

ANGLO-AMERICAN COLLABORATION IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION

THE report of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission to the Governments of the United States and Great Britain for the years 1942-43, which has now been published*, leaves no room for doubt as to the successful start of this first attempt by Britain and the United States at joint control, and at the same time puts into a proper perspective that excessive concern regarding national sovereignty displayed in the statement issued in Washington with the joint communiqué announcing the creation of the Commission. The report itself is in three chapters, discussing in succession the organization of the Commission and the immediate and the long-term aspects of the Commission's programme, but is supported by the text of the joint communiqué of March 9, 1942, reports of the four meetings of the Commission of the Supply Officers' Conference, Jamaica, May 15-18, 1942, and of the Nutrition, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Meeting in August 1943, which led to the creation of the Caribbean Research Council as an advisory body to the Commission. The objectives of this Council will be to survey needs, determine what research has been done, arrange for dissemination and exchange of the results of research, provide for conferences between research workers or extension workers, and make recommendations for further research and co-operation.

The organization thus far established consists of three interrelated units. First is the Commission itself, consisting of two sections of three members each, appointed by their respective Governments, and charged with the duty of helping the territories and colonies in the Caribbean in charting a system of co-operation which will reinforce their economy and society and give them added strength. The British section is closely affiliated with the Colonial Office in London, and with the Development and Welfare Organization in the West Indies. Second is the Caribbean Research Council, which provides the technical and scientific advice required to promote scientific, technical, social and economic advance, and is itself assisted by sectional committees, the first of which covers nutrition, agriculture, fisheries and forestry. The third unit of the organization is a regular system of West Indian Conferences, which is being inaugurated to provide for local consultation. This unit will be a standing body, meeting as and when required, with two delegates from each territory or group in the Caribbean area.

Following a series of meetings of the Commission and conferences in the West Indies, Washington and London, basic policies have been agreed upon in principle by an exchange of notes between the two Governments. The view is taken that the economic problems of the Caribbean should be regarded as regional rather than local. Generally speaking, a single-crop economy in the West Indies is undesirable. Mixed farming and animal husbandry should be encouraged everywhere, but a closed economic system should not be constituted. Inter-island trade should be encouraged throughout the entire Caribbean region. Advantage should be taken of fishing grounds in, and adjacent to, the Caribbean, and local fisheries

with facilities for storage and distribution should be developed and organized. A greater vocational bias should be introduced into the educational system, and in addition to wide improvement of housing and sanitary conditions and an extensive school building programme, the inadequate transport to and within the Caribbean requires improvement. This will need co-ordination and planning on a broad scale. As an immediate and effective approach to the nutrition problem the Commission will investigate the provision of midday meals for children at school. The possibilities of industrial development, though limited, should not be overlooked.

On the immediate aspects of the Commission's programme, the report refers to the action taken to meet the food crisis which developed in the Caribbean in 1942. The Commission was responsible for establishing an organization for the bulk purchase of imported food necessities and assisted in developing a system of inter-island distribution. The measures taken led to a substantial increase in local food production and also to an alteration in the established eating habits of the peoples of the area. The fishery industries have received special attention, and the United States section of the Commission made a study of the sugar situation at the end of the summer of 1942 and formulated proposals which have been taken into account by the United States and the British Government in determining their policy with regard to the 1943 crop.

One outcome of the Conference of Supply Officers was the establishment of an Emergency Land Water Highway to provide a safe transport service from the mainland of the United States to Puerto Rico; in view of the improved situation with regard to submarine warfare, the service over the Hispaniole Highway and the maintenance of stockpiles were suspended in August 1943. The Conference also approved a recommendation that a single supply organization should be created for all the British Colonies, and the British Colonies Supply Mission has been established in Washington.

The long-range aspects of the Commission's programme demand long-term planning, and the basic problems are grouped roughly under the following headings: (1) conservation and utilization of natural resources; (2) development of systems of agriculture based upon improved efficiency; (3) development and maintenance of trade and communications among the Caribbean territories and colonies and with non-Caribbean areas; (4) provision of adequate housing and the improvement of public health; (5) full use of man-power in productive employment and the improvement of welfare among rural communities; and (6) broadening of education to include vocational instruction, the strengthening of public morale, and the promotion of 'self-help' and community co-operation.

The initial fishery survey is being followed up by a more detailed study in the south-eastern Caribbean, and commercial fishery research is being started. Special committees have already been formed under the Caribbean Research Council to report on land tenure and on the measures necessary to maintain diversified production. Arrangements have been made for the full collaboration of forestry services throughout the Caribbean with the United States Federal Forestry Research Institute in Puerto Rico, and the Research Council will assist in co-ordinating studies on forestry problems in the Caribbean and comparable areas. The Commission is giving attention to

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the removal of restraints to trade and travel between the British and the United States Virgin Islands. It has given full support to the work of the Federal Works Agency in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, as well as to the programme of works projects drawn up by the Development and Welfare Organization for the British West Indies. At a conference in Washington in July 1943, it was decided that the Commission offered an effective medium for co-ordinating sanitation and health problems in the area, and a consultative committee was eventually formed for this purpose. Quarantine matters have received special attention, including the drafting of model quarantine legislation. This received detailed consideration at a Quarantine Conference in November 1943 under the auspices of the British West Indies Development and Welfare Organization in co-operation with the Commission. The primary objective of this Conference was to consider the adoption of uniform quarantine procedure throughout the British Caribbean Colonies in regard to maritime traffic, air navigation, and the adoption of model quarantine legislation.

Scientific workers will find particular interest in the detailed programme of research required on soil, water and forest conservation appended to the report on nutrition, agriculture, fisheries and agriculture which led to the formation of the Caribbean Research Council. In addition, the report itself includes detailed proposals for investigations on diet and health, food supply and nutrition, nutrition and public health, on animal husbandry, for which a long-range research programme is formulated, on fisheries, food processing, storage and marketing. Special stress is laid on research in animal husbandry, which has been wholly inadequate in the Caribbean; it is believed that no other investment would yield greater returns in terms of nutritional well-being than measures to increase the proportion of animal proteins in the diet, through improved and adapted animal husbandry and a stable and more efficient agriculture.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS SCIENTIFIC REPORT

THE Scientific Report of the Royal College of Surgeons of England for the year 1942-43 gives the welcome news that no further specimens, Hunterian or College, were destroyed or suffered major damage during that year. The general condition of the specimens is satisfactory, but the task of looking after a large collection which is dispersed among various centres, some of which do not provide adequate or suitable accommodation, must be an arduous one, especially when so many of the staff are serving with the Forces. The need for better and more convenient accommodation for the specimens, with working room and technical facilities, is still urgent.

The report gives a list, covering six pages, of additions to the Museum, and an account of the research going on in the Bernhard Baron Research Laboratories under the direction of Prof. J. Beattie. During 1941-42 it was shown that plasma proteins can be removed rapidly from the blood-stream and can also enter the blood-stream very rapidly in considerable quantities. It was found that the rate of entry was so rapid that it could not be due to the synthesis of protein from amino-acids in the liver,

and that plasma protein could be mobilized from tissues other than the liver. Since the end of 1942, the problem of increasing the rate of protein synthesis by the liver has been studied. Casein digests suitable for intravenous or subcutaneous administration are now being tried, with the object of increasing the rate of protein synthesis in the body. It is considered that such digests might be valuable for the treatment of burns, severe infections and fractures, in all of which conditions the loss of plasma proteins is considerable. The use of digests and pure amino-acids for the prevention of severe liver damage is also being studied.

In 1943 a study of toxic hepatitis was begun with the co-operation of the British and American Army authorities. It has been found possible to prevent the liver damage which occurs in syphilitic patients receiving arsenical treatment, and to reduce the period spent in hospital from 27 to 11 days and the convalescent period from three months to ten days.

Nerve injuries are being studied by a Leverhulme Research Scholar at Oxford and, at the suggestion of the Ministry of Health, a study was undertaken of raw materials which might take the place of absorbable catgut for sutures. A suitable raw material has been found, and this has passed laboratory and clinical trials. All the staff of the Buckston Browne Research Farm joined the Forces at the outbreak of the War, and the main laboratories there were taken over by the Emergency Public Health Service.

CLASSIFICATION OF ANTS

THE naming of the different species of ants and their classification into genera, tribes, sub-families, etc., is but an artifice, a mere convenience, although an all-important one if we are to dispose of our knowledge of myrmecology to the best advantage. In fact, to-day, a knowledge of formicid nomenclature is essential to anyone wishing to make a reasonable acquaintance with myrmecology.

It is perhaps strange, then, that although some five thousand species of ants have been described and given names since the time of Linnaeus, and these five thousand species distributed among approximately four hundred genera and four-score tribes belonging to eight sub-families, no myrmecologist has during the last thirty years published even a complete list of the ant genera, let alone any more comprehensive guide to formicid nomenclature. It is true that Emery in the "Genera Insectorum" (1910-25) covered the whole family, but although he provides the skeleton for the future taxonomic treatment of the group, it is sadly incomplete and in many cases out of date and inaccurate.

Emery lists only two hundred and sixty genera and fifty-three tribes, which he places in five sub-families (*Dorylinae* Leach, *Ponerinae* Mayr, *Myrmicinae* Lepeltier, *Dolichoderinae* Forel and *Formicinae* Forel) as against the modern eight; the three new subfamilies being the *Cerapachyinae* Wheeler (previously a tribe *Cerapachii* Forel and later a section *Prodorylinae* Emery of the *Ponerinae* Mayr.), the *Leptanillinae* (Emery) Wheeler, containing the solitary genus *Leptanilla* Emery earlier attributed to the *Dorylinae* Leach, and the *Pseudomyrmicinae* (Emery) Wheeler, previously considered as a tribe of the *Myrmicinae* Lepeltier. Furthermore, the "Genera Insectorum" is scarce and difficult to obtain except at universities