

Many so-called washerwomen take a whole week to get out a few pieces of clothes and perhaps they may not be done properly. Let us contrast this with the washerwoman who knows what she is about.

She puts her white clothes to soak during that time she is attending to the coloured ones, when she has finished rings out these from the soak, scrubs them into another bowl of clean water to get out as much dirt as she can without soap and then puts them in the warm water for washing. She also puts in the water, washing soda and borax, to give the clothes a white colour. After washing properly, she puts them to boil. A kerosine tin can be used for this purpose. The boiling takes about 20 minutes. After this she rinses them, blues them, starches them right away and hangs them out. In this way she is sure of a good colour on her clothes and then the ironing can be done the next day.

In conclusion let me repeat a few points that ought to be remembered by all washer-women. (1) Assort your clothes before washing. (2) Do not boil or burn flannels. (3) Do not wring flannels nor woollen goods. (4) Do not boil or soak coloured dresses and lastly (5) See that the clothes are of a good white colour and free of all dirt before ironing.

(Extract from the Journal of Jamaica Agricultural Society
Volume XXVIII No. 12 of December 1924).

The Indian Economic Position.

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Inquiry into Agricultural Problems.

It is but a truism to say that *the economic condition of a country depends largely on its industrial development.* When we talk of industrial development in this country, we sometimes fail to recognize the fact that agriculture is the staple industry of this country. The percentage of people living on agriculture proper and other allied industries is calculated by various authorities at something between 65 to 85 per cent, and therefore, in any economic enquiry that is undertaken it is necessary to give the first place to agriculture. Not only should a careful examination into the existing condition of agriculture and agriculturists be undertaken but serious attempts should be made to find out the means of improving the same. *The want of labour-saving machinery, the sub division of land into uneconomic holdings, the lack of cheap and easy credit, the absence of scientific knowledge of agriculture are the main reasons why agriculture in India is in so backward a condition.* *Any inquiry into agricultural problems will have to include an*

inquiry into the land revenue system of the country which varies from province to province. One of the first points that will emerge in discussions on the land revenue system is whether land revenue is a tax or rent. If it is a tax, as is argued by many scientific economists, then the question arises why even the owner of the smallest agricultural holding has to pay the land tax without any exemption, while incomes from sources other than land get exemption upto Rs. 2,000 per annum. In this connection, attention may be drawn to an anomaly that while a man who invests in land is not charged income-tax another man who invests in industries, or in trade and commerce is charged income-tax on the profits that he makes on such investments. In such circumstances, it is not surprising if the richer classes invest their savings in land and thus raise the price of land by undue competition and then try to get a return on their investment in land by rack renting. *Under the existing land revenue system and the Income Tax Act while the smaller land holders have to pay a proportionately large portion of their income as land revenue, the bigger land lords have, on account of the exemption from payment of income-tax, to pay proportionately less.* The problem, complicated as it is, will have to be considered in the light of the existing Hindu and Mahomedan law under which all sons have equal right in the property of their fathers and in accordance with which lands are sub divided into uneconomic holdings. The questions ought to be tackled as a whole if there is to be a re-adjustment of the taxation of the country on a correct scientific basis, and I hope the Taxation Committee, whose members I welcome here on your behalf, will have the courage to do so in a scientific spirit and will not be frightened by the cry of the Hindu law of inheritance or vested interests being in danger. The problem of the sub-division of agricultural holdings, though a very difficult one, has been fairly successfully tackled in some provinces, and if economists, social reformers and other political leaders give a definite lead both to Government and the public in this matter, it is not incapable of solution in other provinces as well.

So long as land revenue forms a very large percentage of the provincial revenues, it is the duty of these Governments to adopt a policy of improving the economic, social and intellectual condition of those who live on the land and pay out of its proceeds. Unfortunately till very recently, Government have followed the *laissez faire* policy of British statesmen and administrators as regards agricultural as well as other industries, and as a result things were allowed to drift agriculturist's being left entirely at the mercy of the village money-lender regarding financial facilities both for current agricultural expenses and for improving the land. The great famine of 1899-1900 was an eye-opener and some of these Governments have since then adopted various

measures to help the agriculturists and provide scientific agricultural education to enable people to introduce modern and scientific methods of cultivation. While thankfully acknowledging what has been done in this direction, one cannot help saying that the needs of agriculture and agriculturists are not fully realized by high Government officials on the heights of Simla or the plains of Delhi. Even when men who have come in touch with agriculturists as district officers are transplanted to these heights, they very soon forget their old friends, for "out of sight out of mind" applies in this case as in many others. If high Government officials had understood their duties to agriculturists they would not have opposed the amendment to the Imperial Bank Act which wanted to empower the bank to extend to co-operative banks, the facilities which it was authorized to grant to joint stock banks. So long as this attitude towards agriculturists continues and there is no change in the mentality of the men in charge of money power at the head-quarters, there is no possibility of any appreciable advance in the condition of agriculture and no chance of agriculturists getting from the soil what their brethren do in other advanced countries. I know this is politics and not economics but I cannot help referring to the policy of Government in so far as it trenches on and affects the economic development of the country. Talking of the general policy of Government towards agriculturists, *one cannot fail to mention the existing heavy indebtedness of agriculturists and the necessity of adopting measures, both legal and financial, to eradicate this evil* as far as it is possible to do so. The establishment of *land mortgage banks* somewhat on the lines of the *Landschaften* of Germany and of *conciliation boards* with power to examine into old accounts of the *sowcars* are some of the *measures* that suggest themselves to me as *likely to prove useful* if debt redemption is to be taken upon a systematic basis. Before passing on to other subject, *I desire to urge both Government and legislative bodies to use the villager's money in improving villages and not in beautifying district towns, or provincial capitals, or the Imperial city of Delhi.*

Problem of Unemployment. One of the results of the adoption of any policy aiming at the prevention of sub-division and fragmentation of lands will be to reduce the number of persons dependent on the land and thus to increase unemployment in villages. *Two remedies* suggest themselves to me, namely, the *development of cottage industries* and the *drawing of those who are in need of employment to industrial areas, or to such agricultural areas as require more men* than are available in that locality or intensive cultivation. While the colonial Governments of Ceylon, the Federated Malay States, Mauritius and even British Guiana spend money on immigration agencies for the

purpose of recruiting unskilled labour, no systematic attempt of this kind has been made by any Indian provincial Government, except that of Assam in the interest of tea plantations. At present, excepting the statistics prepared by the Bombay Labour Office there are no regular and exact figures of unemployment in the provinces. The first necessity is the preparation and publication of such statistics. The industries departments must then, in consultation with district officers and the co-operative department, find out how many of these people can be employed by the development of the old and the starting of new cottage industries. When this work is done they will be in a position to know the number of men for whom provision has to be made outside the villages, either in their own provinces or in others. If there is co-ordination between provinces, it will not be difficult for any province to find employment for its unemployed in other provinces. It is only after all efforts have been made to find work for the unemployed in our own country that we can think of emigration to other colonies as a remedy for unemployment.

While the problem of unemployment in reference to unskilled labour does not appear on the face of it to be very difficult of solution, *the problem of unemployment of the middle and lower middle classes requires very careful consideration to enable correct remedies being devised.* The educational policy of Government is to a certain extent responsible for creating or increasing the number of this class of unemployed, and while one feels the necessity of modifying and recasting the entire system of education one would not be justified to say off-hand as to how and to what extent the policy should be modified. *Industrialization on a very large scale, with State aid and wherever necessary, and the establishment of a large number of technical schools with a technical institute at their head, have been looked upon as two measures which are likely to meet the needs of the large number of educated and semi-educated young men of the middle classes who find difficulty in obtaining suitable employment.* This evil of the unemployment will go on increasing unless industrialists, politicians, educationists and Government join hands and make an earnest effort to find out the remedies and adopt a bold policy of economic reconstruction.

(Extracts from a speech delivered before the Indian Economic Conference at Benares in January this year in his capacity as President).

Black Sheep. Wensleydale sheep have white wool, but the skin of the face and ears is deep blue, and this colour may extend to other parts of the skin. Breeders select for a maximum amount of pigment.

The breed produces about 15 per cent. of black lambs, together with a number which are "pale blue" and very occasionally one which is pure white. Mr. F. W. Dry, from breeding experiments (Journ. Genet., Vol. 14 No. 2), concludes that the black is a simple recessive, since blacks bred together give only black offspring. The same is true of blacks in certain other breeds of sheep. The blue-faced sheep are found to be heterozygotes analogous to the Blue Andalusian fowl; in other words, a black sheep with a (dominant) white coat. On the otherhand, the Karakul sheep is a dominant black. When crossed with white breeds, the lambs are pure black. Such hybrids are now widely bred and their fleeces used as fur, but in the adult the colour becomes grey or dirty white. In black Welsh mountain sheep the colour of the coat and horns is also apparently dominant in crosses. Mr. J. A. Fraser Roberts (Journ. Genet., Vol. 14, No. 3) describes experiments with this breed. A pattern known as "badger face" also occurs, which is white with black markings on the face, belly, and legs. This appears to be recessive to both black & white. In crosses between black and badger-face a white lamb has been known to appear. Such cases of "reversed dominance" have been recorded in other breeds. Their further investigation is a matter of much genetical interest. The badger-face marking has also been studied by Wriedt in a Norwegian breed of sheep. Individuals with reversed badger-face markings, i. e. black where white should appear and vice versa, are also known to occur.

(Nature). G. N. R.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Indian Economic Conference. In his presidential address at the Benares session of the Conference held in January Mr. Lallubhai Samaldas traversed a very wide field and his speech ranks as one of the best that have been delivered for a long time. It evinces a rare sense of responsibility and a correct grasp of public questions and his words are bound to carry weight not only with the audience before him then but also the larger public outside. Mr. Lallubhai rightly stressed the fact that the study of economics should be pursued without any personal, racial or political bias though it was difficult to draw a line dividing economics from politics.