

In this connection it is interesting to note that in 1887 the members were 53% of the total membership; in 1897, 47.5%; in 1907, 26.7%; and 1916, 22.6%. Associate members in 1887 were 15.4%; in 1897, 25%; 1907, 37%; in 1916, 52.5%. Or, classing juniors with associate members, 57.8%. Summarizing, the percentage of members has dropped from 53% to 22.6%, while the percentage of associate members has risen from 15.4% to 52.5%.

In addition to the above, codes of ethics have been adopted and other internal changes made as required to keep abreast of our growth and the times. Legislation has been sought and obtained in some cases, whether that legislation has always been wise or not, it was nevertheless the desire of the majority of the members at the time, and, in either view, it now has little effect on the general activities of the members and may be left out of the discussion.

That ends my formal address. My further remarks are largely my personal opinions on the future conduct of our Society, are thus controversial and do not properly belong to a presidential address—indeed, it would perhaps be wiser to stop here on safe ground; but, in view of the interest now aroused in quickening our activities and enlarging our scope, the attention these matters are likely to receive at this meeting and the inability of the chair to take part in the discussion, I cannot let the opportunity go without making some comments and suggestions. I trust it will be understood I ask your further attention to my informal remarks to follow, only because of my deep interest in the welfare of the Society and the profession. I have had an active part in the management of its affairs for a long time, having served on the council for fifteen years starting in 1894, and have knowledge of many of the complaints, suggestions and acts of the Society during that period. In reference to one frequent complaint, I wish to say that I have not served on any council in that time of which the members who could attend have not been regular in attendance and have not given their best thought to every question that arose touching the welfare of the Society or the consideration of the applications for membership in whatever grade.

The statistics, showing as they do a very healthy growth in membership and apparently a widespread interest, if taken by themselves would seem to be cause for complacency and a feeling that all is well. We know, however, from the many complaints, that most of our members are far from satisfied, and I feel myself that we have only made a start towards organizing our forces to advance our profession to that position in public estimation to which the engineer is entitled.

We may first inquire of what benefit the Society can be to its members and what it is now accomplishing. It seems to me the benefits to be expected are of two kinds: First, what might be called the internal benefits within the profession, such as the professional standing amongst ourselves, conferred by membership; the advancement of professional knowledge by the reading and discussion of papers and the work of technical committees; the acquaintances and friendships brought about by meetings, conventions and other Society activities; and some advantages to its members in finding employment and advancement resulting from the above.

The other class of benefits we might call external, broadly covered by the proper recognition of the profession of the engineer by the public, including the proper appreciation of the engineer's services on engineering questions, and the further recognition by the public that the

engineer by his training and attainments should be eminently fitted to take his place in public affairs and that he should be sought as an adviser in questions not only of engineering, but as well on other important matters where his engineering training and standing qualify him to give sound advice on affairs not directly related to the practice of his profession. The latter feature, under many different headings and in different ways, has been the subject of a number of addresses and discussions amongst our neighbors in the United States and the technical press has made several references to success attending this movement.

In my view we should strive for all these benefits both internal and external, but we cannot hope to attain full success in our quest for external benefits until we have put our house thoroughly in order and so organized our institution that we realize the internal benefits to the greatest extent possible, and I wish therefore to make a few suggestions as to improvements that seem within our immediate grasp.

It seems to me important to have some arrangement by which the considerable portion of our membership far removed from headquarters can keep in touch with the work of the Society and can take its share of directing that work. It is true that every member now receives a report of proceedings at the annual meetings, such transactions as our limited funds enable us to print, and most of the members belong to some local branch or division where matters of more or less general interest come up for discussion and which sends in a report once a year to be distributed to all of the members of the Society. This, however, is long-range work—in many cases divested by elapsed time of its interest, and there must be many who would be glad to take an active interest and discuss our affairs from time to time as they arose, as does the Central Council, but who do not care to give the time to put their views in correspondence—indeed, there is little opportunity for any one to do so.

I think some plan should be devised by which there should be a special meeting of the council at least once a year, preferably twice, to discuss the more important affairs of the Society. If it is not feasible to bring the whole council together, delegates could be sent from the provincial divisions where these exist, and arrangements could be made to nominate a councillor to represent a district where a division has not yet been formed. It seems to me that in an organization such as ours, meeting in general convention only once a year and properly limited in its actions as to changes in by-laws and the general conduct of affairs so that these can only be brought about by slow and elaborate process, it is necessary to leave much to the direction of the council. For, while the discussions that take place at these annual meetings are most valuable, little action can result from them except as it is worked up in detail by the council, and I think important affairs should be discussed and determined by more of the council than can possibly attend the ordinary meetings.

Many of our councillors resident in Ottawa, Quebec and Toronto sometimes attend the regular meetings, but it must be a tax to come even this distance and it cannot be expected that councillors will come from a greater distance unless by special arrangement and when there are definite important matters to discuss. The experiment of a conference was tried two years ago with some success, but there is not adequate machinery in existence to continue the good work started and the finances of the Society have not permitted the expense of calling subse-