

carvings, drawings, and other representations of the human form. In *La Nature* for Dec. 15, he points out that although, according to certain views, the numerous figurines found in or near burials stood for a tutelary goddess of the tomb, and the absence of the mouth may be emblematic of the silence of death, it does not explain why that rather than any other feature should be left out. He reviews a number of examples, and in particular pictures by the aborigines of Australia

in which it is omitted. These he seeks to connect with an animistic train of thought such as that which placed a Wingless Victory before the Propylæum at Athens—wingless in order that she might not leave the city. By analogy the sepulchral and other figures are represented without a mouth to prevent them from talking. Obviously, P. Boussac's suggestion has no bearing on the genuine character of the Glozel figures, and wisely he refrains from committing himself on the point.

The Development Commission.¹

THE report recently issued by the Development Commissioners for the year ended Mar. 31, 1927, is mainly a series of summaries of work in progress at the centres of agricultural research assisted from the Development Fund, and as such is a convenient source of reference. The part relating to fisheries is much shorter, but indicates the activity in sea and other investigations. Another useful reference is the list of publications for 1926-27: (a) relating to researches carried out at agricultural research institutes aided from the Development Fund, (b) published by advisory officers, (c) relating to researches carried out at fisheries laboratories aided from the Development Fund. These reports indicate that the Development Commission is expected to supervise a field that includes animals, plants, soils, economics, on to the welfare of the countryside, and even provision of harbours and the widening of roads.

The Development Fund now contributes a little more than £400,000, mainly to agricultural research. That this sum, large though it be, is inadequate for its aims is evident from a perusal of the report. Fortunately, in a period of national stringency, other sources have come into being to meet the increasing demands of research. The original Development Fund required in that year an addition of £200,000, voted by Parliament, £60,000 more than the previous year. Supplementary to this is a Special Fund provided by the Corn Production Acts (Repeal) Act, 1921, by which the original fund is doubled. This was limited to a five-year period and has now ceased, and new arrangements are outlined. More recently two other sources of contributions have come into being, the Empire Marketing Board for research into problems connected with production and marketing in Great Britain and overseas, and the International Education Board established by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in 1923.

These new sources for grants are evidently handling large sums, and their relation to the Development Fund is discussed at some length. A case given in the report, the development of the Animal Breeding Research Department at Edinburgh, illustrates the position: the Development Fund contribution was £16,000, the International Education Board gave £30,000, the Empire

Marketing Board £10,000, and a generous donor £10,000. The same applies to other large research institutes, so that great post-War developments have been possible. At the same time, the whole structure seems needlessly complex, and it looks as if a large amount of energy were expended on administration and finance rather than on actual research.

The recent progress of animal research is a feature of the period of the report. The large equipment necessary has been provided from the various sources indicated. The scope of the work may be seen by the reports from some of the larger centres; at Cambridge, animal nutrition and animal pathology; at the Rowett Institute, Aberdeen, composition of pastures and the influence of iodine; at Edinburgh, animal breeding and animal diseases. On the plant side, the grants cover many investigations on nutrition, breeding, and pathology. A recent development is the study of fruit, its culture and preservation, as conducted at Long Ashton, East Malling, and other research institutes, largely assisted by the Empire Marketing Board.

The scheme for advisory officers, provided for by the Development Fund for fifteen years, is reviewed at some length (pp. 89-109). The grants to eighteen centres total about £60,000, not including special grants for equipment, etc. It is now suggested that as the centres become better staffed with county organisers, the function of the advisory officer might be better described by the term local research officer. Why not use the simple word 'adviser,' which suggests advice, and allow 'officer' to lapse, since it suggests something in the way of inspection or detection?

The grants under the heading of fisheries and harbours are only a small part of the State contributions, but they have encouraged a number of special investigations, including those on haddock, herring, and various shell-fish.

A number of smaller grants have been made for the encouragement of rural industries, as a contribution to the larger movement for development of the countryside. A review of the position points out that, with motor transport and broadcasting, village life is not so isolated as formerly; hence the need for revision of schemes. Much of the present work must be experimental, but there is need for concentration so as to bring the efforts under the control of some more centralised organisation than at present.

¹ Development Commission. Seventeenth Report of the Development Commissioners for the year ended Mar. 31, 1927. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1927.) 3s. net.