

The object of this Department* is to provide instruction to engineering graduates of Indian Universities in Power Engineering (Hydro-electrical and thermal) for a period of two years, including a period of specialised practical work outside, so that when they emerge from this course they should be able to take up immediately and discharge with confidence superior responsibilities.

In view of the very little scope for research in engineering and very little engineering research being done in India at present, research would also be given due importance and receive prominence as the Department progresses.

Also, it was resolved by the Standing Advisory Committee to request the Government

* The Power Engineering and High Voltage Engineering Laboratories of the Institute were declared open by the President on this occasion.

that a grant which may be earmarked for a Hydraulic Machines Laboratory Wing in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Scientific Research be diverted to this Department, as such diversion resulting in a co-ordination of effort would be in the best interests of the country.

Mutual co-operation and friendly collaboration between scientific institutions and industrial establishments are of extreme value both to science and industry. This Institute has all along been playing its part in establishing such a liaison with industry; and its main objective has been the fostering of investigations especially in those branches of science as would assist industries by providing them with the results of research which they need. In the Western countries, applied research is a charge on the industries which it serves; and it is time that in India too the industries recognise the need to support technological and research institutions."

ORIGIN AND DISTRIBUTION OF CULTIVATED PLANTS IN SOUTH ASIA

A SYMPOSIUM on the above subject was held in Delhi from 12-15 January 1951, by the Indian Society of Genetics and Plant Breeding with the co-operation and assistance of the UNESCO South Asia Science Co-operation Office. The purpose was to review the work done so far on the taxonomy and cytogenetics of crop plants, with a view to stimulate further study. Professors S. C. Harland (Manchester), Edgar Anderson (Washington), and A. Muntzing (Lund), were present by invitation. Delegates from Academia Sinica, Peking, workers from Ceylon, Singapore and Pakistan also attended. There were also observers from various other scientific bodies and institutions.

Mr. K. Ramiah, Director, Central Rice Research Institute, Cuttack, was elected Chairman; and discussion on the following subjects took place.

12th January: Rice, wheat, banana and mango; 13th January: Citrus, sugarcane, millets, brinjal and orchids; 15th January: Cotton jute, sesame, spices, palms. Each day, the session

began with an introductory talk by one of the expert consultants, who dealt with general and theoretical aspects of the subject, and expounded particular lines of work which had proved to be of practical value. The papers on each crop was followed by a discussion.

The complete proceedings are to be published soon by the Indian Society of Genetics and Plant Breeding, copies of which may be had from the Secretary of the Society, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi.

Besides the much needed review of cytogenetics of economic plants, the symposium brought out some important points which would be of value for any long-range programme for improvement of crop plants, such as: (1) organising a Bureau of Plant Introduction, (2) setting up a Committee for Plant Exploration in Indo-Malayan region, and (3) intensifying study of plant taxonomy and cytogenetics in botanical research centres.

C. G.