

## Science News.

*The Chromosome Number of Crotalaria juncea* Linn.: Mr. R. M. Datta, Department of Botany, Presidency College, Calcutta, reports as a result of his investigations that the metaphase plate in the pollen mother cells shows the haploid number to be 10. It may be remembered that Messrs. S. Ramanujam, N. Parthasarathy and K. Ramiah of Coimbatore Agricultural Research Institute, who have worked on four species of *Crotalaria* of which *C. juncea* is one, have reported at the Patna Session of the Indian Science Congress that the haploid number is 8.

In reply to Dr. S. L. Ghose's note on *Mosquito and Charophyta*, (*Cur. Sc.*, 1, 328, 1933) Mr. S. C. Dixit, Wilson College, Bombay, in a short note addressed to us gives the following list of species of Charophyta having no larvicidal properties which are met with in Santa Cruz. (1) *Nitella hyalina*, (2) *Charasuccincta*, (3) *C. flaccida*, (4) *C. zeylanica*. Mr. Dixit observes that opinions freely expressed in journals on scientific matters could not kill further research on this subject.

The Imperial Institute, South Kensington, announces a forthcoming publication on "Lead: Its Occurrence, Uses, Mining and Metallurgy".

*Marriage Ceremony among the Vaishnava Castes in Bengal*: Mr. Keshava Sharan Agarwala of Poona, in an interesting short note on the marriage customs of this important community, condemns the lavish expenditure on social functions attending marriages and has pointed out that according to the *Sastras* the religious and the more important part of the function is comparatively simple and inexpensive. A mere exchange of "Kanthi" or a garland of beads between the bridegroom and the bride is according to him sufficient to constitute a valid marriage. But societies and even governments are under the tyranny of customs and traditions and the force of Hindu Law is more honoured in the breach than in the observance, even in semi-religious functions. Mr. Agarwala sees little or no significance in the social practices.

We have pleasure in congratulating Dr. Karam Narayan Bahl, Professor of Zoology, University of Lucknow, on his election to the Presidentship of the U.P. Academy of Sciences. We wish him and the Academy an uninterrupted career of increasing usefulness.

At the ordinary monthly meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, held on Monday, the 3rd July 1933, Mr. K. P. Biswas read a paper on 'Living Conifers of the Indian Empire'.

Conifers form an important source of revenue of this country. They are also extensively cultivated in gardens throughout India, Burma and Ceylon for ornamental purposes. The present paper contains a list of 106 species of Conifers at present living within the Indian Empire (with inclusion of Ceylon) to be regarded as a working list to which perhaps additions may be made in the future, arranged alphabetically under a systematic system of nomenclature according to the rules laid down by the Vienna Congress of

Botanists in 1905, and subsequently endorsed by the Horticultural and Botanical Congresses in 1930. The locality of occurrence in India and Ceylon is noted under each name. An attempt is made to define whether species are wild or cultivated, and in the latter case when and where introduced. Twenty-three Indian wild species are recorded, representing 21 per cent of the total number. Percentages amongst introduced species are: Chinese and Japanese 21; American 15; European 11; African 4; Pacific and Atlantic 8; Australian and New Zealand 6.

Dr. Bains Prashad exhibited certain Molluscs damaging the brickwork in the King George's Dock, Calcutta.

The Third International Congress of Experimental Cytology will be held at Cambridge in August from the 21st to the 26th. Prof. Th. Huzella, Professor of Anatomy in the University of Debrecen, is the President of the Congress and his presidential address will be on "Culture des tissus en ses relations aux problemes generales de la biologie et aux problemes speciales de la medicine". The chief features of the Congress will be discussions on the following topics:—"Cell Respiration and Cell Metabolism", "Cell Form and Function as demonstrated by Recent Advances in Tissue Culture", "The Electrophysiology of the Cell", "Entwicklungsmechanik and Explanation", "The Cultivation of Animal and Plant Viruses". Further information concerning the Congress can be had from Dr. Honor B. Fell, Strangeways Research Laboratory, Via Cheryinton, Cambridge.

Messrs. Adam Hilger Ltd., have put on the market a new X-Ray Fibre Spectrograph which has been designed by W. T. Astbury, B.A., of the Textile Research Department of the University of Leeds for the investigation of all types of fibres, e.g., wool, silk, cotton, hair, etc., and is now used in his X-Ray researches. The apparatus renders possible the study of the behaviour of these substances under a variety of conditions, such as tension and humidity and thus yields important information on the effects of wear, or of processes of manufacture, upon textile materials. With its accessories it provides a complete equipment for X-Ray fibre research and should prove indispensable in every textile research laboratory.

Sir George Anderson, till recently Director of Public Instruction to the Government of the Punjab, has been appointed Educational Commissioner to the Government of India in succession to Mr. Clarke. The Government of India is seriously considering the revival of the All-India Board of Education which was abolished nearly a decade ago and it is understood that Sir George Anderson will be entrusted with the task of its reorganization.

We have received a copy of *Electrotechnics*, No. 6, April 1933, published by the Electrical Engineering Society, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. Besides notes about the new equipment and research work of the Department of Electrical Technology of the Institute, the journal contains articles on "Preparation for Leadership"

