

FRIDAY, JUNE 11, 1948.

SIR HAROLD

The Gleaner on behalf of a proud Jamaica salutes Sir Harold Egbert Allan on the honour of a knighthood graciously conferred upon him by His Majesty. Here is a conferment which is a signal tribute to the Jamaican people and to one of its most conscientious sons. Indeed, it is an honour which so thoroughly commends itself that we might almost say it does credit to the system of Royal Honours: the choice is so excellently in keeping with what we know to be the highest purposes of such preferment.

We offer no apologies either for noting the fact that he is the first black Jamaican to have received so high an honour. Its uniqueness in that respect will in any case be a matter for general approbation. We do not rate people on any basis so irrational as that of colour or creed, but we know that the million people of Jamaica who are his closest kinsmen by origin will feel a special delight which we find it hard to reprove, even though we would prefer the honour to be given full national accolade without such thoughts.

H. E. Allan, as he will forever be fondly remembered in Jamaican life and affairs, is by any standard a great citizen. His dedication to public affairs is unrivalled and there has not been in our Legislature since he was first elected in 1935 a more steadfast worker for the common weal. No demagogue, yet an advocate when roused capable of passionate and convincing speech, no narrow nationalist, yet a vigorous champion of fuller political rights for his country and his people; no intolerant apostle of "Jamaica for the Jamaicans", yet a tower of strength to the causes which have given and are giving Jamaicans more and more power and voice in their affairs.

In many respects—and especially in those great qualities of sober balance—H. E. Allan has evolved a political character typical of the best traditions of British parliamentary life even while all those round him were bombinating between the extreme poles of subservience or rash hostility. His character and political personality are of the sterling stamp which make the best use of any constitutional instrument and prove the supremacy of goodwill over bigotry.

Yet he has not achieved his stature by using weasel words or by sitting on the fence. A powerful personality in private conference has given him an effective influence over colleagues who might seem from public methods to be more dynamic; and in open assembly his combined astuteness and debating skill have been ample armoury for the persistent battle he has fought throughout his public life to push Jamaica forward on all fronts.

His record as a public leader is listed elsewhere and we need not repeat it here. But we would like to think of two of his accomplishments as permanently significant. The first is the part he played in bringing together the dissident factions in the controversies that raged when we were seeking the present political constitution; and the second is the patient but brilliant service he has given in affording to the new Legislature the substantial heritage of experience gained in the old. These two are contributions to the evolution of Jamaica which have speeded up the processes of our national progress; and they without other justification being necessary adequately deserve the great honour now bestowed upon him.

We feel warmly joyful in this opportunity to pay him tribute, and to link with his name in these felicitations that of his good wife. We know that the devotion of Lady Allan must be a source of strength to him, in his arduous and trying public duties and we wish them long years of enjoyment of these honours and in further service to Jamaica.

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