

The Final University class (B. Sc. III) went on their second annual tour with the Professor of Agriculture. They began at Bommasamudram in the Chittor district on the 23rd instant and finished at Bangalore on the 4th January. They visited Chandragiri, Cuddappah, Siddhavattam, Yerruguntla, Nandyal, Hagari, Hindupur, Maklidrug, Hebbal and Hosur and had instructive lessons to learn and interesting practices to observe.

The College was closed for Christmas on the 22nd instant.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Madras Irrigation Bill. The question of defining the limits to the rights enjoyed by cultivators, Zamindars and Government in regard to flowing water in rivers, canals, channels and distributaries, has been a matter of contention for several years. The Irrigation Cess Act of 1865 was found defective in several ways and the Irrigation Cess amendment Act passed in 1900 caused no little stir among the cultivators. The judgment of the Lords of the Privy Council in what is known as the Urlam case set the authorities a thinking and in 1923, the then Law Member the late Hon'ble Sir K. Srinivasa Ayyangar introduced a Government Bill, the main principles of which were, it was alleged at the time, based on rationalisation of all water sources and the utilization of the surplus for the benefit of the community. But the majority of the Elected Representatives in the Legislative Council found several defects and the bill was thrown out. Subsequently the present Law Member Hon'ble Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar reintroduced it early this year with considerable alterations to suit the wishes of the legislators. The bill was referred to a select committee which submitted its report with commendable expeditiousness. The Council discussed this threadbare in its sessions for four months and finally passed it this month. We hope it will in due course receive the assent of their Excellencies, the Governor and the Viceroy. We cannot however pretend that even as now passed the bill has no defects, We yet hope that remedies will be found as time progresses and the Act will confer lasting benefit to the toiling ryot population.

Ryots' Conferences. It was a happy idea that struck Mr. Koil Pillai, Executive Engineer, Godavari Eastern Division, that he

should meet ryots and discuss with them certain irrigation matters. A meeting of this kind was, we learn, held on the 12th instant at Cocanada in the premises of the Taluk office where 300 ryots from the delta villages in the southern portion of the Cocanda Taluk were present and had a frank talk with Mr. Pillai. They gave their views on the question of acquiring land for private "botbies", or distributary channels in paddy lands. In regard to the crossbunding of drains for taking water during the second crop season as also for wetting sugarcane and other garden crops, the meeting suggested the abolition of the present unworkable system of applications for requests under this head being disposed of by the Superintending Engineer whose head quarters were at Waltair and pressed for vesting this right in the local officers—the Collector and the Executive Engineer. The unsatisfactory manner in which silt clearance is attempted to be done in the short period of four months during which canals are closed was brought to his notice and the very sensible proposal was made that once in five years main canals should be closed for longer periods say from February to June, so that thorough repairs could be effected. The Conference was of opinion that the men plying the ferries in canals and drains should be paid by Government as it was a legitimate charge to be met from the irrigation revenue of the Delta.

We congratulate Mr. Koil Pillai on the step he has taken, and are glad to note that he has been continuing to take interest in the ryot for several years now, for we need hardly remind our readers that it was this genial Irrigation Officer that worked heart and soul in introducing and popularising improved methods in paddy cultivation in parts of the Guntur District when he was a Sub Divisional Officer there.

A similar spirit is stirring cultivators in other districts and we understand that ryots under the Uyyakondan channel in Trichinopoly and those under the Nilayar channel near Tirupparankuran, Madura, have formed Associations to improve their irrigation facilities.

Lord Reading and India's opportunity. His Excellency the Viceroy paid a visit to Bombay on the 2nd of this month and amidst a heavy programme found time to open the Technological Laboratory and to lay the foundation stone for the Research Laboratory of the Central Cotton Committee at Matunga. The speech he delivered on this occasion is extracted elsewhere in this issue. His Excellency, has, it is evident, spoken from the standpoint of the British Empire and warned his hearers that a narrower outlook should not cloud the vision of Indians who stood to gain by accepting a policy of no isolation. His Lordship's statement however that (1) India has the priceless heritage of a climate and soil favourable for Cotton produc-

tion and it would be madness to neglect or squander that fair inheritance or to fail to use every effort to improve it by wise stewardship" is in our opinion liable to be misunderstood and would need to be qualified by the words "without prejudice to the adequate production of food grains to feed the population and without due regard to just distribution of agricultural incomes"

Agriculturist and Military Service. It is common knowledge that the flower of the army in any country is drawn from the rural classes and the ryot population supplies the finest material but the necessary limitations of culture impose obstacles in the way of an ordinary soldier rising to the rank of an officer of status and responsibility. If educated Indian youths from rural parts would enter the army and make themselves useful it would be so much gain to the country and relieve the overcrowded country side. We understand that Mr. Patel, son of Mr. P. C. Patel, Professor of Agriculture, Poona, has been selected for training at Sandhurst and we congratulate both the father and the son, on showing the way and hope that sons of the landed aristocracy in S. India will avail themselves of similar opportunities, in advancing the cause of the country and raising the status of the agriculturist.

Late Mr. E. S. Montagu and Dr. Sir Subrahmania Ayyar. During the month, it is our misfortune to lose Mr. E. S. Montagu, one of the great friends and benefactors of India, and Dr. Sir. Subrahmania Ayyar, one of the greatest of Indian Patriots.

The late Mr. Montagu as Undersecretary to Lord Morley and Secretary of State in the Lloyd Georgean administration did much good to this country especially to the agriculturist by creating ministerships for agricultural development and broadening the basis of election.

The late Dr. Sir. Subrahmania Ayyar was a staunch patriot right through his career whether as a non-official or as a judge of the High Court. His interest in the agriculturist was keen. He served as Secretary to the Committee appointed in 1885, to investigate into the working of the Saidapet College and did valuable work in this connection.
