nature, new for these parts, will have its shortcomings. However, we have the vision, and, in process of time we hope for its full realization.

It is well to bear in mind that any new technique introduced into the schools, however good, can never be successfully put over without the intelligent cooperation of all our parents and guardians. May I not, therefore, ask that you support the work of the school in every way, so that the school will be better able to train our pupils to take their places not only on the Isthmus of Panama, but in any other part of the world to which they may travel.

## LOOKING FORWARD

(R. H. Beecher, Science Teacher, La Boca School)

The speeches preceding this one presented clear pictures of the progress of the Canal Zone Colored Schools during recent years. However, a brief survey of our educational system from its initial stages to its present standard will help to inspire bright hope for the future. The evolution of our schools has been gradual. Year after year plants have been added, instruction has been immeasurably improved, and vocational subjects have been made a vital part of the curriculum. There has been a definite upward trend that has made school life richer and more purposeful for the student.

Progress has been made but we are still far from the goals set for the fullest contribution of an educational system to the raising of standards in a community. The progress of a group depends upon the ability of its members to see ahead, to act sanely and intelligently, to achieve worthwhile ends. It is not sufficient to be content with what was, nor with what is but with WHAT IS TO BE. Our community is now beginning to visualize the shape of things to come.

The Division of Schools has done much to make our schools what they are today. Our elementary schools have served their purposes very well. We are proud of them. They have sent out students who compare favorably with those of their level in other parts of the world. The equipment on our schools is good. Techniques and methods are modern and up-to-date. However, it is obvious that there is a definite need for secondary education in our colored communities. A trained intellect is a powerful factor of growth and far-reaching achievements. Our youths want opportunities brought about by a prolonged school life to develop the socially desirable habits and attitudes and to broaden their outlook on life. When do our youths need most of this training? During the maturing periods of their life.

Elementary education serves its purpose in developing basic skills, techniques, and knowledges; but secondary education gives far-sightedness, initiative, and efficiency. The former arouses interests; the latter matures the emotional and intellectual life.

The educator holds that our educational program must endeavor to guide the adolescent safely through the period of making social, civic, and vocational adjustments. He emphasizes the importance of providing youth with the knowledge necessary for the individual and society, with wholesome recreation and with an appreciation for good literature, music, and art; the educator would acquaint youth with the best social practices and would develop character through ideals of sportsmanship, the faithful performance of duty, and the insistence on personal responsibility for conduct. Good as the work of the elemen-

tary and junior high school is in these respects, the task of producing the desired type of individual is too comprehensive for their limited scope. Other institutions beyond the elementary school must carry the work forward. *In our case; the high school would be the institution to fulfill this purpose.*

Our experience shows that children leave our schools at the beginning of adolescence, at an age when the school could perform its greatest service to them by keeping them in a scholastic environment in which individual development may be continued and social, health, civic, and vocational adjustments furthered.

Because of the peculiar conditions governing our community life, the school is probably the only institution that is greatly concerned with and is making a definite and worthwhile contribution to the development of the child.

The deplorable inactive state of other social agencies such as Boy Scout units, Girls' Reserves, and other civic groups have burdened the school with the arduous task of assuming sole responsibility for the guidance of youth. Does it not logically follow that school life should be prolonged to be of greatest benefit to the child and to the community of which he is a member? Why should the educational growth of the child be checked at the ninth year of school at which period the child is most responsive to learning situations?

The addition of secondary education is eloquently justified by the commendable achievement of the graduates of the first Normal School. When The Division of Schools, announced the beginning of registration of prospective students, hundreds rushed to avail themselves of this bonanza of learning. They had realized that their meager educational background was inadequate successfully to cope with the disturbing complexities of modern life. Forty were finally selected from the knowledge-thirsty horde and at the completion of their four-year course they wrote a glowing page in the annals of colored education on the Canal Zone.

After graduation the Normal School students stepped out into the world armed with the attitudes and concepts developed in four years. The majority entered the teaching profession quickly to justify their training by assuming leadership in many phases of school work. Some graduates entered other fields and made notable ascent to key positions. A few departed from these shores in search of greater opportunities. One has just returned to his own group to pass on to other generations his experiences and to make a lusty contribution in stimulating the cultural growth of our people.

Further justification of the granting of secondary education is found in the achievement of the Ninth Grade which has been previously described.

There are many evidences which prove that our communities are ready for higher educational facilities. The general ability of the children, the adjustments made in the varied fields of labor, the consciousness of problems, attempt at worthwhile organization, the making of trips abroad in pursuit of higher education, and the taking of full advantage of higher education in Panama City — all these stand out in bold relief to justify the need for better educational facilities.

We do not advocate the adoption of the obsolete, classical type of narrow secondary education — the type that lacks flexibility to enable the student to make the best adjustment to changing situations. The secondary education for our youths should aim at successful adjustments to changing environments, should aid the youth in the attainment of efficiency in reflective thinking, in leadership, in specialized skills, and, in the acquisition of an appreciative sense of values.

It should let him fit himself into the pattern of life of his group to work for the common good, so that his act on the stage of group living should be a legacy to be handed down to posterity.

We are "Looking Forward" to a new era of harmonious relationship between the home and the school, an era that will be characterized by mutual understanding of child nature, implicit confidence in approved methods adopted for the educational course of the child, and willingness to cooperate in fulfilling the requirements of the school. In this new era the teacher and the parent will work shoulder to shoulder in the all-important assignment of proper child development.

We are "Looking Forward" to the time when, through secondary education, our youths may be directed into channels of gripping interests that may become the ornaments of leisure in their mature years.

We are "Looking Forward" to the time when our youths will realize that the basis of a democracy is sound education. And, finally, we are "Looking Forward" to the time when our youths, whether they are carpenters, doctors, mechanics or salesmen, will enjoy a richer and more wholesome living and so make a contribution to the preservation of a democratic way of life on the Canal Zone.

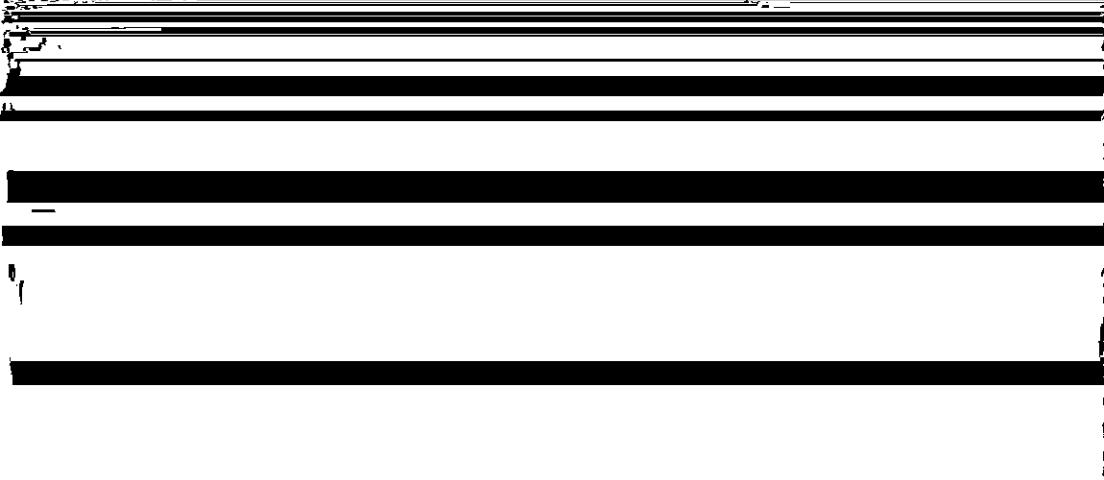
## A COLORED HIGH SCHOOL IN TIME

(A. E. Bell, Former Editor, Colored Page,  
THE PANAMA AMERICAN)

Frequently, it is dangerous to depend on time to present a solution for the problems that confront an individual or a people. When, however, those problems are created by circumstances that are not easily set aside, time is a most valuable — and sometimes the only — asset.

A seldom-mentioned incident in the life of Mohammed tells of the time when one of his disciples told him: "Master, an infidel is willing to bet me ten camels that your doctrine will not be accepted by the world for another quarter of a century." The founder of the Islamic faith replied: "Increase the wager, but lengthen the time."

The time factor has entered a great deal in the development of the school facilities for colored children on the Canal Zone. The broad-



tional opportunities pay high dividends in the attitudes and the usefulness of the beneficiaries.

It is not too much to hope that every day brings our youngsters on the Canal Zone nearer to this long-sought boon. To date, representations which have been made to the authorities have been without effect. In view of that circumstance and since it has been found impracticable to establish a non-government secondary school, such as is common in some other places, it should be wise to accept the advice Mohammed gave to his follower and "lengthen the time" of waiting.

When the surrounding conditions preclude the application of self-help, changes and improvements perforce must be left to Father Time.

## THE PROGRAM OF THE CANAL ZONE COLORED SCHOOLS

(Sidney A. Young, Editor & Publisher, THE PANAMA TRIBUNE)

The newly organized Teachers Association of the Canal Zone Colored Schools certainly made an excellent presentation of their case at the Parents-Teachers meeting held Tuesday night at the La Boca Clubhouse. Our Zone School teachers are doing very important work which will set the stamp and pattern of our community life for the next two or three generations, or for as long a time as our people remain as an integral part of the population on the Isthmus of Panama. They are, as may be easily deduced from their open declarations Tuesday night, doing this work with faith and understanding. Faith in the intrinsic value of the course of study and the benefits to be derived therefrom by the students, and understanding of the many difficult problems and handicaps which they have to face.

Certainly the course of instruction in the Canal Zone colored schools, although there has been gradual improvement over the past 16 years, is far from perfect and even some distance away from what may be wholly desired by our group. However, it is well for us to bear fully in mind that the free educational facilities offered on the Canal Zone are more a privilege than an inherent right considering the fact that we are not yet BONA FIDE citizens of the United States even if most of us would like to consider ourselves DE FACTO citizens because of our long years of able and devoted service to the Government of the United States in one of its most important and vital institutions. Further, we can claim no direct control over the school system since we are by no means taxpayers to the Government.

Whatever may have been the short-comings of the Zone School system in the past, there is now definite progress along sound and practical lines from which the student, by application and ambition, may obtain immeasurable benefits. As some of the speakers emphasized at Tuesday night's meeting, those who are loudest and most acrid in their criticisms have not been honest enough to familiarize themselves with the work that the school is doing and attempting to do. On our part we cheerfully accept any part in the condemnation which seems to be coming from a particular quarter since some years ago in a discussion on the school program with Gov. Julian Schley we supported the idea of school-gardening and vocational courses as a valuable addition to general learning provided there was no diminution in the academic program. We also favored the abolishing of corporal punishment on the grounds that it was archaic and in some cases brutal, and that if it were a general rule of the Schools Division and accepted in the white schools, flogging as a means of discipline should also be abolished in the colored; otherwise we would be defeating our claims for equal treatment and facilities on the basis of equal capacity for learning.

There is much to be done by our group instead of carping about what the Schools Division should do, and programs such as last Tuesday's, which was of the highest literary and intellectual standard, should be continued in all the communities of the Zone in order that parents and the general public may be brought into closer touch with the school activities. By this means mutual sympathy can be established between teachers and parents, the problems of each can be better understood to the end that respect for parental authority and for the functions of the teacher can be stimulated and maintained with an inevitable wholesome influence on the deportment and behavior of the children of our community.

The Schools Division under Superintendent Ben Williams deserve our thanks and appreciation. It is for us to realize that we cannot have all our desires and everything the way we want it, but by showing the proper spirit of appreciation for what we have are more than likely to get far more than what we have at present. We must merit things in order to demand them.

Editorial reprinted from THE PANAMA TRIBUNE of Sept. 6, 1942)

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