

# ✓ TRIBUTE TO INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA LIBRARY UNA MARSON

Pioneer in many fields

by ARCHIE LINDO

**UNA MARSON is dead at sixty, and what a loss the Nation has suffered. Pioneers are seldom remembered for all their early, hard, up-hill work, the public quickly forgets, but there are still some of us who can and do remember.**

A pioneer in local theatre, a pioneer in fighting the cause of the Negro, a pioneer for young writers, a pioneer in the cause of saving the children—Una Marson was all this and more. And all her work was done with sincerity, with never a thought of getting anything for herself out of it.

In the 'twenties Una Marson published a short story of mine. She then had her Magazine, "The Cosmopolitan". I can never forget the personal thrill out of seeing myself for the first time in print. In the 'thirties I acted in two of her plays put on at the Ward Theatre—"London Calling" and "Pocomania". In the 'thirties, too, she helped form the Readers and Writers Club. Her poems were always filled with tenderness and a fondness for her island home and people. She is the only Jamaican poet I know who wrote the Blues form of poetry.

In the field of broadcasting Una broke new ground, when she produced the popular programme "London Calling the West Indies". Most of these things are all now so much a part of our life that we tend to forget the struggle which the Pioneers — like Una Marson—had in putting them into effect. It was sheer determination and pluck which carried them through.

Una Marson's love for people, and particularly children (and all helpless suffering creatures) made her turn instinctively to social work and Child Welfare work. And here, again, she pioneered and got things done. Her health was handicap time and again, but hers was a remarkable spirit which seemed to do what was considered impossible time and again. Lives of people like Una Marson are never lived in vain. Hers was a great example which many women should be proud to follow.

I suggest the Organization shortly of a "Una Marson Evening" at which her poems could be read and her life work published.