

The Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Calcutta.

THE annual grant of Rs. 20,000 which the Central Government has been awarding to this institution has suffered a cut on account of the financial stringency and the offer of Rs. 18,000 for the next financial year by the Standing Finance Committee of the Assembly was based on the report of the Educational Commissioner with the Government of India who inspected the institution in September last. We have always thought that it is an extremely short-sighted policy to curtail subsidies to research institutions in general and in particular to those whose work has earned for India a distinct position in the world of international science. The inveterate tendency on the part of Governments to measure the value of scientific research in terms of its practical applicability to the administrative affairs is hard to cure and the utilisation of its results for increasing

the material wealth of the Nation, while necessary and important, must be subordinate to the claims of wider knowledge and deeper penetration into the mysteries of Nature. Judged by this standard, the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science under the inspiring guidance of Sir C. V. Raman has achieved remarkable results and his successor Dr. K. S. Krishnan whose zeal and devotion for scientific research are well known, requires perhaps greater financial encouragement than has hitherto been accorded to the Association. Scientific work should not be made to depend on the financial vicissitudes of Government, for its orderly and uninterrupted progress must be assured of a steady and satisfactory income, without subjecting the grant to be based on "a review of the position and the work of the Association annually".

The 150th Anniversary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

ON the 15th January the Asiatic Society of Bengal celebrated the 150th anniversary of its foundation by an afternoon conversazione in the Indian Museum, and a banquet in the evening followed by a special anniversary meeting. The Conversazione was attended by the Mayor of Calcutta and about five hundred ladies and gentlemen, the leading citizens of Calcutta. It took the form of a garden party on the lawn of the Museum and special and most interesting collection of exhibits, consisting of paintings lent by the Academy of Fine Arts, copies of old documents from the Imperial Records Department, mostly of the eighteenth century and some concerning the Asiatic Society, paintings of plants from the Botanical Survey, Javanese and Siamese sculptures from Dr. S. K. Chatterji, chemical and physical processes in action by the University College of Science and Technology, prehistoric and tenth century finds from the Archæological Survey, fossils, crystals and economic products from the Geological Survey, birds of Bengal from Dr. S. C. Law, diseases, their prevention and treatment, by the School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, medals and coins by His Majesty's Mint, Kaffir attire, fish, crustacea and insects from the Zoological Survey.

The Banquet was honoured by the presence of His Excellency Sir John Anderson, Governor of Bengal, who is the Patron of the Society, and took place in its 126 year old hall, surrounded by portraits and busts of former members who have made history in Bengal. Ninety-three members and guests took part, including the Consular representatives of France, Germany, Holland, Sweden and the United States of America, the Archbishop of Calcutta, the Hon. Sir M. N. Roy Chowdhury, Sir David Ezra, the Hon. Nawab K. G. M. Faruqi, Sir C. C. Ghose, the Hon. Sir A. K. Ghuznavi, Lord Sinha, the Hon. Sir B. P. Singh Roy, and Sir Jadu Nath Sircar. The toast of the Guests was proposed by the President, Dr. L. L. Fermor; to which Mons. J. Delacour of the National Museum of Paris replied, and also proposed the Asiatic Society, but speeches were brief in view of the meeting afterwards.

At the Special Anniversary Meeting His Excellency the Governor took the chair and the President delivered his Anniversary Address, outlining the history of the Society and naming the distinguished contributors to its publications, more especially in the last half century. He pointed out that many of the specialist departments and institutions founded in India originated from