

SEPTEMBER SONG

Many greetings are ordinarily extended to the graduating chemical engineers in June, but one may well wonder whether September is not a better time. It is in September that the full implications of graduation become apparent. Examinations, term papers, dissertations are behind one, but in their places come many new challenges of even more consequence. It is in September that the summer letdown is forgotten and the neophyte engineer must come to grips with his new job. His performance at such a time is of great importance to him and to the organization which employs him, and it is entirely proper that his job should occupy his best and fullest efforts.

Many adjustments must be made, since the change from academic to industrial environment is not a small one. There are a great many things to be learned in industry which are quite different from those stressed in a university and, indeed, which cannot properly be taught there. First, of course, the details and techniques of the industry itself must be mastered. Second, the necessity for team work and the great importance of getting along with people will soon become apparent. Third, certain routines and channels of information must be learned so that work may be accomplished expeditiously. Thus the one-time college senior or new Ph.D. becomes a freshman again and a very busy one at that.

In this transition period one bridge between academic and industrial life is our professional literature. Some of each man's particular interests, originating in college days, will certainly be covered in *Chemical Engineering Progress* and in the *A.I.Ch.E. Journal*, and no editorial encouragement to read such articles is needed. Furthermore, of course, many new topics will assume interest and importance, as they will have bearing on the new job. Such articles will be of direct and immediate benefit in solving the problems at hand. The editor remembers very well how the solution to a particularly difficult problem which he met on

his first job was made possible because of the timely appearance of a fine communication in the *Transactions of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers*.

However it is not the pursuit of particular interests with which we are concerned here. It is rather with the general reading of our professional literature. In industry it is all too easy to become so specialized that one may forget the broader aspects of chemical engineering. It is distressingly easy to lose sight of the fundamentals and the theory of our field, on which all the rest depends. One can be so carried away by practice and by details that the foundation is lost in the process. It is here that we hope that the *A.I.Ch.E. Journal*, with its array of distinguished authors, may be of particular value. Keeping up with the literature, with its constant reexamination and extension of basic theory, is an essential for the young man. We shall be publishing about one hundred papers each year, and at least half of these we expect to be concerned with subjects of general interest to the young graduate. Certainly also, these papers should represent extensions of ideas and subjects with which the young engineer presumably once had some familiarity. The editor's plea to these men is to read the *Journal* carefully. A program of one paper read each week would be a reasonable one, and such a plan would bring great satisfaction in keeping fresh and active the inquisitive, scientific attitude.

From personal experience in industry the editor knows how easy it is to become wrapped up in the thrill of industrial enterprise and accomplishment and to forget the foundations on which the whole was built. Whether a new graduate hopes to remain an engineer, and to become a very fine one, or whether he wants to go ahead in the field of management and sales, keeping up with the literature is one of the best ways to assure the intellectual keenness and alertness on which any advancement depends.

H. B.