

STATEMENT BY THE COMMITTEE ON VOCATIONAL
GUIDANCE IN ENGINEERING LINES OF THE AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF ENGINEERS

New York City, Jan. 23, 1931.

For several years past the American Association of Engineers has had in mind the preparation and wide distribution of a book on "Vocational Guidance in Engineering Lines," to be written by leading American specialists in the various branches of technical activity; and the undersigned have been appointed as a committee to secure the MS. therefor and to edit and publish the work.

This book is the first part of a program to secure for the engineering schools of our country the best possible students, and to eliminate the many unfit who apply for admission, thus attaining numerous important desiderata, among which might be mentioned the following:

- A. A large and useless expenditure of money would be avoided by reducing to a minimum the number of students that are dropped because of lack of ability or diligence. The amount of money wasted annually by our technical schools, in an endeavor to impart instruction to students who are absolutely unfit to assimilate it, would, if computed, be simply appalling!
- B. By weeding out ab initio the incompetents, the ultra-slow thinkers, and the other undesirables, the pace set for the classes would be materially augmented, thus enabling more ground to be covered - and better covered - by the curriculum. It is a well known fact that, in most technical schools, the course has to be regulated to suit the average capacity of the entire class, or even that of its lower half, thus discouraging and impeding the capable students and inviting laziness.
- C. It is far better for any applicant for entrance to be rejected at the outset than to enter only to be dropped for inability. A "flunk-out" seldom recovers from the disgrace of being dropped, because it stigmatizes him forever as a failure, especially in his own consciousness, and thus tends to prevent his achieving even moderate success in life. If a man of somewhat inferior ability be greatly desirous of entering some line of practical technics, he could do so by attending a trade school or some other type of institution that is suited to his mediocre capacity. After two or three years, if he were truly earnest and hard-working, he could thereby attain to a fairly successful technical career in some minor position, although he would never become eminent. In case it be found that a mistake was made by sending a boy to a trade school, it could easily be rectified by transferring him to a higher grade institution. This, it is true,