

## PALÆOBOTANY IN INDIA

THE latest issue (No. V, Sep. 1944) of *Palæobotany in India*—a Bulletin of current palæobotanical research in India—published from Lucknow under the editorship of Professor Birbal Sahni contains summaries of as many as 31 papers dealing with the recent work being done on fossil plants coming from various rock formations in India ranging in age from the Devonian to the Pleistocene, and constitutes an impressive record of the increasing volume and importance of palæobotanical work carried out in India during recent years under the inspiring guidance of Prof. Sahni. Among the more important studies recorded in the Bulletin, mention may be made of the papers by Prof. Sahni and his collaborators, H. S. Rao, S. R. N. Rao and V. B. Shukla, on the flora of the Deccan intertrappean series, further revealing the interest and importance of this flora both from the stratigraphical and palæobotanical points of view, the papers by A. R. Rao, B. P. Srivastava, K. M. Gupta and P. N. Ganju dealing with the flora from the Rajmahal Hills, and those of G. S. Puri on the fossil plants from the Karewas of Kashmir.

Of outstanding interest as a contribution to one of the most controversial problems of Indian geology and one which is bound to stimulate further discussion, is the paper by Professor Sahni on "The Age of the Punjab Salt in the Light of Recent Evidence" which was

first delivered as the Presidential Address at Hyderabad at a joint meeting of the National Academy of Sciences and Indian Academy of Sciences in December 1943 and an abstract of which is published in the Bulletin under review. The full address has been more recently published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. The evidence of the microfossils recovered from the beds of the Saline Series—"shreds of angiospermous and coniferous woods (some of them carbonised), isolated wood elements with simple or bordered pits, pollen grains of angiosperms, cuticles of grasses, fungal hyphæ and insect-remains including a new and extinct species of Diptera"—is, according to Prof. Sahni, entirely in support of the Tertiary age for the salt and altogether rules out the idea of the Cambrian age.

With the present number, *Palæobotany in India* which was so far being published in the *Journal of the Indian Botanical Society*, appears under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences. Compared with the previous numbers, the Bulletin is now enlarged and its contents are more elaborate and comprehensive, and more profusely illustrated. Under the able guidance of Prof. Sahni, we have no doubt that this Bulletin will soon grow and develop into a regular first-rate journal of Indian Palæobotany.

## REORGANISATION OF THE MYSORE GEOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

THE Mysore Geological Department, originally organised in 1894, for conducting a geological and mineral survey of the State, was in later years obliged to curtail much of its activities on account of severe retrenchment to which the Department was subjected. Within the last ten or twelve years, however, the Department has started on an extensive programme of large-scale prospecting, mining, geophysical and soil surveys, including underground water resources. The limited staff at its disposal was found to be absolutely inadequate to cope with this continually growing volume of work, and realising the need for its urgent increase, the Government of Mysore have recently reorganised this Department sanctioning fully the proposals of the Director.

Under the scheme now sanctioned, the routine geological work in the State will be

allocated among three Divisions to be newly constituted, each Division forming a unit comprising three administrative districts in Mysore. Each of these divisions will be in charge of a Division Geologist, who will be responsible for all routine geological work within his division, subject to the administrative control of the Director. He will be assisted by two Assistant Geologists. Assaying and other laboratory investigations of a purely scientific and fundamental character will be carried out under the immediate supervision of the Director.

The technical and administrative staff includes one Senior Geologist, three Geologists, six Assistant Geologists, one Geophysicist, one Assistant Geophysicist, one Inspector of Quarries and Museum Curator, two Chemists and one Assistant Chemist.

## SIR LAWRENCE BRAGG ON SCIENTISTS AND THEIR PUPILS

"THE majority of scientists after the first decade of research careers continue to live their scientific lives for the most part through their students. Battening upon students, using their freshness for selfish ends, is of course one of the major scientific crimes, and unhappy is the laboratory which has such a head. But there is a better and more normal

side to the picture: the purest pleasure in scientific work is to see the germ of an idea one has planted in a younger man's mind develop in a way and to an extent one could not have achieved or foreseen oneself, and to see him get recognition for his work."

(*Discovery*, 1944, 5, 102.)