

importance. We hope to epitomize some of them. We heartily congratulate our South American colleagues upon their industry and energy. We gather that the conference will be held periodically, and trust that a British delegate will be present when it is next convened.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

Children at the Cross-roads. By AGNES E. BENEDICT. New York: The Commonwealth Fund Division of Publication, 1930. Demy 8vo. Pp. 238. Illustr. 7. Price \$1.50 post-paid.

This work consists of the life-histories of nine children with school or home difficulties, followed by illuminating comments on possible ætiological factors. The work is based on a study of the carefully kept records of visiting teachers in the rural communities of Monmouth county, New Jersey, Huron county, Ohio, and Boone county, Missouri, these being three out of thirty communities selected by the National Committee on Visiting Teachers, sponsored by the Commonwealth Fund, for a three-year demonstration of visiting teacher work.

It presents a point of view and an interpretation of method that should be particularly useful at the present time to all interested in children and their problems, having regard to the efforts now being made to educate the nation on a subject of the greatest importance not only to the individual child but to the adult community of the future.

J. R. LORD.

Report from the Select Committee on Capital Punishment. H.M. Stationery Office, 1930. Pp. 98. Price 1s. 6d. net.

In the autumn of 1929 the House of Commons appointed a Select Committee to examine the question of capital punishment and the possible substitutes for that penalty. The reference was confined to capital punishment in cases tried by civil courts in time of peace. For practical purposes, the Committee had to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the capital penalty for the crime of wilful murder.

The Committee held thirty-one meetings, and examined a large number of witnesses, who may be roughly divided into three classes: (1) Officials from the Home Office, from other public departments, and from the prisons. With a few exceptions these were in favour of retention of the capital penalty, although some suggested certain modifications in practice. (2) Some well-known advocates of the abolition of capital punishment. (3) Witnesses who gave evidence as to the experience of foreign countries, particularly those which have abolished, or suspended, the infliction of capital punishment.

We are informed that the complete evidence will shortly be published. Meanwhile, a report has been presented which, however, does not emanate from the Committee as a whole. This consisted of fifteen members, representing diverse views.