

The Canadian Engineer

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The Canadian Engineer

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A reader is anxious to secure copies of the Canadian Engineer for May 3rd, 1907, and is willing to pay 25 cents a piece for these. Perhaps some of our subscribers can accommodate him.

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SUGGESTED REFORMS.

Elsewhere will be found an extended report of one feature of the recent annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers. Believing that this feature of the meeting is one many members are deeply interested in, and that this interest should not be allowed to fag, we give this matter special attention. We would be very pleased to receive communications from engineers expressing their views on this matter.

SPECIFICATIONS.

This is the time of year when engineers are preparing for the spring rush and this is a good time to revise specifications.

Many engineers have prepared specifications on the principle that the specifications should bind the contractor and protect the engineer without binding him. Is this fair?

The engineer is, in common with all men, fallible, and it would be too much to hope, that in the preparation of specifications, he should make them perfect; to cover every detail of construction; to escape from some ambiguity or indefiniteness. Most will admit, however, that within these limitations much improvement can be made.

If the plans and specifications are full, specific and clear the contractor will know exactly what will be required of him and will name a price that will compensate him for work of that class. If, however, the specifications are loose, indefinite, or call for almost impracticable requirements the contractor will make a reckless bid, hoping that good luck, an easy engineer and clever planning on his own part will lift him out. This is where trouble commences and the engineer who prepares his own specifications has none to blame but himself.

But what of the engineer who does not prepare his own specifications but works to those prepared by another? His position is, indeed, unenviable, yet it frequently occurs that many re-readings make clear and explicit that which was obscure. Discussion with the chief will explain away ambiguity. Difficulties with specifications are often through misconceptions. Let the engineer who prepares specifications make them clear, let the engineer who works by them endeavor to understand them—before he condemns them.

ENGINEERING SOCIETIES.

CANADIAN RAILWAY CLUB.—President, W. D. Robb, G.T.R.; secretary, James Powell, P.O. Box 7, St. Lambert, near Montreal, P.Q.

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.—413 Dorchester Street West, Montreal. President, W. Galbraith; secretary, Prof. C. H. McLeod. Meetings will be held at Society Rooms each Thursday until May 1st, 1908.

TORONTO BRANCH OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.—96 King Street West, Toronto. President, C. H. Mitchell, C.E.; secretary, T. C. Irving, Jr., Traders Bank Building.

ENGINEERS' CLUB OF TORONTO.—96 King Street West. President, J. G. Sing; secretary, R. B. Wolsey. Meeting every Thursday evening during the fall and winter months. February 20th, paper by Prof. R. Angus on "Gas Producers for Power."

SOCIETY NOTES.

Ontario Land Surveyors.

This week the Board of Provincial Land Surveyors are holding the annual examination at the Parliament Buildings, Toronto. On the 25th inst. the annual meeting will be opened. We hope next week to publish a full programme of the meeting.

Dominion Association of Land Surveyors.

A year ago a Dominion Association of Surveyors was formed, with head offices at Ottawa. This year their annual convention will open on February the 25th at Ottawa. T. Nash, of the Surveys Branch of Department of Interior, secretary.