

the fact that in one of the branches overhanging the walls of a temple, the leaves are devoid of the bitter principle, while the rest of the tree bears bitter leaves. This margosa tree is not found in association with banyan or any other plant.

It is quite manifest that the absence of the bitter principle is due to some changes other than the 'stock' influence of the banyan. The author mentions that it is not a genetic modification because the seedlings had leaves with the bitter principle. It would have been more convincing if observations were made in plants propagated from clones.

M. J. THIRUMALACHAR.

Department of Botany,  
Central College,  
Bangalore,  
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<sup>1</sup> *Curr. Sci.*, 1941, 10, 335.

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I was much interested to learn of the occurrence, in Mandya, of a margosa tree, in which one particular branch bears leaves devoid of the bitter principle.

My object in publishing the note in the July number of *Current Science* was only to bring to the notice of the workers, about the existence of an interesting tree combination. I suggested that the banyan tree might have originally started as an epiphyte and later by the peculiar circumstances of growth described in the note, there is every reason to believe

that some parts at least of the two trees might have fused, and the banyan being now a much bigger tree might be influencing the margosa. I did not examine any section to find out whether there is any real fusion. I leave that for future workers. I do admit that the terms, stock and scion, have not been used in the scientific sense of the terms; they were used more with a view to connote the union of the two trees. It would certainly be interesting to study the behaviour of the seedlings raised from the seeds of the parent margosa tree. But I have no doubt that the seedlings found under the banyan-margosa tree combination are from the seeds of this margosa tree.

The suggestion I have made in my original note will stand, until definite evidence to the contrary is forthcoming. A critical examination of the Mandya tree and also of other trees without the bitter principle occurring "in many places" will undoubtedly be of much interest. When I was touring in Chingleput District in the Madras Province it was brought to my notice that a mango tree within the precinct of the Conjeevaram temple bears different kinds of fruits on the four sides of the tree. I examined the plant in question and found that the so-called single tree was the combination of at least two different varieties planted close to each other and now appear to have only one main stem.

K. CHERIAN JACOB.

Agricultural Research Laboratory,  
Lawley Road P.O.,  
Coimbatore,  
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