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HONG KONG CADETS, 1862-1941

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The British Civil Service contains administrative, executive and clerical classes. The administrative class in Britain and the colonies was an elite generally recruited directly from the universities. The term 'cadet officer' denotes the administrative grade of officer in the Hong Kong Government Service in the period under review. It remained in official use for almost a century, until 1960.

Altogether 85 cadets were appointed in the period 1862-1941. 9 died in office, 12 transferred or were seconded, and four resigned or retired on medical grounds. Three became governors of Hong Kong — Sir Francis Henry May (1912-18), Sir Cecil Clementi (1925 - 30), and Sir Alexander Grantham (1947 - 1957); and five became Governors or High Commissioners of other territories — Sir Cecil Clementi Smith (Straits Settlements), Sir James Haldane Stewart Lockhart (Weihaiwei), Sir Reginald Fleming Johnston (Weihaiwei), Sir George Murcheson Fletcher (Fiji, Western Pacific, Trinidad) and Sir Alexander Grantham (Fiji, Western Pacific). Two became Chief Justices of Hong Kong — Sir James Russell (1888 - 92) and Sir Joseph Horsford Kemp (1930 - 33). Four others attained the rank of Colonial Secretary, Hong Kong before retirement — Norman Lockhart Smith (1936 - 41), David Mercer MacDougall (1946 - 49), Claude Bramall Burgess (1958 - 63) and Edmund Brinsley Teesdale (1963 - 66).

The number of cadets on the establishment in any one year was never large: only 7 in 1880, 13 in 1900, 31 in 1920, and 37 in 1941. Even these figures are deceptive: they report the strength on the books but not the strength in the field. We must deduct from such totals the number of 'unpassed' cadets[2] (cadets engaged in the full-time study at of the Chinese language)

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and those on leave, in order to discover, at any moment in time, the actual number of cadets administering the affairs of the colony. However, they formed an administrative *corps d'elite:* a minuscule band of officials with the same values and from the same social background. They were always in short supply: but in time they changed the style of government in 19th century Hong Kong and routinised its operations. The object of this paper is to examine some changes brought about by the introduction of Sir Hercules Robinson's cadet scheme in 1861,[3] and to explore the lives of a few expatriate officials, those who formed the apex of a colonial society with its complicated gradations of race, caste, class, occupation and office.

Such a research task is not a supererogatory one: Sir Ralph Furse, Director of Recruitment, Colonial Service 1931 - 48, affirms that 'in most colonies the Civil Servant *is* the Government, and not the servant of Government'.[4] Sir Ralph's *obiter dictum* is particularly applicable to Hong Kong in the late nineteenth century. At that time it was a small territory with a population squeezed into a few urban enclaves, where everyone lived cheek by jowl and officials were highly visible and often met in the street. In such a constricted society the quirks of an official, given the system of government, often influenced important administrative decisions, over which the general public could exercise little control. The inclusion of the New Territories in 1899 within the administrative framework of Hong Kong did not substantially alter these facts of life; for a long time, certainly until the re-establishment of British rule in 1945, the New Territories remained curiously peripheral to the older, established areas of Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon peninsula.

The cadet scheme instituted by Sir Hercules Robinson, Governor of Hong Kong from 1859 - 1865, grew out of a pressing need for correct interpretation and translation in government, especially in the courts. For the first twenty years of its existence, the Colony had very few officials apart from the notorious and devious D. R. Caldwell[5] (at one time General Interpreter to the Government and Registrar-General) who had adequate command of Cantonese and were able to communicate with the mass of the immigrant Chinese population, most of whom were Punti and Hakka. The actions of government were stultified by the

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mutual incomprehension of Chinese and Europeans. Only a few missionaries had a working knowledge of the Chinese dialects spoken in Hong Kong; but missionary effort went mainly into the evangelisation, conversion and education of the Chinese, and most missionaries, many of whom were not British, were antipathetic to the Colonial Government, whose *raison d'etre* in their view, judging by the contents of the contemporary publication *The Friend of China,* was to protect the opium interests of the great European hongs. Eitel claims there was in 1854, apart from the missionaries, 'not a man left in Hong Kong thoroughly acquainted with both the written and spoken languages of China';[6] and in 1859 there were said to be only three men in government service, (excepting Lobschied, the Inspector of Schools) who had some knowledge of Cantonese; but only one, the Interpreter of the Supreme Court, 'was at all acquainted with the written language and that imperfectly'.[7] The Chinese could not bridge the gap either: there were few educated Chinese and fewer who could understand English. In 1867, an editorialist in the *China Mail* averred that 'we can safely assert that the average knowledge possessed by the compradore class in Hong Kong is almost entirely useless in any situation of official responsibility'.[8]

Above all else Hong Kong needed a group of officials with competence in spoken and written Chinese, especially the former; and, although this was less understood at the time, it lacked officials with an understanding of the structure of Chinese society (of what we would call today the social anthropology of the Chinese). Sir Hercules argued, in defence of his scheme, that it was quite impossible to conduct the government of 120,000 Chinese without proper interpreters who knew their language; but Eitel probably comes closer to the nub of the matter with his declaration: 'English education among the Chinese people of the Colony, and Chinese knowledge among the English officials of Hong Kong are the two factors upon which the success of the general scheme of English colonial policy to a great extent depends....'[9] Communication with the Chinese was needed not merely for social and cultural contacts but for reasons of social control over a Chinese *lumpenproletariat,* without a stake in the Colony.

The scheme initially propounded by Sir Hercules to the Hong Kong Legislative Council on 23 March 1961 was designed primarily to establish a staff of interpreters, to be used in the courts,

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where the need was pressing; for often the courts could not sit at all for want of interpreters and as frequently had to adjourn owing to incorrect interpretation. Sir Hercules' plan was that 'the cadets should be under 20 years of age; that they should be chosen from any of the Colleges, and not from King's College alone, as at present in the consular service.....on arriving in China..... they would have teachers provided for them; when competent, as they might be in three years.....they should be considered preferable (after a further two years of experience in administration) to any office in the Civil Service that did not involve a professional training'.[10] The Council liked the scheme and the Secretary of State gave his approval. Regulations governing the cadetships were then published in the Government Gazette on 12 October 1861. The Regulations stipulated that 'at the end of two years' study or as soon afterwards as they shall be declared qualified by a Board of Competent Examiners, the first three Cadets shall be appointed Government Interpreters, and be employed in such of the departments as may require their services (and that) after three years' service they will be considered eligible by the Secretary of State for promotion to the higher offices in the Civil Service of Hong Kong.[11] As it turned out, the first three cadets never held the position of interpreter. They were in such demand and were promoted so swiftly to substantive posts that their promotion was a *de facto* violation of the published regulations.

The first three cadets were appointed in 1862 and arrived in Hong Kong late that year. They were M. S. Tonnochy,[12] W. M. Deane[13] and Cecil Clementi Smith.[14] There were further appointments in 1865 — Alfred Lister,[15] James Russell,[16] and R. G. Starkey, but the last resigned within a year and joined the North China Insurance Company. H. E. Wodehouse[17] was appointed in 1867 and J. H. Stewart Lockhart[18] in 1879, after an interregnum of 12 years during which the scheme was in abeyance. Only 14 cadets were appointed during the rest of the century, among them Francis Henry May[19] (1881), Reginald Fleming Johnston[20] (1898), and Cecil Clementi[21] (1899), all of whom were to distinguish themselves at a later date.

The early cadets had meteorite careers. They all received acting posts before their period of study was up. Smith became

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Registrar-General in 1864, a key post, Deane Superintendent of Police in 1867, and Tonnochy who held the offices of Sheriff, Coroner and Marshal of the Vice-Admiralty Court in 1865, became Assistant Harbour Mister in 1867 and Superintendent of the Jail in 1875, a post he held until his death in 1882. Lister was soon sent to the Harbour Office and Russell, who also acted as Governor Sir Richard Macdonnell's private secretary, was sent to the Magistracy. James Legge, long resident in Hong Kong, was critical of the way in which the original scheme was modified by expediency and argued that "there should have been no directing them away from their proper business of study until they had given proof of their actual interpretation in the supreme court".[22] Legge was right in principle; but although it was not the Government's intention to produce a supply of sinologues but rather administrators with a knowledge of Chinese, these early cadets did work hard at their Chinese, and one, Lister, supplied the *China Review* and *Notes and Queries on China and Japan* with many thoughtful comments on Chinese language and society.

The development of the cadet scheme can only be understood in relation to changes that occurred outside Hong Kong. The scheme was influenced — if not directly inspired — by changes in public administration in India and the homeland. Open competition was first invented for India and the germ of the idea is to be found in Lord Macaulay's 1854 report on recruitment of the Indian Civil Service. In Great Britain appointments to the civil service until the year 1855 were made by nomination. In 1855 a stringent examination was introduced; and in 1870 the principle of open competition was adopted as a general rule. The year 1870 witnessed, then, the abolition of patronage and the admission of people into the civil service at prescribed ages and by means of competitive examinations; and a distinction was drawn, in terms of grades and hence of salary and prestige, between the routine and intellectual tasks of government. Competitive examinations meant, of course, that there was little chance of success into the higher grade except for candidates who had a successful university career, and, often, in addition, special preparation by a private tutor. These reforms influenced the recruitment of cadets into the Hong Kong Civil Service.

In 1869, as a result of the evolving climate of thought in English, a competitive examination by the Civil Service Commis-

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sioners was introduced for the Straits Settlements, Hong Kong and Ceylon Civil Services; and in 1882, a combined examination was instituted, successful candidates being given a choice of colonies, so that the members of these three civil services were now to some extent regarded as interchangeable. In 1896 the examination was joined to that for the Home and Indian Civil Services; and the Federated Malay States, which had retained the nomination system, was also included. This arrangement lasted until 1932, when Sir Ralph Furse, who believed in the policy of selection by interview, finally succeeded in obtaining for his office control over the selection of candidates for Ceylon, Hong Kong and Malaya. However, university men continued to supply the vast majority of the eastern cadetships even after that date; and the *Dominions Office and Colonial Office List for 1939* informs us that 'whilst a university degree is not an absolutely indispensable qualification the candidates selected for Administrative appointments in the last few years have nearly all been in possession of a University Degree, usually with honours. The few exceptions have been in cases where a candidate has had some special qualification".[23]

The Hong Kong cadet scheme underwent several internal changes over time, although the principle of recruitment from England by competitive examination remained unchanged until 1932. The first three recruits, who pioneered the scheme, were given quarters in the Central School House during their probationary period and learned their Chinese, which was Cantonese, from teachers recruited locally by Government. In 1872, Sir Arthur Kennedy established a Board of Examiners, charged with the duty of examining Government officers drawing a Chinese teacher's allowance, and with issuing certificates of proficiency in colloquial Chinese to European and Indian police constables; but before that date cadets had been examined by an ad hoc committee. To save expense, Sir Arthur Kennedy, Governor 1872 - 1877, stopped the recruitment of cadets from England, and in 1875 even suggested dropping the scheme altogether; but this was not accepted by the Colonial Office. The Secretary of State arranged in 1875 for Eastern cadets to remain in England — usually for a year — and study Chinese at Oxford under Dr. James Legge though, as we have seen above, there were no candidates for Hong Kong at this particular time. This arrangement proved

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unsatisfactory. Instead, the system was adopted in the early 1880s of sending cadets to Peking where they learned Mandarin, which was little used in Hong Kong.[24] Finally, in the late 1880s cadets were sent to Canton to learn Cantonese, and this arrangement continued in force until the Second World War.

Cadets at Canton were billeted in the former residence of the Tartar General, which was taken by Britain after the war of 1857 - 60 and became His Britannic Majesty's Yamen. When the Consulate was transferred to Shameen, the area of original European settlement, the Yamen was turned over as a place of residence for cadets of the Malayan and Hong Kong Civil Services learning Chinese. Some cadets also resided in Shameen. In the early 1920s, according to Victor Purcell,[25] who was then a Malayan cadet, there were in Canton usually about 15 or so cadets, the majority from Malaya, but a few from Hong Kong, and one or two police probationers, who were taught Chinese 'by a small band of Cantonese teachers.....with a core of about half a dozen stalwarts who had taught generations of cadets in the past'. Sir Alexander Grantham, who was also a cadet in the 1920s, tells us that in his day there were about half a dozen cadets living in the Yamen.[26] It is clear from his memoirs that the Hong Kong Government exercised little supervision over its protégés in Canton. So long as the cadets passed their examinations — four examinations taken at six-monthly intervals — cadets had two years of glorious freedom in a very free and easy Chinese city.

Cadets appointed to the Hong Kong Civil Service, or transferred from other colonial territories in Asia, had much in common. All were British subjects of pure European descent and all entered the Colonial Service at approximately the same age. They were educated at fee-paying schools, but most had their schooling at minor public and obscure private schools, not listed in the *Public Schools Yearbook:* only one Etonian, one Wykehamist, two Rugbeians and two Harrovians are to be found among the eighty-five. The majority proceeded to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge but a substantial contingent — over 30 per cent — came from universities in Scotland and Ireland; only a handful — nine in all — were from London or English provincial universities.[27] A few — Cecil Clementi, R. F. Johnston, J. H. Stewart Lockhart, F. H. May and A. M. Thomson[28] — had outstanding academic records; yet even the rest were above average

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in academic performance, and a significant number excelled at sport. The fathers of the cadets were in most cases members of the older professions — law, medicine, and especially the church, although two, for example, were M.P.s.[29] Few, if any, of the fathers were businessmen or shopkeepers, and none could be regarded as aristocratic. In sum, the typical cadet came from a solid, though not rich, upper middle-class family, went to a public school, but not to the most prestigious, and then went up to one of the older universities, where he read classics or history and was noted for his application to study and interest in healthy recreation. The bounder, the aesthete, the hearty, and the rake, were not represented in the ranks of the cadets. The origins of the Scots were humbler — many had schoolmasters for fathers — whereas the Irish tended to come from the smaller landed families, from the parochial gentry rather than the squirearchy.

Two things should be noted about the *curriculum vitae* of the typical cadet. Firstly, it fitted him for the type of job he was expected to carry out as a colonial civil servant in Hong Kong — the need to apply himself with diligence and intelligence to a series of prosaic tasks, and to sustain interest in the minutiae of bureaucratic life; and secondly, the common social background and education of the cadets helped to create an *ésprit de corps*, a class and caste feeling, and an intuitive understanding of other cadets, which helped maintain morale and discipline within an hierarchical service. Cadets, it may be surmised, understood one another without the need for excessive interpretation of motive.

Given this common background, training, and the fraternity of class, cadets came to the field with many shared assumptions about, and attitudes towards, the people they governed in the colonial territories. Robert Huessler, for example, argues that the attitude of British Colonial officials 'was not unlike that which they maintained from childhood towards the lesser orders at home. One ruled the people and protected them from local and foreign injustice. Otherwise one lived apart'.[30] Perhaps a better analogy would be the model prefect at an English public school. The model prefect is expected to be fair, just, upright, dignified, and withal concerned about his charges. However, he is not likely to support ideas of equality and permissiveness: he must exercise authority.

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Hong Kong, needless to say, was not Africa, and the Hong Kong cadet did not spend his working life in the bush adjudicating the disputes of unsophisticated natives. He worked mainly, unless one of the District Officers in the New Territories, in a many-layered urban society, in which were to be found a number of extremely rich and some highly erudite Chinese. The population of Hong Kong was related in terms of race, language and culture to that of China, the home of an ancient civilisation; and cadets spent two impressionable years learning the language of that country and something of its splendours, and its miseries as well. I suspect many cadets were deeply impressed by their contact with the culture and civilisation of the Chinese, that a process of 'mandarinisation' often took place, especially among those working in the Registrar-General's Department (the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs) where official documents were published in the same form and style as those of the Imperial Chinese bureaucracy.[31] I suggest that cadets were paternalistic towards the local population, but that their paternalism was Confucian in spirit and understood by Chinese. Their background and training, in its historical context made this era of cadets not unacceptable to, though not necessarily liked by, Hong Kong Chinese with memories of the behaviour of Chinese officials across the border. British officials acquired in Hong Kong, then, a gloss from the population they ruled. Sir Frederick Lugard, 'in gentle derision', called cadets 'the twice-born';[32] and Reginald Stubbs, on a special mission from the Colonial Office to Malaya and Hong Kong, exclaimed in 1910 that they 'were prepared to advance claims to act for the Almighty'.[33] Exposure to life in an English public school and then to life in an Eastern Colony, led not unexpectedly to this consummation of belief.

The contribution made by cadets and ex-cadets to sinology and scholarship in general is impressive. One has only to take note of the publications of such officials as Alfred Lister, J. H. Stewart Lockhart, R. F. Johnston, G. R. Sayer,[34] S. F. Balfour,[35] Walter Schofield,[36] Soame Jenyns,[37] R. A. D. Forrest,[38] and K. M. A. Barnett.[39] Many were also members of learned societies; and a substantial number acquired not only compulsory Cantonese but a knowledge of other Chinese dialects, such as Hakka and Mandarin; a few specialised in Japanese; and those who worked in the Police, Hindi or other Indian languages.

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The recruitment of cadets changed the nature of administration in early colonial Hong Kong. The cadets were professionals, unlike the earlier officials who were a mixed lot from variegated backgrounds. They spent their working lives — 20 to 30 years on the average — in one or other of the Eastern colonies, for some of course transferred from, or to, Hong Kong. Since their profession was administration, and the government of Hong Kong mainly a matter in those days of running a municipality — between 1886 and 1939 only four new departments were established, the District Office New Territories after 1899, the Kowloon-Canton Railway in 1906 and air services and broadcasting in 1929 — they soon introduced routines and procedures, organised the files, and set the administrative machine into grooves, along which it ran, on the whole, smoothly and uneventfully for many years. Several governors evinced surprise at the little work they were called upon to do, for ways of doing things had soon become fixed and immutable and colonial officials were reluctant to change well-tried methods. Sir George Bowen, Governor 1883 - 1885, declared 'the routine and absolutely necessary work of Hong Kong administration seemed to me from the first to be much lighter than that of any Crown Colony which I had previously governed';[40] and Sir Frederick Lugard, Governor 1907 - 1912, of the same opinion, was amused by the bland efficiency and meticulousness of his able Colonial Secretary, Francis May. In Lugard's day, as Margery Perham writes, the officials 'were certainly efficient; the place was small and administration was conducted according to a system which had been seventy years in the making'.[41] Of course before 1941 most of the problems dealt with by administrators in Hong Kong tended to be workaday ones and dramatic solutions were hardly called for until the post-1945 period, when massive immigration changed the face of things.

With regard to administration, then, Sir Hercules Robinson's scheme had worked. It also produced results in another respect, interpretation. Eitel wrote in 1878: 'There are now very few departments where there is not some one who can read a Chinese petition for himself and efficiently check the oral interpretation of the native clerks acting as interpreter. The Coroner's Courts, the Registration Office and Chinese Protectorate, even the Colonial Secretary's Office, are well provided with a sufficient check on

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any interpretation that may be going on'.[42] On the other hand, the scarcity of cadets in government caused serious problems at the end of the century. No scheme of localisation, except at the clerical level, had been promoted in Hong Kong; and although Government had been forced, as a result of Sir William Robinson's Retrenchment Committee of 1894. to abolish the post of Clerk of the Councils, one Magistrate and the Superintendent of the Jail, and amalgamate the posts of the Colonial Secretary and the Registrar-General, the number of cadets was still far too small for the efficient administration of even a municipality. Alleyne Ireland, after a visit to Hong Kong at the turn of the century, argued that there was a need for more cadets, and reported that 'no one who has spent four months, as I recently did, in the Colony could fail to be impressed, as I was, with the fact that in the service as well as in the junior ranks of the service there are a few men of the highest ability and usefulness, nor could he fail to notice that such men were few and not many'.[43] The reports of the Finance Committee for 1901 showed, moreover, that the attendance included an Acting Attorney-General, an Acting Colonial Treasurer, and an Acting Director of Works. The service of the colony, Ireland adduced, 'has suffered greatly from the evil of acting appointments, and a system should be introduced under which it would not be necessary to transfer so many officials from one department to another whenever a senior official goes on leave'.[44] He also pointed out the inadequate size of the Government offices, and 'the employment of a large number of junior clerks, Chinese and Portuguese, at salaries little better than those paid to day labourers'. Ireland, however, did not mention that the incorporation of the New Territories had led to a drain of officials from Hong Kong.

A concatenation of these processes — of retrenchment, scarcity of cadets, acting appointments, and ill-paid clerical staff — led to a major government scandal which brought to an end in 1895 the career of one cadet, N.G. Mitchell-Innes,[45] who had joined the service in 1881, and this scandal led not only to a commission of inquiry but a rebuke from the Secretary of State.

Mitchell-Innes' troubles began when Alfred Lister was appointed Treasurer in 1888. Lister, who was also Postmaster General, served for the first six months of the year, but was

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relieved by H. E. Wodehouse until January 1890, resuming duties until June, when Wodehouse again acted until the end of the year. Mitchell-Innes was then appointed Treasurer on January 1, 1891, and in 1893 defalcations were discovered in the Treasury. During Mitchell-Innes' term of office, F. H. May acted for him during a six months' leave of absence. Throughout this period — 1888 - 1892 — one Alves, first Clerk in the Treasury, had been systematically embezzling crown rents paid to him as shroff for the Department. Alves was sentenced to six years imprisonment with hard labour. It seems that he had been, like many others, caught up in a tide of building speculation, and had lost most of the stolen money, amounting to $67,817, a large sum in those days.[46]

The fact that the defalcations occurred in the Treasury and went unnoticed by several heads of department — Lister, Wodehouse, May and Mitchell-Innes — caused a great stir in Government and in the Colony. Lister had died in 1890, and before he died he had been given a bond of $10,000 for the faithful discharge of his duties, so that only Wodehouse, May and Mitchell-Innes were called upon by Sir William Robinson, the Governor, to show cause why they should not be held pecuniarly responsible for the sums embezzled by Alves. Each of the officials replied in his own way and attempted, naturally, to exculpate himself. The Governor mildly censured Wodehouse and May but concluded that Mitchell-Innes had continuously neglected the duties of his office, especially as his was a substantive post but theirs had been merely acting posts in addition to their regular duties in other departments. A confidential despatch was sent to the Secretary of State, the Marquis of Ripon, setting out the facts of the case. Ripon replied that 'the officer to whom the heaviest amount of blame must be attributed is unquestionably Mr. Mitchell-Innes, and I regret to observe that he has not improved his position by the tone and temper of his defence'. Ripon concluded: 'I must mark my sense of his shortcomings, by directing that, as a condition of his remaining in the public service, he be required to pay into the Colonial Treasury a fine of $1,000.....and that as he has not justified his selection for the headship of a department in Hong Kong, it will be necessary for me to arrange, if possible, his transfer to another Colony. But such transfer will not mean a promotion, but I trust that

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elsewhere and in the discharge of different duties he will gain the confidence of the Government under which he serves, and thus possibly build up a claim to promotion hereafter'.[47] Wodehouse and May were also criticised but less severely, and Ripon acknowledge that May, who had already been spotted as a 'coming man', 'showed zeal and capacity in other respects during his short tenure of the office of Treasurer'.

Poor Mitchell-Innes, who was a popular figure in Hong Kong society, did not leave Hong Kong at once. The fine was paid by local subscription and the Chinese petitioned the Secretary of State that he should not be removed from the Colony. The petition was successful and he remained temporarily in the Treasury; but on it becoming known in the Straits Settlements that it was the intention of the Home Government to appoint him to the position of assistant Protector of Chinese in Penang which had become vacant, 'vigorous opposition on the part of the Straits Settlements authorities was brought to bear, and the intention aferwards abandoned'.[48] In 1895 Mitchell-Innes proceeded to England on leave of absence and in 1897 news reached the Colony that he had received appointment as Deputy Governor of a large gaol in the North of England.[49]

The Michell-Innes case is instructive. It throws light on administrative practices in Hong Kong at that date and on the scarcity of trained administrative officers. There were only 8 cadets in office in 1893 and these were often shuffled from department to department for short periods of time and expected to master the details of their jobs in a matter of weeks. The tradition of 'omnicompetent generalism' was already believed in by Government and cadets were expected to do all things equally well. Mitchell-Innes was a victim of the system and the tradition. He had been, as the Marquis of Ripon noted, 'a gentleman who after a comparatively short service had been promoted to a new important position'. The case also throws light on the influence the Chinese notables could exercise on certain occasions: their plea was listened to and as a consequence Mitchell-Innes continued to act as Treasurer for a further two years. Mitchell-Innes is also unique in that he is the only cadet out of the eighty-five appointed to be sacked, for all intents and purposes, from Government.

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The staffing situation improved between 1897 and 1901 and 12 more cadets were recruited from England, the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States including Reginald Fleming Johnston, Cecil Clementi, A. G. M. Fletcher,[50] and Geoffrey Norman Orme.[51] The incorporation of the New Territories into the Colony meant that more recruits would be needed for district administration and as members of the Land Court set up to determine thorny problems of land ownership and tenancy.[52] However, 17 cadets were recruited between 1901 and the end of 1914. There were losses of course: notably the gifted Stewart Lockhart who was transferred in 1902 to Wei-hai-wei as H.M.'s Commissioner, and the equally gifted R. F. Johnston who was also transferred to Wei-hai-wei as District Officer in 1904.

A posting in the New Territories provided for some younger cadets an escape-hatch that removed them from office life in the Colonial Secretariat and other departments in the Central District. Service in the New Territories, a mainly agricultural area dotted with small village communities and small market towns, had more in common with colonial service in Africa and South-East Asia, and the cadet was left comparatively free to go his own way, lead an open-air life and exercise judicious authority.[53] The job demanded initiative, stamina, and magisterial skills; and, if one is to believe Mr. Austin Coates,[54] a cadet at a much later date, it was a deeply rewarding life which allowed a cadet to become involved in the lives of simple people, farmers and fishermen, small shopkeepers and craftsmen. Certainly, the report of the District Officers for the New Territories, such as those written by Stewart Carne Ross, have a little more colour than the stilted administrative reports presented annually by heads of deparments.

By the 1920s cadets had become entrenched in most government departments and they filled all the senior posts in the Colonial Secretariat, the directing and co-ordinating agency of government. The exceptions were some departments, such as the Medical and Sanitary Services, Public Works, the Royal Observatory, and Marine Department, which necessitated at the top someone with specialist knowledge. The Inspector General of Police (also in charge of the Fire Brigade), the Director of Education, the Postmaster General, and the Superintendent of Imports and Exports, however, were all cadets, but not the

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Superintendent of Prisons. In the 1920s a larger number of cadets were recruited — 22 in all — but the number dropped to 12 in the 1930s. Three more were appointed in 1941, just before the Japanese occupation.

This increase, particularly in the 1920s, must be related to a general expansion of services and a growth in the functions undertaken by government, and to the near cessation of recruitment during the war years 1914 - 18. In 1901, the total number of employees in all grades of the government service was 715; and in 1938 the figure was 2,886.[55] Another trend, which was to radically reshape the cadet service after the 1939 - 45 war and change its composition, was a growing demand for the appointment of local people to more senior posts. In the 1935 budget debate the Acting Colonial Secretary, echoing the views of the Governor, Sir Andrew Caldecott, declared that the 'Government has fully and frankly accepted the policy of replacing wherever possible European by Asiatic employees'.[56] But the pace of localisation was exceedingly slow and the policy was hardly implemented, outside the Medical and Health Department, before the Governorship of Sir Alexander Grantham, 1947 - 1957.

Colonial officials have been caricatured as stiff, arrogant and snobbish, bemused by questions of precedence and protocol.[57] They have been accused by Americans in particular of 'spirited amateurism towards administration and technological illiteracy in relation to the problems of economic development'.[58] But these characteristics — in a milder form — are a reflection of the values held by the English upper middle class, from whom the cadets were recruited. The cadets did not suffer a sea change on their way out by P. and O. to Hong Kong. They were gentlemen trained in the ideology of the pre-war English public schools and older residential universities. In Hong Kong they went on launch picnics; they swam, played polo, golf and tennis, walked in the New Territories, and played bridge in the evenings. A substantial number, however, did not allow their curiosity and intelligence to slumber in a sub-tropical climate: they wrote books and scholarly articles about the East. And one cadet — Geoffrey Sayer, an historian of early Hong Kong — claims that the bridge between East and West has been bridged 'in so far as it has been bridged, by "linguist", "comprador", "missionary", "interpreter", and "*cadet*" '.[59]

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NOTES

[1] Since the end of war with Japan in 1945 both Hong Kong and its Government Service have experienced major changes of circumstance and outlook. Whilst the cadet or administrative grade continues in being there are now (April 1970) administrative officers in a total permanent Civil Service establishment of there are Chinese officers, the first of whom was appointed in 1948.

[2] The title was later changed to "Cadet on Probation". In 1862 cadets received a salary of £200 per annum on arrival in the Colony and at the end of two years' study or as soon afterwards as they were declared qualified by a Board of Examiners £400 per annum. In 1924 the salary was still only £350 on arrival and £400 after passing the final examination; in 1936 the amounts were £450 and £525 respectively. Information on the Cadet Service is to be found in the various *General Orders of the Hong Kong Government.*

[3] The following books have information on the origin of the scheme: E. J. Eitel *Europe in China,* Hong Kong, 1895, p. 365; G. B. Sayer *Hong Kong: Birth, Adolescence, and Coming of Age,* London, 1937, p. 194; J. W. Norton-Kyshe *The History of the Laws and Courts of Hong Kong,* Hong Kong, 1898, vol. 2, pp. 8-11; and Sir Charles Collins *Public Administration in Hong Kong,* London, 1952, pp. 126-127.

[4] *Aucuparius: Recollections of a Recruiting Officer,* London, 1962, p. 164. Major Sir Ralph Furse was Director of Recruitment, Colonial Service, 1931-48; and Adviser to the Secretary of State for Colonies on Training Courses for the Colonial Service, 1948-50.

[5] For a sketch of Caldwell's career see G. B. Endacott *A Biographical Sketch-book of Early Hong Kong,* Singapore, 1962, pp. 95-99. Daniel Richard Caldwell was of mixed blood, born at Singapore, and married to a Chinese. He was a brilliant linguist and occupied, at one time or another, various senior posts in the Hong Kong Government. His proved association with Ma Chow Wong, a frequenter of pirates, ruined Caldwell's career. Caldwell was found unfit by a Commission of Inquiry to continue in the public service. He died in 1875.

[6] E. J. Eitel "Chinese Studies and Official Interpretation in the Colony of Hong Kong", *China Review,* vol. 16, 1877-8, p. 5.

[7] Norton-Kyshe, op. cit., vol. I, p. 579.

[8] January 28, 1867.

[9] See note 6.

[10] Norton-Kyshe, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 8-9.

[11] Ibid., p. 10. The revised regulations for Hong Kong Cadetships, published in the *Government Gazette,* 7 September 1872, gives the heads of examination as follows: "(A) Obligatory — 1st. Exercises designed to test Handwriting and Orthography; 2nd. Arithmetic, including Vulgar and Decimal Fractions; 3rd. Latin, and one of the following languages: Greek, French, German, Italian; 4th. English Composition, including Précis writing; (B) Optional — 5th. Pure and Mixed Mathematics; 6th. Ancient and Modern History, and Geography; 7th. Elements of Constitutional and International Law, and Political Economy; 8th. Geology, Civil Engineering and Surveying". Every candidate was expected to show a competent knowledge of the first four subjects, but could select any two of the optional subjects.

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[12] Malcolm Struan Tonnochy (1840-1882). Educated at Blackheath Proprietary School and Trinity College, Cambridge. Hong Kong Civil Service 1862; died in office while Superintendent of Victoria Gaol. Obituaries of Tonnochy are to be found in the *Hong Kong Telegraph*, December 14 and 15, 1882, and *China Mail*, December 15, 1882. The *Telegraph* tells us "that yesterday the deceased was in good spirits and played tennis in the afternoon, dined out with a friend, and was in the Club until shortly after midnight". A Chinese barber found Tonnochy dead in bed when he came to shave him in the morning. He was a bachelor.

[13] Walter Meredith Deane (1840-1906). Educated St. Paul's School and Trinity College, Cambridge. Hong Kong Civil Service 1862; Captain Superintendent of the Police, 1866-1891. Deane was severely wounded on duty in 1878 and resigned in 1891 on account of ill-health.

[14] Sir Cecil Clementi Smith (1840-1916). Educated at St. Paul's School and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Hong Kong Civil Service 1862; promoted from Colonial Treasurer, Hong Kong, to Colonial Secretary, Straits Settlements, 1878. Administered Government 1884-85; appointed Lieutenant-Governor and Colonial Secretary, Ceylon, 1886; Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Straits Settlements, 1887; H. M. High Commissioner and Consul-General for Borneo and Sarawak, 1889.

[15] Alfred Lister (1843-1890). Educated at University of London. Hong Kong Civil Service 1865; prepared detailed index to the Ordinances of Hong Kong in 1870; Colonial Treasurer 1883-90. Died on board ship near Yokohama while on sick leave. Lister held the office of Treasurer as an adjunct appointment only, and with an almost nominal salary, in conjunction with his substantive appointment of Postmaster-General. Lister left a wife and four children in England. See *Hong Kong Telegraph*, 15 June, 1890. Governor Des Voeux referred to Lister as an "excellent officer".

[16] Sir James Russell (1843-1893). Educated at Queen's University, Belfast. Hong Kong Civil Service 1865; private secretary to Governor Sir Richard MacDonnell 1868; Police Magistrate 1870; Chief Justice of Hong Kong 1888. The *Hong Kong Telegraph*, 4 September, 1893, in an editorial entitled "Sir 'Judas' Russell: His History" declares "You could not have been much of an expert in the Chinese language two short years after your appointment to a cadet-ship, yet in 1867, you were Government 'Interpreter'." The editorial referred to Russell as "the Gargantua of Hong Kong social life" and "the Jeffries of the Hong Kong Bench". The writer of the editorial was the atrabilious Robert Fraser-Smith, who founded the *Hong Kong Telegraph* in 1881. Since Fraser-Smith had been jailed several times for libel, he had reason to dislike the Chief Justice. (See Frank H. H. King and Prescott Clarke *A Research Guide to China-Coast Newspapers, 1822-1911*, Cambridge, Mass., 1965). Russell, a bachelor like Lister, died at Strathpeffer, Scotland, shortly after resigning from Government.

[17] Henry Ernest Wodehouse (1845-1929). Educated at Repton School. Hong Kong Civil Service 1867; retired on pension as Police Magistrate in 1898. One son, Peveril, was the first baby born on the Peak and brother of P. G. Wodehouse, the novelist. Wodehouse was the last of the batch of officials originally appointed to the Colony in the capacity of student interpreter.

[18] Sir James Haldane Stewart Lockhart (1858-1937). Educated at King William's College, Isle of Man, Watson's Academy, Edinburgh (gold medallist), and Edinburgh University (Greek medallist). Hong Kong Civil Service 1878; attached to the Colonial Office for one year; Registrar General 1887; Colonial Secretary 1895-1902; Special Commissioner to Inspect and Report on the Extension of the Colony of Hong Kong, 1898; representative of Great Britain to delimit the boundaries of the extension of Hong Kong; first civil Commissioner of Weihaiwei, 1902; retired 1921.

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[19] Sir Francis Henry May (1860-1922). Educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Dublin. *Hong Kong Civil Service 1881; Captain Superintendent* of Police, 1893-1902; Colonial Secretary, 1902-1910; Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner of Western Pacific, 1910-12; Governor of Hong Kong, 1912-1919. First cadet to become Governor. Altogether May spent 38 years in Hong Kong.

[20] Sir Reginald Fleming Johnston (1874-1938). Educated at Edinburgh University (Gray Prize; prox. accessit., Lord Rector's Essay); Magdalen College, Oxford (mentioned hon. causa Stanhope Essay). Hong Kong Civil Service 1898; Assistant Colonial Secretary, 1899-1904. Transferred to Weihaiwai 1904; Senior District Officer and Magistrate, Weihaiwai, 1906-17. Tutor to the Ex-Emperor of China, 1919-1925. Commissioner of Weihaiwai, 1927-30. Professor of Chinese and Head of Department of Languages and Cultures of the Far East, School of Oriental Languages, London University, 1931-1937.

[21] Sir Cecil Clementi (1875-1947). Educated at St. Paul's School and Magdalen College, Oxford. Hong Kong Civil Service 1899. Clementi, following his uncle and godfather, Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, preferred an Eastern Cadetship, and was posted to Hong Kong. Land Officer and Police Magistrate in the New Territories, 1903-6, Clementi had the task of recognizing the land titles of over 300,000 claims. Appointed Colonial Secretary of British Guiana 1913-1921; Colonial Secretary, Ceylon, 1922-1925; Governor of Hong Kong, 1925-30; Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner for the Malay States 1930. In 1934 Clementi retired on account of ill-health.

[22] James Legge "The Colony of Hong Kong", *China Review*, Vol. I, 1872-3, p. 173.

[23] *Dominions Office and Colonial Office List 1939*, p. 624, states: "The average number of cadets appointed to Malaya and Hongkong during the period of 1919-31 inclusive was between 9 and 10. Since 1931 the average has been 5-8, 6 generally. In 1937, 7 cadets were appointed, and 9 in 1938. There were none appointed to Hong Kong 1937, and only 2 in 1938. The demand for cadets in Hong Kong was always small".

[24] For example, Thomas Sercombe Smith (1854-1937) was appointed a Hong Kong Cadet in 1882. In 1883 he was attached to the Colonial Office for a year; and in 1884, after a brief spell attached to the Colonial Secretary's Office, Hong Kong, proceeded to Peking where he studied Chinese, 1884-6. On the other hand, Arthur Winbolt Brewin (1867-1946), proceeded to Canton in 1888. Brewin, who was educated at Winchester, succeeded Eitel as Inspector of Schools in 1897; became Registrar General in 1901 and retired in 1912.

[25] Victor Purcell *The Memoirs of a Malayan Official*, London, 1965, pp. 108-109. The *Index to Correspondence* (of the Colonial Secretariat), compiled in 1902 by R. H. Kotewall, has a cryptic entry: "Cadets studying Chinese in China must reside at a place removed from European social surroundings".

[26] Alexander Grantham *Via Ports*, Hong Kong, 1965, p. 5.

[27] I have been able to discover the schools attended by 64 of the cadets: 52 went to schools listed in the *Public Schools Yearbook;* the other 12 to small private schools. Two cadets (H. E. Wodehouse and A. W. Brewin), it seems, did not go to a university; five I have been unable to trace; and of the rest — 78 in all — 55 went to English universities (Cambridge 25; Oxford 23; London 4; and one each at Leicester University College, Liverpool University, and Manchester University); 10 to universities in Ireland (Trinity College 8); and 11 to Scottish universities (Edinburgh 6,

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St. Andrews 2, Aberdeen 2, Glasgow 1). Sir Joseph Kemp attended Cape University, South Africa and Edward Wynne-Jones the University of Wales.

These university-educated gentlemen represent a social stratum lying somewhere between Mathew Arnold's Barbarians and the Philistines. A large number of them had been educated in schools animated by the ideas and ideals of Arnold's father, Thomas Arnold, the headmaster of Rugby.

[28] Alexander Macdonald Thomson (1863-1924). Educated at Aberdeen University. Lecturer in Mathematics, Naini Tal College, India, 1884-5; Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Aberdeen, 1887; entered the Hong Kong Civil Service, and attached for one year to the Colonial Office, 1887; Treasurer 1898-1918. Retired in 1918. He is the only cadet who retired to live in the United States (San Mateo, California); most cadets, including the Scots, settled in the Home Counties on retirement.

[29] Norman Lockhart Smith (1887-1968) was the son of Hugh Crawford Smith, M.P., Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Lewis Audley Marsh Johnston (1865-1908) the son of William Johnston, M.P., Ballykilbeg, Ireland.

[30] Robert Huessler *Yesterday's Rulers*, Syracuse, New York, 1963, p. 98.

[31] In H. R. Wells and Lam Tong *Chinese Documents and Petitions*, Hong Kong, 1931, some examples are given in Chinese, with English translations. There are also some interesting specimens of petitions received by the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs from Chinese in Hong Kong. In the section on the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs in the *General Orders of the Hong Kong Government, 1924*, we read: "Before taking action affecting bodies or classes of people, the Chinese Government is in the habit of issuing proclamations explaining the action to be taken and the reason for it and the Chinese in Hong Kong expect the same notice to be given. It is desirable that whenever the Head of a Department finds it necessary to take notice of any slackness in complying with the law, or to put a stop to gradual encroachments on the part of individuals, or to bring some new regulation into force, he should first consult the Secretary for Chinese Affairs and ask him to notify the people affected in the same way".

[32] Margery Perham *Lugard*, vol. 2, London 1960, p. 302.

[33] Ibid., p. 367.

[34] Geoffrey Robley Sayer (1887-1962). Educated at Highgate School, London, and Queen's College, Oxford. Hong Kong Civil Service 1910; Director of Education 1934-6; retired 1938.

[35] Stephen Francis Balfour (1905-1945). Educated at King's College, Cambridge. Hong Kong Civil Service 1929; died in internment during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong.

[36] Walter Schofield (1888-1968). Educated at the University of Liverpool. Hong Kong Civil Service 1911. First Police Magistrate 1934-1937; retired 1938. Schofield was noted for his work pre-war on the geology and archaeology of Hong Kong, in which fields he was a pioneer scholar.

[37] Roger Soame Jenyns (born 1904). Educated at Eton and Magdalene College, Cambridge. Hong Kong Civil Service 1926; resigned in 1931 to join the British Museum. He is a noted expert on the arts of the Far East and has written extensively in that field.

[38] Robert Andrew Dermod Forrest (born 1893). Educated at Aberdeen University. Hong Kong Civil Service 1919; Inspector of Vernacular Schools; Immigration Officer 1940. Lecturer in Tibeto-Burman Linguistics at the School of Oriental and African Studies at London University.

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[39] Kenneth Myer Arthur Barnett (born 1911). Educated at Mill Hill School, London, and King's College, Cambridge. Hong Kong Civil Service 1934. Retired as Director of Census and Statistics 1970.

[40] Quoted in James Hope Hennessy's *Verandah*. London, 1964, p. 186. Hennessy is quoting, presumably, from Sir George Bowen's *Thirty Years of Colonial Government*, London, 1889, which I have not seen.

[41] Margery Perham, op. cit., p. 302. Lugard also liked and trusted A. W. Brewin, the Registrar General: "if he once said, he was very 'pro-Chinese' this was really a compliment. He would allow Brewin to forbid his own delivery of a speech to a Chinese gathering. He could not always understand the reason 'but I trust implicitly in him'."

[42] E. J. Eitel "Chinese Studies and Official Interpretation", p. 8.

[43] Alleyne Ireland *Far Eastern Tropics*, London, 1905, p. 34. In 1901 Ireland was appointed Colonial Commissioner of the University of Chicago for the purpose of visiting the Far East.

[44] Ibid., p. 32.

[45] Norman Gilbert Mitchell-Innes (1860-1947). Educated at Repton and Edinburgh Academy. Hong Kong Civil Service 1881; Treasurer 1891; left Hong Kong Service in 1896 and transferred to the Home Prison Service. Des Voeux thought highly of Mitchell-Innes. See G. B. Endacott *Government and People in Hong Kong 1841-1962*, Hong Kong, 1964, p. 112.

[46] *Report on Defalcations in the Treasury*, Sessional Papers, Hong Kong, 1893, p. 546.

[47] Ibid., p. 546.

[48] Norton-Kyshe, vol. 2, p. 447.

[49] Ibid., p. 447.

[50] Sir Arthur George Murcheson Fletcher (1878-1954). Educated at Cheltenham College and Trinity College, Oxford. Hong Kong Civil Service 1901; transferred to Ceylon 1927; Colonial Secretary, Ceylon, 1926-9; Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner for Western Pacific 1929-36; Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Trinidad and Tobago, 1936-38.

[51] Geoffrey Norman Orme (1879-1966). Educated at Cheltenham College and Hertford College, Oxford. Hong Kong Civil Service 1902. Director of Education 1924-26. Left Hong Kong Service in 1926.

[52] The *Report on the Land Court, 1900-1905*, Sessional Papers, 1905, gives a list of the presidents and members of the Land Court in order of their appointment, most of whom were cadets. H. H. J. Gompertz was appointed in 1900 and resigned in 1904; Cecil Clementi in 1903; and C. M. Messer and J. R. Wood in 1904. The Registrars in order of appointment — all cadets — were: J. H. Kemp, E. D. C. Wolfe, and S. B. C. Ross. The Land Court in 1905 consisted of three members: C. M. Messer, Cecil Clementi, and J. R. Wood. The New Territories became popular with cadets as a place to walk or shoot in on week-ends. Robert Oliphant Hutchison (1880-1920), the Superintendent of Imports and Exports, on his way to shoot snipe at Saikung fell off a launch in a squall and drowned. His body was never found. With him at the time was D. W. Tratman, the Colonial Treasurer. One imagines from the evidence that both had "tiffined" rather too well.

[53] "At first British officials were limited in principle to two, dealing with police and land. In 1899 a police magistrate was appointed and also an assistance land officer to deal with land cases, and the police were placed

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under the Captain Superintendent in Hong Kong. . . The islands, and later, an outlying part of the mainland, were organised separately as the Southern District, with an assistant land officer appointed on 1 January 1905; he became an Assistant District Officer in 1910". G. B. Endacott *Government and People in Hong Kong*, pp. 134-5. Stewart Lockhart's *Report on the New Territory at Hong Kong*, 1900, says: "Since Mr. Lockhart's return to Hong Kong in July (1899) the work of the New Territory has been carried on by Messrs. Messer, Kemp and Hallifax, three cadets who are carrying out their instructions in a most satisfactory manner". The tradition developed of sending newly passed cadets to be "blooded" in the New Territory before they took up more sedentary duties in the Central Government Departments.

[54] Austin Coates *Myself a Magistrate*. London, 1968, p. 13: speaking of his appointment as a Magistrate in the New Territories, Mr. Coates writes: "It was a job which would demand a complete change of thought and attitude after the Secretariat, occupied as I had been there with the doings of the modern world. Yet in this older world, bypassed by time, might I not find the roots — perhaps even the soul — of the people who, met with in the city, held in their hearts something that everlastingly eluded me?"

[55] G. B. Endacott *Government and People in Hong Kong*, p. 169.

[56] Ibid., p. 169.

[57] A particularly acidulous, but fictional, portrait of an Assistant Colonial Secretary is presented in Somerset Maugham's *The Painted Veil* (London, 1925). This so enraged the then Assistant Colonial Secretary of Hong Kong, A. G. M. Fletcher, that he threatened an action against the publishers, Heinemann. The name Hong Kong was replaced in the second issue of the book by "Tching Yen".

[58] Richard Symonds *The British and Their Successors*, London, 1966, p. 16.

[59] G. B. Sayer *Hong Kong: Birth, Adolescence, and Coming of Age*, London, 1937, p.15.