

as the student of religions well knows, is a sublimation of group solidarity. In a supreme self-protective effort it either proselytizes, expels, or exterminates: hence missionary effort and persecution, on the principle that he who is not for is against. This lies at the root of the quarrel of Nazi nationalism, a quasi-religious emotion, and the Confessionals in Germany, just as it inspires the persecution of the Jews. The Old Testament expresses it repeatedly in the reliance of the Hebrews on Jehovah, the god of battles, as the exclusive protector of the Chosen People.

To some extent at the present time this particularist spirit of self-protection has been diverted into the channel of nationalism. More potent,

however, is the fact that an ever-increasing number, appealing in the conditions of modern civilization to a widening circle, is not content to rest in the particular, but must pass on to the universal. To such, neither restrictions of national distinction nor differences between creeds can weigh in the balance against the ethical principles explicit or implied in all the higher forms of religion. In this composite but practical creed, analogous to the *jus gentium* of the legists, it may be that they are feeling their way towards a further and higher stage in the development of religious belief, in which the theological differences which antagonize will be forgotten in the pursuit of a common and universal ethical purpose.

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## Colonial Policy and Scientific Research

MR. ORMSBY-GORE has lost no time on taking up his duties as Secretary of State for the Colonies, in making clear his personal position in relation to a variety of problems with which he is confronted in colonial administration, and more particularly to the need for the active prosecution of research with a view to future development.

An address which he delivered recently, when presiding at the thirty-fifth annual Colonial Service dinner of the Corona Club, was broadcast, and was no doubt consciously directed to reach a wider public than his immediate audience. It will go far to allay some not unjustifiable feelings of uneasiness as to future developments, which for some time have disturbed informed opinion both at home and in the Dependencies. While Mr. Ormsby-Gore deprecated the discussions, in which the possibility of future sessions of territory had been debated, as likely to do more harm than good, he was emphatic in endorsing "the very clear statements" of the Prime Minister and of his predecessor in office, referring specifically among other dependencies to Tanganyika Territory. "Peace," he went on to say, "continuity of policy, social progress, and economic development are the greatest needs of the Colonial Empire."

With this all will agree, although there may be difference of opinion as to the best means by which they are to be attained. It is significant, however, of the confidence inspired by Mr. Ormsby-Gore's appointment, that it has made optimistic even so

sturdy a champion of the white settlers' claims in Kenya as Lord Frederick Scott, who, as he told the East African group of the Overseas League on June 18, sees hope for the future in the appointment of "a new Secretary of State for the Colonies, who knew East Africa, and had written . . . the best of all reports on East Africa".

While Mr. Ormsby-Gore is fully alive to the part which has been played, and must continue to be played, by the study of native institutions in their bearing on the further development of the native, there are two matters to which he directed attention as problems of public health confronting the Colonial Governments. Of these the first is the application of the newer scientific knowledge of nutrition. Mental and physical efficiency, as well as resistance to disease, he pointed out, are tremendously affected by nutrition; and he is not satisfied that the problems of nutrition have been adequately studied and the results applied in our tropical dependencies. After a reference to the generous offer of the Rockefeller Foundation to establish a special organisation in Uganda for the study of yellow fever, he spoke of the benefactions received by many Colonies from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, particularly in connexion with education, social services and libraries.

It is especially satisfactory to hear that Mr. Ormsby-Gore intends to devote his personal attention to the application of science to Colonial problems of agricultural development and public

health, and to watch with a vigilant eye the work of the education departments throughout the Colonies. In this connexion it may not be inopportune to note that Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy of India, in addressing the opening meeting of the Advisory Committee of Nutrition under the Indian Research Fund Association at Simla on June 18, referred to the relationship of improvement in sanitation, hygiene and nutrition among

the rural population to literacy among the women: "In default of female literacy," he said, "it will be found that, whenever supervision is removed, there will be a relapse into age-old customs, and that within a few months nothing will be left of the better living that has been so laboriously inculcated." The experience of India in the past ten years may not be without its lessons for the colonial administrator.

## Land-Reclamation in Italy

### Land-Reclamation in Italy :

*Rural Revival in the Building of a Nation.* By Cesare Longobardi. Translated from the Italian by Olivia Rossetti Agresti. Pp. xii + 243 + 29 plates. (London : P. S. King and Son, Ltd., 1936.) 12s. 6d. net.

ONE of the achievements of which Fascism can unreservedly be proud is the reclamation of great areas of land in Italy that for centuries had added little or nothing to the national wealth, and indeed had frequently, like the Pontine Marshes, been dangerous to human beings owing to the widespread prevalence of malaria. Waste land can be found in all countries, even in our own, densely populated as it is ; it escaped enclosure in the old days because it could not be cultivated by the methods then in use. Considerable areas are, however, amenable to modern methods of cultivation, though the cost of reclamation might be too high to permit an economical return on the money expended. For this reason land-reclamation is scarcely proceeding at all in England, though occasionally private individuals embark on the enterprise out of sheer love of the work. In Holland the great Zuyder Zee scheme is being financed by the Government, but it is regarded not as a financial but as a social investment, to provide land on to which the growing population may spread. In the western European countries the problem is complicated by the many private rights which, though long in abeyance, may burst into vitality as soon as there is any suggestion of the land being developed or taken over for public purposes. In countries ruled by a dictator as in Italy and Russia, such questions do not arise, and land-reclamation becomes simply a technical problem which can be carried out regardless of cost.

One of the greatest of the Italian schemes was described by Dr. Roberto Almagia in *NATURE* of June 15, 1935. There he shows how the great

Pontine Marshes have been converted from malarial swamps into good farming land. The present writer visited this region in April 1934 and was greatly impressed with the efficiency of the work and the adequacy of the houses and farm buildings. Hitherto it has been difficult for English experts to obtain information on the many administrative and financial problems involved. These are satisfactorily dealt with by Señor Cesare Longobardi, so that we now have a full account of the procedure and some statement of the cost of the work.

Reclamation has progressed rapidly since the Fascists came into power. In their first years of office, some 5,000,000 man days were given to this work ; in 1933-34, their twelfth year of office, this had increased to nearly 18,000,000 man days. Some 4.7 million hectares are already in hand or completed, and marked increases in output of agricultural produce have already been obtained. The production of wheat, which before the War was less than 5,000,000 metric tons per annum, has risen to nearly 7,000,000 tons ; net imports of wheat, formerly 1.4 million tons per annum, fell in 1934 to 235,700 tons only.

The Italian reclamation schemes extend also to the land which, though cultivated, is not properly utilized, especially to the well-known latifundia, agricultural properties on which farming is extremely primitive and extensive, where the farms form "a compact mass untraversed by roads, with no water system, infested by malaria, with hardly any permanent inhabitants". The latifundia are associated with what is known as the 'Southern Question', the group of problems arising out of the backward economic and social development of the south of Italy and the islands as compared with other parts of the country.

The general machinery for the reclamation is prescribed by the Mussolini Act which characteristically, as the author states, "does not lose itself in the maze of existing measures. It leaves them as they are and goes straight forward". It