



The President's Message

"Mighty Oaks from Little Acorns..."

Twenty-five years ago a small group of pioneers in the then comparatively new field of steel mill electrical work felt the need of some agency to foster the exchange of ideas, promote professional policies and further the development of the industry. These men planted the seed from which the present flourishing organization has grown. And even as these men met, by invitation at the plant of an electrical equipment manufacturer to pass judgment on some new apparatus, so it has remained up to the present day, for the personnel of the Association of Iron and Steel Electrical Engineers to guide and judge the many developments which have proceeded so rapidly.

Incited by the great loss of life and prevalence of accidents in the

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industry, a safety committee was formed in 1908 and functioned within the Association until four years later, at which time a cooperative safety meeting was sponsored, from which grew the present National Safety Council, an offspring of which we may justly boast.

In 1921 a combustion engineering meeting was held in Chicago, and from this beginning sprung the Combustion Division, comprising at present about 250 active members, besides the associate members connected with this branch of engineering.

The year of 1925 brought safety work back as an active part of the Association program. So thoroughly does safety work permeate the activities of the steel plant engineer that it was thought that the establishment of a Safety Division within the Association would bring about the harmony and cooperation so necessary for the success of work of this kind.

The next development came in 1930 with the creation of a Lubrication Division, a logical follow-up and enlargement of work begun in various papers presented before the Association previous to this time.

The close connection of much of the work in these foregoing branches of engineering with the mechanical field led to the most recent addition, the Mechanical Division, which was formed this year and represents the outgrowth

of a mechanical power transmission committee and a welding committee. This is a natural trend, as some form of mechanical power transmission is employed in almost every electrically driven unit. This close relation renders cooperation between the manufacturers of the respective equipments extremely desirable. This cooperation can be promoted by this new division, perhaps by the adoption of several sets of mechanical drive transmission specifications. There are splendid opportunities here for some excellent work, and we expect great things from this new division.

In this brief outline we see a gradual evolution towards a definite but somewhat changing goal. In all evolution, the surrounding conditions are the factors which determine the physical characteristics of the product. As these surrounding conditions change, so change the characteristics. We began with purely electrical interests and have broadened to include almost all branches of engineering in the steel industry. This evolution resulted from a definite want.

It may be pointed out that there are professional societies covering each branch of engineering. This is true, and they are excellent in their various fields. The steel industry, however, due to its size and the fact that its organization is so constituted as to demand closer relation and cooperation of the



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various branches of engineering, creates a need which can only be met by an organization of steel mill engineers. It is this need that we are fulfilling. We are progressing gradually, step by step. With the divisions now established we may feel that we have covered the requirements and that our organization is now complete and well-rounded. Actually, a short time may bring changed conditions which will demand further additions to our activities. When such changes occur it is necessary that we adapt ourselves to meet them. Continued resistance to such changes can only result in the fate suffered by many of the animal types of prehistoric ages. Their resistance to the process of evolution, as demanded by changing conditions, brought about their own extinction.

It is to our credit that we have thus far adapted ourselves to prevailing conditions and have moved forward. A survey of our past ac-

tivities can easily be made by a study of the complete index of our Proceedings given in the January issue of the Iron and Steel Engineer for this year. Here we find a collection of valuable data covering a wide variety of subjects, entering into every branch of engineering, yet united by a common bond—iron and steel. Steel mill equipment of all types is discussed from the standpoint of design, construction, operation and maintenance, and it is this universal view-point of our work that is in a large measure responsible for much of our success and for the interest our work has aroused among steel operators outside the Association.

Our problems are too complicated to be viewed from any one angle. There is probably no equipment unit in a steel plant into which the various branches of engineering do not enter more or less equally in design, construction, operation and maintenance, and problems involved must be surveyed from all angles. We must therefore forget that we are mechanical engineers, electrical engineers, combustion engineers, lubrication engineers and safety engineers—in short, we must be iron and steel engineers.

No mention is made, in the foregoing brief history of our Association, of the many trials and anxieties attending its development. That they were many and frequent goes without saying—

nothing worthwhile is accomplished without effort. And the efforts of the founders and pioneers of our Association have borne glorious fruit. We are sound, active and vital—but this is not enough. We cannot rest on our oars and consider the pull finished. We have increased the scope of our activities, and in doing so, we have increased our responsibilities. We must carry on our new work with the same effort and vigor that was put into the building of the Association in the early lean years, so that the results shown will uphold the excellent reputation achieved in the past. To do this requires the cooperation of every man in the organization. A little effort on the part of every individual will produce the desired results, while the burden of each is light. Let us all give this little push, and the resulting momentum will carry us on to new heights of achievement. We must progress, that we may not fall back.

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