THE GROWTH IN OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN PHYSICS DURING THE PAST FIFTY YEARS

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During the last year we have lost by the death of Professor Albert Michelson a physicist whose work was of quite exceptional importance. The famous experiment known everywhere as the Michelson-Morley experiment has, since it is the basis of the theory of relativity, been largely responsible for the trend of physical thought during the present century. It is a very striking example of the great philosophical consequences which can result from what might seem the rather mechanical process of improving the precision of physical measurements; the importance of the experiment depended entirely on the accuracy of the measurements being great enough to detect with certainty changes amounting only to one part in a hundred million.

The additions to our knowledge of physical phe-

1 Address of the president of Section A—Mathematical and Physical Sciences, British Association for the Advancement of Science, London, September, 1931.