

would like to have, so that I can carry back to my constituents, an interpretation of the Ordinance. The Interpellations are addressed to the Chairman of the Council who, I believe, is capable of giving the necessary information.

4th Member for Frederiksted Country District (*Andersen*) objected to any discussion on this matter on the grounds that it was not placed before the House by the Vice-Chairman.

During a debate on this question in which many of the members participated the Vice-Chairman called upon the Chairman of the Municipal Committee (*Cane-gata*) to assist the Chair. Accordingly the Member took the word and said, —A few individual owners have asked for loans and he has already taken the matter up with Government. The original intention of the Ordinance is to grant loans to owners of real property on behalf of their squatters. But, said he, owners of estates who do not squat their lands are not entitled to loans under the Ordinance.

There being no further business the Vice-Chairman declared the meeting closed at 5 50 p. m.

LOCAL

The coming of a Tortola sloop with liquor having been reported to the Police in Frederiksted same was seized on arrival yesterday and quite a shipment of whiskey and gin confiscated. Milton Dowdy is understood to have been the one who put the police wise in the case.

A squadron of destroyers passed the roadstead of Frederiksted yesterday afternoon.

It is contemplated to give the commissioners arriving here by the "Grebe" on Saturday evening a hearty welcome from the people of Christiansted. It is said that there was no popular reception in St. Thomas and St. Croix does not want to be equally flat apart from there being a spirit of real encouragement worked up here by the prospect of much good arising from the visit of these gentlemen.

It will be remembered that the mails for the States by "Parima" close at 4 p. m. today.

SPEECH

DELIVERED BY LIEUTENANT J. C.
GEBHARD, AS-ISTANT PUBLIC
WORKS OFFICER, JANUARY
28, 1924.

Mr. Secretary, Honorable Members of the Colonial Council, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I feel like one of our sailor boys did the other day when he tried, rather in vain, to locate some of the forbidden liquid. After much hunting about he finally came upon an old colored gentleman in the country whom he thought he could

trust with the secret question. So walking up to him he whispered, "Got any Johnny Walker Whiskey?" "No", replied the old gentleman, "ain't got no Johnny Walker, but I got some good white mule". "Don't want no white mule", replied the sailor, "I want Johnny Walker." "Why not?" answered his colored friend, "White mule is the soarest stuff you'd ever want to drink". "That may be, old man", retorted the sailor, "but I ain't aiming to do any soaring. I just aim to flap around a little."

That is all I aim to do for the next few minutes, "just flap around a little". All the important things have already been covered or will be covered by the other speakers before this meeting is over.

As I think of this little ceremony and its symbolic meaning to our little community I think of a similar event which must have taken place in that old seat of civilization, Rome, 2,236 years ago, when Emperor Appius Claudius turned over the first spadeful of earth which marked the beginning of the construction of the famous aqueduct which bears his name to this day. It was in the year 312 B. C. that he started construction on the first system, which eventually brought the first pure water into the city of Rome, from a distance of eleven miles. In three hundred years, nine such aqueducts were built with all their appurtenant cisterns and baths. Rome was great before this time, but it became even greater after these systems were constructed. And too, I think of a similar event which must have taken place in that other famous city in the old world, Jerusalem, when it, less fortunate than Rome in being able to lead water from a pure source eleven miles away, started to build its first underground cistern within its walls, to store the rain which fell there. In later years, this old city built other cisterns outside its walls, and piped the water from them into those within its walls.

As I think of those ancient cities, I feel more convinced than ever, that our water problem with all its attendant economic phases is a very ancient one indeed. The ancients believed that there were only four elements—four things which composed the entire earth, namely, earth, air, fire and water, and I dare say that the one most important to them, as it is to us right here, was water. Every community that has ever amounted to anything in times gone by, or at the present time, has solved its water problem in some way. It has made it possible for its people to get water for their domestic needs, and by so doing it has relieved its people of one labor and care and so gave them more time to direct their energies along paths of productiveness. Rome got its waters from rivers and streams, Jerusalem caught the rain which fell and stored it for the times when there was no rain, but each place got its water.

And coming down to our own very

present time, I am glad to think that we right here have at least followed in the footsteps of other communities, and have, through the initiative of one of our local citizens, and through the cooperation of his fellow citizens and the local Government, at last made a start in solving our own problem. It is only a start, but it is a start in the right direction, and I for one hope that it will be productive of greater results in the future.

We, like Jerusalem, will attempt to collect the rain which falls and store it in a reservoir outside the town limits, and then conduct it to the other reservoirs scattered throughout town as the needs demand. The reservoir we intend to construct on this site will be small in comparison with those in the ancient city but it will be a foundation for a system which can eventually be made to supply all the needs of the town. It will be a covered reservoir of about 300,000 gallons capacity. Such rains as will cause the gutter to flow will be caught behind a dam located a little upstream from here and will be led into the reservoir. The smaller rains which are lost on the hill-sides will be collected upon a paved watershed on yonder slope, and will be used to augment the heavier rains. The water from the reservoir will then be piped into town and for the present into the well in the Market. As funds then become available in later years the pipe line will be extended and other cisterns can be built in other parts of the town. When our present plans are completed, and if our prayers for rain are answered, we will have stored enough water to give each person in Christiansted one hundred gallons.

Having that how then will it help us? We have gotten along for a hundred years without such a system. Do we need it now? And will it do us good any after we get it? I believe it will, if we but let it.

First, it ought to relieve us of anxiety concerning a future drought. Then it ought to decrease the amount of time and energy which we now have to expend to haul water to our houses; and then having a certain supply of water it ought to make our homes a little more comfortable. Having done all this it ought to enable us to devote more of our time and energy to productive occupation—occupations which will yield positive return to our island.

Unless it enables me even in a very small way—to produce more and to better our economic condition it will be a failure. Which will it be? The people of Christiansted will have to give the answer.

CORRECTIONS.

In yesterday's Avis, 2nd page, 3rd column, 8th line from top please read "exorcising" instead of "exercising"; also in 10th line the word "contraction" to be amended to read "concentration."