

## Forced Labour in Africa.

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**F**OR several years now the question of forced labour has been prominently before the governments of the world. In 1925 and 1926 when the Assembly of the League of Nations adopted the Convention on Slavery, an article was inserted therein condemning in general terms recourse to forced labour, and in 1926 the League adopted a Resolution inviting the International Labour Office to investigate the subject.

From that date till now the Labour Office has given the matter unremitting attention, calling for reports from governments, consulting administrators and experts with local knowledge (Mr. Taberer represented South Africa on the Experts Committee) and publishing for general information in orderly form the mass of facts and opinions that were thus obtained.

There was a discussion on the subject at last year's International Labour Conference and it has been put down as Item I. on the Agenda for this year's (1930) Conference.

### THE COMPLEXITY OF THE SUBJECT.

Anyone who takes the trouble to read through the evidence accumulated by the Labour Office will be struck by the wide extension of the practice and the variety of the methods employed to compel the "Natives" of Africa and other countries, but especially of Africa, to labour. Labourers may be compelled to work for public purposes or for private employers. The compulsion may be applied directly by officials or subsidized chiefs or indirectly by such means as taxation, vagrancy or pass-laws, deprivation or restriction of lands.