

A HINDU ASTRONOMICAL CLOCK

ACCORDING to Oriental sciences of Astrology and Astronomy time is measured in *Yamas*, *Ghatikas* and *Vighatikas*; but no mechanism has been known to indicate this system of division following the readings of the Hindu Almanac.

At the Nellore District Agricultural Exhibition held in March 1947 a big clock fitted in a wooden frame of about $3' \times 2\frac{1}{2}' \times \frac{3}{4}'$ was exhibited to the admiration of the public. The clock, unlike the *Jantar-Mantar* at Delhi and other devices, reads besides hours and minutes, *Thidhis*, *Warams*, *Nakshatrams*, *Lagnams* (with *Pushkaramsa*) and *Rahukalam* in *Ghatikas* and *Vighatikas* and also dates. All these are readable on a single dial though the hands are different. It is said to work with weekly winding, and the readings are based on 'Sowramana'.

It is the work of one Mr. Gongalla Krishnaih, Doctor of the Rural Ayurvedic Dispensary, Mypad Village, Nellore District. The visiting public felt that the mechanism is useful for further research in Astrology and Astronomy.

To-day, when civilisation is said to be much advanced, time is expressed in *Yamas* and *Ghatikas* in Indian villages, as many villagers do not have time-pieces. Our ancient sciences are alive, but mechanical research is not there to produce suitable devices. This kind of clock does better service than a Radio set to the farmer. If researches of this kind are encouraged, they add to the fame of the country and serve the public from farmer to saint.

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Thumadu,
Nellore Dt.,
May 22, 1947.

ORGANISING SCIENTIFIC TALENT IN THE COUNTRY

EVERY Indian who is associated with any scientific work in the country* will welcome the appointment of the 'Scientific Manpower

Committee' by the Government of India to survey, salvage and conserve available scientific talents for its full utilisation in future India.

The comparative fewness of attractive appointments in the scientific lines and the greater salaries, power and influence associated with posts in the executive and administrative lines have caused men of proved scientific abilities to choose other lines of service. Adequate recognition of scientific and technological talents has been slow in most countries and particularly so in our own.

Even inside a scientific or technical department of Government the administrative posts often carry much higher salaries than posts in the scientific line with the result that after some years of service, the scientist looks forward to finish his career in non-scientific posts with their larger emoluments and pensions. I know of one young brilliant chemist who, after building up considerable work and reputation as chemist, ended his career as a second rate administrator. This was a distinct loss to science and not a service to administration.

The very tangible results of sugarcane work at Coimbatore was rendered possible through the worker—not very bright nor highly qualified—sticking to that work for thirty years. His colleagues thought he had a kink in his brain which prevented him looking around and above his post. In the agricultural departments of Government which need an immediate conservation of scientific talents I have known of persons, after decades of service in one crop, turn to another because of better emoluments.

The proposed Committee would do well to take note of these existing drawbacks as in the nationalistic India of the future the need for the conservation and proper utilisation of scientific talents is bound to be an important and urgent problem for working out schemes to the benefit of the mother-country.

56, Thyagaraja Road,
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A PEACE TIME USE FOR MONAZITE

AMONG the latest developments announced by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research is the use of Australian deposits of monazite in the manufacture of carbon electrodes for searchlights. The positive carbons of a modern searchlight usually have a core consisting of a mixture of powdered carbon and fluorides of the cerium group of metals. These materials required for making carbon

cores have been imported, but it has been found that sands from the beaches of Northern New South Wales and Southern Queensland contain considerable quantities of monazite, from which cerium fluoride can be prepared.

Cored carbons made from Australian materials have been tested in a searchlight arc lamp, and found to be in no way inferior to imported cerium fluoride.