ACADEMIC EFFICIENCY

About ten years ago I was asked by the president and general manager of a large manufacturing corporation to advise him how to improve the performance of his boiler house. During the previous winter it was pushed to its utmost to deliver enough steam to run the engines and to keep the buildings warm, and the next winter, on account of extensions to the factory and increased output, the demand for steam would be still greater. Before beginning my work the president told me something of the history of the company, and of how he came to be the general manager. It had grown in fifty years from a small concern to a large one, occupying several blocks of ground. The business was the manufacture of a variety of shelf hardware. He had for several years been a director and the manager of the sales department, and on the death of the former factory manager the directors insisted on his taking the place, although, as he said, he knew nothing about running a factory. He started in to learn how by calling in the best outside expert advice available. He was paying $10,000 for a year’s services of a highly skilled expert in machinery, jigs and methods of manufacturing, who was making a revolution in the shop, which amply justified the high price paid for his services. This man said he knew nothing about boilers, and therefore I was called in to tackle the boiler problem. Incidentally the president told me that the catalogue of the products made by the concern con-