

Annual Address of President N. C. Hamner

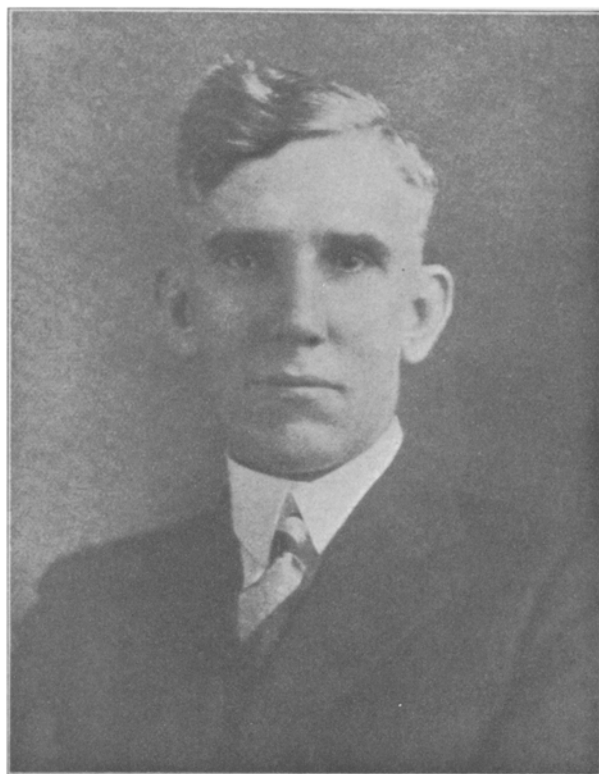
At the beginning of our last year the industry we serve was in the doldrums, and consequently many of our members were out of employment; many were overloaded with work on account of short staffs maintained by the companies they serve; and the members in the commercial field were not making money. It was therefore but natural that I should feel a sense of inadequacy when I became President of our Society. Those of you who were present last year will remember that I told you frankly that without your help I could accomplish nothing. In fact, had I known at that time what conditions would actually be during the past year, I think my sense of inadequacy would have changed to panic. Reverting to the request for support, I want to express my appreciation of the remarkable support I have received.

The work of two committees this year has been particularly heavy, these two committees being in a peculiar way inter-dependent on each other. I refer to the Membership Committee, headed by your first vice president, Mr. J. P. Harris, and the Journal Committee, headed by Mr. W. H. Irwin. Without membership we haven't much use for a Journal, and on the other hand, without a Journal, I don't see how we could expect to ever have much of a membership. For the Membership Committee, Mr. Harris will report to you in detail, and, while there has been some loss in membership, the fact that it is not much greater under all conditions that existed, is, I think, quite remarkable. Certain it is that every effort was made by the committee, your secretary, and myself, to maintain and increase the membership.

In regard to the Journal Committee, you are all able to judge what has been accomplished in improving and enlarging the Journal, but most of you can have no conception of the amount of work this has entailed on the committee. Mr. Irwin will report in full.

In regard to these two phases of the work—Membership and the Journal—I feel, first, in regard to membership, that if, as we believe, we are at last turning the corner, then our membership, with a much improved Journal, will increase rapidly. And, in regard to the Journal, I know we have one of which we can be proud, and I feel that our infant has developed wonderfully during the past year.

Some of you are possibly aware of the fact that we had a bank holiday some time back, and two of the banks in which our funds were on deposit failed to open at the end of the bank holiday. I am glad to advise you that these banks have been recapitalized and the Society will lose no funds. With further reference to this matter, the first letter I had from your Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Helm, advising me of the status of these banks, afforded further information—that Mr. Helm, unknown to myself or the Governing Committee, had voluntarily reduced his own salary almost to the vanishing point. I want to state this publicly, as I believe it shows a wonderful spirit, and to here acknowledge the uniformly helpful and prompt cooperation I have had from him. To the committees engaged in what might be termed the regular scientific work of the Society, the speaker feels a great debt of gratitude for the way they have carried on in spite of the great amount of work that has been placed on them, in many cases, by their companies. You will recall that for a number of years, the F. A. C. Committee has had nothing to report. I am pleased to advise



Past-President N. C. Hamner

you that under the leadership of Mr. Irwin as chairman, this committee will report at this convention.

In preparing for this convention, I was faced by the fact that many members would not, for some reason or another, be in attendance this year. Notwithstanding that, I have been able to get some most interesting and instructive papers, some of which will be read by the authors, but unfortunately some of the authors will not be able to be in attendance. I make special mention of this for the reason that in a number of cases, these men have prepared the papers knowing full well at the time that they could not be present, and have labored out of a pure love for the Society. These papers are in addition to committee reports, which will be—I believe—of unusual interest to the membership.

It was my pleasure last Fall to attend the meeting in Chicago, and in a good many years of attending scientific meetings of one sort or another in different places, I have never seen one in which the attendance seemed more interested, nor with a program better balanced and more in line with the objects of the meeting. To me, the attendance was much larger than I would have expected, and it was altogether a most enjoyable occasion. This year the Fall meeting will be held again in Chicago, and, during the Century of Progress Exhibition. I can assure you now of a most interesting program, and that everything possible will be done for your pleasure and comfort by the local members.

For whatever good has been accomplished this year I desire to render thanks to the committees and membership at large. For the things in which we have failed, I offer mistakes of the head rather than intent.