Editorial

K L Sebastian, Chief Editor

This issue of *Resonance* features the Italian scientist Salvador Luria, who was one of the first molecular geneticists. The details of his life are fascinating, and should be known to anyone who aspires to be a scientist. He originally wanted to be a physicist, and hence associated with the famous physicist Enrico Fermi. Soon he realized that his mathematical abilities were not up to the

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mark to be associated with the brilliant physicist, though his abilities seem to have impressed Fermi, who gave him a letter of recommendation, with which he could join the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University. Shortly thereafter, he started collaborating with Max Delbrück and together, they did their classic work on mutations, which eventually won them the Nobel Prize. His biography, having the rather curious title *A Slot Machine*, *A Broken Test Tube*, is a delight to read. It gives one a clear idea of the person. On reading it, one realizes that the usual picture that we have of Nobel Prize winners as very smart, hardworking individauls with a passion for learning almost anything under the sun may not be correct, at least in some cases. Shivakumar and Chakravorty's review of the book, reprinted from *Current Science*, itself captures the essence of the book.This issue has one more article from the area of biology – the article by Jani and Setty on the 2013 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. The Prize was given to Rothman, Schekman and Südhof, for their work on the way cells organize their transport system.

There are other very interesting articles in this issue. Ritavan's article focuses on approximating functions by polynomials. This type of approximation is the subject matter of the paper by Das and Roy who discuss the classical mechanics of projectile motion in the presence of damping. Usually one considers damping to be proportional to the velocity of the particle, but the authors consider a situation where it is proportional to the square of the velocity. The problem, though simple in principle, cannot be solved analytically in a closed form. The authors show how series expansion techniques can be useful, in getting easy-to-use and accurate expressions. Khare looks at another area of physics – that of radiations. In a very interesting article she outlines how radiation can be used to unravel the mysteries of the universe.