

Editorial

COMPENSATION OF ENGINEERS.

According to a report made to the American Society of Civil Engineers by a special committee, the average compensation of engineers is \$3,985 per annum. The research work of the committee was supposed to have been conducted among non-members as well as members of the society. Engineering Record, of New York, in commenting editorially upon this report, scouts the idea of the average engineer's income being so near the \$4,000 mark, and states that the committee should withdraw its report. We entirely agree with our contemporary in this matter and feel certain that the average compensation of civil engineers on this continent—counting in all classes—is considerably less than \$3,985.

The average income of the members of the American Society of Civil Engineers may be that amount, but the average salary of engineers who are not members of the society would be so much lower that it would materially reduce the total general average. Data was obtained from 5,042 out of 7,037 members of the society, but only 1,316 non-members reported to the committee.

The committee itself acknowledges that low-salary data is lacking and explains that it was difficult to arrive at the salaries of engineers in state, municipal and railroad employ, etc. Engineering Record points out that a census of the engineers employed in the eastern district of New York State shows 253 men with an average compensation of \$1,775. Only eight were up to the committee's average of \$3,985. Of these 253 men only 44 were found in the membership list of the society with an average of \$2,857, leaving an average of \$1,547 for the other 209. This suggests the unreliability of returns which are compiled mainly from members of the society.

No doubt the report of the committee of the American Society is an extremely valuable document and shows the average remuneration of the members of that society, but it evidently cannot be taken as a fair determination of the average compensation of civil engineers in general.

AFTER-THE-WAR PROBLEMS.

During the past few weeks there have been held the annual meetings of some of our important banking and financial institutions. At many of them there have been delivered addresses which have dealt more or less fully with the trade conditions that are likely to obtain after the war. One of the most remarkable of these addresses was that delivered by Sir Herbert Holt at the annual meeting of the Royal Bank of Canada a few days ago. He pointed out that the present prosperity had no permanence about it and that the war was the only thing which had accelerated the wheels of industry; that the termination of the war must react on all industry with very far-reaching results. Factories that were now running full time and overtime and were exclusively engaged in the manufacture of munitions would close. Kindred industries, stimulated by high prices, would suffer by the return of more ordinary conditions. Exports, he anticipated, would decline as Europe imported less and commodity prices would recede. Labor will become a glut in the

market, only to be aggravated by the return of soldiers in large numbers.

Leaders of thought in all parts of the Dominion have pleaded and are still pleading for some intelligent action to be taken in order to solve the problems which must confront us as a people after the war is over. The great majority of our people are seized of the importance of action in this direction.

It seems that practically every country in the world is exercising itself in intelligent effort to meet and solve these problems in a businesslike way except Canada. Is it not foolish for us as a people to go blundering along trusting that something will turn up which will enable us to evade the difficulties which other nations feel sure are bound to confront them when hostilities cease.

ENGINEERING SOCIETIES AND THE WAR.

While it will be generally conceded that technical societies were founded for scientific and educational work and that they would be going out of their province if they began meddling with matters of trade and industry, there is, nevertheless, a growing conviction on the part of many members of such societies that the time has come for some of them, at least, to concern themselves with the business side of engineering more than they have done in the past.

There is much to be said on both sides of this question. We have great respect for those who maintain, and maintain stoutly, that it is not the function of a technical society to discuss, for instance, the matter of workmen's compensation, or the limitation of profits. These and kindred subjects are suitable for boards of trade, but not for the technical society. The discussion of business questions should be left to business organizations, but the technical society should confine itself to scientific discussion.

Undoubtedly the view that our scientific societies should lend themselves more generally to the discussion of business matters has been accentuated since the war introduced a new series of economic problems, in the solution of which science will be called upon to play a most important part.

If, as is so often stated, science is to be the ruling factor in the race for national supremacy after the war, would it not seem to be the wiser course for societies which were created for the consideration of scientific questions to stand by their guns and not permit their energies along that line to be scattered by the introduction of discussions of a totally different character?

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF COUNTY ROAD SUPERINTENDENTS AND ENGINEERS.

We have been sent a programme of the third annual conference on road construction for county road superintendents and engineers. This year the conference is to be held March 27th to 30th,

These yearly conferences which are held under the auspices of the Ontario Department of Public Highways