

In this issue

Jan Oort

We publish a set of articles (page 123 to 147) in honour of Jan Oort who is considered by consensus as undoubtedly the greatest astronomer of this century. He died on the 5th of November 1992 at the age of 92 and his obituary appears on page 131. He was a man of vision and many of the papers he wrote in the distant past are still considered contemporary.

During my visit to Leiden in 1955, I went to the Physics Laboratory, saw the stained glass window set up in honour of Peter Zeemann, as also the laboratories of Kammerlingh Onnes where history was made in the field of low temperature physics. I could also see the dome of the Leiden Astronomical Laboratory. My Dutch friend who was taking me round asked me whether I would like to meet Jan Oort. To my utter shame I did not know who Oort was—this too after the discovery of the 21 cm hydrogen line which completely

changed the face of radio astronomy (see page 134). In the mid-seventies (when I was a bit more educated), I did meet him. I was almost dumbstruck to see this colossus who started lines of research which changed the very direction of astronomical thinking. We briefly discussed how Holland could produce some of the greatest painters and scientists. How such a tiny country could lead in so many fields like low temperature physics, X-ray crystallography, radio astronomy and technology. We also talked of the agony of the Dutch during the German occupation.

At Westerbork, there was a Nazi concentration camp where many Dutch scientists were tortured and killed. Oort chose the same piece of land to build his magnificent array of telescopes so that man could (to use his expression), 'Look forward in wonder' at the universe. Now this place will not be remembered as one symbolizing man's inhumanity to man, but one from where man pursues unity and

understanding, seeking them through science in space.

The Crab Nebula

A problem that interested Jan Oort strongly for a number of reasons and to which he directed the attention of his students and colleagues is that of the Crab Nebula. It hardly needs mentioning how many and diverse the consequences of the observations and theoretical studies of this supernova remnant have proved to be. Oort has also been personally involved in it—from its identification with the guest star of 1054 (in 1942), to the study of its polarization (1953), its composition (1956) and its radiation mechanism (1957). One cannot also forget his beautiful article in *Scientific American*. It is therefore fitting that in the same issue we publish the text of a lecture on the Crab Nebula by Lo Woltjer (one of Oort's very distinguished students) delivered in Bangalore (page 123).

**SREE CHITRA TIRUNAL INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL
SCIENCES & TECHNOLOGY
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM 695 011**

Applications are invited for the post of **DIRECTOR** who will be the Chief Executive Officer of the above Institute. The Institute, a body corporate, is an Institution of National Importance under the Ministry of Science and Technology and has the status of a University

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QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- (1) Medical qualification included in the 1st or 2nd schedule of the Indian Medical Council Act.
- (2) Post-graduate qualification such as MD, MS, DM, MCh., MRCP, FRCC, FRCS (C) or American Speciality Board Certification in any one of the specialities of interest to the Institute.
- (3) Teaching and/or research experience of not less than 12 years in the subject of specialization after the prescribed post-graduate qualification.
- (4) Twenty years standing in the profession.

DESIRABLE

It is desirable that the applicant has an outstanding record of research in any branch of medical sciences as well as record of significant contribution to medical journalism. A strong and demonstrated interest in the development and application of technology in the health-related areas is also desirable. The job demands management and administrative experience of a high order and ability to interact with highly competent professionals in medicine, technology and industry.

AGE LIMIT

50 years, as on 31 May 1994

SALARY

Rs 8000 (fixed) + NPA Rs 1000 and allowances as per Central Government rates. A staff car and furnished accommodation will be provided.

NOTE

Qualifications, experience, age limit, etc. relaxable in exceptional cases.

MODE OF APPLICATIONS/NOMINATIONS

The applicants may send their applications directly. The Chairman and members of University Grants Commission, Vice-Chancellors of universities, Directors of medical education and research, heads of learned societies and research institutions, medical colleges and those similarly placed as well as eminent scientists are invited to nominate suitable candidates for consideration for appointment.

The Applications/Nominations supported by bio-data may be sent to Shri Ashok Harnal, Director, Department of Science and Technology, Technology Bhawan, New Mehrauli Road, New Delhi 110 016 **on or before 30 September 1993**. Fax 011-661682/6862418/6863847, Tel. 661682 OR 667373 ext. 306.