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ENGINEERING'S PART IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIZATION¹

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SINCE the effects of engineering run all through living conditions, our topic is one of great importance to engineers and to engineering education. It is therefore appropriate for to-day's conference to be held here under the patronage of an important college of engineering and an organized society of engineers. The sub-topic ("The Social Significance of Engineering") which was under discussion this afternoon is a broad and pervasive one which means the import of engineering to society. The sub-topic also includes various others by implication. For example, it includes the social influence of engineering, which means the effect through the senses which engineering exerts

¹ Evening address delivered as part of Symposium on "The Engineer's Place in Modern Civilization," held at Lehigh University on October 26, 1938, under the joint direction of the University and the Engineers' Club of the Lehigh Valley.

on society; it includes the social implications of engineering, which means the intimate connections which relate engineering to social organization and social interrelations; and it also includes, among other things, the status or position of engineering as an entity with respect to society-organization as an entity. This evening I will go even more broadly into social relations and deal with the tripartite interrelations of engineering, social organization and civilization.

It is proper to here comment that true civilization grows as a consequence of community contacts among human beings, and intimate community contacts are (broadly speaking) made possible by and are dependent on the fruits of engineering. Such fruits became vaguely manifest many thousands of years ago and have steadily ripened and increased in scope and variety, through those thousands of years, down to the

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