

dwell upon the reasons for synthesizing such an odd title using obviously incompatible but well-known terms *opto-electronics* and *imaging*. Reading through the papers a reader cannot escape getting time and again the following question in his mind. Was the symposium intended for taking stock of state-of-the-art in opto-electronics or imaging or both?

If it was meant for opto-electronics, then all the papers should have been devoted to the theory and practice of opto-electronic devices and systems. By this I mean such devices and systems in which the electronic functions are accomplished through the agency of the energy/information carrying capabilities of electrons, which in turn are generated through the mediation of light interacting with matter. On the other hand if the whole idea was to concentrate on imaging, then all the papers should have been devoted to subjects such as image formation, image processing, image transmission, image storage, image understanding etc. It is evi-

dent that the symposium was designed to cover as loosely as possible both opto-electronics and imaging. Of course the individual scientific value of a number of papers is never in doubt. But when such diverse papers are clubbed together under one omnibus title, the specialist reader will be pained while the non-specialist will remain totally confused.

The book is expensive for individuals. Where does such a book belong? Obviously in the bookshelves of the participants of the symposium and institutional libraries, where it can be displayed as one more addition to the existing collection of passive books euphemistically called reference books.

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NEWS

PUBLICATIONS FROM HERBARIUM CRYPTOGRAMAE INDIAE ORIENTALIS (HCIO)

Descriptions of Pathogenic fungi, which cause damage to the plants, in the form of sets comprising of loose leaflets have been issued by Herbarium Cryptogamae Indiae Orientalis, Division of Mycology & Plant Pathology, IARI, New Delhi for the first time. These sets provide information on fungi, their geographical distribution and frequency of occurrence in India with the help of disease distribution maps. It is a useful information for plant patholog-

ists and mycologists interested in plant disease identification. The authors have cited original Indian references pertaining to them wherever necessary. List of synonyms and basionyms of the descriptive fungus is another feature of these descriptions. These sets include genera like *Erysiphe*, *Phragmidium*, *Uromyces* and members of Aphyllophorales. The sets are reasonably priced between Rs. 15 and 20 each only.

INDIAN NATIONAL SCIENCE ACADEMY, NEW DELHI

Prof. M. G. K. Menon, Scientific Adviser to the Prime Minister, has been re-elected as President of the National Academy of Sciences, India, for 1988 at its annual session in Tiruchi. The other office bearers are: Dr Maheshwar Dayal, Prof. D. B.

Chandra (Vice Presidents), Prof. M. P. Tandon (Treasurer), Prof. H. C. Khare (Foreign Secretary), Prof. U. S. Srivastava, Dr (Mrs.) Manju Sharma (General Secretaries).

NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, USA

Prof. V. S. Ramadas, Dean of Faculty of Sciences and former Rector of Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, has been elected an active life member of

the New York Academy of Sciences. The honour was conferred on him for his "Outstanding contribution in the field of Botany on Photosynthesis".

WATMULL AWARD OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Watmull Award of Rs. 1 lakh has been awarded to Dr M. K. Sethu Rao, Director of Extension, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, and also to Prof. D. S. Mahadevappa,

Seed Technology Division, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore. The amount will be utilised in the foundation's ongoing reforestation programme in India.

ATMOSPHERIC LUMINESCENCE: A FORERUNNER OF AN EARTHQUAKE

Nature issues a warning of the impending earthquake in the form of increased luminescence in the skies in the twilight and by night. This has been established by scientists at the Abastumani Astrophysics Observatory in Georgia, Transcaucasia. For instance, two days before the strong earthquakes in South Georgia in 1984 and in Romania in 1986, luminescence in the skies in these parts of the Caucasus sharply increased.

Experts believe that the phenomenon observed is due to a rise in the temperature of a certain layer in the atmosphere caused by electromagnetic irradiation from the earth's bowels produced by deformi-

ties taking place there on the eve of an "underground storm".

"Facts of the emergence of electric fields in the Earth's bowels prior to a natural calamity giving rise to the outburst of electromagnetic irradiation in a wide range of frequencies are known to science today," Benedikt Balavadze, Member of the Georgian Academy of Sciences says. (*Soviet Features: Science and Technology*, Vol. XXVI, No. 123; p. 2; October 15, 1987) Published by: Information Department, USSR Embassy in India, P. B. 241, 25 Barakhamba Road, New Delhi 110 001).