BANQUET SPEECHES

PRESENTED AT THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY BANQUET OF THE SOCIETY AT THE NEW OCEAN HOUSE, SWAMPSCOTT, MASS., OCTOBER 7, 1931

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: Although most of us are concerned more with the future than with the past, I think it is fitting that on this occasion, the fifteenth anniversary of our Society, we should pause in our hurried pilgrimage toward better motion pictures and pay homage to those engineering pioneers whose efforts have made the motion picture possible.

The motion picture was not invented. It has a long pedigree as have all scientific advances. It moved step by step through the efforts of a long line of workers, including men like Le Prince, Marey, Friese-Greene, Edison, Eastman, Lumière, Jenkins, LeRoy, Paul, Skladanowsky, Lauste, and a host of others.

Through the efforts of members of our Historical Committee, the accomplishments of many of these men have been placed on permanent record and our Society has seen fit to select a few of these pioneers as being worthy of honorary membership in our Society by virtue of having achieved high distinction in the science of motion picture engineering and the allied arts and sciences.

The first award is to Mr. C. Francis Jenkins. For nearly forty years his name has been related intimately with the motion picture industry. Between the years 1892 and 1895 Mr. Jenkins was busy devising both a camera and a projector. Since these early years he has repeatedly shown inventive genius of a high order. Of the numerous technical papers contributed by him to our *Transactions*, those deserving especial mention have dealt with his researches in stereoscopy, non-intermittent mechanisms, high speed photography, and radio vision. In several of these fields, his work has anticipated to a marked extent the trend of scientific endeavor.

But perhaps his most outstanding achievement was the founding of our Society. Let me recount how this was done in his own words:

"Every national organization of the motion picture industry, by whatever name, has had its Committee on Standards. I was first elected to membership on that committee of the Motion Picture Board of Trade. We met once. I was next elected on a similar committee of the present National body, and on call made a trip from Washington to New York to find not a single other member or officer present, with the exception of the Secretary of this Committee who was also Secretary of the National Association, in whose office we were supposed to meet. At my insistence, he telephoned members nearby but without result.

"On the way home that afternoon I fidgeted in my chair, fussed over conditions which made for such fruitless efforts, and determined that I would put my personal standing in the Industry to the risky test of inviting engineers to come to Washington for the purpose of organizing a Society of Motion Picture Engineers, on my own responsibility. I am terrified even now every time I think of the chagrin I would have felt had the call gone unacknowledged.

"But a most gratifying response rewarded my anxious wait on the fateful day, for Mr. Don J. Bell came down from Chicago, Messrs. Willatt and Westcott from Boston; Cromelin, Cannock, Gillett, and Miles from New York. These gentlemen with Mr. Brockett and myself formed a very substantial nucleus indeed. We adopted a constitution and by-laws, and adjourned to meet in New York in October, after incorporation should be completed."

Mr. Jenkins was elected president and presided at the first meeting of our Society which was held at the Hotel Astor, New York City, October 2-3, 1916. The destiny of our Society was guided by him in the next two years when, in the face of an international conflict, the future of a new society was always uncertain. Never for a moment has he relinquished his hopes and interest in our Society.

Unfortunately, Mr. Jenkins is not able to be here, and he has sent this wire:

"Mr. President and Fellow Members, I am greatly disappointed that my recent three months' illness has left me without the strength to attend the Fifteenth Anniversary Banquet of our Society. As I recall the service the Society has rendered to the movie industry, and the growth in membership, I am reminded of the eight pioneers who responded to my invitation to meet me here on July 24, 1916, for the purpose of forming a Society of Motion Picture Engineers. So sound a Society foundation was wrought that few changes have been suggested since, and from this small group of pioneers our Society has grown to an international membership. I feel well warranted in predicting a still greater engineering service as industrial changes follow progress and invention. May I then extend my congratulations and heartiest greetings, in which Mrs. Jenkins joins me, for she hopes to meet the lady attendants in Washington again.

(Signed) C. FRANCIS JENKINS"

In talking with Mr. Jenkins over the telephone, he designated one of his personal friends to receive the certificate of honorary member-

ship, a pioneer and a member of our Society, who was engaged very closely with Mr. Jenkins in his early work—Mr. Oscar B. DePue.

Charles Francis Jenkins was elected to honorary membership in the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, October 4, 1926. It is now my pleasure to present this official record of the honor conferred.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: The next presentation is to Thomas Alva Edison. We shall hear a recitation of his accomplishments by one of our own members, who has conducted researches for many years into the history of the motion picture—an author of note, and editor of the Motion Picture Herald—Mr. Terry Ramsaye.

MR. TERRY RAMSAYE: It has been my privilege and my honor, several times in the last fifteen years, to speak for, on behalf of, and about Mr. Edison, and I have never done it under what I consider more complicated and emotionally difficult circumstances than tonight. The problem finds me almost as embarrassed as our Dr. Goldsmith said he was, a few years ago, when he found it necessary to sign a license to permit Mr. Edison to manufacture radio sets. That is a key to some of the technological complexities of this business, and the controversial elements of its background.

Tonight is not only an anniversary for the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, but by extraordinary coincidence is also very close to a great anniversary for this industry. Yesterday at noon was the forty-second anniversary of the first demonstration of the Edison Kinetoscope, the machine upon which the commercial development of this art and industry were founded. Mr. Edison came home from a trip to Paris and dashed over to the laboratory in West Orange before he went home, to see this machine which had been finally assembled and put together in his absence. Happily, it worked. And this machine, a little peep-show Kinetoscope, was scattered over the world, and became the germ and seed of the motion picture development that came afterward.

Mr. Crabtree was eminently right, I think, when he said that the motion picture was not invented. I am very much inclined to think that nothing is invented in the terms that the popular mind thinks of invention. But Mr. Edison did bring the motion picture across from that misty background of laboratory endeavor to the margin of the beginning of commercial performance. That was a labor of some two years, beginning in the year 1887. He was conscious of and familiar with a great deal of the work that had gone on in the century

before, including that of some of the gentlemen Mr. Crabtree named, notably Friese-Greene, Le Prince, Paul, and other workers.

The motion picture was just one of Mr. Edison's many important contributions to this technological era. The multiplex telegraph and the dynamo were made commercial machines by Mr. Edison. He gave us the incandescent lamp, the phonograph, and he really in truth went to work on the problem of the motion picture to develop a picture as an accessory to the phonograph. So you see, there was a very early conception of the sound picture.

In the same period in which his motion picture mechanisms were being evolved, some casual experiments developed on what was known for a great many years as the "Edison effect" and which involved, in substance, the principle of the radio valve which has finally come to be married to the film and relate itself to the motion picture, in sound.

I once whimsically remarked to Mr. Edison that he invented the electric light so that we could work nights, and then presently he invented the motion picture so that we all had to.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: Mr. Edison has requested that a dear personal acquaintance of his for many years shall accept the certificate on his behalf—Mr. A. Y. Attwell.

Thomas Alva Edison was elected to honorary membership in the Society of Motion Picture Engineers on April 13, 1928. On behalf of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers I present this the official record of the honor conferred.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: The next presentation is to George Eastman. Mr. Terry Ramsaye will also give us an account of his accomplishments.

MR. TERRY RAMSAYE: Mr. Eastman's contribution to the motion picture is well near as basic, fundamental, and important as that of all the other contributors combined, because the motion picture had to have a medium. As all you technicians know, the glass plates and paper tapes which were used introduced insuperable obstacles, and nothing could be done about the motion picture until there was something to make it on. And in truth, Mr. Edison's mechanisms were completed before there was anything to run in those mechanisms. It was in August of 1889 that he heard that George Eastman was about to begin the commercial production of a flexible photographic base for what was known as roller photography, leading up to the kodak. So he sent to Rochester one of his employees who made the

first motion picture raw stock purchase, consisting of a strip of film one inch wide and fifty feet long. No precedents were established but he received that roll of film on credit and remitted in postal money order for it on September 2nd the sum of $1.50. That was the beginning of that business. But in supplying the celluloid or nitrocellulose base as a photographic medium, Mr. Eastman really became the weaver of this magic carpet of the motion picture.

This again was not one of those inventions that come like a magician taking a rabbit out of a hat. It was the result of long, tedious years of engineering research. And you will find in the Eastman archives that certainly no later than 1884 Mr. Eastman began his researches leading up to the evolution of what we now call film.

Tonight Mr. Eastman has behind him fifty-three consecutive, uninterrupted years of research—research in the background of this industry. The whole history of the industry has no such parallel of concentrated, consistent endeavor. For a great many years, as every one in the motion picture industry knows and gladly admits, a very large proportion of all the engineering in the motion picture business was done at Rochester, and shipped out in a can. The industry was entirely dependent upon this raw stock.

There is a little story which I do not believe has ever been published of some interest in connection with Mr. Edison and Mr. Eastman. These two men, by the inter-relation of their researches and technological developments, had a tremendous deal to do with each other's conspicuous success. Finally about the year 1925, the motion picture industry decided it probably owed Mr. Edison something and gave him a lunch. Mr. Eastman was among those in attendance at the the luncheon. Both of them are very prompt and precise, orderly men. They arrived on time. No one else did. They were both checking their coats at the Ritz Carlton Hotel at the same time, and there was no sign of recognition between them. So it was suggested to Mr. Blair, who accompanied Mr. Eastman, that it would be well for these gentlemen to become acquainted. They were introduced then, in 1925, and Mr. Edison looked at Mr. Eastman and said, "You are the film man, aren't you?"

Eastman said, "Yes. I have heard quite a bit about you, too."

"So?" said Edison.

"Yes—along, I think, in '85, I bought a dynamo from you."

"Was it any good?"

"Well," said Eastman, "anyway, it still works."

And Mr. Edison remarked, "As a matter of fact, I think your film is pretty good, too."

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: When I asked Mr. Eastman to designate some one to receive the certificate on his behalf, because his health would not permit him to attend this meeting, this is what he said: "I cannot think of anyone more appropriate to receive the certificate for me than yourself."

It is a pleasure for me to accept the certificate on behalf of Mr. Eastman. He will appreciate it highly and give it a prominent place in his study. He has always been very interested in the welfare of our Society, and manifested that interest in a practical way by encouraging his employees and executives to work on behalf of the Society.

Mr. Eastman has also been passionately interested for many, many years in fundamental scientific research. I think I mentioned previously that I had taken up the matter of the establishment of research fellowships with two of the eastern universities who have intimated their willingness to establish these fellowships if the necessary funds were forthcoming. I approached Mr. Eastman to see if he would be willing to provide the necessary funds for one of these fellowships, and he advises, "I am willing to contribute an amount not exceeding $1500 for the purpose of establishing a Society of Motion Picture Engineers' fellowship in one of the universities, designated by your Board of Governors."

I hope this generous donation of Mr. Eastman will be emulated by many other persons in the industry.

The next presentation is to Frederic E. Ives. His accomplishments will be recited by the Chairman of our Historical Committee—Carl Louis Gregory.

MR. CARL L. GREGORY: Frederic E. Ives was born February 15, 1856, in the little village of Litchfield, Conn. At the early age of eleven years, his father died, and he was compelled to leave school and help support his mother and four younger brothers and sisters. He became a printer's devil in the office of the Litchfield *Enquirer*. It is probable that his work as a printer formed, to a great extent, a substitute for the further schooling which he was unable to obtain. Even with the arduous work of from twelve to fourteen hours daily, in the printer's office, he nevertheless found time to devote to experiments in photography. That was in the old days when they knew nothing of film and had to make their own plates. And at the early age of

about sixteen he made his own first camera from an old cigar box and an old pair of spectacles. He made pictures with that.

At seventeen, he worked as a photographic gallery operator with a distant relative, and shortly afterward took charge of the photographic laboratory at Cornell University, after a battle with the authorities, because they were appalled at his seeming youth. But he made good.

In the days during this period of his work, as he attained his legal age, he invented the photoengraving process which later gave to the world a great profusion of photo-mechanically illustrated books, magazines, and papers.

From those early days, which I have so briefly and so inadequately portrayed, the life of Frederic E. Ives was like a fairy tale in the wonderland of science. The Franklin Institute of Philadelphia presented him with a medal for his work in color production. He has taken out more than seventy patents in the course of his busy life, many of which have now come into the public domain and form the basis for a great part of the present-day achievements in projection, in black and white, and in color reproduction, and in color cinematography. Mr. President, I have the honor to present to you the name of Frederic E. Ives for suitable honorary recognition by our Society.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: Frederic E. Ives, you were elected to honorary membership in the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, April 13, 1928. It is a pleasure to present you this suitable recognition of the honor conferred; and I do it with a very personal regard for your achievements in the field of motion picture engineering, because it so happens that I have conducted researches along the lines of color photography, and in many cases I have put in applications for patents; but in a large percentage of the cases they were returned with the notation at the bottom, "anticipated by Ives."

The next presentation is to Louis Lumière. His accomplishments will be recited by a member of our Historical Committee —Mr. Glenn E. Matthews.

MR. GLENN E. MATTHEWS: In the year 1880, Antoine Lumière started a modest business in the manufacture of photographic plates in the Montplaisir quarter of Lyons, France. The business flourished and his two sons, Louis and August, became associated with their father in 1883.

As indicated by his work, Louis has been more interested apparently in mechanical and chemical questions related to photography, whereas August has been concerned more with the human side and has published many papers related to medical and biological subjects. Louis has published more than three hundred scientific papers since the first one (published jointly with his brother) appeared in 1887. A keen, untiring interest in research in all branches of photography and cinematography has been the keynote of his life.

His early interest in motion picture photography was concerned both with synthesis as well as an analysis of motion, whereas many of his contemporaries were interested chiefly with the latter subject. About the year 1894, a working model of a camera and projector was demonstrated before a group of intimates at the Lumière plant in Lyons. The first public showing took place on March 22, 1895, at a conference on the photographic industry of the Society for the Encouragement of National Industry. The second showing occurred at the Congress of the National Union of Photographic Societies of France held at Lyons, June 10, 1895. It is of interest that a picture made of an astronomer, Jansen, on one morning during the convention was shown the same day at the evening banquet. The first public showing, for which admission charges were made, took place in the Grand Café, Paris, December 25, 1895. Exhibitions were given with the Lumière Cinematograph in London, at the Royal Polytechnic Institute, February 20, 1896.

Not content to rest on the laurels of a glorious four decades of effort in cinematography, color photography, photographic chemistry, and other fundamental fields of photographic research, this man toils on, a living example to us all of an unflagging devotion to a great cause. His life work will always be an inspiration to every worker in photography.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: The French Consul at Boston has graciously consented to accept the certificate on behalf of Mr. Lumière—Mr. J. C. Joseph Flamand.

Louis Lumière was elected to honorary membership in the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, April 4, 1923. It is a pleasure to present now this official record of the honor conferred.

MR. J. C. JOSEPH FLAMAND: Mr. President, Ladies, and Gentlemen: On behalf of Mr. Lumière, I accept this certificate of his appointment as an honorary member of your Society. As the French

Consul, I wish to express the privilege that I feel in telling you of the appreciation that France will have, of the honor you have bestowed on one of her children. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: The next presentation is to Eugene Augustin Lauste. His accomplishments will be recited by another member of the Historical Committee—Mr. Merritt Crawford.

MR. MERRITT CRAWFORD: Eugene Augustin Lauste occupies a distinctive niche in the motion picture Hall of Fame because he contributed to an important extent to the inventions of two eras—the silent and the sound picture.

He helped to make the silent picture possible by his invention of a number of fundamental mechanical devices, and aided in developing the mechanics and processes, which made practicable the addition of synchronized sound to the animated scene upon the same film.

Mr. Lauste was employed by Mr. Edison from 1886 to 1892, and was an assistant of Laurie Dickson, Mr. Edison's chief of staff, in the experiments which led to the invention of the Kinetoscope. In 1894 he became associated with Major Woodville Latham, who was at that time interested in step-photography. For him Mr. Lauste designed and constructed the first wide film projector, the eidoloscope, and numerous other cameras and projectors.

In 1896 Mr. Lauste joined the American Biograph Company, and remained with them several years, much of the time in charge of their laboratory and experimental plant near Paris, France. But his chief claim to fame in film history will doubtless eventually rest upon his work in the field of the sound film and its processes. In 1888 Mr. Lauste read an account of the invention of Alexander Graham Bell's photophone, and its successful transmission of sound by means of radiant energy. It occurred to him that the sound waves might be recorded, photographed, and reproduced by means of a light-sensitive cell, in the same manner.

It was his idea at first to record the sound waves photographically upon a ribbon or strip of bromide paper and to reproduce them using a mirror and reflected light. When he saw Eastman's film at the Edison laboratory later, however, he knew that this phase of his problem need give him no further concern.

His other activities, however, kept him from pursuing his experiments actively along this line until the year 1900. Then he found time to make his first "light gate" of the grate type.

In 1904 Mr. Lauste completed his first experimental apparatus for recording sound, and in 1906, with two others, applied at the British Patent Office for a patent described as "a new and improved method of and means for simultaneously recording and reproducing movements and sounds."

To sketch, even briefly, Mr. Lauste's later experiments is, of course, impossible here tonight. The exhibit of his early apparatus at this Convention tells it better, perhaps, than any description could. It is sufficient, therefore, to record that in 1910 Mr. Lauste first successfully photographed sound and scene on the same film and between that date and the outbreak of the War in 1914 photographed many thousands of feet of sound pictures.

His inventions needed only the amplification developed by modern sound engineering skill, to make his sound pictures commercially possible, and he was working on this phase of his problem when interrupted by the War.

As the first man to photograph sound and scene synchronously upon the same film, Mr. Lauste occupies a unique place in motion picture history. The importance of his researches and early experiments, already recognized, will become increasingly apparent with the passing of the years.

Mr. President, I have the honor to present the name of Eugene Augustin Lauste for formal honorary recognition by the Society of Motion Picture Engineers.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: Eugene Augustin Lauste, on behalf of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, it is a pleasure to present to you this recognition of your outstanding contribution in the field of motion picture engineering.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: The next presentation is to Jean Acme LeRoy, whose achievements will likewise be recited by Mr. Merritt Crawford.

MR. MERRITT CRAWFORD: On the morning of February 5, 1894, a group of persons, about twenty-five in number, gathered in Herbert Riley's Optical Shop, 16 Beekman Street, New York, to witness the demonstration of a new device. It was a motion picture projector which had been built by Jean Acme LeRoy, a commercial photographer and experimenter residing in New York. Two kinetoscope films, each about forty feet long, were projected on a screen for the

audience of whom several are still living, who have testified to seeing this notable demonstration.

LeRoy had been experimenting with many devices related to photography as early as 1873, and had even succeeded several years previous to 1894 in producing a semblance of motion with a series of still camera studies on glass plates taken of posed dancers.

His first projector, built in 1893, was designed to use unperforated film. It was not successful, but it encouraged him. When, later, he saw the Edison Kinetoscope with its perforated film, he began work on the machine which was shown at the Riley Optical Shop. The device contained many of the mechanical parts of the present-day projectors, including an intermittent movement, take-up and feed sprockets, and a film gate.

With this projector, LeRoy gave exhibitions for three years whenever he could get engagements. He may properly be described as the world's first motion picture showman.

LeRoy's claim to pioneer fame rests chiefly on his having designed the first motion picture projector with which commercial shows were given for public entertainment. On this basis he is entitled to recognition as a pioneer in cinematography.

Mr. President, I have the honor to present the name of Jean Acme LeRoy for formal honorary recognition by the Society of Motion Picture Engineers.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: Unfortunately, Mr. LeRoy's physical condition would not permit him to attend this Convention, but he sends a wire extending his regrets and many thanks for the recognition afforded him. Mr. Merritt Crawford has been designated by him to accept the certificate on his behalf.

It is a great pleasure for our Society to present to Jean Acme LeRoy this award for outstanding distinction in motion picture engineering, and will you convey this to him with our best wishes for a speedy recovery?

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: As I pointed out, a large number of individuals have contributed to the development of the motion picture. Many of these have now passed along but our Society has decreed that their names shall be perpetuated by placing them on the Honor Roll of our Society. The first name to be placed on this Honor Roll is that of Louis Aimé Augustin Le Prince.

Between the years 1886 and 1890, he made cameras for taking a

series of pictures in rapid succession upon a long band of light-sensitive material. Samples are in existence of motion pictures taken by him in October, 1888, with a single lens camera at ten to twelve images per second. His single lens camera is stored in the Science Museum, London. Le Prince also devised a projector using an arc lamp for projecting his pictures, as well as spools for development, permitting processing of a long length of film in a small tray.

We have with us this evening the daughter of this outstanding pioneer. She has brought along with her a number of the photographs of the apparatus devised by her father, and perhaps she will say a few words to us on his behalf.

MISS G. MARIE LE PRINCE: Mr. President and Members of the Society: I wish to thank you for the honor to the memory of my father, and especially as a society of engineers, because you will understand the difficulties of a pioneer inventor who had only a home laboratory, and could yet produce inventions which are something like the modern moving picture machines.

Also, I am grateful that this Society is an international society, because I think, as my father often said, that the motion picture would bring all nations closer together and make them more friendly and that in the end, the motion picture would prevent wars.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: The second name to be placed on our Honor Roll is that of William Friese-Greene. From the time of his first interest in making a device to record a series of images in rapid succession in 1882 to the year of his death in 1921, Friese-Greene experimented with subjects related to cinematography. In January, 1888, he made a series of pictures using a transparent paper band in conjunction with toothed sprockets. Toward the end of that year he secured some nitro-cellulose "dope" and made film support upon which he coated a light-sensitive emulsion. The edges of the film were perforated by running it over sprockets with sharp pin points. The evidence obtained from an examination of the early inventions of this man stamp him as one of the great pioneers in the motion picture field. Besides his patents in ordinary cinematography, the first British patent in color cinematography was granted to him in 1898.

I have a telegram from his son, Mr. Claude Friese-Greene, which says: "My best wishes for a happy evening, in coupling my father's name with motion picture pioneers. May I say that he would wish to congratulate you all on the technical improvements achieved."

I had hoped that I would be able to present to you this evening the man who was the cameraman, the director, and the actual projectionist of that picture, *The Great Train Robbery*, which we saw on Monday evening. Unfortunately, Mr. Porter was called away.

I would like to present another pioneer, who, in 1897, introduced the first motion pictures to India and since then has experimented with mechanical devices to the present day—Mr. A. S. Victor.

I think we should also at this time pay tribute to the following pioneers: William Rock, who, in company with Mr. Wainwright, opened one of the first motion picture theaters of which written and photographic record still exists (this was in July, 1896); Mr. J. Stuart Blackton who, in company with Mr. William Rock, formed the Vitagraph Company of America; Mr. Alfred Smith, who was a partner in forming the Vitagraph Company of America in 1897; Mr. William Reed, who had charge of the Edison peep-hole Kinetoscopes until the spring of 1896, when he was employed by Messrs. Rock and Wainwright as projectionist; he became a projectionist in their theater in 1896 and has been a projectionist continuously since that time until quite recently; Sigismund Lubin, who was president of the Lubin Film Manufacturing Company, one of the early producing organizations and projector manufacturers; Nicholas Power, one of the earliest projector manufacturers, who did more than any other man to effect improvements in the projectors of early days.

We have a cable from Max Skladanowsky, an early pioneer in Germany, regretting that he cannot be present and wishing for our historical celebration a very successful outcome.

We have a telegram from Laurie Dickson: "Greatly appreciate invitation. Regret unavoidable absence. Cordial greetings to all co-pioneers. Shall be with you in spirit."

We have also a letter from D. W. Griffith, a pioneer, who regrets that he cannot be present. We have also a telegram from Carl Laemmle: "Heartiest congratulations on your fifteenth anniversary. Regret I cannot be with you at celebration."

We have a cable from Professor Lehmann: "The German Cinematographic Society greets the historical efforts of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers and the honoring of the pioneers of cinematography, whose work in all cultured lands we may thank for the present world-wide significance of cinematography."

We have also a wire from James H. White: "Very deeply regret my inability to accept your kind invitation to the banquet. All my

good wishes to you and members, and may I ask your prayers for the Old Master, Mr. Edison."

A letter from Mr. Georges Méliès, France, reads, "I am very sorry and very much regret, indeed, not to be able to accept your amiable invitation for which I heartily thank you.

"But I rely upon you for telling to the members of your association that I appreciate very much the honor made to me by them and that I wish for them the greatest success, for the good of the motion picture industry."

Telegrams regretting their inability to be present were also received from Colonel W. Selig, Hollywood, Calif., and Robert W. Paul, England.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: On a similar occasion as this two years ago, in response to a question as to how it felt to be a president-elect, I said that it seemed as though I had ridden down to the bottom of the Grand Canyon and I suddenly found that I had to walk back again. The journey, however, has been a very pleasant one and not as difficult as I had imagined, thanks to the loyal help of the members of the Board of Governors, the various committees, and the members at large.

But there is hard work ahead for our Society. The present problem of the industry is not that there is any immediate need for new tools but that the industry should better know how to use the tools which it now has at its disposal.

One of the most striking facts which a visitor from the East to Hollywood observes is that the quality of sound reproduction in the screening rooms of the studios is better than that which exists in the majority of theaters throughout the country. The inferences from this are two-fold, namely, that the present size of the sound track is adequate for the industry's immediate needs, and that sound reproduction in the theaters has not kept pace with recording in the studios. This is due to several causes including deficiencies in the maintenance of equipment, imperfect release prints, and imperfect projection.

Although a wider sound track, and especially sound tracks on a separate film, will give some improvement in sound quality, their general adoption will be impracticable for some considerable time to come. It, therefore, behooves the industry to pay the greatest attention to details so as to get the utmost from the sound track which is

at present available. It is possible to get better sound by means of higher quality reproducing equipment, such as the recording machines available for studio work, but much improvement could be obtained by meticulous attention to details with present equipment.

Demonstrations using hill and dale cellulose acetate disk records and improved reproducing equipment including duplicate horns have revealed that it is now possible to reproduce music which goes one octave higher than is possible with present theater equipment, and this addition imparts to the reproduction a striking degree of naturalness.

Although I do not predict an immediate return to disk recording by producers, this epoch-making advance in sound reproduction will, undoubtedly, serve as a stimulus to improvement in the reproduction of sound photographically.

In many cases imperfect maintenance and operation may be attributed to the fact that the projectionist is not always kept on his toes by virtue of his isolation. Even the most aggressive surgeons and professional men attend clinics at least once a year in order to keep in touch with the latest developments. It is the duty of the projectionist organizations to establish corresponding seminars in key cities, which projectionists from all theaters should be compelled to attend, substitutes being supplied to their own theaters during their absence. Also, more projectionists should be permitted to attend our conventions. The resulting stimulus and acquaintance with men who are constantly striving to improve the motion picture could not help but result in a marked improvement of the picture and sound quality in the theater.

There is also much room for improvement in theater showmanship. The motion picture theater of today is too much of a machine—it lacks soul and personality. More atmosphere and glamour could be created by individuality in the technical presentation of the picture. Neither sound nor picture is a perfect replica of nature but after four years of evolution the sound, as reproduced at present in conjunction with motion pictures, is more true to nature than the picture which lacks color and depth. The reproduction of speech is quite satisfactory but the reproducible volume and frequency range is inadequate to simulate orchestral music. The patron, however, does not realize these shortcomings when he is placed in the mood of willingness to believe by means of suitable atmosphere.

The problem of the quality of the release print is also a very urgent

one. The difficulty involved is to produce release prints which are replicas of the best print which the original picture and sound negatives are capable of giving. To an impartial observer it would appear that the quality of the sound in the case of release prints, in many cases, is not equal to that of the first print produced in Hollywood. A second striking observation to the Hollywood visitor is the recent great improvement in laboratory equipment and the meticulous care with which the equipment is constructed and maintained.

But the quality of the product largely reflects the quality of the man-power which produces it. In Hollywood there is a spirit of coöperation and friendly rivalry to produce the best motion pictures possible. It is highly important that the eastern technicians cooperate to the utmost not only with themselves but with the technicians in Hollywood; otherwise, I predict that Hollywood will not only be the center of production but of laboratory processing as well.

But what will be the next outstanding technical development of the industry? Color is the only immediately available variant from the prevailing black-and-white picture. It has little box-office value at present because the public thinks of colored pictures in terms of some of the wretched ones which it has already seen. You have seen some excellent examples of colored motion pictures during our Convention which were adequately sharply defined, and when similar films are generally available, the public will undoubtedly register its appreciation.

The next innovation will probably consist of the imparting of depth both to picture and sound. Demonstrations at our Convention have indicated that the possibility of securing stereoscopic motion pictures without the use of auxiliary devices is not as remote as we had previously supposed, while in the case of many of the scenes of the color pictures referred to above, the color imparted a surprising degree of semblance of depth to the picture.

It would also be possible to secure startlingly entertaining and amusing effects by the use of devices which would permit binaural reproduction, whereby an independent sound record is transmitted to each ear. This would necessitate the use of multiple sound tracks on the film and independent reproducing channels leading to ear phones which the audience would undoubtedly tolerate for short presentations. The effect of a person whispering in the ear can be simulated with startling fidelity and such effects, judiciously combined

with suitable picture material, would provide some of the necessary novelty for the motion picture presentation which the public is always anticipating.

Another development of the future during the summer months will undoubtedly be the outdoor theater. The public is outdoor-minded, and open air symphonies, outdoor plays, and outdoor events of every description have never been better attended. Rear screen projection has been developed to a point where adequate screen brightness is easily attained while the engineer could undoubtedly provide effective means to destroy intruding flies and insects.

It is questionable whether the 16-mm. film in the home will ever be a serious competitor of the motion picture theater as a means of entertainment. In the home, man is inherently too lazy to set up and operate a projection machine to exhibit pictures other than those of his own making in which his guests are usually not interested.

The spectre of depression has been relatively kind to the motion picture industry. Present box-office receipts are only 10 per cent below those of last year but the quality of the motion picture was never better than it is today. In order for business to improve, we must give better and better values. If the public knows anything at all, it knows values in entertainment. It was Emerson who said, "Let a man preach a better sermon, write a better book, or build a better mouse trap than his neighbor—though he build his house in the woods—the world will make a path to his door," and his words are equally applicable to motion pictures.

Better business is a question of each one doing more and better work than ever before—more intensive research work—the making of better tools—doing better work with existing tools—better stories—better direction—better acting—better film stocks—better camera work—better laboratory work—and better projection. So long as we continue to provide better entertainment, the continued success of this motion picture business is assured.

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: My only remaining duty is to introduce to you our President-Elect. He is a big man with a big concern, and I know he is going to do big things for our Society—Dr. Alfred N. Goldsmith, Vice-President of the Radio Corporation of America.

DR. A. N. GOLDSMITH: The great honor which the Society of Motion Picture Engineers has conferred upon me, in granting me the opportunity to aid in its further upbuilding, is one which is at once

most encouraging and a challenge to put forth my best effort on behalf of the membership. If I may speak for the officers of the Society for the coming year, it would be to express our appreciation of so fine an opportunity and our thorough understanding that whatever may be accomplished during the year will of necessity rest upon the firm foundation of splendid achievement of those who have in the past so capably conducted the affairs of the Society. If their wise guidance and advice will still remain at the disposal of the Board of Governors and the officers of the Society, as we are convinced it will, there can be little doubt that the Society will continue its healthy and constructive career.

May I also pay tribute to those courageous pioneers whom we have honored this evening? Their determination permitted them to conquer physical obstacles and public scepticism. I am reminded of a pertinent episode:

About a century ago a far-sighted New England gentleman applied for leave to debate the possibility of steam railroads in the village schoolhouse. The skeptical Board of Selectmen answered him in the following uncompromising language: "You are welcome to the use of the school house to debate all proper questions in, but such things as railroads and telegraphs are impossibilities and rank infidelity. There is nothing in the word of God about them. If God had designed that His intelligent creatures should travel at the frightful speed of fifteen miles an hour by steam He would clearly have foretold it through His holy prophets. It is a device of Satan to lead immortal souls down to hell." And so it was with motion pictures in the early days. Few had faith and still fewer the ability to carry forward the art. Tonight we have recognized some of those brave and clear-visioned men who battled with the unknown in those trying times.

May I also express my belief that the S. M. P. E. is destined to be the standard bearer and representative organization of the motion picture engineers.

Through this body, the motion picture industry is rapidly learning of the importance of the engineer. For the first time artists and engineers are working together, as they should, both of them creative in spirit, dignified in their activities, professional in their outlook, and both troubled by similar problems. The staffs of operating technicians in the studios and theaters are also coming closer each day to the engineer. Each group can be of greater help to the other. The engineer can explain the reason for the equipment design to the

technician, can bring out the fine points of its utilization, and can anticipate and cure the troubles which may arise in its daily use. The technician, on the other hand, can present to the engineer a multitude of practical problems of daily routine which require ingenuity for their engineering solution. He can make most valuable criticisms and suggestions. These groups should and must come closer together, and it is to be hoped that the Society of Motion Picture Engineers will contact directly with the technicians of the industry with this aim in view. I shall not touch further on the tasks of the Society in the immediate future, particularly since they have been so clearly outlined to you in President Crabtree's opening address.

I wish only to emphasize, in more general terms, that we should all work together in this Society to bring more science into the field of motion pictures and, by this means, greater effectiveness, increased acceptance of the product by the public, and a continually higher status of the motion picture industries. We have this privilege of working for the growth of that agency, science, which is so well described in the inscription on the dome of the building of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, where it is stated: "To science, pilot of industry, conqueror of disease, multiplier of the harvest, explorer of the universe, revealer of nature's law, eternal guide to truth." Gentlemen, with this aim in view, your officers will endeavor to carry forward the work of their able predecessors during the coming year.

MR. L. C. PORTER: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: Some of you who have had the patience to sit in at our meetings have probably gathered the idea that the Board of Governors' meetings have not always been in agreement. We have had many and long arguments. There is, however, one point on which the Board is entirely unanimous, and that is that our President, John Crabtree, has made an outstanding executive, and given unstintingly of his time and his interest, frequently at the sacrifice of personal pleasures, in the promotion of the welfare of the Society. President Crabtree has been on the Board for a good many years. He was on the Board before he became President. And at the first Board meeting which he attended, he made the statement that he felt, in the interests of economy, it would be desirable to remove the names of the officers from our letter-heads, leaving only the name of the Society. At every single Board Meeting since then President Crabtree has pleaded long

and fluently in that cause. At our last Board meeting, Sunday night, the Board finally moved to remove the names from the stationery. Our Board has, therefore, prepared some resolutions for President Crabtree, and in order that he may have a fitting souvenir of his victory, we have prepared those resolutions on the last sheets of stationery having the officers' names at the top.

Swampscott, Mass.
October 7, 1931

President Crabtree:

We, the undersigned members of the Board of Governors of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers on this the fifteenth anniversary of the founding of our Society, wish to express our sincere appreciation of our retiring President, John I. Crabtree.

We feel that the recent administration, due largely to the courage and foresight of President Crabtree in initiating many original activities to promote the progress and welfare of the Society and in carrying to successful conclusion various things for which solid foundations had already been laid, has firmly established our Society as the foremost technical organization in the world.

Among the major events which have occurred under President Crabtree's leadership we are proud to record:

(1) The delegation of the Society's administrative details to a professional editor-manager.
(2) The establishment of headquarter offices in New York City.
(3) The expansion of our *Transactions* into a flourishing JOURNAL.
(4) The foundation of three additional sections of the Society.
(5) Revision of our Constitution and By-Laws.
(6) The establishment of sustaining memberships.
(7) The initiation of a research fellowship in motion picture engineering at one of the nation's foremost seats of learning.
(8) The inauguration of an honor roll to commemorate the work of the great pioneers who have passed on.

We are further proud and glad to assert that President Crabtree has proved a sympathetic leader, patient and strong in his conduct of both our general sessions and the Board meetings.

We take this occasion to confess our regret that it becomes necessary for him to relinquish the reins of office. We assure him of our loyal friendship and continued support and we wish him success and prosperity in whatever endeavor he may undertake.

(Signed)

F. C. BADGLEY	W. C. KUNZMANN
HERFORD TYNES COWLING	J. H. KURLANDER
K. C. D. HICKMAN	M. W. PALMER
WILLIAM C. HUBBARD	L. C. PORTER
J. ELLIOTT JENKINS	E. I. SPONABLE

PRESIDENT CRABTREE: Fellow members of the Society, I assure

you I shall greatly cherish this token of esteem from the Board. I want to assure the Board and members that my work on behalf of the Society has by no means come to an end. I am always at your right hand, Dr. Goldsmith, ready at your call.

PRESIDENT-ELECT GOLDSMITH: Thank you, Mr. Crabtree, I greatly appreciate it.

MR. F. H. RICHARDSON: I want to say that I believe every member of this Society would be very glad and very proud to have his name added to that list, as signing that set of resolutions.