

conditions and to meet the new individualistic attitude, the group or tribe must now find a new orientation. As an educationist, he, not unnaturally, pins his faith to the individual; and he, therefore, proceeded to demonstrate the educability of the African from the degree and character of the achievement of the natives under his jurisdiction. In rating it relatively high, he is in agreement with others whose acquaintance with the African is not less than his own.

In view of Mr. Lacey's remarks on the place of the family and tribal group in promoting the maintenance of law and order, it is a disappointment to find that he anticipates little assistance from the home environment in the slow process of building up an educational tradition. The pre-European system of native education was largely left to the influence of the social environment, and if the group should attain the new orientation which is said to be a necessity of future development, it should be made to play its part in developing the social consciousness of the rising generations, co-operating with the more academic influence of the official system of education. It is evident that a grave responsibility will rest on the administration in guiding tribal development towards the new orientation along lines which avoid any sudden break with tradition and yet lead towards the full social and religious life which Mr. Lacey postulates as an inspiration for the full expression of the Bantu genius. In this connexion the article on "Kenya Cults" which appeared in the *Times* of March 10 is suggestive. The author of that article describes some of the strange cults which have arisen recently in Kavirondo and among the Kikuyu. Their appearance in Kenya is not unique, but can be paralleled by strange forms of belief which have been grafted on Christianity and have attracted a large number of followers from time to time in other parts of Africa; and it will be remembered that it was a dispute, similar to that now described, but on a much larger scale, between the followers of Roman Catholic and Protestant creeds which first led to European intervention in Uganda. It is suggested by the writer in the *Times* that the Kenya cults are matters for the anthropologist rather than the administrator; but against this view, it is a question whether, owing to the tendency of the African towards fanatical adherence to aberrant and anti-social cults, the attitude of the administration towards developments in native religion does not require fundamental revision.

24-Hour Time System

It has been announced that the British Broadcasting Corporation will adopt at an early date the 24-hour system of expressing time. The system will be used in announcements over the microphone, in the journals issued by it and in correspondence. This decision by the B.B.C. will provide the best possible opportunity of testing whether the general public is in favour of or is opposed to the 24-hour system. Though the adoption of the 24-hour system has been widely supported by transport organisations (rail, road and air), by engineers, by the mercantile marine and in scientific circles, the Government has taken

the view that there is no very strong demand for the change and that it would be wrong to impose upon the public a system of notation which might confuse rather than assist. As was announced in *NATURE* last week (p. 354), the Postmaster-General has stated that he proposes to await the result of the B.B.C. experiment before coming to a decision. It was apparently with the same desire to see what measure of support or opposition from the general public was indicated that the House of Lords on March 7 negatived a motion introduced by Lord Lamington urging that the 24-hour system should be put into operation as soon as possible, though the House on December 7, 1933, had approved a motion for the adoption of the system.

Development of the Royal Air Force

PRESENTING the air estimates to Parliament on March 8, Sir Philip Sassoon, Under-Secretary of State for Air, outlined a programme of expansion of the R.A.F. which, while modest, is probably as large as can be undertaken with efficiency at the present time, remembering that previous economies have restricted both the training of personnel, and the provision of accommodation for additional squadrons. The net amount provided is £17,561,000, an increase of £135,000 over last year's figure. If grants from India and the Admiralty in respect of R.A.F. services to them are added, these figures become £20,165,000 and £527,000 respectively. Four new squadrons are to be formed, two for home defence, one flying boat squadron, and the equivalent of one squadron for the Fleet air arm. In addition, two home defence squadrons, at present forming part of an experimental station, and consequently non-effective as fighting units, are to be reconstituted as active squadrons. The principal increased expenditures are obviously to be made under Votes 3 (technical equipment), and 4 (works, buildings, lands, etc.). It is interesting to note that Vote 2 (non-technical stores) remains stationary, in spite of the expansions, due to lower prices. Vote 8 (civil aviation) stands at the highest figure for the last ten years. This includes expenditure upon the British Government part of the route to Australia, up to Singapore, the first link of the Atlantic service, New York to Bermuda, and the usual subsidies for flying activities in Great Britain. Sir Philip also gave an interesting account of the various developments of the R.A.F., including long distance communication flights, police duties and distress relief in remote lands, air surveying, etc. The use of petrol produced from British coal has been successful, and it is hoped to maintain seven squadrons upon it exclusively during the coming year.

Elements Old and New

In a lecture with the above title given at East London College on March 8, Prof. James Kendall, of the University of Edinburgh, traced the development of fundamental ideas on the elements from the earliest times to the modern period. The four elements of the Greek philosophers—fire, air, earth and water—expanded during the nineteenth century