solution. The residue, after all this extraction, when suitably treated, can yield approximately 205 to 228 tons of thorium nitrate, provided all the thorium is converted to nitrate. These figures are variable as the thorium oxide content of monazite is known to vary from 8 to 9·5 per cent. This residue will be treated by a factory being set up by the Atomic Energy Commission for the production of uranium and thorium compounds. This factory will also extract uranium.

PROFESSOR B. B. MUNDKUR—OBITUARY

THE passing away of Professor Balachandra Bhavanishankar Mundkur, Professor of Botany, Poona University, and noted Indian Mycologist on December 13, 1952, will be received with deep regret both in this country and abroad. Prof. Mundkur was born on January 26, 1896 in the village of Mundkur near Mangalore on the West Coast of India in the State of Madras. He was the only son of his father. He matriculated in 1915 and had his early collegiate education at the St. Aloysius College, Mangalore. In 1920 he took his B.A. (Hons.) Degree in Botany and passed out First Class with a Gold Medal from the Presidency College, Madras. For a short period after graduation, he was Agricultural Officer in Bengal and from 1922 to 1928 was Assistant Mycologist in the Cotton Research Scheme at Dharwar from where the bulk of his pioneering published work on the cotton wilt problem appeared. He obtained his Doctor of Philosophy degree from the Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, in Plant Pathology, working there between 1929-31. On his return to India, Dr. Mundkur was appointed as Assistant Mycologist in the Mycology Division, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Pusa, Bihar. Indeed, his association with this Institution both at Bihar and New Delhi until 1947 for well over sixteen years marked a period of great mycological activity, and he not only published several scientific papers and monographs on Indian *Synchytrium*, Indian *Phyllosticta, Pestallotia* and *Monochœtia* and Indian *Smuts*, but also edited a critical supplement to 'Fungi of India' by Butler and Bisby. He also published a number of papers on Indian Rusts. This period was also significant in that he had developed a small but devoted school of Mycological workers whose critical observations in their various independent capacities later on was marked by the thoroughness with which their training for critical observations was imparted by Dr Mundkur. Altogether, Dr. Mundkur published a large volume of scientific papers appearing in many journals all over the world, and the climax was the publication of a text-book entitled "Fungi and Plant Diseases" in 1949. A notable recent publication on the Ustilaginales of India published by the Commonwealth Mycological Institute is to be considered as a landmark in this field.

From 1947 to 1952 he served in an advisory capacity as Deputy Director of Plant Protection, a Department born in the wake of Indian Independence. His pioneering work in this field will long be remembered with gratitude in this country. For a short period of a little over one year, from 1952 till his demise at Poona, he was the first occupant of the newly created Chair of Botany at the Poona University. I recall from one of his personal letters with what a high degree of humility he accepted the post—a very admirable quality in a senior scientist! I also recall with what great enthusiasm he had planned to go to Europe in 1951 on a 'Mycological tour', but that was not to be, since he had already taken ill then. Professor Mundkur was elected in 1950 as President of the Botany Section of the Science Congress Session at Bangalore. Among his other contributions to the scientific community in India are his creative effort in bringing into being the Indian Phytopathological Society and the taking over in its initial stages the editing of its official organ, the *Indian Phytopathology*.

Prof. Mundkur's scientific career was marked by thoroughness and although he was characterised by varying moods and what appeared to be a hypercritical nature, what was most characteristic of the man, as I saw it, was that he had beneath this exterior a genuine interest and ungrudging appreciation of sound scientific work, whichever quarter it came from, and indeed, this feeling had reached such a tempo that he had no time for any one who had not wholly adopted a scientific career as his life's mission.. Prof. Mundkur is survived by his wife and two sons, to whom we offer our most sincere sympathy in their loss.

T. S. SADASIVAN.
