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INTERNATIONAL LABORATORIES FOR RESEARCH

THE spirit of science being in the truest sense international, co-operation among scientists in different countries is no doubt the condition essential for progress. But it would appear that such co-operation as exists today among scientists by way of free exchange of ideas and information pertaining to research, is hardly enough. For, there have emerged research projects in many branches of science which are well beyond the resources of any one country to put through. We have, in fact, lighted on an era in science when several countries may have to pool together their resources for the creation of Central Laboratories to carry out these special programmes of research. It is, therefore, very gratifying to learn that the UNESCO have taken some pioneering steps in the formation of such international centres of research. The details of the historical picture leading to these developments are indeed worth recording.

The basic aspects of this problem were studied, following the decision of the Economic and Social Council in 1946 inviting the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Research Laboratories. An extensive enquiry was made by the Secretary-General, and in 1949 a Committee of Experts from the UNESCO and the United Nations examined the results of this enquiry and recommended the following priorities in the field of natural sciences: first priority—computation centre, brain institute; second priority—astronomical laboratory, institute of biochemistry, meteorological Institute, research laboratory on arid zones.

The convention for the setting up of the International Computation Centre, comprising three main functions in the fields of research, education and service, was signed on the 6th December 1951, by eight countries: Belgium, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Mexico and Turkey. There were several offers from the member-States of the UNESCO for the location of the Centre, and it was decided to establish the Centre in Rome, where the Italian Government offered a wing of its National Research Council building, and agreed to lend the Centre $ 75,000 free of interest for ten years. All the library and documentation facilities of the National Research Council have been placed at

the disposal of the Centre whose annual budget of $ 100,000 is to be made up from the contributions of its member-States. For the first year, UNESCO will give the Centre a grant of $ 15,000 and a loan of $ 60,000.

As a result of the co-operation offered by the European States, there has been another promising development towards international collaboration. At the General Conference of the UNESCO in Florence in June 1950, Professor I. I. Rabi proposed on behalf of the United States delegation that UNESCO should make a preliminary study of the possibility of setting up a West European Physics Laboratory for High Energy Particles. Professor Pierre Auger, Director of the Department of Natural Sciences of the UNESCO, submitted a report and it was discussed by a Committee of Experts convened by the UNESCO.

A conference of about 60 delegates from 12 European countries examined the plan prepared by the UNESCO in regard to the equipment and structure of the Laboratory, the creation of an Institute for Advanced Studies in Nuclear Research, the organization of the work including the creation of study groups in various countries and liaison with the governments taking part in the work. It also estimated the cost of studies to be undertaken during 1952 and considered the establishment of the list of States willing to participate in the work and the calculation of their financial contributions. Following another meeting in February 1952, a Council of Representatives has been set up with Headquarters in Geneva which will be responsible for the establishment of the Laboratory and the organization of other forms of co-operation in nuclear research.

Twelve States have signed the agreement constituting the Council. The Secretary of the Council is Professor E. Amaldi (Italy). The heads of the study groups are: construction of a synchro-cyclotron for energies of at least 500 Mev—Professor C. J. Baker (Holland); construction of a cosmotron with energy exceeding 1 Bev.—Professor O. Dahl (Norway); organization of an International laboratory for nuclear research—Dr. L. Kowarski (France); theoretical studies to be set up in Copenhagen —Professor Niels Bohr (Denmark). Without prejudice to the ultimate location of the laboratory, the synchro-cyclotron of the University of Liverpool of 400 Mev will be made available for work on an international basis during 1952.

Examples such as the above are well worthy of emulation by comparatively under-developed countries like ours. Nations occupying contiguous areas can advantageously co-operate in establishing common centres of research on problems of mutual interest, thus avoiding the unnecessary expense in duplication. It is to be hoped that such practice would become the normal mode of planning in the near future, with a view to achieve through co-operation what should obviously be impossible by acting severally.

I. C. A. R. GRANT TO *CURRENT SCIENCE*

ON behalf of the Current Science Association, may we take this opportunity to express our grateful appreciation of the generous gesture of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research in sanctioning to the Association a subsidy of Rs. 2,000 each, for the years 1950-51 and 1951-52 towards the cost of printing *Current Science*?

M. SREENIVASAYA.
Secretary.

ROYAL INSTITUTE OF CHEMISTRY

THE Associateship of the Royal Institute of Chemistry is a well recognised professional qualification, being the equivalent of a First or Second Class Honours Degree of a British University. It is, therefore, a pleasure to announce that in response to many requests from India, the Council of the Royal Institute of Chemistry have decided to hold an examination for the Associateship in Bombay in the latter half of January 1953. Forms of application for permission to enter may be obtained from the Registrar, Royal Institute of Chemistry, 30, Russell Square, London, W.C.-1, and must be returned to the same address not later than 30th September 1952.