

Mr. Chas. F. Hart

Vice-President of the National Association of Stationary Engineers, Chicago

On the twenty-sixth of October, 1903, Dr. Gunsaulus introduced Mr. Hart, part of whose address is here given.

Dr. Gunsaulus and Students of Armour Institute:

Perhaps the thing which has caused me the keenest regret is the fact that I never had an opportunity to get a thorough technical education. Twenty years ago, when I was in a position to take advantage of such an opportunity, none was open to me, except at a tremendous expense, which I could not afford, or thought that I could not. But perhaps I am a little closer to this matter of technical education than any one might think. For a number of years the Association of which I am a member has conducted examinations for stationary engineers in the City of Chicago, and there has been considerable feeling among many of the applicants because Armour Institute graduates have walked off with all the highest honors.

We had an examination some three years ago for a stationary engineer of the fifth grade for a pumping station. The two leaders in that examination were comparative boys and graduates of Armour Institute of less than one year. That shows you what it is possible to do. There were, taking that examination, twenty engineers of more than ordinary ability, and ten who to my mind were very fine operating engineers; but they had never reasoned on the basis of cause and effect. There was an effect produced—they knew that, but they did not know the cause of it. They also had never had the training in English which would enable them to express themselves intelligently and well.

It has been truly said that ability without opportunity is lost. While going through the various departments of your splendid institution my mind was taken back ten or fifteen years, to a young man of seventeen or eighteen, who had a wonderful aptitude for engineering, but had no opportunity to develop that talent; and perhaps no one appreciates Armour Institute more than I do, because I realize the fine opportunity it affords to earnest young men with ability and ambition.

Our organization, the National Association of Stationary Engineers, was started twenty-one years ago yesterday—October 25, 1882—with no other end in view than to educate the engineers, not simply from a technical or a professional standpoint, but to bring their knowledge up to the rank of professional men.

Now, Armour Institute gives us just such practical opportunities as are needed to make the stationary engineer a professional man. Disabuse your mind of the idea that the stationary engineer is rather the “under dog,” so to speak. I say to you, look out for the stationary engineer. There is more under his hat than you have any idea of. He has been through a line of work that called for close judgment. There is a saying that it is not what you know, but what you make the other fellow think you know, that counts. If a man