

The Java Convention of the International Society of Sugar Cane Technologists.

The International Society of Sugarcane Technologists had its origin originally in the pan-Pacific Food Congress. It was felt that sugar was sufficiently important as an article of food and persons connected with sugar were sufficiently numerous to justify the formation of a separate organization. Practically from the time of its inauguration, India has been associated with it. The Sugarcane Expert to the Government of India has been the regional Vice-Chairman of this Society for some time and to-day the Society has on its rolls about a score of members from India.

The Convention which took place in Java in June this year was the third of its kind, the Society meeting once in three years in the various sugarcane countries of the world. The first convention was held at Honolulu in Hawaii and the second in Cuba. The next convention to be held in 1932 is to be at Porto Rico.

The Java Convention attracted quite a number of delegates from all over the sugarcane world. This is apparently because of the fact that Java, the place of meeting has been in the front rank of sugarcane countries for some considerable time. Almost all the countries were represented with the exception of Cuba. The island of Hawaii had deputed quite a large number of their experts to the meeting. The Indian delegation consisted of (1) M.R.Ry. Rao Bahadur T. S. Venkatraman Avl., Sugarcane Expert to the Government of India; (2) K. C. Banerjee Esq., from the Tamkuhi Factory in Bihar and the Hon. Secretary of the Sugar Technologists' Association (of India); (3) S. J. Sabnis Esq., from a Sugar Factory in Burma; (4) U. K. Das Esq., now working at the Sugar Experiment Station, Honolulu, Hawaii; and (5) Wallawolker Esq., who had recently gone to the West to study the sugar industry there in all its aspects.

The visit to Java was of particular interest to the Indian delegation, as Java still possesses certain relics of Hindu culture and civilization and the commercial relation-

ship between India and Java is of some duration. To-day India is the best customer of Java. One remarkable feature it has impressed the Indian delegation was the combination of extremely favourable conditions for the growth of the sugarcane obtaining in that island. The climate and irrigation facilities are almost ideal for the sugarcane. A second noticeable feature was the fact that cane growing was almost entirely in the hands of enlightened European planters with ample resources in the form of capital. Because of this the cane crop in Java is receiving very good attention. A third striking feature was the effective control which the factory has over the quality and quantity of cane that is supplied to it. All the delegates were very much impressed with the extreme cleanliness in the Java sugar factories some of them having neatly tiled floors.

The sugar industry of Java is very highly organized. The General Syndicate of Sugar Manufacturers—a private organisation established at Sourabaya in 1893—comprises practically all the sugar interests in that island. It has plenty of funds at its disposal and watches the industry from the time the cane sown in the field to the time that the sugar is actually sold to the various countries. It is a model of what such organizations ought to be. It runs a very efficiently staffed and highly organized experiment station at Pasoeroean which is in a position to give timely and real help both to the planter and to the manufacturer. The sugar industry in Java fully realizes the value of scientific methods and organized research to the industry. It has substantially benefited in the past from the results of scientific work and is confident that science would do even more to it in the future. The organization in Java is an unique example of what can be achieved by intensive mutual co-operation between the various departments.

The Java Convention was presided over by Dr. J. Jeswiet who has been connected with the Java sugar industry for some time. He is probably the best living authority on sugarcane varieties and the creator of P. O. J. 2878 the present wonder cane of Java. At the convention were found some of the leading workers from the various parts of the world; from Australia, Hawaii, Formosa, Mauri-

tius, Trinidad, the Philippines, the United States of America and India. The Java sugar industry showed its appreciation of the foremost workers in the sugarcane world by announcing at the Association their election as Honorary members of the Java Sugar Syndicate. Messrs. Prinsen Geerligs and Noel Deerr were both recipients of such an honour. The latter is now with Messrs. Begg Sutherland & Co., who control a number of factories in Bihar.

The discussions at the various meetings were of intense interest and reflected the all-world character of the International Society. Perhaps more important than the meetings was the personal contact which scientists from all the world over were able to establish with one another. Many scientists who had read each other's work with interest were able for the first time to discuss various matters in person. The long and interesting excursions kindly arranged by the Java industry greatly helped in the establishment of personal relations. The various organizations in Java connected directly and indirectly with the industry co-operated to make the members quite comfortable and their sojourn in Java both instructive and interesting.

Dr. F. W. Zerban was elected General Chairman for the Porto Rico meeting; while Mr. Noel Deerr and Rao Bahadur T. S. Venkatraman were elected Chairmen, the former for Factory Operation and Chemical Control and the latter for Varieties (including selection and propagation).

One of the important general lectures at the convention was by Dr. Jeswiet and entitled "The American Sugarcane Expedition to New Guinea, 1928": With a set of very interesting lantern slides and motion pictures the Doctor detailed the remarkable expedition which he, along with Dr. Brandes of the United States of America, undertook to explore the wild regions in New Guinea in quest of wild and disease resistant varieties, with the object of using them for hybridization purposes later on. On another evening the delegates had the privilege of seeing the official film of the "General Syndicate of Sugar Manufacturers" entitled "The Java Sugar Industry". This film represented the salient features of the Java industry and the various

stages of its development. It visualized to the delegates the industry in all its aspects from the preparation of land for cane planting to the stage where the finished product is sold to customers through an organized system of brokers. The excursions included visits to various irrigation works. One such was a reservoir built up near the crater of an extinct volcano and capable of irrigating about 700 hectares of cane. The phenomenal increase in acre yields obtained in Java by a very careful application of science to the industry in all its aspects is a lesson to India and shows the possibilities in the future of India producing her own needs in the matter of sugar. It is now fairly well known that certain of the canes bred at the Imperial Sugarcane Breeding Station, Coimbatore, are already spreading very rapidly in the main sugarcane provinces of India such as, The United Provinces, The Punjab and Bihar, considerably increasing the acre yields in those provinces. The founding of the Coimbatore Station in 1912 was one of the first activities of the Central Government towards helping the Indian sugar industry and the results have shown that the activities of that Government have been on the most promising lines. One of the Coimbatore productions—Co. 281—has been found useful in countries outside India, viz., Cuba, Florida and Louisiana.

(T. S. V.)
