

The expedition left Rangoon for Putao (Fort Hertz), some 800 miles north, in a Burma Air Force plane. From Putao it travelled 60 miles by car until the road ended. From there on, it proceeded on foot over mountain, river gorge and valley for nine days until Arumdam was reached.

The whole population of Tarongs (69) in that region was examined. The team spent seven days in the area during which time it collected anthropometric, haematological and other physiological data, and also conducted dietary, goitre and intestinal parasite surveys. It also obtained information regarding the customs and beliefs of the Tarongs.

Detailed analyses of the results obtained are still in progress, but some preliminary conclusions may be drawn. Anthropologically, the Tarongs are of Mongolian stock, and are believed to be ethnologically closest to the Rawangs, a tribe of the Kachins. The majority of them are between 4-5 ft. in height, very few being taller than 5 ft.

The Tarong blood groups show a high predominance of group B with group O coming next. No person belonging to group A was found. Only two were of group AB. Group M was twice as common as MN. N was rare. Of the Rh group, CDe was most common. CDE was also fairly common.

Electrophoresis of haemoglobin solutions, alkaline denaturation test for haemoglobin F, sickling and

osmotic resistance tests were also performed. No haemoglobinopathies were found.

Vital registration records are non-existent, but judging from the family-histories, there is a high infant mortality; but once the difficult childhood years are survived, the Tarongs seem to enjoy reasonably good health. There is little evidence of gross malnutrition, and they seem to be relatively free from serious infections like smallpox and plague. Intestinal diseases such as dysentery and worm infections also appear to be uncommon. As is to be expected in most hill tribes, a high incidence of goitre was evident and, side by side with it, cretinism.

The team also brought back samples of blood, stool and urine from the Tarongs for further examination, and also collected insects, arrow poisons and medicinal plants from the region for examination in Rangoon.

The report of the expedition will be published in the *Proceedings of the Burma Medical Research Society*.

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## AN ELEMENTARY INTERPRETATION OF SCIENCE

IN January 1961, Purnell and Sons, Ltd., printed the first copy of *Knowledge*, a weekly colour journal edited by John Chancellor and an advisory board of Lady Violet Bonham Carter, Prof. C. N. L. Brooke, Mr. Norman Fisher, Mr. Walter Hamilton, Mr. John Sparrow, Dr. Dudley Stamp and Sir George Thomson. The success of this magazine in the field of general education has apparently encouraged the publication of a very similar but more specialized magazine entitled *Understanding Science*\*, under the senior editorship of Leslie Basford, with a consulting editorial board comprising Sir James Chadwick, Mr. Norman Fisher, Sir Harry Melville and Prof. J. Z. Young.

According to the chief editor it is "a new weekly magazine intended both for the general public and to help in developing the teaching of Science in schools". The general plan is that each issue will contain a selection of articles, each of which is a member of a series of articles outlining a particular branch of science. The first issue, for example, contains articles on biology ("Living Cells"), chemistry ("Atomic Structure of Elements"), electricity ("An Electric Circuit"), heat ("The Fireless Locomotive"), hydrostatics ("Floating and Sinking"), magnetism ("The 'Loves' and 'Hates' of Magnets") and technology ("Using a Micrometer"), as well as an article on Sir Isaac Newton. The cover design and article printed on the front and back constitute a special feature on topics of general scientific interest: the first of these is entitled "Water and Life on Earth". Every twelfth issue will contain an index and title-page to facilitate collecting and binding of the copies: this habit will

\* *Understanding Science*, No. 1. (A New Colour Magazine which becomes an Encyclopedia.) Pp. 16. Subscription rates: 52 weekly copies, £6 10s. 0d.; 26 weekly copies, £3 5s. 0d. (Paulton, Nr. Bristol: Purnell and Sons Ltd., 1962.)

be further encouraged by the offer of special volume binders both for the main articles and for the special features.

The text is very clearly printed, and on the whole the large diagrams and illustrations are good. The sections on the micrometer (issue No. 1, pp. 8-9), the chemical balance (No. 2, pp. 24-25) and the microscope (No. 3, pp. 42-43) which would, as Mr. Basford suggests, provide science teachers with material for visual aids, are quite impressive. On the other hand, some of the biological drawings such as the worm, flowering plant and *Spirogyra* (No. 1, pp. 10-11) and the plankton (No. 4, pp. 56-57) are rather poor. Some of the material and illustrations are taken directly from the *Junior Science Encyclopaedia* (Sampson Low, Marston and Co., Ltd.). The topics are always treated as clearly and as simply as possible. Occasionally, therefore, they suffer the inevitable consequences of oversimplification and contain somewhat misleading statements such as: "Atoms are the smallest possible pieces of the basic pure materials that make the universe" (No. 1, p. 5) and "At another certain temperature water turns into a gas—steam. On the centigrade scale of temperature the point at which this happens is defined as 100°" (No. 1, back cover).

The editor claims that the magazine will present science in a way which is easy to understand. He also claims that it will cover the equivalent of the Ordinary Level syllabus of General Certificate of Education in chemistry, physics, biology, etc. Unfortunately, he does not indicate how many years this will take. Nevertheless, the parents of young aspiring scientists may, perhaps, still consider 2s. every Monday a worth-while investment.

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