

REPORT OF THE LONDON SECTION

SIMON ROWSON*

PRESIDENT and Gentlemen:

I want first to express my pleasure at being able to be among you today. When I heard of the date fixed for the convention, I tried to arrange my business visit so that I could be present, and I want therefore to say at once that I am glad on behalf of the Section I have the honor to represent—London—to be with you today, and take part in your deliberations.

Our section is a junior one, but I believe it will turn out to be a very important one. Importance in this department of our activities is measured not so much by numbers as by its power to influence views and thoughts upon the technical matters connected with our industry. I feel that while on the technical side of your industry you have associated a good many British technicians from our universities and colleges, there are left behind in Britain quite a number of other scientists capable of making contributions of international value in this business, and I think nothing is more significant than the tone and character of the deliberations since the Section was founded the early part of the year. You have not had the papers in your Transactions, but you will be interested in the kind of papers read up to now.

We opened at the beginning of the year with a paper by C. F. Elwell, who summarized the different sound recording and reproducing systems from a purely technical point of view, and it is to his credit and that of the Society that in preparing a very technical survey of this branch of the industry he never tried to push the particular type of mechanism with which he was interested. He was interested with the DeForest outfit and is a technician, high-class physicist, and engineer, but he never, although he is a good commercial man, tried to push his own ware. He introduced that scientific spirit which we are so anxious to keep. The second paper dealt with Camera Mechanism and was by Mr. Newman, one of the pioneers of cameras about 25 to 30 years ago and now associated particularly with the Newman-Sinclair camera. His paper proved

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to be most excellent and was found most intriguing in producing questions of wide range and variety. The third paper was by Mr. Schwarz of the Elstree Studios on trick lenses, which provoked considerable interest and discussion, and he brought with him an armourey of the lenses to demonstrate. It was enormously interesting to everybody connected with studio work. Since I have been away another paper has been fixed by Mr. Sunde on the acoustic problems connected with the camera and the studio. That is the character of the people who have read papers, and I can assure you that when you read them in the Transactions, you will feel that we have attempted to make real contributions to the technical branch of this great industry. Mr. Roy Pomeroy and Mr. Rosher, now in England, have also promised to contribute at an early date.

I am pleased to say, however, that not only has the quality of the work so far accomplished been high, and from that point of view its influence is great, but the number who have become members has, I think, been satisfactory. We started with a very small membership of perhaps under 30. Every meeting has been attended by 50-70 people, and every meeting has resulted in additions to our membership, so that at present we have about 80, and by the end of the year we hope to turn the century, and I think that will be a very satisfactory start.

We are trying to conform to the rules laid down from this side, where we realize headquarters are, but I hope you will also realize that it is not always wise to enforce your rules too strictly in a country so far away as England. We have the right feeling and the right spirit, and we will not let you down, but don't try and insist too much on regulations and rules which are not vitally essential to the successful working of the Society if we feel that some small modifications will be better adapted to our own particular requirements. I am pleased to say that the grade of membership is very high, and we have not a few of the leading executives of the bigger companies who have willingly accepted my invitation to become members of the Society and have shown they believe in the Society. They have encouraged many of their own technical staff on the same basis.

I think you will be very proud of the child which you have given birth to in England.