

## Notes and News

### *Studies of Colonial Culture.*

A LECTURE recently delivered in London by Mr. John de la Valette, Vice-Chairman of the India Society, though it had reference mainly to the Far East, is of equal interest to students of Africa. The lecturer summarized the growth of interest in colonial problems in France and Holland, and showed how the formulation of a clearly defined policy based on understanding of native cultures had led to the development of institutions in the two home countries for the systematic study of ethnology and native languages and to an insistence that individuals destined for colonial careers must be thoroughly prepared in advance by means of such studies. As the lecturer put it, 'it is not left to the haphazard methods of the man on the spot to initiate the newcomer into these mysteries'.

Since Holland alone of colonial powers has no territory in Africa the provision made there for such studies is probably less familiar to Africanists than the corresponding institutions in France. As long ago as 1860 Holland had organized a three-year course of training for colonial officials, attached to the University of Leyden. In this course special attention is devoted to the geography, ethnology, and history of Indonesia. Malay is an obligatory subject, also Javanese for those destined for service in Java, and other languages are taught. Those specializing in Islamic subjects learn Arabic. A missionary training school was opened in 1905 by the various Dutch Protestant missions in co-operation, which gives a five-year course in 'Indology' with elementary medicine and tropical hygiene. The education of public opinion is the work of the *Kolonial Instituut*, founded in 1910, which is responsible for the impressive Colonial Museum at Amsterdam. The Institute, which is financed almost entirely by private contributions, also furthers scientific research in sections devoted to colonial agriculture, tropical hygiene, commercial chemistry, and the like. It has endowed chairs and lectureships at the University of Amsterdam, while other teaching posts are held at the Institute itself. An index of the general interest of Dutch public opinion in the ethnology of their colonies is the fact that a firm of chocolate manufacturers has issued several series of coloured cards illustrating native costume and crafts and scenes from native life. A corresponding series fell completely flat on the English market.

In France the *École Nationale de la France d'Outremer*, founded in 1889, follows a general programme on the same lines as the Dutch colonial course, though the study of native law in French territories has nowhere approached

what has been done in the collection of the *Adatrecht* of Java. This institution, where officials are trained for the colonial service, has also sections on colonial forestry, mineralogy and agriculture, surveying, and tropical hygiene. An interesting subject of lectures is 'Psychology and Ethics as applied to Colonization'. Special sections deal with the difficult regions of the French colonial empire. The Colonial Institute at Bordeaux has a range of subjects almost as wide and prepares for similar posts. At Nancy the *Institut Colonial et Agricole* adds to its technical instruction courses on Asiatic, Moslem, and African cultures, and colonial history and geography.

Both Holland and France require a special training of colonial lawyers, while short courses on colonial cultures are included in the studies of the schools of tropical hygiene, and in Holland at the schools for higher military and higher naval studies. In France the stimulation of popular interest is achieved through colonial institutes in various towns, and through societies whose interests are focused in the work of a museum, like the *Amis du Musée Guimet*, or in specialized studies, such as the *Amis Français de l'Orient* or the *Amis de l'École Française de l'Extrême-Orient*, which is mainly interested in archaeological work done in Indo-China.

In the view of the lecturer both the systematic development of serious studies and the widespread popular interest in colonial questions which he described are 'primarily due to the fact that the peoples and governments of those countries have formed coherent conceptions of their colonial policies, and of the relationships which these entail between the peoples of the home countries and those overseas'. Other observers have drawn a different contrast between the popular attitude to colonies in France and Britain; in France, they would say, there may be more of a conscious interest in colonial questions as subjects worthy of study, in England the colonies, through a host of personal links, are so entirely taken for granted that perhaps the need for study is overlooked. It is certainly curious that Britain, which in elaborating for Africa the philosophy of Indirect Rule has gone at least as far as Holland, and farther than France, in recognizing the value of native institutions to the peoples which have themselves evolved them, demands of those who are to administer this policy no such serious preliminary study, and of technical experts, other than teachers, no study at all. (*Communicated by* DR. L. P. MAIR.)

### *Progress—with Caution.*

THE division of work between the white and the black man in Africa is a problem which ever arises afresh. It is of greatest importance in agricultural production, because Africa is an agricultural continent and agriculture is the one large field of production in which the native producer is able successfully to compete with the European. The question of large-scale or small-scale