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CRITICISM OF THE ENGINEERING SCHOOLS¹

FRANCIS BACON said in the introduction to his "Maxims of the Law":

I hold every man a debtor to his profession; from the which as men, of course, do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought of duty to endeavor themselves by way of amends to be a help and ornament thereunto.

This quotation is so enriched by age that it can be constantly quoted without attracting the charge of being trite; and its meaning is particularly apposite to my subject. I press it upon your attention the more willingly because teachers and professional men generally are given to overlooking the importance of its precept. An engineering school has a hard duty, for it must teach science and business, humanity and common sense, and withal it must give its students professional ideals. The present is a period of discussion and adjustment of the relationships of engineering courses to the preparatory schools and to the so-called liberal college courses. Various of our universities are setting up requirements for entrance into their engineering courses which include a part of the subjects leading more particularly to the bachelor of arts degree; and one of our greatest universities has made the possession of a bachelor of arts or equivalent degree the prime requirement of entrance into the studies of its engineering school, and has called its school a "graduate school of engineering." The adopted name for that school seems to me a misnomer, for the major portion of its teach-

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¹ Lecture before the Stevens Engineering Society, November 23, 1909.