

schemes which were previously of more or less academic interest to us; they are compelling us to consider our ways and means and how to rehabilitate the social, commercial and political affairs, and they undoubtedly are driving forces to which we have to yield. The war is a war of engineers, and reconstruction must in a large part be the work of the engineer. Premier Asquith in August, 1917, said in the House of Commons that "no one who has any imagination can possibly be blind to the fact that the war, with all the enormous upheaval of political, social and industrial conditions which it involves, must in many ways—and ought to if we are a rational and practical people—suggest to us new problems or possibly modifications in the solution of the old ones."

It is somewhat remarkable that engineers as a profession have in recent years gradually come to acknowledge that their organizations have a great deal more to do beyond facilitating the acquirement and interchange of professional knowledge. The new by-laws of the parent Institute define that one of its objects is to enhance the usefulness of the profession to the public.

A committee appointed by the American Society of Civil engineers, when reporting on April 17th, 1917, stated that "engineers should realize and accept their duties as citizens of the community in which they live"; and further, they should exert "influence in the legislation of the State and the administration of its affairs wherever engineering principles or practices are involved." Local sections (branches) should volunteer judicious and carefully considered advice on public matters involving "engineering questions."

Dr. G. F. Swain, in his presidential address to the American Society of Civil Engineers' meeting at Ottawa in 1913, made the following observations: "The engineer is primarily a member of the social body. Its problems are his problems; he cannot avoid the responsibility of taking a share in their solution. Social problems are the outcome of the work of the engineer, who, as the advance agent of civilization, has been the main factor in creating the condition which gave birth to the problem."

"Problems of citizenship," said Morris Knowles, "are largely engineering in character"; and yet, when Sir Robert Borden issued his message on the fiftieth anniversary of Confederation, and proudly referred to the marvellous material development in Canada, as Fraser S. Keith mentioned in his address delivered at Ottawa on November 15th last, Sir Robert forgot to state that "each and every one of the indications of advancement owes its present state directly to engineering skill and to engineering progress."

Enough has been stated to show the opinion of various authorities on the desirable relation between the branch and the community. It will be well now to refer to what is being done in this direction, so that we may have some indication of the activities in which the branch may engage.

The Providence Engineering Society succeeded in 1917 in inducing the authorities to appoint an engineering committee to consider the preparedness of Rhode Island, especially with reference to the protection of plants and provision for the restoration of interrupted public service and other work which the engineers could probably do in the event of a serious conflagration or the like.

The Nashville Engineering Society in 1907, at the request of city officials, gave the city council assistance in connection with the method to preserve and secure a pure water supply. It afterwards co-operated with the fire commissioners and building superintendent to frame new building regulations. It assisted in the preparation of a uniform boiler code and in drafting national water

power laws. It joined with the county authorities in connection with the question of highway bonds.

The Cleveland Engineering Society has been very active. It worked with the Chamber of Commerce to co-ordinate the industries of the city to effect a maximum of war production. It joined with the Builders' exchange and the Institute of architects to revise the building code. It assisted the Civil Service Commission in connection with examinations for engineering positions. It co-operated with the Y.M.C.A. and the Chamber of Commerce on the problem of vocational guidance for boys. It assisted with the City Planning Committee to preserve and beautify certain properties.

The Engineers' Society of Pennsylvania conducted Industrial Welfare and Efficiency Conferences. The Model Charter for Boulder, Col., was drafted by engineers. The Municipal Engineers in Britain, at their various meetings, not only offer criticism of the various civic enterprises which they visit and study, but also frequently submit valuable information to the authorities.

The Engineering Institute of Canada is by no means remiss in its service to the public. Its committee on transportation prepared a comprehensive report on the railway problem. It urged the government to make an investigation how the natural resources of Canada could best be developed.

The Toronto branch has also done some work on behalf of the community. The Saskatchewan branch offered to place the services of the members at the disposal of the provincial government to co-operate to the fullest extent when called upon and to give any information at their disposal, either as a consultory body or in an advisory capacity, concerning the qualifications of members of our profession. The British Columbia division made a similar movement.

It will be acknowledged that although we have done something in behalf of the public, the relationship is not extensive or intimate. In this respect we have maintained an attitude of partial isolation. The public knows very little of what we have done in this behalf. Prestige and influence in the community must more or less correspond to the extent to which we cultivate its confidence, goodwill and appreciation. A negative virtue meets with a negative esteem; or in other words, if we do not as a body serve the public, we cannot legitimately expect its high esteem. It has doubtless been observed by us all how few engineers represent the people in Parliament or on other public bodies. We seem to shrink from publicity and must suffer thereby, whilst public service is that much the poorer. The appointments of C. A. Magrath as fuel controller of Canada, and of R. A. Ross and A. Surveyer as members of the Honorary Advisory Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, suggest a satisfactory change in the attitude of the governments in their attitude towards the profession. The United States Government has utilized the services of engineers and engineering organizations in a larger measure.

The question will arise, What then can we do as a branch to enhance its prestige and influence?

We might co-operate with the Board of Trade and the Canadian Manufacturers' Association to study what industrial developments are desirable and possible, and how to promote them.

It would be desirable to join the Civic League and the Bureau of Municipal Research in the investigation of various problems associated with city affairs.

The employment of partially disabled soldiers is a very important subject. The branch might afford assistance in some direction to the governmental commissions.

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