

Editorial

N Mukunda, Chief Editor

There is an age-old legend that at the confluence of the rivers Ganga and Yamuna at Prayag (Allahabad), a third unseen river Saraswati joins the other two. What, where and who is this Saraswati? In this issue, Khadg Singh Valdiya describes in delightful fashion the evidence to show that not too long ago there was indeed a major river by that name, and explains how she disappeared. You will also be amused to discover the connotation of the name 'Yamuna' for a river, as Valdiya explains by looking at examples from different parts of India.



We have, partly by design, evolved a pattern of telling you something interesting in each issue about some major figure in science or mathematics, by having a portrait on the back cover, accompanied elsewhere by a brief account of the person. This time we feature the mathematician John von Neumann. But to call him a mathematician is to unfairly limit his genius and his accomplishments! His class-fellow and later world-renowned theoretical physicist Eugene Wigner once described him as "the sharpest intellect whom I have known". In turn, it was von Neumann who suggested to Wigner that the mathematical discipline of group theory could be applied with great profit to the then new subject of quantum mechanics. And this Wigner did with outstanding success. You will find some aspects of this reflected in Vishwambhar Pati's review of Shlomo Sternberg's book "Group Theory and Physics".

Several readers have written recently suggesting that we reduce the amount of material presented in each issue. In response (and for other reasons too!), we have made the issues starting with April 1996 somewhat slimmer than earlier ones. So now you might say - 'Yond ***Resonance*** has a lean and healthy look'!

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