

with the village folks to keep them informed of the real nature of things, without untruth or exaggeration, especially at a time like this when one is likely to be dejected at every little reverse or accident.

We have to fight against prejudice and fault-finding and work for better understanding and mutual esteem. The past is irreparable and irrevocable but let us make sure that, in the future, we shall not permit the doors of opportunity to shut in our faces.

The Agriculture Trade Conference and His Excellency the Governor of Madras.

The Indian Industrial Conference held on 26th December at Madras is more or less a non-official concern, although, amongst the 28 papers submitted to the Conference, a good number has been contributed by Government Officials, the Director of Industries, Madras, for instance. The Agriculture-Trade Conference, however, was engineered by the Departmental Heads of Government and aimed at bringing about a closer relationship between the grower, as represented by the Agricultural Department, for instance, and the tradesmen represented by the various Firms who are the means of distributing the produce, finished or unfinished, of the grower, to the consumers who may be in the country or outside it. His Excellency the Governor who presided in explaining the object of the Conference said:—"During the last eight years, substantial grants and much attention have been given by Government to the development of Agriculture and the improvement of agricultural practice; and although the Department has by no means yet reached its full strength and scope, considerable success has resulted from its efforts. As far as this can be ascribed to any one cause, it is due to the policy of sending

trained men into the districts to get into direct touch with cultivators, to study their conditions and work their indigenous crops. It is claimed, with good reason, that under normal conditions the improvements already introduced and adopted by the ryots in the districts are worth to them more than a crore of rupees a year and this although hitherto work of this description has only been possible in some portions of the Presidency. And the other hand, the growing of crops and the methods of cultivation are only a portion of the economic development of a country. It is through you and the firms which you represent that our commercial crops are brought upon the world's market.

None knows so well as you the clash of interests between different branches of trade and commerce, yet few are in a better position to realise the benefits which flow from an established market for a recognised commodity, the need for products to be up to the sample, the advantages and difficulties of trading in bulk, and the openings and best markets for different products. Hence, to advance the economic condition of our country, to develop its markets, in a word, to increase its general productivity require the co-operation of both the growers and the purchasers. Both the producers and the purchasers are interested. Now better farming is better business; and the first and immediate test to be applied to all departments directly designed to work for the agricultural development of a country is not philanthropic but material—namely, are they promoting better farming and better business?

Thus, if the Agricultural and Industrial Departments are to be of full service to the ryots, it is essential that they shall be in close touch with the trading interest. While they do not claim or pretend to be in any sense a complete intermediary between the ryot and the purchaser, they are already in direct touch with many of the ryots in many places. They most readily acknowledge the help they have received from many of

you gentlemen who are here to-day, both in advice and active assistance in the districts. And now that there are grounds for believing that they are steadily gaining more and more influence with the ryots, this meeting has been summoned with the object of bringing them into closer touch with commercial interests, in the hope that by your advice and criticism, their work and energies may be directed towards objects immediately profitable and useful; and that, as a result of the discussions which I hope will take place, mutual knowledge of objects and difficulties of conditions and limitations may be increased. They do not ask for your general commendation or tolerant sympathy; they would, I am certain, prefer criticism and discussion; and, to encourage this it is proposed that separate Meetings shall be held (according to the time-table which has been given to you) of those chiefly interested in the different staples of the Presidency."

Speaking of the Agricultural Department in its past and present policy, His Excellency said:—It is right to look upon the Agricultural Department as one of the youngest of the departments of Government, though as a matter of fact, it has existed in one form or another for sixty years. In that time it has had a very chequered career, periods of high hope have alternated with long periods of depression and almost despondency. The department as now being organised differs, however, in two very vital points from its predecessor. In 1854, when the attention of Government was seriously turned to agricultural improvement, the all-pervading idea was the introduction of foreign implements, foreign stock, foreign seed and the demonstration of their advantages, on a "Model" farm. Thus, sixty years ago, orders were placed in England for a steam plough, threshing machines, winnowers, several iron ploughs and harrows, in fact, for a full set of all the aids to the capitalistic large farming of the West. After a short period of management by a Committee of amateurs, a trained Superintendent was brought out from England to manage these

strange implements on the "Model" farm at Saidapet. The Superintendent was in Madras for almost ten years before he toured at all and before he ever saw an up-country village. It was the same with their cattle and with their seed. The foundation of their herd was laid by some cows described as Aden cattle, because they were brought here in a ship which came from that place. So with seeds, exotics were obtained and sent to ryots or Collectors up-country, with meagre instructions. All these efforts, however, did not end in failure. Where local demonstration was possible and was systematically followed, some changes were established, *e. g.*, the introduction of Bourbon cotton into Coimbatore in 1820, the introduction of large iron ploughs into Bellary by Mr. Sabhapati Mudaliar in the seventies, the introduction of the iron sugarcane crushing mill and the introduction of barley into the Nilgiris.

On the other hand, the policy which has been steadily developed during the last eight years has been to send trained men into the districts, and as such trained men become available, to open local agricultural stations, where exotics can be thoroughly tested whenever necessary, but who shall primarily and mainly, by detailed and continuous work, endeavour to improve the quality, the yield and the methods of cultivation of the indigenous staple crops of the Presidency. The facts there learnt and tested are then communicated and demonstrated to the villagers on their own land, by trained and competent agents. More on this I need not say; except that the success already achieved promises well for the future and that there is undoubtedly a growing interest and spirit abroad in the districts towards agricultural and industrial improvement. The vital differences then between the old and the younger departments are that attention is now in the first place paid to indigenous crops under the local conditions in which the ryot works, and secondly in the organisation of a trained up-country staff. Thus it is that I said that I hoped that this, the first meeting

for discussion with the commercial houses, will mark a further step in an organised scheme of development, by bringing the Industrial as well as the Agricultural Department into still closer touch with the local conditions of that which directly affects all their efforts, namely, their market. I refer, of course, to the purchasers of their produce, as represented here to-day by the leading export and commercial firms of the Presidency."

In concluding his address, His Excellency hoped that, from the help, advice, and criticism offered by the members during the discussions, "these young departments, Co-operation, Industries and Agriculture, which, with the Forest and Fisheries Departments, were more particularly charged with the duty of conserving and developing the wealth and national resources of the country, might derive strength and knowledge for further progress."

We hope to give a report of the deliberations of the various committees in a future issue.

The Indian Industrial Conference.

The address of the Hon'ble Mr. Manmohandas Ramji, President of the Indian Industrial Conference, is well thought out, based on actual experience of agriculture, industry and commerce. After reviewing the hardships caused by the war and the possibilities of capturing the trade of Germany and Austria, he states that "a large portion, if not the whole, of the trade, can be captured if our people acquire the necessary scientific training, experience and, above all, a thoroughness of working. I appeal to our young men to devote themselves more and more to science, trade and industries and to take up their work in no light-hearted spirit, but to apply themselves heart and soul to their respective line of work, giving their best to it and thus help forward the cause of commercial and industrial progress. It is only thus that