

to the conditions of such countries has been taken up, and that already considerable progress has been made in that direction. I hope that the proposal to which Sir Frank Noyce alluded will be adopted, and that in future years we shall have a special Committee of the Conference to deal with this point.

"I should like to say at this stage how appreciative I am of the promise of welcome which has been extended to me by so many speakers from Japan, China, and India. I can only say to them that I am very much looking forward to visiting their countries, and to attempting to obtain some first-hand understanding of the great difficulties with which they all are faced and of the special problems which their industrial development presents.

"In conclusion, I should like to say a few very brief words about some other points touched on in the debate. A number of delegates spoke of the sequel to the American Conference at Santiago. I am glad to think that the efforts which the Office has made have met with their appreciation. Mr. Benavides, Mr. Antokoletz, and Mr. Gutierrez Alfaro all spoke with pleasure of what had been done and urged us to still greater efforts. We shall try to meet them. I was particularly glad to hear the thanks which the delegates of Venezuela tendered to the Office for having placed the services of Mr. Belloch at their disposal, and their tribute to the assistance which he gave in drawing up a code of labour legislation. Any assistance of that kind which the Office can give, it will regard as the fulfilment of one of its most important tasks.

"Then a number of speakers spoke on the migration question, and I should like to dwell on it at greater length, but time does not permit that. I do feel, however, considerable satisfaction in the thought that at the end of this year a conference is to meet which will be attended by the principal immigration countries of Latin America, and some of the principal emigration countries of Europe. If that Conference is able to do something to promote the kind of immigration which is needed in Latin America, and at the same time to relieve agricultural unemployment, which is perhaps the worst form of unemployment in Europe at the present time, it will have performed a very valuable function.

"And that brings me to the question of agriculture, to which Mr. Ernest Brown, Mr. Curcin, Mr. Diaz Muñoz, and Dr. Riddell, and other speakers alluded. I agree that up to now perhaps too little attention has been paid to agricultural problems; but, as those speakers pointed out, the solution of the social problems of agriculture depends very largely on the solution of the economic problems. When the large Committee which we are convening at the beginning of next year meets, one of its first and most difficult tasks will be to consider: How is it possible to raise the standards of living of the countryside? How is it possible to prevent the progressive impoverishment of the farmer and the peasant such as has occurred in countries like Japan, where the demand for raw silk has been cut in half by the development of artificial silk? And it is not impossible that the development of other artificial substitutes may hit other countries equally hard in the near future. How is it possible to prevent the over-development of cotton, for instance, to which frequent allusion was made during the Washington Conference; and how is it possible to remedy the discrepancy between agriculture and industrial prices?

"Those are some of the problems which lie at the back of the whole social problem in the agricultural world, and I do not know on what lines we should proceed—we are looking to the Agricultural Committee to direct us—but I feel sure that whatever line is adopted it will not be a similar line to that which we have adopted in regard to industry. I feel that the agricultural problem is entirely different in kind, and has got to be treated in an entirely different way.

"Then I should like to say one word in regard to what was said by Mr. Dickson, the representative of Canada, in regard to the constitutional difficulty which has arisen there. It was a matter of particular satisfaction to the Conference, I think, that in spite of that difficulty no question has arisen as to Canada being constitutionally incompetent to give effect to the obligations she has assumed by the ratification of some of our Conventions. The only question which has arisen relates to the manner in which those obligations are to be performed. The second point is that the Canadian Government recognizes the necessity of labour legislation being Dominion-wide in its operation. Mr. Dickson quoted from a speech of Mr. Lapointe, the Dominion Minister of Justice, in which the latter said, in reference to unemployment insurance: 'It is one of the things which cannot be worked out unless it is national in its scope, and there are other matters, more particularly with regard to labour legislation, on which it would be futile and useless to legislate unless the whole of Canada adopts the same legislation with regard to it.'

"These words seemed to offer some ground for expecting that Canada will succeed in overcoming, in the near future, the constitutional difficulties which at present impede the application of some of the Conventions which it has ratified.

"I should like, too, to say a good deal—for which there is no time—about the criticisms of Conference procedure which were made by Mr. Oersted and Sir Frank Noyce. I am inclined to agree with them to a very large extent. I do not feel that either of the present procedures is entirely satisfactory. On the one hand, as Sir Frank Noyce said, the ordinary first-reading discussion, which results in the settlement of a series of points on which the Governments are consulted, is not really a very satisfactory form of discussion. It does not really bring out the essential points, and a discussion of a first draft would probably be much more useful. On the other hand, I agree with Mr. Oersted to some extent that the Tripartite Conferences have also not been altogether satisfactory as substitutes for a first-reading procedure. They have not allowed the full consultation of Governments which I think is necessary before any important Convention is adopted: and I certainly feel that the expedient of the Grey-Blue Report has not given all the assistance which had been hoped. It leaves not only Governments but all delegates to the Conference in doubt until the last moment as to what they are going to be asked to do, and I feel that some attention will have to be given to the whole question of Conference procedure in order to try to devise a more satisfactory system than that which we have sometimes practised in the last few years.