

All these activities would be of little avail if the results obtained were not brought home to the people themselves. The subject of propaganda, or as His Excellency put it in his address to the nutrition committee, the need for practical application in the homes of the people of the fruits of research, is also being energetically pursued. It will be remembered that Sir Robert McCarrison published a small book entitled *Food* in 1923. This has gone through several editions and it has been translated into a number of vernaculars, and whilst it has been widely used by those in charge of hostels, boarding schools and similar institutions, further propaganda work has been done by means of the health bulletin already referred to. Whilst periodical notes, such as those issued from the nutrition laboratories on the value of skimmed milk, are issued to the press in the hope that the information contained therein will reach the people for whom it is intended, other arrangements are also under way, such as the preparation of series of coloured posters, etc. In the same direction, a certain amount of educational work by means of pamphlets and posters is being carried out by provincial public health departments and voluntary associations. But much more remains to be done before one can bring to the notice of the average villager the practical results of scientific research and get him so to adjust his diet as to give him the best value for his expenditure on food materials.

Some details are given in the report as to the expenditure incurred by the Indian Research Fund Association on nutritional research. The average cost of the maintenance of the nutritional research laboratory at Coonoor has amounted to over Rs. 82,500 per annum. Six other grants for nutritional research have been made to different workers, including those in Indian Universities, and in order to implement the recommendations of the nutritional advisory committee, the Indian Research Fund Association have earmarked an additional sum of Rs. 1.5 lacs.

DRUG ADULTERATION

Following on the publication of the Drugs Enquiry Committee's report in 1930, which comprised an exhaustive examination of the whole question of the control of the import, manufacture and sale of drugs and medicines in India, and a discussion in the Council of State during 1935, the Government of India again impressed on Provincial Governments the need for action and enquired whether, in view of the urgency of the problem, they would be prepared to adopt the recommendations made in the report. The establishment of a central drug-testing laboratory was also made the subject of reference.

As a first step towards the effective control of drugs and medicines in India, the Government of India have recently established bio-assay and pharmaceutical sections of a central drugs laboratory under the guidance of the Director of the Tropical School, Calcutta. These sections were opened in March 1937, being temporarily accommodated in the All-India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health. The technical staff includes a pharmacologist, a senior experimental assistant, a pharmaceutical chemist and a biochemist.

It will probably be necessary later on to open a further section for the testing of sera and vaccines; evidence already shows that these substances require a degree of control which does not yet exist in this country. It is obviously desirable that the drug control scheme should develop gradually, as experience indicates lines on which further advance is necessary.

It is to be noted, however, that one of the essential parts of the scheme is the development of a suitable laboratory in each province, as of course it is impossible for one central laboratory to deal with the whole of India. In addition, under the new Constitution, control of drugs is vested in Provincial Governments, but it will be necessary to evolve some arrangement by which co-ordination can be effected between Provincial Governments' laboratories and the Central Government's laboratory.

The Drug Enquiry Committee's report visualizes that the central laboratory will undertake commercial testing

of drugs for manufacturers and dealers on payment of fees. In a country like India where the drug manufacture industry is in its infancy, the expert advice such as will be available in the central laboratory should be of great assistance in the development of this important industry. A number of manufacturing firms already in existence in this country has at present no means for proper testing and standardization, and they will probably welcome the assistance which the Central Government's laboratory can give.

Correspondence

X SIPHUNCULINA FUNICOLA (EYE-FLY)

To the Editor, *The Indian Medical Gazette*

SIR,—In your January 1938 number, Mr. M. M. Syddiq has published a short résumé of the life history of the eye-fly, *S. funicola*. It is however necessary to mention that Jepson and Pinto (1927), in the Ceylon Government Agricultural Service, have previously studied the life history, and bred the flies artificially on a variety of dead organic matter: they lived as much as six weeks in captivity, and did not breed on growing plants, as is usual in the *Oscinida*, to which family they belong.

Later on, D. N. Roy (1928) found that they were breeding naturally in cattle sheds, where the earth was sodden with excreta, and Syddiq has restated this matter thus, 'the breeding place *par excellence* is moist mud, particularly that contaminated by decomposition of organic matter. The damp soiled earth around improperly kept pail latrines is a favourite breeding place; breeding has been found in badly-kept cattle stables and more frequently in connection with badly-kept and contaminated surface drains'.

As the natural source of the pest is an important matter in some districts, particularly in the tea gardens, it will be seen that Dr. Roy should be given prior credit for his observations.

It is scarcely necessary to advise on any course of action.

REFERENCES

- Jepson, F. P., and Pinto, M. P. D. *Tech. Reps.* 1927. *Dept. Agric., Ceylon*, Colombo. (Abstract—*Rev. Applied Entomol.*, 1929, Vol. XVII, p. 22).
 Roy, D. N. (1928). A Note on the Breeding and Habits of the Eye-fly *Siphonella funicola* Meij. *Indian Med. Gaz.*, Vol. LXIII, p. 369.

Yours, etc.,

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[Note.—Jepson and Pinto failed to find the natural breeding sites of these flies, but were able to breed them in the laboratory on decaying animal and vegetable materials.

D. N. Roy investigated the matter further by placing longcloth meat-safes over different sites. Some nine different types of site were tested, with the following result: 'Only dung and urine and sodden earth in cattle sheds yielded the flies and then on four occasions; only thirteen eye-flies in all were caught from these sites.

With this single experiment it cannot be said that finality on the subject of the breeding habits of eye-flies has been reached, and we are glad that M. M. Syddiq, who appears to have overlooked these earlier references, took up the matter again.

His conclusions appear to have been reached independently, as in answer to a letter in which we asked him for his authority for the statement regarding the breeding sites of eye-flies, he replied as follows:—

'Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 11th March, 1938, I have to inform you that different types of eggs are found at such places. Mud was collected and the