

## “Our Inspection Trip to the Illinois Steel Company”

Our inspection trip to the Illinois Steel Co. was a decided success. I say success because it, by far, surpassed any other inspection trip that we have had up to date. It served very nicely to brighten up a gloomy day and to divert our minds from the deep and drudged thot of laboratory work for that afternoon.

After boarding a dark-town transportation bus at the corner of State and Thirty-third St. we ambled southward for about forty blocks and then we transferred to a Hammond car which in it's southward route endeavors by every possible hook and crook to get one addled and confused in his directions. We rode this car with some difficulties and mental anguish to within a mile or two of the plant, and decided that it would be easiest to walk the rest of the way. We arrived at the gate of the Steel Co. at about one twenty, and found that we had to wait outside across the street from a BAR until our instructor arrived. He got there at about a quarter of two and then we passed inside the gate to the door of the reception room where we had to wait another half hour until the guide got all details properly booked and signed, and then he went thru a formal review to his superior, of where he would lead us and the wonders he would reveal to us. Our guide was a very trustworthy appearing sort of an individual who would keep us out of any place where there was any danger, either physical or mental. He wore a star and a blue uniform which showed some age but very few spots. The one remarkable thing about this man was his speed; he took us thru the plant like some fellows go thru college; in at one door and out at another. He knew a lot but it was a hard job to find out what it was, in fact, we never did find out much of what he knew. He told us a few things tho, for instance, he told us that they had some Bessemer converters and Blast furnaces around there somewhere.

After counting us two or three times and having us check everything except our hats and coats, our guide started out a little short of a run and we followed, keeping in sight as much as possible. We went over a high bridge first which gave an excellent birds-eye view of the layout of the grounds and buildings. We passed several human trucks carrying some heavy material in buckets with a sort of a hod. We wound around for a while over scrap iron and twisted rails and finally dodged into a sort of a shed with a couple of boards swinging on hinges for a door. We were rather surprised when we got inside to see a good exhibition of water falls. The water was tumbling and splashing down over some massive machinery. I asked somebody what it was and what the machinery was for and they said that they thot it was a Rail mill but didn't think that it was working. I looked around and found that the guide and most of our crowd was gone so I endeavored to catch up again. The next thing that we got into was the one thing that brightened up the afternoon, in fact we were dazzled for quiet a while after we left and had to wear blue glasses while we were inside. In entering we went up a very narrow stairway and into a side door (not the family entrance) and into a very large room, with a high roof. There were a number of men working high above us and they were making tumultuous noises which, if for our benefit, should have been left out. After satisfying ourselves that nothing was going to hurt us from above we went on down the center of the room and in front of some large open hearth furnaces. These were built of brick and lined with dolomite. These furnaces were going at a white heat but the operation was mostly over. The liquid iron was in a boiling state and was being prepared for tapping. Some strong backed men were scooping in some sort of a flux which