

December 3, 1910

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F. Z. de Ferranti
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S. Z. de Ferranti.

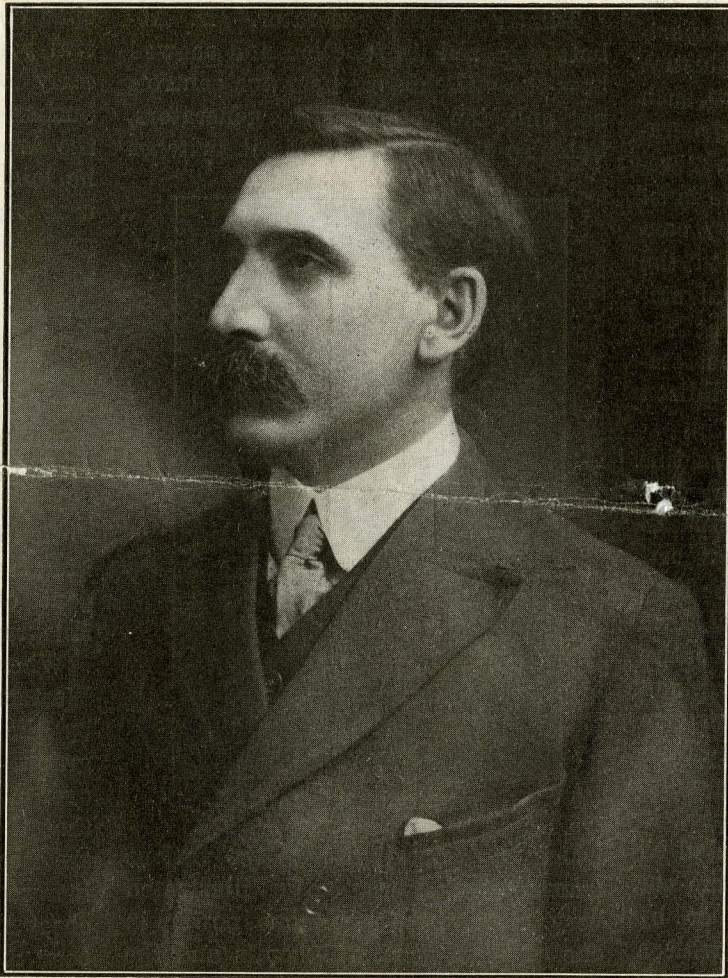
The subject of this sketch, Sebastian Ziani de Ferranti, whose memorable presidential address delivered to the Institution of Electrical Engineers of Great Britain, on November 10, on the subject of the conservation of coal, and the incidental suggestions which are naturally brought to mind in summing up these questions of conservation, appears on other pages of this issue, is in many ways a remarkable man.

Mr. Ferranti was born at Liverpool, England, in 1864. He was educated at Hempstead School, St. Augustine's College, Ramsgate, and University College, London. At an early age Mr. Ferranti displayed capacity for machine design, and when between ten and twelve years old he produced original sketches which showed an extraordinary grasp of detail. He turned his attention to electrical engineering work about 1877, and while at Ramsgate designed among other electrical apparatus, an arc lamp very similar to the Brush clutch lamp. When fourteen years old he constructed his first dynamo, and this also bears a remarkable resemblance to the Brush machine, although Ferranti had never seen this apparatus. It seems hardly possible that one so youthful could have acquired so much information respecting the then little understood subject of electricity, but the chronicle is nevertheless true, and although Mr. Ferranti has shown remarkable

qualifications in later years, his work as a boy stands out very prominently and almost epochal insofar as development in the electrical industry is concerned.

When he was fifteen years old, Mr. Ferranti began a twelve months' course at University College. Very soon after this he gained permission of the superintendent of the Kings Cross Electric Lighting Station, then operated by Crompton & Company, to go on the practical shifts with the men, and in this way he greatly stimulated his desire for this work, and added to

his fund of information. He made his first practical working start, however, in the employment of Siemens Brothers & Company, at Woolwich, during the period when the Mackey-Bennett submarine cables were being made for the Commercial Company. Shortly after this experience, when seventeen years old, Mr. Ferranti was placed in charge of the erection and running of a temporary lighting plant at Wolverhampton. About the same time he made a series of experiments at Kings College



SEBASTIAN Z. DE FERRANTI,
President of the Institution of Electrical Engineers.

on electric furnaces for Sir William Siemens, and later on conducted the initial tests on the secondary battery then being introduced in England by Mr. Faure. In short, Mr. Ferranti's career has been one of continual effort and achievement. The Ferranti rotary-field motor, the continuous-current meter, and the Thompson-Ferranti alternator are all historical evidences of this man's ingenuity.

About 1883, Sir Coutts Lindsay, president of the Grosvenor Gallery, decided to adopt the Gaulard and Gibbs transformer system of distribution,

which was then coming into vogue. The system was highly successful, and led to the taking on of a considerable extension of the plant, and Mr. Ferranti was selected to engineer these extensions. The series system was changed into a parallel system, the Siemens alternators were rearranged, switchgear designed and erected, and measuring instruments introduced. The London Electric Supply Corporation succeeded the Grosvenor Gallery Company, and soon some 36,000 lamps were connected up, all supplied with current from machinery erected in basements of buildings adjacent to the gallery.

The extension of the service ultimately made expedient the construction of a new plant at Deptford. It was here that Mr. Ferranti carried out some notable ideas in installation, working in opposition to the regulations of the Board of Trade, and contrary to the opinions of the best informed electrical men of the day. The project at Deptford was designed to supply 2,000,000 lamps with 10,000 horsepower in generators, and a 10,000-volt distributing system. There were eight miles of distribution, with transformer stations built en route, stepping the current down to 2,400 volts. In spite of the almost insuperable difficulties and the entire lack of information in many directions, the work was carried out successfully, with Mr. Ferranti giving his personal attention to the most trivial details, and the accomplishment stands as a monument to his ability as a constructor.

Pennsylvania Station Opens.

The Pennsylvania station in New York was opened to the public on Sunday, November 27.

At the meeting of the Chicago Signal Club, Monday evening, November 28, the following subjects were discussed: "Shunt vs. Series," "Fouling Circuits for Switches" and "Protection Against Foreign Current."