

dilapidated condition. The owner told me that he was intending to make a better lift on the same principle next year. The cost of working was about 6 annas a day less than the cost of irrigating the same area by the local picotah, and the cost of the machine itself about Rs. 85. It requires only two boys to work it, one to drive the buffaloes and one to guide the water, while the picotah requires two men and three boys. In another village where Mauritius sugarcane cultivation has been extending I saw today for the first time in this District, an over-head picotah of the same design as one sees on the East Coast. The owner told me that this picotah raised twice the amount of water that the local picotah did, as the bucket was larger and it was lifted much faster. The drawback to it is that it requires four good male coolies to work and these are scarce at the present time, and demand 5 to 6 annas a day. I think myself that there is scope for the ordinary bullock-mhote in some parts of the District. Sugar-cane cultivation is extending, and would extend more if it could be watered in the hot weather and I am in consequence giving Mr. Sampson a good deal of trouble about this question.

M. E. COUCHMAN,
7th April 1914.

Revised Courses at the Agricultural College, Coimbatore.

A brief outline of the changes which are to be made in the teaching given at the College may be of interest to some of our readers especially as the new course has received the approval of the Board of Agriculture for India, and is being brought into force at once. It is based on rather revolutionary ideas of the teaching of agriculture, and has been brought about by the staff themselves, with a view to increase the efficiency of the college. It aims at first putting the student in touch with agriculture, with agricultural ideas and methods and agricultural practice, and then giving him a training in science which will enable him to understand the causes underlying the facts he has already grasped, and which will appeal to him therefore, the more strongly. Under our present system, when we teach first the pure and then the applied science and then agriculture, we are, so to speak,

During the causes of facts which a student may not acquire until late in his career, when he may perhaps have forgotten the causes, especially when he comes up as is so often the case, ignorant of any farming methods whatever. This reversal of the usual system is based on the report of a tour which was made by a party from one of the Agricultural Colleges in England to Canada and America and though they did not see the system actually at work, yet the general feeling seemed to be that such a change was only a matter of time. Madras has taken the opportunity to show the way, by boldly adopting this novelty.

But this is not the only change. Opportunity was taken to introduce other modifications which experience had shown desirable.

It was felt that a single course of three years was unsatisfactory, it was too long for some, it was too short for others. There were signs that there existed a class of men who did not want to learn science and who did not want to give three years to the training, but who did want to learn something about farming, and who were keen to put their knowledge to practical use on their own lands. For this class the three years course was too long. Again for those who wished eventually to occupy posts of investigation and research, in the Department, it was found that the three years training was not enough. Many of them could have learnt more, but as the strength of a chain is in its weakest link, so the standard of a class is fixed by the poorest member of it. By simplifying the first two years of the course, and by cutting out the laboratory work, it would be possible to take in many more students, as hitherto the classes had been limited by the laboratory accommodation. Thus the present scheme was gradually evolved,—a course divided into two parts, the first devoid of laboratory work and of larger numbers, and the second scientific and limited in numbers.

Only those who qualified in the first course were to proceed to the second course, which would now naturally be of a more advanced standard, and the students would therefore in the eighteen months learn more than they had before in two years.

Such is the outline of the new scheme. Forty students are to be admitted in June, and will immediately start on a two years' course of agriculture. They will have more field work, and more general field training than at present, and will have manual training in the engine shops, blacksmith's shed, carpenter's shop and so on. The lectures will be shared by the staff, but will not be divided into separate

courses, as this would tend to dissociate the student from the idea that it is agriculture he is learning all the time. At the end of two years the successful student gets his certificate for proficiency in agriculture, when he will be qualified to proceed to a further course of training of eighteen months.

The second course will follow much the same lines as the first two years of the present course, and will consist of scientific courses in pure and applied Chemistry, Botany, Mycology, Entomology, Veterinary Science, Engineering and Agriculture. The students should have by then a basis of agricultural knowledge, on which they can fit the science they are to learn and since it will only be possible to enrol twenty students each year for the second course, they will have undergone some selection and will, it is hoped, be of a more uniform and higher standard, so that the teaching of these subjects can be made more advanced than is possible at present. The Diploma of Agriculture will be given to those students who are successful in this second course.

The advantages claimed for this alteration may be briefly outlined. The department will gain in the superior training which its recruits will obtain, and, with the great advances which are being made in the study of scientific agriculture, this is most necessary. At the same time, the college claims of the practical farmer will not be overlooked, and though the demand at present for a purely practical training may not be large, there are signs that it will increase; at any rate the college will be ready for it when it comes. We ask all our readers to wish the new courses success and to co-operate with the department in getting them known amongst those who are likely to take advantage of them.

Agricultural Associations.

Malabar.

A successful meeting was held at Otapallam at which Mr. C.A. Innes, Collector, and Mr. D.T. Chadwick, Director of Agriculture, were present to meet the representatives of various Village Associations, 50 of them being present, to talk over the results of their experiments, to discuss with them the means to remedy the defects and to draw up the programme for the coming year.

In the course of his speech the Collector said that the reason for establishing those Village Associations was to introduce improved