

appointed a sub-committee to consider measures for the protection of the natives of Dutch New Guinea. This sub-committee was composed of members eminent in science, or with experience of primitive peoples and of industrial organization in the tropics. Among them were Prof. O. de Vries, of the Government Agricultural Experimental Station at Groningen, Dr. A. J. M. van W. van der Gracht, of the Government Service for the Supervision of Mines, and Dr. H. J. T. Bijlmer, whose expedition to the mountain region of Dutch New Guinea in 1936 effected contacts with native peoples who had never previously seen a white man. The sub-committee has prepared a report, which has been adopted by the main committee and has recently been submitted for consideration to the Governor-General of the Dutch Indies and the Minister for the Colonies\*.

The native problem, it is pointed out by the Committee in its report, is twofold. The population of the coastal lands, which on broad lines is already known geographically, consists of tribes of Papuan stock, which already have been in contact with Europeans, official, mission and other, for some decades. These tribes are fierce and warlike, cannibals and head-hunters, among whom murder and manslaughter are rife. Some of them are still uninfluenced by civilization. In the mountain region, until recently almost entirely unexplored, on the other hand, the inhabitants are Papuans of a specialized type, some indeed of so low a stature as almost to warrant the designation of pygmies. Of these a few only had been reached in recent years by scientific expeditions, and that with extreme difficulty, before the aeroplane made the country more readily accessible. The culture of these mountain peoples is of a different order from that of the peoples of the coastal lands. They cultivate gardens and keep pigs, are industrious, and have settled habitations, while their warfare is of a mild type. In disposition they are friendly, and greet European contacts in an amicable spirit.

Two alternative methods of dealing with the native problem presented themselves to the Committee for consideration. Of these the first was the complete segregation of the native population from all contacts with civilization in a native reserve, in which they might be preserved with their culture as museum specimens. The second alternative was the protection of the native population from the effects of a full and sudden impact of white civilization—the abruptness of the impact constituting, it was felt, the essential danger—by a process of gradual preparation and education, in which contact with European influence would be subject to stringent and careful regulation.

The Committee elected in favour of the latter course as the more practical, and at the same time the more fair to the native, as it would leave open to him the possibility of cultural development, from which, it was felt, he should not be debarred, as he would be under the first alternative.

It is, therefore, suggested that provision should be made for three stages of development and contact: (1) a period of gradual reconnoitring and penetration, research and study, with a minimum of native control by Government agencies; (2) a period of gradual building up of a new culture, the introduction of

missions and mission schools, the intensification of Government functions, with a recognition of native authorities, and the extension of communications, and other forms of economic development; and (3) the normal colonial condition of Dutch administration, with co-operation with, and recognition of, local native autonomy.

In order to bring about the smooth development of these three stages of progress, certain regulations are suggested, which include the declaration of population reserves, in which in addition to the existing regulations as to permits for entrance, no Eastern immigrants should be admitted, and no corporate or individual enterprise should be allowed except under special conditions framed to protect the interests of the natives. As a condition of admission to New Guinea, medical examination and precaution against infectious or other disease should be added to the requirement of a permit; the importation of all alcohol and drugs should be prohibited; and the importation and sale of drapery goods should also be prohibited in order to enforce the wearing of the native type of clothing. Further, the establishment of estates should be subject to regulation, ensuring the preservation of sufficient agricultural land for the needs of the native population, while the importation of labour and recruiting of indigenous labour should be regulated. A large area of the mountain region should be declared a reserve, though not debarred to prospecting, which being for the most part of a transient character should not, under permit, affect the interests of the native population. This large reserve, when known ethnologically, and technically explored, might be broken up into smaller units.

It will be seen that the Committee, in framing its recommendations, has wisely aimed at reconciling the efficient protection of the interests of the indigenous population with the opening up and commercial development of this valuable territory. In framing its policy it has been, as is duly acknowledged, much indebted to the measures taken by the Australian Government for the administration of the Mandated Territory of New Guinea, and above all to the conceptions in native administration of Governor General Sir Hubert Murray.

## University Events

**BELFAST.**—The title of professor emeritus has been conferred on Prof. F. Hummel, who retired recently from the chair of civil engineering.

**EDINBURGH.**—On January 11, Sir William Bragg formally opened the new common room of the University, situated at King's Buildings, West Mains Road. It is designed to meet the physical and social needs of the students of science, most of whose work is done at King's Buildings. During the ceremony, it was announced that Dr. J. A. Thomson had given £5,000 and promised up to £10,000 towards the maintenance of the building.

Sir William Bragg also took the chair at the inaugural lecture of the newly instituted lectureship of crystallography. The lectureship was founded by a fund left by Lady Dewar, widow of Sir James Dewar, in 1936, and the lecture was delivered by Dr. C. A. Beevers, Dewar research fellow.

\* Netherlands Committee for International Nature Protection: Report concerning the Possibility of Protecting the Primitive Natives, especially the Mountain—Papuan—Tribes in Dutch New Guinea. Pp. 32. (Amsterdam: Nederlandsche Commissie voor Internationale Natuurbescherming.)