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Diary of Trip Through West Indies and Tropical Regions by Claude V. Wright of Richmond Hill Who Recently Returned From Interesting Tour.

Travelling in New Places and Seeing New Things with Richmond Hill Resident

In our last issue we left off in this interesting trip with Claude just leaving the famous Port of Spain. This week many other interesting places are visited and interesting experiences recorded.

A good number of our passengers got off at Trinidad that being the place where the set congregated. Life is pretty wild I imagine, and it doesn't take a person long to find out either. Although ships cannot get close in shore it is a busy little port, and numerous vessels were anchored in the roadstead when we arrived. All the cargoes have to be taken ashore in barges, which makes it pretty slow work. They tell me in Trinidad that things are not too good just now, there being a big depression, the town certainly doesn't show it. I think it is in the interior where they are suffering. All these tropical places seem to be suffering from periodical blights. There are a tremendous number of jelly-fish round Trinidad, and also a great number of pelicans. They tell me this is the land of the humming bird, but I didn't see any, also a great number of parrots abound on this island. The shores are very rugged all round and it's a great sight from the ship.

February 20, 1930—Left Trinidad on our way to our last port of call going south. It is now getting very hot as we are getting close to the equator. The sea is fairly calm but the ship being light is tossing around somewhat. The ocean is a peculiar green color, one thing I notice that the sky is not so blue in the tropics, there seems to be a haze always in the sky, and it's the palest of colors. Our passenger list is also light, many of them leaving the ship at Trinidad. We will soon be in Georgetown, and when leaving Trinidad we had to go through a narrow strait called the twin Bocas. I think they call it the serpent's mouth. Some of the passengers are feeling pretty listless, and tired after all this excitement and rush, it's been rather a long sea trip.

February 21, 1930.—Arrived at Georgetown, British Guiana at 10 o'clock in the evening. Georgetown is on the Imarara River and believe me it's a muddy one. We have to come in on high tide and must have scraped the bottom all the way up the river. It is a fairly busy port. We were unable to get accommodation the evening we arrived and therefore had to stay on board all night. We secured rooms at the Park Hotel in the morning. This place is very backward and the conveniences fair considering the climate. This is surely a poly glot population, every nationality being represented. Georgetown has a population of 60,000 and pretty wide streets, they are clean in the main sections, but the native quarter is bad, filled with evil smells. The whole town however looks shabby and rather down at heel, in fact conditions in British Guiana are very bad. The whole Colony is practically bankrupt. Tremendously in debt and so far behind, that they had to apply to the British Government for aid. I am told they tried self Government for awhile and made such a mess of it. They spent money recklessly and extravagantly and ran themselves into such a hole, by bad and rotten administration, that they asked to be taken on again as a crown colony, and Britain will have some time getting her back into shape again. Their methods are peculiar in doing business I'll say. If they expect to do business with Canada and get a square deal, all round they will have to change their ways. They don't know what reciprocation means, they do nothing to encourage tourists. Now I said it was getting hot the farther south we came, but down here hot isn't the word, it's simply blazing the heat at noon is fearful, dead sticky heat and the moment you attempt to exert yourself ever so slightly you begin to perspire freely even the natives have to fan themselves. Georgetown boasts a wonderful Botanical Garden, covering I am told 160 acres, we took a drive round it and it was certainly interesting. They have every variety of tropical trees and shrubs, every product native to British Guiana is found in the gardens, they also have a long sea-wall stretching for miles. On Saturday afternoon, after a drive through the gardens, we took a stroll along this sea-wall and found it pleasantly cool, British Guiana below sea level and consequently has to have dykes built to keep from washing away, they are very strongly built. We listened to a band concert for an hour or so, this is the place where all the nurses and their babies congregate to get cooled off and it is really interesting to see the different types of children there, you can pick out every nationality. In the evening we attended a picture show where the conditions were rather crude. The silent one too of course, and how the natives yell it is deafening. This is a great place for parrots and you can buy them cheap, other wonderful birds too are here in great variety. The only birds I've really seen since we left Bermuda, they seem to be scarce on the other islands. On Sunday morning we attended the church of Scotland called St. Andrew's this is a large church with a mixed congregation. I perspired going in but soon cooled down inside. It seems remarkable down here that the moment you get inside of place you feel cool right away. This is a great place for saloons, no prohibition here, everybody drinks even ourselves. Quite a few things are dearer than in Canada. This place seems to be full of Holy men, those strange Hindus from India who go about in rags and dirt and perform all kinds of strange rites and

ceremonies out on the open street. Eggars without number infest the streets a usual thing in all the islands of the West Indies with the exception of Grenada I think. We also have to sleep with mosquito nets round us but so far we haven't been bothered with any. They catch a lot of small alligators down here too. Elephantitis is a disease peculiar to the tropics, and we find plenty of it on all the islands and in British Guiana, its the result I'm told of being bitten by an insect which cause the feet and ankles to swell to large proportions many of the natives have it. This colony has a wonderful variety of palms. An interesting palm is the travellers palm so shaped like a huge fan it is very graceful. On Sunday afternoon we thoroughly explored the Botanical gardens and they are quite extensive the largest in the West Indies. They have a great variety of palms, more than I at first dreamed of. One of the nicest and largest shade trees out side of a banyan is the Saman tree and along the middle of main street are two rows of this beautiful tree. Georgetown is a great place for canals and ditches. Of course this town was originally built by the Dutch who built it from a pattern of their own country. The water in these canals and ditches is stagnant, and very dirty how they keep them from smelling is beyond me. There are lots of churches in this town of all denominations, and outside of the town a few miles are Hindu Temples. The Atlantic breeze is the salvation of Georgetown, it would be almost impossible to live there without it. It is a dead sticky heat, what it must be like in July I won't try to imagine. After talking to various whites who live here (and they are very few indeed) my impression is that it isn't a white man's country, and it gets the most of them in time. They have to go away to recuperate. It's the climate that works on a person, slowly and insidiously and gets in its deadly work nevertheless. A person cannot walk very far without becoming exhausted in this fierce tropical heat. Even the blacks feel the heat and perspire and fan themselves. The people are hospitable on the whole, and try to do the best they can for you. The people are very law abiding, and are the best behaved I've seen so far. Although all the islands visited have been noted for their good conduct and kindness to visitors, in spite of their terrible poverty and squalor, and dirt, they seem to remain cheerful. On most of the islands of the West Indies, the people have a hard time eking out a bare living, it is pitiful to see the conditions on some of these islands, where every prospect pleases, and the you know. Another thing I must say, before I forget, and that is about tropic fruits, they haven't the flavor of northern fruits, and a person soon gets tired of them. They mature too quick, and are overripe. This is also a great place for birds and some of them really musical (a rare thing with birds of the tropics), they also have beautiful plumage of all colors.

February 24th, 1930 — Leaving Georgetown, British Guiana, 1.30 p.m., a large crowd on the dock to see us off, mostly women a usual thing down here as I have said so many times before. Sorry in a way, and yet glad in another, half of our tour is gone, and we have now turned homeward, so far it has been a wonderful experience one never to be forgotten. My first experience of the tropics. We are now running back again to Trinidad which will be reached to-morrow.

February 25th, 1930—Arrived at Port of Spain Trinidad on our return journey north, we have a much longer stay here this time and a greater opportunity to see the island. We took a motor trip over the famous saddle-back mountain. This island possesses wonderful mountain scenery and the luxuriant tropical vegetation right to the mountain tops is a wonderful sight to see, great estates of cocoa-trees and cocoa-nut trees cover this island, and also giant bamboos, coffee trees, oranges and limes abound. The roads are good, splendidly kept up and are a credit to Trinidad. The heat here is very great and real tropic I can assure you. Shopping in Port of Spain is a great adventure and numerous bargains must be struck or else a person will be taken in if he or she doesn't look out. There are two fine Canadian Banks, and business seems to be going on briskly. The majority of the people seem fairly prosperous and begging doesn't seem so pronounced as in other places. The importation of a great number of Hindus hasn't made things good for the negroes. There are some very pretty girls on this romantic island, which is full of history connected with Sir Walter Raleigh who made many a raid on the town of Port of Spain. To-night we witnessed our first real tropical sunset and it was a glorious sight, but still I think Canadian sunsets are more full of color and on the average much better than the tropics. I have seen so much sugar cane, I don't need to put it in my tea any more. It grows in great quantities on every island. We certainly have our fill of tropic fruits, but they haven't the flavor of northern fruit. They mature too fast to have real juice. The natives of these islands show marks of all kinds of diseases, peculiar to tropical climates, and it is very sad to see the wrecks of some of the specimens of humanity. We in temperate climates can thank our lucky stars that we are free from those repulsive scars and sicknesses. You sometimes pay the penalty of living too long in these hot and debilitating climates. I notice people down here drink a little too much for the good of their health, although strange to say I have only seen one or two drunken men during

our trip. Too much alcohol is not good in hot countries, a person must be careful what they eat, ice cold drinks also should be tabooed, and cool or fairly warm drinks should be taken. So far I haven't been burdened by the heat, and have stood it pretty well. Most of the business of this island seems to be done by Portuguese, and there are a great many on the island, they are very nice and courteous and try to make the visitor welcome, as much as they possibly can.

(Continued next week)

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If you are situated as above described, failure to make this return by midnight, April 30th, together with cheque or cash for at least 25% of amount of tax, will render you liable to a penalty equal to 5% of the total tax payable. (Limit of penalty \$500.)

To avoid incurring this penalty, obtain NOW, from your postmaster, or from the Inspector of Income Tax in your district, the necessary forms and make your returns at once. These forms are as follows:

- Form T1** For Individuals other than Farmers and Ranchers.
- Form T1A** For Farmers and Ranchers only.
- Form T2** For Corporations and Joint Stock Companies.

Each form contains in itself instructions for filling out.

By making your return by April 30th you gain in two ways:

- First**, you avoid penalties for delay.
- Second**, you qualify yourself for the privilege of paying in instalments.

INCOME TAX INSPECTOR WILL HELP YOU MAKE OUT YOUR RETURNS

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Where Income Tax Inspectors are Located

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- KINGSTON, ONT. Customs Building
- TORONTO, ONT. 21 Lombard St.
- HAMILTON, ONT. Lennox Building
- LONDON, ONT. Carling Block
- FORT WILLIAM, ONT. Customs Building

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Income Tax Division OTTAWA

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