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### STUDY OF TROPICAL DISEASES.

#### DONATION FROM ENGLAND.

Melbourne, January 29.

Bishop Frodsham, of North Queensland, has scored a notable success with the representations he made when in England to the British Government in favor of the grant of an Imperial subsidy to the recently established school for the study of tropical diseases at Townsville. To-day Mr. Batchelor (Minister of External Affairs) announced with evident pleasure the receipt of a dispatch from Lord Crewe (the Colonial Secretary) intimating that the Advisory Committee of the Tropical Diseases Research Fund had recommended, and he had approved of a donation of £400 being made to the Townsville school. Lord Crewe, in his covering letter, wished the Australian school a useful career, and declared that it gave him great satisfaction to learn of its establishment. The Federal Parliament subsidises Townsville school to the extent of £500 a year.

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It is very interesting to learn how Dr. T. Brailsford Robertson, who had a brilliant career at the University of Adelaide, and is now assistant professor of physiology at the University of California under the famous Professor Jacques Loeb, is spoken of by one who is capable of judging his abilities. In a letter recently received by a South Australian a world-renowned scientist writes:—"Dr. Robertson is developing rapidly into one of the foremost scientists of our time. It will not be long before his reputation will be international."

### IN AUSTRALIAN TROPICS.

#### STUDY OF DISEASE.

#### BISHOP FRODSHAM AND THE INSTITUTE.

Sydney, January 29.

On his return from England by the steamer Commonwealth to-day Dr. Frodsham, Bishop of North Queensland, was questioned regarding the movement initiated by himself for the promotion of the study of diseases peculiar to the tropics of Australia. The bishop said:—

"On my arrival in England last February I applied, with the approval of the universities of Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, to the advisory committee of the Tropical Diseases Research Fund, in connection with the Colonial Office, for assistance in commencing the institute, and, together with Professor Martin, of the Lyster Institute of Preventive Medicine, in London, I had an interview with the committee. The result was that the committee gave a sum of £400 for the institute at Townsville, and the money has just been paid over to the Queensland Government. The next step was to provide for the appointment of a superintendent for the hospital, and acting under instructions from the Melbourne University, Professor Martin and I applied to the London and Liverpool Schools of Tropical Medicine, and to the Royal Society, asking that those bodies should appoint a member to act upon the committee of selection. Sir Patrick Manson, Major Ronald Ross, and Professor Bradshaw were as a consequence selected to form this committee. Then last October we sent to the Melbourne University a draft advertisement, calling for applications for the post of superintendent, and suggested that it be inserted forthwith in the newspapers of Australia and England. Professor Martin was to receive the applications and refer them to the committee of selection. When I left England on December 8 Professor Martin told me that he had already received several applications from medical men with a knowledge of tropical diseases, three of which applications came from Australia and one from a man of some European standing. That is where the matter rests so far as I have actual knowledge."

In explaining his connection with the movement, Dr. Frodsham said:—

"I have always been greatly interested in the question of the settlement of white people in northern Queensland, and I feel that some attention must be paid to the matter of rendering the tropics, which necessarily have peculiar forms of disease, healthy. Lord Chelmsford (the Governor), who came out to Queensland with the intention of forming an institute of tropical medicine, if it were possible, has backed up the movement throughout ably and enthusiastically, and, through him, Mr. Darcy, of Mount Morgan, gave a donation of £1,000 towards the foundation of the Townsville institute. I feel now that my work, which has only been of a primary character, is practically finished. I understand that a Commission is likely to be instituted by the Federal Government to find out how far the Australian tropics are suited for a white population. The enormous importance of the work cannot, to my mind, be over-estimated, for the whole question really is in the balance. It seems to me just as rational to say that the Australian tropics are necessarily fit for the white race as to say that they are not fit, for we have really little to guide us."

"I have had to modify my opinions considerably with regard to the possibility of white men working in the canefields of north Queensland. From observation, I believe that white men who are healthy, strong, and temperate can do the work if they will, and I have found that when the conditions of life are improved the health of the women and children improves also. Still, the matter seems to me to be quite in the balance. One thing, at any rate, that is clear is that, whatever our opinion may be, since the Commonwealth has decided in favor of a White Australia it is the duty of every citizen to do his best to make a White Australia possible. That is one of the reasons that actuated me in attempting the formation of this institute. As a celebrated Frenchman once said, 'If we are to colonise effectually we must make the colonies healthy.'"

### TROPICAL DISEASES.

"Can tropical Australia be developed and its resources utilised by white men? That there are possibilities of making these regions contribute enormously to our national wealth is beyond question. The founding of an institute of tropical medicine at Townsville should have an important bearing on the matter. Dr. Frodsham, Bishop of North Queensland, has for a long time past interested himself in this subject, and it is largely due to his labors that so much progress has been made with the scheme for inaugurating systematic scientific research into tropical diseases which affect Australia. His energetic and practical mind concerned itself not only with directing attention to the advantages which might reasonably be expected from the investigations of such a school of medicine, but also with devising means for bringing the institute into actual existence. Specialising on different diseases and making a careful study of the conditions of climate and country in which they occur have long been recognised as the most hopeful method of attaining a mastery over them, and where this plan has been adopted the results have been so encouraging that the extension of the system is inevitable. Places which but a few years ago were regarded almost with terror by the white man are now in many instances nearly free from exceptional danger. No better illustration of this could be found than that supplied by Panama, where American hygienic science has scored a particularly convincing victory, despite exceedingly unpromising natural conditions. Malaria and the means by which it is spread are now so well understood that it may be confidently expected that in the near future it will be numbered amongst the diseases which are completely under human control. In like manner sleeping sickness will cease to defy the skill of the physician. Excellent work has already been done, both by individuals who have gone to disease-infected localities and by those splendid institutions, the Schools of Tropical Medicine established in connection with the Universities of London and Liverpool, and the well-equipped institution founded by the American Government at Manila. The interview with Bishop Frodsham, which we published on Saturday, shows that he attaches great importance to the study in Australia of tropical conditions and tropical diseases. To this he rightly looks for a solution of the problem of settlement in the far northern latitudes of our great continent. Dr. Ramsay Smith has already reported favorably on the climatic conditions of the Northern Territory, but if the best use is to be made of this and other tropical portions of the Commonwealth it will be necessary to bring the diseases to which Europeans are subject when working in such regions as fully as possible under control, and the best hygienic and sanitary measures will have to be resorted to. Originally it was intended that the centre for preliminary observation should be at the Townsville Hospital, and the result of the researches made there by an expert were to be forwarded, along with specimens of the diseases investigated, to the professors of medicine at the Sydney University. Whether the establishment of a University in Brisbane will lead to a modification of the proposed scheme remains to be seen. A good deal of interest has been shown by various Australian medical men in tropical diseases, but a properly equipped laboratory and systematic scientific investigation by an expert who makes a special study of the subject is what is really required."