

THE TECH

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In charge of this issue: M. R. SCHARFF, 1909

Friday, March 15, 1907.

There are probably few engineers engaged in the design or conduct of work who will not readily concede the claims of good judgment in engineering. The work of many engineers has been successful largely because of the possession of this faculty, strongly developed. With some of these scientific knowledge has been somewhat, though not wholly, wanting, mathematical skill being limited to the most rudimentary forms of calculation. Many branches of engineering have advanced to a very considerable degree of excellence largely by the use of good judgment. Works have been carried out, machines of various kinds constructed, and ships built with but little else to assist the designer. Better structures, better machines, and better ships have resulted with the aid of latter day knowledge; but the essential point is that the judgment alone accomplished much. This faculty is of the greatest importance, for instance, in considering whether any existing structure is safe or not, in which case it becomes the ultimate court of reference.

However, long continued and observant exercise of this quality, while leading to greater reliability and confidence in its possessor, may and sometimes does, induce some contempt for strictly scientific methods of reasoning. Similarly the man of mathematical ability is quite as prone, while cultivating his own particular talent to a state of high efficiency, to slight the value of judgment, even to the extent of trifling with the premises to an analysis, content if his reasoning upon them be correct. The best work has undoubtedly been

done by men possessing both reliable judgment and scientific knowledge.

A prominent engineering journal recently summed up the whole question as follows:

"While no one to day has any intention of attempting to glorify the judgment at the expense of strict scientific methods, still the tendency of any long continued course of academic study is to subordinate this faculty to methods of precision, and to stifle in its growth a most valuable attribute which should rather be cultivated in the fullest measure by any engineer who hopes to do good work."

PRIZE DRILL DISCUSSED.

Further arrangements for the Annual Interscholastic Individual Drill to be held on May 1 were discussed at a meeting of the Prize Drill Committee held during the drill hour on Wednesday. The matter of arrangements for the M. I. T. Prize Drill was left for a later meeting.

Mr. C. L. Wright, '02, is with the U. S. Geological Survey and is at present working at their Fuel Testing Plant at St. Louis.

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