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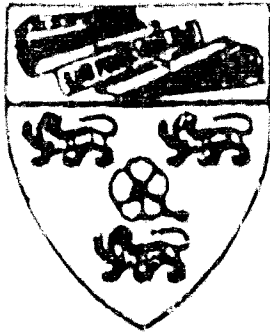
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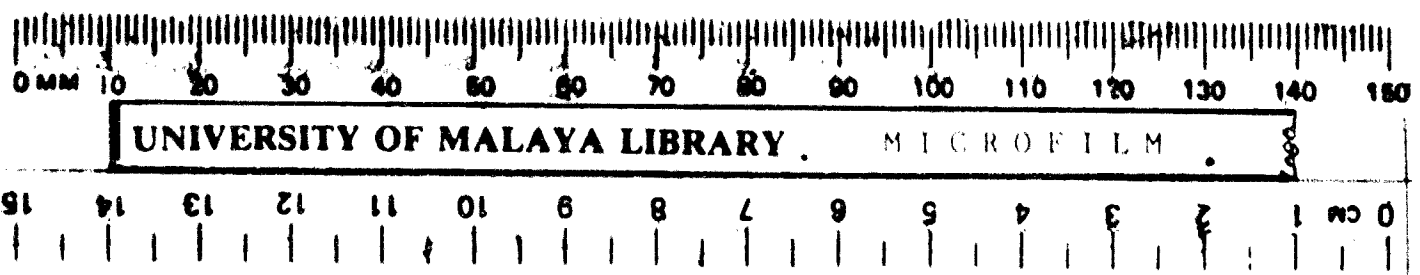


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STENOGRAPHERS

The Malayan Association of the Blind (MAB) in 1953 established the Gurney Training Centre in Kuala Lumpur with the objective of training suitable blind people in certain fields which they can use as a mean of earning their livelihood. One of the courses is in cane work, and since its establishment the centre has already trained more than 100 blind people. As time passed, it was soon realised that the real problem was not in the training but rather in finding employment after training.

As part of an answer to this problem, the MAB in 1959 built the Kinta Valley workshop in Ipoh. Part of this workshop aims at providing employment and further training to the caneworkers to prepare them in finding employment later outside the workshop. When these workers have gained enough experience and confidence in their work, employment will be found for them by the workshop officials and the vacancies thus created would allow taking in fresh workers who have just finished training in Gurney Training Centre.

Somehow, it did not work out the way it was planned. Employment for the blind workers was hard to find and only some were employed, outside. Further some workers preferred to stick to their work in the workshop. Anyway, the workshop continued to take in fresh workers with the result that the number of caneworkers in the workshop increased to 20 at the end of last year. But this cannot continue for long if sales do not increase also. Last year, the total sales dropped to the level 5 years ago. Thus at present, the workshop is not taking as many new workers as before and consequently most of the caneworkers have to find employment somewhere else.

Due to difficulty of finding employment, all of them have to work on their own. The condition of these home-workers deserves sympathy. A homemaker is able to sell monthly at the most \$60.00 worth of rattan products. The difficulty lies in the finding of market for their products. As most caneworkers who have been trained by the Gurney Training Centre have to turn to this way of life, this problem deserves special attention. In fact this problem was recognized as early as 1958 when a recommendation was made to form a sales organisation. This organisation will be of great help towards improving the standard of living of the homeworkers and its success should not be doubted in view of the presence of market for rattan products.