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with some account of the principal sources of waste in present methods of extraction and use. The directions in which economies seem likely to be found are also dealt with, and numerous suggestions made for action by the State to prevent the too rapid consumption of irreplaceable commodities. The field covered is so wide that the author does not profess to have expert knowledge of all the problems, but hopes that the volume may be of use in enabling intelligent citizens to realise the importance of the subject. The book contains a number of photographs, statistical tables and charts. The author is a whole-hearted advocate of State action to prevent waste, but details and difficulties are hardly discussed. "Exportation of oil should be prohibited" (p. 359); "beehive ovens should be abolished" (p. 359), and so on.

C. F. BICKERDIKE

Political Economy: A Handbook of Economics and Public Finance for Egyptian Students. By JOHN TODD, B.L., Lecturer in the Khedivial School of Law, Cairo. (Edinburgh and Glasgow : Wm. Hodge & Co. 1910.)

MR. TODD'S preliminary remarks on the definition and method of the science of economics seem to us to incur a number of objections, as being inconsistent in themselves and ill-fitted to introduce the subject to the youth of Egypt. But he is not unsuccessful in the presentation of economic science to his students by the alternate handling of European and Egyptian problems. He is at his best as a practical economist, dealing not merely with motives but with economic data and economic relations. On the subject of free trade he is lucid and reasonable, explaining the subject for Egypt in a simple and convincing way. Incidentally, he reveals (p. 347) a fact not generally known, that in 1909 the Egyptian Government made the experiment of suspending the excise duty on cotton manufactures for a term of five years. As regards Egyptian interests, he is intelligently alert, and any reader may acquire from his work a good insight into the conditions of the cotton-producing industry, and the main aspects of international trade there.

On only one point of practical economic doctrine does Mr. Todd seem to the present reviewer to incur serious objection. It is his handling of the population question. He writes that the theory of Malthus "is as true as ever, but now it must be applied, not to any single country, but to the world as a whole," arguing

that since England no longer depends upon her own food supplies, the theory has lost its practical application. "Malthus could not foresee that, by the introduction of steamships, she would be able to draw her food supplies from the farthest parts of the world." Mr. Todd has misconceived the problem. Malthus actually saw foreign food imported into England, checked only by an import duty; and his position remained unchanged. To say, as Mr. Todd does, that the theory remains true, but that it has no practical application till "the whole area of the earth's surface is fully occupied by man," is only to reiterate the old fallacies of those who never grasped the theory at all. Even on the assumption that subsistence can be increased more easily for the people of any country by an exchange of their manufactures with other countries which have advantages for food production, the Malthusian law would still stand, that population, under "natural" conditions, "*tends to increase faster than subsistence.*" What Mr. Todd should have told his students is that in many countries control of population is so far being approached that the birth-rate is much lower than formerly, and that *thus* the divergence between gross population and food-supply is lessened, and the loss of child-life through deficient means of subsistence is in process of reduction. But great divergence there still is; and even if that should disappear there will remain both the truth of the theory and the practical application in terms of the needed control.

In this connection Mr. Todd writes (p. 66) that the rate of increase in Egypt "has now probably passed its maximum, as there is a marked tendency among the upper classes to postpone the age of marriage and to abandon polygamy." The statement is interesting, but the suggestion that polygamy tends to a rapid increase of population is open to grave question. As his words imply, it is (as it must be) relatively much less common among the poor than among the rich at all times, and the birth-rate among the poor in Egypt is high, like the death-rate. Readers interested in Egypt will note Mr. Todd's statement that "the standard of living among the working classes is exceedingly low; indeed, the general conditions of life among the fellaheen are such as only the climate could make tolerable." His book, further, is honourably free from the normal racial boasting about the marvels wrought by the British control.

J. M. ROBERTSON