

Assistant Manager at Hagari. He was selected for the higher course but he chose service in the department at once. By his death the department has lost one of its very promising subordinates.

C. K. Venkatesha Ayyar underwent his training during the years 1915—17 but failed to get the certificate of Proficiency. He was sometime ago taken as a Dairyman in the College Dairy which post he filled till his death. He was a sociable and obliging young man.

We offer our heartfelt condolences to the members of the bereaved families.

An old man's view about the coconut cultivation of the West coast.

One of the chief Agricultural pursuits of the West Coast which ranks only second in importance to paddy cultivation is coconut planting which is considered so profitable a speculation that the mania for getting possession of reclaimed lands and lands along the river side favourable for the above purpose is ever on the increase; and if it is cultivated on scientific lines the profit will be ten-fold more than under existing arrangements. Those who are interested in the promotion of this branch of industry will do well to pay particular attention to the following few points:—

In the first place great care is taken in the selection of nuts for growing. Only large-scarred nuts of trees that have passed their middle age will be fit for the same and these when they have attained their full maturity, have to be gently let down in baskets and not violently dropped on the hard ground like ordinary nuts but some consider this process rather too troublesome and so they generally

select trees growing on the banks of tanks so that the fully ripe nuts might drop down into the water which is considered less injurious.

These nuts are then planted on the ground only half covered at a distance of one foot from each other. In some cases they are simply slung two by two over a large horizontal pole, but the more common one is to place them on house tops in a similar manner. In each case they are fully exposed to the weather and remaining thus for about three months they generally begin to germinate and when four leaves are seen or when they are about four or five months old they are carefully transplanted, while on high roads only plants three years old are considered fit for transplanting.

The pits into which these young seedlings are to be transplanted must be prepared with due care and they should be prepared at least six months before they are to be used. One chief point in the preparation of these pits is observing a proper distance between two and this must necessarily vary according to the nature of the soil. A distance of 24 feet in low grounds and a distance of 30 to 40 feet in high regions are considered to be fairly sufficient and in each case they must be two feet square by two feet deep. Then these pits are thoroughly burnt which practice is restricted to high grounds only. After this, marine shells are put in to form the first layer, on which comes another layer of sand. This serves a double purpose. It not only adds to the fertility of the soil, but prevents the encroachment of white ants, the strong pungent smell of which having a very destructive influence upon the injurious insects. The plants require to be watered till they are firmly rooted and throughout the hot season and this will have to be continued even in the case of grown up trees especially if they are on a purely sandy soil. A sandy clayey soil is best suited for its growth. Filth and refuse form the chief manures while ashes and sand are also commonly used for the same purpose. The deposits of rivers considered highly fertilizing are largely used. In addition to all these, the base of the young plant is yearly dug up and covered with a thick coating of sand which practice is kept up even after they become trees and this tends to benefit them much.

The time at which the tree blossoms, varies according to the nature of the soil, the earliest instance being of five years from the time of planting and the latest twelve years. There is a special variety which begins to bear when it is 18 months old but this is not of much use as it does not live long.

A tree in a favourable locality produces between 90 and 100 nuts per year and under favourable circumstances will go on for thus bearing about 80 or 90 years and live to the age of 120 years though by this time the produce will dwindle considerably. Toddy drawing for the first three or four months after blossoming is considered beneficial, because the treading down of branches is calculated to give them fresh life.

Diseases and insect pests are not wanting in this case also. Beetles and insects sometimes eat up the tender shoots of the young coconut tree. These are carefully removed by means of a sickle-shaped pointed iron instrument and the part affected well stuffed with salt, ashes, and sand which cure it in no time. If this means is not resorted to, the tree will wither and die. There are no other baneful agencies to the trees except the natural causes as lightning and excessive drought, over which human precautions however, great have no control.

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Student II Class.

A valued correspondent from the West Coast has made the following remarks on the above article :—

Good cultivators invariably lower the nuts intended for seed in baskets or nets or by means of ropes. This is the best practice. The trees on the banks of rivers along the coast are not selected for seed purposes, because they are generally short-lived. The most important point to be borne in mind in selecting gardens from where the trees are to be chosen for seed nuts is that they should be favourably situated in point of drainage, i. e., they must be very well drained.

The seedlings from 6 months to 36 months old are planted out in their permanent homes. The age of the seedlings is a question of the locality where it is planted out.

Some of the practices alluded to in the article seem to be very rare, particularly the one regarding filling up pits with marine shells.

Reviews.

1. *Planting Sugarcane sets.*

In the Science Congress number of the Pusa Journal we find an interesting article about the planting of Sugarcane sets by Mr. Kulkarani, Deputy Director of Agriculture Bombay.

He says that by the ordinary method of planting, the sets produce a smaller number of plants than they are capable of, giving also uneven germination because the eye buds are placed in different directions in the ground, those on the top germinating first, those on the sides later and those at the bottom dying out altogether. So an experiment was started in Dharwar of planting sets so as to contain only one eye bud each and that being placed upwards. The experiment has been found successful on a field scale with the following inferences :—

(1) Sets with a single eye-bud planted as above have given a higher percentage of germination than in the local method of planting. The germination by this system was above 80%.

(2) The germination in the single eye-bud method was earlier by one week and all the plants germinated simultaneously. Thus a uniform crop was secured.

(3) The eye bud being placed upwards, the plants go straight up, and if planted deep there is less liability of the cane lodging when grown up, and also there is greater facility for work between the rows namely interculture, earthing up etc.