

Editorial

N Mukunda, Chief Editor

In this issue we celebrate Subrahmanyam Chandrasekhar. We are most fortunate that Kameshwar Wali – whose *CHANDRA – A Biography of S Chandrasekhar* appeared some years ago – agreed to our request to specially write for us on Chandra. We urge all our young readers – and others too – to also have a look at Wali's book, so limpid and engaging in style and so successful in painting an intimate portrait of his subject. There is in particular an extended and illuminating concluding dialogue between Chandra and Wali, where the former expresses himself very candidly on many issues pertinent to Indian science. One of his comments is worth recalling:



"... it is a remarkable thing that in the modern era before 1910, there were no (Indian) scientists of international reputation or standing. Between 1920 and 1925, we had suddenly five or six internationally well-known men. I myself have associated this remarkable phenomenon with the need for self-expression, which became a dominant motive among the young during the national movement."

We are speaking of other people; why bring in yourself?

Ivan Turgenev

In addition to Wali's piece, Ganesan Srinivasan has written an *article-in-a-box* on the derivation of the Chandrasekhar limit; and Rajaram Nityananda has contributed a brief description of Chandra to accompany the portrait on the back cover. Under *Reflections* we offer the address Chandra presented in 1985 at the Golden Jubilee meeting of the Indian Academy of Sciences.

In August 1996 we had featured the mathematician Harish-Chandra. Then as now our specially invited contributors put forward their best efforts in capturing and conveying the gifts and accomplishments of their subjects to our readers. And when talking of these two Chandras, one cannot resist borrowing from the present one his quotation from Ivan Turgenev:

We are speaking of other people; why bring in yourself?

