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Education for Environment.[1]

UNTIL a few years ago the various local governments in British Africa could justly have been accused of indifference to the educational needs of the native peoples committed to their care. Within the past few years, however, these same governments have given welcome evidence of their growing belief in education as the principal factor in the development of the capacities of the African peoples, and the need for supplementing the work of the various missionary bodies in the field of education. They have been given much encouragement in their efforts to improve native education by the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, which from its inception has had at its command the services of Major Hanns Vischer, who combines a genuine enthusiasm for education with an almost unique knowledge of the peoples of Africa and a sympathetic understanding of their needs. Equally important has been the stimulus given to educationists in Africa by Mr. Ormsby-Gore, Mr. Jesse Jones and his associates, and the members of the Hilton-Young Commission, all of whom have visited Africa within the past six years.

In addition to the encouragement and stimulus from without, local governments find they are being urged from within to increase the educational facilities for the natives. The natives themselves are almost clamorous in their demands for education, particularly 'education by the book', just as in India, since the capacity to read and write in the language of the dominant whites gives those who possess it a comfortable feeling of superiority over those who do not, especially as it carries with it the possibility of clerical or other semi-professional work for government or for the trading community, and this work is the best paid.

In striking contrast to the thirst for instruction exhibited by the Africans is the comparative indifference of the adult members of the white-settled communities in tropical and sub-tropical Africa to the educational needs of white children. In Kenya, Tanganyika, Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia, there are many white children who are receiving practically no formal instruction at all, with the inevitable result that in each of these territories there is growing up a class of illiterate whites. If this state of affairs is not soon ended, each of these territories will have its own 'poor white' problem, a problem which is already intense in the Union of South Africa and

[1] Southern Rhodesia. Report of the Education Commission. Pp. ii+187. (Cape Town: *Cape Times*, Ltd., 1929.)

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is causing much anxiety to the Union Government, for the 'poor white' is an unemployable; too ignorant and incompetent to be worth employing in a skilled capacity, but cursed with a superiority complex which prevents him from seeking employment in occupations regarded as only fit for blacks.

Even those white parents in these territories who do send their children to the schools provided by the Government or voluntary bodies are almost without exception uncritical of the instruction given. They are apparently pathetically content that such instruction should be almost identical in form and substance with that which is provided in the schools in Great Britain. The majority of these white children will probably never leave Africa, essentially an agricultural continent, only a very few will proceed to a university, but their school studies are almost exclusively literary, more so than in the average grammar school in Great Britain, divorced from the realities of their environment and more likely to engender distaste for African life than to inculcate an intelligent appreciation of the significance of Africa in world economics and politics or a sympathetic understanding of its peoples, without both of which the assumption of leadership by the white minorities in Africa is an impertinent presumption.

World opinion now demands that the whites in Africa should equip themselves for leadership. An essential part of this equipment is the capacity to adapt themselves to the changed order of things. The exploitation of the Africans by the immigrant races is no longer condoned by most of the governments in Africa The prosperity of the whites has to be based on something other than the misery of the blacks. It can be attained by the development of the other natural resources of the continent. The development of these resources, animal, vegetable, and mineral, is obviously dependent upon the quality of the co-operation between the Africans and the whites, and this in turn is determined by the "right adjustment between the developing human organism and its surroundings" (Sir Richard Gregory's definition of education), whether the human organism be white or black.

The school, it is true, is only one of the many forces at work to secure this adjustment; but it can be made the most potent of them all, if it provides "an education that works and moves entirely amid the facts and circumstances which make up the texture of life for its pupils", the aim set forth in the recent published report of the Education Commission, which was appointed at the beginning of 1929 by the Governor of Southern Rhodesia, Sir Cecil Rodwell, to inquire into the present system of education, other than native education, of that colony.

This Commission surveys with admirable clarity and understanding the facts and circumstances of the life of the white-settled community in Southern Rhodesia. The white colonists, mainly of British stock, comprise less than 5 per cent of the total population, but they are the dominant political power. The natives are docile and intelligent. The Asiatic element in the population is very small as compared with that in the Union of South Africa or Kenya, and there is no Arab slave tradition as in eastern Africa. It is a country of known great natural resources, both agricultural and mineral, and still greater possibilities. It enjoys a fine climate. It is situated in the midst of other great productive areas and is across the main lines of communication of the southern part of Africa. Its political, economic, and social development is bound to exert a powerful influence on such development in other African colonies. Also, since the determining factor in this development will be the white minority, it is all-important that this white minority should be provided with an education which will fit it for its great responsibilities. "In a community of white people set amidst a great black population", says the Commission, "the obligation to give every white child the most complete education which he is capable of receiving must be accepted at whatever cost."

The Commission considers that the main permanent objectives which a system of education for the white community in Southern Rhodesia must have in view are:

1. "The continuance in full strength of the European inheritance."

2. The erection and maintenance of "a community that will be, in every aspect of its life, characteristically Rhodesian".

3. The development in the youth of the country of "the moral stamina to overcome the strong and subtle influences which, in a mixed society like that of Rhodesia, are constantly at work to sap the energies and weaken the moral tenacity of the privileged European".

4. "The development and wise use of the great natural resources of the country."

For the attainment of the first objective the Commission regards it as essential that not only teachers, but also other educating agencies, must continue to come from Europe, particularly from Great Britain, for this will ensure that the common store of achievement in literature and art and the

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general apparatus of civilised life will be drawn directly from the source, to provide for those born in a hitherto barbarous land such as Southern Rhodesia " the best substitute for that rich background of long-established civilisation which is the unconscious inheritance of every child in an older community " As regards the second objective, the Commission lays emphasis on the educative value of the study of " the natural life of Rhodesia, its plants, animals, insects, climatic phenomena and so forth ; the life of the natives which so intimately and subtly concerns the welfare of every child ; the main industries ; the history of African settlement ".

Regarding the third objective the Commission refers to " the danger of moral degeneration which threatens the youth of a country, where the services of others are so easily come by, and where the labour that serves the first needs of life is apt to be despised as menial and dishonouring ". It recommends strongly that the expert aid of psychologists should be enlisted to investigate the influences on the life of white children through their many contacts with the native peoples, particularly in connexion with the attitude of the former to the latter. The fourth objective will be best attained, it believes, by the multiplication of centres to provide facilities for training skilled workers, and better and more systematic co-operation between the schools on one hand and organised industry and the technical departments of Government on the other.

There follows a critical survey of the existing facilities for the education of the whites in Southern Rhodesia. Various recommendations are made for the improvement of the system. Southern Rhodesia is warned of the dangers of parochialism in education, and in particular is advised to lose no opportunity for friendly and fruitful co-operation with the Union of South Africa. Equally important are the suggestions made for the co-operation of parents with school authorities. The tendency on the part of parents to regard teachers as a class apart, and schools as institutions with no links with the homes of the scholars, is not uniquely a Southern Rhodesian phenomenon : it is almost universal. In this connexion the Commission's suggestion, that one means of promoting co-operation between parents and the education authorities would be by designing better home-tasks for pupils, merits the most careful consideration in Great Britain.

This is by no means the only need Southern Rhodesia and Great Britain have in common. Where secondary schools exist in any British colonies, they appear to be based on home models, that is to say, the school curricula are designed to meet the needs of the universities to which only a very small proportion of secondary school scholars will proceed. Parents and the public generally condone this, the former because they lack the courage to resist the demand by employing bodies for the stereotyped educational hall-marks prescribed by universities. The needed change will only be brought about, as the Commission states, by the public realising that " Secondary schools should be regarded as the final stage of school education for the many rather than as the preparatory stage for the few ". The need in all countries of the Empire is for the provision of a variety of secondary courses of equal status, not " one selected body of studies having a traditional pre-eminence over others, any more than it can be regarded as the exclusive privilege of a select class ". In any course, however, the Commission strongly recommends the inclusion of manual training and general science subjects, including biology. What is surprising is the reaction of the Commission to the suggestion made by certain witnesses that some provision should be made in the white schools for the study of native languages. The Commission says quite definitely that " the advantage to be gained from the introduction of native languages as a school study is not sufficiently great to justify the encroachment that would be involved on the time available for other studies ".

A chapter of the report is devoted to agricultural education. " Comparatively little has been done in Rhodesian schools to develop interest in the problems and the life of the countryside, and to produce what may be called rural-mindedness." This the Commission attributes mainly to the fact that " primary education in the Colony has been dominated by secondary education, and the secondary schools have been developed under teachers whose own education and training have been in the main on purely academic lines " But Rhodesian parents also object to their children " digging and hoeing ", or doing any other form of manual work, since such occupations are regarded as 'Kaffir' work, too degrading for whites. The result in Rhodesia as elsewhere is the progressive migration of the rural population to the towns.

The staffing of the white schools in Rhodesia is adequate to the extent of generosity, but there is an undue proportion of untrained teachers, particularly in the secondary schools. This the Commission regards as a grave defect. It considers that both a university degree and training are essential for secondary school work, and backs its opinion

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by the specific statement that the proportion of untrained teachers among the inefficient teachers is very much higher than the proportion of untrained teachers in the service as a whole. This opinion is valuable, for it gives added authority to those members of the Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education who have, for some years past, advocated the provision of professional courses, prior to appointment, for those graduates from British universities who wish to enter the education services in the Colonies. A. G. CHURCH.

The Philosophy of Spinoza and Leibniz.

The Philosophy of Spinoza: The Unity of his Thought. By Richard McKeon. Pp. ix + 345. (New York, London and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1928.) 25*s.* net.

Spinoza. By Prof. Leon Roth. (Leaders of Philosophy Series.) Pp. xvi + 250. (London: Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1929.) 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

Leibniz. By Prof. Herbert Wildon Carr. (Leaders of Philosophy Series.) Pp. vi + 222. (London: Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1929.) 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

THE new series of publications which, under the title of "Leaders of Philosophy", is being edited by Prof. J. L. Stocks, ought to supply a want which has long been felt. It is true that certain of the volumes contained in Blackwood's "Philosophical Classics", such as Adamson's monograph on "Fichte" and Croom Robertson's on "Hobbes", are in their way unique and of permanent value; but they were written nearly fifty years ago, and the last half-century has been particularly fruitful in historical and critical work respecting all the philosophical systems that have influenced western thought. There is, therefore, ample room for such a set of volumes as Prof. Stocks contemplates; and with those that deal with Spinoza and Leibniz, the two greatest metaphysical thinkers of the pre-Kantian period, the new series appropriately makes a start.

At first sight, it is true, the individualism of Leibniz would appear to be diametrically antithetical to the universalism of Spinoza. But, as Prof. Roth points out, when it comes to a detailed working out of the two systems, the opposition tones down, and the similarities are at least as striking as the contrasts. Prof. Roth instances Leibniz's theories of soul, of pre-established harmony, of liberty, of perfection, as depending on specific features in Spinoza's doctrine; and he refers to the cardinal notion of activity (*esse = agere*) as being already involved in Spinoza's view of modal being. He might, however, have gone further, and have shown that in the end both thinkers were confronted with precisely the same crucial issues.

Prof. Carr's account of the historical background of Leibniz's career, as also of the intellectual world of the last half of the seventeenth century, is extraordinarily well done, and forms a most fitting introduction to the later study. In setting forth the various aspects of Leibniz's philosophy, there is room for considerable difference of emphasis, if not of interpretation. For, although the philosophy is in itself essentially systematic, yet Leibniz himself left no single systematic exposition of it, and a connected view can only be obtained by drawing together what was put forward in detached letters and papers and essays. Prof. Carr justly lays stress upon the characteristics of unity and activity as defining for Leibniz the notion of real existence. In contradistinction from the discreteness of a physical atom, consisting of *partes extra partes*, the unity of a real existent was the unity of an internal variety; and, in contradistinction from 'moving force', its activity was an 'implanted principle of change and persistence', involving effort, *conatus*, and that without external stimulus. In other words, a real existent, or monad, was essentially psychical in character.

It was, however, by the help of a further consideration that Leibniz was enabled to advance from this fundamental conception to the thought of an infinite plurality of monads—the consideration, namely, that psychical activity cannot be a mere flowing forth of unimpeded energy, because this would give no more manifestation of itself than would an elastic force which met with no resistance. Accordingly, a monad must be both active and passive: active, in order to exist at all; passive, in order to exist as an individual and to manifest itself as a centre of activity. Hence the existence of one monad presupposed that of a world of monads with which it was in some way in relation, otherwise its unity would be impossible. I think it is because Prof. Carr makes no reference to the passive side of the monad's nature that Leibniz's philosophy, as he presents it, appears to be even more lacking in coherence than it really is. For it was just this element of passivity, of limitation, of finitude, that Leibniz fixed upon to explain the appearance, in the life of the more developed monads, of the phenomenal world of sense-experience. In so far as the monad is passive, its representations are, he argued, obscure and confused, and what is obscure and confused *seems*

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