

President's Address

WE are now entering the sixth year of our existence. Back in 1916, Mr. C. Francis Jenkins had the vision of a need for technical standardization in the motion picture industry and we are here assembled as the Society of Motion Picture Engineers because Mr. Jenkins had the courage to act on his convictions. The need for such an organization as we now have is evidenced in the wonderful growth of our organization and the wide scope of our activities. The first six sessions which were held were of two-day duration. The older members will recall that in those days we had a difficult problem to prepare a program to fill two days. We then started to expand and for the next three sessions we ran under a schedule of three days. We broadened still further until the last three sessions have necessitated four days, and we have no difficulty getting papers of merit to fill our program; in fact, we have found it necessary to curtail discussions in order to keep the scheduled program.

The time has now come when I feel that we should demand the recognition in the motion picture industry to which we are unquestionably entitled. We started out on a small scale and have worked effectively and efficiently, and have achieved that of which we are justly proud. Our efforts are affecting the industry in all its various branches from the studio to the screen and, therefore, why should we not demand recognition from those who have and will benefit from our activities? Our usefulness to the motion picture industry has been well established.

The world is depending more and more upon the use of motion pictures, not only in the entertainment field but also practically in every field of activity; educational, industrial, mechanical, medical, etc. The return to normal is going to open new developments and possibilities and we must be ready to meet the newer and greater responsibilities which we will be called upon to assume. It is the opinion of those closely affiliated with financial and commercial interests that the business depression has reached the bottom and that we are now on the slow climb back to normal conditions. The depression during the past year, naturally, had an effect on our work. Funds not being available to the same extent as in more prosperous periods, research and development work has not advanced very rapidly.

Every technical branch of the industry should be represented in our Society. Each branch should cooperate, giving freely of its best, in exchange for the best of others. In so doing, we will recognize the value of gaining by giving, and failure to recognize this will work to our disadvantage. It is necessary that we have an exchange of ideas and opinions from individual members. This will bring about a better understanding of our aim and purpose.

In several of my previous messages to you, I have tried to point

out the importance of more action on the part of the Standing Committees. Committees are the means of arriving at a solution of common problems and they are, or should be, made up of those members who are the best informed on subject matters pertaining to committees of which they form a part. A few of our committees have done splendid work and have gotten results, but these are the exceptions. There is much to be done and if those who are honored by appointment on committees during the coming year will make an analysis of the tasks which have been assigned to them, they will find plenty to do and their efforts will increase the efficiency of the Society. Why not try to work out a plan for each committee to get together at least once between our regular semi-annual sessions?

After a very careful analysis of our membership, and in accordance with your instructions, a Standardization Committee has been appointed by your President from a list of suggestions by individual members of your Board of Governors. The Standardization Committee is going to be the most important committee you will have and your cooperation with this committee and its deliberation will have a decided effect on the industry.

At this meeting you will select your officers for the coming year. In line with your approval and in order to eliminate any possibility of politics entering into the nomination for officers, your Board of Governors now and in the future, will act as a nominating committee for a slate for the elective offices. The report of the nominating committee is by no means final and additional suggestions will be welcomed. With the growth and extension of the Society, the officers will carry greater responsibilities and therefore selections must be made with great care.

I would like to take this occasion to make mention of our printed transactions. Have you realized that our transactions to date, contain articles relative to approximately every technical branch of the motion picture industry? Those who are just affiliating with our Society should avail themselves of the opportunity of obtaining copies of our earlier transactions. The Washington transactions are a valuable addition to our proceedings. On behalf of the Society, I wish to express appreciation to those who were responsible for its development and formation:—those who presented papers, those who enlarged the scope of the papers by discussion and also the Committee on Papers and the Committee on Publications. A large circulation of our transactions outside our membership is highly desirable as our transactions are the means of indicating our activity to the industry at large, and also a large circulation makes the advertising space more valuable. The sale of advertising space is one of the means of obtaining funds whereby we are able to carry on our activities. Not only should each individual firm represented in the Society use our transactions as an advertising medium, but we should also get advertising space from those in the industry who are not affiliated with us.

An excellent program has been prepared for this meeting by the Committee on Arrangements cooperating with the Committee on

Papers. Aside from the technical papers and the discussions, the Committee on Arrangements have made such provisions that our time will be well occupied. I am sure that our appreciation will amply repay them for their efforts.

In closing, I would like to remark that your officers have endeavored to guide your activities to the best of their abilities. Matters of importance have been discussed and decided at meetings of your Board of Governors which have been held periodically, and our deliberations are indicated in the minutes of the Board of Governors which the Secretary has or will read to you. There has not been a single note of discord and our actions have been unanimous. I wish to express my sincere personal appreciation to the officers, those comprising the various committees, and the other individual members of the Society for the cooperative spirit shown and the help which has been given me during the three years in which it has been my pleasure to serve as your President, and I bespeak the same assistance and cooperation to those whom you will select to office during the coming year. The meeting is now open and I trust that each of you will take advantage of the opportunity afforded you by constructively discussing the very able papers which will be presented for your consideration.

H. A. CAMPE.

Buffalo, N. Y., October 31st, 1921.