

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Fall Meeting of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers

Briarcliff, N. Y., 1926

W. B. Cook*

FELLOW MEMBERS AND GUESTS:

As stated in our Constitution, the object of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers is the advancement in the theory and practice of motion picture engineering and the allied arts and sciences, the standardization of the mechanisms and practices employed therein, and the maintenance of a high professional standing among its members. Every phase of the motion picture industry is benefitted by the papers prepared and the discussions that follow their reading. Upon the members of our Society rests the responsibility that the motion picture production—created for the entertainment and instruction of the public—shall be properly prepared in the studio, developed and printed in the laboratory, distributed to the exhibitor and perfectly presented at the theater.

Through its members, the Society originates new and improved devices, processes and methods, and acts as a clearing house for the dissemination of this information to those who will be benefitted by it.

The meetings of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers are not in any sense sales conventions and their main purpose is to exchange ideas and encourage the development of matters of a technical nature. The members, for the time being, are not directly concerned with the commercial side of the industry, but their activities are of a very practical nature and directly influence the prosperity and progress of the entire motion picture industry. The Society is gratified by the encouragement and support received from some important sources, but feels that the motion picture industry, as a whole, is not as well acquainted with the activities or as appreciative of the work of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers as it should be.

The very foundation of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers rests on its scientific members and it is the nature of these men to work quietly and alone.

* Kodascope Libraries, Inc., New York, N. Y.

In recent years, however, there has been a growing tendency in large manufacturing enterprises to utilize practically the abilities of scientists and technicians, and the world has thus derived almost incalculable benefits from this co-operation.

During the seven years it has been my privilege to be a member of the Society, I think at every successive convention we have taken up the problem of co-ordinating the work of the Society more closely with the big producers and distributors. While we have a few members who are representatives of the individual units in the big producing studios and possibly one or two among the distributors, there is no general tie-up between our organization and those directly connected with the production and distribution. We have sought in vain for some sort of contact, and until the last year we have made no progress. Now, during the past year we have made flourishing progress in this direction. We have not only one or two members who are influential in the producers' class, but we have a tacit agreement from the Producers' and Distributors' Association that they regard the co-ordination of our efforts for the solution of their problems as a very desirable thing. Tonight we will see and hear substantial evidence of this progress at the dinner we are giving Mr. Hays, who is the head and moving spirit of the Producers' and Distributors' Association. There is every reason to believe that our hopes and ambitions for a closer co-ordination of our efforts with their requirements is about to be realized, and it is something in which I know you will all share with your executive and Board of Governors in the feeling of satisfaction for the successful culmination of our efforts.