

INTER-UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION OVERSEAS

IN 1944 the Secretary of State for the Colonies invited British universities to set up an Inter-University Organization to assist the development of higher education in the Colonies. This invitation was accepted by all the universities, and their representatives met in London in the rooms of the Royal Society, on March 8, 1946, to establish themselves as the Inter-University Council for Higher Education in the Colonies. The original title later became inappropriate and was changed to Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas; but the objects of the Council remained unchanged, namely, those of assisting the development of universities within British territories which are, or have recently been, Colonies, and within the Sudan. A review of the work of the Council for the period 1946-54 was presented to Parliament last year by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and this has now been published*.

When the Council was established in 1946, it was concerned with two universities which have since moved outside its sphere—the University of Ceylon and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In 1948 Ceylon became a Dominion, while the termination of the Palestine Mandate, also in 1948, removed the Hebrew University of Jerusalem from the interests of the Council. From the start the Council was especially invited to extend its assistance to the Sudan, and more recently it accepted the invitation of the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations to assist the development of university education in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

At the close of the Second World War there were only two universities in the British Colonial territories and the Sudan apart from those in Ceylon and Palestine. These were the Royal University of Malta and the University of Hong Kong, both of which had suffered much damage as the result of the War. At the present time there are three universities—Malta, Hong Kong and Malaya—and six university colleges—the University College of the West Indies, the University College of the Gold Coast, University College, Ibadan, Nigeria, Makerere College (the University College of East Africa), the University College of Khartoum, and the recently established University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Some of the foundations which existed in 1946 now fall within the province of a post-war development parallel to that of the university institutions, namely, the provision of higher technical education in the Colonies under the guidance of the Advisory Committee on Colonial Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology, a body analogous to the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas. Institutions which come under the Advisory Committee on Colonial Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology include Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone, Kumasi College of Arts, Science and Technology, Gold Coast, College of Technology, Nigeria, and the inter-Territorial Royal Technical College, Nairobi.

The specific task of the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas has been to assist the three universities and the six university colleges, and

this report shows how well the purpose has been achieved. Although figures alone can be dry and unrevealing, the total number of students attending the university institutions coming within the province of the Council illustrates one aspect of the effectiveness of its work. In 1946 the total number of students attending such institutions, of which there were only four active at that time, was 726. In 1949, by which time eight of the institutions were effectively working, the total was 2,456, while in 1954 it had risen to 4,592. As was to be expected, in 1955 the figure approached 5,000. In addition, during the same period, the number of overseas students in universities of the United Kingdom and Ireland grew from 2,014 in 1946-47 to 9,901 in 1954-55.

All the universities and colleges are inter-racial. None has a quota system for races, although preference is given to local candidates. They are wholly or mainly residential, both for students and staff.

Two important principles which the Council has followed during its nine years of existence have been, first, that there should be no compromise on the matter of standards of teaching and of academic attainment, and second, that the university institutions with which it is concerned should be completely autonomous. A price that had to be paid for the achievement of attaining the academic standards of a first-class university has been that initially the number of students was small, with a high ratio of staff to students. This in turn has meant that the institutions required very large funds, both capital and recurrent. It follows that only a few of these university institutions could be established at any one time. There is no doubt that this policy has justified itself, since the Colonial university institutions are fully accepted within the university world. This has been greatly assisted by the fact that all the university colleges have entered into special relationship with the University of London. This has meant that the degrees the students take are those of the University of London. Furthermore, the University of London interests itself in appointments to the academic staff, particularly in the Faculty of Medicine. The Colonial university institutions are already beginning to attract research workers from outside, and they and their graduates are undoubtedly building up a reputation in the world at large for the territories they represent.

The maintenance of the autonomy of the university institutions has been important both with respect to finance and constitution and has been adequately safeguarded in every instance. The independence of the university institutions has meant that the relationship of the Inter-University Council to them has been advisory only.

The three universities, Malta, Hong Kong and Malaya, award their own degrees. The six university colleges will ultimately award their own degrees; but meanwhile their students pursue courses leading to the degree examinations of the University of London. The University of London alone among British universities awards degrees to external students. Special relationship with the University of London is a temporary arrangement intended to safeguard the academic standards of the university colleges

* Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas, 1946-1954. (Cmd. 9515.) Pp. iv + 41 + 4 plates. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1955.) 2s. 6d. net.

while they are establishing their reputations and building up their experience. The first of the colleges to assume university status will be the University College of Khartoum, which has announced its decision to seek degree-granting authority in the present academical year. There is no uniform scheme for special relationship with the University of London and it is developed separately for each college, the college working out in consultation with the University of London the arrangements which best suit its particular local conditions. For example, if the development of secondary schools in a particular territory makes desirable that a minimum entrance requirement to the university college should be adopted which is lower than that obtaining in the United Kingdom, the college and the University of London can agree to accept a modified standard of admission. If a lower standard of entrance examination is instituted, the length of the degree course is normally extended by one academical year. Special relationship involves the arrangement that members of the staffs of the university college take part in the setting and marking of the examinations for their own students, with examiners from the University of London. Furthermore, full-time members of the teaching and research staffs of the colleges in special relationship with the University of London may, if appropriately qualified, register as internal students for the London Ph.D. degree, and continue to carry out their research work in the university college.

The Inter-University Council itself meets four times in each academical year, and annually appoints an executive committee which usually meets monthly during each session. Each of the universities in the United Kingdom, together with the three Colonial universities, appoints a representative member. Recently university colleges in England have also appointed representatives, while the Council has co-opted additional members in their individual capacities. The educational advisor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Christopher Cox, has served *ex officio*. The late Sir James Irvine was the first chairman of the Council and served until February 1951, when he was followed as chairman by Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders, who had until then been vice-chairman. Sir Raymond Priestley then succeeded Sir Alexander as vice-chairman. The secretary has until recently been Dr. Walter Adams, who left in May 1955 to succeed Dr. W. Rollo as principal of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. He was succeeded in the office of secretary by S. J. Worsley. By overlapping membership and by other means, the Council has maintained close co-operation with the Advisory Committee on the Colonial Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology, with the Advisory Committee on Education in the

Colonies, with the Colonial Research Council and with the various advisory research councils and committees of the Colonial Office. It has worked in very close association with the University of London Senate Committee on Colleges Overseas in Special Relationship. The Council is represented by two members of the Colonial University Grants Advisory Committee. The cost of the Council's secretariat, office accommodation, visits and advertising of vacancies has been met by an annual grant from the Colonial Office.

The Council has attached great importance to the visits which its members and other representatives have been enabled to make to the overseas universities and colleges, and indeed its work would not have been possible without them. Air transport, which has developed so much since the War, has made possible the close personal contacts between the overseas and the home universities, the visits of experts and examiners, the frequent leave of academic staff, and the rapid exchange of correspondence and examination papers. The post-war period has also fortunately coincided with economic prosperity in almost all the overseas territories, and with the growth of responsible nationalism and the acceptance by both Great Britain and the dependent territories of a policy of transference of power to which the development of universities is well attuned. The University Grants Committee in the United Kingdom has said that "the dependence of the Universities on the State is balanced by a dependence of the State on the Universities". This mutual dependence and partnership is as clear in the Colonies as it is at home. The prestige of university institutions as a whole has never been higher, and they are exceptionally responsible to their national and international obligations.

In the future, as in the past, the overseas universities and colleges will look for co-operation to the universities of the United Kingdom. Although the University of London has been enabled, by its special position, to give more help than other universities in Britain, one may hope that the other universities will not fail to take as much interest in the overseas institutions as circumstances will make possible. One way in which they can help is by assisting the promising graduates of the Colonial university institutions to come to Great Britain for postgraduate and further specialist studies. The need for finances for the provision of postgraduate fellowships is clear. It is to be hoped that all will help who wish to see the development of universities in the British Commonwealth go forward in a manner which is worthy of the name which the Commonwealth has itself won in world affairs.

F. G. YOUNG

ZOONOSES IN EAST AFRICA

THE annual scientific conference organized by the East African Medical Research Scientific Advisory Committee was held in the Makerere College Medical School, Kampala, Uganda, during January 11-13. Some eighty delegates came from East African territories, and visitors from Britain, Egypt, Israel and South Africa joined in the discussions. In opening the conference, the Governor of Uganda spoke of the dependence of East Africa upon Great

Britain and the United States of America for basic long-term research and on support for such research, and this was well illustrated in many of the discussions, particularly in relation to taxonomic research.

Dr. H. Hoogstraal, of the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit, Cairo, described the great faunal explorations which the Unit has carried out in north-eastern Africa as a basic preliminary to ecological