

for the amendment of the land laws. Among the reforms it is intended to propose is the reintroduction of the system of tribal tenure. It is understood that this proposal has the approval of the Indian Office. Suggestions are also to be considered for the establishment of a system of credit for the Indians in order to enable them to equip and stock their farms, as they are not otherwise in a position to work any land which may be assigned to them. It is certainly desirable that something should be done to establish on an economic basis the half-detribalised Indians who at present are largely parasitic on the fringes of white communities. The passing of a revised land-law which would restore the Indian to the land without the power of alienation would probably prove a substantial advance in that direction.

Grading of Empire Hardwoods

A SMALL brochure has been prepared by the Imperial Institute Advisory Committee on Timbers entitled "Grading Rules and Standard Sizes for Empire Hardwoods" (Imperial Institute, South Kensington, Oct. 1933). The Sub-Committee, appointed by the Advisory Committee, decided that these inquiries should be confined to overseas Empire square-edged hardwoods. The grading rules and memorandum on sizes recommended by it will be subject to amendment from time to time, as further experience is gained. The grading rules for Empire hardwoods (square-edged) intended for shipment to the United Kingdom are considered under: A. Hardwoods from Countries other than Canada and New Zealand, I Standard Grades. II Wormy Grades. III Grades for shorts, squares, strips, quarter-sawn stock. B. Canadian Hardwoods. C. New Zealand Hardwoods; and appendixes. This piece of work was overdue and should prove of great value to all concerned in this matter of hardwood imports. The danger of laying down hard and fast grading rules for any particular item of imports may result, however, in great waste at the source of origin—a waste which has to be seen on the spot to be fully realised. For example, under "Squares" it is stated, "*First Quality or Prime Squares* must be free from all defects, except that, when squares are sold specifically for turning, slight defects on one or more corners which will turn off will be admitted". In the case of mahogany, to obtain the flawless squares, sections of logs of 2-4 ft. will be cut off and left to waste in the forest owing to some small flaw which the manager on the spot will not risk sending home since he will be censured by the management. The latter will not have this type of material sent home since they know it will be objected to by the buyers. Is it necessary to waste annually thousands of cubic feet of so magnificent a timber as mahogany because the specification of import laid down by the purchaser approaches an ideal?

Wireless Communication at Mount Everest

A paper entitled "Wireless Communications with the Mount Everest Expedition, 1933", read before the Royal Society of Arts by Mr. D. S. Richards, has now been published (*J. Roy. Soc. Arts*, May 11). The

plans provided for the installation of a main fixed station at Darjeeling, the starting point of the expedition, and two mobile transmitting and receiving stations to be erected at the Base Camp and Camp III at altitudes of 16,800 ft. and 21,000 ft. respectively. The distance from Darjeeling to the Base Camp was about 111 miles, with a further 10 miles to Camp III, from which a telephone line was to be laid to Camp IV about 1½ miles distant and at a height of 22,800 ft. Communication was carried out by telephony when possible, with recourse to Morse telegraphy when conditions were less favourable. Wave-lengths in the region 40-60 metres were found to be the most successful, and the best time for communication was in the early morning when fading and interference from atmospheric were reduced to a minimum. On the whole, the wireless equipment worked satisfactorily, and the service provided was of great value to the climbers. Weather reports were delivered to Camp IV within an hour or two of their being originated in Calcutta. Radiotelephony proved a great success on occasions, notably when H.E. the Governor of Bengal spoke to some members of the expedition from Government House, Darjeeling, and also when the Civil Surgeon in Darjeeling was consulted about some medical cases. Dr. Greene also carried out a diagnosis by radio between Base Camp and Camp III when there was no doctor in the latter Camp. Not least among the advantages provided was that of the reception at Base Camp of broadcasting programmes and news bulletins.

Road Construction in New Germany

If we leave the United States out of account, it is at first sight curious that countries overburdened with financial liabilities take the leading part in promoting road construction. During a period of great prosperity, the United States built a gigantic network of highways. Yet when unemployment increased, further energetic steps were taken to increase the road work being done. During the former period, maximum use was made of machinery, but now the tendency is to employ manual labour as much as possible. In *Roads and Road Construction* of April, there is an interesting paper by Prof. K. Kruger, of the Technical High School, Charlottenburg, describing the latest German *autobahn* (super-highway) scheme. At the motor exhibition in March at Berlin, Herr Hitler urged the encouragement of motor-vehicle traffic as this would provide work for hundreds of thousands of men. The *autobahn* project has been fostered, and the construction of powerful high-speed vehicles—almost semi-aircraft—is being encouraged. It is intended that the high-speed traffic should be collected on the *autobahn*. The ordinary roads not built for the present dense heavy and rapid traffic would be saved from the necessity of constant repairs and efforts would be made to improve them. The super highway will enable the motorist to speed up to at least 90 miles per hour. A lorry driver will be able to travel between two distant cities twice a week instead of making only one return trip. The deterioration of