

The Canadian Engineer

Established 1893

A Weekly Paper for Canadian Civil Engineers and Contractors

Terms of Subscription, postpaid to any address:

One Year	Six Months	Three Months	Single Copies
\$3.00	\$1.75	\$1.00	10c.

Published every Thursday by

The Monetary Times Printing Co. of Canada, Limited

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Principal Contents of this Issue

	PAGE
Elimination of Grade Crossings, by E. R. Blackwell	195
Discussion of Engineer's Status	197
Ontario Good Roads Convention	197
Windsor Garbage Incinerator	198
Erection of Kettle Rapids Bridge, by Sterling Johnston	199
United States Engineering Council, by A. D. Flinn	201
Sewer Pipe Joints	202
Lignite Coal in Modern Steam Plants, by T. L. Roberts	204
Supervision of Public Water Supplies by the Health Officer, by Jack J. Hinman, Jr.	206
Chain Fenders in the Locks of the Panama Canal, by Henry Goldmark	208
Availability of Energy for Power and Heat, by John Blizard	210
Personals and Obituaries	216
Construction News	48

GUARANTEE BONDS

A treasury board regulation prevents the acceptance of anything but a cash security in connection with contracts for the Public Works Department of Canada. This department cannot accept a guarantee bond, an instrument which has become an important factor in modern business. Considerable inconvenience is caused to contractors and others by the requirement of substantial cash security for the performance of certain work. Large sums of cash deposits lie idle when they might be employed profitably. The majority of public bodies in Canada are satisfied with the guarantee bond, furnished by reputable companies which make a specialty of the business, and which bond provides security for performance of contract. What is the reason for the treasury board's regulation?

WAR TRADE BOARD

The appointment by the Dominion government of a War Trade Board is a commendable step. One of the few criticisms that might reasonably be offered is that the creation of the organization was delayed too long. The personnel of the board combines many qualities and experiences which will be of great value in the important work ahead. The board is representative not only of departmental experience, but also of practical industrial, financial, labor, and executive experience. It might perhaps be strengthened by the addition of engineering advisers.

The powers and duties of the board, which were outlined in the February 14th issue of this paper, are very wide. The organization will have direction of

licenses for export and import. They may supervise when necessary, industrial and commercial enterprises with a view to preventing waste of labor, raw materials, and products. They will make recommendations for the maintenance of the more essential industries and will also investigate the country's stock of raw materials, partly finished and finished products and, when necessary, direct their distribution. In addition, they will co-operate with the Canadian War Mission at Washington which, by the way, might profitably have been appointed many months ago, instead of in the early part of 1918. The board naturally will co-operate with the several departments of the government.

Our War Trade Board has been constituted, as the prime minister has stated, "following very careful consideration of more effective organization for the purpose of the war, and having regard to the necessity of more effective measures for maintenance of industries essential for that purpose."

ARE ENGINEERS NARROW-MINDED?

Not so much for any valuable ideas which it contains, but more as an example of the glittering generalities which many magazines are to-day printing about engineers and their work, we reproduce the following from the December issue of *Industrial Management*, New York:

"Engineers are steadily moving into the forefront of the professions. This enviable position was once held by the clergy, then by the law, and then by medicine. Engineers now are having their turn—or soon will be having it. It is a responsible place in society. To lead, to guide—that is it. Therefore, bearing this tremendous responsibility, engineers should live cheek to jowl and elbow to elbow with society. Engineers should understand humanity—its foibles, its weaknesses, its governing sciences. Men in the profession should know something besides laws which have nothing to do with society as such. Mathematics never bred cats, for instance—though mathematics might at times be strained to keep count of the kittens; nor has chemistry or physics ever accounted for John's red hair, when John's father and mother both have raven locks.

"Something is wrong with the profession—has been wrong from the first. Engineering courses are not quite what they should be—not quite complete. If they were, engineers would be different. They would think in channels somewhat broader than they do; they would see with clearer and more generous vision. Engineers must think in broader channels—must see with more generous vision—if, having once moved into the forefront, as they will, they would remain there—would not go back—as the clergy has gone back, as the law has gone back, as medicine is going back. Once to the front, engineers could stay there. They could stay there if only they would profit by the mistakes of their brethren in the older professions, and study the New Management. Which means that engineers have got to forget some things and learn some other things. Forgetting, and learning, they will have attained to mastery over the world. . . .

"The human element, after all, despite mechanical perfection, despite the laws governing the sum of two figures, is the vital element, the element that makes or breaks—the one science above all sciences deserving of consideration and study on the part of the engineering fraternity.

"Engineers as a race have not studied it. They have considered it, of course, as in the designing of apparatus;