

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

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### **Agricultural—Conditions 1923—1924.**

The year has been characterised by unusual weather conditions. The South West monsoon was late in bursting and proved to be very erratic and ill-distributed. While South Kanara, Coorg and Mysore Malnad received such a great excess of rain that large areas were devastated by floods, the monsoon was in defect to a greater or less degree in other parts of the Province. The Return or North East monsoon was similarly very unsatisfactory. Failure of rains has brought about acute distress in Anantapur and Bellary and in parts of Salem and Coimbatore, a scarcity of fodder has arisen which has resulted in large numbers of young stock being disposed of at ridiculously low prices in the local markets. On the other hand, cyclones and phenomenally heavy rains were received in Ganjam and Vizagapatam and Tinnevely Districts accompanied by floods and damage to houses, trees and fields. Owing to these reasons, the year has proved a most disappointing one. There is distress everywhere and famine is staring in the face of people in the Deccan Districts. South Kanara and Malabar which had an excess of rain in the early part of the year are now suffering from a deficiency of the same in the second crop period. The year has after all justified the Hindu name of "Rudhirodgari" or "Bloodspitter." The continued spell of dry weather—which has been with us since the middle of November at Coimbatore and probably also in most parts of the Presidency has not proved re-assuring. The cultivators have been anxiously looking forward to the receipt of the "Mango showers" which besides brightening the prospects and saving the mango crop from ruin, may also be expected to keep in check various epidemics such as Cholera and Small-pox which usually spread in seasons of drought.

We fervently hope that the Almighty may in His kindness save the poor Indian Cultivator—who is so dependent on a good monsoon for his welfare—from another year of a similar character.

### **Lord Willingdon and his Successor.**

It is given unto few Englishmen of exalted rank to possess such long acquaintance with India as has been the share of His Excellency, Lord Willingdon. His period of tenure as Governor of Bombay for seven long years in the pre-reform days was itself of a very exacting nature. His Excellency came to Madras in 1919 and his advent into

this province synchronised with the introduction of the Reforms. His keen interest in Animal Husbandry and agricultural development in general induced him to take up the agricultural portfolio here before it passed under the Reformed constitution into the hands of the Development Minister in December 1920 and it was perhaps in the best interests of the country that he should have taken up that portfolio, since it gave him a deep insight into the agricultural needs of this presidency. A keen observer of men and affairs, a skilful administrator and a tried politician, it was easy for His Excellency to read a-right the signs of the times and play his part in the march of progress this country had set itself to. In 1920 His Excellency made whole-hearted recommendations to the Secretary of State for the promotion of some Indians to the Indian Agricultural Service and later encouraged his colleague, the Development Minister, Sir K. V. Reddi Nayudu in the pursuit of the policy of Indianisation. His Excellency's enthusiasm in agricultural development is too well known to need mention at any great length. His Excellency visited the Agricultural College and the allied Forest and other institutions at Coimbatore in 1920 and in July 1922 laid the foundation stone for a building designed to house the teaching sections of the institute. It is owing to the strenuous efforts of His Excellency that the Local Government could secure a grant of 3½ lakhs of Rupees from the Central Government for the building, which is now nearing completion. Had it not been for his Excellency, the agricultural department in this province would not have expanded during the last five years as rapidly as it has done in the face of threatening financial deficits and the earlier ill-informed criticisms of the members of the Legislative Council in their first outburst of irrepressible zeal to serve their motherland. To quote an instance, the department's expenditure in 1918-19 was only 10.11 lakhs while it had risen in 1922-23, to 14.82. His Excellency is a good breeder and the very fine animals that have been an accompaniment to the Government House during His Excellency's stay in Bombay and Madras are an incontrovertible testimony to His Excellency's interest in Dairying. In this and other diverse matters that have engaged His Excellency's attention, Lord Willingdon has, we are glad to be able to state, been ably, sympathetically and with alacrity, helped by his wise and noble wife, Lady Willingdon. Their Excellencies' departure from Madras on 8th April 1924 will be consequently viewed with regret by all interested in agriculture in this Presidency. We may confidently state that the good wishes of Madras will follow Their Excellencies to their distant home in freedom-loving Britain.

We take this opportunity to extend our hearty welcome to Lord Goschen as the successor of His Excellency Lord Willingdon. We hope that, during his regime, there will be no slackening of the public

interest in the betterment of the agricultural classes and that Government will not swerve from the path of the development of the country's resources. We understand Lord Goschen is not an amateur in public life. He has been Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Agriculture and comes out with an open mind on problems which agitate the Indian world.

### **Travancore Representative at the Empire Exhibition.**

We are gratified to learn that the Travancore Durbar have selected Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai to represent them at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley Park and to supervise the Travancore section of the Indian Exhibits. Dr. Pillai, we need hardly tell our readers, is the permanent Director of Agriculture, Travancore State and is besides responsible for directing the work in the Veterinary, Fisheries Sericultural and Apicultural sections. He is the President of the Economic Development Board and has served on several committees, such as the Vernacular Education Committee, the University Committee and the Kallar Hydro Electric Committee. Graduating in Chemistry with distinction in 1903 in his 21st year of age from the Maharaja's College Trevandrum, he went to Europe where he spent 3 years at Edinburgh, 2 years in Leipzig and returned to his native place with the M. A., B. Sc., and Ph. D. degrees. Soon after his arrival he was appointed to the post of Director of Agriculture, Travancore, which was newly created. He has organized the Department and has been ably administering it during the past 15 years. His ripe experience, insight into the defects in local agricultural practices, and wide knowledge of conditions abroad eminently fit him to be the proper guide and real friend of the Travancore ryot. We hope his organising ability which showed itself in the Preliminary Exhibition of Trevandrum last December, at which His Excellency Lord Willingdon, was present will be much more conspicuous at Wembley. We learn he was given a hearty send-off on 2nd January 1924 on the eve of his departure on deputation to England. We wish him success and we are sure the Durbar will have reason to congratulate themselves on the splendid choice they have made in Dr. Kunjan Pillai—a son of the soil.

### **Ramasastrulu—Munagala Prize Essay.**

We beg to invite the attention of the readers to the notice regarding Ramasastrulu—Munagala Prize essay for 1924, which appears elsewhere in this number and trust there will a large number of entries for the competition.

