

150 Broadway
New York, N.Y.
March 10, 1932

The Honorable,
The Board of Trustees
of Columbia University

Gentlemen:

At the close of a conference with Gen. Wm. Barclay Parsons concerning the project of the American Association of Engineers to elicit, edit, and publish a book, "Vocational Guidance in Engineering Lines," written by leading specialists and educators in the main branches of engineering, the General advised us to address you in writing upon the subject. This we now do.

HISTORY OF PROJECT

In recent years, prominent statesmen, industrialists, and educators all over the United States have seen the necessity for starting the youth of our nation in those careers for which they are best fitted. Such men as President Herbert Hoover, Dr. Owen D. Young, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, and others have voiced their belief in the value of disseminating authentic information about the many vocations open to young men. The American Association of Engineers in 1926 embarked on an objective program of vocational guidance in engineering lines. Little was accomplished, however, before January 1, 1931. Since that date, the present committee has been working steadily in preparing a book addressed primarily to junior and senior students in the high schools throughout the country. Fifty-two leading engineers and educators have collaborated with them on this important enterprise, and now the manuscript of the book is ready for the printer.

DESCRIPTION OF BOOK

The book consists of sixty chapters, eight by the editors and fifty-two by eminent specialists, besides an Appendix, "Who's Who in the Book." (List of chapters and authors given to Gen. Parsons.) Each chapter describes briefly the work of one of the main lines or specialties of engineering, tells what the opportunities are, what training is required, and what rewards may be expected. The book expounds what the Engineering Profession really is, and its great importance to the world. Essential characteristics of an engineer are noted, and there is constant warning against too early specialization. Much valuable general and specific advice is given, with particular emphasis on the question of who are and who are not suited by both nature and training for entrance into the profession.

The book will contain some 570 pages, including 50 photographic illustrations of outstanding engineering constructions and 17 photostated letters from eminent men commending the undertaking. (List of endorsers given to Gen. Parsons.) It will be an excellent model of technical English. It will be valuable not only in the high schools, but also in the colleges, as a textbook descriptive of the wide scope of engineering.