The functions of the council, as outlined in the constitution adopted at the meeting, are as follows:

1. To endeavor to obtain, at the request of any interested group, the desired cooperation of organizations in any standardization project in the mechanical field.
2. To confer with any organization in the mechanical field interested in or carrying on work which eventually may be presented for action under the rules of procedure of the American Standards Association.
3. To advise the American Standards Association on questions of policy relating to standardization applying to products of the mechanical industries.
4. To serve as a general coordinating medium in the mechanical field, within the scope of the constitution, by-laws and rules of procedure of the American Standards Association.
5. To consider—
   (a) the desirability and practicability of standardization projects within its field,
   (b) the order in which standards shall be developed,
   (c) the scope of projects,
   (d) sponsorships for the necessary sectional committees, and
   (e) the adjustment of conflicts and the clearing up of ambiguities.
6. To follow up and expedite work in the development of standards.

In accordance with its constitution, the council voted to designate the representatives of the Society of Automotive Engineers, the National Machine Tool Builders Association, the American Standards Association, the Manufacturers Standardization Society of the Valve and Fittings Industry, the American Society for Testing Materials and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers as the executive committee of the new council.

The meeting recently held followed two preceding conferences of April 7, 1926, and June 20, 1928. The first conference, called by the society, answered the questions of "how to standardize" by unanimously determining that the procedure of the American Standards Association (formerly known as the American Engineering Standards Committee) is the method which should be employed in developing and promulgating a standard of sufficient scope to seriously affect more than a single group of interests.

The second conference decided upon "what and when to standardize" by approving the recommendations of the first conference's special plan and scope committee that such functions should rest with industry itself and by creating a temporary executive committee with power to further develop a basic instrument or constitution for the necessary organization, to be known as the Mechanical Standards Advisory Council, and also to call a meeting at which this council would be organized upon a permanent basis.

THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA RIFT CLUB

THE Rift Club meets several times a year at localities where faults are shown, for study and discussion. For the winter meeting the adjacent Death and Panamint Valleys of eastern California were selected, and a detailed road and camping schedule covering four days from December 27 to 30 was prepared. Over fifty people made the trip, in a caravan of twenty-one motor cars, under the leadership of Mr. R. B. Peters, of San Bernardino, club president, and Professor J. E. Wolff, of Harvard University (retired), arranger of the program.

Death and Panamint Valleys are narrow troughs extending north and south between lofty mountain ranges. Each range is a tilted fault block, with a steep compound fault escarpment as its western boundary. The party studied numerous component scarps of these systems, some cutting across alluvial fans. It was also noticed that the alluvial fans on the west side of each valley are broken by north-south faults, each with upthrow on the fanhead side. A noteworthy prospect was that west from Dante's View, including both Death Valley, below sea-level and the lowest point in America, and in the far distance Mt. Whitney, the highest point in the United States. These great differences of elevation are the result of geologically recent movements or faults.

Death, Panamint and adjacent valleys are more or less completely closed basins. A rather recent event in their geologic history has been the formation and subsequent desiccation of great lakes, whose shorelines and saline deposits remain in testimony. The Rift Club noted vague shore-lines in Death Valley, clearer cases in Panamint Valley, and the perfect terrace above "Searles Lake" west of Panamint Valley.

The trip closed with a circuit of the great potash and borax works at Trona, where the brines pumped from beneath the dry floor of "Searles Lake" are fractionally crystallized to rob them of their more valuable constituents. This opportunity, and the turkey dinner which followed, the club owed to the courtesy of the American Potash and Chemical Company. The club had previously been accorded the great privileges of wood and water at every possible point, and even freedom from toll over Townsend Pass. The desert hospitality was much appreciated.

THE RIO GRANDE NATIONAL FOREST

THE Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture regards the Rio Grande National