

local study, but it is one which will have to be faced and which is becoming more and more insistent every year. In this the chief port and chief trading centre of our Presidency it seems appropriate to emphasise the question of marketing.

Chrysanthemum cultivation around Coimbatore.

Plants are cultivated not only for seed, bark or leaf but also for flowers. Flowers of some plants are beautiful to look at and extremely fragrant and from the petals of such flowers are extracted some of the most delicious perfumes. Beautiful bouquets and gaudy garlands are also made of them. The importance of flowers in worshipping gods among the Hindus and on marriage occasions is too well known to need comment here. The cultivation of such flower-yielding plants gives very high remunerative returns when carried out in places where there are facilities for marketing. In Coimbatore there is a large sale for flowers of chrysanthemums which are cultivated in the neighbouring villages of Kurichi, Kuniamuthur and Pallepalayam. The plant is a shrub of many roots and stems and is propagated by division: that is, by dividing it into as many slips as it can give. After the final picking of the flowers the plants are pruned, and irrigated which make them grow and shoot up quickly. They are lifted, divided and planted out avoiding the parent stem.

The season for its cultivation corresponds to that of hot weather cholam of Coimbatore. The planting is done in March—April and the plants begin to flush in July.

Chrysanthemums grow well on clayey soils under well irrigation. The field intended for the cultivation is well ploughed and fallowed for a period of 3 or 4 months. Sheep-folding is the common manure the crop receives; but it is not uncommon to manure the land with cattle dung. If the tilth happens to be

fresh or the initial manuring unsatisfactory a dose of municipal rubbish or horse dung will be given to individual plants and worked in with mamotti. The land is laid into square beds, irrigated and planted with slips at $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet apart. The crop, on the whole, receives six irrigations regulated at intervals of seven days or more according to soil conditions and season. Copious watering is necessary when the plants begin to flower.

After the plants are established the land is kept clear of weeds and stirred now and then to provide a surface mulch.

Two varieties of chrysanthemums are found in these villages viz., the indigenous and the introduced; the latter variety according to the version of the ryots was introduced from Jalarpet. Flowers of both are yellow in colour although a few white flowered plants are seen here and there. The local variety bears small sized flowers emitting good smell. These are liked by ladies for decorating their hair. This variety flushes only once. The other variety is more popularly cultivated as it gives two flushings. The flowers are bigger and are used for garlands. There is a great demand for them in and outside Coimbatore. Flowers in large quantities are also sent to Palghat and other big towns.

The Muhammadan flower merchants of Coimbatore are the actual cultivators who take the land on lease paying Rs. 150/- to Rs. 200/- per acre. The cost of irrigation is always borne by the proprietor of the land. No definite information is available regarding the gross income from the produce which must be about Rs. 300/- per acre. The cost of production does not exceed Rs. 60/-. It is under contemplation to try this crop on the Central Farm and the result is awaited with interest.

The cultivation of a crop for flowers like chrysanthemum is a paying one and it is neither expensive nor laborious. In Mangalore, for example, the Christian women make handsome profits from the jasmine flower industry. Therefore there is scope for

agriculturists living in the neighbourhood of big towns to develop other aspects of farming besides the time honoured cultivation of field crops.

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Some aspects of Coconut cultivation in the West Coast.

An ideal coconut palm may be taken as one that bears early, produces the maximum number of well sized nuts in a year and has a long fruitful life. According to the experience of the writer about coconut palms in the West Coast of this Presidency, the following points may be of interest.

A coconut palm comes to fruit early or late due to various causes. Even in the same locality soil differences have been found to affect it very much. A palm put in a well drained land close to ponds or other cool places has been found to bear earlier. Proximity to sea or saltish back-waters is one of the most congenial conditions for planting them to get an early crop. A very thickly planted coconut garden seldom brings in early harvest. In a plantation if well manured catch crops like vegetables chillies etc., are cultivated coconut seedlings have been found to grow very vigorously so as to come into bearing early. Good seedlings when planted grow vigorously and a vigorous seedling is the result of a good seed nut. It is therefore of extreme importance to select the best seed coconuts for planting.

Much has been said about the selection of seed coconuts for planting. Doubts have been expressed in certain quarters as to the inadvisability of rejecting nuts from young plants. Instances have also been quoted of such selections having proved successful in producing palms vigorous enough to come to fruit in the 4th or 5th year. Considering all the points that contribute to the success of the plantation experience has taught the ryots of the West Coast that good sized nuts from middle aged trees should be selected for planting. Nuts formed during the hot summer months will be small and are considered