

Monthly NEWS LETTER

OCTOBER 1948. Following the mid-year examinations, which were held during the week commencing October 17, we dropped from the rolls three first year students - one from Honduras, one from Salvador and one from Panama. This action was based not alone upon unsatisfactory grades in the examinations; it was prompted also by daily records in the classroom and the practical work in the field. Previous schooling of many of our students has not always been adequate, hence we take into account, during the first year, the boy's interest and his demonstrated capacity to learn, more than the grades obtained in such difficult courses (relatively speaking) as biology and mathematics.

A fine rice crop is approaching maturity. The vegetable garden, which always suffers severely during the heavy rains of August and September, is gradually coming back into good production. Annually we ask the boys in the class on Cultivos Tropicales, what vegetables they would choose if they were marooned on a desert island and could only have 5 sorts for the rest of their lives. We think it is interesting to note that they are practically unanimous in their choice of four - tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage and carrots. First year students have been actively engaged this month in budding avocados and roses. Our collection of avocado varieties now numbers more than 60 sorts, including the 18 Guatemalan-Mexican hybrids introduced in late August from the region of Atlixco, state of Puebla, Mexico.

With half blood and three-quarters heifers coming into production, milk production is increasing in our dairy. Our new incubator is working on a batch of 800 eggs, Rhode Island Red and Plymouth Rock. A nice lot of ham and bacon was smoked at the end of the month.

Paul C. Standley, leading authority on the taxonomy of Central American plants, is making his headquarters at the school, while conducting collecting trips in Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. Early in the month we had a visit of several days from Ing. Enrique Pérez Leon, who is making an extended tour of tropical regions to study banana production, in the interests of the Mexican government. The Archbishop of Honduras, Monseñor Turcios, spent a day with us, accompanied by Doña Amparo viuda de Zeledón, of Costa Rica. Doña Amparo, one of the best-known figures in that republic, has always been much interested in this school. Professor W.W. Robbins, head of the Department of Botany at the College of Agriculture, University of California at Davis, arrived on the 22nd, accompanied by Mrs. Robbins, for a visit of several days, during which time he gave our staff an illuminating lecture on chemical control of weeds. During the past six months Prof. Robbins has travelled throughout South America, lecturing on this subject. We took advantage of the opportunity to obtain from him specific recommendations regarding the control of Mimosa tenuiflora, the worst pest in pastures of this region; as well as many helpful comments on our program in general. On Sunday the 24th we were visited by Graham S. Quate, agricultural attaché to the embassies of the United States in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. He was accompanied by Mrs. Quate and by Dr. and Mrs. Henry D. Gilbert of Tegucigalpa. On the 28th we had a brief visit from R.M. Beasley of the Tela Railroad Company, La Lima, Honduras.

An excellent descriptive article regarding the school, well illustrated, was published in the Christian Science Monitor (Boston, Mass.), issue of October 25. It was written by Robert K. Shellaby, Latin American editor, who visited the school some time ago.