

## SYMPOSIUM ON 'HEAVY CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES IN INDIA'.

### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

At the meeting of the Council of the National Institute of Sciences of India held on the 4th February, 1941, it was suggested to hold a Symposium on 'Heavy Chemical Industries in India' at either Bangalore or Delhi. After consulting the Members of Council residing at these two places it was finally decided to hold the Symposium at the Ordinary General Meeting of the Institute to be held at Delhi by the middle of April, 1941. Sir S. S. Bhatnagar and Dr. (now Sir) J. C. Ghosh were requested to organise the Symposium. The Symposium was held at the Physics Lecture Theatre of the University of Delhi on the 19th April, 1941.

Owing to preoccupations of possible contributors and shortness of notice it was not possible to secure a sufficient number of contributions which would correctly reflect the present position of heavy chemical industries in India and the present and future problems of developing them. A considerable number of important contributions representing various aspects of the subject were, however, received and they are published in the following pages. Naturally, attention has been pointedly drawn by several speakers to the manufacture of sulphuric acid, the position regarding which requires close examination and watch. The contributions deal with phosphatic fertilisers, cyanamide, urea and allied substances, glycerine, magnesium chloride, potash salts, water glass, acetic acid and formaldehyde. The manufacture of these substances, which are of great importance for a number of our basic industries, has acquired special importance at the present moment.

The war has drawn attention to a group of correlated factors which, although of fundamental importance in the industrial development of a country, have not hitherto been much noticed in India. The most important among these are a planned and systematic survey of the available basic raw materials including minerals and forest products, and the development of industries for processing them to the finished goods stage instead of exporting them in the 'raw' condition and importing the finished products. Other questions of fundamental importance are the co-ordinated development of the transport system of the country, prosecution of fundamental and applied research in the Universities and technological institutions and the training of skilled labour. The Symposium draws attention to some of these problems and shows the attempts which are being made by official and non-official agencies to tackle them.—S. P. AGHARKAR, *Honorary Secretary*.