

is not clear and that little more is being added to our knowledge than was already known from the work done in other countries. The best use is not, therefore, being made of the workers, who should be engaged on parts of the problem allotted to them by a co-ordinating authority.

INDUSTRIAL MYCOLOGY

The mycology of fabrics, of foodstuffs, leather goods, plastics, insulating material, scientific equipment, and so on, has come to the fore especially during the war. It is a special branch of mycology requiring a thorough knowledge of the fungi commonly known as "moulds", a rather indefinite term covering certain Mucorales, some Ascomycetes such as *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium* and a large number of imperfect fungi of the Moniliaceæ and Dematiaceæ. While some of the work has to be done in factories and godowns, there seems to be no reason why, after the war, much of it should not be done in a central place which would have facilities better than could be provided by the numerous industries concerned acting individually. Such work could perhaps best be centred in one of the large manufacturing cities, and could be associated with a technological laboratory dealing with cotton, jute, or some other fibre.

FUNDAMENTAL MYCOLOGY

All the aspects mentioned above have relation to specific major groups of problems. Each is connected with certain groups of fungi of a rather limited kind. In such work the danger is that the workers concerned will lose contact with other branches of mycology and will become narrow in their outlook, so that they will tend to overlook modern trends and remain unaware of the significance of findings by other branches which are of fundamental importance to their particular branch also. It is this narrowness of outlook, and its consequent limitation of scope and ideas, that has to be guarded against by giving proper attention to mycology itself, by which is meant the study of fungi for what they are themselves

rather than for what is their importance to other sciences or to industry. A central research agency is required which can constantly have experts working on and monographing the various groups of fungi, recording their behaviour and their distribution in nature. Such an agency needs a particularly well-equipped library, first-class laboratories, a good herbarium and a national culture collection. The aim of the mycology section at the Imperial Agricultural Research Institute during recent years has been to build up such an organisation. It has meant a considerable change from the Pusa tradition which was built up, for obvious reasons, with an agricultural bias. Such a change in outlook was inevitable, for, as already pointed out, it could not deal with all, or even a major portion, of India's crop problems. Its facilities, however, are still inadequate, and a crying need is the establishment of a hill station where work can be carried out on the temperate fungi, many of which in all probability are carried yearly or occasionally to the hot plains during the cooler weather.

To summarise, we appear to need groups of mycological workers distributed more or less as follows:—

Plant Pathology: Agricultural experimental stations throughout India under the Government departments of Agriculture. *Soil Science*: Soil Science departments of the Universities. *Chemistry and Nutrition*: Factories, with a central laboratory for fundamental work attached to a nutrition laboratory. *Medicine*: A medical research institute. *Industrial Mycology*: In association with a technological laboratory dealing with fabrics. *Fundamental Mycology*: At a central research institute in association with other sciences and having access to a first-class library.

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PROFESSOR P. C. MAHALANOBIS, F.R.S.

THE happy announcement of the election of Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis to the Fellowship of the Royal Society, will be received with supreme satisfaction by his numerous pupils, colleagues and admirers. The distinction is a belated recognition of his pioneering, substantial and enduring contributions to the science of Statistics, in its pure and applied aspects. The Indian Statistical Society and *Sankhya*, its official organ, owe

their inception to his genius, zeal and organising ability. By example and by precept, he has inspired and fostered a strong, flourishing and an internationally recognised school of statistical science in this country. On this auspicious occasion, we wish to tender to the Professor our heartiest felicitations and wish him a long career of greater distinction and achievement.