

## President's Address

### *Society of Motion Picture Engineers*

**T**HIS meeting in Washington and at this Hotel is of historical and sentimental interest to our members. Almost five years ago—on July 24th, 1916—Mr. C. Francis Jenkins called a meeting in this Hotel for the purpose of organizing a Society to work out the details of and to discuss subjects peculiar to the motion picture industry, primarily for the purpose of effecting standardization in the industry. Of the nine men who attended this meeting, five are still Active members; namely, Messrs. Jenkins, Gillett, Brockett, Cromelin and Wescott. This meeting formed the basis for the organization of our Society in New York City on October 2nd and 3rd, 1916, at which the first Officers were elected. That we have made progress, goes without saying. We have kept abreast of the times and the many developments in the motion picture industry will, I am sure, afford ample opportunity for still further progress.

In order to retain the standing which we now have in the industry and in engineering in general, we must be ever active and aggressive. Our aim is to promote successful motion picture engineering. This involves doing—a little better—what some other engineers have already done. To do this, we must each make a careful and systematic study of and become thoroughly familiar with what has already been accomplished in the different phases of the industry and then bend our efforts to do something or to create something that is better.

Although we have made progress in having Committee Reports submitted and excellent papers presented during our semi-annual meetings, yet, I feel that we have failed to accomplish all that for which the Society was formed, respecting standardization. Some standards, previously universally accepted, have been adopted, while others originating in our Society have also been adopted by us. Yet, considering the motion picture industry as a whole, it seems that we have not accomplished as much as we should. Your Board of Governors has realized this condition and from a partial analysis, which has been made, it feels that this condition is due to the lack of interest and co-operation in the various Committees. We have been working on the plan that standardization should originate in the various Committees, but this has not brought the desired results. I trust that some action will be taken at this meeting to stimulate activity, either by the selection of a Standardization Committee, with duties definitely outlined, or by some other plan which you may deem advisable.

Your Board of Governors call to the attention of the newer members, the fact that we have available copies of our previous Transactions. These Transactions contain over 50 Papers by the best authorities on motion picture engineering. The Committee on

Papers and the Publication Committee have prepared a small booklet giving an outline of what our Transactions contain and it is urged that you make a list of those Transactions which you require to make your files complete, and order copies through the Secretary. We shall be glad to furnish you with such copies of this booklet for distribution outside of the Society, as you may think worth while. By this method, we hope to make the Society and its activities more valuable to the industry and at the same time increase our finances. The price charged for copies of our Proceedings does not cover the cost of printing and binding. Our Proceedings contain data and information which cannot be obtained through any other channels whatsoever.

With your permission, I should like to say a few words regarding membership. It is true, we have been enjoying a steady and healthy growth, yet we must look to the future for expansion commensurate with the importance of the industry. At the formation of the Society in 1916, we had a total of 23 members, while today, not including those names which were acted upon by the Board of Governors yesterday, our membership totals 105, of which 91 are Active and 14 are Associate members. There are many phases of motion picture engineering and there is a large number of men who are active in the industry's engineering interest. Where men are of the proper calibre, we should use our efforts to have them affiliate with us. Bear this in mind, however, we are building up an organization for the future and we should therefore be critical in our investigations before we admit new members. What we are after is men who are energetic and who will contribute to our activities. Our Society was not formed to create motion picture engineers. We desire only such members as will present, before the Society, new ideas and problems for discussion. Application blanks can be obtained from the Secretary or chairman of the Membership Committee. Applicants should fill in the blanks, giving details of their activities.

I call your particular attention to the plan which we are trying out at this meeting in connection with the presentation of Papers. Abstracts only will be read by the authors, unless the Paper is very short or cannot readily be abstracted. Advance copies of papers are available, and although certain members have been especially asked to discuss these Papers, it should be distinctly understood that all those present are expected to enter into the discussion. In this way, we shall be able to obtain the greatest benefit possible from these Papers. Stenographic notes will be made of the discussions and will become a part of our printed Transactions. Quite often, the discussions are as vitally important as the Papers themselves. The results we obtain at this meeting will serve as a guide respecting the value and scope of future discussions.

It would not be amiss to mention, at this time, the activities of your Officers. Your Board of Governors have met three times since the last regular meeting for the purpose of transacting the business of the Society, and to formulate plans for the future. These meetings have necessitated considerable correspondence. All this work

has been carried on without expense to the Society. I have asked our Treasurer to give you a short analysis of how your funds have been handled. The work of the Committee on Arrangements and the Committee on Papers is evidenced in the program which has been scheduled for the next four days. The duties of the Committee on Papers involve more exacting work than any branch of our Society. In preparing the program, it is always necessary to make quite a number of tentative outlines, which are changed many times before the final set-up is made. This Committee, then, has to get the manuscript in an approved state for presentation. Before Papers are finally printed, as part of the Transactions, they must be proof-read. With stenographic records of discussions, the work of this Committee will be enlarged. It costs considerable to get out the Transactions which are distributed to all members without charge. We endeavor to cover some of this expense by making use of part of the space in the Transactions for advertising purposes. From the report of the Committee on Advertising and the results obtained so far in selling space for this year, the opportunity of advertising in our Transactions is evidently appreciated. Each firm represented in the Society should use our Transactions as an advertising medium and we shall also be glad to consider space for concerns not represented in the Society. I would like to call your attention to the work of the various Committees, as well as to the individual efforts which have been extended, but as these activities will be covered by later reports, I shall not take up any more time as I know you desire to get started on the excellent program which has been prepared.

I should like, however, at this time to extend to the Officers, to the various Committees and to the members, my very sincere appreciation of the helpful co-operation which has been extended. Such co-operative spirit is the very basis of the existence and continuous success of our Society.

H. A. CAMPE,  
*President.*

Washington, D. C.,  
May 9th, 1921.