

The British Association and the Indian Science Congress

A Scientific Delegation to India

ARRANGEMENTS for a scientific delegation from Great Britain to India this winter are nearing completion. The Indian Science Congress Association, which holds annual meetings in different parts of India of individual scientific workers and others, and functions much on the lines of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, is approaching the celebration of its jubilee (twenty-fifth) session at the meeting to be held in Calcutta in January next. The Association invited the co-operation of the British Association in forming a representative visiting delegation from this country and others, and the General Committee of the British Association eagerly accepted the invitation, which was, in effect, to make a new use of the mechanism of the Association, and one which is felt to suggest far-reaching implications. It is common knowledge that the British Association has sometimes held its own annual meetings overseas, at the invitation of Dominion Governments and institutions. But it has never before been asked to co-operate in organizing a scientific delegation apart from its own annual meetings—and if this can be done for India, why not for other parts of the Empire in which conditions would not permit of a meeting of the Association on ordinary lines? But this is to anticipate: the present notice is concerned with the Indian meeting.

It was arranged with the Indian Science Congress Association that invitations should be extended, through and by the British Association, to a large number of eminent scientific workers in Great Britain, in part on nominations received from India, and for the rest on representative standing in the British Association. The Indian Association itself has invited certain representatives from foreign countries, and also from Great Britain in a few departments of work which find more prominent places in the Indian Association than in our own. Lord Rutherford accepted the Indian Association's request to preside over the joint congress, to the immense satisfaction of both British and Indian colleagues. The total number of the party, including delegates and persons accompanying them, is 94 at the moment of writing; but this is subject to some addition—not, it is to be hoped, to subtraction.

The programme in India is being arranged by the Indian Science Congress Association, and the presidents of the sections for the meeting are all residents in India; but the visiting delegates may

be expected to take an active part in the proceedings. The meeting in Calcutta will run from January 3 until January 9, and will be preceded and followed by tours through India, during which visits will be paid to various university and other centres of scientific interest, and it is understood that some of the visiting delegates will be invited to lecture.

The great majority of the visiting party will sail on the P. and O. steamer *Cathay* on November 26 (or will overtake her at Marseilles by leaving London on December 2) and are due at Bombay on December 16. Two days will be devoted there to reception and sight-seeing, and the party will then leave in a special train or trains in which they will live, strenuously no doubt but in the best of comfort which the Indian railways can provide, for the next twelve days. In the course of this journey they will visit Hyderabad (by the special invitation of the Nizam's Government), Agra, Delhi, Dehra Dun, and Benares, besides intermediate points of interest, where scientific and university institutions in particular will be inspected. There will be some opportunity for short journeys from Calcutta before the meeting of the Congress, including field excursions to the coalfields, Tatanagar, Darjeeling, ancient 'Gaur', the Sundarbans and the Assam oilfields, and after the meeting a further tour is planned to include Madras and Bangalore. Many of the delegation, however, having special interests and contacts in India, will substitute for this second tour individual visits to various places, and full facilities will be given to them to do so. Nor will the whole party be gathered together for the homeward voyage, though a substantial proportion of it will return from Bombay on the S.S. *Strathaird*, which will bring passengers to England on February 3, or a few days earlier by the overland journey from Marseilles.

The fund necessary in connexion with this occasion has been raised partly by the Indian Association, partly by the British Association from interested firms and individuals at home, and partly by means of a contribution from the funds of the British Association itself, which last is additional evidence, if any were needed, of the full appreciation of the importance of the occasion by the Council and General Committee of the senior body, as well as of the high compliment paid to it by the Indian Association in inviting its co-operation.