

with a view to determining the facilities available in these institutions, to ascertain their needs and bring the systems of training to a certain standard. These Committees have submitted their reports and these will be considered at this meeting of the Council, whereupon adequate grants will be recommended by the Council to the Government for distribution among these institutes.

On the question of making a detailed survey with a view to determining the needs of industries, there can, of course, be little controversy. If schemes of extending technical facilities are undertaken without regard to actual needs, facilities may be far in excess of needs and, it is contended, the recruits annually turned out may fail to be absorbed in gainful occupations for lack of commensurate expansion of industries. All this is no doubt true; but when the detailed and comprehensive survey of a vast country must necessarily take some time to be completed, this should not be allowed to prevent a beginning to be made in the direction of providing such facilities. Taking, for example, the case of India it can be pointed out that facilities for technical education in this country are so meagre and insufficient to meet even the existing demands that the establishment of a few technical institutions before the survey is completed can never be regarded as leading to a surfeit of such facilities. The plans of hydroelectric development, road-building projects, irrigation and agricultural improvements and various other plans lying ready in the archives of the Governments, both Central and Provincial, would require a large body of technicians. It has been estimated by a British Engineering Journal that the schemes of water-power development alone would need 20,000 technicians. These are only the needs of Governments in some of their departments. There is also the growing volume of requirements of private industries to be satisfied. All these would clearly show that the establishment of a few technical institutions immediately, as recommended by the Council, can by no means be regarded as creating a condition in which the annual number of recruits trained by these institutes exceeds the annual intake of indus-

tries, even as we can visualise the latter's needs in a rough and ready manner. Further, in a matter which concerns the education and training of individual human beings, adjustments of supply and demand should be made within wide tolerances. While it may be feared that the creation of new technical facilities may lead to unemployment if they are in excess of existing needs, it is equally plausible to argue that in the case of a growing and newly-developing country the presence of these technicians may act as a spur to development, thereby creating their own conditions of work and employment. In the present condition of India, of course, there can be no question of the supply of technicians outrunning demand. In the future scheme of things also the status of technical and managerial personnel will arise, as finance loses some of its dominating role.

I may here refer to a prevailing notion about the import of foreign technical skill and industrial "Know-how" from abroad to meet India's demands. We shall, no doubt, have to depend on foreign assistance in many spheres at the initial stage, since we have at present very little technical force of our own. But the possibility of any large-scale import of foreign technical experts must be ruled out at present, and this for two reasons. In the first place, there are the calls of reconstruction in Europe and elsewhere, and the enormous industrial and governmental undertakings contemplated in Europe and America to provide full employment. Already a shortage is being felt in these countries of high-grade technical personnel and efforts are being made to meet these shortages. It would be difficult, if not impossible, in these conditions, to secure the services of technical personnel from abroad to the extent required by India. Further, whatever services may be available, a tendency has been recently at work for foreign technical experts to demand, apart from extortionate prices, a controlling influence in the concerns for which their services are required. This is all the more reason why India should build up her own higher technical force with the greatest possible expedition.

THE EDITOR, CURRENT SCIENCE

MR. M. SREENIVASAYA, Editor, *Current Science*, left India on the 26th June for an extensive tour of Europe and America. In the course of his tour he will attend the Science Conferences in Sweden, visit important research laboratories, industrial plants and academic in-

stitutions. He also proposes to renew and make fresh contacts with the editors and sponsors of scientific journals in the countries of his visit. During his absence from India Mr. K. S. Rangappa, Assistant Secretary, will look after the duties of *Current Science*.