

An Agricultural Tour

By

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(Second year.)

The annual tour of the second year students this year was confined to a fourteen days visit to the southern districts of the Province from the night of 31st October. The Blue Mountain Express steamed off with 40 budding agricultural officers, who began to feel certain that their long expected tour had actually commenced.

Nellikuppam, our first destination was reached next evening. We were comfortably put up at the "Amaravathi Palace" the owner of which received us kindly by arranging a dinner party. The Palur Agricultural Research Station was then visited where we had been given full details of various items of work done there. The total area of this farm is 55 acres. After this, the sugarcane fields, a laboratory for rearing of insect parasites, and the sugar factory of Messrs. East India distilleries and Sugar. Ltd. were visited by us.

On 3rd, Wednesday, we left Nellikuppam and we had enough time to visit the Annamalai University on our way to Aduthurai. There, our young cameramen began to put their heads together to get a good picture and finally obtained a birds eye-view of the University Buildings and the town from the top of the famous Sastri Hall.

Aduthurai was reached in the evening and we stayed in the rest house in the Agricultural Research Station. The Superintendent took us round the paddy fields, orchards etc. and gave us full information regarding the various strains of paddy evolved there and their distribution in the Presidency. A nice tea party was given to us by the staff of the station but unfortunately we didn't return it since we had to leave the place on the same day. Entraining at Aduthurai Railway Station in the morning, we reached Kodai Road in the evening of the 5th. Soon after our arrival we drove to Pattiveeranpatti which is about 17 miles from Kodai Road. Mr. Sountharapandia Nadar was kind enough to accommodate us in his Guest Bungalow and he took us round his extensive lands under the Grapevines, Mangoes, Paddy etc. explaining to us all the details of their cultivation and their economics. Many distinguished visitors have paid him glowing tributes. An excellent exchange of dinners were arranged between himself and ourselves. The hospitality and affability of Mr. Nadar and his sons put us at our ease and every convenience was very solicitously attended to throughout our stay there. Our pleasant stay here will always be a memorable one for our class. During our stay here we also visited a plantain garden near the riverside.

On, the 7th morning the Kodai Observatory which is about 7,800 ft. high was reached after a pleasant journey by bus. The students evinced a keen interest in seeing and knowing the workings of the various apparatus kept there, Photo-Heliograph and the Milneshaw Seisnograph were particularly very interesting. Our cameramen played an important part here in having all the beautiful new things into their small cameras. After this we returned to our halting place at Pattiveeranpatti.

Madura was reached at noon on the 8th and leaving our luggages in the station itself, we started for the inspection of the sewage farm. The luxuriantly grown guinea grass and the efficient underground drainages are worthseeing. The farm though mainly started to dispose of the sewage water and ensure the sanitation of the colony is now a source of good profit to the Madura Municipality. The farm commands an area of about 138 acres with a soil of light sandy loam, very suitable for sewage irrigation. The clear drained water from the farm collects in a tank from where it is utilized for the paddy fields and for cattle.

The next important visiting place was Koilpatti which was arrived on the 8th night. On the following morning the red soils of the Agricultural Research Station was visited by us.

On the 10th morning we went to Ettayapuram by bus and visited the lands of the Jamindar who was kind enough to receive us with a light tea party. He himself explained to us everything in a nutshell about his lands, cultivation and the working of the improved mechanical seed drill. The famous "Bharathi Memorial Hall" was also included into the cameras of our students.

The black cotton soil of the Agricultural Research Station, Koilpatti, which is within a stone's throw from the Bungalow where we stayed was visited next. The superintendent of this station explained to us the various experiments carried out in the farm, the agricultural practices of the tract and the departmental improvements effected therein. The superior variety of cotton of that tract, the practice of growing cumbu after cumbu were noteworthy features. Our activities at Koilpatti concluded with a football match on Wednesday evening against the Local High School Team which ended in a goal-less draw.

We reached Tenkasi at dusk on the 11th and with the help of the local Agricultural Demonstrator, we were accomodated in a good bungalow at Courtallam. The natural and pleasant sight of the lower Falls and the Five Falls were very much enjoyed by the party. The cameramen among us were very busy in making the falls enter into their cameras. When we just entered the mango gardens up the hills, an unfortunate accident of a snake-bite to a student, made us to retrace our steps to our lodgings. Fortunately everything went allright.

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At Ellangi we met Sri Akilandam Pillai who kindly furnished us with useful information about the mango cultivation on the hills of courtallam. He gave us a good tea-party after his interesting lecture.

Saturday the 13th was spent in a long journey from Tenkasi to Coimbatore and we arrived our Headquarters on the 14th morning with a warm welcome from our colleagues in the hostel awaiting us. During the tour we utilised every visiting hour to the best advantage.

The local authorities in all places were extremely kind and did their utmost not only to explain the details of work but also to help the party in the matter of lodging and boarding. We tender our grateful thanks to them for their uniform cordiality and courtesy.

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