NOTES AND NEWS

OIL AND NATURAL GAS COMMISSION

Under the far-sighted initiative of the Hon'ble K.D. Malaviya, Minister for Natural Resources and Scientific Research, a new Department, *The Oil and Natural Gas Commission*, has been set up with the object of exploring India's oil deposits and natural gas. A team of Russian oil experts and other personnel consisting of Dr. N. A Kalinin (leader), Prof. A. I. Tagieve, Mr. N. P. Tchounarev and Mr. E. Selimkhanov carried out a preliminary examination of certain areas on which a report was submitted to the Government of India. Highest priority has been given for the exploration of the Jwalamukhi area (Kangra district) of the Punjab Himalaya, detailed survey of which was carried out some years ago under the direction of M. R. Sahni by V. H. Boileau, Petroleum Geologist, and G. Kohli of the Geological Survey of India.

Drilling operations are expected to be started shortly near Jwalamukhi where a flame burns constantly within the Jwalamukhi temple (*Jwala*=light,*mukh*=face).

ASSAM OIL COMPANY

The Assam Oil Company have discovered new oil wells in Assam which have commenced production.

STANDARD VACUUM OIL COMPANY

According to reports, the Standard Vacuum Oil Company who have been carrying out exploration for oil in the Bengal basin for some years, are expected to commence drilling operations in the near future.

BIRBAL SAHNI INSTITUTE OF PALAEOBOTANY

Several researches have been recently carried out or are in progress in various fields of Indian palaeobotany in the Institute. These relate both to academic research and the economic field *e.g.*, spore analysis of Gondwana and other coal seams. Among the workers are :—the late P. N. Srivastava : Glossopteris flora; K. R. Surange : Gondwana flora, Deccan Intertrappean flora; D. C. Bharadwaj : Microflora of coal-seams; spore dispersal and allied problems; K. M. Lele : Plant fossils from South Rewa, Gondwana basin; K. Suryanarayana : Coastal Gondwana plant fossils; S. C. D. Shah : Microflora of Variegated Shales, Salt Range (Pakistan); Rajmahal flora, Bihar; V. Mittre : Fossil plants from Nipania chert, Rajmahal hills, Bihar; R. N. Lakhanpal : Fossil plants from Garo Hills, Assam; C. P. Verma : Fossil woods from Trichinopoly; Fossil algae from Nammal gorge, Salt Range (Pakistan); M. N. Bose : Rajmahal flora.

PALAEONTOLOGIC DIVISION (PALAEONTOLOGY AND PALAEOBOTONY) GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

RECENT INVESTIGATIONS

The Palaeontologic Division under M. R. Sahni, Palaeontologist-in-charge, Palaeontology and Palaeobotany, carried out numerous researches, advance notices concerning some of which have already appeared. These are : M. R. Sahni : British Chalk Terebratulidae (British Museum collection); Revision of Stoliczka's South Indian Cretaceous Terebratulidae; Jurassic Terebratulide of Burma, other than *Holcothyris*. Other investigations were carried out under the guidance of and in collaboration with the Palaeontologist by the following: V. V. Sastri : Orbitolines from the Himalaya, Tibet and Burma: New genera of Microforaminifera from Tibet and Burma; J. P. Srivastava : *Eurydesma* and *Conularia* in Eastern Himalaya; M. V. A. Sastry : New corals from Quilon, West coast (Miocene); M. V. A. Sastry and S. S. Sarkar : Cretaceous ammonites; C. Nageswara Rao : Gondwana flora; R. N. Shrivastava : Gondwana micro-flora; C. Tripathi : Indian Deinotheres; Triassic Tetrapods; Fossil *Equus caballus* in Vindhya Pradesh; D. K. Dutta : Revision of the genus *Spirigerella;* the *Eurydesma* fauna from Manendargarh, Central India; A.P. Tewari: Fresh-water Triassic mollusca from Tiki;

Permo-Carboniferous fauna of Spiti; K. K. Verma : Lower Palaeozoic fauna of Spiti; correlation of Tiki (Tihki) and Parsora beds; A. K. Chatterjee : Cretaceous Orbitoids; N. C. Bhatnagar : Jurassic fossils from Jaisalmer; Tertiary freshwater mollusca and plants from Kargil, Ladakh; M. B. Pawde: Jurassic Rhynchonellids from Burma;

G. Kohli and V. V. Sastri investigated *Globotruncana* from the Himalaya.

MICROPALAEONTOLOGICAL LABORATORY

A separate laboratory has been set up in collaboration with M. R. Sahni, M. F. Glaessner, V. V. Sastri, V. Raghavendra Rao and A. K. Chatterji, for detailed investigation of the larger and smaller foraminifera. The main objective, apart from academic research, is to assist in elucidating the palaeontology and stratigraphy of the oil-bearing and other formations. Work is in progress.

MICROPALAEOBOTANICAL LABORATORY

A laboratory has also recently been set up by M. R. Sahni and R. N. Shrivastava for the study of plant microfossils—spores and pollen—from coal-bearing and other rocks. This will help in the correlation of coal seams and in age determination. Besides R. N. Shrivastava a number of younger workers are engaged in the study of plant spores and pollen.

THE INDIAN UNIVERSITIES AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Fellows of the Society have been engaged in palaeontologic and palaeobotanic research in several Universities and Institutions.—S. R. N. Rao and B. S. Tewari : Tertiary foraminifera of Kutch and Kathiawar; S. B. Bhatia : Recent forminifera of Bombay and Kathiawar coasts; S. N. Singh : Rajasthan Tertiary foraminifera (Lucknow University); Y. Nagappa : Cretaceous, Tertiary foraminifera of Assam and Pakistan (Assam Oil Company); L. Rama Rao and Sambe Gowda : South Indian Cretaceous foraminifera and other micro-fossils (Mysore University, Bangalore); S. Kilpady : A giant Cretaceous bivalve (Nagpur University); V. D. Shukla : Mesozoic mollusca of Kucth (Banaras Hindu University); S. K. Agarwal: Mesozoic invertebrates of Kutch (Banaras Hindu University, now at Natural History Museum, Paris).

Excellent collections of vertebrate fossils are being made by the staff of the Geology Department, M. G. M. College, Jammu (Kashmir) under the charge of R. Sawhney, Head of the Department. Among the finds are a complete tusk of *Stegodon ganesa*, chelonian and bovid remains.

A School of Intertrappean palaeobotany under V. B. Shukla (Nagpur University) is actively engaged in important researches; among other workers are: (Mrs.) T. Trivedi, J. K. Verma and J. N. Dwivedi.

K. N. Kaul and R. V. Sitholey have worked on numerous aspects of Gondwana and Tertiary palaeobotany (National Botanic Gardens, Lucknow); K. A. Chaudhuri : Fossil and Protohistoric (Harappaon) woods (Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun).

PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PLEISTOCENE

A number of investigations are in progress or have been carried out recently by Fellows of the Society. Among them are:—P. E. P. Deraniyagala : The Stone age of Ceylon; Plio-Pleistocene mammals of Ceylon (Colombo); H. D. Sankalia : Prehistory and Pleistocene of Gujarat (Post Graduate and Research Institution, Poona); B. B. Lal : Microlithic and Protohistoric studies (Archaeological Survey of India); R. V. Joshi : Pleistocene of Malaprabha Basin (Dharwar University); B. Subba Rao: Stone Age of S. India (Baroda University); B. S. Tewari and B. C. Pande : Implements from Jabalpur (Lucknow University).

Researches carried out by foreign Fellows of the Society will be reported upon in the forthcoming issue of the Journal.