

OBITUARY

Professor S.N. Sen

PROFESSOR SAMARENDRA NATH SEN is a well known name in the field of History of Sciences in India. Shri Sen expired on 13 April 1992 after a heart attack in a Nursing Home in Calcutta. He was born on 1 October 1918 in Calcutta, did his graduation from the Calcutta University in 1938 and won University Gold Medal in 1940 in Physics from the same university. He served Scottish Church College as lecturer in Physics from 1941 to 1947. He retired as Registrar from Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science after 31 years of service from 1947 to 1978. He worked for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in Paris from 1947 to 1949, where he came in contact with Sir Joseph Needham, FRS, the



S.N. Sen (1918-1992)

well known authority on History of Science in China and got interested in History of Science. This background helped him to write *Vijnaner Ithihas* (History of Science, 2 Vols. in Bengali). This was later translated into Hindi. For this important work, he was awarded Rabindra Puraskar of the Government of West Bengal in 1955-56 and Narasimha Das Prize of Delhi University in 1957. Shri Sen was nominated Founder Member in 1960 of History of Science Board which was formed at the Asiatic Society under the Chairmanship of Dr. A.C. Ukil, FNA and supported by the Indian National Science Academy (formerly National Institute of Sciences of India). He had been the Editor of *Science & Culture* from 1952 to 1982, member of the Editorial Board of *Indian Journal of History of Science* (from 1965 onwards), Member, Sub-Committee on System of Dating in India, Natural Scientist member of the Council of the Asiatic Society (Calcutta, 1983), Member of the National Commission from 1965 to 1985 and various other societies. He took keen interest in programmes on History of Sciences in India and completed several important projects after his retirement from the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science. He was Professor of History of Science at the Asiatic Society, Calcutta from 1985 to 1987 and was associated with the Indian National Science Academy as superannuated scientist till his last day. Recently, he was associated with two very comprehensive projects, namely, 'Foundation of Ancient Methodology of Theoretical Sciences in Indian Tradition' and 'History of Science, Philosophy and Culture' (in ten volumes). He had been author of many important articles and books and editor of several publications. A few of his important publications are:

1. *Vijnaner Ithihas*, 2 Vols. (in Bengali)
2. *Bibliography of Sanskrit Works in Astronomy and Mathematics* (with A.K. Bag and S.R. Sarma)

3. **A Concise History of Sciences in India (as one of the Editors with D.M. Bose and B.V. Subbarayappa)**
4. **The Sulba Sutras (Geometry of Altar Construction with A.K. Bag)**
5. **Ancient Glass in India (with Mamata Chaudhuri)**
6. **The History of Astronomy in India (as one of the Editors with K.S. Shukla)**
7. **The Cultural Heritage of India, Science & Technology, Vol. VI (as one of the Editors with P. Ray)**
8. **Biographies of Prof. M.N. Saha and Sir C.V. Raman (in English) and Mahendralal Sarkar (in Bengali)**
9. **Scientific & Technical Education in India (19th Century)**
10. **Pibliography of Physics, Astrophysics, Astronomy and Geophysics, 1801-1950 (containing both subject index and author index)**
11. **History of Magnetic Studies**

Shri Sen had been an extremely serious worker in the field of History of Science and tried to complete all his assignments in time. He maintained a great spirit and high morals all through his life. Extremely energetic and methodical in his project works, and possessing a sharp memory, he was a symbol of inspiration even in his final years to his friends and colleagues. There is no doubt that he will be remembered as a good debator, administrator, scholar and a man with a lovable personality. In his death, History of Science has suffered an irreparable loss.

Editor