TALK ON GOVERNMENT EXPERIMENTAL TANK

Graphic Description Of Testing Out Miniature War Vessels.

At the disabling of the Naval Architectural Society last Tuesday night, one of the most fascinating branches of experimental science was described by Prof. Keith of the Department of Naval Construction and Design, the United States Experimental Model Basin, with which he was formerly connected, was the subject of his talk.

The Model Basin is situated near the Potomac River about a mile out of Washington. It is 470 feet long, 42 feet wide, and 14 feet 8 inches deep. The building over the basin is 500 feet long and 49 1-2 feet wide on the inside. It is heated in winter by an elaborate heating device which maintains a constant temperature throughout the basin, and running upon steel rails. The carriage weighs about 31 tons, and hence has sufficient inertia to give an appreciable "flywheel" action to resist sudden variations in speed. It is driven by four electric motors and is capable of developing a speed of about 20 knots in a run of 200 feet.

The models used are made of wood and are 20 feet long. When a model is placed in the carriage and fastened to a flexible towing rod. There are also guides for the bow and stern of the model which "take" at right angles to the bottom of the carriage and allow free vertical motion caused by the tendency of the bow of the model to move up and down, but at the same time keep it from moving fore and aft. The carriage is raised well over two thousand dollars, and a good response from Technical men are expected by the committee to respond loyally to the call for funds.

One of the chief aims of the movement is "that the schools and colleges join in a nation-wide 'self-denial movement', sacrificing for the present the unnecessary extras of their courses." Technology has been appealed to as an institution where men are trained in the service of mankind, and, as men realize the big problems and expenses of keeping sanitary and well regulated camps and hospitals for those so unfortunantly classified as to be the victims of war, Technology men are expected by this committee to respond loyally to the call for funds.

There will be boxes in Rope's building and the Union, where money may be left, and there will be only appointed men who will canvass the roosters and laboratories. Harvard raised well over two thousand dollars for its campaign and the committee, both national and local, look for a good response from Technology.

In addition to making model experiments for all new ships designed for the Navy Department, a large amount of work is done for private citizens. This provision was placed in the bill authorizing the basin, and the amount charged to private persons for model testing is simply sufficient to pay for the material and labor used. Nothing extra is charged to help pay the huge expense of the basin, as this is met by Congressional appropriation.

The cost of making and testing a model averages about $150 out of the Washington tank, while at the new tank in Teddington, England, the cost is four or five times as much.

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