

On 13th May, 1949, Hd.B. wrote to the Director as follows regarding the work to be done by the Systematic Botanist : -

"This is a study of collections of crop plants and their immediate allies, with the object of developing better strains of crop plants. It is now axiomatic in plant breeding that the work must commence with a wide range of genetic variability; this necessitates the exploration, collection, maintenance, and evaluation of plant collections from the view-point of their usefulness for agricultural purposes. Training in this type of work forms an essential part of the postgraduate course in agricultural botany with special reference to plant breeding and genetics."

When as Hd.B. I asked for a post of Systematic Botanist, the idea was that he (the Systematic Botanist) would apply to the crop plants latest methods developed in systematic botany and taxonomy for dealing with wild populations. It is well known that in some crop plants we have enormous number of varieties and not much headway has been made in classifying them from the view-point of the geneticist and the plant breeder. The sort of work I had in mind was actually demonstrated in Cajanus by Professor Anderson when he was here this year in January and February. I should like to discuss with Hd.B. and Dr.D.Chatterji how we can make the Systematic Botanist work to fulfil the need we had in mind. Making herbarium specimens of wild plants, weeds etc. will of course continue as a useful adjunct but it cannot form his main line of work in an Institute of this kind. From what I have seen of Dr.Chatterji's interim report on natural vegetation of I.A.R.I., this is not going to help us very much. Incidentally, it is not clear to me how all these plants, such as Jacaranda mimosifolia, Cassia fistula, etc., which have been deliberately planted as avenue or garden trees can be considered natural vegetation.

I shall be glad if Hd.B. and Dr.Chatterji would meet me next week to chalk out a suitable programme of work.

Hd.B.
Hd.B.

(B.P.Pal) (Signature)
DIRECTOR

Director's UO No. 13590

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