

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE SPRING MEETING AT  
HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., MAY 25, 1931

It is a pleasure to welcome you to this, the thirty-first convention of the Society. Our twenty-fifth convention was also held in Hollywood. Although that was only three years ago, by comparing our status then and now, we can realize how our Society has grown not only in size but in its value to the industry and the world at large. The comparison also emphasizes the magnitude of the changes that have occurred in the technic of producing motion pictures.

In 1927, the tools of production consisted largely of cameras using orthochromatic film and arc lamps. The year following, panchromatic film was introduced and was soon universally adopted. As a consequence of the improvement in photographic quality which resulted, the producers began to direct more attention to the technician because they saw that he is also a potential contributor to box-office values.

A study of the relative merits of arc and tungsten lamps for lighting sets was next instigated by the American Society of Cinematographers and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and these experiments were concluded just prior to the Hollywood convention. The use of sound in conjunction with the motion picture was beginning to be discussed, but with many misgivings. Our Society staged the first demonstration of Photophone equipment in Hollywood, although the demonstration attracted but slight attention from the producers. Six months later the sound revolution commenced; there followed a mad scramble to build new stages and modify old ones, and in a relatively short time there was on the influx of a large army of skilled technicians to take care of the new equipment and procedure. In the short space of three years remarkable advances have been made in the technic of recording sound and in the making of motion pictures, and it is therefore fitting that we should hold our national convention in this center of production in order to exchange ideas and discuss our new problems and recent researches.

A wide gap of 3000 miles between the technicians in the East and those in the West, and an economic depression are, of course, not conducive to frequent meetings in Hollywood but I think it is highly important that the time intervals between our conventions in Hollywood should not exceed two years.

During the past six months our Society has undoubtedly made more progress than in any similar period of its existence. In January, 1930, an important milestone was passed when the form of publication of our technical papers was changed from the quarterly *Transactions* to the monthly JOURNAL.

A second milestone was passed in November, 1930, when our Society acquired an Editor-Manager and permanent headquarters at 33 West 42nd Street, New York, N. Y. The Editor-Manager, Mr. Sylvan Harris, is a graduate electrical engineer with extensive research and editorial experience and, in addition to editing the JOURNAL, has taken charge of much of the routine business formerly undertaken by the Secretary and committee chairmen.

Our Society has continued to disseminate an increasing amount of technical information through the medium of the JOURNAL. The quality and quantity of the technical papers has been maintained and an increasing proportion of these have dealt with fundamental principles which are so vitally necessary for the healthy advancement of the industry. Several new sections have been added, including those devoted to Patent Abstracts, Committee Activities, and Activities of the Academy. The readers have also been kept in touch with developments in foreign countries by means of translations of articles originally published in French, German, and Russian. The section devoted to abstracts of technical papers has been enlarged, due to the establishment of an organized staff of abstractors.

An Open Forum has also been initiated, through the medium of which readers may offer suggestions relating to the welfare of the Society, draw attention to problems requiring investigation, or make preliminary announcements of their technical discoveries.

The circulation of the JOURNAL numbers about 1000 which is somewhat unsatisfactory. It is hoped that it will be possible to reduce the subscription price in the near future to permit of much more widespread circulation which it deserves.

The sections of the Society, having their headquarters in New York, Chicago, and Hollywood, have been increasingly active and have held local meetings at regular intervals, thereby drawing attention to new

problems and developments with a minimum loss of time and permitting more intimate discussion than is usually possible at the semi-annual meetings of the Society.

It was with extreme regret that the Board of Governors resolved to disband the London Section. Refusal of the Board to accede to requests for reduced entrance fees, authority of this section to appoint Active members, and a non-budgeted expense account resulted in the resignation of the officers of the section, who, in turn, established the independent British Kinematographic Society. Fifty of the members of the London Section retained their membership in our Society. We wish the new Society every success and will collaborate to the fullest extent on technical matters.

The various standing committees have worked untiringly and with regularity, as contrasted with the somewhat spasmodic efforts of many previous committees. The members of the Progress Committee are distributed throughout the world, and their submitted reports result in making the Progress Report a representative picture of world developments. The fine papers program before you is the result of organized solicitation by the Papers Committee, which has been successful in securing advance abstracts of all the papers for publicity purposes. The Standards Committee has finally arrived at a recommended standard for wide film and has prepared a glossary of motion picture terminology which will be published in an early issue of the JOURNAL.

The excellent arrangements for the present Convention are an indication of the efforts of the Convention Committee. The Publicity Committee has consistently secured excellent trade notices, while through the efforts of the Color and Paper Committees, it has been possible to arrange for the color symposium during this Convention.

The Historical Committee has published papers in the JOURNAL dealing with the achievements of pioneers in the industry and has arranged for an exhibit of historical apparatus for the present convention. Members are urged to donate apparatus of historical interest, which will be placed permanently on exhibition in a suitable depository.

Four new committees have been appointed, dealing with Projection Practice, Projection Theory, Projection Screens, and Sound. The Projection Practice Committee has set an example for other committees to follow by establishing regular bi-monthly meetings and its deliberations have resulted in recommendations for standard layouts for projection rooms, improved projector design, and remote control of volume.

The Projection Screens Committee is endeavoring to acquire sufficient data to permit a recommendation for a standard of screen brightness, and the Sound Committee is assembling information on ways of improving methods of sound recording and reproducing. Other committees in the process of formation will deal with laboratory practice and studio practice and it is proposed to appoint separate subcommittees on both the east and west coasts to deal with these problems.

It is through the committees that the Society can best serve the industry in the capacity of a coördinating and coöperating medium. Committee work can take the form of (a) reports on progress, (b) the formulation of standards, and (c) a discussion of new problems. It appears to be an open question as to whether or not committees should undertake to perform research work but when this is possible without entering into comparisons of competitive materials, it is very desirable and is to be encouraged.

The past six months have also been made conspicuous by the increased activity of the Society in collaborating with other organizations and societies having interests related to our own. Our Society has acquired membership in the American Standards Association, which has recognized the various standards adopted by the Society, and also in the National Fire Protection Association, which has invited the Society to collaborate with regard to safety measures in the handling of nitrocellulose film. Contacts have been made with the Institute of Architects with a view to collaborating in the design of theaters, particularly with regard to projection and acoustical requirements.

The Society will be officially represented at the 1931 International Congress of Photography in Dresden and arrangements for the exchange of technical manuscripts have been made with the Deutsche Kinotechnische Gesellschaft, which has conferred Honorary Membership upon the Presidency of our Society. The Society was also represented officially at the Inter-Society Council on Color Specifications, sponsored by the Optical Society of America.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the secretary and treasurer, the various committee chairmen, the members of the Board who have given unsparingly of their time and energy, and all those who have labored in the interests of the Society.

J. I. CRABTREE, *President*