

spectroscopy.

The symposium was inaugurated by Professor T. R. Govindachari, Director, Amrutanjan Ltd., Madras, who highlighted the importance of natural product chemistry. Professor Arthur J. Birch, FAA, FRS, President, Australian Academy of Sciences, Canberra, Australia, in his key note address on "Fifty years of Science" gave a personal account of his experiences and thrills in research that led to the discovery of 'Birch Reduction', polyketide hypothesis and finally to the new approach to organic synthesis using "Inorganic Enzymes". He stressed the importance of basic research which is essential for tackling applied problems and advised the young scientists to look for challenging problems as luck favours only the mind that is prepared to receive it. Professor D. K. Banerjee, formerly Director, Indian Institute of Science, released the souvenir. This was followed by invited lectures which were spread over eleven scientific sessions.

Several papers dealing with the regio- and stereospecific synthesis of biologically active molecules which include guggultetrols, antitumour antibiotics, insect pheromones, terpenoids, pseudomonic acids and novel compounds from Indian plants were presented. A new carbon-carbon bond formation using oxo-ketene dithioacetals and the importance of dimethyl boron group in organic synthesis have been reported.

In view of Professor M. V. Bhatt's retirement from

the service of the Institute on 31st July 1984, one forenoon session was devoted to Physical Organic Chemistry as a token of the Department's appreciation of his contributions. Several interesting topics like organoboranes, neighbouring group effects, mechanism of oxidations, application of the concept of overleaf matching, stereochemistry of reduction of cyclic ketones, dynamic nuclear polarisation and free-radical solute solvent interactions were covered.

In the area of bioorganic chemistry, topics of current interest, such as remote functionalisation *via* carbenes, peptides as bioorganic models, biosynthesis of medically important compounds and biomimetic photochemical transformations of natural compounds, were discussed.

In addition to the above mentioned topics, interesting papers on solid state reactions and crystallography were presented.

The symposium brought all the leading organic chemists of the country under one roof to identify and discuss research projects in frontier areas in organic chemistry.

Department of
Organic Chemistry,
Indian Institute of Science,
Bangalore 560 012.

G. S. R. SUBBA RAO

NEWS

BORLAUG AWARD

Dr V. L. Chopra, Professor and Head of the Division of Genetics, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, has been awarded the Borlaug award for his outstanding contributions in agriculture.

The Award consists of a gold medal and a cash prize of Rs. 10,000. The Award was instituted in 1971 in honour of the Nobel Laureate Prof. Norman Borlaug, to honour Indian Agricultural scientists.

Prof. Chopra is well known for his original contri-

butions on the genetics of micro-organisms and the mechanism of rust-resistance in wheat. He has developed concepts and generated supporting data to show that it is possible to incorporate horizontal type of rust resistance using the conventional recombination breeding method. This has opened up avenue of breeding for horizontal resistance, which eliminates the disease and imparts stability to production.