

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.

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### Presidential Address.

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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,

sooner than originally intended, he was sincerely grieved that thereby the technical skill and experience possessed by the European officers was irretrievably lost to the country. He, however, plainly informed the European officers that any adverse opinion formed by them as to the motives of the Indian Legislature was absolutely unfounded and solemnly assured them that "India would never play them false."

Referring to the Presidential address of the last Conference (1921) he said he concurred with the President—Mr. MacMichael—in condemning "eyewash" and advised the department to continue to do honest, unostentatious work as heretofore. He did not however think that there was a greater danger of the substitute of "eyewash" under a democracy than under any other form of Government. He confessed, however, that in the first two years of the present Legislative Council, there was a good deal of misinformed criticism directed against the Agricultural Department, but that when a hand-book such as "The Popular Account of the Madras Agricultural Department" was published the situation was greatly remedied. He laid great stress on the value and necessity of publicity, especially under a democratic Government and declared that in his opinion advertisement was necessary for the Agricultural Department, as otherwise the work done by the department would escape the notice of the public.

As stated by His Majesty the King Emperor at Rome, Agriculture was the foundation on which the whole fabric of a nation whether viewed from the political, economic or social standpoints depended, and as such needed the whole-hearted encouragement of the State. He emphasised therefore, the importance of the Agricultural officers being in greater touch with the ryots and thereby benefiting them. He was of opinion that research work carried on honestly and unostentatiously should go hand in hand with advertisement and demonstration.

He stated that he was satisfied from personal observation that work in the Agricultural Department was on right lines and that from the beginning he turned his attention, therefore, more to the Department of Industries instead. As far as Agriculture was concerned, what was greatly needed at the present moment was in

his opinion an expansion of staff for purposes of demonstration, as rightly demanded in the Legislative Council. The great disproportion and inadequacy of a staff of 78 officers to serve an area of 39 million acres of cultivated land in the Presidency was self-evident. Again there were about 5 million acres of arable land now lying waste that remained to be utilised—a work that the Agricultural Dept. had, in his opinion, to undertake. He was glad to be able to state that, through the kind offices of Mr. Noyce, Development Secretary, about 15 new posts had recently been sanctioned. He further added that as compared with other parts of the world the standard of living in India was very low and that a raising of the standard of living was bound to interact and induce a higher standard of production and thereby make Agriculture as a profession more remunerative. Referring to the students among the audience, he said that as future citizens they owed a duty to the "soil", which devolved on them the work not only of bringing mor<sup>d</sup> land under cultivation and thus increasing production, but also of taking to the ryots the results of research work turned out at this institution and thus of helping the development of their motherland. He added that he was sure there were among the officers of the Agricultural Department, some on whom the Spirit of Science had descended and thought that with their co-operation the expansion of the Department on useful lines was assured.

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### **President's Concluding Speech.**

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Sir K. V. Reddi Nayudu, rising amidst cheers said that he felt he ought to congratulate the members of the Conference on a very successful session. He declared that he was glad he was able to stop till the close of the conference, for he felt he had thereby become a better informed man. He, however, felt that it was rather strange that all the papers contributed by the institution should have come mostly from junior officers and declared that, although it was laudable of the Heads of sections to encourage juniors, he had expected a few at least from the senior officers. He also thought that some of the