Sir Josiah Stamp has said that the standard of living in civilized countries increased more than four times during the past hundred years. It was science and technology that made this possible.

While the world may not appreciate it, the fact remains that the marvelous material advance which occurred during the last three or four generations came about almost entirely through discoveries made by men of science. The achievements by the Greeks 2,000 years ago in architecture, in philosophy, in sculpture, and in literature, are still the standards of excellence for evaluating present-day developments in these fields. No one has yet succeeded in formulating a religion that surpasses what Jesus taught 20 centuries ago.

But it is not so in the case of knowledge of the natural world. During the lifetime of many of us here today, there have been more additions to man's understanding and control of nature than occurred in all the previous generations of humanity. The results that have followed this increase in scientific knowledge, and the advances thereby made possible in technology, will be recited by historians of the future long after the soldiers and the rulers of our generation are forgotten. For not only has the new knowledge greatly improved man's material welfare and comfort, but it has also given him an enormously wider intellectual outlook. Traditions, superstitions, fears, beliefs based on authority rather than evidence; these, and a host of other barriers to freedom of the mind and of the spirit, have been largely swept away in our part of the world with the advance of science and the acceptance of the methods of science.

Before the flowering of present-day science and technology, each generation thought it did things as they had always been done. Changes in methods were so gradual they were not apparent in a single lifetime. Now we have a wholly new attitude. Systematically we search for the new knowledge that will enable men to shape the world closer to their needs and their desires. In Franklin's time,