

Municipal Water Supplies.—In municipal water supplies many opportunities occur on a small scale for graceful treatment of such works as service reservoirs, water towers, aqueducts, etc. In Europe and many places in the United States there are numbers of fine works showing that municipalities are becoming proud of their property, and while they are seeking to make them permanent they are also attempting to make them beautiful.

Railway Terminals.—In the design of railway terminals to-day it is the generally accepted practice for great railway corporations to employ architects to collaborate with the engineering staff, but often the architectural style adopted is a severely classic one which does not seem to the engineer to be an expression of 20th century railway progress. Perhaps some day, under the influence of the engineer, the architect will free himself from the traditions of archaeology and classic architecture, and give us a railway architecture that will be an expression of the modern spirit. Examples of the collaboration of the two professions may be seen in the Grand Central and Pennsylvania railway terminals of New York, the Union terminal at Washington, D.C., and the collaboration of the architect and engineer has also been carried out in many of the terminals of the three great transcontinental railways in Canada.

Modern Steel Frame and Reinforced Concrete Buildings.—In the design of modern steel frame and reinforced concrete buildings the modern engineer and architect in Canada have in collaboration one of the most magnificent opportunities of evolving an architectural treatment of their structures unhampered by European traditions. We may perhaps criticize the architect for his neglect of a proper study of the main principles involved in the design of great buildings as he is in danger of becoming merely the adorer or decorator of structures for which he is not primarily responsible. We feel that the ornament on a building should accentuate and add to the beauty of its proportions, and in the complete design the architect and engineer should be in closest sympathy. To the engineer it seems incongruous to pile row on row of classic orders and details one on top of the other in the facade of a modern steel structure when there is an opportunity of maintaining the leading lines of the construction. May we not ask, when we look around and examine many decorated steel structures in Canada and the United States, if the architects are not too much dominated by modern French classic influences. A very simple and beautiful exterior treatment of a reinforced concrete building is seen in the new Birks Building in Vancouver, and here it will be noticed that the architects have not attempted to hide the structural proportions of the building. In New York, in spite of the Government's insistence that all new public buildings shall be of classic design, we find in the Woolworth Building (the highest in the world) a free treatment of Gothic details in terra cotta that does not hide or destroy the proportions of the engineer's steel design. In this building we see a very fine example of the engineer and architect in closest sympathy. No architect or engineer alone could have produced it because the building, from foundation to tower, involved some of the most difficult problems in engineering design. The building is one that fascinates the onlooker and must be regarded as very successful from the architectural point of view. The writer is, however, aware that artists have denounced the architectural treatment and have called the building an eye-sore, but it would be interesting to know what alternative method of treatment they would propose for a building of that character. It seems to the engineer that the architect in adorning a steel frame building should accentuate its proportions if they are true. If they are not true

no ornament will help to make the building beautiful, and engineers and architects alike should remember Pope's criticism of the artist and poet:

“Poets heap virtues, painters gems at will,
And hide by ornament their want of skill.”

and guard against the temptation to adorn with architectural details what might possibly be faulty construction.

Town Planning.—In another field of activity there is great scope for the co-operation of the two professions, namely, that of town planning. The civic idea is a very ancient one and has always dominated the progressive spirit of a great race, and in the creation of beautiful cities this cannot be accomplished by the landscape gardener or architect alone, but by the co-operation of engineers engaged in many different branches of the profession, and it would be well if we as engineers would cordially support and assist the efforts of the new Civic Improvement League in Canada so as to make our cities healthier and more beautiful in the future.

Our citizens should take a keener interest in their great public structures, and aspire to something beyond mere utility. Before we can expect them to do so, we must consider our own attitude and endeavor to educate the public so that the standards of taste and ideals are raised until Art in its highest expression pervades every part of our civic and national life. We need a truer education of the public, and of those chief citizens whom the people, in their collective wisdom, send to represent them in council chambers and in the legislature. As a result of such education we ourselves will create structures which will stand as permanent monuments of a people that endeavor not only to produce great works of utility, but works of beauty, in the service of man.

BETTER RAILWAY EQUIPMENT NEEDED.

Speaking at the annual meeting in Chicago on February 4th, of the American Electric Railway Association, while on the subject of safety on American railroads, Senator Oscar W. Underwood, of Alabama referred as follows to the fact that there are at least 10 employees killed or injured on American lines to one on the railroads of Great Britain.

“It can not be truthfully said the engineers who constructed these roads have builded them with less ability than the engineers who constructed the English roads. It can not be said that our iron and steel, our timber and rock are not as good building material as that which is found in the British Isles. It can not be said that the men who sit at the throttle, or watch the signal tower are less capable, sober and alert than the men who occupy similar positions in a foreign land. Then why should we face conditions that endanger human life, and make a serious charge on transportation, that in the end the public must bear? To my mind it is clear that the dangers involved in our railroad system are almost entirely due to the lack of proper transportation facilities. We endeavor to run trains over a single track where the needs of business require double tracks. We load our freight on weak and defective cars where new cars should long ago have taken their place. We rely on antiquated methods for the movement of our trains when our tracks should be provided with the latest and best signal devices. In fact it cannot be denied that to adopt modern methods and provide proper facilities for transportation would be true economy in the end.”