

The Alumni

The relations of the alumni to the Institute have during the past ten years grown much closer and more effective; and the present year is to be an especially important one in this respect. There is to be held in Boston next June the Quinquennial Reunion of all Technology Alumni. There is to be issued under the auspices of the Reunion Committee and the Institute the first complete register of former students, including non-graduates as well as graduates, and thus identifying the former more closely with the Institute. The Alumni Association is about to be reorganized through the formation of an Alumni Council of about sixty members so chosen as to be thoroughly representative of the whole body. This Council will form a responsible body whose advice and co-operation may properly be invited by the President and Corporation in connection with many of the problems of development.

For fostering and extending the relations with the former students of the Institute no opportunity should be lost; for upon their feeling towards it depends in large measure its success. Their attitude determines its reputation throughout the country; their influence is directly or indirectly the source of most of its students. Their enthusiasm stimulates its officers and professors to greater efforts; and their aid in securing financial support is essential to its development. Our Alumni Association is most active in keeping our former students informed in regard to the Institute, and in maintaining their interest in its welfare; but the Institute authorities must also co-operate in this undertaking. Among other things, the administrative officers or other deputed members of the Corporation and Faculty should visit periodically the various alumni associations throughout the country. Dean Burton has just returned from a trip of this kind to the Pacific Coast, where he took part in the organization of two new Technology associations, in Seattle, Washington, and Portland, Oregon, respectively.

The Secondary Schools

The relations of the Institute to the secondary schools deserve constant attention. With those schools the Institute has always kept closely in touch with reference to its entrance requirements, taking care not to make them so excessive as to discourage the pupils from the city high schools, whom by reason of their ability we wish to attract, or so uneven as to distort the curricula of those schools. Any addition to our requirements should, I believe, be of an alternative character, so that they may be adapted to the different preparation afforded by the various types of high schools which are constantly becoming more diversified. It is, for example, desirable that it be made easier for graduates of Latin high schools to enter the Institute.

But there is another direction in which the relations of the Institute and of other scientific schools to the secondary schools need to be cultivated. Owing to the fact that by far the larger number of teachers in the high schools have received an academic rather than a scientific training, owing to the undue development in this section of the country of the sentiment that a more effective education is secured under the collegiate plan than under that followed by even the best scientific schools, and owing to the failure to appreciate that the social and physical sides of student-life are developed at the Institute upon a sounder basis and in better proportioned measure than at most of the colleges, the advantages of our system of education and the opportunities afforded by the scientific professions in general are not sufficiently understood by boys in the preparatory schools nor by their teachers and parents. There is, therefore, a need in this community of better informing the public in regard to this matter,—not so much because the interests of the Institute are involved, as because it is important that both types of educational effort be duly appreciated. It is to be hoped that individual members of our instructing staff will avail themselves of any opportunities that occur for the presentation of these considerations to the teachers and pupils of the secondary schools; also that the Faculty Committee on the Relations with Secondary Schools consider what can be done in this direction. There is, however, no part of the Institute organization which

can accomplish so much on this side as our student-body, the individuals of which can readily maintain close relations with the special schools from which they have come.

The Public

There are also important relations to be maintained with the general public. The public should be kept informed, through the press, and otherwise, of the activities of the Institute; and all those industrial, commercial, and transportation interests which are in any measure dependent on scientific knowledge and investigation should be made to feel that the Institute stands ready to place at their service for the study of their problems the expert advice of its staff and its laboratory facilities; and in the further development of those facilities, through the establishment of research laboratories of applied science and of engineering testing stations and through the installation of the elaborate testing machines and other scientific instruments needed for investigation purposes, the co-operation of the manufacturers of this community should be secured.

The Society of Arts, the oldest part of our organization, has for its primary function the general dissemination of scientific knowledge and especially with reference to the recent advances and practical applications of the sciences; but it also furnishes incidentally a means of making the work of the Institute known to the public. I am glad to be able to tell you that as a result of the earnest efforts of its Executive Committee, new life has been infused into that Society and an unusually valuable and attractive program has been arranged for the meetings of the present year.

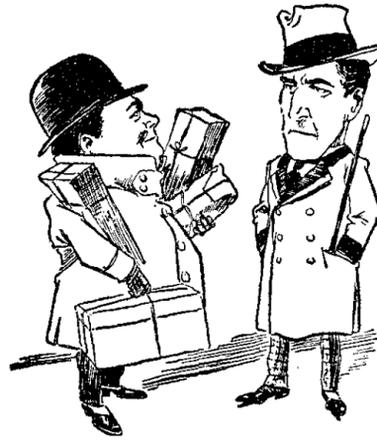
The State

With the State the Institute naturally stands in intimate relations. It bears its name, is located in its capital city, and it received from it its charter and the plot of ground on which its older buildings are located. Three representatives of the State sit upon its governing board. Forty free scholarships are maintained, available for applicants from the various senatorial districts. Finally for a number of years financial aid has been received from the Commonwealth. Without sacrificing its national scope or its own independence, it should therefore constantly strive to serve the State in every possible way—in the development of its natural resources, the improvement of its industrial processes and its transportation facilities, and especially in the solution of its educational problems. In all these respects, it should stand to the Commonwealth much in the same relation as do the progressive State Universities of the Middle West.

As an aid to the officers of the Institute in promoting closer affiliations in these and other directions, the Institute has been fortunate in securing the services of Mr. I. W. Litchfield, one of our former students who has long shown a deep interest in the Institute and an energetic and intelligent co-operation in its work. Since the beginning of his official connection with the Institute last September, he has taken an important part in the successful starting of the Technology Union, in the development of the Society of Arts, in the co-ordination of the work of the student press reporters, and in other matters relating to the public sides of the Institute's work.

It will, of course, be appreciated that, though it is the function of the President to be in touch with all the various organizations and interests that have been mentioned, and though he must often take the lead in extending the relations between them and the Institute, yet he can perform, even with the assistance of the other administrative officers, only a trifling part of all that needs to be done in these directions. In closing this report, I would therefore emphasize, as the watchwords of our future progress, the ideas of co-operation and closer relationships. If there be also shown an implicit confidence in the soundness of our educational system and in its support by the community, its proper growth and development will be assured.

The monthly meeting of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers will be held on Wednesday evening, at 39 Boylston Street.



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