

The Canadian Engineer

WEEKLY

ESTABLISHED 1893.

VOL. 19.

TORONTO, CANADA, OCTOBER 27, 1910.

No. 17.

The Canadian Engineer

ESTABLISHED 1893.

Issued Weekly in the interests of the

CIVIL, MECHANICAL, STRUCTURAL, ELECTRICAL, MARINE AND
MINING ENGINEER, THE SURVEYOR, THE
MANUFACTURER, AND THE
CONTRACTOR.

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Present Terms of Subscription, payable in advance:

Canada and Great Britain:	United States and other Countries:	
One Year \$3.00	One Year	\$3.50
Six Months 1.75	Six Months	2.00
Three Months 1.00	Three Months	1.25
Copies Antedating This Issue by Two Months or More, 25 Cents.		

ADVERTISEMENT RATES ON APPLICATION.

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London Office: 225 Outer Temple, Strand, T. R. Clougher, Business and Editorial Representative. Telephone 527 Central.

Address all communications to the Company and not to individuals.
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NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS.

Changes of advertisement copy should reach the Head Office by 10 a.m. Friday preceding the date of publication, except in cases where proofs are to be mailed to distant points, for which due time should be allowed.

Printed at the Office of The Monetary Times Printing Company, Limited, Toronto, Canada.

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ENGINEERS AND NEWSPAPER REPORTS.

At a recent meeting of the Ottawa branch of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers a very lively discussion took place as to whether or not the press should be allowed to have representatives at the meetings of this organization.

As a usual thing engineering problems or discussions led by engineers do not receive in the public press the attention which they deserve. When a Works Department is being investigated or a city engineer is under fire of one or two councillors, the press reports are embellished with scare headlines and snappy paragraphs, but when the engineer has something to present which is informing, reasonable, and for the public good, too frequently the matter is not reported at all, and when it is reported is full of inaccuracies.

A number of the Ottawa engineers object to reporters being present, because their reports were so condensed as to be misleading and valueless. Some even argued that the average reporter is not well enough informed on the question under discussion to prepare a fair abstract of what had taken place.

Because the reporters are sometimes unable to deal fairly with the situation is no reason why the engineers should discourage press reports of their meetings and discussions. They should rather assist the press by appointing a committee to prepare press notices, and where press reports are required to either furnish these reports or to have the privilege of amending the reporter's copy.

The problems the engineer has to deal with are questions that vitally interest the public, and the engineer who can keep the public's confidence by having them rightly informed will usually have little difficulty in getting what he requires.