

Report of the Sub-Committee on Training of Sugar House Apprentices

The Report of the Committee on the above subject was then read by Mr. G. S. Moberly.

The committee this year was the same as the previous year consisting of Messrs. B. J. W. Pearce, B. M. Narbeth and G. S. Moberley (convenor). As Mr. Narbeth was away during a large part of the year, his place was taken by Mr. H. E. Jones, Vice-principal of the Natal Technical College. The committee also received valuable assistance from Mr. Golding of the Natal Technical College.

The main work of the committee this year was to ensure the continuance of the Technical College Course which was commenced last year, and to bring it on to a sounder footing.

It was felt that it was very desirable that this course should lead to some definite goal, and should prepare students for some diploma examination, such as would be recognised in the industry as a definite qualification. Arrangements have now been made through the Union Department of Education to enable students to sit for the City and Guilds of London examination in Sugar Technology.

On the completion of the third year, students will sit for the first section of the examination, and during the fourth year they will be prepared for the final diploma examination. Eight of the more advanced students have elected to sit for the first section this year, and two men who are not attending the course have applied to sit for the final examination. It is to be hoped that in future years this examination or its equivalent will come to be looked upon as a necessary qualification in engaging men for employment in the higher positions in the industry.

The matter of continuation scholarships has again been considered. Lack of funds makes it impossible to make a definite move in this direction, but it is hoped that the Associations which control the various sections of the Sugar Industry; or the leading individuals connected therewith, will see

the advantage of endowing some form of scholarship so that the promising students may be enabled to continue their studies overseas. This is very important in a small isolated industry like ours, where every encouragement should be given to the introduction of the latest developments in other countries. Something might be considered on the lines of what is being done in Queensland, where the Government provide three travelling scholarships enabling picked students to travel to all the leading sugar countries of the world, and to study at all the principal training institutions.

The second term of the special training course at the Technical College commenced on January 3rd with 47 students, of whom 31 are employees of the S.A.C. Growers' Association and 16 are employed by the various milling companies. The College has provided a full staff of instructors for the General subjects. Messrs. Natal Estates, Ltd., have kindly lent the services of Mr. J. Rault for the Technology classes. It has unfortunately again proved impossible to provide instruction in Sugar Factory Accounting and Statistics owing to the difficulty of finding a qualified instructor. This is greatly to be regretted as this is considered to be a very important subject, especially as it would be desirable to train men in the use of the new Locking System of factory accounting which will probably come into considerable prominence in the near future. It is hoped that manufacturing companies will realise the importance of this subject and assist the committee by the loan of the services of a qualified member of their staffs as an instructor during the four months of the course. A schedule of the complete curriculum is appended to this report.

Reports from the College indicate that work is proceeding very satisfactorily, and good advantage is being taken of the instruction provided.

The committee look to all branches of the Sugar Industry for support in continuing this very important undertaking, which should be of inestimable benefit to the industry in years to come.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF STUDIES.

FIRST YEAR.		SECOND YEAR.		THIRD YEAR.		FOURTH YEAR.	
Subject.	Hrs.	Subject.	Hrs.	Subject.	Hrs.	Subject.	Hrs.
CHEMISTRY— Theory I.	4	CHEMISTRY— Theory II.	4	CHEMISTRY— Theory III.	3	CHEMISTRY— Theory IV.	2
Practical I.	10	Practical II.	10	Practical III.	9	Practical IV.	6
PHYSICS— Theory I.	2	PHYSICS— Theory II.	2	PHYSICS— Theory III.	2	MATHEMATICS IV.	2
Practical I.	3	Practical II.	3	Practical III.	3	SUGAR TECHNOLOGY IV.	2
MATHEMATICS I.	4	MATHEMATICS II.	4	MATHEMATICS III.	2	SUGAR FACTORY AC- COUNTS AND STA- TISTICS IV.	1
AGRICULTURE I.	1	AGRICULTURE II.	1	SUGAR TECHNOLOGY III.	2	ENGINEERING, ME- CHANICAL, II.	4
SUGAR TECHNOLOGY I.	1	SUGAR TECHNOLOGY II.	2	SUGAR FACTORY AC- COUNTS AND STA- TISTICS III.	1	ENGINEERING, ELEC- TRICAL, II.	2
SUGAR FACTORY AC- COUNTS AND STA- TISTICS I.	2	SUGAR FACTORY AC- COUNTS AND STA- TISTICS II.	2	ENGINEERING, ME- CHANICAL, I.	2	DRAWING II.	6
PLANT PHYSIOLOGY.	1			ENGINEERING, ELEC- TRICAL, I.	2		
				DRAWING I.	3		
Weekly Total	28		28		29		25

Chairman: Although my name appears in the first paragraph I am afraid I can claim no credit in this matter. In fact the work was done entirely by Mr. Moberly and Mr. Jones of the Technical College who was acting in place of Mr. Narbeth who was absent in Europe. My name should not be in this report at all. I am not a member except ex-officio as Chairman of the Association. The report is an excellent one and I am very glad to see that so much is being done locally to give our young men in the Industry some academic-grounding in the fundamental scientific principles underlying the various phases of their work. Yesterday Mr. Booth rather criticised this scheme of training at the Natal Technical College from a point of view which we now have an opportunity to discuss.

Mr. Booth: I have nothing much to add except that I think precaution should be taken to see that all these young men do not take up this course willy-nilly. There should be some limitation as to the number because at best there can only be a certain number employed by the Industry.

Mr. Moberly: We have not lost sight of this danger, and it is one which has exercised our minds very much. As far as my own Association—the Cane Growers—goes, we are very anxious not to get people into blind alleys and we are trying to get positions for them if necessary outside our own Association as soon as they are ready. We intend to see all these men get opportunity and we are giving every encouragement to those who show that they are likely to be a success and whom it is worth while keeping in the Industry, but not to encourage those to remain who show no aptitude for sugar work; the latter we will advise to get out, and we will help them into other callings in which they may be likely to do better. Speaking of my own Association we have also tried to interest the various milling Companies in the fact that we have a source of supply here when they want new men. I think a lot could be done there if the Companies will come to us for men when they want new men to fill technical positions, instead of looking outside. In that way we may be able to absorb all of these young men whom we desire to keep in the

Industry. But if, in addition to the men we are training here others with no training are taken on by the Milling Companies, then the thing will become very difficult. So we appeal to the Milling Companies to help this matter as far as possible by taking their new juniors from us.

Chairman: I think it ought to be pointed out that the intention is not to attract newcomers to the Industry, far from it. The aim is to ensure that those who are actually engaged in the Industry and are likely to continue in it permanently will get an adequate training in the fundamentals of science and sugar technology. Our scheme deals with the training only of those who are already employed in the Sugar Industry.

Secretary: I would like just to say a few words on this subject. One point is in connection with the point of view that Mr. Moberly has taken in regard to the limitation of the personnel for student-ship—There is another side to it (hear, hear). The Sugar Association is being pressed by the Department of Labour in connection with this subject of apprenticeship in the Sugar Industry, and I am not sure that if we adopted this policy, a kind of exclusive policy, of shutting out outsiders, that that policy would be particularly favourably received from the national point of view. I just want to mention that as a thing that has to be taken into account in handling this subject. Mr. Tobias, who is now in Durban representing the Department, is at the present moment working very strenuously in connection with this matter of employment of European youths. He has already been to see me and he is coming to see me again, because he is very persistent, with the express object of finding out what the Sugar Industry is going to do about it. I confess my mind at the moment is particularly inconclusive as to what has to be done. Therefore I am not able to say more just now than to warn the meeting that it has that other side which has to be taken into account. Then there is the other question raised here—a very important question—of scholarships, presumably for the young men who show that capacity that makes more extensive education—sugar technological education—desirable. I have here a letter which has just come by the mail to-day, which says that our representative

in London is sending a few copies of a Supplement to the Journal of the Imperial College of Agriculture. This gives particulars of the sugar factory at St. Augustine's, Trinidad, which the British Colonial Office is now making the training centre for the Colonial Agricultural service which includes sugar technology. I may say that several years ago we were asked to interest ourselves in this connection but nothing could be done; at any rate nothing has been done. But the matter is brought before us again. The letter draws attention of the various companies concerned in our industry to the subject, as it is felt they might do as the British Government is doing, send young University graduates and others concerned to the College for training for appointments on their sugar estates. This opens up another side of the question that has got to be considered when we are dealing with the subject of technical training for the sugar house. Except to give that information I don't think I have any comments or criticisms to make at the moment.

Mr. Moberly: I am very interested to know that the Government are taking an interest in this and would like to ask Mr. Eadie that when next he is in touch with any representative of the Government if he would give this Committee an opportunity of meeting such representative and discuss the matter with him because we have no wish to lose sight of any of those aspects of the matter.

Chairman: There is just one other point that occurs to me. I see that in this report it stated seven students have entered for the first section and one for the final of the City of Guilds of London Institute examination. I believe the numbers are eight and two respectively. I happen to know this because all the local applications came through the Experiment Station. This is the first time that the examinations have been held locally and I consider it is rather an encouraging number of entries. A good many other entries were received too late for acceptance. The examinations are to be held on the 23 April, and all papers had to be in by the beginning of January, so that there was very little time for candidates to make up their minds from the time the opportunity was first offered. Probably next year there will be a much larger number of entries.

