

PRESENTATION OF THE CIVIC FORUM MEDAL TO EDISON.

A year ago you honored yourself by honoring the greatest warrior of today, the member of the military class of America, that is, the military class of the future, who does not fight and destroy man, but fights nature's destructive forces; the man, who has torn a continent asunder and made the argosies of commerce travel, where once the legions of death held sway over the fever-laden swamps of Panama.

Today we are honored by the man of peace, though a warrior too, for throughout his long and active life he has fought, and is still fighting to bend the forces of nature to the service of man.

He is not a mere practical man, popular fallacies notwithstanding, who tries everything and anything, and occasionally even finds something useful - though never more than once in a life time, for the number of possibilities is so infinite, that it is mere luck if anything useful is accomplished thus.

He is not a mere scientist, building laboriously on assumed premises a phantom structure in a phantom world, unless directed by a master mind.

His work is done as all the great and radical advance of the world has been accomplished by a few men, not by guess and trial, nor on the narrow path of orthodox science, but by the intuition of the genius, which leaps across the gulf from premises chosen by judgment and ex-science, to the result which opens up the path to the solution of a world problem.

So he has in the glow of the incandescent lamp banished darkness and brought daylight into the night; by wedding the dynamo to the steam engine, he has created the electrical industries and made power available to man. He has shown us how to cast our houses of enduring rock, and has locked up the mighty electric power in the nickel steel cell. While telegraph and telephone send the written word and the human voice across oceans and continents with the speed of lightning, he has flung the voice of man across the ages of time and made it possible for still unborn generations to listen to the living voice, and see the action of the men of the generation of the past:

All honor to him, the greatest American, the man of peace, the genius-Edison.

Schenectady, N.Y.,  
May 8, 1915  
CPS-SW