

reason, we wish jointly to report the presence of chlorogenic acid in both mature and immature apple and pear fruits, and of this substance and a substance similar to, or identical with, *isochlorogenic acid* of coffee¹ in leaves and shoots of pear.

Details of the work will be given in independent publications elsewhere.

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¹ Barnes, Feldman and White, *J. Amer. Chem. Soc.*, **72**, 4178 (1950).

The Symmetrical Spherical Top

THE plastic toy top described by C. M. Braams¹ recalls a similar top described in some detail in Prof. John Perry's "Operatives' Lecture of the British Association Meeting at Leeds, September 6, 1890", or in his book "Spinning Tops", 67-74 (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1890). He gives the reason for the unusual behaviour of the top in terms of the rule: "Hurry on the precession and the body rises in opposition to gravity", and ascribes the theory of the effect to Lord Kelvin (1874). Perry's Fig. 35, which is on p. 75 of "Spinning Tops", is almost the modern "Tippe Top".

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¹ *Nature* **170**, 31 (1952).

"Library Services in the British Colonial Territories"

THE thoughtful and well-informed article on this subject in *Nature* of May 24 will be keenly appreciated by all who also regard the establishment of adequate public library services in these territories as a matter of high priority, being a prerequisite of both economic and social development. The Library Association, with the full co-operation of the Colonial Office, has recently appointed a Committee to advise on all aspects of library provision in the Colonies.

The Library Association warmly supports the contention that "There is clearly a need for a body with driving force capable of providing the finance to establish public libraries and the ability to organize and direct their development until the local governments are able to take over" the responsibility.

Nevertheless, there are difficulties which it would be wrong to underestimate. First, it is a basic constitutional principle that the Metropolitan Government does not direct Colonial development, or indeed interfere any more than is necessary in local affairs. Thus it is not possible for the British Government to impose any pattern or standards; it can only

encourage and guide. Consequently its functions, however implemented, must be limited to initiating and financially aiding pilot or demonstration projects, assisting in schemes for professional education, and affording advice, bibliographical services and the like. Some of this help must be on a short-term basis, preferably diminishing as local support increases. But it is cardinal that initial help should not be withdrawn until the local support is sufficient, otherwise all that has been achieved is thrown away. Yet that is what is in danger of happening, for example, in the Eastern Caribbean. Moreover, all these pilot schemes must enjoy a measure of security, as otherwise planning is impossible, and those who undergo training for librarianship must be assured that they will have permanent scope and employment.

The second great difficulty is that no sound library services can be started or maintained without properly selected, trained and experienced staff. It is, therefore, though obviously unintentionally, misleading to suggest that "the cost of establishing adequate library systems throughout the British Colonial Empire would be very small, and no more than a small team of librarians working in the field would be required". The idea of such a team starting one scheme in one Colony and then moving on to another and so on may seem attractive but is actually impracticable. Each scheme needs two or three first-class, thoroughly experienced leaders capable of starting the job and seeing it through, and of building up well recruited and trained local staff to maintain the services permanently, a task which will occupy a great part of their professional lifetime. We must avoid thinking of library services as inexpensive undertakings. Good libraries must be expensive, which does not prevent their being worth while; on the contrary, the inexpensive are the least worth while. It is absurd to imagine that nation-wide public libraries can, in a year or two and at small cost, be established in the towns and throughout the country districts of a multi-lingual, multi-culture Colony with scarcely any vernacular literature, which will be adequate for the needs of those who can read and those who will be able to read as fundamental education projects begin to achieve full results.

If it is reasonable to argue that any particular Colonial Government cannot afford to maintain adequate libraries, then the case for aid from the British Government is all the stronger. For one thing is absolutely sure: that without education and the libraries that are the essential accompaniment of educational development, these people will never be able to afford libraries, or anything else beyond bare subsistence. Without adequate library services, the British Colonial territories will never be able to achieve proper standards of living for their peoples, and the ideal of democratic self-government will either remain a dream or prove a tragic failure. Therefore, we would urge all who have a sense of responsibility in this matter to support the Colonial authorities in their educational and library development policies and to urge that the British Council, in co-operation with the Colonial Office, be enabled to resume its library work in these territories, and to resume it with much greater resources than were ever enjoyed before.

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