

Welcome Address.

BY

THE PRINCIPAL—MR. F. R. PARNELL.

SIR VENKATA REDDI NAYUDU, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

It is my very pleasant duty, on behalf of the Madras Agricultural Students' Union, to welcome all our visitors to the College Day Celebrations. Many of you are old friends who know from past experience how pleased we are to have you with us once again. Some are here for these celebrations for the first time and I can promise that we will do our best to ensure that it shall not be your last.

To our Minister, Sir Venkata Reddi Nayudu, who has so kindly consented to honour us by presiding on this occasion and to Mr. Noyce, our Secretary to Govt., I wish to offer a special welcome. I should like to take this opportunity of offering to Sir Venkata Reddi our hearty congratulations on his Knighthood, a well-deserved honour and a happy recognition of the good work that he has done. I recently witnessed part of the reception accorded to him on his first return to his native district after that honour; any ordinary reception must seem cold after that, but our good wishes, though less boisterously expressed, are equally sincere.

I cannot but notice, with deep regret, the absence of one who, but for his untimely death, would, I am sure, have been with us to-day. I refer to our old friend Mr. Vengail Krishnan Nayanar who took such a live interest in the Union for many years.

This year we have reverted to the old time for holding the College Day viz., July. We were unfortunate last year in having very heavy plague infection on the Estate in December and it was decided that it would not be fair to ask visitors to come here at that time. In order to avoid the possibility of the same thing happening this year, and to reduce the time between the 1921 College Day and this year's it was decided to revert to July. Yesterday was the 14th Anniversary of the opening of the College by Sir Arthur Lawley on July 14th, 1909 and this year's date is, therefore, most appropriate.

The Secretary will read the annual Report of the working of the Union and there is, therefore, nothing for me to say on that subject. I should like, however, to refer to the importance of the general meeting of the Union to be held on Tuesday morning. The question of registration has to be discussed and I hope the general condition of the Union, its aims and working will be considered with a view to widening the scope of its work and placing it in a sounder financial condition.

I am pleased to see several of our Honorary Visitors here to-day.

Presidential Address.

Sir K. Venkata Reddi Nayudu—President—in opening the Conference declared that, as a Minister, he was personally most proud to be associated with agriculture, for, was it not appropriate that, coming of an Agricultural family—a family belonging to a community of agriculturists—known as the “Kapus”—he should be in charge of Agricultural Development? Referring to the congratulations made by Mr. Parnell and the Union on the Knighthood conferred on him, he said he did not consider that as an honour conferred on him individually, but rather as an honour done to the Development Department as a whole. For, if he was able to show any work as the Development Minister, was it not because he had received the loyal co-operation of all the various sections? He was particularly glad to state that he had received the best help of all from the Agricultural Department. Adverting to the fact that several of the European Officers of the Department had retired from service during the past two years, he said he was sorry that the country had to bear the loss of their valuable services. He was afraid that such a retirement was probably due to the sense of insecurity created by irresponsible speeches, made in Congress platforms and elsewhere, with regard to the future responsibility for the pension contributions of Europeans in the services. Although such a retirement had the effect of indirectly bringing about the Indianisation of the Agricultural Service aimed at by the Reform Act,