

ADULT EDUCATION.

THE Final Report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction (Cd. 321, 1s. 9d.), appointed in July, 1917, as a Sub-Committee of the Reconstruction Committee, over which the Prime Minister presided, but afterwards, on the establishment of the Ministry of Reconstruction, as a Committee of the Department, has been issued and presented to the Prime Minister, in the absence of a Minister of Reconstruction to succeed Sir Auckland Geddes. It is a most informing and suggestive document, and has been preceded by three interim reports dealing respectively with industrial and social conditions in relation to adult education, and suggesting drastic reforms, both industrial and social; education in the Army; and libraries and museums, in which it is insisted that a much closer relationship and co-operation should be arranged with other branches of educational work, even to the extent of the transfer of their administration to the local education authorities.

The Committee was presided over by the Master of Balliol, who has prefaced the Report by a most illuminating covering letter addressed to the Prime Minister. The Committee comprised scholars, employers, trade unionists, and representatives of the Workers' Educational Association, and included men and women fully conversant with the needs of working people and others, and familiar with the work of the various educational organisations, both public and private. Its terms of reference were:—"To consider the provision for, and possibilities of, adult education (other than technical or vocational) in Great Britain, and to make recommendations." The scope of the inquiry necessarily covers a wide field, but it has been fully considered in its various aspects, and comprises a history and general review of adult education since 1800; standards and methods in adult education and its weaknesses and possibilities; the relation of the State and local authorities and of the higher institutions of learning to adult education; the supply of teachers; the development of adult education in rural areas; the relation of technical to humane studies; the organisation and finance of adult education; and concludes with certain valuable recommendations for its effective establishment.

The Report covers 178 pages, and, as is the case with the interim reports, is unanimous. It is followed by four important appendices, the first of which reviews respectively and at great length the present provision of the means and facilities of adult education; the part played therein by the local authorities; the universities in respect of lecture extension courses, and especially of tutorial classes; voluntary agencies such as the Workers' Educational Association; the colleges for working people, including the London Working Men's College and the Ruskin and Labour Colleges at Oxford; the educational work of residential settlements like Toynbee Hall and the Passmore Edwards Settlements, and of non-residential such as Swarthmore, Leeds; the Gilchrist Trust, the National Home Reading Union, the co-operative movement, and other activities of literary and scientific societies; war-time developments; and, finally, adult education abroad. The further appendices deal with university education in London and in Wales, the report of the Committee on the position of natural science and that of modern languages in our educational system. The appendices, which are replete with statistics and fertile in suggestion, cover 200 pages of the Final Report.

The Report lays down as an absolute condition of future civilised progress that education, taken in its true sense, is the basis and postulate of all urgent

problems of reform, whether they refer to domestic questions such as those of nationalisation, the claims of Labour to better conditions of life, the position of woman, the subject of a Second Chamber, and social matters such as those of drink and prostitution, or to political questions dealing with the Imperial position in relation to the self-governing Dominions or to India and Egypt, or to the international problems involved in the redrawing of the map of Europe on sound lines of nationality with due regard to the claims of racial and religious minorities.

These serious and urgent problems will not find a speedy and wise solution until we have an educated and enlightened public. There is abundant evidence, in the opinion of the Committee, of the demand of the adult members of the public for the means of a humane and liberal education, which shall include literature, modern languages, local and general history, economics, art, and the natural sciences. There is latent in the mass of the people a capacity, far from being recognised as it should be, to rise to the fundamental conceptions of great issues and to face the difficulties incident to their realisation.

The Committee has based its main conclusions on the following propositions:—The main purpose of education is to fit a man or woman for life as a member of a civilised community, and so the education of the adult must proceed on the lines of successive periods in his education: the family, the school, the trade union or the profession, and the locality, which are all successive stages, and reach their fullness in the life of the community; and whilst each part of the process must be related to its appropriate stage, the goal of all education must be citizenship, viewed in relation to both rights and duties on the part of the individual as a member of the community. This is the *raison d'être* of the need for facilities for education and training.

Adult education must not be regarded as a luxury for a few exceptional persons, or as a thing which concerns a short span of early manhood, but as an object of permanent national necessity, as an inseparable aspect of citizenship, and be therefore universal and lifelong spread systematically and uniformly over the whole community in its own interest and as a duty to its members. All possible encouragement should be given to voluntary organisation, so that there may be freedom of experiment and that their work may find its appropriate place and opportunity of development in the national educational system.

The tutorial class methods of instruction are unreservedly praised in the Report, and, in order that the higher institutions of learning shall be enabled to take their full share in their development, the demand is made that the State and the local authorities shall place more abundant resources at their disposal, so that their staffs of teachers may be largely increased. In the present crisis of the nation's affairs is found the chief and abiding reason for the speedy adoption of the Committee's recommendations.

AN OBSCURE DISEASE, ENCEPHALITIS LETHARGICA.¹

ABOUT two years ago reports began to appear concerning a "new" acute general disease associated with a condition of apathy and drowsiness which passed into lethargy. Other striking features were progressive muscular weakness and paralysis of various cranial nerves, leading especially to squint. The prevailing abnormal conditions of life and living

¹ Report of an Inquiry into an Obscure Disease, *Encephalitis lethargica*. Local Government Board Reports (New Series, No. 121), 1918.

caused suspicion at first to fall on articles of diet. Thus some observers were struck by a similarity to cases of botulism, a disease due to the poisons of a bacillus which can flourish in foodstuffs kept out of contact with air, as when meat or vegetables are immersed in a weak pickle. Others suggested that some essential accessory factor had been lacking in the diet, so leading to a "deficiency" disease, perhaps analogous to beri-beri, in which nervous symptoms are prominent from affection of the peripheral nerves. But the wide area over which cases were distributed, and the rarity with which more than a single member was attacked in any one family, almost excluded such theories of causation.

Further clinical investigation, and especially pathological examination, established the close resemblance between the new disease and the well-known condition, acute poliomyelitis or infantile paralysis. In both diseases the essential pathological feature consists in microscopic areas of inflammation, with cellular infiltration, consisting largely of round cells, in the perivascular lymphatic sheaths and in the grey matter. In *Encephalitis lethargica* these changes were most noticeable in the upper part of the pons and in the basal nuclei. In the affected areas the nerve-cells showed the usual changes indicative of degeneration. In addition, Marinesco found degeneration of the Purkinje cells of the cerebellum in the two cases examined by him; such changes are similar to those observed by Mott in shell-shock, and previously studied by Crile, who considered them an expression of cellular exhaustion.

Thus the nervous lesions did not at all resemble those originally investigated by Marinesco in botulism. On the other hand, there are certain well-marked differences from infantile paralysis as regards the localisation of paralysis, which in the new disease mainly affects the cranial centres, while the spinal cord is commonly the site of lesions in infantile paralysis; also there is a practically equal incidence of the disease at all ages, whereas infantile paralysis affects mainly children and young adults. But such differences are possibly within the limit of variations which may occur in a clinical "entity" or "syndrome," since modern investigation of infective diseases in general has taught that the number of "typical" cases of any condition may constitute a variable, and sometimes relatively small, proportion of the total number.

The experimental results are of greatest importance, however, as tending to show that the two diseases are distinct in their causation. It has been well established by various observers in different parts of the world that in cases of infantile paralysis the central nervous system especially harbours the virus, and that the disease can be transmitted to monkeys by intracerebral inoculation with glycerinated emulsions of brain or spinal cord. On the other hand, McIntosh consistently failed to transmit the new disease to monkeys by injecting emulsions of nervous tissue from cases under similar conditions to those which are successful in poliomyelitis.

The disease, after obtruding itself in the spring and early summer of 1918, has again relapsed into obscurity for the time being. The valuable work in this report has outlined the natural history of the manifestations, but the failure to reproduce the disease experimentally or to identify any micro-organism as constantly associated with it has prevented the elaboration of a basis for dealing with a future outbreak. It may be presumed that, like infantile paralysis, it is a disease to which the majority of individuals are relatively resistant, and that healthy carriers, who harbour the virus in the nose and pharynx without themselves suffering from

ill-effects, probably play a large part in dissemination. The practically simultaneous occurrence of *Encephalitis lethargica* in this country, France, and Austria is another of the unaccountable manifestations of the disease.

C. H. B.

EXPLORATION OF NORTHERN GREENLAND.

THE second Thule Expedition to northern Greenland in 1916 to 1918, under the leadership of Mr. Knud Rasmussen, is the subject of articles in the *Geographical Review* for August and September (vol. viii., Nos. 2 and 3). With Thule on Melville Bay as a base, the main party of the expedition left on a long sledge journey to explore the northern coast of Greenland between Robson Channel and Peary Land. This coast had been only roughly sketched by Peary on one of his northern journeys. Mr. Rasmussen's party charted it in detail between St. George's Fjord and De Long Fjord. It was found that Nordenskjöld Inlet, at one time supposed to be the end of the so-called Peary Channel, but disproved in 1907 by Mylius-Erichsen, is a short fjord ending in a glacier. The distribution of ice-free land was found to be the opposite of what was before believed to be the case, the land round St. George's Fjord being ice-free, and that round Nordenskjöld Inlet ice-covered. Mr. Rasmussen failed to find any ruins of Eskimo houses in that district, or any signs that Eskimo had ever migrated round the north coast of Greenland. This was previously supposed to be the route by which Eskimo at one time reached the east coast, where traces of camps and villages are numerous. Musk-oxen may have migrated in small herds round the north, but the general conditions of hunting are so poor that Eskimo are unlikely to have been attracted to the route. The ice-free areas are not large enough to furnish sufficient game for a wandering tribe, and the conditions of the pack-ice along the north-west coast make hunting on the sea impossible. Mr. Rasmussen believes that the east coast natives travelled from the west by Cape Farewell, and that reconnoitring parties of hunters went so far north as Independence Fjord. The botanical work of Dr. Thorild Wulff, who died from starvation, was important, and Mr. Lauge Koch obtained valuable geological results. The new map of the coast, of which a sketch is added to the article, was carefully prepared, forty observations of latitude and forty determinations of longitude being taken.

AQUATIC FAUNA OF SEISTAN.

UNDER the auspices of the Indian Medical Research Fund, Dr. N. Annandale and Mr. S. W. Kemp undertook in November, December, and January, 1918-19, an expedition to Seistan and Baluchistan with the object of discovering whether the disease Bilharziasis (or Schistosomiasis) occurred in Seistan, and, in particular, whether any of the known molluscan hosts of the parasite were to be found in that region. So far as the medical part of the inquiry was concerned the results were negative, but the opportunity was taken to make a collection of the limited aquatic fauna of the country. The zoological results of the expedition are now in course of publication as a special volume of the "Records of the Indian Museum" under the title of "Report on the Aquatic Fauna of Seistan." In an introductory essay Dr. Annandale describes the physiographical conditions of the Hamun-i-Helmand, the basin into which the