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EDITORIAL

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ENGINEERS' ROUNDUP

The annual fall carnival of the engineering college, the "Engineers' Roundup," will be held this year on the evening of December 4. The place has not yet been decided upon, although it will probably be held in the Judging Pavilion on Neil Avenue, the place where yearling artillerymen learn the whys and wherefores of the doughty French 75. On account of the tests being run in the large north testing laboratory of the Engineering Experiment Station, it was impossible to secure the usual auditorium.

Every year this attraction, sponsored by Engineers' Council, brings out all of the dramatic abilities smouldering in our students as well as faculty. Each society organizes and stages an act in competition for the loving cup offered for the best skit. In the past we have seen everything from a near-Ziegfeld revue to the most heart-rending and tear-provoking melodrama ever staged. It is really surprising what these engineers can do, once they get started. This year we are expecting as good as ever, if not better.

The famous Turnbull-Sherman debate, renowned from coast to coast, is without a doubt the headliner of the show. We will never forget the debate of three years ago when Dean Turnbull and Professor Sherman debated on the momentous question of whether bricks keep the mortar apart or whether the mortar keeps the bricks apart. This year another vital issue will be settled by these gentlemen.

Then there is the hot dog stand where various and sundry forms of nourishment may be procured. There is no hot dog like a Roundup hot dog.

The managing committees promise a bigger Roundup and one with more startling innovations than ever seen before here or on any other campus. Don't forget the date but don't bring a date!

AND NOW POLITICS!

A new era in campus politics began this quarter when the engineers arrayed themselves for the annual battle. Although we have no definite proof, we feel, by intuition, that the formation of the *Independent-Engineering* ticket brought forth something approximating a sneer from our brethren south of Brown Hall. The idea of engineers in politics was something new, and like Ben Franklin's kite flying, caused the unknowing to shake their heads sadly. We lost, but the loss was by only a few votes and we feel that perhaps from now on, the voice of the technicals will be listened to with more respect in the councils of the powers. Engineers have been kept out of campus offices heretofore on account of the strict hour ruling. While not generally known, an engineer having full standing in his college, had more than the maximum number of hours allowed by the elections committee ruling to permit him to run for any office in his class. This effectively kept the engineers out of things until this year, when the old ruling was revoked.

The popular fallacy among non-engineering students, is that the engineering student is not qualified to engage in extra-curricular activities that carry him outside of his college. We feel certain that the manner in which our campaign was carried out (including the loud speaker in Lord Hall) caused a revision of this opinion in certain quarters. Although we bow in defeat to the victorious, we are proud to say that we gave them a good fight. Maybe we have proven that the engineer is as well-qualified to carry on high-pressure advertising and salesmanship as the members of any other college. We are living in an engineering age and it's up to the technically-trained man to prove himself capable of handling an executive position. Where is there a better place to start than right here in college?

FROM THE PATENT OFFICE

With the noun "invention" most of us associate the word "patent." An invention is defined as being a new idea or a new arrangement of old ideas. An idea may be new to one person but old to another. If a man gets such an idea and believes that it has commercial possibilities, he generally applies for a "patent" or letters patent as it is sometimes called.

When he applies to the government for a patent he sets down a very accurate and detailed description of his idea or invention. The patent examiner searches the records of not only this country but those of every other country as well and if he finds that someone has already conceived this idea, the applicant is refused a patent, but if he finds that the idea or invention of the applicant is entirely new or is an entirely new arrangement of old ideas, the applicant is granted a patent.

What is a patent and why is it issued by governments? The applicant makes public, by his description, all the details of his invention when he applies for a patent. If his idea is new and is his own, he is granted an exclusive monopoly, to use, make and vend his invention during a seventeen year period, after which time (if the patent is not renewed) his invention becomes public property. This makes a patent a sort of contract between the holder and the government.

We recently came across some very interesting figures concerning the number and kind of patents issued from the U. S. Patent Office during the week of October 22-29, 1930. At the beginning of this week there were 117,047 patent applications awaiting action. During the week there were 744 patents granted. Of this number, approximately 8.5% were relative to the automobile industry, 4.5% were relative to the electrical industry, 2% concerned the radio industry, while only 1% related to aviation.

The nature of the patents that were issued ranged from razors, lawn mowers, and milk bottle caps, to refrigerator systems. The number of patent applications is steadily increasing. Some patents are very valuable and some are worthless. It is reported that the man who invented the autographic kodak sold his idea for \$70,000 plus a royalty. There are perhaps two items into which more money has been sunk for patents than any other. They are perpetual motion and safety razors.

—F. H. T.

Since the days of Louis XV when the king, to please Madame Pompadour, purchased the newly-founded Sevres porcelain works, the reputation gained by the French in the porcelain field has been world-wide. The Sevres plant still belongs to the government. Today the French again lead the world in developing the newest tendencies in the porcelain field. The present concentration is on a soothing flowing of curves or a clever breaking up of squares and triangles. Translucent porcelains for lighting purposes have been introduced as well as highly colored figures for the home. All of these articles are put well within the reach of the man of average income.

—Ceramic Age.

THE ENGINEER AS AN EXECUTIVE

The world has always needed leadership. Yesterday that leadership was military and political. It made no difference what form of government any country had; it was successful as long as it had leadership and it failed when it did not. Neither military nor political leadership is creative. Business was called successful only when it took away something that some one else had created. The kind of leadership that the past had was undoubtedly the leadership it needed. Times have changed and there has been a revolution in thought. Today political and military leadership cannot serve the people as well as industrial leadership.

The engineer is destined to become an important figure in the new age which is dawning. However, he cannot occupy a position of such importance without his share of duties and responsibilities. He cannot be a leader without taking upon himself the task of solving many of the problems of our civilization, human problems as well as mechanical, problems in finance, in government, in education, and in social life. The engineer must direct the labors of thousands of uneducated men, and he cannot escape some responsibility for their well-being. The work of his hands and brain may build up or destroy the welfare of whole industrial communities and of gigantic corporations. As an employer of young engineers he must take an active part in their education, that great part of education which comes when school days are over, and he may, if he has the wisdom, exercise a human influence more important than he can ever estimate. With such a role to play in the development of our civilization, the engineer must think in human terms as well as in materials—in terms of a leader and not of an automaton.

The engineer holding an executive position in an industrial firm has an obvious advantage over the business man without a technical education. He understands at once the scope and limitations of each enterprise before he undertakes it. If he has worked in the field he understands labor conditions, the handling of men, the detailing of work. He can judge the technical men he employs. Many a venture has failed because its promoter did not understand the technical problems of his undertaking and was not fitted to pick proper experts to investigate them for him. The executive must exercise vision and display wisdom and judgment with respect to external, but very important social and economic forces.

The engineer should accept the position of the leader—the executive, for he is the man who understands today's problems and the greater problems of tomorrow. He is in his own right, his professional right. Will he accept the call?—W. R. Fiedler.

SPINNING FOUR 36" CABLES FOR THE FORT LEE BRIDGE

The job was completed in nine and one-half months, a record time. The four cables weighed 28,400 tons. The main span is 3,500 feet, nearly twice that of any previous span. The method of spinning is fundamentally the same as that used by John A. Roebling in 1854 on the Niagara River bridge.

—Engineering News-Record