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H.Z. SW

March 1935

# TECHNOLOGY

## REVIEW

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## THE TABULAR VIEW

MANY ideas as well as actual changes in the theory of the structure of our society in recent years have gone unnoticed, because, not being fully understood by the majority, they have been passed over as unimportant. The development in the country of the subsistence-homestead idea is one innovation that has not received the attention that it deserves from the public. EDWIN S. BURDELL, '20, who writes on the production unit and subsistence-homestead projects in Dayton, was State Administrator for Emergency Education for Ohio before he came to Technology, last fall, to take the chair of Associate Professor of Sociology. He writes, therefore, from first-hand information. ¶ Professor Burdell feels that homesteading should not mean farming. It should be rural-urban living, at least until further decentralization of the factories makes it unnecessary to commute to crowded cities. A recent survey in Austria and Germany made by Clarence E. Pickett for the Government Subsistence Homestead Division confirmed this point of view. "Hitler," says Pickett, "hasn't interfered with Germany's farm-subsistence projects. Sixty-six thousand German families are living on small farms. One is in the suburbs of Berlin, and was financed jointly by the German government and Germany's largest electrical manufacturing company.

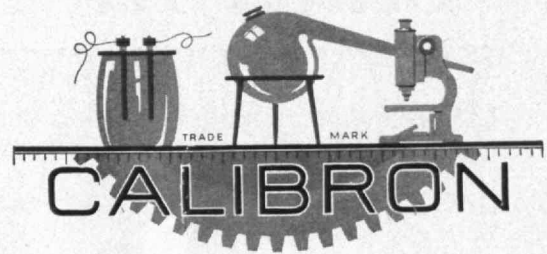
"Four hundred and sixteen families live in that community. They have three-room houses and plots of land 90 feet front by 225. They keep chickens and, sometimes, a goat for milk, and raise vegetables. Heads of families are employed by the electric concern.

"All of Germany's subsistence projects have been developed in 10 years, partly with government financing and partly on a 50-50 basis with industry, as in the Berlin community. Germans have found, however, that without some tie-up with industry the project is a failure.

"Families stick it out two or three years, then their clothes are worn out and they're sick of being without money. They hear of a job, and go and get it. The job comes to an end; they're out of work and back where they started.

"But one German state is organized on a 100 % subsistence-farm basis, and it's the only one not now suffering from depression. . . . Württemberg workmen travel as far as 25 miles to their factory employment. Citizens of one community hire a bus in common and travel together. One huge manufacturing concern employs 12,000 men all of whom live on their own small plots of ground."

AS Assistant Professor of Economics at the Institute, B. A. THRESHER, '20, has studied in detail the effects of technical innovations on political and economic life. ¶ D. C. SAYRE, '23, is on the staff of *Aviation*, and is a frequent contributor to The Review on aeronautical subjects. For further information on the air lines which will connect Pan American transpacific service readers are referred to the Technology Review of last December.



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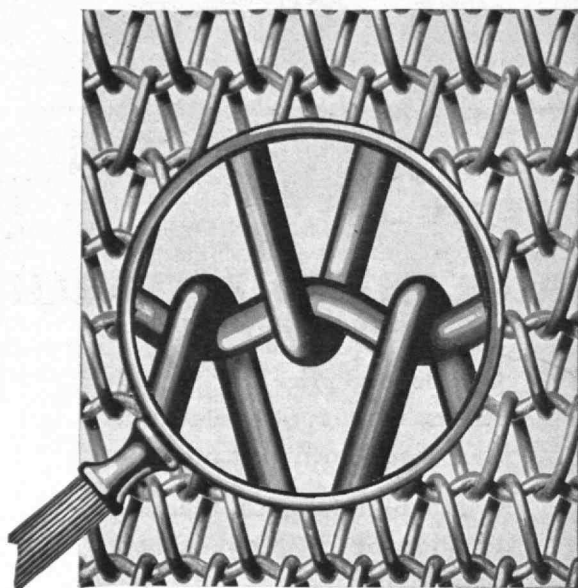


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## BENDING MOMENTS

*Left, Right; Left, Right*

DURING the January blow that brought an official 16 inches of snow to Boston but a full three feet in every place *we* had to shovel, there occurred one of those Shakespearian touches of nature that do make the whole world kin. One of the distinguished deans who head Technology's three schools stuck his shoes in his brief case and bravely mushed his way to the Institute in hip boots, with the idea, of course, that, once in his office, he would exchange the hip boots for his shoes, thereby resuming his usual meticulous professional dress. The plan worked well, with one minor *contretemps*. After successfully slipping into his office without any students seeing the hip boots, he sat down, after warming his toes at the radiator, to put on his shoes.

They were both for the left foot.

*Panhandlers vs. Professors*

During a recent science assembly in a distant city three Technology professors were returning from one of the meetings on a night that was bitter cold. Two of these professors were wrapped in heavy shawls and overcoats, and yet they shivered. The third was coatless and hatless, and seemingly quite warm. Now this professor No. 3 was thus scantily clothed purely from volition. He resolutely refuses in winter to add the usual wrappings that most of us find so inadequate, and day after day we see him sally forth in the blizzards and gales with only a hey nonny nonny, and no overcoat.

As these three strolled their frigid way, a panhandler accosted them, asking for a cup of coffee. Quick on the up-take, one of the becoated professors immediately said, "Just look, my dear man, at this chap here without hat or coat. We've got to do something to help him."

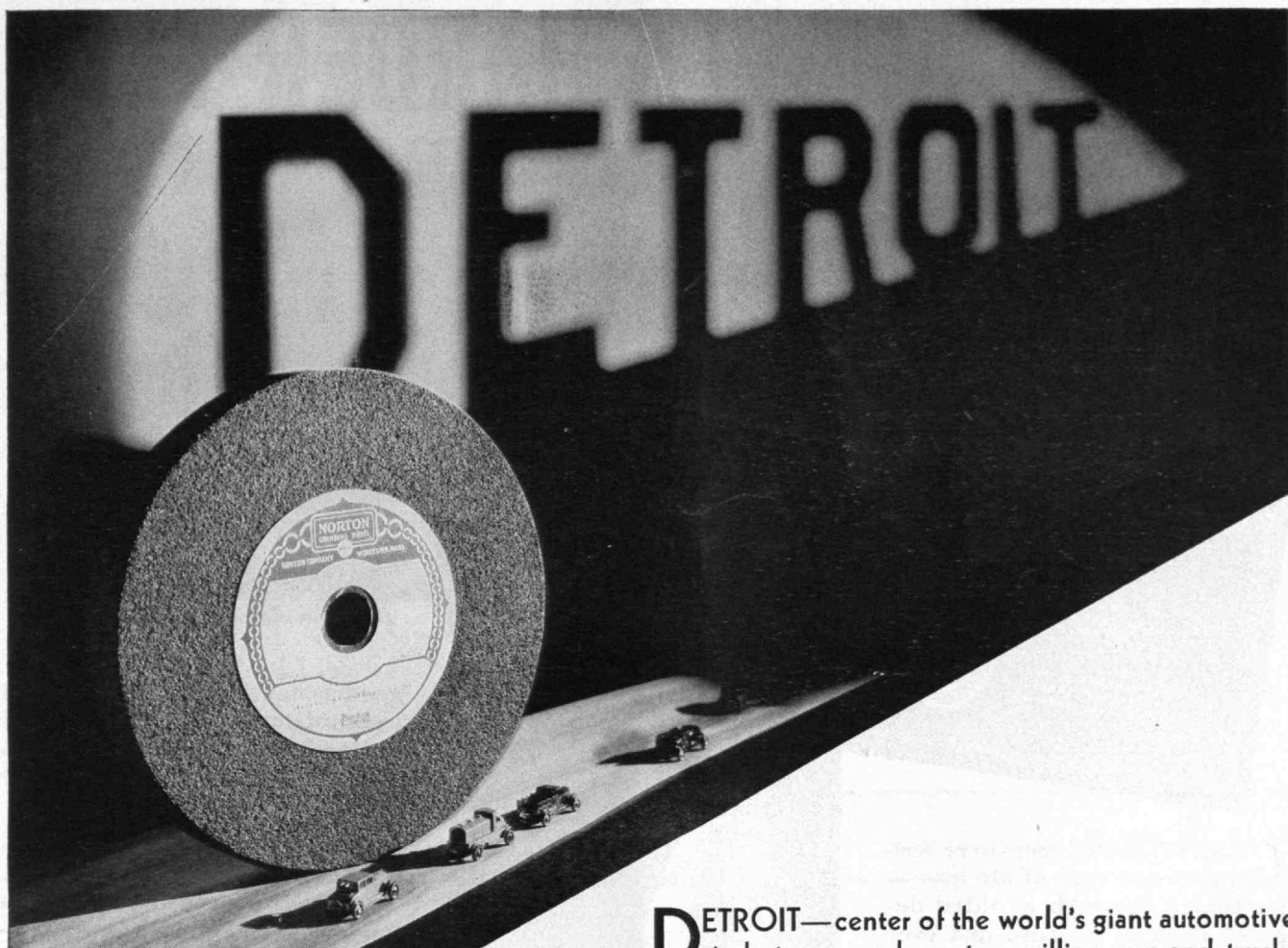
The Quidnuncs understand that the panhandler offered his contribution, but that it was gracefully refused.

C. Howard Walker, architect-philosopher, whose unmistakably patriarchal and professional figure graced the halls of Rogers for many years, was lately (so we have been informed by the *Boston Post*) taking a constitutional in the Boston Public Garden. He, too, was accosted by a panhandler and, with that readiness which we are coming to believe professors have cultivated for decoying panhandlers, he made a deal with the gentleman.

"I," he said, "will work the other side of the garden for a couple of hours, if you will work this side. At the end of that time we will meet here and split our gains." It was agreed, and the professor went back to his office. Two hours later he kept his appointment, and showed 50 cents. The genuine panhandler plunged his hand into a side pocket and pulled forth a great collection of nickels and dimes. The total was \$4.30.

Looking with obvious amusement at the surprise in Professor Walker's eyes, the panhandler, with professional arrogance, said, "You don't do so well; here's your share. You are still too new at the game."

THE QUIDNUNCs



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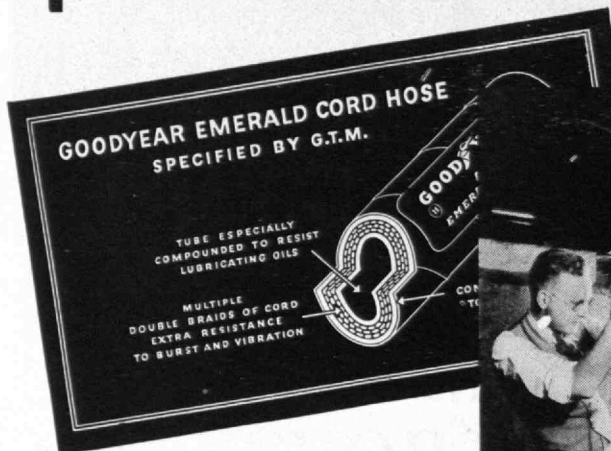
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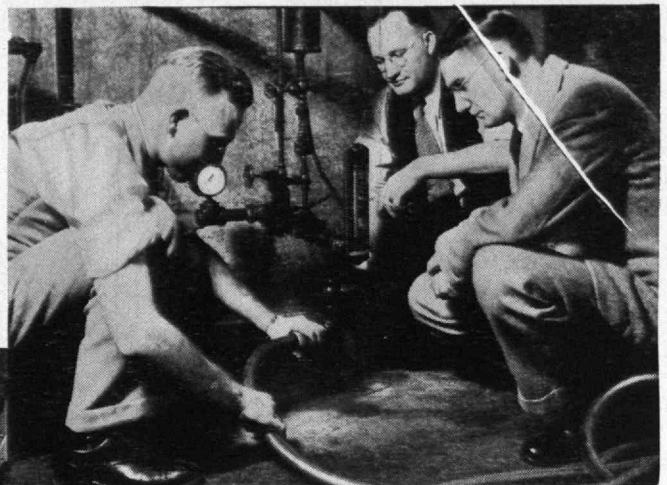
For air hose gets cruel and unusual punishment, even in everyday service. Heavy-laden trucks may run over it, cracking the carcass. Hot oil works through the line, disintegrating the tube. Dragging over rocks cuts the cover.

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*Boiling-hot oil—under pressure*

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## The trip-hammer test

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Irazu Volcano, Costa Rica, at 11,000 feet. Note that the smoke and steam arising from the crater form a profile similar to Padereuski's, the noted pianist

Jones

# THE TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

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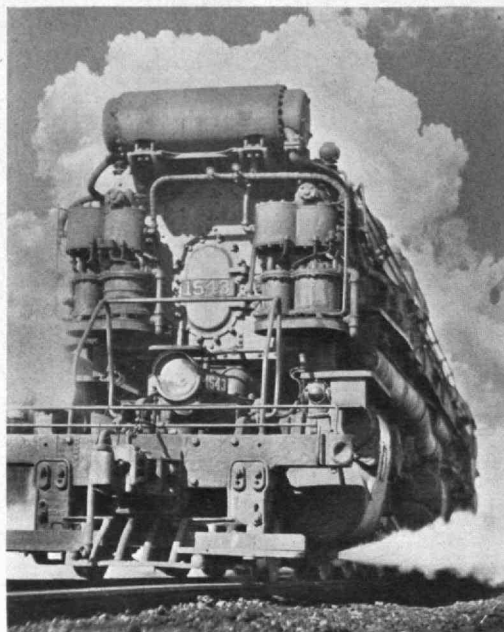
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## AN AID TO ALUMNI IN FINDING DESIRABLE POSITIONS



# THE TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

Vol. 37, No. 6



March, 1935

## The Trend of Affairs

### Notes and Observations

**A**FTER the lean months of mid-1934, business indices seem to have turned upward again, and this affords some comfort to those who still pay attention to business and statistical graphs. More reliable harbingers of a long delayed industrial spring, we were reminded on February 2, may sometimes be found by the old Candlemas Day method.

One of the hibernating ground hogs that has at last come out of the hole is the German inventor. In the good old days these fellows haunted the offices of every American corporation which was known to be interested and engaged in the promotion of inventions. Now they have turned up again, mostly with the same old ideas that were apparently put in moth balls in 1929. The plot remains the same, though the cast is new. Through an unimpeachable contact, a reliable friend of the executive to be approached, comes the word that he has just been in touch with a couple of men who seem to have something of interest. In due course these men turn up. One of them is a German, who has lived in this country, and is always merely a sort of friend, who is steering his companion through the mazes of American business. The other is a migrant, just over

from Germany, who "spitch" little English, and is visiting some relatives here. He, the story runs, has agreed with the inventor, who lives in Germany, to see what he can do about the marketing of the invention here. The invention is nearly always chemical (probably trading on the awe in which German synthetic chemistry was once held), and the representative, who is never the inventor himself, knows little about it, but is provided with beautiful samples, usually of a fireproof, waterproof, light-weight nailing concrete or an imitation marble. He always wishes to license nebulous and never-disclosed patents by states, or to sell outright, and the figure mentioned is never less than a quarter of a million.

The samples are always intriguing, and a long conference finally wears itself out when the Germans refuse to say anything definite about the ingredients, the patent situation, or, indeed, anything else, except the properties of the product, which are, of course, miraculous. No affidavits, no letters, no proofs of any sort are available.

It has always been a mystery how so many different Germans have access to the same inventions; and how these promoters live is still more remarkable, for they are always well dressed and plausible. Unquestionably some sort of a complicated "con" game, the situation is never

### BAEDEKAR

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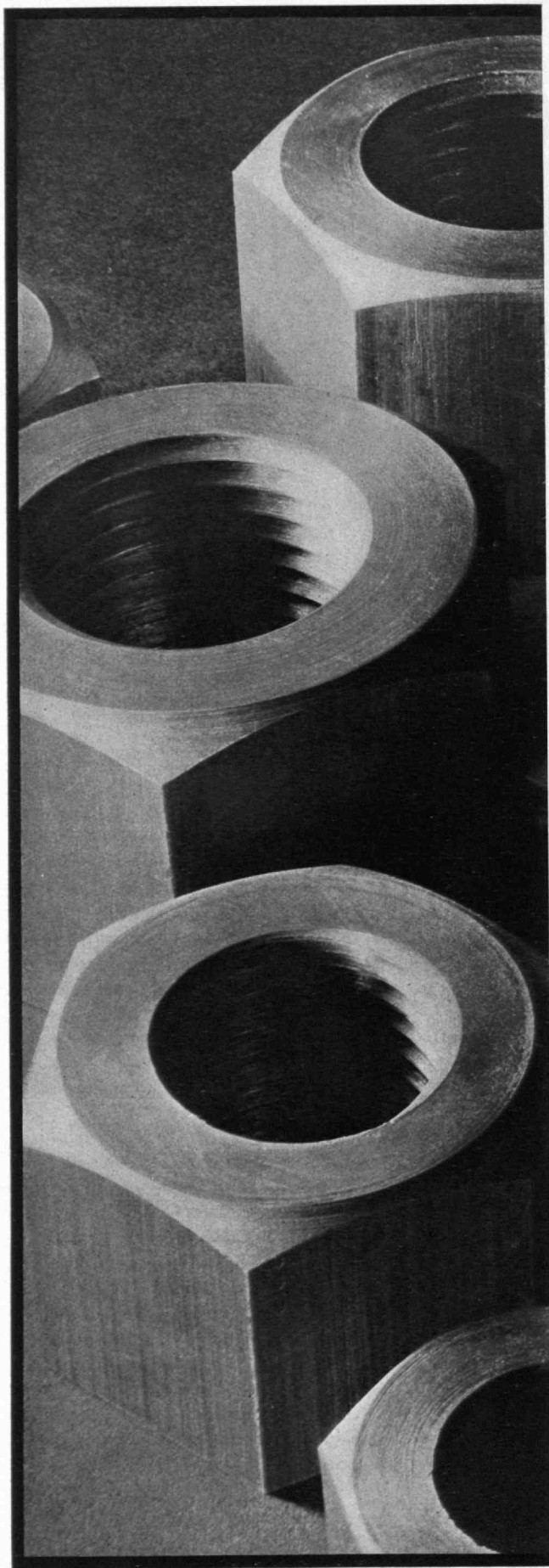
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Bourke-White

pushed to the point of developing the plot, even though the harassed American executive shows interest. It would be a fascinating and rewarding piece of detective work to trace these men and see where they finally come to rest. In lieu of that, to at least one observer we know, their reappearance at this time seems to be a sure indicator of some kind of change for the better in business conditions. Certainly such men could never thrive except in periods of loose corporate budgets and loose management of speculative ventures. They are clearly too canny to waste their time unless they felt that budgets and management had either already returned, or were about to return, to the frenzied days when every business man used the long-distance wires and extra-fare limiteds to Southern California on the slightest provocation.

**S**OMEONE in the National Research Council has a brilliant *eye* for the fitness of things. In a recent bulletin of that body we note the salient fact that the chairman of the Committee on Aerial Photographs (Division of Geology and Geography) is C. H. Birdseye.

**E**NGLISH scientists, like English gentlemen, enjoy bombarding their national publications with epistolary debate. One that has been running for several weeks in *Nature* may seem to the serious-minded applier of science a singularly fruitless discussion. It all started when somebody asked a perfectly pertinent question. Men, he recalled, suffer bends if they emerge too suddenly from subaqueous depths. Whales, also mammals, appear, on the other hand, to be able to ascend and descend with tremendous rapidity. Why?

The problem divided itself at once into several distinct controversies. In the first place, did whales go so deep after all? General opinion was that they did, and evidence was presented as to the amount of line taken out on this and that whaler, while some reported that occasionally Greenland whales actually died from suffocation on the bottom. Did whales ascend rapidly? again echo answered, "Yes."

Next point of assault was the reason why humans got bends. That was easy. In the depths, nitrogen was forced by pressure into the blood. At rapid rising it spurted out like the fizz from a bottle of Louis Roederer. Then why not from whales' blood, too? Here, one Mr. A. H. Laurie stepped to the fore. He found, it appears, that whales have in their blood bacteria-like organisms which fixed the nitrogen as it was forced in. These he called "X." To all this Professor August Krogh, of the University of Copenhagen, awarded the Bronx cheer. The process, said the doughty Dane, would be much too slow. The controversy continues.

Shades of Herman Melville, who would say at once, "But, Sir, whales are not men." Still, it never pays to be too "high hat" about apparently inane discussions. From this one may yet come a hormone.

**W**ITH a few notable exceptions, the revolving and rising stages first developed in Germany have made no serious incursions into American dramatic technique, except to serve as a vehicle for the elevation of a movie-palace orchestra. There is little hope, either,