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The Indian Academy of Sciences*

The first annual meeting of the Indian Academy of Sciences was held at Bombay. Once again we meet in the Bombay Presidency, this time in the historic city of Poona, associated in our minds with one of the most striking periods in Indian history and to-day one of the chief centres of culture and learning in our country. To our hosts who have taken it upon themselves in these difficult times to invite us to their city and thereby made it possible for us to meet here, our grateful thanks are due.

Ten years is not long period in the life of an individual, much less in the history of an institution. Infantile mortality is, however, notoriously high in India. Hence, it is not inappropriate for me to draw your attention to the fact that this is our tenth annual meeting and that the scientific *Pro-*

ceedings of the Academy are now running in the twentieth volume, both in the A and B series. The usefulness of these *Proceedings* as a forum for the publication to the world of the results of the scientific investigations of our Fellows and their collaborators has been abundantly demonstrated. The *Proceedings* have appeared in an unbroken sequence and with unfailing punctuality on the last day of every month ever since July 1934 which was the date of the first issue. This is a record of which we may feel justifiably proud.

The Academy is a body of scientific men interested in their work and especially in the advancement of knowledge by original research. It is an organization which can be of immense service to science and to the country in various ways, if it is adequately supported and encouraged. I think I am speaking for all our Fellows throughout India when I say that not only are we capable of rendering such service, but are also willing to do everything in our power to demonstrate the social value of scientific research in our country. Elsewhere in the world, the Academies of Science are not merely publishing organizations for scientific research, but also function as active promoters of scientific research by building and equipping laboratories and maintaining professors and students to work in them. It is my considered opinion that the future of science in India depends to a very great extent on such a development taking place in our country and not upon the multiplication of official laboratories staffed by armies of Government servants. The history of science has demon-

strated over and over again that the choicest fruits of scientific research fall into the hands of those men who seek for no reward except the discovery of truth. The mind that seeks to explore Nature and discover her secrets and the mind of a bureaucrat are as poles asunder.

It is my earnest desire that the Indian Academy of Sciences should function in the manner I have indicated and actively sponsor scientific research in a group of institutions covering the whole field of natural knowledge, from pure mathematics and astronomy at one end, physics, chemistry and mineralogy in the middle and physiology and genetics at the other end. Such a group of institutions linked together and working under the general guidance of the Academy would serve as the vanguard of science in India, marching into the unknown, blazing a trail for others to follow and pointing a way to the practical applications of science. Such a scheme may seem a colossal one, but to my mind it is entirely practical and indeed realizable in a reasonably short time, if only our wealthy men could give a generous helping hand. Nothing would please me more than to be able to devote myself to the realization of this idea and of its practical consequences.

Meanwhile, there is one small step which our Fellows, if they so choose can help the Academy to take immediately, and that is to provide a permanent habitation for our offices. A circular letter has been issued to our Fellows in this connection, and I greatly hope that it will meet with an immediate and generous response from them.

*Part I of the Presidential Address by Sir C. V. Raman at the Poona Meeting, 27 December 1944.