

## LEGISLATION FOR ENGINEERS

Toronto Branch of Engineering Institute of Canada  
Discusses Draft Bill

A SPECIAL general meeting of the Toronto branch of the Engineering Institute of Canada was held in the lecture room of the Engineers' Club on Monday night, May 19th, to consider and discuss the draft bill of the proposed legislation for the purpose of obtaining an expression of opinion on this important question. Owing to the absence from the city of Mr. A. H. Harkness the chair was occupied by Prof. H. E. T. Haultain, and after the minutes of the previous meeting were read, and the reading of a letter from the Niagara Peninsula branch of the Engineering Institute of Canada on the preparation of a schedule of salaries for different classes of engineers, which was referred to the sub-committee on salaries, the members were invited to discuss the draft bill. Mr. Willis Chipman stated that one of the most difficult tasks was to define, "What is an engineer?" and he thought that the one given was too diffused, and that the suggestion of the Joint Committee of American Societies was both shorter and better. He gave the views of different branches and expected that the members will be invited to vote on the bill in June. In reply to a question put by Mr. Goedike, he thought that transitmen and structural engineers could become professional engineers by passing the examination and being responsible for their work. Mr. Goldman considered the point raised by Mr. Goedike was important because the object of the bill was to place the profession on a higher level and to protect the public. Only a small proportion of engineers will be professional, the others being employed or acting as assistants. Many engineers depend upon their assistants to design structures and consequently the public would not be fully protected. Mr. Chipman said it was difficult to provide for these points and that the door must at first be very wide. Mr. Clarke thought that present members of the Engineering Institute of Canada, holding subordinate positions, would be recognized as professional engineers. Mr. Stewart was of the opinion that the bill was open to revision although it was generally good. The Engineering Institute of Canada was a technical organization but the association under the bill would be one of protection to the public and to the engineer. The term "operating and maintenance" requires to be more carefully defined because on railway work these were often attended to by men who are not engineers. It was necessary when the ballot was taken that only the cardinal principle of the bill should be voted upon.

Mr. Wynne-Roberts expressed the view that the committee had devoted a great amount of labor and had produced a draft bill which was excellent in many respects. There are a few points, however, which need to be clarified. For example, the definition of "What is a professional engineer?" does not seem to be satisfactory. For example, the expression "advising on, making measurements for, laying out and the design and supervision of the construction," means that the engineer must be engaged upon each of the four points and not upon any one individually. For example, a consulting engineer may advise upon and not do anything else. The supervision of work, especially of large undertakings, should be in the hands of engineers, and the maintenance of works should also be in the hands of engineers, for maintenance often constitutes just as important a feature of engineering as the actual construction.

Clause 5a provides for the discipline and the honor of the members, which implies that the Engineering Institute of Canada need not perform the same function on the same points. The Engineering Institute of Canada will require to revise the requirements with regard to the qualification of members.

Clause 7e is not clear. For example, it states that if a person is unable to obtain his license within three months he is entitled to practice during the same period. In other words, immediately he makes his application he can go on practising. This does not seem what is intended.

Clause 9 should provide for an election of the council within six months after passing the act. The question whether the certificate to be issued by the registrar should be an annual one or not is not clearly stated.

Clause 14e might be altered to allow candidates to sit for examination at any interval of one year.

Clause 18, The term "Registered Engineer" is mentioned but there is no definition what is meant by this. Candidates acting under this clause, should have the privilege of making up the six years under any number of engineers, because engineers' work is migratory.

Clause 29, dealing with offences against the Act, should not limit the action within one year, as it is possible to have offences committed and not be discovered for perhaps two years.

Mr. Rust thought the committee were to be complimented on the work they have done. He remembered that in Ontario some years ago an application for legislation received a very cold reception by parliament and that parliament generally is chary to give any class of legislation these days. Nevertheless, legislation of this character should be very beneficial for the protection of the public. He thought that this bill might tend to interfere with the development of the E.I.C. for some time.

Mr. Haultain stated that the reason why the bill presented to the Ontario Legislature years ago was rejected was because the late Mr. B. T. A. Bell, who energetically promoted the Mining Engineers' Society, was jealous lest the legislation would interfere with that body and injure its progress. Mr. Harris of Kingston was another opponent of legislation to the Canadian Society of Engineers. Mr. Chipman thought there would be no objection to the members sending in suggested amendments to the executive and he recommended that the engineers should meet again periodically during the summer.

Mr. Haultain stated that he was making a confession of conversion, because he thought that any legislation to include all branches of engineers was impossible, but this opinion he now recanted. He thought that all branches and all stages of engineers should be included in the bill. It was evident that the bill substituted for experience and ability, the quality of mind and the point of view known in the term "profession." Engineers' attitude was always professional. Chainmen, transitmen and all men should be included and, if they were, the new association would aggregate at least 10,000 engineers in Canada. This association would have a great educative effect, it would have no jurisdiction but would be of great influence. The bill might hinder the growth of the E.I.C. for some time, but thereafter it will constitute a great feeder to it, and will tend to bring all branches of engineers together. This depends on whether the bill can be worked out satisfactorily in details. If so, it would be an accomplishment of a great idea. Legislation would not be granted to engineers if they were divided. Politicians would take advantage of any dissension and it would be injurious to engineers to attempt it unless we are united. There must be harmony among engineers. He was glad to say that this harmony now prevailed between engineers and doctors.

Mr. Charters, of Edmonton, referred to engineers last summer in the West trying to obtain legislation in Alberta and Saskatchewan, but the engineers were advised to postpone action and no doubt the present bill was the result. Western parliament will no doubt insist on appointing the examiners. He is glad to say that the mining and civil engineers had come together in the west and it will be a great help to get the passage of the bill later on. Mr. Chipman thought that the engineers should endeavor to secure the control of the examining body and if it is refused, then accept what is granted.

Resolution moved by Mr. A. F. Stewart and seconded by Mr. C. H. Rust: "That this meeting of the Toronto Branch of the Engineering Institute of Canada does hereby endorse the general principles of the proposed Act respecting the engineering profession, but is of the opinion that there should be a very careful revision of the details before submitting it to the legislature." Carried.