

The production of Iron increased from 823,053 tons in 1923 to 1,445,000 tons in 1924. The Tata Iron and Steel Co. was chiefly responsible for such increase. Steel melting capacity and internal requirements in India for iron castings being very much less than the blast furnace capacity large export of pig-iron has become inevitable and stood at 341,326 tons with a value of Rs. 217 lakhs. Owing to a world wide slump in the iron and steel trade the importation of Indian pig-iron into the U. S. A. led to complaints from American producers and even anti-dumping notices seem to have been issued against certain cargoes.

Petroleum ;—Production amounted to 294½ million gallons in 1924 and kerosine oil 71,807,575 gallons and of fuel oils 89,152,952 gallons valued at Rs. 651 lakhs of rupees while paraffin wax exports aggregate 29407 tons valued at 135 lakhs.

Salt.—Ordinary salt 1,623,475 tons; rock salt 189, 237 tons. Total value is 108 lakhs. Imports 595, 666 tons valued at 139 lakhs.

Saltpetre.—Production 8,543 tons valued at 25 lakhs; exports 8,385 tons valued at 28 lakhs.

(From the Records of the Geological Survey of India Vol. LVIII Pt. 3)

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Royal Agricultural Commission. With pleasure we note the announcement of the constitution of the Royal Commission to investigate agricultural problems in India. It is opportune that the advent of the Agricultural Commission should synchronisewith the celebration, in July 1926, of the Golden Jubilee of the introduction of Agricultural Education in India, by the Madras Agricultural Students' Union, as this occasion will be utilized to review the progress during the past 50 years. It is a happy sign of the times that during the past two or three years, every section of opinion should profess to speak for the masses, for the man in the street, for the toiling peasant. Should this turn in the wheel inaugurate a new era in the development of the natural resources and proper adjustment of society, all efforts the country has put forth will not be in vain.

In certain quarters a sharp distinction is made between the agriculture and the agriculturist and the critic would look upon the commission with certain misgivings, as in his opinion, its labours may be directed towards suggesting ways and means of increasing production without any thought for the well being of the ryot. This, in our opinion, certainly overlooks an important correlation between the worker and his work. You cannot improve the work without advancing the status of the worker, and he would be a simpleton indeed who will in these days of lock-outs and strikes, try to stem the raging tide of democracy and be drowned in the attempt. After all, the Royal Commission is out to make recommendations and these can only be based on the materials placed before them. Should the country decide on improvement nothing can resist her will.

Agricultural account test for lower Subordinates. Agricultural officers of all grades are, under existing orders, required to pass an agricultural account test before they are confirmed. At present there is no distinction made between officers and officers, one in the Imperial Grade has to sit for the same examination and answer the same papers as a lower subordinate. With a good deal of difference in the mental equipment and in the prospects in after life, it would seem hard that certificate holders should be made to pass this test. The matter is, however, different when they are promoted as Upper subordinates in which case they can be obliged to pass the test within two years of such promotion. In this connexion, it is well to consider whether agricultural officers may not more usefully be made to pass vernacular tests specially instituted for this purpose than to undergo the Deputy Collectors' test, which, in most instances, does not deal with agricultural matters.

Indian Economic Conference. This conference met this month in Madras about the same time as the Indian Science Congress did at Bombay. Professor C. J. Hamilton presided over the full proceedings. Several papers were read, mostly dealing with matters pertaining to land and the ryot. "Agricultural Production" "Agricultural Indebtedness" and such like are a few samples of subjects on which papers were given and discussions took place. May we appeal to our countrymen to look more at the economic side of undertakings than be carried away by the dazzling show which often heralds such undertakings if they mean to lay sure foundations for the future steady development of the country, as figures and facts are very hard to beat in the solution of any problem, economic or otherwise.