

CHAIRMAN'S OPENING ADDRESS

M. I. MacLAURIN

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. Welcome to the sixth fundamental research symposium.

Over 20 years ago Dr Rance had an idea. Simply stated, he believed that bringing together paper scientists from all over the world to present the results of their work, to discuss common interests and to establish personal contacts, would result in the more rapid advance of paper science and, hence, improve the profitability of the industry within which we work.

'Symposium' seemed a rather pompous term to me. Why not 'conference'?

Reference to the Oxford English Dictionary gives this definition:

'A meeting or conference for discussion of some subject—hence a collection of opinions delivered or a series of articles contributed by a number of persons on some special topic.'

But, reading on, there is an older definition:

'A drinking party; a convivial meeting for drinking, conversation and intellectual entertainment.' In fact the word is derived from the Greek for 'a fellow drinker' and Plato's account of Agathon's famous party in 416 B.C. shows that 'symposium' means a fellowship of drinkers in both wine and scholarship.

And so Dr Rance even got the title right!

Many of you are thoroughly familiar with the background and intention of these meetings, but I hope you will bear with me whilst I say a few words for those who are here for the first time.

Nearly four years ago a questionnaire was sent to a number of research laboratories in our industry and to those universities and institutes where paper science is studied.

It sought to find out what the leading people thought to be worth studying.

The Committee then considered what topics would be worthy of your attention in 1977.

Not too easy in 1973, and you must judge how well we have succeeded.

Dr Corte, as Programme Secretary, led us in working out the content of

the sessions and we then sent invitations to those people we thought most likely to provide what was required.

Following upon the success of previous meetings, we found it possible in many cases to influence the direction of research so as to produce a contribution which closed a gap in our knowledge. In some cases, Dr Corte conducted a long correspondence with the people concerned and a number of visits were made to the laboratories where the work was in progress.

The abstracts were requested early and, if the Committee was not happy with the content, an effort was made to produce changes. The final manuscripts were required in June and some, regrettably, had to be rejected as inappropriate or not to the standard to which we aspire.

You have seen reprints of these manuscripts and I hope you agree that the standard is high. In many cases the work has continued and the authors will tell us the results of the latest investigations.

In most sessions the author will not be allowed sufficient time to present his work in full in this lecture theatre. It is assumed that you will have read and considered the preprints before the authors speak about them. If you have not had time to do this, I recommend that you do so; otherwise you may find the papers difficult to follow in some cases.

The intention is to use your valuable time efficiently. It is a waste of that time if authors read what you are perfectly able to read for yourselves and every author and chairman is aware of this. This symposium will allow relatively little time for formal presentation, but generous time for debate.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the quality of the debate is up to you and, after seeing the registration list, I am confident that it will be of a high order.

Dr Corte has made efficient arrangements to ensure that your contributions are recorded effectively and I will ask him to tell you about them shortly.

It is a great honour for me to be Chairman of the Fundamental Research Committee and especially so following the inspired leadership of Toby Rance and Hector Emerton. Hector has unfortunately left our industry, but Dr Rance, who started the whole thing, is very much a part of it. Indeed he has given generously of his time, both to the main committee and also as Chairman of the Social Sub-Committee. In introducing him, I feel rather like those people on television who say 'Our next guest needs no introduction'. In this meeting that must be literally true and I now have great pleasure in asking Dr Toby Rance, holder of innumerable awards for excellence and the father of these meetings, to address us.

Ladies and Gentlemen: Dr Rance.