

uniformity—in technical regulations, as these advance with time and with the progress of technical invention. So far, the most effective spur to changes in the mining regulations of the various provinces of Canada, has been a spirit of emulation, and no literature is so avidly read by mining men as that which compares accident rates arising from mining in the provinces as they appear in the annual reports of the inspectors of mines. Nothing, moreover, is more instantly objected to than any attempt at unfair comparison, or slur upon the good name of any province, in regard to its mining accident rate, which we take to be a first-class indication of a commendable spirit of emulation in the good work of lessening accidents.

There could be little objection to the provision of funds for the purchase of first-aid and mine-rescue appliances; these having hitherto been provided at the expense of the mine owners, and, since the passage of compensation acts, possibly to be regarded as a fair charge against compensation assessments held by the compensation boards. This is the meaning we would give to the Commission's recommendation in Clause 14, but it is inconceivable that the "administration" of first-aid and mine-rescue work should in any case "be entirely in the hands of the Workmen's Compensation Board."

THE PUBLICATION OF TECHNICAL BOOKS.

We are reminded by a well-known New York publishing house, John Wiley & Sons, that the prices of technical books are advancing, and that they will not join the downward movement of general commodities. Since 1914 the costs of manufacturing books has advanced 132 per cent, and is still going up. Printers are now asking for a further forty per cent wage increase. The war caused a slump in the demand for certain classes of technical books, and in some instances necessitated the withholding of publication of books well advanced towards issue. The renewed demand has depleted the stock of books, and a general increase in the price of new issues will be required in technical books, as it has been required in novels and other books.

Of the making of books, the Preacher said, there is no end, and this is an ancient dictum that may be fittingly applied to the technical book of today, often out-of-date in its references before it reaches the public because of the rapid advance of human knowledge and recorded experimentation.

The publication of technical works has always ranked as one of the most honorable of professions, and it is fitting in this connection to note that the firm of Charles Griffin & Co., of London, has issued a centenary volume, with a foreword by Lord Moulton, F.R.S., to mark its completion of one hundred years of service to the technical professions. The list of publications mentioned in this volume, beginning with Rankine's

classics in 1858, is actually a catalogue of British engineering and technological progress and the names of those who laid the foundations of progress.

Canada has not yet developed a publishing house that is equipped to produce technical works on a scale to compete with the large firms of London and New York, and it is hardly to be expected that such should be the case, but it is possibly not the happiest of omens that our large publishing houses have so far specialized in volumes of fiction or ephemeral literature. Notable among the few British book-publishing houses that has established a Canadian branch is MacMillan's, but perhaps the day is coming when such firms as Isaac Pitman & Sons, Griffin & Co., or some of the better-known New York houses may see fit to set up shop in Canada, or better still that some of our Canadian houses may develop a substantial technical-book business.

In one particular, that of elementary and high-school books, there is much need for preparation of manuals on distinctively Canadian subjects. For example there is no competent text-book on Canadian industries, on the association of regional geography and geology with industry and population, no understandable manual on Canadian minerals and mining, and no book that attempts to apply to Canadian life the principles—and not the dry-as-dust facts and figures—that animate the geologist, the geographer, the historian, the forester and the scientific agriculturist. Our school literature is largely clipped and borrowed material, and it is distinguished by the minimum of originality and the maximum of compilation.

Really worth-while school text-books of the nature above outlined cannot, of course, be originated by the individual provinces. They will have to be assured of a Dominion-wide circulation, and will probably have to originate outside existing educational authorities.

CANADA AS A PRODUCER OF PETROLEUM.

In the issue of the 19th November, exception was taken in these columns to an opinion of the "Petroleum Times," of London, which stated "it must not be imagined that Canada has the slightest hopes of ever becoming a great oil-producing country." It is pleasing to note that in the latest issue of our informative contemporary which is to hand, there appears a geological sketch-map of Western Canada illustrative of the oil occurrences and prospecting boreholes, and containing a note on the Fort Norman oil strike, and the interesting statement that the new oil-field "is probably of great extent and may be one of the largest in the world."

We congratulate "Petroleum Times" on its quick publication of accurate information regarding the successful prospecting of the Imperial Oil Company, based upon Dr. Bosworth's researches, and its evident ap-