ABSTRACTS

Soybean flour destroys Vitamin A. Flour made of legumes, particularly soybeans, and added to bread to improve the color of the crumb has been found to destroy its vitamin A content. The color which is removed by soybean flour is carotene, which is oxidized and hence decolorized in the process. Since carotene is the basic substance of vitamin A, its activity is thus destroyed. Similar tests with cod-liver oil have shown that soybean flour will destroy at least 99 per cent of its vitamin A content. (*Scientific American*, February 1937).

V. R.

Fertilizing from the Air. When wheat is grown in an atmosphere enriched with carbondioxide, Dr. Johnston reports, that the weight of straw, the number and weight of heads, and the number of grains increased in comparison with plants grown in ordinary air. The practical application of this type of fertilizer has not been found satisfactory in commercial work. (*Scientific American*, February 1937).

V. R.

Bedbugs alive for one year. An Entomologist kept bedbugs alive and fairly active for one year without any food whatsoever. This remarkable vitality explains the great prevalence of bedbugs. (*Scientific American*, February 1937).

V. R.

Artificial resin. With the increasing use of electricity for domestic and other every day purposes, there will be very few who are not acquainted with Bakelite and Bakelite products and many will be interested to know what Bakelite is and how it is obtained. An exceedingly good and readable lecture is reported in one of the recent issues of Royal Society of Arts. Though often called an artificial resin, it is only a product of the condensation of phenol and formaldehyde and is called a resin only because in appearance it resembles a resin. The condensation product when first formed is a solid which will melt on heating but solidifies again if the heating is continued for some time and in this last condition, it assumes the consistency and electrical properties of the Bakelite products commonly sold in the market. In manufacturing the various commercial articles, advantage was taken of this fact and nice looking and useful things are turned out quickly and in large numbers by simply pressing the semi-solid resinoid into appropriate models and heated till the resin sets to a hard mass irreversibly. It would be of interest to know that besides these phenolic resinoids, there are the Urea resinoids, Alkyd, Vinyl and Sterol resinoids. The reader is referred to the extremely lucid original article in the Journal of Royal Society of Arts for further information. (*Jour. Roy. Soc. Arts.* January 29th 1937).

Dr. S. K.

Review.

Text Book on Horticulture in Telugu by V. Venkateshwara Rao, Bhimavaram.

The book is primarily intended for the use of Secondary School students according to the requirements of the S. S. L. C. Syllabus and is, therefore necessarily elementary in its scope.

It deals with soils and their properties, hedges, implements used in horticulture, tillage, after-cultivation, manures and manuring, methods of propagation, insect pests and fungoid diseases and their control. A few notes on some of the most commonly cultivated flowering and orchard plants would however have made the book more complete.

There are few useful books on this important subject of horticulture easily available to the student and the teacher, and fewer still in the vernaculars. This book, it is expected, will, therefore, supply a long felt want and prove useful not only to the regular students studying for an examination and the elementary school teacher, but also to the amateurs in horticulture and serve as a brief introduction to the fascinating subject of horticulture.

The book, the first of its kind in Telugu, ought to be welcomed by all interested in the subject. The author derseves to be congratulated for his efforts which however humble they may be, should contribute much to the spread of knowledge in horticulture among the younger generation.

Copies can be had from the author for annas Twelve.

G. V. Narayana.

Correspondence.

Dear Sir,

In your issue of the M. A. J. for this month (March) I find an article on "*A new enemy of the honey bee*" by Messers M. C. Cherian and V. Mahadevan. In the introductory paragraph of the paper the authors while refering to a few previously known enemies of the honey bee have, I find, not made any reference to another wasp enemy of the honey bee recorded before from S. India with almost the same habits as *Palarus* and belonging to the same family *Sphegidae*. I would invite their attention to the following published papers containing information on it.

1. My paper on "Some insects recently noted as injurious in S. India". In which is recorded the bee hunter wasp *Philanthus Ramakrishnae T.* with a figure showing the wasp carrying a honey bee (published in report 3rd Entomological Meeting, Pusa, 1919).

2. "Bees and bee keeping in S. India" by myself and S. Ramachandran published in M. A. J., February 1934, P. 7 with a figure.

3. "Bee keeping in S. India" Madras bulletin No. 37 by S. Ramachandran with a forward by myself page 1, fig. 13, year 1935.

This sphegid wasp *P. Ramakrishnae T.* was discovered by me on the Bahabudan hills (4000') in Mysore about twenty years ago; I also noted it later on the Nilgiris and on the Palnis. It was named after me by Mr. Turner of the British-museum as a new species.

'Girija' Farm,
Mundur, S. Malabar.
14—3—'37.

T. V. R. Ayyar.

Dear Sir,

In reply to Dr. T. V. Ramakrishna Ayyar's (Rao Saheb) letter I have to state that I am aware of the three publications, mentioned by him. These publications, especially Nos., 2 & 3 however do not contain much information on the wasp *Philanthus*. I am of opinion that this wasp is not of sufficient importance to be included amongst the insect enemies mentioned by me and Mr. Mahadevan in our paper on "A new enemy of the Indian Honey bee." Hence the omission.

It may be stated in this connection that the Mysore Entomologist also does not consider this wasp of an importance in his State.

M. C. Cherian,
Govt. Entomologist.

Lawley Road P. O.
10—4—1937.