



THE RIGHT HON. LORD WEIR OF EASTWOOD, P.C.
(PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTE OF MARINE ENGINEERS.)

THE name of our President is a household word to Marine Engineers, and he therefore occupies the position with universal acceptance and high estimation on the part of the members.

Mr. James Weir, the father of Lord Weir, was a chief engineer in the service of Messrs. J. Bibby & Sons, of Liverpool, his last steamer being the *Oporto*, which he left to take an appointment as Superintendent Engineer, but the necessity of improving the conditions under which the boilers were worked so appealed to him that the hydrokineter for equalising the temperature of the water to avoid undue strains, and a pump for the elimination of air from the feed, were invented by him. In 1878, he founded the firm of G. & J. Weir in conjunction with his brother George and started business in a small way in Glasgow to meet the demands for their appliances. In 1885 they established the works at Cathcart, which have since grown steadily until at the present day they cover an area of about 17 acres.

The characteristic features associated with Mr. James Weir in his work descended to his son William, who was born in Glasgow and educated at the High School. He served his apprenticeship in the works at Cathcart under his father, and studied the technique, not only of engineering, but of business. A visit to the Works and an investigation of the methodical arrangements in connection with the different Departments demonstrate clearly that the master mind has carefully thought out the minutiae of details with a view to the best results. The systematic way in which the work is carried on from the Drawing Office to the Dispatching Department, appeals to the visitor and brings the reflection that a well ordered establishment not only is a credit to the owners, but is a source of pride to the employees from the apprentices, whose training is systematised, to the foreman, whose duties are simplified by method.

Lord Weir has not only interested himself in the development of the technical side of engineering, but in the progressive advancement and the comfort of the human element, striving towards the attainment of a just remuneration for services rendered; accuracy, despatch and finish being kept in view in the interest alike of employer and workman.

It is evident from the expression of Lord Weir's views on industrial work and development in the post-war critical conditions that wisdom, not bias, rules his mind; several recent speeches evince this characteristic and have been commended to the consideration of all concerned in the vital interest of the country.

The industrial enterprises on the Continent were studied by Mr. William Weir in years gone by, and in order to do this more thoroughly he learnt German and became acquainted with useful points in connection with their methods of production, at the same time working in harmony with a few of the firms to mutual advantage. He has also given his attention to American systems of work, and from his visits to the United States—his last visit being paid during the summer months of 1919—he has not only added to his knowledge of what has been done in the past, but what is now being done to advance marine engineering

as an important factor in the economy of American National life. The sum of these experiences adds force to the warnings given in regard to industrial warfare.

A change of occupation to a busy, energetic man is a rest productive of good to mind and body, and Lord Weir has devoted his attention to motors and motoring amid the grandeur and beauty of hill and dale, interspersed with fishing expeditions. He has been a member of Committee of the Scottish Automobile Club, and has done good work in forwarding inventions and improvements in racing cars, having built machines of this class in the Works at Cathcart.

Aviation claimed his attentions some years ago, and its possibilities became a source of thoughtful interest to him who had travelled far and wide by land and sea. He attended the meetings for flying tests at home and on the Continent, thereby becoming acquainted with the developments taking place year by year and gaining an experience which was to stand his country in good stead when the day arrived to put it to the test.

A year after the outbreak of war, it was needful to select and appoint a Director of Munitions in Scotland, and with many expressions of recommendation Mr. William Weir was appointed as specially suitable to control and guide this department of the National Service, and he did it well

In January of 1917, the Aircraft Productive Department required special attention from an engineer with knowledge and experience of the class of engines in general use and with business acumen. Mr. William Weir was chosen to supervise the department with the appointment of Controller of Aeronautical Supplies. Shortly after this the honour of knighthood was conferred upon him, with the further appointment towards the end of 1917 of Director General of Aircraft Production in the Ministry of Munitions attached to the Air Board. In July, 1918, Sir William was appointed Air Minister and elevated to the Peerage with the title of the Right Hon. Lord Weir of Eastwood, P.C.

The Honorary Degree conferred upon him by the Glasgow University on November 18th was a pleasing acknowledgment by his native city and an endorsement of the general feeling regarding his work and enterprise.

