

# The Canadian Engineer

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## THE K-TRUSS DESIGN

AT the last meeting of the Montreal branch of the Engineering Institute of Canada, G. H. Duggan, in a paper on the Quebec bridge, remarked that efforts had been made to take from Phelps Johnson the credit for the "K" design of bracing which Mr. Johnson had practically introduced to the engineering profession. Russian engineers had used a sort of "K" bracing, but Mr. Johnson had known nothing of it, and moreover it was not in the form that was designed by Mr. Johnson and used for the Quebec bridge.

## FIRST CANADIAN RAILWAY TROOPS

AN enviable record in military railway construction was made by the 1st Canadian Railway Troops in France when this unit built a railway 173 miles long, standard gauge, under front line conditions, in 90 days. Nor was this record an isolated achievement of this force, whose exploits at Cambrai and later in other sectors resulted in their being showered with the congratulations of the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas Haig, General H. Rawlinson, commander of the fourth army, and Major-General S. D. Cruickshank, director-general of transportation. Lieut.-Colonel Blair Ripley, who commanded the 1st C.R.T. overseas, arrived in Toronto last week, after having crossed on the Scotian, and was persuaded by the daily newspaper reporters to give a brief account of the feats of his unit. Col. Ripley is well known in engineering circles as the engineer in charge of grade separation for the C.P.R. For his service in Flanders he has been twice mentioned in despatches and awarded the D.S.O. After a brief vacation, Col. Ripley will resume his former position with the C.P.R.

## THE WAGE EARNER'S VIEWPOINT

SENATOR Gideon Robertson, the new Minister of Labor, has earned a good reputation in the handling of industrial difficulties; he has the labor situation well in hand. Some of his opinions expressed before the Association of Montreal Building and Construction Industries on April 11th, deserve the serious consideration of employers.

The minister showed how relations between employers and employed have changed during the past twenty-five years. The growth of industrial plants has led to the number of workmen becoming so great that the employer has no individual contact with them, since he does not even know them, and on the other hand very often the employees do not know who the proprietors or employers are. To-day the workingman feels that he ought to receive more recognition and that he ought to be reasonably and adequately paid so that he may live with at least the same degree of comfort as he enjoyed in pre-war days. Not only that; he has conceived the idea that he is worth more than he thought himself worth in the pre-war days. There has come to the workingman a self-confidence that he did not possess five years ago, which is due to the great things accomplished during the stress of war, both in the provision of war munitions and in the loyalty and the sacrifice that the workmen of North America and of Europe had shown. Although the armies of the world were composed mostly of workmen, yet they represented but a small part of the property and wealth which they fought to save. As a result many of them are taking the view to-day that the process followed in the past has been too gradual and too slow, and that it is now incumbent upon them to be more militant than formerly, and in some countries that feeling has so grown that it has become a menace to society. Happily this is not the case in Canada and the senator thinks it never can be so, for Canada is a democratic country and the great majority of the people are financially interested in the nation. "But I think it behoves all business men and employers of labor to give heed to the changing times and to realize that this spirit is growing and will continue to grow among workmen unless they are convinced that they will be fairly treated," said Senator Robertson.

The minister of labor referred to recent labor events in England, where he said it was only by the adoption of very unusual methods that serious disaster had been averted. Canadian employers and employees both stand to benefit by these changes, as under the new conditions Canada can better compete with England. But if Canada is to prosper and develop industrially, there must be a maximum of efficiency displayed not only by employers in management, but by workmen in their work. It is unfortunately true that too many men have sought rather to see how little they could do for their day's pay than endeavor to give honest service for reasonable compensation. Senator Robertson urged that a spirit of co-operation in all industries should be fostered, and he argued that if Canada prides itself on being a democratic country, it is also desirable that where a large capital was invested in a particular industry which is helpless to produce profit without the assistance and co-operation of the necessary labor, the advisability of that labor being consulted in the operation and management of the industry so far as the interests of employer and employee were mutually concerned, should also be considered. He did not mean to suggest that the workmen ought to have any control or voice in the capital expenditure or the use of money invested, but so far as their own services were concerned they had some claim to be heard.

"The thought that is prevalent in the minds of hundreds of large employers to-day," continued the minister of labor, "and also in the minds of many workmen, is why should this situation grow any more acute? Why should we not emulate the example of the great nations of the world and now try to adopt a spirit of co-operation and arbitration to settle our differences rather than dispute the claims of the other fellow?" However, the workingman must recognize, concluded the minister, that there is a limit to the employer's ability to meet ever-increasing demands.