

SURESH
MOONA

Bringing Back Bangalore

The SCIENCE people

Central College Science departments was the best in South India. Several leading minds headed these departments

Several stalwarts have

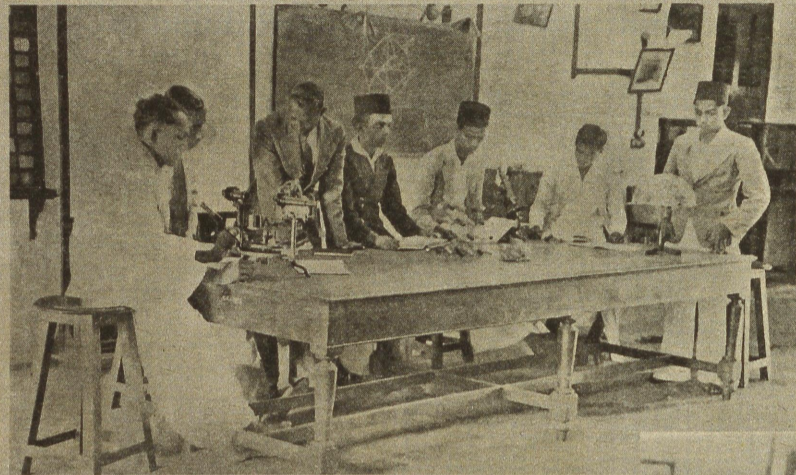
strived hard to lay a very strong foundation for the Science Departments during the first sixty years of Central College. Their committed efforts helped the college to become an iconic institution. A glimpse of such attempts is given here in a nutshell.

It was John Cook's keen interest and enthusiasm in his subject, Physics, that was responsible in making Central College an important Centre in South India for Physics training. Till his retirement in 1907, the College was preparing students for group IIA of the Madras University with Physics as the main subject and Chemistry as the subsidiary. Surprisingly, Madras University then did not require candidates for BA examination to Physics to undergo a course in practical Physics. As a result, no facilities had been provided in the Central College to perform experiments and make physical measurements.

After J. Cook came Dr. E P Metcalfe, who had established his reputation as a brilliant student of University College, London. He had made important and original Contribution to Physics both while in London and in Cambridge, where he worked in the Cavendish Laboratory under the distinguished Physicist Sir JJ Thomson. The reorganization of studies by Madras University to which Central College was affiliated, resulted in the introduction of new intermediate and BA courses with practical work in Science subjects. On appointment to the chair of physics, the first task that Dr. Metcalfe undertook was to alter and equip the portion of the old building for practical work in physics both for intermediate and BA students. By 1912, a separate building for Physics Department was made. Since then many facilities were offered for advanced studies and research and such works could be compared to any other University in India.

In 1929, Dr. Metcalfe became Vice-Chancellor of the Mysore University and Prof. B. Venkateshachar was made the head of the department of the Department. At the same time, honors classes were introduced and this widened the scope for research.

C.M. Vijayaraghavachar was teaching Chemistry, before it became an indepen-

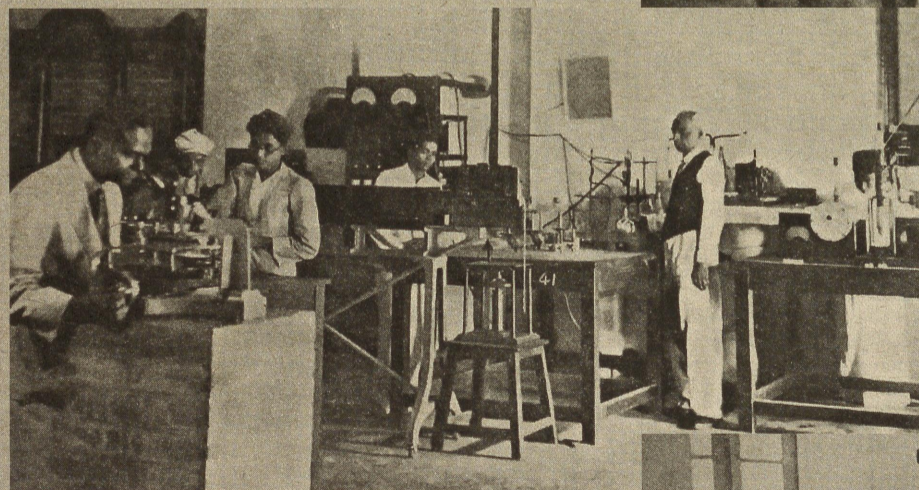


dent department. In 1910, a separate chair was constituted and Mr. F.L Usher, a distinguished student of Sir William Ramsay was appointed the Prof of Chemistry. The Chemistry wing of the college was opened in 1913, students with Chemistry as the main Subject graduated for the first time in 1915.

A chair in Organic Chemistry was established in 1917 and Mr M.G. Srinivasa Rao,

ning the Department.

The history of Mathematics Department can be traced to the year 1870 when R. Venkataramaiya was the professor. However, the BA classes in this subject was started only in 1886. Dr. J. Cook taught this subject for a short period till Mr. R.H. Piggot and T.R.Venkataswamy Naidu joined as staff of Mathematics Department. In Madras University Examination of



was appointed Prof. of Organic Chemistry on his return from America after specialisation in this branch of Chemistry. In 1926, Dr. Usher, to take up an appointment went to Leeds. Prof. Srinivasa Rao became the head of the Department.. Dr. Sanjiva Rao, one of the first graduates of Chemistry from this college, on his return from London after higher studies in Chemistry was appointed the Professor of General Chemistry. In 1928, when Prof. Srinivasa Rao died, Dr. Sanjiva Rao was given the responsibility of run-

1888 M.T. Naranienagar, student of this college topped the list of Mathematics Graduates. Very next year, January 1889, he was appointed as the Mathematics Assistant.. Same year by October Mr. Piggot died and Prof Venkata Swamy Naidu became Inspector General of Education.

Then, very young M.T Naranienagar was made Prof of Mathematics. During the long period of 36 years of service, Naranienagar was not only responsible for vast improvement and growth of the department but also made it

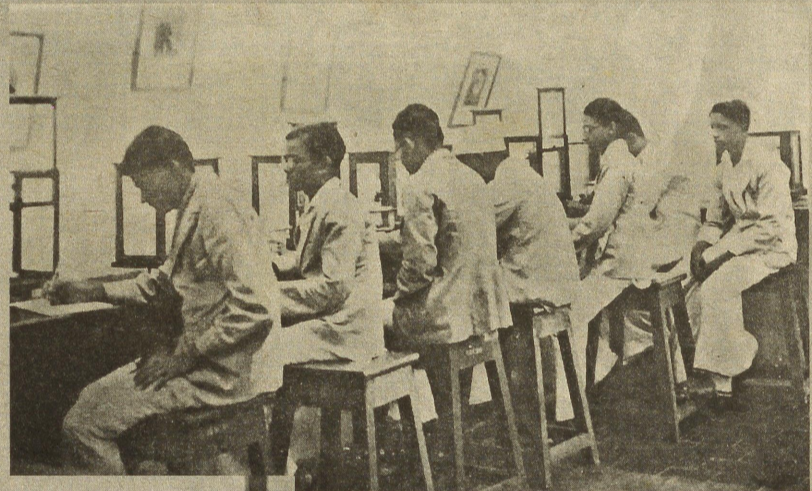
Photos courtesy: Golden Jubilee Magazine, Central College.■

which was started in 1907 by his talented friend Mr. V. Ramaswamy Iyer for the advancement and promotion of Mathematical Study and Research in India.

He was also editor of Journal of the society from its inception, himself contributing in the field of Geometry. Including Prof. KSK Iyengar, many stalwarts like B.S. Madhava Rao, Dr. C.N. Srinivasiengar, M Bhimasena Rao, M.N. Narasimhaiengar. K

the whole of the building. By 1919, a small experimental garden was attached to the Department. Dr. Borgesen, the eminent Algologist, when he visited the laboratory was very pleased to find a good collection of sea weeds here. In 1928, a Botanical Society was started to assist the researchers. Dr.M.A Sampathkumaran was one of the stalwarts who has given a great shape to the Department.

Zoology Department started in a humble way in 1909, also gradually made its mark in Central College in the coming years. K Karunakaran, M A. Subba Rao, Prof. C. Narayana Rao and others strived



Venkatachalkaiengar have made the department a highly sought after study centre even for the researchers of other countries. Prof. B. S. Madhava Rao is remembered by the general public even today.

A huge circle near M.N. Krishna Rao park is known as B. S. Madhava Rao park. Another earlier Department of the Central College is Botany. From a single northern

hard in building the department, that it became an important centre of Zoological studies in India.

The Department of Mines and Geology was started in Mysore in 1894 under the direction of Mr. Robert Bruce Foote. Immediately, it was also felt by the government that a proper training should be given to young men so that it would be easy to appoint them in future. Hence,

in 1898, a Geology section was opened in Central College. Prof V S Sambashiva Iyer, Mr. L Subba Rao, P Sampathe Iyengar, Prof. L. Rama Rao, and others have laid a strong foundation for the Department.

Dewan Sir Mirza Ismail was an old student of this Department.

To be continued...
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globally known for its high standards. He was also one of the founder members of the Indian Mathematical Society

verandah room of the old Chemistry building, the department subsequently expanded to occupy practically