

direct connection with schools but to the community as a whole in the course of their travels through rural areas, and if they could be re-instituted he thought very considerable assistance would be given to the re-construction programme.

Mrs. M. R. Akehurst reported that of the one hundred and sixty-six students at Makerere this year there were six Arabs from Zanzibar and actually six women students.

The Chairman (Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, G.C.V.O.) thought there was a need for balance in all these matters: balancing of education between the female and the male. It was so important that the African, when he went home after a day's work, should find a wife that could talk of something other than goats. Another balance should be between the need for speed and the need for dalliance. It was so easy to motor round a place and come back with the idea that something must be done immediately, but it must be remembered that one could not ride rough-shod over native traditions, customs and habits, that would only lead to the use of machine-guns. Then there was the balance between material and spiritual development. Anybody who had been in the position of Governor knew the tremendous debt they owed to the Missions, not only in what might be called the "material education" but in the moral and spiritual education of the African. It was so important to keep the balance there: it was useless to preach the highest moral sentiments to a person who was wondering how to pay for his children's clothing and education. The tendency at the moment, he thought, was rather to concentrate on the material side and forget the spiritual side, and they had been extremely lucky to have Archdeacon Beecher there to remind them of its importance.

The Early Introduction of Cocoa to West Africa

By F. N. HOWES, D.Sc.

While going through old records at Kew, Dr. Howes discovered some papers which shed an interesting light on the earliest days of attempts to establish cacao on the West Coast. He has written this note at our invitation.

THE date of the first introduction of the Cacao tree to the British West African possessions is somewhat uncertain. Most of what is known with any certainty on the subject has been recorded by other writers and ably summarized by van Hall in his well known and standard work on cocoa and cocoa cultivation.

The credit of having first brought the cacao tree from the New World to the African tropics undoubtedly goes to the Portuguese. They are reputed to have planted cacao on the island of San Thomé (off French Gabon) as far back as 1822. It was not until about 1870, however, that cultivation was undertaken seriously there. By 1895, the export of cocoa beans from this island had reached a million kilograms, which was a considerable quantity for those days.

With regard to the Gold Coast, which has been for many years the leading cocoa producer of West Africa, it is stated that in 1868 the Basel Mission at Akropong (in Akwapim, Eastern Province) had a few cacao trees growing in their grounds and that these were flourishing. It is also stated that in 1879 a native of Mampong (also in Akwapim) brought back pods from Fernando Po (an island off the Cameroons) where he had been working, and raised a few trees which he planted on his farm near that village. These trees are believed to have been the parent trees of the Gold Coast industry. Cultivation on the Gold Coast was greatly encouraged by Sir William Griffith, who was Governor from 1880 to 1895, and who established the botanic garden and experiment

station at Aburi 1892—where the writer happened to be stationed as an agricultural officer at one time, and where cacao plots were a special feature.

The fact that the Gold Coast industry developed from this single introduction (or possibly two introductions) is considered to be the reason for the remarkable uniformity of Gold Coast cacao compared with that in many of the older cacao growing countries. This uniformity is now of special interest in connection with the study of local cacao diseases and the resistance of cacao to disease.

In Nigeria, the position is very similar to that of the Gold Coast. For cocoa is alleged to have been first introduced there by a native chief called "Squiss Banego" in 1874—also from Fernando Po. He established a cocoa farm in the Bonny district and cultivation spread. By 1887-9 a few plantations had been established by European companies, those of the Royal Niger Company at Abutshi and Onitsha being taken over by the Government of South Nigeria in 1900.

It is thus apparent that the cacao of both the Gold Coast and Nigeria was derived from a common source—Fernando Po. From which part of the American tropics the Portuguese obtained their seed or plants in the early part of last century there appears to be no record, but it is probable that they would have come from Para or other parts of Brazil.

In Sierra Leone the cacao in cultivation is conceded to be of a different type from that in general cultivation in the Gold Coast and Nigeria. This raises the question of the origin of Sierra Leone cacao. In this connection it may be of interest to note that among old records at Kew is one of young cacao plants being sent to Glasgow Botanic Garden for shipment to West Africa on the 30th August, 1864. Unfortunately, there are no details as to the ultimate destination of the plants and how they fared. However, it is probable that at this early period they would have been consigned to Freetown and not to any other part of West Africa. As the voyage is a comparatively short one it is quite probable the plants survived and ultimately became established in Sierra Leone. At about this time, economic plants of various kinds, including cacao, were constantly sent from Kew to such far off places as the botanic gardens at Brisbane and at Durban and usually survived the long voyage. There was free intercourse and exchange of plants between Kew and the West Indies at this period and the probability is that the cacao plants despatched from Kew in 1864 were raised from West Indian seed and were not of Brazilian origin as is believed to be the case with the early introductions to the Gold Coast and Nigeria.

There is thus the interesting probability that the present day cocoa of West Africa (apart from recent introductions at experiment stations) is of dual origin, that of the Gold Coast and Nigeria having originated from Brazil and that of Sierra Leone from the West Indies.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Council Room of the Royal Empire Society, on Friday, 10th May, 1946 at 3 p.m. In the absence of the President, the Rt. Hon. Lord Hailey was in the Chair.