

## Editorially Speaking.....

### OURSELVES :—

THE standard of a technical journal like the 'Bombay Technologist' depends primarily upon the material provided by the contributors. As the majority of our contributors is drawn from our student members, both the success and the standard of our journal depend upon the zeal, care, co-operation and adjustment shown by these young men—zeal in preparing the articles by a thorough literature review, care in putting down the thoughts and readiness to modify in the light of editorial comments. Thanks to the collaboration received on all hands—authors, referees, advertisers, printers and others—it has been possible to present this fourth volume of the 'Bombay Technologist' to our readers in time, which we do with great pleasure.

A perusal of the contents will show the variety of subjects appearing in this volume and we daresay that the articles themselves will interest the general as well as the specialized chemical technologist. We would like to draw the attention of our readers to the article of Weeks and strongly recommend that our young technologists about to enter the industry study it carefully.

### Variety or Uniformity :—

In the reorganisation that is taking place in our country in all spheres of activities, it is inevitable that education should receive attention of the reformist. In the field of technical education, Universities, the Central and State Governments and technical institutions have drafted courses for different subjects at post-matriculate, post-intermediate and post-graduate levels. For this we have taken the British and/or the American system as models and have modified them to suit our specific requirements—

or shall we say, temperaments—wherever necessary. This has resulted in the syllabi being veritable mixtures the effect of which, as is to be expected, is dependent upon the relative proportions of the ingredients and the manner and order of mixing them! It is, therefore, not surprising that when you travel across the wide expanse of our country from one teaching institute to another, you see marked differences in the syllabi. Variety is, no doubt, good, but only up to a certain point. It is not suggested that all the courses and syllabi should be regimented. However, a good deal of uniformity amongst them is desirable so that no institution may claim superiority of its syllabus over the others. *After all, it must be remembered, that not the written word in a syllabus but the spoken word, of the teacher, that brings reputation to a teaching institute.*

The diversity in the syllabi is to a certain extent reflected in the denominations of the degrees as well. For example, students being trained at different places get B.Sc. (Tech.), B. Tech. B.Chem.Eng. or M.Sc.(Tech.) or just diplomas for equivalent studies. The position is rendered more confusing by the manner in which classes at the examinations are assigned. Naturally such a state of affairs tends to confuse both the prospective employer and the employee at the time of the latter's selection.

To improve this situation in the right direction it is suggested that professional bodies like the Indian Institute of Chemical Engineers take the initiative.

### Industrial Research :—

The attitude of both the Central and State Governments towards research in technical institutions has been highly encouraging; but the fact remains that

many of the research projects do not see the light of the day beyond the laboratory benches. In order to give encouragement to the young technologists in developing new processes or improving the existing ones it is absolutely necessary that these research projects be carried out through the pilot plant stage. The question of finance is of primary importance with the responsibility for putting the enterprise on a sound footing, a close second. If the finance is available, we are sure that the people under whose guidance the research schemes were successfully completed at the laboratory level are equally capable of seeing the projects through the pilot plant stage, provided no undue restrictions are placed in their way. The finance required for these projects should come from the Industrial Finance Corporation or similar State bodies once they are satisfied with the *bona fides* of specific cases. Alternately, even the present sums of money spent on a large number of schemes can be utilized far better in developing a few selected schemes.

#### *Industrial Tours* :—

Works practice, visits to factories and industrial tours form important items in

the curriculum of any technological course. It is only by these that students see and learn the application of their lecture-room knowledge. It is only these that give them an idea of the hard life ahead of them—so different from what may be conveyed in the laboratory.

Of the three items mentioned above, the industrial tour had to be dropped out during the war years for obvious reasons. However, some institutions have yet not been able to reinstate the practice of sending their students on these tours, with the result that the latter miss an important opportunity of visiting some of the most magnificent industrial centres in our country—and perhaps some God-forsaken places too. 'Seeing is believing' and one cannot visualise for example, a 400 ft. rotary kiln, or overhead transport of ores, or a carbonation tower or a triple-effect evaporator, without being in front of them. We earnestly hope that those institutions which had stopped financing such tours will reconsider the situation. At the same time, we would like to say that such students who can afford should themselves organise such tours. The opportunity of getting the experience and facilities will not come their way once they leave their respective institutions.