

THE GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THE CHEMICAL SOCIETY OF JAPAN

The Chemical Society of Japan originates in the "Kwagakukwai" (Chemical Society), the first general meeting of which was held on April 26, 1878, at the Professors' Common Room of the University of Tokyo. Soon after the Restoration of 1868, modern sciences were introduced into this country, and in 1873, several courses of special education were established in Tokyo Kaisei Gakko (Tokyo Enlightenment School), the forerunner of the University of Tokyo and a college of an American model. In 1877, Tokyo Kaisei Gakko was reorganized to the University of Tokyo, and graduates were admitted to their degrees for the first time in that year. In the next year, the graduates and students of the Chemistry Course of the Department of Science of this University organized the Chemical Society referred to above. The first President was the late Dr. Mitsuru Kuhara, a graduate of 1877, and later Professor of Organic Chemistry and sometime President of the Imperial University of Kyoto. The word Tokyo was added to the name of the Society soon after, and it was changed to Japan since 1921, to make the name fit for wider scope of the activity of the Society.

As the papers communicated to the Society at its first meeting the following are recorded: viz., "An idea of sanitary chemistry and the necessity of its progress in Japan" by M. Kuhara, and "On Graebe's remarkable achievement regarding artificial alizarine" by E. Watanabe. First of these two was continued at the second meeting held on May 17, when another paper, "The manufacture of Japanese paper" by S. Imai, was also read. On looking upon these subjects we can imagine how eager were those who established this Society to try to do some researches in those early days when exact sciences were just introduced into this country, and laboratory equipments were very meagre. Unhappily the Society not having its publications on those days, the text of these papers cannot be approached now.

The first number of the publications of the Tokyo Chemical Society appeared in February 1880, as the Vol. I, No. 1 of the "Tokyo Kwagakukwaishi" (Journal of the Tokyo Chemical Society). The Journal was quarterly until 1887, and during 1888-1903 ten numbers were published every year. Since 1904 it is monthly. In 1921, the name of the Journal was changed to "Nippon Kwagakukwaishi" (Journal of the Chemical Society of Japan), as the name of the Society was so changed. From the beginning this Journal has been published in Japanese language, and contains original papers communicated to the Society, abstracts of chemical

papers published in other journals, miscellaneous notes, proceedings of the Society, etc. In 1926, another publication "Bulletin of the Chemical Society of Japan" was launched. This Bulletin is printed in English, French or German language and contains the papers communicated to the Society, original or translation of those in Japanese, as well as abstracts of papers published in Japan.

Another publication of the Society is "Kwagaku Yakugoshu" (English-Japanese Dictionary of Chemical Terms) published in 1891. It was out of print for a long time. Meanwhile, Professors Takamatsu and Sakurai, with their friends, compiled and published "Kwagaku Goi" (A Vocabulary of Chemical Terms) in 1900, the second and third editions of which appeared in 1906 and 1918 respectively, with revisions and additions each time. Now in commemoration of the jubilee of this Society, the enterprise was again taken up by the Society, the authors of the latter work having presented its copyright to the Society. New edition of the Vocabulary will be issued in a near future, and French will be added also to English, German and Japanese in its present edition.

The Chemical Society of Japan administers three special funds besides its general fund: viz., Sakurai Fund, Ikeda Fund and Osaka Fund. The Sakurai Fund was donated to the Tokyo Chemical Society in 1908 by the friends and pupils of Professor Joji Sakurai, now President of the Imperial Academy and of the National Research Council of Japan and Emeritus Professor of the Imperial University of Tokyo, to commemorate his completion of twenty-five years as Professor of Chemistry in that University. The income of this fund is to be used in awarding the Sakurai Medal with an honorarium to the author of meritorious papers in the Society's Journal or any other publications. The first recipient of this Medal in 1910 was Prof. M. Ogawa, now President of the Tohoku Imperial University at Sendai, and the second in 1911, Prof. U. Suzuki, now Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture in the Imperial University of Tokyo. The Ikeda Fund is a fund contributed by the friends and pupils of Professor Kikunae Ikeda in 1925, to commemorate his sixtieth birthday and his service as the Professor of Physical Chemistry in the Imperial University of Tokyo. The income of this fund is to be used for assisting scientific publications, and the fund itself may be expended if necessary. The Osaka Fund was presented to the Society by Professor Yukichi Osaka in 1927, from the sum contributed by his friends and pupils to commemorate his sixtieth birthday and his service as the Professor of Physical Chemistry in the Imperial University of Kyoto, another part of this sum having been devoted to assist the publication of "Sexagint," a collection of papers dedicated to him by his pupils on that occasion. The income of this fund as well as the fund itself may be

expended for the promotion of chemistry by any method the Council of the Society decides fit.

In the domain of the international relations following points may be enumerated. First, when the International Committee on Atomic Weights was formed in 1899, Tokyo Chemical Society nominated Professors Sakurai and Ikeda as its representatives. In this point, perhaps it may be added that they addressed an open letter (*Chem. News*, 89 (1904), 305) to Prof. F. W. Clarke, Chairman of the Sub-Committee, criticising the policy of adopting both oxygen and hydrogen standards, and whether in consequence of this letter or not, the oxygen standard has since become the only official standard of International Atomic Weights. The second is the nomination of Professor Osaka as a member of the International Committee for the publication of "Annual Tables of Constants and Numerical Data: Physical, Chemical and Technological." This Committee is an outcome of a resolution passed at the Seventh International Congress of Applied Chemistry, held in London, 1909, and Tokyo Chemical Society, in conjunction with Tokyo Physico-Mathematical Society, Society of Chemical Industry and Agricultural Society, elected Professor Osaka as the Japanese member of the International Committee, and tried to collect necessary data and send them to the General Secretary at Paris, as well as making some donations. The third is the joining to the International Association of Chemical Societies. This Association was formed in 1911, and consisted of one representative Society from each country, and Tokyo Chemical Society joined it in 1912. Perhaps it may be added that all these three were since absorbed in the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, formed together with the International Research Council in 1919. The International Association of Chemical Societies was declared dissolved at the first Conference of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, held in Rome, 1920. The publication of the Annual Tables of Physico-Chemical Constants and Numerical Data was annexed to the Union at the same meeting, but Professor Osaka is still working as a member of the International Committee for its Publication. The International Committee on Atomic Weights was also affiliated to the Union at that meeting, and was reorganized to the International Committee on Chemical Elements in 1921. The representation of Japan in the International Research Council and the affiliated Unions is assumed by the National Research Council, established as a Government institution in 1921, and although this Council is now working as a self-governing and self-co-opting body, on its first formation the Chemical Society of Japan nominated two members of the National Research Council as its representatives in the persons of Professors Ikeda and Suzuki.

As mentioned in the beginning of this short note, the Chemical Society of Japan is an out-growth of the "Chemical Society" established in 1878, and just completes fifty years of its existence. The number of its original members was 24, while its present strength is 1407 (2 Honorary Members, 710 Fellows and 695 Associates). Of the 24 original members, we can happily count six among our present Fellows: viz., Prof. T. Takamatsu, this year's President of the Society, and Drs. Y. Hiraga, T. Ishido, Y. Koga, I. Nakazawa and H. Yoshida. Hearty congratulations of the Society must be offered to them!

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Addendum. The minutes of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Meeting of the Tokyo Chemical Society, held on May 9, 1903, appears in *Chemical News*, 87 (1903), 310. The Eighth Annual Meeting, held on April 10, 1886, is also reported in the same journal (*Chem. News*, 53 (1886), 284). Papers read before the Chemical Society of Japan at the monthly and annual meetings since January of 1927 are noticed in the Bulletin of the Society, Vol. II, No. 5, and the following parts.
