

*Paper No. 42.*

VETERINARY RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN, INCLUDING THE NEW BUREAU OF ANIMAL HEALTH, AS AVAILABLE FOR EMPIRE PURPOSES.

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THE following summary of his paper has been furnished by W. H. ANDREWS, M.R.C.V.S., D.Sc., Director of the Veterinary Laboratory, Weybridge, England.

Dr. Andrews referred to the former neglect of veterinary research in Great Britain, and stated that there had been a great change in recent years. There were now several well-equipped veterinary research institutes which were able to offer ample accommodation and all reasonable facilities to a number of post-graduate research workers. The number of such workers who could be given these facilities was, of course, limited, but he thought that for some years to come they would be able to accommodate more men from overseas than were likely to be able to avail themselves of the facilities provided. There were also various organizations, in the form of committees and bureaux, that could aid the research workers to carry on their experimental work, and which also enabled them far better to make known their difficulties and needs.

With respect to veterinary research institutes, the one attached to Cambridge University had a comparatively large staff, modern buildings and equipment, and excellent accommodation for large animals, so that work of practically all types could be undertaken there. There was also a chemical department, and nutritional studies could be undertaken.

The institution at Weybridge had excellent buildings and particularly good accommodation for the larger animals. There was also a strong department for investigating the diseases of poultry and other domestic birds. Connected with Weybridge was the station at Pirbright, at present devoted exclusively to work with foot and mouth disease. The facilities at Pirbright included an excellent laboratory and very extensive accommodation for large animals, which was specially designed to permit the most rigid isolation.

At Edinburgh there was the Moredun Institute, which was also well equipped, well provided with animal accommodation and land, and particularly well adapted for the study of diseases of sheep.

Finally, at the Royal Veterinary College, Camden Town, there was a new research institute with extensive laboratory accommodation. The animal accommodation was mainly for small laboratory animals, and the institution was therefore particularly suitable for laboratory or more academic studies, but it was in touch with various centres of disease in the field, and extensive work was being carried out on mastitis and Johne's disease.

In addition to the purely veterinary research institutions, there were also agricultural institutes devoted particularly to the study of subjects allied to our own. These institutes included that of Agricultural Parasitology at St. Alban's; the Animal Nutrition Institutes of Aberdeen and Cambridge; and one at Edinburgh, devoted to the study of Animal Genetics.

Finally, there were medical institutions, including particularly the Institute of Medical Research at Hampstead, the Lister Institute, and the Schools of Tropical Medicine at London and Liverpool, where

it was possible to take up, not only more definitely medical subjects, such as pathology, but also entomology, protozoology and helminthology.

The veterinary research institutes welcomed post-graduate workers from overseas, and, of the allied institutions that he had mentioned, it might be said that the choice would naturally depend on the nature of the work required, and that it would generally be possible to arrange facilities for suitable men, with appropriate training and experience. In addition to these institutions there were various organizations which governed them, or were able to encourage and facilitate their work.

Dr. Andrews referred to the part played in Great Britain by the Development Commissioners and the Ministry of Agriculture, with the Agricultural Research Council and its Animal Disease Research Committee; also to the Empire Marketing Board, with its Research Grants Committee, and, in connection with the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, the Colonial Advisory Council of Agriculture and Animal Health. There appeared to be the need for some link, not only between the colonial veterinary and agricultural workers and the institutions in Great Britain, but in general between workers in different parts of the Empire, and it was hoped that the necessary link would be provided by the newly established agricultural bureaux. He reminded the Conference that, mainly as a result of the very valuable services which had been rendered by the Imperial Bureaux of Entomology and Mycology, and by the Tropical Diseases Bureau, the Imperial Agricultural Research Conference of 1927 had recommended the establishment of several bureaux dealing with different branches of agricultural science. The Bureau of Animal Health had only very recently come into existence. There were three other newly established bureaux dealing with the allied subjects of Animal Nutrition, Animal Genetics, and Agricultural Parasitology. There would obviously be considerable over-lapping with these three bureaux, as the Bureau of Animal Health must necessarily attempt to cover these three subjects as far as they were connected with problems of animal health. He anticipated that this over-lapping would not in any way prove undesirable, and that the Bureau of Animal Health would obtain useful help from these allied bureaux, and would be able to offer them useful collaboration.

The new bureaux differed from those previously established, in that they were definitely attached to appropriate research institutions and that it was not at present contemplated that they should issue special and regular journals. The Bureau of Animal Health in this matter was in a different position, in that it was definitely intended after the lapse of sufficient time to enable the proper establishment of the Bureau, to take over the publication of the Tropical Veterinary Bulletin, probably with some enlargement and further development.

With reference to the first point, it had been decided by the Executive Council that it was desirable to associate the bureaux as closely as possible with active centres of research, and it could hardly be doubted that such an association would be useful and stimulating, both to the staff of the bureau and to that of the particular research institute. In each case the Director of the research institute had been appointed Director of the bureau itself, and while he might be able to do much to further the bureau's interests and to facilitate its work, and even to some extent to guide its policy, it was evident that

the effectiveness and success of the bureau must depend very largely on the Deputy-Director, who would devote his whole time to its service.

He was glad to be able to inform the Conference that the post of Deputy-Director of the Bureau of Animal Health had recently been accepted by Mr. W. A. Pool, the Director of the Moredun Institute of Edinburgh. He would mention the fact that Mr. Pool had spent years in India, and that he had had experience of veterinary work both in the field and in the laboratory, and also of educational work at the Punjab Veterinary College. He considered the Bureau very fortunate in having secured the services of so able and experienced a veterinarian as Mr. Pool.

With reference to the functions of the bureau, it should be emphasized that it was not intended to perform or initiate any laboratory work, and that the bureau was intended to be solely a centre of information. It was intended not only to index and, as far as necessary, abstract literature, but also to keep the fullest possible records of the research workers of the Empire and of the subjects on which work was proceeding. It was intended to provide all the information possible to officials, research workers, and advisory officers, but not to the general public or agriculturists. The bureau would aim at supplying bibliographies, references, summaries, and, if necessary, reproductions of scientific articles, and also information on suitable centres for special studies. It would also supply information in connection with the purchase of apparatus and equipment.

It had been suggested that the bureau might well promote direct correspondence between workers in different parts of the Empire who were interested in the same or closely related subjects, and even meetings might be arranged if desired. Any research worker might, and it was sincerely hoped that he would, correspond directly with the bureau on scientific and technical matters, but not, of course, on questions of the *local* application of technical procedures and other matters which should necessarily be decided by the administrative authorities. The bureau would normally express opinions on such matters only on request, and only to the official correspondent nominated by the particular Government. It was hoped that the bureau would receive active support from veterinarians in all parts of the Empire. They could do very much by furnishing information as to work in progress, and problems that ought to be investigated. It was also necessary for the bureau to receive, regularly and immediately, copies of all published work and official reports.

It was clear that the success of the bureau must depend in great degree on the overseas workers, and on the extent to which they contributed to the information collected by the bureau and utilized its services. They could also help very greatly by offering suggestions, advice and friendly criticism. The bureau would necessarily begin on a small scale, and would probably for some time have to confine its attention mainly to a few of the subjects of outstanding importance, such as Contagious Abortion, Tuberculosis, Rinderpest, and Trypanosomiasis. The work at first would undoubtedly be difficult and progress might seem slow, but he would appeal to all of them for the most generous help and a suspended judgment until the new organization had had a real chance of developing to its full capacity.