

## COTTON CULTIVATION AT MAHO

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**T**HE available records for cotton cultivation at Maho are as follows :

<i>Season</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Yield</i>
1930-31	.. 11 acres	.. 40 cwt.
1931-32	.. 19 acres	.. 28½ cwt.
1932-33	.. 16 acres	.. 19 cwt.
1933-34	.. 8 acres	.. Ploughed up as growth was too leafy
1934-35	.. 8 acres	.. 32 cwt.

These yields were received by the ordinary tillage methods, using the plough and disc-harrow for preparing the soil. Inter-cultivation was done by the Plant Junior cultivator. No fertilisers were used. According to the above figures cotton has been cultivated at Maho with any degree of success only once in four years.

The low yields in the other three years are accounted for by one or other of the following reasons :—

(a) Heavy rains in October, November and December. This was particularly so in these months in 1933, when the rainfall was 15·29, 18·39 and 3·61 inches respectively, with the result that the crop was just a mass of leaves.

(b) Heavy showers in January and/or February. This causes much boll-shedding, *e.g.*, in 1932 February, there were three occasions upon which there were heavy downpours amounting to 2·55, 2·39 and 2·78 inches, respectively, during a 24-hour period. In 1933 there was rain both in January and in February.

In 1931 although there was rain in January, February was dry with a total fall of 0·32 inches. The crop that year was consequently good. In 1935 there was only 0·62 inches

in January and a single fall of 1.82 inches in February. The 1934-35 crop also had the advantage of less rain from October to December. As a result the 1934-35 crop was the best so far secured.

Heavy showers in January and/or February also make the plant continue its vegetative growth for a longer period. This was specially noticed in 1931-32 when heavy showers fell in February causing boll-shedding, and a pick was obtained again in August after the April and May rains. The pick from the 1931-32 crop 19 acres in extent was 10 cwt. in March, 3 cwt. in April, 2 cwt. in May and 10 cwt. in August.

These results would indicate that for the successful cultivation of cotton, one should be sure of a rainfall not exceeding 20 inches in the months of October, November and December. The rainfall in January should not exceed two inches and be well distributed while February should be practically dry.