

The Canadian Engineer

ESTABLISHED 1893.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

THE CANADIAN MACHINE SHOP.

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TORONTO, JANUARY, 1907.

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CIVIL, MECHANICAL, STRUCTURAL, ELECTRICAL, LOCOMOTIVE, STATIONARY, MARINE, MINING, METALLURGICAL, AND SANITARY ENGINEER, THE SURVEYOR, THE MANUFACTURER, THE CONTRACTOR AND THE MERCHANT IN THE METAL TRADES.

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NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SEVEN.

"The Canadian Engineer" wishes its subscribers and friends all the good fortune they deserve this year—and even more. The signs are for continued good times. Up-to-date business methods will reap their just reward. The man who gets after orders; and makes his quality known will get his share of whatever is going. "The Canadian Engineer" is fortunate enough to receive pleasing meed of appreciation. The experience is not singular. It is a multipliable quality. If good wishes would do the multiplication every reader hereof would have a splendid new year.

THE ONTARIO POWER SITUATION.

At the time of going to press it seems likely that the model by-law to be submitted to the electors in western Ontario municipalities, authorizing local councils to make contracts, under the ægis of the Hydro-Electric Commission, for the purchase of Niagara power, will pass everywhere. The friends of the Commission have carried on an energetic, well-conducted campaign, in which on the whole, the fallacies in the report upon which the whole enterprise is based, have been cleverly handled. Before such bodies as the Engineers' Club, of Toronto, much distrust has been expressed of the calculations made in the historic document. But Mr. Beck and Mr. Cecil B. Smith stick to their guns. As far as the model by-law can do it, the municipalities will most likely be committed to becoming wholesale dealers in electric power.

Talk of an injunction, prohibiting the submission of the by-law on the ground of insufficient information not having been given the electors, did not produce litigation. The wisdom of such a course was doubtful, because it would only tend to deepen the enthusiasm of those who have become devoted to the idea of municipalization under a Government umbrella; and to develop that kind of controversy in which a constantly-fostered mistrust of corporations of all kinds is apt to become the winner at the polls. The opinion of Mr. Shepley, K.C., to the effect that the by-law would be nullified in a court of law was wisely published. But the question of faulty drafting of an Act of Parliament is small beside the general principle, to which the Government is committed; and which courts or no courts, will be submitted to the public with a minimum of delay.

Unquestionably there is ambiguity in the Ontario Act constituting the Hydro-Electric Commission. It is possible, from a reading of different sections, to hold the view which has been adopted by the Commission and the municipalities—that councils may be authorized by plebiscite to enter into a contract for a minimum quantity of power at the maximum price for a given period—and also to hold that the details of the contract must be submitted to the electorate at the very beginning. Obviously, it would be unbusinesslike to ask the voter to endorse now a contract which, in the first place must necessarily be too technical in expression for him to understand and, in the second place, cannot be worked out in complete detail, because there is so much to be determined as regards the production, transmission and distribution of energy, before the final terms to cover a lengthy period can be fixed.

"The Canadian Engineer" assumed a strongly critical attitude towards the report upon electric power in the Niagara Peninsula. The responsibility for proceeding with the different enterprises lies upon those who have devised the scheme, and have practically mortgaged the provincial credit to it. It is no use crying over what can't be helped. It is evident that those