

Editorials

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS IN THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

In 1887 the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers was established in Montreal, but no branches of the society were organized for eighteen years, or until 1905, when the first branch was founded in Sydney, N.S., with fourteen members.

Geo. H. Duggan, general manager of the Dominion Bridge Co., and immediate past president of the society, was one of the active organizers of the branch at that time. Those were booming times in the Nova Scotia steel and mining industries, however, and the branch survived only one year, business apparently having too great a demand upon the members' time for them to be able to devote any attention to the society meetings.

In 1906 the Toronto Branch was organized, and this was rapidly followed by others from Quebec to Victoria, so that there are now ten branches of the society, with a total branch membership of approximately one thousand. However, the Maritime Provinces, where the branch idea started, remains without a branch, as there is no such organization east of Quebec.

Mr. Duggan's presidential address, read before the society last January, showed that there were 252 corporate members (members or associate members) in the district east of Montreal, or 11.9 per cent. of the total corporate membership of the society. An analysis of the 1916 list of members shows that there are 138 corporate members, or approximately 6.6 per cent. of the corporate membership of the society, resident in the Maritime Provinces or Newfoundland.

It is obvious that there should be a branch of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers in the Maritime Provinces, not only on account of the number of members living there, but more especially on account of the very great importance of the big engineering industries in those provinces. A live branch would no doubt attract some of the many engineers working in the Maritime Provinces who are not as yet affiliated with the society. *The Canadian Engineer* understands that E. G. Horne, A.M.Can.Soc.C.E., of St. John, N.B., is endeavoring to establish a branch at either St. John or Halifax, or possibly a joint St. John-Halifax branch, and it is to be hoped that all members of the society will give their earnest support to Mr. Horne and those associated with him in the effort.

POLITICS UBER ALLES!

Politics appears to have the upper hand of patriotism at Ottawa. Despite the railway situation and the many other problems which require urgent attention, it seems that parliament is about to dissolve and to plunge the country into the throes of an election.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier blames Sir Robert Borden for the failure of attempts at coalition, and Sir Robert places the blame upon Sir Wilfrid's shoulders. The average engineer, contractor or business man in general will be inclined to blame both of them for not sacrificing their own and party interests to a sufficient extent that all outstanding differences be settled by some means.

England early found the necessity of a national government in time of war, but Canada, after nearly three years of war, has yet to learn how to forget party politics and fight shoulder to shoulder.

Next to the war, the most important matter before parliament is the railway problem. The delay which must necessarily ensue in the settlement of this problem will not be to the benefit of the shippers of Canada or of the people generally. Apparently there will be no parliamentary relief during the coming winter for the freight congestion troubles.

The system upon which our government is founded does not very well admit of a third party. The whole working of the government is based upon the assumption of a two-party House of Commons. Were it not for this, the business men of the country no doubt would be strongly tempted to organize a third party to take part in the coming election—a National Party which would appoint lawyers to legal positions, business men for business executive jobs, and engineers where engineering executive work is required.

BUSINESS IN QUEBEC

A number of Canadian firms seem to recognize the value of the French language as an aid to developing trade with Quebec province. Aside from racial and political considerations, many firms in Ontario and elsewhere tell *The Canadian Engineer* that their business has greatly increased as a result of printing their catalogues and circulars in the French language for circulation in that section of the country. Instances are known where letters in English have been thrown away by the recipients without any effort to ascertain their contents; the same applies to catalogues and other advertising matter printed in English. An inquiry recently made by *The Canadian Engineer* yields the general opinion that as there are many country districts in the province where French is practically the only language spoken, it is obvious that the use of the French language should be a factor in increasing sales there.

An Ontario correspondent relates his business experiences in Quebec and points out that to get the best results in doing business anywhere, one must speak the language that is best understood. For that reason, it is well that the language of the country into which a person goes to do business should be known by him. Besides a knowledge of the language, it is well to have some knowledge of the habits, customs and characteristics of the people. Personality also has a strong influence in doing business. Some interesting opinions on this subject were received.

It is often said that French-Canadians do not speak the "genuine Parisian French." According to Mr. Leon Lorrain, secretary of the Montreal Chamber of Commerce, there is not such a thing as Parisian French. "In Paris, Montreal, Quebec or any other French-speaking centre," he says, "people speak more or less correctly according to the education they have received; but they speak French. In a parallel case, the English language, though spoken with a different accent in each country, is still the English language, understood by all."