

"I AM not flattered at the honour done to me by the Royal Society. This is a small achievement. If there is anything which I aspire for, it is the Nobel Award. You will find I get that in five years."

These words, seemingly so lacking in modesty, but resonant with that determination which in later years became a widely recognised characteristic of his, were spoken by a tall, dark man of moderate build nearly 25 years ago to the members of the Calcutta University, who had gathered to pay their tribute to his achievements in the world of science.

And precisely at 7 p.m. on February 8, 1928, the Knight Errant of Indian Science, C. V. Rāman, fulfilled his promise by a discovery so vital and so far-reaching in its effects on modern scientific knowledge that the award of the Nobel Prize for Physics to him became a certainty.

It was no mere chance that had brought about the discovery of the "Raman Effect". Behind it was the unremitting work of seven long years, and more than that the urge of the spirit of adventure that even today drives this doyen among physicists into the uncharted realms of human knowledge.

It was the same spirit of adventure that compelled Raman to go to Sweden in order to receive the prize even before the awards for that year were made known to the world. It is good to find an Indian with such spirit.

Nobel Prize Anecdote

Nearly a year ago, Raman celebrated his "Shastipoorthi", the ceremony held by orthodox Hindus on the occasion of their completing their 60th year. Raman was happy on that day and narrated a fine story to an Indian journalist in Bangalore. The story related to the manner in which he received the Nobel Prize. He said: "The ceremony connected with the award of Nobel prizes is celebrated with pomp and dignity in Sweden. There were about 10,000 persons in the assembly. The Swedish king was in the chair. Five persons had to receive the prizes. All of them were seated in their chairs flanked by their countries' flags. But I was sorry that I was under the British flag. India was still dependent on Britain and the state of affairs in our country was not too bright. The civil disobedience movement was in full swing and Mahatma Gandhi was in jail."

When Raman's name was called the entire assembly rose, including the King of Sweden. They stood at attention to honour a great man of India and the world. Raman was overcome by emotion. He tells us that there has not been any incident in his life, so far, to compare with this



SIR C. V. RAMAN with Prof. D. Englehardt, noted Russian scientist and winner of the Stalin Prize for Scientific Research.

one. Nor do many people know about this remarkable episode.

Raman's life reads like a wonderful tale of romance and adventure.

Born in 1888 in Trichinopoly, Raman used to be remarkably bright as a schoolboy and was, in fact, a mathematical prodigy. He belongs to a well-known family of mathematicians and his father was a schoolmaster in Trichy. Raman passed his matriculation examination at 11 years of age and graduated from the university when he was just 16.

Even at that young age he wrote an article on some physical phenomena and submitted it to his professor. But the professor never read it nor would he return the manuscript for many months. Raman felt annoyed and wrote the article all over again. He had a wonderful memory.

(Please Turn Over)

KNIGHT ERRANT OF INDIAN SCIENCE

Sir C. V. Raman



REPLYING TO AN ADDRESS by the members of the Indian Academy of Sciences, felicitating him on his 60th birthday. Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (left) presided.



EXAMINING GEOLOGICAL SPECIMENS at an exhibition.

SIR C. V. RAMAN

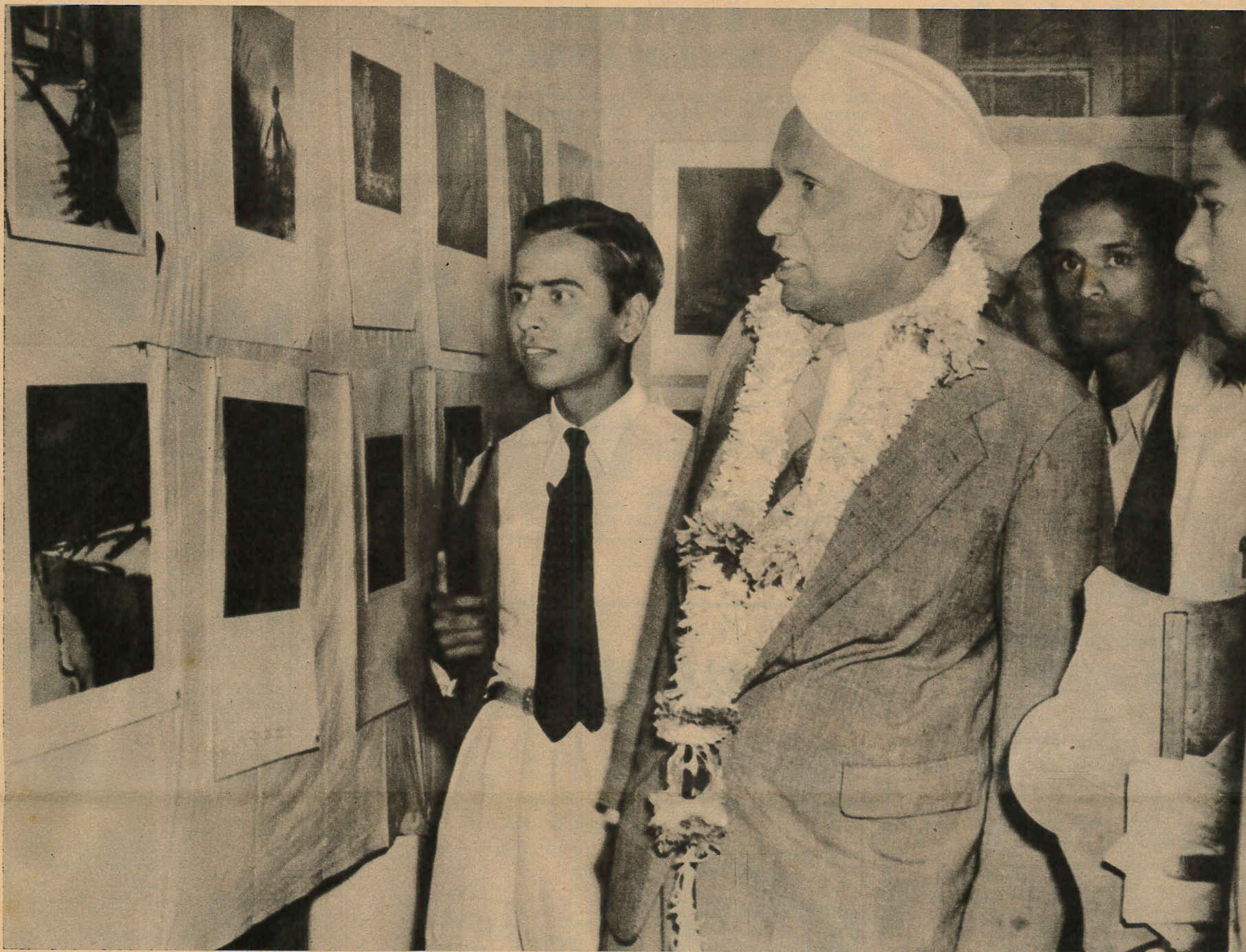
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Eventually, when the article appeared in a well-known journal, the professor was chagrined!

Raman's father was keen on his son joining Government service. It was a craze with young men in those days to seek permanent posts in Government service, but Raman had different views. However, after getting the first rank in the Financial Civil Service (now known as the Indian Audit and Accounts Service) he joined the Finance Department of the Government of India as Deputy Accountant-General.

He did this under much persuasion, but his interest did not lie in his new post. He was determined to pursue scientific studies. When the post of Professor of Science at the Calcutta University fell vacant, Raman was eager to apply for it. But such posts were then "reserved" for those who had stayed in London for some years. However, Ashutosh Mukherjee was particular that Raman should get it in view of his remarkable genius. In the end Ashutosh triumphed in spite of much opposition and Raman found himself in the professorial chair. Very soon he became well known in the world of science.

Even today Raman's energy and enthusiasm for hard work have not abated. His new



CONNOISSEUR OF ART: Sir C. V. Raman's interests range from politics to art and literature. Here he is seen at a photographic exhibition.

Research Institute in Bangalore, where he wants to spend the rest of his life doing a series of scientific experiments, is yet another of his valuable contributions to scientific progress in India.

Raman is not merely a scientist. He is a true artist as well and finds delight in flowers, green grass and fresh air. Parks and gardens have a special charm for him and flowers he adores. When he is garlanded at meetings, he never removes the garland until he reaches home!

All-Round Knowledge

His knowledge of literature and economic, political and social problems is outstanding. He speaks with authority on many of the burning problems of the day. Asked about a quick solution for India's food problem, Raman said, "Stop breeding like pigs and the matter will solve itself." In the beautiful library in his new Institute, one can find almost all the books that count in modern and ancient literature. He told me that among the books which inspired him most was Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*.

A non-smoker, teetotaller and strict vegetarian, Raman lives a simple and clean life in his Bangalore home. He loves Bangalore so much that he considers it the best city in the world!

He is now working on the structure of diamonds. There is in this a strange aptness, for he himself has a mind and a nature much like this crystal—hard, brilliant and multi-sided.



T. S. S.

DISCUSSING A POINT with Prof. Chapman of Oxford University.