

## FOOD SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

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ON June 18, Mr. Lauchlan Rose, chairman of the Food Manufacturers' Federation, formally opened the extension to the Procter Department of Food and Leather Science of the University of Leeds. The name commemorates Prof. H. R. Procter, who founded, in 1891, the Leather Industries Department, the precursor of the present one. The additions constitute an increase in floor area of almost 50 per cent to a total of more than 18,000 sq. ft. They provide much-needed facilities for the 4-year course leading to the honours B.Sc. in food science, the inaugural year of which is just about to be completed, as well as for postgraduate research in food science.

Apart from offices, the main part of the extension is devoted to the food technology laboratories under the direction of Mr. G. Glew. The purpose of these laboratories is two-fold: first, to enable undergraduate students to handle small-scale equipment in order to obtain an understanding of the operations involved in food processing and, secondly, to provide facilities for research into technological problems of the food industry by undergraduates in their final year, research students, and members of the staff. The facilities of the laboratories include three refrigerated chambers, one controllable down to  $-29^{\circ}\text{C}$ , a blast freezer, a small Leybold-Elliott freeze drier, a Kestner laboratory spray drier, a Kestner drum drier, and a Q.V.F. all-glass concentrator with a flavour recovery unit, together with a canning line and a variety of equipment for mixing, milling, baking, boiling and testing.

Attached to the laboratories is a room for bacteriological control work, much of which is carried out in collaboration with Mr. J. Wolf's Bacteriology Section of the Department of Agriculture. This work was illustrated by several exhibits.

Dr. R. Reed's electron-microscopy group with its Siemens Elmiskop II and a full range of ancillary equip-

ment, including two ultramicrotomes, an ultrasonic disintegrator, and a metal shadowing unit, has been re-housed in the extension in a compact suite, and light microscopy, under Dr. F. Olga Flint, is catered for both on the under- and post-graduate levels. A Leitz 'Ortholux' microscope has just been acquired. The Biochemistry Research Laboratory's most prized piece of equipment is a Technicon automatic analyser, at present used for amino-acids, but shortly to be used on carbohydrates as well. A physics research laboratory and a final-year undergraduate laboratory complete the extension.

The previous addition to the Department in 1959 enabled facilities, such as a Spinco model L ultra-centrifuge, a Bellingham and Stanley photoelectric spectropolarimeter, and a light-scattering apparatus, to be installed. The present occasion provided the opportunity to add a Perkin-Elmer 237 infra-red spectrophotometer and a 451 gas chromatograph.

In connexion with the opening, the whole department as well as the new extension remained on view for three days, and some two hundred visitors were received. Special food science exhibits illustrated the methods adopted for undergraduate teaching and these included a display by Dr. R. Harper of the Psychology Department, who is responsible in the course for treating problems of perception with special reference to the sensory qualities of foods and food acceptance. A further display, on the history of the Public Analyst's work, was that by the City Analyst, Mr. R. A. Dalley, who lectured on food control aspects.

Present research on view included topics such as the electron microscopy of wheat gluten, the gelling of gelatin and pectin gels, and the isolation of the components of black-currant volatiles.

## THE SOUTH-EASTERN UNION OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES ANNUAL CONGRESS

AT the invitation of the Mayor and Corporation of Tunbridge Wells and the Tunbridge Wells Natural History Society, the South-Eastern Union of Scientific Societies held its sixty-eighth annual congress at Tunbridge Wells during May 9-12 under the presidency of Dr. W. S. Bristowe. The headquarters of the Congress was at the Public Library and Museum; the Young Naturalists' evening was held at the County Grammar Schools for Girls, by permission of the Headmistress.

The delegates were welcomed and entertained by the Mayor, Alderman Donald Savage, who reminded them that the Union was founded at Tunbridge Wells in 1896, only seven years after the town received its Charter. The Corporation takes great pride in its Museum, one of the first to stress the importance of local interest in the display of exhibits.

At the commencement of the Congress, the delegates were conducted on a tour of the town by Mrs. E. Bradley, who, on the route, described the Georgian houses and their past tenants, the origin and development of the Walks, now the Pantiles, and the cures (real and imaginary) obtained by taking vast quantities of the water from the chalybeate springs. Messrs. Boots kindly permitted the examination of the famous bath beneath the floor of their

premises. A visit was made to the Church of King Charles the Martyr, where the change in its orientation was discussed.

A Young Naturalists' evening was held, and questions on a wide variety of natural history topics were answered by a team of experts under the chairmanship of Maxwell Knight, prizes being awarded to the girl and boy who submitted the best questions.

After the formal induction to the presidency, Dr. W. S. Bristowe delivered his address on "A Galaxy of Spiders". He commenced by saying how easy it was for a collector in towns to be suspected of misdemeanour. He had been disgraced near Hyde Park Corner where, seeing a prim and proper lady in distress, because of a spider hanging on a thread from her hair, he had removed it, opened his mouth and popped it in. The lady's expression of extreme disgust later became good-humoured. During his visit to Thailand he could not, at first, regard the delicacy of spiders with favour, but, when the feeling of repugnance was overcome, he found they tasted well. Discussing this with a Siamese gentleman, who had attended school in England, the same feeling had occurred when he was asked to eat British green raw vegetables and the decaying carcasses of pheasants and hares.