

NATURE

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Editorial and Publishing Offices

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Telephone Number: Whitehall 8831

Telegrams: Phusis Lesquare London

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TRAINING FOR THE COLONIAL SERVICES

THE Colonial Service is called upon to-day to deal with a whole range of problems that had not been contemplated when a course of training for entrants was first devised in 1924. The administrative officer, once concerned mainly with the maintenance of law and order, is now expected to be the active promoter of all those types of activity that have come to be grouped under the heading 'Development and Welfare'. A new type of training is called for, more appropriate to these new functions.

British faith in the amateur dies hard; in the Indian, Home and Sudan Civil Services, a university degree, in no matter what subject, is regarded as both a necessary and a sufficient qualification. In the case of the Colonial Administrative Service, this has been supplemented since 1924 by a course at Oxford or Cambridge, lasting one university session, in subjects relevant to the work for which the students are preparing—law, surveying and field engineering, colonial history, colonial administration, geography, anthropology, tropical agriculture and forestry, tropical hygiene, and languages. Contrast the provision made by the other major colonial Powers—the *École Nationale de la France d'Outre-Mer* in Paris, the *Université Coloniale* at Antwerp, the five-year colonial courses given at the Universities of Leyden and Utrecht. A recent addition to this list is the Australian School of Pacific Administration, which was opened in May of this year and is to be incorporated in the Australian National University. Australia's present plans are for a training period shorter than a normal university course—three months before, and two years after, the first tour of service. In all the other cases, the syllabus for a university degree is built around the special interests of the man preparing for work in the colonial field.

Britain still sees virtues in a 'general'—some might almost say an irrelevant—education. So the administrators of the British Colonial Empire must still cover the enlarged field of studies now considered necessary within the limits of the time they can spare when they have completed an undergraduate course. This has now been somewhat extended; there is to be a preliminary course of four terms (with special study during the 'long vacation'), and an additional one of six months after the first tour of service. The proposals which have just appeared* are based on a memorandum by Sir Ralph Furse, director of recruitment to the Colonial Office, which was discussed by a committee representing the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London, with the Duke of Devonshire as chairman. The memorandum is published as an annex to the Committee's report. It is emphasized that the proposals are tentative and may be revised in the light of experience.

Under the new plan, entrants on selection will go first to Oxford or Cambridge, where they will spend two full terms and a shortened summer term (to the

* Colonial Office. Post-War Training for the Colonial Service Report of a Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. (Colonial No. 198.) Pp. 46. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1946.) 9d. net.

end of May) studying British Empire and Colonial history and administration, law, agriculture, geography and anthropology. They will then be allotted to their respective Colonies. The month of June and the following October term will be spent in London, mainly in the study of languages; to this the report would allot a minimum of three hours daily. At the same time, however, they are to take courses in the geography, sociology and administration of one of three major regions, West Africa, East Africa, or Malaya and the Pacific. The report remarks that "recruits are willing to work very hard so long as they believe that they are being given the tools for their future job". Willing they may be, but the breathless succession of lectures which this programme must involve is just what most university teachers would deplore. One wonders what was the compelling argument against devising a course extending over two university sessions.

During the 'long vacation', the students are to be given practical experience of the working of local government administration and of the social services in both urban and rural areas; this will presumably involve dividing them into small groups to be attached to different local authorities. This is the most interesting innovation in the proposed new course, and the one that most clearly reflects the new conception of the functions of the administrative officer; he is to be largely engaged in co-ordinating the work of specialists in 'development and welfare' schemes, and in encouraging the colonial form of local government—a native authority or whatever it may be—to take responsibility for the social services, which it is the present policy of Britain to extend as rapidly as possible. Another new proposal is that the second course, to be taken after the first tour of duty, shall be attended by officers of all the technical services as well as by administrative officers. This, it is hoped, will help to break down the isolation of the political from the specialist officer, and of specialist officers from one another, which has characterized too many Colonies in the past. It has been realized in Government quarters, ever since the Nutrition Committee reported in 1939, that the first essential in approaching any of the major problems of Colonial backwardness—malnutrition, soil erosion, illiteracy, disease—is the concerted attack, and most Colonies have recognized this to the extent of bringing the heads of all departments together to draw up development plans. At lower levels, however, co-operation is not yet taken for granted, and a combined course of training will have a most valuable influence in this direction. Sir Ralph Furse points out that the lectures recently introduced on the work and problems of the agricultural and forest services have already had good results.

The probationers are also to fit into their 'long vacation' a course of lectures on tropical hygiene and sanitation, and "possibly some instruction in" a number of miscellaneous subjects, the value of which seems open to question, judging from their titles. "Field Engineering", a reject from the pre-war course, evidently found an advocate who could not bear to see it go. "Colonial Accounts" appears from

the text of the report to mean office routine work. "Tropical Housekeeping and Cookery" was introduced, it seems, in response to "colonial opinion"; but is an organised course required in order to explain that food goes bad quickly in hot climates?

Certainly no one could accuse the Committee of overlooking any subject likely to be of value to the administrative cadet; the question is rather whether so many can be adequately treated in the time available.

Sir Ralph Furse makes some interesting suggestions about the cadet's first tour of service. The work allotted to him should be planned with the view of giving him useful experience on different types of station and in different aspects of administration. He might be attached for short periods to officers of some of the technical departments. He should spend part of the tour at Makerere or Achimota in order to make the acquaintance of the educated African; and at the same time, since both those institutions are near Government headquarters, could see something of the working of a colonial secretariat and departmental headquarters offices.

Confirmation of appointment is to come at the end of this first tour. The officer will then return to Britain for a second course of six months, to be taken in London, and to consist mainly in discussions rather than in formal teaching. The subjects listed for this course are British colonial aims, comparative colonial administration, social administration, and one of several aspects of economics relevant to colonial problems. It is significant that in the case of the first subject alone, no indication is given of what the title covers; it could be argued that, though the methods of Colonial Powers differ widely, their aims are fundamentally the same, and that the first subject can only be treated as part of the second. In addition, students at this course will make a special study of some problem of anthropology, history, law, economics, education, agriculture or language. It is hoped that they will keep up a permanent interest in the subject selected. Provision is to be made, on a much larger scale than heretofore, for sabbatical leave for officers anxious to pursue their study further.

The second course is to be preceded by attendance at a summer school of the type that was so successfully organised at Oxford before the War. This will be open also to officers on leave in Britain. In future, summer schools are to be held both in Oxford and Cambridge, with the co-operation of London in providing lecturers and discussion leaders.

Sir Ralph Furse suggests that selected officers from the services of the Dominion mandated territories should be invited to attend all these courses; the report mentions them only in connexion with the summer school. While New Guinea was under military administration, the Australian Defence Department attached some importance to arrangements for giving selected officers experience of other Colonies, and a plan was adopted whereby four each year would be seconded for six months, of which three would be spent in a British Crown Colony and three at the Colonial Office. Only two had left Australia

when civil government was restored, and the Minister for External Territories did not continue the scheme. It has since been suggested that officers from the British Crown Colonies might attend the Australian School of Pacific Administration.

The financial provision involved in the necessary expansion of the Colonial Service and the new plans for training are discussed in a further memorandum*. This emphasizes, first, the need to implement the declared policy of throwing open the administrative service to suitably qualified men from among the colonial peoples by greatly increasing the opportunities for them to become qualified. For this purpose, a sum of £1,000,000 has been allocated from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund over the next ten years for scholarships to enable selected colonial candidates for the service to receive education up to the same standards as those from Great Britain or the Dominions. The scholarships will be open to officers in subordinate grades of the public services as well as to entrants from outside.

The Government is also to provide a very much larger proportion than in the past of the cost of training, both general and technical. Formerly this was borne mainly by the Colonial Governments, though Great Britain financed scholarship schemes in the case of agricultural, veterinary and forest officers. For the next ten years, £1,500,000 is to be allocated from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund for this purpose.

Principles are laid down governing the vexed question of salary scales for officers recruited locally and overseas. These are to be determined according to the nature of the work and the relative responsibilities, and are to be fixed at rates applicable to locally recruited staff, regard being paid to ruling levels of income in those classes from which the public services are recruited. Expatriation pay is to be provided for overseas officers, at rates which will take into account, among other things, the remuneration offered in alternative careers at home. The justification in these terms of the discrepancy in the salaries of officers recruited locally and overseas is logically unassailable; the recognition that the Colonial Service has to compete with alternative careers, and must offer conditions which will attract good men, is more important now than ever before; yet it is doubtful whether feeling on this point in the Colonies will be appeased by the division of the overseas officer's emoluments into salary and expatriation allowance.

Assistance is to be available under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act in special cases where a Colony's resources are insufficient to meet the cost of appointing overseas officers whom it needs.

The question whether Great Britain should take over the whole cost of the Colonial Service is discussed in a final paragraph. To do so would dispose of the argument that the Colonies should not be 'burdened' with the cost of a staff adequate in numbers and quality. This possibility is dismissed, however, on the ground that it would be politically retrograde to

staff the higher grades of the Service with officers whose conditions of employment would not be controlled by the Colonial legislatures. The arrangement outlined in the paper is preferred because it "provides for a generous measure of assistance, so planned as to ensure that the Colonies will get a fully equipped Service in which the Colonial peoples themselves will take a progressively increasing share, while retaining the framework of existing institutions and safeguarding the principle of local self-government".

Although these reports contain many points which may be criticized, they are evidence of official recognition of the fact that the Colonial Services have many new problems to meet, for which the old training methods will be inadequate. The proposals are stated to be provisional, and their effects will be carefully examined.

TRIASSIC FISHES FROM EAST GREENLAND

Studies on Triassic Fishes, I. (Palæozoologica Groenlandica)

By Eigil Nielsen. Pp. 394 + 30 plates. Meddelelser om Grønland, 138. (København: C. A. Reitzels Forlag, 1942.) 22 kr.

WITH the exception of introductory pages and summaries, this work is identical with *Palæozoologica Groenlandica*, Bd. 1; parallel publication of fossil material will continue in this new journal and in *Medd. om Grønland*.

This volume, excellently printed in English on good paper during the German occupation of Denmark, is a most worthy member of the great series of monographs on fossil vertebrates produced under the direct influence of Prof. E. A. Stensiö of Stockholm. It shows the latest developments of techniques of freeing fossils from matrix, of serial sectioning, and of illustration, which have been worked out in Stensiö's laboratories. As in other large works of this school, the generous scale of publication allows extensive review of a whole group of fishes, and discussion of many problems; the excellent co-operation between the specialist palæontologists and the official expeditions is as marked as ever. Dr. Nielsen has himself spent several seasons, and wintered, in East Greenland, and collected much of the material now described. Vertebrate palæontology owes much to Dr. Lauge Koch's repeated, and outstandingly productive, expeditions to East Greenland.

Two genera of Eotriassic Actinopterygii are dealt with—*Glaucolepis* Stensiö (= *Pteronisculus* White) with five species, and *Boreosomus* Stensiö (= *Dia-phorognathus* Brough) with one; their stratigraphical position is well defined. Both genera were first described from Spitsbergen, and have been definitely recognized elsewhere only from Eotriassic rocks in East Greenland and Madagascar—an intriguing problem of distribution.

About two hundred specimens of *Glaucolepis*, in calcareous concretions, permit the most comprehensive and detailed description of a 'palæoniscoid' fish ever published. The head has been investigated by exquisite positive preparation (the specimen illustrated on pls. 13–17, showing the whole branchial arch

* Colonial Office. Organisation of the Colonial Service. (Colonial No. 197.) Pp. 12. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1946.) 2d. net.