

Just prior to the war a departmental committee was appointed by the President of the Board of Agriculture in England "to inquire into the requirements of the Public Services with regard to officers possessing veterinary qualification; and to consider whether any further measures can with advantage be adopted for the selection and training of students with a view to such employment." The committee reported that, with regard to the Indian civil veterinary department and the colonial veterinary services, in both cases there was a deficiency of suitable candidates. Further, "it was generally agreed among the professional witnesses that the course for the qualifying diploma was not of itself sufficient training for future officers in the Government service. At least a year in post-graduate work and study would be a great advantage."

This criticism of the ordinary course applies specifically to the four-years course leading to the diploma of M.R.C.V.S. in any of the affiliated British veterinary schools, but it must be equally true in principle of any graduation course which is on general lines; and a year of specialization in the laboratory, with as much field-work in the abattoir and on the dairy farm and in the quarantine station as may be, is, in my judgment, the minimum requirement for an appointment as a Government veterinary officer.

The second effect this broader view of the State veterinary officer's duties must have upon his education is that he will have a desire to continue and extend it. The British departmental committee referred to above suggest several inducements to university students possessing a thorough grounding in general science to enter the veterinary profession and the State service. Among these they rightly include special facilities for research work. I have suggested elsewhere in this address that increasing knowledge makes for increasing security and diminishes the risks of importing infection. But there are many hiatuses in our knowledge of the causation and prevention of contagious diseases of animals. Who are to fill the gaps? To the scientifically trained veterinary officer there must come practical problems demanding scientific investigation and research. It is of the right type such problems come as a challenge. He may be qualified to carry out the research more or less alone; or he may find it necessary to seek the collaboration of the bacteriologist, or pathologist, or parasitologist, in the laboratory. What is certain is that the practical knowledge of the field officer must be combined with the scientific and technical knowledge of the laboratory worker before many of the problems of contagious disease can be solved. Further, it requires the scientifically trained officer in many cases to see the problem in its proper proportions, and in order that he may go on seeing difficulties and appreciating risks some facilities for special investigation and research must be given him from time to time.

I close, then, with a plea for an opening door to inter-State and international stock traffic, because with increase of knowledge there is increased security, and with the further plea for the employment of men of the highest standard obtainable, who with reasonable facilities and encouragement for research will continually add both to our knowledge and our security.