

The production as planned, is expected to take care of nearly three-fourths of the major illnesses prevalent in India and effect a substantial saving (Rs. 2.25 crores per annum) in hard currency since most of these drugs are, at the moment, being imported from the U.S.A.

We are not quite happy about the disconcerting but nevertheless inevitable time lag—the long three-year period—which is said to be necessary for starting the production of these drugs. Considering the phenomenally rapid advances which are being made in the field of chemotherapy, there is the risk of the drugs now proposed to be manufactured being superseded by superior specifics, more potent, less toxic and less expensive to manufacture. Such risks one has to face in a competitive world, but they could be considerably minimised by a careful selection of plant and equipment, thoughtfully designed and fabricated to secure adequate flexibility so that the same manufacturing machinery could be harnessed for making other drugs. In the present

instance, the plants contemplated to be installed, we hope, possess this merit.

The drugs now proposed to be produced are of vital significance to the nation and in the event of a war, these plants need adequate protection. From this point of view many may doubt the wisdom of locating the factory at Bombay, considering the imminent vulnerability of the metropolis. It would not be difficult to suggest other alternative sites for the location, e.g., Bangalore, offering greater attractions for the industry to flourish and expand. We hope and trust that the organisers of this vital industry will give due consideration to this aspect of the problem.

We look upon this State enterprise as a national asset, not merely because of the means it provides for attaining a state of self-sufficiency with respect to these essential drugs, but on account of the long-range benefits which the venture could be made to confer on the country's drug research and industry, if the industry is well planned with scientific vision and technical foresight.

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### QUALITY IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

**Y**OUR January issue opens with a leader "Quality in Scientific Research" basing your comments on the recent speech of our outspoken Prime Minister at the Indian Science Institute, Bangalore. He is reported to have stated that research output in our country is not commensurate with the monies expended and with the wealth of research material and human talent available in the country. You lay the blame at the door of what you call the absence of "research climate". Below are indicated certain other causes for the dearth complained of.

With few honourable exceptions the spirit of wholehearted one-pointed continued devotion to research is lacking in many of our scientists. The reasons are partly social: the young enthusiast finds himself saddled with domestic and social commitments at a time when research should occupy his sole attention. Often so-called administrative needs pick him out

of his line and place him elsewhere and this breaks the continuity and enthusiasm of the researcher.

Apparently because the spirit of modern scientific research is somewhat recent in the country, many of our scientists show a love for power and administration, both of which are inimical to true research. A brilliant agricultural scientist held sway over one of our important institutes for about a year and he was able to cut down routine administrative work of the directorate by a well-planned method of decentralization in the matter of control. Others who occupied the same position—both European and Indian—showed a regrettable tendency to gather more administrative control than necessary. Ultimately, the Government red tape with its files and unending back papers proved so stifling that he decided to quit. During his regime the scientists under him enjoyed a freedom they never had before or after.

Our scientists would do well to rid themselves of the mania for control and power to produce.

The present science departments have been modelled on the revenue-collecting departments with their graded array of heads, deputies, and assistants in descending order with great differences in emoluments. This difference in emoluments is often interpreted as connoting parallel differences in research talent which is wrong. We have not yet learned to appreciate and give the proper position to scientific talent.

In the past, the scientific services in the country lost many useful and devoted votaries because of the allurements held out by administrative positions carrying higher status and better emoluments.

Science departments should learn to appreciate and hunt for research talent wherever found. In the future set up there should be no need for a researcher to give up his line of work and get lost in administrative nullity to improve his position. Scientific talents need to be paid on a par with administrative ability and within the science department itself the differences between pay scales should be lessened. I have very intimate knowledge of one agricultural researcher who had to give up higher emoluments in a different line of work and at a different place to enable him to produce tangible results. In this case, the individual lost but the country gained immensely.

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### THE ASIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL METEOROLOGICAL ORGANISATION

IT is a matter for genuine gratification that the Capital city of Free India is becoming the venue for the meetings of many International Conferences. In the first Asian Regional Commission of the International Meteorological Organisation which held its session at New Delhi from the 10th to the 20th November 1948, India played a leading part. 13 Member States including the U.S.S.R. as well as observers of the U.K., the U.S.A. and the I.C.A.O. took part in the proceedings.

The Prime Minister of India who opened the session on the 10th November, rightly stressed the importance of international co-operation in Meteorology as follows :—

“..... So it is a good thing that we take advantage of all these opportunities for international co-operation, not only because it is good in their particular field of activity but because they affect the larger field of human relations in the world and make people realise that after all the world is being carried on today by a great measure of international co-operation. In this context the communications system becomes more and more international and so many other branches of Science can only progress internationally.

Therefore, I welcome all the delegates who have come here and I hope that your labours will bear fruit in this particular branch of Science which is so important for human welfare as well as in the larger field of human relations.”

The Director-General of the Indian Meteorological Service was elected as President and the Chiefs of the U.S.S.R. and the Netherland East Indies Weather Services were elected as the two Vice-Presidents.

The Commission appointed *ad hoc* sub-committees to go into the following very important problems of Synoptic Meteorology in the Asian Region,—

1. Net-work of surface, upper air, radio-electric, etc., observatories.
2. Tele-communications and Broadcasts.
3. Codes and Units.
4. Marine Meteorology.
5. Use of Counting Machines for Meteorological purposes.

These sub-committees some of which were presided over by members of the Indian Meteorological Service concluded their valuable work during the session and produced workable solutions of the many problems raised and agreed plans for observational net-work, inter-regional and national meteorological broadcasts, procedure relating to codes and units, etc. The Conference held 18 plenary sessions to discuss the 25 items on the agenda and passed 45 resolutions and recommendations.

The labours of the Commission have paved the way for increased co-ordination and co-operation in the field of Meteorology. It is essential that we should have the maximum co-operation and understanding with our neighbour countries for the successful prediction of weather for the