

Enclosure.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 17th March, 1913.

I have the honour to inform you of the present position of the work of the committee referred to in Mr. Lyttelton's circular despatch of the 13th of April, 1905, and now known as the Visual Instruction Committee of the Colonial Office.

The committee consists of the following members: the Right Hon. the Earl of Meath, K.P., Chairman; the Right Hon. Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, G.C.M.G.; Sir John Struthers, K.C.B., LL.D., Secretary to the Scotch Education Department; Sir Charles Holroyd, Director of the National Gallery; Sir Philip Hutchins, K.C.S.I., late member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India; Sir Everard im Thurn, K.C.M.G., C.B., late Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner for the Western Pacific; Sir Charles Lucas, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.; Dr. H. Frank Heath, C.B., of the Board of Education; A. Berriedale Keith, D.C.L., of the Colonial Office; H. J. Mackinder, M.P., lately Director of the London School of Economics and Political Science; W. H. Mercer, C.M.G., Crown Agent for the Colonies; Professor Michael E. Sadler, C.B., LL.D., Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds.

2. Five editions of the lantern lectures on the United Kingdom written by Mr. H. J. Mackinder have been prepared for—(1) the Eastern Colonies, (2) Mauritius, (3) West Africa, (4) the West Indies, and (5) India; and the Indian edition has been reissued for use in this country and generally.

3. In paragraph 7 of Mr. Lyttelton's circular despatch reference was made to a scheme for supplementing these lectures by lectures on the oversea dominions and colonies for use in the schools in the United Kingdom, but the difficulty of providing for the initial expenditure had not then been overcome. In 1907, however, under the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen, then Princess of Wales, a fund was raised for this purpose by the Countess of Dudley and a committee of ladies and placed at the disposal of the Visual Instruction Committee.

4. The committee were thus enabled to retain the services of Mr. A. Hugh Fisher, an artist, who travelled for three years under the direction of Mr. Mackinder, painting pictures and taking and collecting photographs. During his engagement Mr. Fisher visited in turn Ceylon, India, Burma, Aden, Somaliland, Cyprus, Newfoundland, Canada, Weihaiwei, Hong Kong, Borneo, Singapore, Gibraltar, Malta, Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji. He was given everywhere the fullest possible facilities, and much useful advice and assistance from Government Departments and officials as well as from private individuals. In addition very many photographs were placed at the disposal of the committee, who gratefully acknowledge the valuable help which they have received.

5. The material which was collected enabled the committee to undertake the preparation of four sets of lectures. It was hoped that Mr. Mackinder would write the whole of the lectures, but after completing those on India he found himself unable to continue the series. The committee, however, have had the benefit of his advice in the planning of the subsequent lectures.

6. The remainder of the work was entrusted to Mr. A. J. Sargent, M.A., of the London School of Economics and Political Science, of which Mr. Mackinder was formerly Director. Mr. Sargent's first book is entitled the "Sea Road to the East," and treats of the possessions in the Mediterranean, in the Indian Ocean, and in the East. His second is entitled "Australasia," and his third, which deals with Canada and Newfoundland, is now in the press and expected to be published in the coming summer.

7. The generosity of the Rhodes Trustees has provided the funds for lectures on South Africa, which will be ready by the end of the year. The whole of the Empire will then have been reviewed, with the exceptions of tropical Africa and the West Indies, and the committee trust that they will be able soon to complete their work.

8. The lectures are all written and carefully revised under the supervision of the committee, who endeavour to secure uniformity of treatment and the presentation of the main facts in their true proportion. The best first-hand information and guidance from official and unofficial sources are obtained in each case, and every effort is made to ensure accuracy. Each set consists of from six to eight lectures, each of which is illustrated by sixty slides, some being plain and others coloured views, and some coloured maps. Full particulars will be found in the appendix to this despatch.

9. The first book of lectures, that on India, was published in a form specially adapted to the convenience of lecturers using the slides, but later an edition with illustrations reproduced from some of the slides was issued for popular use. In the subsequent books the illustrated edition is made to serve both purposes, and may be used with or without the slides.

10. The object of the committee, as set forth in the first paragraph of Mr. Lyttelton's circular despatch, is to give to the school-children of each part of the Empire a better knowledge of the other parts, and this object would not be attained if the use of the lectures on the oversea dominions and colonies were confined to this country. I have accordingly brought the scheme to your notice in the hope that further use may be made of the books and slides which have been prepared by the Visual Instruction Committee.

I have, &c.,

The Officer administering the Government of New Zealand.

L. HARCOURT.

APPENDIX TO CIRCULAR DESPATCH OF 17TH MARCH, 1913.—PUBLICATIONS OF THE VISUAL INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE.

SEVEN Lectures on the United Kingdom, by Mr. H. J. Mackinder. Lecturer's Edition. Published at 1s. by Messrs. Waterlow and Sons (Limited), London Wall E.C.

Lecture I. "The Voyage from India to London."

" II. "London, the Imperial City."

" III. "The Scenery of the United Kingdom."

" IV. "Historic Centres and their Influence upon National Life."