1. CLASS C
2. John Dunscombe
3. [redacted]
4. 154 Holton Rd.
   Barry.
5. Barry Boys' County Grammar School

C

1st Prize

FIRST PRIZE

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An Imaginary Visit to Nairobi.

My visit master had set me a tiresome task. For Thursday morning I had to write "an account of a visit to Nairobi." Idly I pored over my text-book. It was full of chapters headed 'physical features,' 'irrigation' and 'primary products.' How could I visualise a journey from facts which resembled a grocery list? How I yearned for a shorter journey to Morocco at the local cinema! In despair, I turned to my atlas, looking hard at the air-routes to what was still to me very much the 'Dark Continent.' I looked long and hard — so hard that the map seemed to come up to meet me. Imperceptibly, I suddenly became aware of the steady drone of an aeroplane.

good

Vaguely I became conscious of looking down on a limitless map — the familiar blue sea looked up at me. Then the blue slip-

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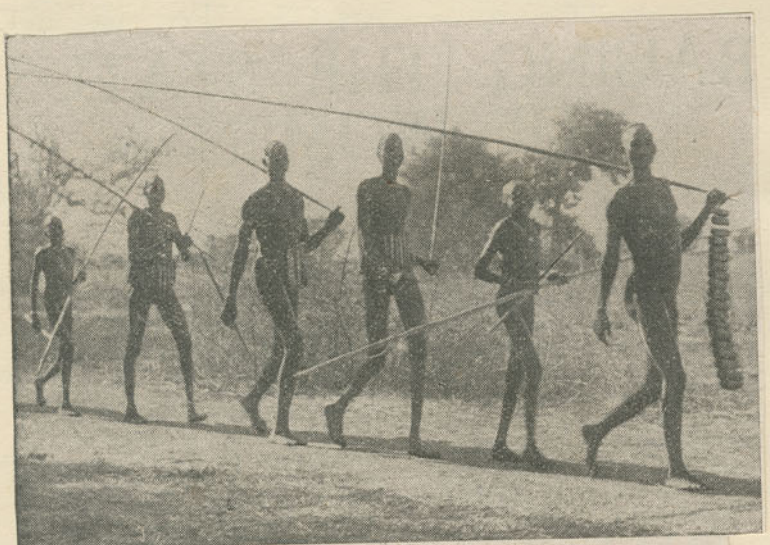

African tribesmen going down to the river to fish. It is men such as these, uprooted from their primitive ways of life, who are being drawn increasingly into mines and plantations where they tend to become socially disintegrated.

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-ped away giving place to the familiar land — an immense tower loomed into sight. It went as if it had never been, and next I became aware of the land again melting into ocean, — a far bluer ocean than the first crossed. In what appeared but a moment of time, the ocean ended and we were again looking at what was intermittent 'terra firma' — was it what my geography text-book called a delta? But it was far more interesting when actually seen. In no time, the channels merged into a single river and along its banks appeared 3 Pyramids which seem to mock at my youth.

They soon disappeared and, suddenly, the ground below swarmed with shiny black faces peering skywards. I was flying above an immense plain. Out of nowhere I thought I could hear a voice, strangely reminiscent of my Geography Master,

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A woman tenant, who together with her sons farms a holding of 40 acres, is seen working on a canal bank beside her 10-acre cotton plot. She has also five acres of durra, five of lubia, and 20 fallow. The average net income of an individual tenancy is about £250 to £300 a year.

GEZIRA.

Durra stalks being stacked by Gezira farmers for use as cattle fodder after harvesting.

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saying — "This is the Gezira plain - irrigated from a great reservoir at Sennar on the Blue Nile. The land is owned by the natives, who pay as 'water-rent' sixty per cent of the money they earn. The average net income of an individual tenancy is about £250 to £300 a year and ----." The voice was silenced, only to begin again as we passed over a flat topped hill on which seven large bungalows stood. "Here," said the voice, "are the houses built by the Colonial Service for their officers in Uganda." Around them were gardens, gay after the rains with scarlet hibiscus, pink and white oleander and sweet-smelling waxy frangi-pani.

But it was a fleeting vision, and in what seemed but a moment of time we were approaching two magnificent snow-capped mountains one of which seemed to mock

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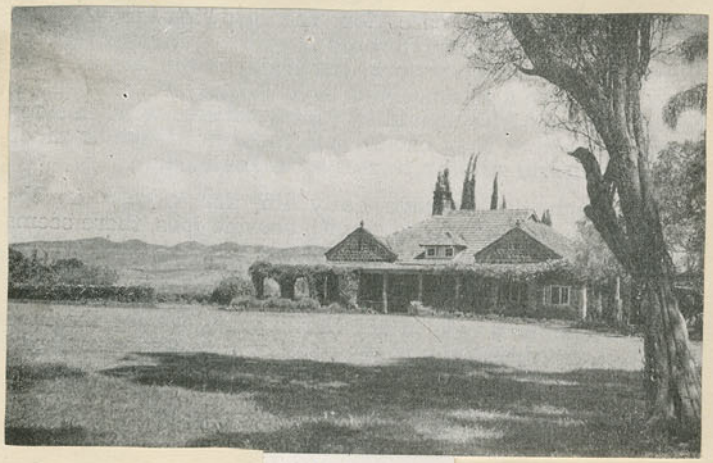
Kenya Mountain



Settlers' Houses.

All Saints' Cathedral, Nairobi.

Town Hall.

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me and say "You know me? I am Kilimanjaro — K-i-l-i-m-a-n-j-a-r-o. You remember? You never mis-spell me!" The other uttered coyly, "I am Mt. Kenya."

good

Then we gently glided down on to a plain which nestled in the mountains. As we came down, a white and bright town which seemed to dazzle in the sun looked up at me. Smoothly, we landed at the airfield — and I spelt out rather lazily on a huge board the name 'NAIROBI.'

It all seemed new. The streets were broad. The houses were generally one-storeyed, mixed here and there with the familiar double-storey type which here seem to intrude. Here and there public buildings appeared tactfully planned — a Town Hall, the McMillan Memorial Library, the Law Courts and All Saints' Cathedral.

But it all appeared much more colourful.

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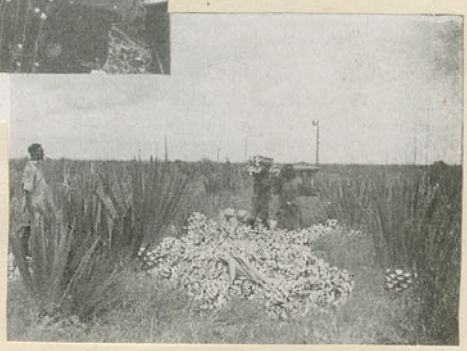
COFFEE

Pyrethrum,



SISAL

SHEEP

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than the cities I had seen at home - was it the heat? More likely, the people - for I noticed the handsome African and the keen Indian busily moving along the streets, colourfully attired. Even the white people looked whiter in their white duck suits.

I shuddered - almost unbelievably at the sight of the cinema — which seemed to be showing "Strange Journey" — and moved on quickly, and found myself almost free of the towns.

There I noticed plantations growing coffee, tea, sugar and sisal. How fortunate to have the town so near the country! The natives seemed to be preoccupied on their lands growing maize. But there were also cattle and sheep farms, dairy farms and on the highest lands, pyrethrum flourished in abundance. The farms appeared larger than ours and there

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Trout fishing.

Restaurant Car.

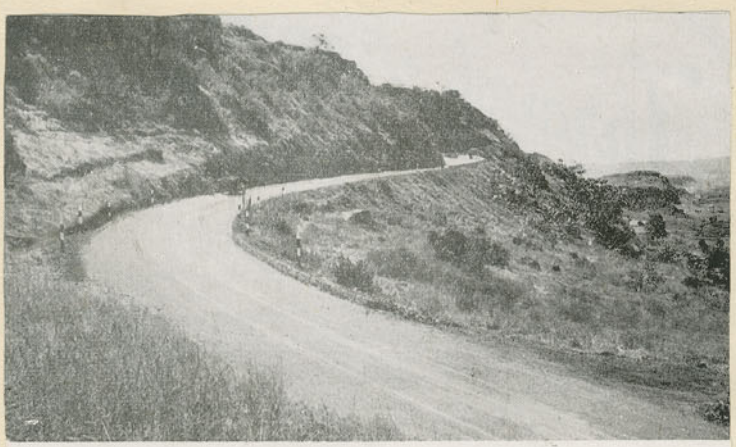
RAILWAYS

The Kenya and Uganda Railway has 1,625 miles of track running through varied and beautiful scenery from Sea level to 9,000 ft.

The main line from Mombasa to Kampala on Lake Victoria is 879 miles in length.

Comfortable and Modern Rolling Stock including Sleeping and Restaurant Cars, is provided for Passengers.

Kenya & Uganda Railway



ROADS

An extensive road system exists through all parts of the Colony, and direct road communication is now open with most countries in the Continent of Africa. Car Hire Services are available with or without drivers. Garages and Service Stations are to be found in nearly all towns or townships and fuel services are obtainable at frequent intervals on most roads.

The Royal East African Automobile Association provides maps, route cards and all usual facilities.

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seemed to be plenty of native labour.

A dozen or more trout rivers ran down from the mountains. Here and there parties seemed to be spending a happy day shooting wild birds.

I yearned to wait but was drawn back almost forceably to the town. We moved along a splendid road, and at one place, a railroad ran alongside it. A luxurious train fleeted past us — which even had a sleeping and restraunt car.

I lingered for a time to take a look at the race-course. There was a huge crowd there of people who evidently knew how to spend a day out, - they were bluff and hearty in voice, and seemed to be less reserved than people at home. I thought too that they were less formal than we; greeting each other invariably by their Christian names. I overheard one say that he had found that his rascally

good.

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Hardinge Street.

Site of Delamere Memorial.

Delamere Avenue leading into Government Road.

Delamere Avenue from Sadler Street.

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houseboy had been forgetting to pay the 'dhobie'!

I wished to linger with them enjoying the days' sport but I was whisked away. I found myself entering the main street of the Indian quartet, noisy with strange Eastern music and gay with colour but a grating voice seemed to hinder my progress as I strived to reach the Native Quarters. Here was I in a town where East and West seem to shake hands with Africa, when the voice halted me saying, "Nairobi, capital of Kenya. Built on Athi plains – at foot of Kikuyu hills. Commands magnificent view of Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya. First building completed in 1899. Railway centre. Population 7,000. Includes 1,752 Indians –" This was too reminiscent of the mouldy text book. I awoke with a start and found the page of my atlas rather badly crumpled. I smiled to myself and, with surprising vigour, began to write my account of a visit to Nairobi. After all, he travels fastest who travels alone.

good

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Books read:-

1. Introducing the Colonies
2. 'History of Commonwealth and Empire' (Masefield)
3. Kenya - Settlement Handbook
4. The Times - Colonial Edition

This is a first class essay, having originality. It shows imagination + is well written

A + +

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This is definitely – in my opinion – the best essay in the competition. The writer has shown originality and imagination. He has displayed an ability to make his description part of his essay-structure, in contrast to many who gave a list of things they had seen and done, after first stating that for some reason or other, they were going to visit some place. The article is coherent from beginning to end, and yet while telling his story, the writer has managed to present many facts and to convey a picture of the place visited without ~~nothing~~ allowing these facts structure to be disruptive to his story.

There are a few minor errors as noted, These do not, in my opinion, lower the relative worth of this essay, ~~as~~ as the best of the entries.

J.A.C.

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