

gratification that the Council has boldly embarked upon this inquiry notwithstanding its cost and despite perhaps the opinions of doubting Thomas's about its value.

Research on rice occupies the pride of place, judged by the expenditure sanctioned, among the other schemes. It is a comprehensive all-India scheme costing Rs. 11 lakhs, spread over a period of five years. Work, however, seems to have related mainly to the breeding and testing of varieties which most provincial departments are already engaged upon, but the grant is said to have enabled the departments among other things, to widen the range of varieties handled. We may, perhaps, single out the work in Burma for special mention, for it relates to the development of strains of rice suitable for the English and European markets and leading therefore to an expansion in the foreign trade in rice. The period of five years is too short for the work in view, and we feel certain, that the need for continuing the scheme will have to be faced. While on the subject of foreign markets for Indian produce, we may draw attention to the collection and circulation of information by the Council during the year regarding the quality of the different kinds of produce, notably oil-seeds, which enjoy a preference in the United Kingdom markets under the Ottawa agreement, which will enable them to compete with non-empire produce and will make the preference really operative. We are glad that as an all-India organisation, the Council has been fully alive to the importance of this matter and is closely watching the working of this commercial agreement in the interests of Indian agriculture.

It is rather disappointing that in respect of tobacco where the scope for improvement with a view to meeting the local demand for cigarette tobacco and also producing enough for an export trade is very considerable, the Council could not do more than appointing another committee. We hope this committee's work will lead to practical action very soon, among which we may suggest suitable financial help to provincial departments undertaking the cultivation of the special varieties and the curing and conditioning of the produce according to up-to-date methods.

Among the minor activities of the year, we may refer to the subject of statistical studies in agricultural research and the help afforded by the Council in the training of agricultural

officers in these methods. The field trials and the interpretation of the results stand to gain in accuracy and already the effect of the training is noticeable in the studies and publications of many of our experiment stations. The initiation of studies in agricultural meteorology is another important development to the credit of the Council and considerable work has been done especially in correlating crop yields to meteorological data and in the evolving of suitable instruments and of technical methods. Weather Bureaux elsewhere have been of such great assistance to farmers that we can expect our own organisation also to play a similar rôle, provided the staff is strengthened so as to secure co-ordination with the existing meteorological stations in the different parts of the country.

It will be impossible to refer even briefly to all the schemes and other activities of the Council. The oil technology work and the work on the utilisation of molasses at the Harcourt Butler Technological Institute, the work on the utilisation of town refuse and farm waste for manure at the Indian Institute of Science, potato breeding on the Nilgiris, inquiry into the trade in cocoanuts and coconut products, locust research, water hyacinth control, dry farming schemes, goat keeping, 'quality' in crop investigations, malting of cholum, fruit research schemes, research on virus diseases, are some of the schemes referred to in the Report. As already indicated, however, nearly all the schemes have been going on only for short periods and some have hardly begun. Moreover the Report itself, latest as it is, appears to be very incomplete; so rapidly have the activities of the Council been expanding and so many are the new schemes taken up since the period covered by the Report. The Council is gradually approximating in scope and organisation to the Federal Department of Agriculture in the U. S. A., and we have no doubt that the Council will succeed in doing as much for our agriculture as the U. S. Department is doing for the American farmer.

### Poverty amidst Plenty.

THE paradox of Poverty amidst Plenty has become almost a platitude by iteration. Nevertheless the conscience of thoughtful people continues to be disturbed. Why is food thrown into the sea when

millions are ill-nourished? Why is cotton ploughed into the soil when millions are ill-clad? There are those who blame the discoveries of modern science for this trouble, the means of production have vastly increased while distribution has lagged behind. The problem would seem indeed to be largely a question of time-lag. Part of the world is living mentally in the age of the bullock cart, part in the age of the aeroplane. Thus the financial world is still largely governed by the ideas of a pre-scientific era and is therefore ignorant of the implications of modern science. The scientific worker, on the other hand, is little concerned with the world of finance and the possible results of his own discoveries, in relation to the public welfare.

It is satisfactory, therefore, to note that at last the scientific world is waking up to the need for the realisation by scientific workers of their responsibility for the wider aspects of human welfare, lest science itself shall come under condemnation. A recent letter of protest against the misuse of scientific discovery has appeared in the press bearing the signature of the President of the Royal Society and a number of other distinguished names. Sir Richard Gregory speaking recently at a Rotary luncheon at Norwich made an eloquent plea for the right use of the gifts of science, and looked for the time when science would no longer be thought of as a destroying angel but as the herald of a more abundant life.

Following a recent discussion at Oxford on "Academic Freedom", reported in the August number of the *Journal of the Institute of Chemistry*, a resolution was passed to set up a Committee with the object of seeing that so far as possible science should be used only for the benefit of humanity. Of even greater significance than protest and eloquence is the fact that a representative body of engineers and scientific workers

of the British Science Guild have formed themselves into a group to study the problems of modern economics and these studies have resulted in the publication of a highly valuable document entitled "First Interim Report on Schemes and Proposals for Economic and Social Reforms". No fewer than 24 proposals have been carefully studied and their essential features tabulated. Among these proposals may be specially mentioned:—

Sir Basil Blackett's "Planned Money",  
Proposals of the Communist Party,  
Conservative Party Proposals,  
Douglas Social Credit Proposals,  
The Proposals of Silvio Gesell ("Free Economy"),  
The London Chamber of Commerce Proposals,  
Professor Soddy's Proposals, and  
The Proposals of the Continental Committee on Technocracy.

The British Science Guild have published other pamphlets of scientific and economic interest among which may be mentioned "The Electron Liberated: Its Industrial Consequences", by Clifford C. Paterson, O.B.E., M.Inst.C.E., M.Inst.E.E., and "Human Biology and Politics" by Professor J. B. S. Haldane, M.A., F.R.S.

This activity among scientific workers may help to lay a true foundation for a new world where every hungry mouth has enough to eat, every capable hand enough work, where exploitation in the name of business is unknown and where peace and sufficiency reign supreme.

The appeal made by Dr. Fowler in his recent paper entitled "Energy and Economics" which appeared as a supplement to the May number of *Current Science*, calling for greater attention on the part of scientific workers to the problems of modern economics, has our warm support, and we hope to return to the subject in a later issue.

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HIS Highness the Maharaja of Mysore was graciously pleased to confer the title of "Rajasabhabhushana" on Sir Venkataraman at the recent Dasara Durbar held in Mysore. We have great pleasure in congratulating Sir Venkataraman on the glittering decoration bestowed on him. Palace honours

are usually reserved for officers rendering distinguished service to the State, and the titles connote the merits and accomplishments of recipients. But in the case of Sir Venkataraman, all laurels become his brow. His Highness's generous act will be widely appreciated.