

The Easter Meeting at Bangalore.

UNDER the joint auspices of the South Indian Sciences Association, Bangalore, the Society of Biological Chemists, India, and the Madras Branch of the Indian Chemical Society, a three-day meeting was held in Bangalore during the last Easter Week. The programme commenced on the 15th April with the Presidential Address of Dr. S. Subba Rao, B.A., M.B.C.M., L.R.C.P., etc., Senior Surgeon to the Government of Mysore, when he addressed the gathering on the place of the medical man among the scientists and pleaded for an application of the study of physics and chemistry to the problems of medicine and surgery. This was followed by the reading of several original papers on organic and physical chemistry under the presidency of Dr. P. C. Guha, D.Sc., Professor of Organic Chemistry, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. In the evening Sir Mirza M. Ismail, Dewan of Mysore, opened in the presence of a large distinguished gathering, the Sciences Exhibition organized by the Societies. In a felicitous speech Sir Mirza pleaded for a wider study of science in its application to humanity. The precincts of the Central College were *en fete* and the Mysore Government Electrical Department had flood-lighted the central buildings of the College in honour of the occasion. This exhibition which demonstrated the fundamental principles of Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Geology, Medicine and Pathology, Radio, Engineering, Biochemistry, Dairying, Nutrition, etc., was visited by more than 2,500 members of the public during the four days when it was kept open.

On the 16th there was a symposium on the "Ghee Problem in India" under the presidency of Dr. S. Subba Rao when the following papers were read and followed by an interesting discussion :*

Dietetic value of ghee	Mr. N. C. Datta and Mr. B. N. Banerji.
Adulteration and Analysis	Mr. Y. V. Srikanteswaran.
Ghee substitutes, their manufacture and trade	Dr. R. Bhattacharjee.
Chemical aspect	Mr. P. Ramaswami Ayyar.

In the evening Rao Bahadur B. Viswanath, F.I.C., Government Agricultural Chemist, Coimbatore, delivered a public lecture on Plant and Animal when Sir C. V. Raman, Kt., F.R.S., N.L.,

presided. He said that the plant and the animal in their co-operative existence in nature bring about the marvellous round of events in which the inorganic is shaped into the organic which, passing through successive changes and displaying manifestations of life, pass again into the inorganic state only to resume the organic form. In this round of events he referred to the wonderful power of plants to build up their tissues from simple substances, and contrasted this with the helplessness of animals to utilize the same substances till they are made ready into a more suitable form by plant agency. He pointed out that although the structure and functions of the body parts of plants and animals have little in common, the recent contributions made to the biochemistry of plant and animal show that many of the typical functions of the cell are capable of being expressed in terms of simple chemical formulae or equations, leading ultimately to the simplification of phenomena and to the view that in its fundamentals the physiological mechanism of the two organisms is similar. From the epoch-making work of Willstatter and his collaborators similarity and relationship is visible between the vital centres of plants and animals, through their pigments chlorophyll and hæmoglobin from both of which ætioporphyrin can be obtained. Likewise instances were shown in which considerable similarity is revealed in the chemical changes underlying the metabolic and katabolic processes. While recognizing that analogies should not be stretched too far, the available evidence would justify consideration of the plant in terms of the animal in certain directions, and the lecturer showed how on the basis of such considerations it is possible to use the plant as an index or test organism in the solution of certain problems connected with animal life, such as nutritional, immunological and pharmacological studies.

On the 17th Dr. V. Subrahmanyam, D.Sc., F.I.C., Professor of Biochemistry, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, presided over the reading and discussion of original papers of biochemical interest. Dr. Gilbert J. Fowler, D.Sc., F.I.C., addressed on the Ern and Technocracy under the presidency of Prof. C. R. Narayan Rao, M.A., L.T.*

There was a number of delegates from Coimbatore and other places who contributed largely to the success of the Session.

* See page 400.

* Summary of this address has appeared in *Current Science*, 1, 11, 366, 1933.