

It is a remarkable fact that the number of first-rate broadcasters on any special subject number less than half a dozen. How, then, can science topics be presented to make the appeal which they inherently possess for the bulk of the population?

One of the answers lies in the greater use of feature programmes. Script-writers of the calibre of Louis MacNiece would have made any of the topics of "Reshaping Man's Heritage" so attractive that many more listeners would have been attracted. It is not suggested that straight talks be eliminated from broadcasting. Great names are themselves an attraction and many people listen at first not for the subject-matter but because Dr. So-and-So is broadcasting. But when Dr. So-and-So is the authority on a particular subject which lends itself to broadcasting and he is not suitable either in manner or personality to make the subject attractive over the microphone—this was even more evident in the recent series "Science at Your Service" than in "Reshaping Man's Heritage"—he might well be asked to prepare a script which could be presented in 'feature' form by skilled broadcasters. To soften criticism on this point, perhaps it is worth mentioning that the B.B.C. has a maxim, developed from experience, that to make a broadcast sound natural it must be 'staged'. Examples of this are constantly being referred to by W. E. Williams in his sagacious column called "The Spoken Word" which appears each week in *The Listener*.

This brings the discussion to its focus. The B.B.C. should have on its directing staff a man of science of the standing of the co-ordinator of "Reshaping Man's Heritage". He should be instructed to develop the place of science in broadcasting and to use the necessary discrimination in the selection—and rejection—of speakers. He should be given a staff whose duty it would be to investigate the various methods of making scientific broadcasts attractive.

In conclusion, it should be said that "Reshaping Man's Heritage" makes good reading for the elementary student wishing to extend his knowledge of the application of biological research to human welfare.

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CONTROL OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment Can Be Cured

By Lt.-Col. K. E. Edgeworth. Pp. 158. (Dublin: Eason and Son, Ltd.; London: Simpkin Marshall, Ltd., 1944.) 10s. 6d.

THE conclusions and suggestions put forward by Colonel Edgeworth in this book run closely parallel with the policy set out in the White Paper on Employment Policy. The four serious types of unemployment which Colonel Edgeworth considers need handling are all recognized in the official statement, and the measures he advocates find a place in the Government's policy.

First, for example, there is unemployment caused by fluctuations in the demand for industrial equipment and for buildings, to be remedied by a certain measure of national planning and control over the volume of output. This control, Colonel Edgeworth suggests, might be, as suggested in the White Paper, in part voluntary, assisted and supplemented by an appropriate control of Government expenditure. Secondly, there is unemployment caused by the decline of existing industries owing to the develop-

ment of new industries of greater technical efficiency. For this the remedy is to facilitate the transfer of the displaced workers to other occupations, the scheme including the cost of training and the payment of wages or part wages during the period of transition. Co-ordination of such transference with plans for the development of housing and for the expansion and location of new industries would also be required.

Thirdly, unemployment is caused by the decline in purchasing power which arises from over-saving. This is the distinctive feature of Colonel Edgeworth's book, where the influence of this factor is worked out in considerable detail and with some approximation to quantitative computation. Fourthly, unemployment is caused, especially in the smaller countries, by the competition of larger and more efficient industries abroad. Apart from this, Colonel Edgeworth just touches on the question of agriculture, to which the White Paper makes only passing reference. Schemes for sustaining agricultural prices by increasing the bargaining power of the farmer in marketing his surplus, national schemes for storing the surplus output of exceptionally good years, and some international planning in respect of international purchases of agricultural products, are among the measures he advocates for securing a healthy and well-balanced agriculture.

Colonel Edgeworth's analysis leads him to conclude that individual saving should not exceed 3 per cent of the national income, and that it can be kept down to this figure by a suitable system of taxation and death duties. Business saving tends to increase with undesirable rapidity when trade expands, and acts as a brake on expansion, preventing the attainment of full employment. To provide the remedy of passing on to the consumer, in the form of reduced prices, the reduced costs which are associated with expanding output, he suggests that the boards of management of all large business enterprises should include representatives of workers and consumers to see that this principle is observed. The volume of Government saving should be determined by the opportunities for utilizing the money in an investment worth while, and if other means of controlling the surplus saving prove inadequate, he suggests that the Government should borrow the surplus savings and expend them on social services, rather than on public works. This is in effect what the White Paper suggests in the differential scheme of contributions to social insurance.

With regard to international trade, Colonel Edgeworth suggests a combination of moderate tariffs with a system of price control through the control of wages and associated with the control of profits. Here he appears to go somewhat beyond the measures the Government is at present prepared to contemplate; but he recognizes that the smooth working of any such scheme will depend very largely on how far each country is prepared to accept the principle that a properly adjusted system of international trade is to everybody's advantage, and that it can only be secured by mutual co-operation.

There can be no question as to the value of Colonel Edgeworth's little book as a stimulant to public interest in these problems and as an indirect comment on Government policy as outlined in the White Paper. It should provoke further discussion on the causes of unemployment and assist to clarify the issues, whether or not the remedies he suggests be regarded as appropriate.