

and Ohio, rose to flood heights. The River Connecticut broke down dams and bridges, inundating towns and low-lying districts, and causing factories to close, throughout its entire length from northern New Hampshire to Long Island Sound. In the State of Massachusetts, industry and transport were similarly paralysed. The damage to property in New England is put at more than ten million sterling. Farther south, the River Potomac has been badly swollen and the city of Washington was invaded. Although at the time of going to press the floods are reported to be subsiding in the afflicted districts, apprehensions are entertained as to the creation of new danger areas when the augmented waters of the Ohio reach the Mississippi at Cairo (Illinois). Portsmouth (Ohio) and Cincinnati are threatened, and hurried precautionary measures are being taken. So widespread has been the calamitous visitation that it has extended even into Canada, affecting the provinces of Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick. Fredericton, the capital of New Brunswick, has been largely under water, in addition to large stretches of the adjoining country.

'Bush' Culture in the New Hebrides

OWING to recent economic developments in the islands of the Pacific, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the anthropologist to find material for observation there in the field of social and cultural anthropology. The sophistication of the native through European contacts has indeed always been a difficulty, but post-War development, especially plantation employment, has led to a rapid disintegration and even a blurring of the memory of tribal institutions. Such, for example, was the experience of Miss Beatrice Blackwood in the Solomon Islands, when she was compelled to seek the remoter islands of the group before she could begin her investigations. A similar experience befell the members of the Oxford University expedition to the New Hebrides. It is noted in the recent report of the Oxford University Exploration Society that it was only in the bush that unspoiled material was to be found. Here, however, conditions are still to a considerable extent unchanged, as was indicated in the account of the natives of Malekula given before the Royal Geographical Society on March 16 by Mr. T. H. Harrison, who resided on this island of the New Hebrides from August 1934 until July 1935, and took a census of the inhabitants of this and the adjacent small islands. He assesses their numbers at approximately 10,000.

THE Malekulans are not entirely unknown to European science. They were studied intensively by the young Cambridge anthropologist J. Deacon, whose recent untimely death when on his return will always be held a heavy loss to science. Mr. Harrison, however, is of the opinion that the natives of Malekula, who have come under scientific observation through their European contacts, are free from the effects of certain psychological elements, which he observed as present among the inhabitants of the northern areas. Here man-hunting is both a sport and an ever-present cause of fear. War, arising out

of inter-village vendettas, is perennial. The people of Amok, a large village of 1,000 inhabitants, are real 'man-bush' and are referred to as such by their neighbours. During the year Mr. Harrison was with the Big Nambas, thirty men were killed and about seven were successfully taken back and eaten. Among the bush people the effect of the impact of the white man has been practically nil. They are still primitive-minded and dangerous in the old New Hebridean way. Notwithstanding this, Mr. Harrison maintains that these peoples are in many ways the most admirable in the Pacific. They have all their old zest and vigour, the will to live and their dogmatic pride. Yet though their mind is unimpaired, civilisation is rotting them away through disease. In 1932 whooping cough carried off six hundred Big Nambas, and in 1934 influenza caused about one hundred deaths.

Orthodox and Proselyte in Hinduism

AN interesting sidelight on the interplay of religious and political cross-currents is afforded by the ceremonial admission to Hinduism of proselytes of both sexes and all ages to the number of one hundred and fifty, which took place in an initiation by the Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya on March 17 at Bombay. This was in part a demonstration against the attitude of the more rigidly orthodox Hindus, and in part a phase of the widespread movement, of long standing, but now of increasing civil importance, of adding to the nominal roll of Hinduism. This policy, which may fairly be regarded as liberal, is at present to some considerable extent influenced by the threatened danger that the Untouchables, irked by their ritual disabilities and the intolerance of the orthodox, may withdraw entirely from Hinduism, with serious political repercussions. An interesting account of the initiation by the venerable septuagenarian Pandit is given by the Bombay correspondent of *The Times* in the issue of March 18. It consisted of a purification ceremony, in which, to the recitation of sacred texts, the converts, with foreheads adorned with the holy red powder, bathed in the river and then bowed before the Pandit Malaviya, who sat under the holy peepal tree. He then gave to each a portion of *Panchgarya*, the sacred compound of the five products of the cow—milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung. When this had been consumed the Pandit whispered in the ear of each the *Nama Shivaya*, which is supposed to open heaven's gateway, and each convert vowed to speak the truth, to observe cleanliness, and to abstain from beef and liquor. To each was then given a petal of the sacred tulsi plant, a rosary card with rules of conduct and a piece of cloth on which were printed incantations. It is hoped by the reformers, it is stated, that these neo-Hindus will be accepted as full members of the community by the orthodox within ten years.

Tobacco Disease in Australia

THE tobacco-growing industry in Australia has in recent years suffered heavy losses from the disease commonly known as 'downy mildew' or 'blue-mould' (*Peronospora tabacina*). To raise disease-free seedlings in the principal growing areas by customary methods