

## An Empire Development Board

FOR some years past, Sir Robert Hadfield has advocated the establishment of an Empire Development Board in order to secure a systematic and co-ordinated or a 'planned' development of the vast resources and opportunities of the British Empire. He has now brought his suggestions together in a concise pamphlet\* which, although prepared for consideration by a committee of the Institution of Civil Engineers, is deserving of the widest study. Sir Robert speaks with authority as a man of science, an engineer and as an administrator; and whilst drawing most of his examples from the field of engineering, he is clear that the membership of the Board should be fully representative of Empire scientific, technological and industrial activities.

The proposals are concrete and definite: a permanent body of adequately remunerated members continually at work and continually supplied with 'new blood' on an elastic basis of retirement by rotation, with a secretariat in each country and the main Board travelling frequently to all parts of the Empire. The Board would be non-political, and its aim would be to assist in developing new and additional resources, and *not* the guiding of existing trade into Empire channels by fiscal means. Its purpose would be to develop the Empire as a whole, and not to benefit one part at the expense of another. The Board would co-operate fully with all professional institutions, trade and industrial federations, as well as with the Governments of the constituent parts of the Empire, but would not itself control or manage existing or new undertakings.

\* Empire Development and Proposals for the Establishment of an Empire Development Board. By Sir Robert Hadfield. Pp. 78. (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1935.) 2s. 6d. net.

Sir Robert is under no illusions regarding the magnitude of such an undertaking. He points out, in the first place, however, that the Dominions Royal Commission (1912-17) expressed with no uncertain voice the need for such a body and unanimously recommended the creation of an Imperial Development Board. There is thus evidence both of need and of prospective co-operation. In reply to the argument that the plan is too immense to be handled effectively by any single organisation, it is urged that the magnitude of the task is simply a measure of the opportunity, and that clearly some organisation to deal with the problems is in any event better than no organisation at all. With regard to the objection that the cost would be excessive, it is argued that productive work would be accomplished at comparatively small cost and that within reasonable limits the more spent on the work the greater would be the return, whilst a small fraction of the sums spent annually on the various legislative bodies within the Empire would supply an adequate income.

The proposals put forward by Sir Robert Hadfield would seem to be especially vital at the moment. We have at home a National Government which has already indicated its appreciation of one urgent Empire problem by setting up a Dominions Migration Board. The countries of the Empire are united by a common loyalty and a real brotherhood which cannot be but strengthened by the work of a common Development Board. As one by one political ties are loosened, there is real need for a new bond.

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## Method and the Science of Man

IF trenchant criticism of the methods employed in investigation affords any gauge of a healthy state in a given science, physical anthropology must be enjoying a peculiarly healthy activity. To recent attacks on racial classification on the basis of the measurement of physical characters may now be added criticism of both the accuracy and adequacy of bodily measurement itself. It may be remembered that Sir Arthur Keith was once

criticised for relying on the evidence of the eye in racial discrimination. It was pointed out that in so doing he relied upon an inexact observation for evidence which was afforded more exactly by measurement. It should be remembered, however, that 'racial discrimination by inspection', to be effective, must be trained; while measurement itself, experience has shown, may be a source of error, if due precaution be not taken against the