

is no law that cannot be evaded, and as the conditions imposed upon tenderers became harder, the ingenuity of such contractors, as were of dishonest purpose, became sharper, and large contracts have of late years tended to be more and more restricted to wealthy firms.

If this custom did secure the exclusion of dishonest parties nothing need be said against it, but it does not, and that is easily seen from the majestic scale on which robberies are now perpetrated and the genius for petty detail by which they are bolstered up.

I have never been a contractor nor anything but a plain engineer, and my sympathies naturally lean to that side, but I do recognize that contractors are human beings like the rest of us, and that no agreement can be ultimately satisfactory to either party unless it be based on mutual terms of equity. It is only injurious to keep piling on one prohibition after another. The best way to secure bona fide tenders, and honest contractors, is to open the door to the widest competition, and give the broadest publicity to every thing. Then be definite and reasonable in framing specifications, and use proper judgment in awarding contracts,—not necessarily giving it to the lowest tenderer. I have long gone on this theory, and my principals have never had a lawsuit with a contractor.

Engineer.

Ottawa, March 9th, 1908.

FINENESS OF CEMENT.

Sir,—In your edition of the 31st ult., I read with interest the article on Cement:—viz., the difference in using 2 per cent. and 17 per cent. of plaster of paris, and going further on was glad to see the question of fineness taken up by the writer.

This in my estimation is a very important factor, I think I may venture a step further by saying (the most important factor in manufacturing an ideal Portland Cement). Permit me to remark on this point. Firstly, all raw materials (rock or marl) should be ground to a fineness of from 94 per cent. to 97 per cent., on a 100 x 100 mesh screen. The aim being to bring about thorough incorporation. This is a very simple matter, and can be easily accomplished by a competent miller. In both cases the composition must be pulverized to a fineness as stated above so as to ensure thorough incorporation, and again by this being done, the percentage of lime can go into a thorough mix with the other ingredients; "and if a high tensile strength is required by specification it can be given by raising the percentage of lime a point or two if needs be, and then feeling absolutely safe." The lime question is very important, and working in conjunction with the fineness; which if taken up by our Canadian cement makers would be found the cause of the trouble of slurry not being sufficiently fine is the absence of not using a tube mill before the slurry passes into the storage tanks.

Further, the writer remarks on "Air Separators." This also I am in favor with, as: the material when penetrated by the air caused by the machine is of such a uniform fineness that no fear need be entertained in using a good make of separator, as any competent miller can operate these machines with ease, lastly the material after passing the "Air Separator" is sufficiently cool and ready for the market.

Yours,

John H. P. Wood.

COMMERCIAL MOTOR SHOW.

Preparations are now proceeding for the second International Commercial Motor Vehicle and Motor Boat Exhibition, organized by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, to run at Olympia, London, from March 26th to April 4th, both days inclusive. Judging by the applications for space and the names of the firms applying, this show will eclipse in size and importance that of last year. The Prince of Wales has accorded his patronage, and a most successful exhibition is anticipated.

ENGINEERING SOCIETIES.

CANADIAN RAILWAY CLUB.—President, W. D. Robb, G.T.R.; secretary, James Powell, P.O. Box 7, St. Lambert, near Montreal, P.Q.

CANADIAN STREET RAILWAY ASSOCIATION.—President, E. A. Evans, Quebec; secretary, Acton Burrows, 157 Bay Street, Toronto.

CANADIAN INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION.—President, J. F. Demers, M.D., Levis, Que.; secretary, F. Page Wilson, Toronto.

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.—413 Dorchester Street West, Montreal. President, J. Galbraith; Secretary, Prof. C. H. McLeod. Meetings will be held at Society Rooms each Thursday until May 1st, 1908.

QUEBEC BRANCH OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.—Chairman, E. A. Hoare; Secretary, P. E. Parent, P.O. Box 115, Quebec. Meetings held twice a month at Room 40, City Hall.

TORONTO BRANCH OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.—96 King Street West, Toronto. Chairman, C. H. Mitchell; Secretary, T. C. Irving, Jr., Traders Bank Building.

WINNIPEG BRANCH OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.—Chairman, H. N. Ruttan; Secretary, E. Brydone Jack. Meets first and third Friday of each month, October to April, in University of Manitoba.

ENGINEERS' CLUB OF TORONTO.—96 King Street West. President, J. G. Sing; secretary, R. B. Wolsey. Meeting every Thursday evening during the fall and winter month. March 18th, M. T. S. Griffiths, "Steel Rail Manufacture."

CANADIAN ELECTRICAL ASSOCIATION.—President, R. S. Kelsch, Montreal; secretary, T. S. Young, Canadian Electrical News, Toronto.

CANADIAN MINING INSTITUTE.—413 Dorchester Street West, Montreal. President, W. G. Miller, Toronto; secretary, H. Mortimer-Lamb, Montreal.

NOVA SCOTIA SOCIETY OF ENGINEERS, HALIFAX.—President, R. McColl; Secretary, S. Fenn, Bedford Row, Halifax, N.S.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS, TORONTO BRANCH.—W. G. Chase, secretary, Confederation Life Building, Toronto; March 13th, M. J. E. Fries, "Distribution Voltage for Central Stations."

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS.—29 West 39th Street, New York. President, H. L. Holman; secretary, Calvin W. Rice.

SOCIETY NOTES.

Engineers' Club.—On March 5th, 1908, Mr. W. H. Breithaupt read a paper on "River Regulation." He suggested two methods, reforestation and large dams. We hope to publish next week the paper in full.

A. B. Barry, who presided at the meeting, announced that the committee appointed to look into the matter of new quarters had arranged to extend the lease of the present club rooms for another year. During this time the committee will look about for other quarters.

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FOUNDRY SUPPLY ASSOCIATION, HELD IN TORONTO.

By order of the president, Mr. E. H. Mumford, a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Foundry Supply Association was called for Monday and Tuesday, March 2nd and 3rd, in Toronto.

The meeting was held in the King Edward Hotel, there being present the following members:—E. H. Mumford, W. S. Quigley, J. S. McCormick, F. N. Perkins, U. E. Kanavel, J. S. Smith, E. J. Woodison, George Rayner, H. M. Lane.

Mr. Somerville, chairman of the Reception Committee at Toronto, and Mr. L. L. Anthes, vice-president of the Am-