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## PROBLEMS OF THE ENGINEER

By Dr. FRANK B. JEWETT

BELL TELEPHONE LABORATORIES

AFTER a great many years of activity in one branch of the engineering profession, and through it having had some considerable contact with practically all the other branches of engineering, it seems to me that we are approaching an era—possibly we are already in that era—when the problems of the engineer, and particularly the problems of the engineering profession, are about to undergo some rather radical changes in their fundamental features. Whether we like it or not, and whether we would change the situation if we could, it seems clear not only that we are living in a highly mechanized age, but also that we and our children and their children are destined to continue to live in an even more highly mechanized environment. Periodically we hear or read statements

<sup>1</sup> Address of the retiring vice-president of Section M—Engineering, American Association for the Advancement of Science, New Orleans, Louisiana, December 30, 1931.

and wails to the effect that it would be nice if we could return to a simpler mode of living. Any such possibility seems to be quite out of the question, however. The things of science which have been made useful to the people through the work of engineers have not only come to stay but are destined to increase in number. They have come in such large measure already, and they bid fair to come in such greater measure in the years ahead that many of the old controls which were developed through long ages of human activity no longer suffice for a proper ordering of them for the well-being of society.

We have about us everywhere the evidences of attempts to control a new scheme of living through the rules and regulations which grew up in an essentially agricultural and trading age. We are witness to all sorts of legislative action taken in an endeavor to control by statute things which can not be con-

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