

KOI FURUICHI, Hon. M. Am. Soc. C. E.¹

DIED JANUARY 28, 1934

Koi Furuichi was born in Yedo (Tokyo), Japan, on July 12, 1854, the first son of Takashi Furuichi, a Samurai of the former Himeji Clan.

From January, 1869, he studied in Kaiseigakko and Daigaku-nanko (later, Tokyo Imperial University) as a tribute scholar (excellent scholar sent from the former feudal clan to the Department of Education), until July, 1875, when he was sent to France.

Mr. Furuichi studied at l'Ecole Mongé, in Paris, and also at l'Ecole Centrale des Arts et Manufactures. He was graduated therefrom in August, 1879, with the degree of "Ingénieur des Arts et Manufactures". He then entered l'Université de Paris, from which he obtained the degree of "Licencie es Sciences" in July, 1880.

In October, 1880, he returned to Japan, and served as an Engineer in the Home Department, holding, in addition, the position of a Lecturer at Tokyo Daigaku.

In 1886, the Faculties of Tokyo Daigaku and other educational institutions were amalgamated, and the Tokyo Imperial University was organized. Mr. Furuichi became Professor and Dean of the College of Engineering of

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the Imperial University, with supplementary duties as Engineer of the Home Department, for which he superintended the notable river improvement works of Shinanogawa, Aganogawa, and Shogawa.

In May, 1888, the academic degree of "Kogakuhakushi" (Doctor of Engineering) was conferred upon him. The following year, he visited Europe in the suite of Count Yamagata, Minister of the Home Department, and investigated the various systems of engineering education.

In June, 1890, Dr. Furuichi became Director of the Bureau of Public Works of the Home Department, holding also the positions of Dean and Professor of the College of Engineering of the Imperial University, until his resignation in July, 1898.

In September, 1890, he became a Member of House of Peers, and, subsequently, served as Jurymen and Councillor of the Domestic Industrial Exposition, Member of the Earthquake Investigation Committee, and of the River and Harbor Investigation Committee, as Adviser to Tokyo, Yokohama, and other harbor works.

In November, 1898, Dr. Furuichi was appointed Vice-Minister of the Department of Communications, Member of the Railway Nationalization Committee, and Chairman of the Investigation Committee for the Construction of the Imperial Steel Factory, the solution of an important National problem.

He then became President of the Imperial Railway Construction Bureau, and was elected Vice-President of the Imperial Railway Association, retaining that position until December, 1903. In the same year, the honorary title of Professor Emeritus of Tokyo Imperial University was conferred on him.

Soon after his resignation from the Government Service, Dr. Furuichi became President of the Seoul-Fusan Railway Company, in Korea. The speedy construction of this railway line was of great advantage in the operations of the Russo-Japanese War, in 1904 and 1905.

In June, 1906, he became a Member of the Imperial Academy, and was President of the Second Section. On the transference of the Seoul-Fusan Railway to the Railway Bureau of the Korean Government in 1906, he was appointed President of the Bureau, remaining in that position until June, 1907.

Dr. Furuichi was then made Adviser to several important companies, and President of the Tokyo Subway Company. He also served on the Committee for the Railway-Gauge Question, construction of a new Parliament Building, and the Anglo-Japanese Exhibition. He was President of the Chemical Research Institute, and Chairman of the National Research Council.

For his long and distinguished engineering service, Dr. Furuichi was created a Baron in December, 1919.

He was a Councillor of the City Reconstruction Bureau of Tokyo, in connection with the destruction caused by the great earthquake of 1923, as well as an Honorary Member of the Imperial Railway Association. He was one of the founders of the first private school (now "Kogakuin") for training assistant engineers, and served as its Managing Director from 1903 to

1924. He was also President of the Japan Engineering Society ("Kogakkwai") for many years, until 1934. In September, 1914, he was elected President of the Civil Engineering Society of Japan, when that Society was founded, and in January, 1933, he was made an Honorary Member. In 1930, he was elected an Honorary Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, of London, England.

In January, 1924, he was appointed a Privy Councillor of the Japanese Government, and remained in that position until his death on January 28, 1934.

Baron Furuichi held the Second Junior Court Rank, and the First-Class Decoration of the Grand Cordon of the Rising Sun with the Paulownia Flowers. He had many other decorations, such as those from Cambodia, Denmark, Belgium, and Korea; and, from France, the Legion d'Honneur, Second Class.

He was always a leader in all engineering and engineering education problems throughout his life. When the meetings of the World Engineering Congress and World Power Conference were held in Tokyo, in October and November, 1929, he was elected President.

Baron Furuichi was one of the best amateur singers and actors of "No Dance". He was married to Ko Kawana, a graduate of the Tokyo Woman's High School, who, with seven sons and three daughters, survives him.

Baron Furuichi was elected an Honorary Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers on July 8, 1929.