



*Koichi Matsubara.*

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## PROFESSOR KOICHI MATSUBARA.

Professor Koichi Matsubara was born in Nagoya as the first son of Yasoichi Matsubara, a *samurai* of the Owari clan, on the 22nd day of the fifth month of the fifth year of Meiji in the then statutory lunar calendar, corresponding to June 27, 1872, in the Gregorian calendar. He came to Tokyo in his sixth year of age and received all his educations in Tokyo. Thus, in 1878, he was first sent to Nankai-Gakko and then to Shiba-Gakko, both municipal elementary schools in the city, and in 1884, he went to Tokyo Prefectural Middle School. In 1888, he was admitted to the First Higher Middle School, in whose dormitory he lived for five years. In 1893, he graduated from this school and was matriculated at the College of Science of the Imperial University of Tokyo, where he chose chemistry as his speciality and studied under Professors Divers, Sakurai, Haga, Yamagawa, Fujisawa, and Tsuruta. In 1896, he finished his university course, and continued his studies as a post-graduate student.

In 1897, he was appointed to the professorship at the Second Higher School in Sendai, and took the charge of chemistry in the preparatory courses for imperial universities, the main courses in the Higher Schools at that time. In the next year, he was transferred to the same post in the First Higher School in Tokyo. In 1899, he was appointed Assistant Professor of Chemistry in the College of Science of the Imperial University of Tokyo. Being sent to Europe, as a Government Research Fellow, for further study of organic chemistry, he spent two years, from 1903 to 1905, at Owens College of the University of Manchester, under Professor W. H. Perkin, working on nor-terpene, etc., and next one year at the University of Berlin, under Professor Emil Fischer, working on valine, etc. He came back to his *alma mater* in 1906, and the chair of organic chemistry in the College of Science was put in his care. This chair he held for twenty-seven years continuously since then. In 1909, he was promoted to the Professorship, and in 1913, the degree of D. Sc.

was conferred to him by the Minister of Education upon the recommendation of the President of the Imperial University of Tokyo. From 1913 to 1929, he gave the lectures on organic chemistry also to the students of the Department of Applied Chemistry in the College of Engineering of the University. He was elected by his Faculty a Member of the Library Committee of the University from 1913 to 1930, and was elected its Chairman in 1927 and 1929. In December of 1926, he was elected a Member of the University Council for three years, and in December of 1929, he was appointed the Dean of the Faculty of Science. May 22, 1932, being his sixtieth birthday, he retired from the Professorship and the Deanship on March 31, 1933, the end of the academic year, in accordance with the traditions concerning the age limit of professors in the Imperial University of Tokyo. Quite recently, the title of Honorary Professor of the Imperial University of Tokyo was conferred to him by Imperial command. He is in the Senior Third Court Rank, and is decorated with the Second Class of the Imperial Order of the Sacred Treasure. He was one of those whose meritorious services for the sake of education extending over thirty years were specially honoured by the Minister of State for Education on the 10th of November, 1928, the Coronation Day of the present Emperor.

Professor Matsubara was requested by the Ministry of Education to serve on several committees, some nominated by the Imperial Cabinet upon the recommendation of the Minister of Education and others nominated by the Minister.

Thus he was nominated by the Cabinet an Additional Member of the Committee for the Compilation of the Catalogue of Scientific Literature in 1901, and served as such for two years. He was again nominated an Ordinary Member of this Committee in 1917. This Committee is aiming to compile the catalogue of scientific literature published in Japan for the sake of the International Catalogue of Scientific Literature, originated by the Royal Society of London and administered by an International Council, commencing with literature of the year 1901. Although the work of this Committee was suspended in 1922, as the publication of the International Catalogue was temporarily stopped with the 14th issue owing to the

World War, the Japanese Committee is continued nominally even to the present time. In this relation, Professor Matsubara represented the Imperial Government at the Second International Convention of the International Scientific Catalogue held in London in 1905.

In 1923, Professor Matsubara was nominated by the Cabinet a Member of the National Research Council. This Council is an organization attached to the Ministry of Education and has been established in 1920 for the purpose of coordinating and encouraging activities at home in the various branches of science and its applications and also of cooperating with like institutions in other countries, with the view of promoting national and international researches in these fields, as the outcome of the conference of the representatives of the principal inter-allied Scientific Academies held in London and Paris in October and November of 1918, and the Constitutive Assembly of the International Research Council held in Brussels in July of 1919. Professor Matsubara, who was attached to the Division of Chemistry, was elected the Vice-Chairman of that Division in 1924, and the Chairman in 1930, and as such is also a member of the Division of General Affairs since 1924, besides the Chairman of the Publication Committee of this central Division and also that of the Division of Chemistry. In this connection he represented the National Research Council of Japan at the Extraordinary General Assembly of the International Research Council held in Brussels in June of 1926. This is the meeting at which it was resolved, after agreeing unanimously to omit from the Statutes of the International Council the words which have limited the membership of the Council to the allied and neutral countries, to invite Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria to join the International Research Council and the Unions attached to it. He represented the National Research Council of Japan also at the Seventh International Chemical Conference of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, held in Washington, September, 1926. As a Member of the National Research Council, he acted as General Secretary, together with the late Professor N. Yamasaki, for the Third Pan-Pacific Science Congress, held in Tokyo, October and November, 1926, under the auspices of the National Research Council of Japan.

Perhaps it may be added here that Professor Matsubara represented the Imperial Government at the Sixth International Congress of Applied Chemistry, held in Rome, April and May, 1906. He was one of the organizers of the Japanese Committee of the Pasteur Centenary Celebrations of 1922, and also of the Berthelot Centenary Celebrations of 1927, and gave memorial lectures in both of these occasions. He was also a member of several committees for the organization of the World Engineering Congress, held in Tokyo, October and November, 1929.

There is a Committee attached to the Ministry of Education for giving certificates for the teachers. Formerly the certificates for the teachers in secondary education only were concerned by this Committee. Professor Matsubara, after serving as an Examining Member of chemistry in 1907, 1910, 1911 and 1912, was appointed in 1913, by the Cabinet, one of the Standing Members of this Committee, to conduct all business connected with the testing of the qualifications of teachers for licenses, both by examination and without examination. When, in 1919, the certificates for the teachers of the Higher Courses of the Higher Schools, which are practically the preparatory courses for the universities and colleges, were determined to be given and to be controlled by this Committee, he was requested to act in the same capacity also for this section. He is still continuing to serve in both of these sections.

When School Books Investigation Committee was reorganized in 1920, Professor Matsubara was nominated, by the Cabinet, one of its Members. This Committee has to examine the textbooks for elementary schools, which relate to morals, Japanese language, arithmetic, Japanese history, geography, science, etc. Such textbooks are to be those for which the copyright is held by the State, and they are submitted to this Committee by the Minister of Education before their publication.

When, in 1907, Mr. (now Baron) Toranosuke Furukawa offered a sum of money to build a College of Science in Sendai, the Ministry of Education determined to establish the Tohoku Imperial University with this College of Science in Sendai and the College of Agriculture in Sapporo as its constituent colleges, and Professor Matsubara was nominated, by the Minister, a member of the Organization Committee of this College, which was opened in 1911.

Again, in 1927, the Post-Graduate Courses of the Higher Normal Schools of Tokyo and Hiroshima were to be reorganized each to a College of Literature and Science, according to a resolution of the Education Council passed in 1922, and Professor Matsubara was requested, by the Minister of Education, to be a member of the Organization Committee of these Colleges, which were opened in 1929.

When in 1921, the syllabus of "science" to be taught in the Literature Section of the Higher Courses of Higher Schools was to be discussed and fixed, the Ministry of Education requested Professor Matsubara to be a member of the drafting committee. Again in 1926, he acted in the same capacity when the syllabus of chemistry to be taught in the Science Section of the Higher Courses of Higher Schools was discussed and fixed. In 1924, when the syllabus of physics and chemistry to be taught in Middle Schools was revised, he also served in the revising committee.

From 1919 to 1931, Professor Matsubara acted as a consultant to the Naval Arsenal at Hiratsuka. He was a Councillor of the Institute of Physical and Chemical Research from 1930 to 1933, while he was the Dean of the Faculty of Science of the Imperial University of Tokyo. He acted as a Juror at the Tokyo Taisho Exhibition of 1914.

Professor Matsubara joined this Society, then the Tokyo Chemical Society, in 1894 as an Associate, and in 1896 as a Member. He was elected Editor of the Journal of the Society in 1899-1903, Member of the Council 1906-1907, Secretary 1907-1908, Editor 1908-1919, President 1919-1920, and Editor 1920-1926. Besides, he served on several committees of the Society, and was the centre of its activities for many years.

He joined the Society of Chemical Industry, of Japan, in 1898, and the Association of Chemical Industry, of Japan, in 1917, just after the establishment of both, and served in the Council of both of these institutions several times.

In 1908, he joined the Kogakukai (Society for the Promotion of Science), a society of some fifty people, publishing the *Toyo-gakugei-zasshi* (Oriental Journal of Science), a journal in the line of the "Nature" of London or the "Science" of New York, and acted as its editing secretary from 1911 to 1921.

Professor Matsubara was distinguished, through his whole course of education, by high standard of scholarship. One who ever knows him cannot help admiring his excellent memory and extreme carefulness in all details. His omnivorous stock of knowledge, and plain and impartial character made him a man who cannot be missed in all organizations in which he played always an important rôle. Indeed his meritorious and implicit contributions to the progress of sciences in Japan shall never be forgotten.

On the occasion of his retirement from the Professorship, his friends and pupils raised a considerable sum of money, which was transferred to the Chemical Society of Japan. The Society decided with gratitude to establish a fund to be used for the encouragement of the progress of chemistry, in association with the name of Professor Matsubara.

Yuji SHIBATA.

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