
SCIENCE NOTES AND NEWS

International Pharmacopoeia

WHO is preparing an International Pharmacopoeia that will cover the most important medicines used throughout the world. When completed, the manual will consist of three volumes covering several hundred drugs. The first volume, already published, includes pain killers, sleeping pills, antimalarial drugs, sulfa drugs and other compounds for fighting infection, and the most important vitamins. It is expected that antibiotics and hormones will be covered in the later volumes.

Symposium in Chemistry

It is proposed to hold a symposium on *Chemistry of Hydrous Oxides* at the next Annual Session of the National Academy of Sciences, India, to be held in January, 1952. Dr. S. Ghosh, Reader in Chemistry, University of Allahabad, is expected to be the Chairman. Intending contributors are requested to send their papers accompanied by short abstracts by Air Mail immediately.

Award of Research Degree

On the recommendation of a Board of Examiners consisting of Prof. Kathleen Lonsdale, Dr. W. A. Wooster and Dr. R. Furth, the thesis entitled "Crystal Elasticity (Ultrasonic and other Methods)" by Mr. R. V. G. Sundara Rao, M.Sc., has been declared qualified for the degree of Doctor of Science in Physics of the Andhra University.

On the recommendation of a Board of Examiners consisting of Prof. Sir John Simonsen, Prof. R. P. Linstead and Prof. Sir Ian Heilbron, the thesis entitled, "Synthetic Experiments in Trihydroxy Flavones and Study of Some Flower Pigments" by Mr. N. Viswanandham, M.Sc., has been declared qualified for the degree of Doctor of Science in Chemistry of the Andhra University.

ISI—Fourth Annual Report

An important feature of the year's achievement which the Report records in detail was the growing recognition accorded to Indian standards by industry and Government Departments,

such as the Directorate-General of Industries and Supplies, the Railway Board, Directorate of Technical Development, Ministry of Defence and the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department, which either adopted them in place of their older specifications or modified their purchase specifications by suitable reference to them. In the matter of laboratory facilities for tests, the Institution continued to receive active co-operation and assistance from all quarters in the country, and particularly from the laboratories of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun, the Technical Development Establishment Laboratory (Stores), Kanpur, and the Government Test House, Alipore.

New subjects accepted for standardisation include transformers, chokes and wires used in radio industry, non-magnetic non-ferrous metals, wood poles, cast iron pipes, copper and brass tubes, wood screws, textile machinery, handloom cloth, sesame oil, groundnut oil, oil of peppermint, sodium stannate, potassium metabisulphite and phenyl.

In the international sphere the ISI is a member of the Council of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), and the Director, Indian Standards Institution, is the Vice-President of the ISO.

Geological Mining and Metallurgical Society of India

The Twenty-Seventh Annual General Meeting of the Geological, Mining and Metallurgical Society of India was held in Calcutta, on 14th September, 1951. In his Presidential Address to the Society, Dr. West drew attention to India's recent work on the development of mineral resources of the Damodar Valley, and pointed out that progress so far achieved in this direction was largely based on the fundamental geological work carried out in the past. He, therefore, laid great stress on this type of fundamental geological work which must be carried out alongside work of more important practical significance.

Mr. B. P. Agarwalla, at present Vice-President of the Society, was elected President, and Professors N. N. Chatterjee and N. L. Sharma were elected Joint Honorary Secretaries of the Society for 1951-52.

Solar Eclipse Expeditions

Plans are being made for at least six expeditions which will make use of a total eclipse of the sun on February 25, next year, and a report on weather prospects has been prepared by a Commission of the International Astronomical Union.

The duration of totality will be 3.0 minutes, the belt of totality stretching from Equatorial Africa to the U.S.S.R. with the Nile Valley near Khartoum as the most favoured area.

International Industries Fair

The Bombay International Industries Fair will be held in December under the patronage of the Indian Government and under the auspices of the Engineering Association of India.

The Fourth Indian Pharmaceutical Congress

Arrangements are being made for the Fourth Session of the Indian Pharmaceutical Congress to meet in Jaipur during the end of December, 1951. The programme will include science session for the reading and discussion of research papers under five sections:

Pharmacy, Pharmacognosy, Pharmacology, Ayurvedic Medicines and Pharmaceutical Chemistry. A symposium on "Pharmaceutical Education" will be the special feature of this session.

Photosynthesis in the Laboratory

The process by which the plant uses solar energy to convert water and carbon dioxide into carbohydrates is believed to consist of two stages: photolysis of water and reductive fixation of carbon dioxide. The second stage is presumed to be catalysed by enzymes and a trace of manganese. A significant portion of this process of photosynthesis has been reproduced in the test tube, according to a report on work by Prof. D. I. Armour of the University of California. Pyruvic acid was converted to malic acid and oxygen was evolved, exactly as occurs in plants. The catalytic role of manganese in the reaction confirms previous theories of its importance as a trace element in the soils. The achievement may be a long step towards a scientific advance that would be fully as important as the achievement of nuclear fission.

Inter-Commonwealth Post-Graduate Scholarships in Science

The above-mentioned publication, compiled by B.C.S.O. and published by H.M. Stationary Office,

is a comprehensive list of post-graduate scholarships available for scientific study within the Commonwealth. The main object of the list is to encourage the movement of scientists within the Commonwealth, and only those awards open to members of at least one Commonwealth country or colony other than the awarding one have been included. The price of the publication is 5 sh. and copies are available at all branches of H.M. Stationary Office.

Penicillin Manufacture in India

The Draft Agreement between the Government of India on the one hand, and WHO and UNICEF on the other, for the manufacture of penicillin in India, has been finalised. It is proposed that the penicillin factory should be located in the Poona District.

The factory will be entirely owned and controlled by the Government of India, and UNICEF will supply all the imported equipment, estimated at 850,000 dollars.

Other clauses of the agreement are that WHO will provide technical assistance and also arrange for the training of Indian personnel at an approximate cost of 350,000 dollars. WHO will award Fellowships for advanced training in connection with the operation of the plant. Production is likely to start in December, 1953, while full production is likely to be reached about a year later.

Dr. B. Mukerji

Dr. B. Mukherji, Director, Central Drug Research Institute, has been elected a Member of the Scientific Research Society of America. He has been invited as an expert to serve on the Advisory Panel of the International Pharmacopoeia.

International Technical Cooperation

Under the various schemes of technical assistance from foreign countries, India has so far obtained 32 experts and trainee facilities for 247 persons. The experts and the facilities have been made available to India under (a) the point-four agreement with the United States of America, (b) the Technical Co-operation Scheme of the Colombo Plan, and (c) by the specialised agencies of the United Nations. In fulfilment of her obligation as a member country of the Colombo Plan, India has also sent some of her own experts to foreign countries. Offers of training facilities have been made to Ceylon, Nepal and Pakistan.