

SIR JAGADISH CHANDRA BOSE MEMORIAL ADDRESS*

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

When by some fortunate chance I came into an intimate contact with Sir Jagadish, he was in the prime of his youth and I was very nearly of his age. At that moment his mind seemed entranced with vision of the living creatures' fundamental kinship with the world of the unconscious. He was busy in employing his marvelous inventiveness in coaxing mute Nature to yield her hidden language. The response which he received through skillful questionings revealed to him glimpses of the mystery of an existence that concealed its meaning underneath a contradiction of its appearance. I had the rare privilege of sharing the daily delight of his constant surprises. I believe, poets inherit the primeval age in their temperament when things in their infant simplicity revealed a common feature. Somehow these lovers of *Maya* feel the joy of their being spread all over the creation, which makes them indulge in seeking the analogy of the living in things that appear lifeless. Such an attitude of mind may not in all cases be based upon any definite belief, animistic or pantheistic; it may be merely a make-believe, as we notice in children's play which owes its origin to the lurking tendency in our subconscious mind to ascribe life-energy to all activities in the natural world. I was made familiar from my boyhood with the Upanishad which, in its primitive intuition, proclaims that whatever there is in this world vibrates with life, the life that is one in the infinite.

This might have been the reason of the eager enthusiasm with which I expected that the idea of the boundless community of life in the world was on the verge of a final sanction from the logic of scientific verification. Being allowed to follow the Master's footsteps in the privacy of his pursuit, even though as a mere picker of his casual hints, I had my daily feast of wonders. At this early stage of his adventure when obstacles were powerfully numerous and jealousy largely predominated over appreciation, friendly companionship and sympathy must have had some needful value for him even from one who to maintain intellectual communion with him lacked special competency. Yet I then proudly claimed to have helped him in some of his immediate needs and occasional hours of despondency in those days of an inadequate recognition and feeble support that he received from the public.

In the background of that distant memory of mine, I find not the slightest gleam of a vision of the enormous success that could before long combine scientific renown with a vast material means adequate enough to build this Institute, one of the very few richly endowed medium in India for bestowing the benediction of science upon his countrymen. In fact, it makes me laugh at myself today to read, in some of my old letters, my effort to encourage him with the likelihood of filling the gaps in his funds when my own resources were precariously limited to persuading friends who were foolish enough to have faith in me. Still it is comically sweet to think of the proud magnificence in my assurance fitfully accompanied by contribution absurdly poor compared to the ceaseless flow of tribute that, later on, he could attract by his own magnetic personality and also by the general confidence

* "Sir J. C. Bose Memorial Lecture" was initiated in 1938 after his demise on 23rd November 1937 and has been delivered on his birthday (30th November) every year since then. This is the first lecture of the series and the speaker was Rabindranath Tagore. Due to ill health, Tagore could not physically attend the meeting, but his talk was read out by Ramananda Chatterjee.

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he widely aroused in his genius. But I repeat again, it was sweet to have dreamed impracticable dreams and to have done however little it was possible, as it proves a coverage (?) of joy in the faith in greatness which itself is a bounteous gift to one's own mind.

However ill equipped as I was by the deficiency in my training and by poet's idiosyncrasy to be fit companion

to a man of science at a luminous point of his self-revelation, I was till accepted as his close friend and, possibly because of the contrariety in our natural vocations, I was able to offer some stimulation in his urge of fulfilment. Not having the necessary amount of vanity in my constitution, it had built the subject of constant wonder in my mind. □

LIST OF SPEAKERS DELIVERED ACHARYA J. C. BOSE MEMORIAL LECTURE IN THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS

1938: Rabindra Nath Tagore	1965: Prof. P. Maheshwari	1991: Prof. P.N. Tandon
1939: Prof. M.N. Saha	1966: Dr. Atma Ram	1992: Prof. H. Sarat Chandra
1940: Prof. S. S. Bhatnagar	1967: Acamedician A.I. Oparin	1993: Dr. U.R. Rao
1941: Dr. J. C. Ghosh	1968: Dr. B.D. Nag Chowdhuri	1994: Dr. S.Z. Qasim
1943: Sir Cyril S. Fox	1969: Dr. Homi N. Sethna	1995: Dr. P.K. Iyenger
1944: K.P. Biswas	1970: Dr. P.R. Ray	1996: Dr. G. Padmanaban
1945: Dr. P. Jarija	1971: Dr. N.K. Bose	1997: Prof. V. Ramalingaswami
1946: Dr. S.K. Mitra	1972: Prof. S. Swaminathan	1998: Prof. N.K. Ganguly
1947: Dr. J. N. Mukherjee	1973: Dr. A. Srinivasan	1999: Dr. R.A. Mashelkar
1948: Prof. K.N. Bhal	1974: Dr. A. Ramachandran	2000: Prof. P. Balaram
1949: Dr. K.C. Mehta	1975: Dr. B. Mukherjee	2001: Prof. Ramanath Kowsik
1950: Dr. S.K. Banerji	1976: Prof. G.P. Talwar	2002: Dr. Pushpa M. Bhargava
1951: Dr. P.C. Mahalanobis	1977: Dr. Raja Ramanna	2003: Prof. M. S. Valiathan
1952: Prof. R.C. Majumde	1978: Prof. (Mrs.) A. Chatterjee	2004: Prof. Asok Sen
1953: Dr. N.K. Bose	1979: Prof. S.K. Mukherjee	2005: Prof. Rajesh Kochhar
1954: Prof. S.N. Bose	1980: Prof. Niharranjan Ray	2006: Prof. V. S. Ramamurthy
1955: Dr. S.I. Hora	1981: Prof. Sukumar Sen	2007: Swami Jitatmananda
1956: Dr. A.C. Ukil	1982: Prof. B.K. Bachhawat	2008: Prof. F. P. Marconi
1957: Dr. D.N. Wadia	1983: Swami Lokeshwarananda	2009: Prof. J. N. Mohanty
1958: Dr. S. Radhakrishnan	1984: Prof. N.S. Subbarao	2010: Prof. André Béteille
1959: Sir JehangirGandhy	1985: Prof. R.C. Majumder	2011: Swami Atmapriyananda
1960: Dr. V.R. Khanolkar	1986: Prof. C.N.R. Rao	2012: Shri Gopal Krishna Gandhi
1961: Dr. B.C. Guha	1987: Prof. S. Chandrasekher	2013: Professor Mushirul Hasan
1962: Dr. D.N. Ramachandran	1988: Dr. A.P. Mitra	2014: Dr. Srikumar Banerjee
1963: Dr. S. Bhagavantam	1989: Prof. O. Siddiqi	2015: Dr. T. Ramasami
1964: Shri Asoke Mehta	1990: Dr. S. R. Ramachandran	2016: Prof. Raghavendra Gadagkar