

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

1937

The Vice-President, Mr. J. N. Das Gupta, said that upto yesterday it had been expected that Rai Bahadur G. C. Das would preside at the Annual General Meeting. But it was only last evening that the Secretary received the letter containing the news that Rai Bahadur would not be able to attend the meeting due to illness and it had therefore suddenly devolved on him (Mr. Das Gupta) to deliver an address; and he had not had sufficient time to prepare one. He would therefore say a few words on the able report of the Secretary.

It had been stated here that we had not made sufficient recruits and that a subversive action was going on among a certain section. But that there were also others who still gave their support. It was his firm opinion that as long as we worked on the right lines we were bound to win, and those who thought they could do harm to this Association would soon be disillusioned.

There were not many activities referred to. But the progress of the Library was mentioned. The Library was our best acquisition. Mr. K. M. Chaudhuri who had been the Librarian from its very inception had unfortunately resigned. It was due to his zeal and continuous and unstinted effort that the library was what it was today. It had several good books and a large number of valuable magazines. He attached more importance to the current journals and periodicals than even the books. For most Engineers have had acquaintance with standard books. Study of the Journals reveals the development of the science, from day to day, widen the imagination and broaden the outlook. A few minutes' glance over the pages—even a look at the pictures was of advantage.

The Association Journal had also been referred to. It had been ably conducted by Mr. N. N. Rudra. But there had been only three issues due to paucity of contributions. The Secretary had recommended a reduction of the number of issues. The argument could be used both ways. Exchange of journals was likely to be affected by a reduction of the issue. Almost all the journals in our library had been obtained by exchange and, if we did not publish a sufficient number of issues, we would not get the favour of exchange. On the other hand, if we did not make the Journal more presentable, others might not be willing to consider it worthy of exchange.

Paucity of papers was another matter that required consideration. The Secretary had said that more meetings had not been held during the session as there had not been papers to read. Experienced Engineers

should make an earnest endeavour to contribute papers for reading and discussion. We should try to get together at least four or five papers annually. It might be useful to send out a circular. An Engineer engaged exclusively in one branch of engineering often liked to know something of other branches.

Another point rather serious was under the heading Income and Expenditure Account. The outstanding subscription for the Year was Rs. 2,479 whereas the excess of income over expenditure was only Rs. 2,038. So that the Excess of income over expenditure was really washed out. Effort must be made to collect all that was outstanding. Attempts had been made in the past. They were not very great success. Some arrears had to be written off. He appealed to members to help in realising the subscriptions.

One other point. We have not had any big addition to the membership as we have had many resignations and still have many to consider. Let us try to recruit men who have no class prejudice.

It was the custom of the President to point out the outstanding engineering works of the Year.

(1) The opening of the San Francisco Oakland Bridge was an event of great importance and significance. The Bridge which is about 9 miles in length was of the suspension type. Its towers were about 750 ft. high, while the deck level was about 240 feet above the water-line. The base of the tower took up the space of approximately a full sized football field. The construction was carried out by an American Company. They expect to realise the cost of construction by taxation on Motor Vehicles alone. The vehicular traffic there was large there being 1 car to every 3.5 men.

(2) Hydro Electric Schemes of great magnitude and usefulness have been undertaken by the American Engineers in the United States of America. These schemes consist generally speaking of putting up dams across their rivers, and the water power has been converted into Electric power for all the various purposes to which Electricity has been put to. Mention may be made of the Grand Cullee Dam "on the Columbia River, the Boulder Dam on the Colorado, the Hoover Dam, and the "Wilson Dam." These works were also sources of water supply to large areas.

(4) In the shipbuilding line "The Queen Mary" had been put into service. It was the largest vessel afloat—over 1,000 ft. in length—and had obtained the "Blue Ribband" of the Atlantic by establishing a record in the speed of crossing the Atlantic.

(4) Nearer Home—The construction for the New Howrah Bridge

had commenced and in a number of years we might expect to have the pleasure of using a comfortable bridge for crossing the River.

(5) The foundation stone of the "Anderson Bridge" over the Damodar had recently been laid by H. E. Sir John Anderson, Governor of Bengal, at Sadar Ghat. It would be the largest Road Bridge in Bengal and, what was greatly interesting, it would be the longest Reinforced-Concrete Bridge in India.

He thanked all for asking him to preside.

Essay Competition

One of the largest awards ever set up for competition in the scientific field has just been announced by the James F. Lincoln Arc Welding Foundation, with headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio, U. S. A.

The competition calls for papers by engineers, technicians, designers and skilled workers who are familiar with the uses of arc welding.

A total of \$200,000 will be given in prizes; and there are 446 awards which may be won.

The principal prize winner will receive not less than \$13,700 for his paper on the application of arc welding to the design of some machine, structure or large building.

Other individual prizes range from \$7,500 to \$100—the latter sum be 178 contestants who failed to receive a larger prize but whose papers were judged worthy of "honorable mention."

In order to give every person an equal opportunity to win a prize, similar awards are offered for winners in each of the eleven divisions of industry covered by the contest. These divisions are: Automotive, Aircraft, Railroad, Watercraft, Structural, Furniture and Fixtures, Commercial Welding, Containers, Welderies, Functional Machinery and Industrial Machinery.

Wide diversification of awards is effected by further dividing each major industry into various sub-classifications; with entrants required to select in advance the particular sub-classification to which their papers will relate.

When accepted by the Jury of Awards as properly classified, each paper will be in competition, in its particular sub-classification, for five