

History of Armour Institute of Technology



Institute of Technology was founded in 1892, by Mr. Philip D. Armour, of Chicago. The work of instruction was begun in September, 1893." Behind this brief quotation from the institute year book is a story of the personal consecration and brotherly affection of two men, which powerfully contradicts the hasty assumption so often advanced that commercial ideals to-day are hostile to the higher motives and gentler emotions of life.

Mr. Joseph Armour left, in 1881, a bequest of \$100,000, to be used in promoting the moral and intellectual development of children and youths. This bequest was given into the charge of his brother, Mr. Philip D. Armour, who has not only been a faithful executor of his brother's benefaction, but has added to it gifts aggregating two millions of dollars.

Following the spirit of the bequest intrusted to him, Mr. Armour erected the spacious building at Armour Avenue and 33d Street, now known as Armour Mission, in which he established what was then known as the Plymouth Mission Sunday School, an organization supported in that neighborhood since 1874 by members of the Plymouth Congregational Church. The effect of this mission was most marked in the neighborhood, and led Mr. Armour to erect the fine group of buildings known as the Armour Flats. These consist of two hundred and thirteen separate suites of apartments, forming an attractive neighborhood, and a congenial environment for the great engineering school which now stands in their midst.

The development of this institution from the antecedent conditions just enumerated was due to the conviction of Mr. Armour and his co-workers, that their benevolent enterprise would fail of its highest aim, unless practical education were added to the moral and religious forces already at work to produce good and efficient members of society. Accordingly a school was planned to include only academic and industrial training; but through the wise forethought of Mr. Armour's pastor, Dr. F. W. Gunsaulus, who was its first president, and who from the first realized the possibilities of the enterprise, its scope was widened so as to make room for higher technical training along various engineering lines, the limits of which were not at first precisely defined. The importance to the community of this kind of education was also strenuously urged by engineers and educators, and their views were reinforced by the many applications for extended courses in engineering that were received as soon as this purpose of the Institute became known.

In March, 1893, President Gunsaulus committed to Prof. Thos. C. Roney, Dean of the new Faculty, the work of co-ordinating these varied elements, and developing a plan by which the departments already established, or to be established, might be united in a logical