

(II) SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE.

(I) INTRODUCTION.

The only previous investigation on fertilizer briquettes is one. It is possible that, under the condition of heavy leaching that obtain on the College Farm during the rainy season, fertilizers applied to the soil in the normal manner may be rapidly removed before the plants have had time to utilize them completely. It was thought that, by applying the fertilizers in briquette form, the rate of dissolution and diffusion into the soil would be diminished, and that their manurial ingredients would be made available to the crop during the whole of its growing period.

An attempt was accordingly made to find a satisfactory method of making briquettes for experimental purposes, and to investigate which fertilizers can best be incorporated in briquette form. Two types of briquette have been tested in the field, one a quick-acting briquette containing soluble fertilizers, and the other, a slow-acting briquette containing less soluble fertilizers. An estimate of their rates of decomposition has been obtained by chemical analysis, and observations have been made on the reaction of plant roots towards them.

The manufacture of briquettes and their application to the soil is expensive, but any attempt to discover whether the extra expense is repaid would be unjustified until it is known if there is any advantage in their use. Hence the economic aspect has so far been ignored.

At the end of three months, the cane stools supplied with solid