

to thank the Host for the opportunity afforded them of meeting such a representative gathering. He was very favorably impressed with the scenery and grandeur of St. Croix and its ideal climatic conditions; he and his colleagues were also greatly delighted with the cordial reception given them on their arrival, and would carry back a lively souvenir of thought of the kindness and affection of the inhabitants in general. He gave assurances that their interest in the island would not cease with the handing in of their findings and recommendations, but that the island would have the continued remembrances in their consideration.

The rest of the program consisted of speech making by several of the guests among them being the following:

Mr. P.R. Martinez was very pleased for the privilege to be present at such an important function. He had, previous to coming to the island, heard not very pleasant things of the people of these islands, but after his twenty days stay he was glad to be able to say that he would carry back with him the most pleasant recollections. In commenting on the importance of education he expressed the hope that the legislators would do all that lies in their power to support this noble work. He said in Porto Rico twelve million dollars were appropriated annually for education, and although there was still room for improvement yet he was satisfied that a solid foundation was being laid in this direction. Referring to the laboring class he said that that was the hardest problem now confronting the Government of Porto Rico, and that from all he had seen here he felt justified in saying that the laborers of Santa Cruz were much better off than those of Porto Rico.

Mr. George A. Moorehead expressed himself as being dissatisfied with the fact that only three natives of these islands are numbered in the professions. For this reason he would advocate that children should not be made to work in the fields, but should be given every opportunity of becoming lawyers, doctors, judges, clerks and merchants.

Mr. Woodson gave a very sharp rejoinder to the remarks made by the last speaker. He said he held up husbandry as one of the most noble occupations of man. All could not be lawyers, doctors, judges, clerks and merchants, for if they were, there would be none left to till the soil. Rather elevate husbandry in thought and action, and with its health giving occupation there would arise minds capable to fill these more elevated offices and they would succeed. He could not see how a community could prosper if the people did not till the soil, create business and pay taxes to support a Government. That when he first went out into partnership he was invited to participate in robbing an estate which they had for settlement of \$15,000, but he refused positively to enter into any such scheme.

He was greatly criticized by his colleagues at the time and was warned that he would never make money as a lawyer that way, but nevertheless, he had succeeded by following the straight road of honesty.

Mr. Merwin in his remarks relative to agriculture said he was aware that agriculture was taught in the schools in the neighbouring islands and that a garden is attached to each school for the purpose of demonstrating the practical side of this branch of study. It was while on a visit to Barbados in 1921 he had the opportunity of visiting school gardens and on his return home took the matter up with the Director of Education and as a result school gardens were established here. He was sorry therefore to find that some parents did not like the idea of their children working in these gardens which he, on the contrary, considered was always and is still one of the most noble, if not the noblest, work of man.

It is a remarkable coincidence that the same night on which this Banquet was held was exactly four years to the hour, since a similar banquet was held by Mr. Merwin in honor of the Congressional Commissioners who visited this island in 1920, for the purpose of investigating the economic condition then existing in the island.

Mr. Merwin has invariably exercised much far sightedness in public affairs, and he has always evinced keen interest in matters pertaining to the welfare of this island. We have no doubt, therefore, that it is his proverbial zeal which prompted him to bring together a body of men whose meeting on such an eventful occasion is sure to bring about the best results for the common good of all concerned and which may mark the commencement of a new era in the history of our beautiful island.

BY ONE WHO WAS PRESENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE JOINT SESSION OF THE COLONIAL COUNCILS for St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John.

(Continued from yesterday's Avis.)

(7) That the Coastwise laws be amended to exclude the ports of the Virgin Islands of the United States.

The Coastwise Laws contain a provision permitting the President to hold them in abeyance with respect to insular possessions of the United States until such time as adequate American shipping facilities were provided for such insular possessions, hence their application to the Virgin Islands have been held in abeyance by executive order so far, the latest executive order having postponed their application until May 1, 1924.

The principal port of the Virgin Islands is St. Thomas, which is a natural port

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THE REV. BELLE B. BURNS,

who pastored the church at Frederiksted a few years ago is here again on a visit and will preach at THE GOSPEL TABERNACLE, SUNDAY NIGHT, the 17th instant, at 7.30 o'clock.

All are invited. Come and bring your friends.

C. S. MAYHEW.
Pastor.

of call for vessels plying between Europe and the Panama Canal. It is not a port of entry in any sense of the word. Ships requiring coal, fuel oil and supplies of various kinds, may obtain them at St. Thomas, and St. Thomas has, for hundreds of years, been a large distributing port not alone for the West Indies, but for freight to South American ports and to those of the United States. The Coastwise Laws were designed primarily as an aid to American coastwise shipping and require that coastwise freight be transported in American bottoms. In the Continental United States there is a natural competition in the coastwise trade between the railroads and the steamship companies, and this has the effect of keeping the freight rates of steamship companies within reasonable bounds. There is, of course, no such natural competition between the east coast ports of Continental United States and the Virgin Islands, so that, should the Coastwise Laws be made applicable to the Virgin Islands, the natural effect would be to greatly increase freight rates in the Virgin Islands. This would in its turn, tend to greatly increase the cost of commodities sold in the Virgin Islands, predominantly among which would be coal and fuel oil which are the outstanding commodities carried for sale in St. Thomas to vessels of all nations requiring such. The application of the coastwise laws to the Virgin Islands would, furthermore, presumably have the effect of compelling the merchants of St. Thomas to purchase coal and fuel oil from abroad rather than from the United States producers as they now do, by reason of the increased freight rates.

(8) To permit the retention of liquor on board ships under seal and the transportation and transshipment of liquor cargoes through Virgin Islands' ports.