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Native Education in Africa.

IN no part of the British Empire is the task of developing education services more difficult, onerous, and important than in British territories in Africa. In the Union of South Africa, the task is complicated by the language differences between the British, Dutch, immigrant Asiatics, and indigenous peoples, the different social customs and religions of the white, brown, and black elements, and the economic differences based upon the differing standards of living between these three distinct racial types. The situation in East Africa and parts of British Central Africa is much the same. In British West African territories, if we except the Cameroons, there is no white or Asiatic problem, but a complication exists because of an essential difference between the ideals underlying British colonial policy and those of the French and Belgians whose colonial territories are adjacent.

In his recent Rhodes Memorial Lecture at Oxford on "Native Policy in Africa", General Smuts pointed out that British colonial policy is enshrined in the Covenant of the League of Nations. Art. 22 of the Covenant lays down that to those colonies and territories taken from the Powers defeated in the War, which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there shall be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation, and that this trust shall be carried out by the advanced nations. "The well-being and development of peoples not yet able to stand by themselves", says General Smuts, "can only mean the progress and civilisation of these backward peoples in accordance with their own institutions, customs, and ideas, in so far as these are not incompatible with the ideals of civilisation."

This is the ideal. It is one upon which education policy must be based in the British Colonial Empire, not only in the territories which the British administer under mandate from the League of Nations—and Great Britain, the Union of South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, each have such mandates—but also in those territories for which we have been responsible for varying lengthy periods of years. In India for more than a century we have been attempting, however imperfectly, to put this ideal into practice. In West Africa, in Mauritius, in British Malaya, in the Sudan, our efforts have been in the same direction. Rhodes's conception of our responsibilities in Africa was substantially in harmony with the principle of

trusteeship: "white settlement to supply the steel framework and the stimulus for an enduring civilisation, and indigenous native institutions to express the specifically African character of the natives in their future development and civilisation".

That the education of the natives of South Africa has only recently been developed in consonance with Rhodes's ideals has been due to the prejudices and short-sighted economic dogmas of the white settled populations. They attempt to justify their attitude by asserting that the native peoples can profit only by primary education, that they reach a phase of mental stupidity or 'saturation' by the time they are adolescent. The intellectual successes of American West African negroes, and even the recent successes of South African Bantus at the South African College and the universities of Great Britain, leave many, we are almost tempted to say the majority of, Europeans in Africa, unconvinced that the native peoples are not inherently generally intellectually inferior. The consequence has been that, until quite recently, practically the whole responsibility for the education of the native peoples in South, West, and East Africa has been left to the various missionary bodies. In South Africa, although the native pays, in proportion to his means, much higher taxation than the white man, the amount spent on the education of the whites is many times the amount spent on five times the number of natives. Wherever there is a white settled population in our African Crown Colonies, the position is similar.

Fortunately, not even the active hostility of the majority of white settled peoples in Africa, South or East, has been able to withstand the explicit enunciation by the European powers of the principle of trusteeship with all its implications. The governments of the Union of South Africa, of Southern Rhodesia, of British West and East African colonies are now definitely committed to the provision of educational facilities for the African peoples, either directly by the creation of government educational institutions or indirectly by financial grants-in-aid to and government supervision of missionary schools and colleges, and a real start has been made. Since 1916 there has been a Native College in South Africa at which Bantu students can read for university degrees. In West Africa there are several institutions which take native students up to the standard of the entrance examination for universities in Great Britain or America—and there is every hope that before very long Achimota College on the Gold Coast will attain to the status of a university institution. At Makerere

in Uganda a similar government institution has been created, one which already trains Africans for professional occupations, in addition to which Uganda boasts of several missionary institutions where the standard of education provided is above that of our matriculation. Nyasaland also provides, in many missionary centres, an advanced type of education for the natives. In Tanganyika the government has taken the lead in providing for the higher education needs of the native population, and in Kenya the training college for Jeanes (or itinerant) native teachers appears likely to exert a far-reaching influence upon the educational progress of the peoples of that country.

Southern Rhodesia, which enjoys a large measure of self-government, established a separate Department of Native Education at the beginning of 1928 under the direction of Mr. H. Jowitt. His first report,¹ which he presented to his legislative council recently, is worthy of careful study by those interested in African problems. Native education, considered as a government-aided system, covers a quarter of a century in Southern Rhodesia. In that period the number of grant-earning schools has increased from four to approximately 1600: the grants have increased from £105 to approximately £40,000. The schools are classified under three heads: first-class schools are boarding schools under European supervision, following a prescribed code, including at least two hours industrial work a day, and with actual instruction by a European teacher on a reasonable number of days a year; a second-class school is a day-school under a European teacher, who must give instruction on a reasonable number of days during the year; and a third-class school is the ordinary kraal school where pupils are taught to read and write in a native language, with the elements of writing and arithmetic, for at least two hours a day. There are two government native schools which are not classified.

Altogether, about 2500 teachers, 270 of whom are Europeans, are engaged in the work of dealing with a school population of about 100,000. The classified schools are all the result of missionary effort, twelve distinct Christian missionary bodies having established schools in the colony. A large number of their schools have now been inspected by the officers of the new Department and the report throws an interesting light on their efficiency. The kraal schools are staffed for the most part by ex-scholars who have received no training for their

¹ Southern Rhodesia. Report of the Director of Native Education for the Year 1928. Pp. 48. (Salisbury: Government Printer, 1929)

work other than that provided by the primary school which they attended. Their standard of knowledge of school subjects is rarely above that of a boy or girl aged eleven or twelve in Great Britain. Their main work is to enable the pupils to gain sufficient knowledge to become Church members. Chief stress is laid on vernacular reading, particularly in relation to relevant portions of Scripture which must be mastered before the candidate can become a member of the Church. They are supervised by missionary superintendents, most of whom labour under the disadvantage of lack of knowledge of teaching technique and organisation of schools. The Inspector of Native Schools, Salisbury, in his first report to the Department, says, "I have on record at least 12 superintendents who are unacquainted with the Native language".

As the Director of Native Education remarks, it would serve no useful purpose to attempt a meticulous survey of the present curricula in the missionary schools. He has inherited a medley of schools in various stages of growth, staffed for the most part by uneducated, unknowledgeable men and women, badly paid, inadequate to their duties and responsibilities, muddling along without proper guidance and without proper buildings or materials. The facilities for training of teachers have been practically non-existent. "It can be stated without fear of contradiction that professional training, in the common acceptance of that term, hardly existed in most of these [training] centres before 1928."

This picture of the state of native education in Southern Rhodesia is by no means unique in Africa. There are other British Crown Colonies where the conditions are much the same.

Nevertheless, the future is promising. A tremendous effort is now being made in every part of British Africa to improve the educational standards of the native peoples. There is opposition to overcome, it is true, but most colonies have now a Department of Native Education. Most of the directors are men of courage, able, like Mr. Jowitt, to express clearly and forcefully the underlying social aims of an education system and its requirements, and possessing his faith that most of the native peoples of Africa are educable up to a very high standard. A properly organised system of education for the native peoples of Africa is the first requisite to the building up in Africa of a people able to enter into co-operative partnership with the Europeans in the task of developing the immense natural resources of a mighty continent.

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Origin of Coral Reefs.

The Coral Reef Problem. By Prof. William Morris Davis. (American Geographical Society Special Publication No. 9.) Pp. viii + 596 + 16 plates. (New York: American Geographical Society, 1928.) 6 dollars.

IN 1913 Prof. W. M. Davis began to investigate the controversial subject of the origin of coral reefs. Since that time he has written numerous papers, and travelled many thousands of miles to see reefs for himself. This present volume incorporates the material of those papers and voyages, and enables those interested in coral reefs to obtain his views conveniently.

The appearance of this book is an event of considerable importance in geographical literature. Most writers on coral problems have been biologists, with the result that speculations on the origins of the different types of reefs have been somewhat varied and often have had but slight reference to the fundamental teachings of geology and physiography. It is not intended in any way to ignore or belittle the great importance of the biological study of reefs: far from it. But it is questionable how far a study of reef features and details is able to throw any light on to the origin of the reef as a whole. Looked at as an entity, a reef must clearly bear a close relation to the island or mainland which it borders, and if a reasonable interpretation is to be made of its origin, the physiographical characteristics of the shoreline must receive careful consideration. If, on the other hand, we are dealing with atolls, little direct evidence of their origin can be obtained from them. But, by deduction, we may draw certain conclusions about atolls from a study of elevated reefs or barrier reefs of other areas. In fact, the greatest difficulty of the whole coral problem is the origin of atolls: and a final answer to it can probably only be given when, if ever, we have a large number of deep borings made through characteristic atoll-reefs. Meanwhile, geographers, geologists, geophysicists, and biologists are able to help in solving this mystery by deduction until such borings are made.

It is, then, in the stress laid upon the physiographical and geological side of the problem that Davis has made such an important contribution to the already voluminous literature on the subject. Whatever criticisms may be passed on the book, it must be admitted, frankly and sincerely, by all who are interested in coral reefs, that Davis has succeeded in throwing much new light on the