

OURSELVES

WITH this issue of *Current Science*, we begin the 50th volume of this fortnightly journal of science. Next year, 1982, will be our golden jubilee year.

At this point in its history we are tempted to look back with nostalgic memories to the time of the birth of this journal in the early thirties. We see a small group of scientists in Bangalore, mostly from the Indian Institute of Science and the Central College, in discussion; they have conceived the idea of starting a scientific journal covering diverse fields of knowledge which would help a great deal in consolidating science in India. They took advantage of a visit to Bangalore of the late Sir C. V. Raman (then at the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science at Calcutta) in 1931 and discussed their idea with him. Sir Martin O. Forster, Director of the Indian Institute of Science, obtained through a formal questionnaire of August 1931, the response of the scientific community in India to starting an Indian Science News journal; and the response was overwhelming. This was followed by a meeting of a number of scientists who had come to Bangalore from all parts of India to attend the sessions of the Indian Science Congress in January, 1932, and the appointment of a working committee to work out details. The result was the starting of the journal *Current Science* the first issue of which appeared in July 1932. The event was hailed as "an event of major importance to the development of science in India" by Dr. L. L. Fermor, the President of the Indian Science Congress, in his Presidential address in January 1933.

The journal was conducted by an editor assisted by an Editorial Board. Prof. C. R. Narayana Rao, Professor of Zoology, Central College, Bangalore, was the first editor and the Editorial Board consisted of four scientists including him. They laid the foundations

of the editorial practice for the journal; their service was of a pioneering nature. They secured the editorial co-operation of a number of scientists in India. The organisers of the journal were able to obtain the advice of editors of journals of similar character outside India, namely, Sir Richard Gregory of *Nature*, Dr. Arnold Berliner of *Die Naturwissenschaften* and Dr. J. Mekeca Catell of *Science*, who became corresponding editors of *Current Science*.

The sponsors notified for the information of contributors and subscribers that the main features of the journal would be (a) editorial; (b) special articles, (c) letters to the editor consisting of short notes of original investigations; (d) research notes consisting of news and references to important publications, announcements and similar topics; (e) science news consisting of news and notes of lectures, addresses, meetings and important scientific events; (f) industrial outlook consisting of notes and articles on industrial topics including all branches of applied science; (g) coming events; and (h) book reviews.

The journal which started as a monthly continued as such till 1964 when it was converted into a fortnightly journal to accommodate a larger number of letters and articles.

There has been a steady growth in the size of the journal. It now publishes about 1000-1300 pages every year. We have been facing a progressive increase in the demand from authors for availing themselves of our publication facilities. We have always tried our best to respond to this demand to the extent possible within the limitations of space and finance.

Our editorials have played a significant role in the organisation and promotion of science and education. Some of our editorials were seminal in nature, like the one on "An Indian Academy of Science" published in the first volume. While we referred to an

Academy, probably the effect of the article was so great that the country got two, one in 1934 and another in 1935!

The Current Science office was housed at the Indian Institute of Science for several years from the inception. Ten years after the journal started, the Current Science Association was registered at Bangalore on 1st October 1942, under the Societies Registration Act (XXI of 1860). The main objective of this Association is "to carry on the business of the journal *Current Science*"; among its other objectives, the issuing of special numbers, memoirs and books and the desire to arrange for the publication of similar journals in other languages, may be mentioned.

In 1947, Sir C. V. Raman, the President of the Indian Academy of Sciences founded by him in 1934, was elected President of the Current Science Association and he held both these offices till his death in November 1970. He had been associated with *Current Science* from its inception.

A close and fruitful association between the Current Science Association and the Indian Academy of Sciences developed over the decades. In fact for the last several years the Current Science Office is housed in the Academy premises, sharing their facilities.

In recent years the Association and the Academy have felt the desirability of a planned strengthening of the collaboration and close association which has developed between them, through mutual consultation and discussion. The character, evolved by the journal *Current Science* as a letter journal providing a means for fast publication, would complement those of the Academy journals and the publications

of the two organisations could well be seen as a total whole. At the same time we have been aware of the need for a judicious reorganisation of the *Current Science* journal. Many scientists have also expressed this need. There have been changes in the contents of the journal. Of late, the editorials have been few and far between. The main contents are articles, letters to the editor, short scientific notes and reviews of books. In the context of the developments that have taken place in the organisation and cultivation of science in the country, the reorganisation, we felt, could brook no delay.

The Association and the Academy have through mutual consultation and discussion and after getting the opinion of several scientists in the country, decided upon a plan of reorganising *Current Science* to bring about a widening of its services to the scientific community and linking it to the journals of the Academy, at the same time retaining its character as a news journal. This will also give an element of completion to the total group of journals. A brief account on how these will be structured is appended for the information of our readers (Annexure).

We are happy to announce to the scientific community in the country and to those individuals and organisations having interest in scientific publications that the reorganisation and link-up has commenced from the beginning of the new year 1981. With the co-operation of the scientific community it is our earnest hope that this will be completed by the beginning of 1982, the golden jubilee year of *Current Science*.