

letters or other documents sufficiently establishing the status of the importer or consignee and the purposes for which the specimens are imported. The collector of customs and excise will be at liberty to request further information, if he considers it necessary. Where specimens are imported in personal baggage, similar information will be asked for.

If these requirements are satisfactorily complied with, the necessary authority will be granted forthwith and the specimens admitted immediately free of any charge of spirit duty.

It is not necessary that scientific workers proceeding on expeditions abroad should take any action before leaving Great Britain. It is, however, advisable, with the view of avoiding delay, that scientific workers returning with specimens should have the letters or other documents required to establish the facts readily available, and, in the case of specimens which are being received from senders abroad, that the forwarding agent who is entrusted with the work of clearing the goods should be supplied with the necessary information and letters, etc., in good time.

University and Educational Intelligence.

LONDON.—The following honorary appointments to the staff of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine are announced:—Dr. James Fenton, medical officer of health for the Borough of Kensington, to be an additional lecturer on public health administration and practice; Mr. L. W. G. Malcolm, conservator of the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, to be a lecturer on racial hygiene.

A COURSE of nine lectures on television will be given by Mr. J. J. Denton, honorary secretary of the Television Society, at the Borough Polytechnic, Borough Road, London, S.E.1, on Thursdays at eight o'clock, commencing on Jan. 21. Further information can be obtained from the Principal of the Polytechnic.

THE finance of public elementary education as exemplified, on one hand, in certain Tyneside areas and, on the other, in a number of wealthy watering-places, forms the subject of a pamphlet entitled "The Finance of Public Elementary Education", by Mr. Ernest Dyer, issued in November by the Tyneside Council of Social Service (17 Ellison Place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne). The gist of the problem discussed is indicated in the following comparison between Hebburn and Bexhill urban districts. In 1929-30 Hebburn (a Tyneside town) had 4683 elementary school children and a 1d. rate yielded £395 or 1s. 8½d. a child, so that an education rate of 3s. 2d. in the £ was needed to finance an expenditure of £8 19s. 9d. per child. Bexhill, with an equal population, had only 1339 elementary school children, a 1d. rate yielded 16s. 8½d. per child, and a rate of 7½d. in the £ (one-fifth of the Hebburn rate) enabled it to spend £13 3s. per child (fifty per cent more than Hebburn expenditure). The following year, under the operation of the Derating Act, Hebburn's rate had to be raised from 3s. 2d. to 4s. 7d., while Bexhill's position remained unchanged. The conclusion drawn is that the formula under which grants-in-aid are fixed is becoming increasingly ineffective as a means of rectifying such disparities between rich and poor authorities, and there can be no satisfactory advance in education in the poorer districts, such as those of the Tyneside, until the State can be persuaded to accept a greater share of financial responsibility. The conclusion is to some extent invalidated by a number of important recent modifications of the grants-in-aid rules. A summary of these is given at the end of the paper.

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Calendar of Geographical Exploration.

Jan. 17, 1773.—Crossing the Antarctic Circle.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there was a widespread belief in the existence of a great southern world. The revival of interest in geography in the eighteenth century led the Royal Society to urge on the British Admiralty the importance of research in southern waters. In 1768, James Cook sailed under orders of the Admiralty to prosecute astronomical and geographical researches in the Southern Pacific. In July 1772, under similar orders, he set out to examine and determine once and for all the question of the supposed great southern continent. His vessel, the *Resolution*, accompanied by the *Adventure*, commanded by T. Furneaux, crossed the antarctic circle on Jan. 17 of the following year. This voyage, during which he thrice penetrated the antarctic, effectively disposed of the long-cherished illusion. For it became evident that if such a continent existed it was frozen and uninhabitable. In addition, his explorations outlined the main features of the southern portions of the globe such as they remain to-day. Of further scientific interest is the fact that this voyage marked the conquest of scurvy. Cook lost but one man out of 118 on a voyage lasting 1000 days. For this service to hygiene, the Royal Society awarded him the Copley Medal in 1776.

Jan. 17, 1839.—Balleny Islands.

John Balleny, in the schooner *Eliza Scott*, left Campbell Island, south of New Zealand, to search for new land. He reached the antarctic circle in 178° E. on Jan. 29, but later, meeting heavy ice, turned westwards and discovered the group of rocky islands which bears his name. The islands were mapped and geological specimens collected. Balleny was sent out by the firm of Enderby Brothers, a London ship-owning firm trading in seal oil. This firm showed a keen interest in geographical discovery, and one of the brothers was an original fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. They had previously, in 1830, dispatched John Biscoe on a two years' voyage combining sealing and exploration. Biscoe sailed through nearly fifty degrees of longitude south of the antarctic circle and discovered the coast of Enderby Land. He did not know of Bellingshausen's discoveries, but entered that sea and discovered Biscoe Islands and the coast of Graham Land.

Jan. 18, 1912.—The South Pole.

Capt. R. F. Scott found the tent with the record that Roald Amundsen and four other Norwegians had reached the south pole on Dec. 16, 1911. Scott had reached the pole on the night of Jan. 17, but had realised from the tracks that his party had been forestalled. Scott and his companions, Wilson, Evans, Oates, and Bowers, set out on their tragic return journey. Evans fell ill and died, and the time involved in caring for their sick companion considerably delayed the party. A strong surface wind wiped out the track they were trying to follow; weather conditions were persistently adverse; the oil in the tins at the depots was insufficient, weather conditions having resulted in the perishing of the leather washers with consequent evaporation. Yet in spite of weariness and hunger, the party continued to the last to carry the geological specimens collected on the Beardmore glacier. The fossils in the specimens threw much light on the age and past history of this part of the antarctic continent; the gain to science was, however, obtained at the cost of heavy