

Editorial Notes.

The Relation of Administration to Research.

The importance of administration in research is the theme of the Editorial of the February number of the Experiment Station Record of U. S. A. for 1923. Its comments are based on the remarks made by Dr. R. S. Woodward in the course of an address on "the Varied Aspects of Research." The comments made therein refer to conditions obtaining in Experiment stations of the United States of America, but the same remarks will apply with equal force to all Scientific Institutions and probably to the Scientific Departments in India as well. Generally the work of the Administrator is identified with the fiscal and clerical side of the institution. This, according to Dr Woodward is erroneous; "such a view overlooks the importance of the development of a wise research policy, the outlining of the field, the selection of men, and the intelligent provision of conditions essential to their highest success; and it fails to grasp the relationship and influence which a broad-minded, sympathetic man of technical knowledge may maintain in connection with the furthering of inquiry." A mere business man cannot make a successful scientific administrator.

Sometimes the investigators themselves reveal a failure to appreciate the place of administration in a Research Institution. "In contending for freedom and opportunity for the individual in following out the ideas which come to him in connection with his studies, administration has been scouted as having small place in connection with research and as being even inimical to it if carried beyond the office details." In reality "the part which administration plays does not interfere with the proper functions of the technical workers. It may serve as a stimulus, and at times it may impose restraint, but it exercises a steadying hand and it

preserves the idea of a station as a whole. The purpose of organization and administration is to secure the most effective employment of the various forces and resources of the Station, some of which are shared with other branches, in lines of efforts which have been determined upon after careful consideration."

"It is the business of administration to preserve the objects and aims of the station, to keep matters moving in an orderly and active way, to stimulate and encourage, to sustain and protect, and to counsel and suggest where these are necessary." "Where attention from a responsible administrative head is lacking, the course of the station is likely to be haphazard, inadequately considered, not directed by any well developed policy. There may be vacillation, a marking of time and wasted effort. There is often a tendency to undertake more things than can be carried out with the means at hand, for the enthusiasm of individual workers is prone to under-estimate difficulties and the necessary expense is likely to lead far beyond that anticipated. There is danger also of an accumulation of undertakings which have fallen into the routine stage and have ceased to be productive towards conclusion.—The Director of the Station cannot be expected to be an expert in all lines of work, but he can know something about them and the elements essential to their success, and eventually he can form a judgment as to how far these are being met. He can of course be familiar with the problems and their relative importance, even though he must rely on experts to devise the means and carry them out.—He may perhaps be able to stop some leaks, or by eliminating expensive overhead in connection with operations that have become largely routine he may conserve resources, and give larger opportunity where it is needed. Again, the remedy for inadequate funds is not always more money. It may lie in the direction of concentration and conservation, a more effective employment of the existing resources.

All these cases are matters of decision by the responsible administrative head, but decision must be based on an intelligent and sympathetic understanding and this is the advantage of the man of technical training in the administration of research."

According to Dr. Woodward "the theoretical and abstract side of science can no longer be sharply divided from the practical and applied. The fundamental research cannot be done in one place or one set of institutions and the applied research in another. The two types of effort have steadily grown closer together, so that all investigation at the present day, even though it aims directly at applications, must involve fundamental and abstract enquiry before it proceeds far"—The type of enquiry and the line of work followed in a station as well as the selection and development of the Staff of workers depends in no small degree on the capabilities of the director. "A research policy without competent workers to execute it is an anomaly; and on the other hand a corps of ambitious investigators whose efforts are not supported by an intelligent and aggressive research policy will labour under a severe handicap. According to Dr Woodward, the fundamental principle of administration is simple—the way to get good work done is to commit it to a good man and give him freedom and sustained support. But he made it clear that this involved something more than a passive relationship, a 'laissez-faire' attitude towards the worker and what he was doing. It implies, as he pointed out, an attitude of encouragement and expectation; but it will hardly be contended that it means the granting of unlimited freedom and liberty to the Specialist to follow at random where his inclinations may lead."

The above observations and remarks are as much applicable to the organization of research in this country as in America and, we believe, they will supply ample food for thought to our readers.

The World's Dairy Congress.

Milk and Milk products form a most important source of income to the farmer in the Western countries. Their chief value lies in milk being the sole article of food to infants, children and invalids who in any country number more than 25% of the total population. The Dairy Industry commands a large part of the attention of Economists, Statisticians, Doctors, Sanitarians and Businessmen. It is therefore no surprise to us to note that the enterprising American farmer is organising the World's Dairy Congress which will be held from October 2nd to 5th, next.

In the words of the prospectus which has been issued, this will be the first international dairy meeting to be held in the United States of America and the first held anywhere within the past nine years. The vital influence of milk on child health and on the vigour of the nation cannot be too much exaggerated in our country, where the cow which was once worshipped has long since ceased to be an object of veneration, though its protection has touched the imagination of thinking men in all provinces. With the low yields of milk and the smaller number of cows available, the solution of the question of an adequate supply of this nourishing and vital food is urgent. Child welfare and health associations, pin-jrapoles and similar beneficent institutions hardly touch the fringe of the problem and serve only to emphasize its magnitude and urgency. The average consumption per head in India is not worth noting and looks surprisingly meagre as compared with the consumption in the United States of America which is reported to be 421 lbs., in 1921. How many in this country have touched these figures?

We understand that the Dairy Industry in the United States of America has "its roots in 47 million dollars' worth of farms and handles nearly 44 billion quarts of milk" and that for every \$5 spent by families for food 1 \$ goes for milk and milk-products.

Publicity Bureau.

We are sorry to note that the Publicity Bureau which was established in 1921 and had been performing the very useful function of broadcasting desirable information to all corners of the Presidency has been abolished this year by the Legislative Council owing to financial reasons.

The publication of the Monthly Digest of the Madras Agricultural Department was undertaken by the Bureau in the earlier days, but since July 1922, the work was taken up by the Department itself, so that the publication of the Digest has not been thereby affected. We trust the work of broad-casting useful information will similarly be undertaken by various other Govt. Departments such as the Medical and the Sanitary, and the useful work of the Publicity Bureau continued.

College Day.

The celebration of the College Day and the holding of the Conference have now been definitely fixed for the 14th, 15th and 16th July next and the Hon'ble the Minister for Development has kindly consented to preside. We trust that a large number of landed proprietors and other gentlemen interested in agriculture will, in response to invitation, grace the conference with their presence. We fervently hope that members of the Union will recognise the importance of the occasion and give the Committee their enthusiastic support both by way of donations and of contributions of papers.

Departmental News.

Allotments for Agriculture in 1923. Under Agriculture the following allotments have been sanctioned by the Council :

Rs. 55,000 for the establishment of a Central Millet-Breeding Station, Coimbatore, Rs. 5,500 for improvements of dairy cattle, Rs. 8,000 for special demonstrations of improved methods in agriculture and Rs. 21,000 for the opening of a sugarcane station at Anakapalle.