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THE REPORT.

The long looked for report on the Quebec Bridge disaster has been presented. There is no mistaking the Commissioners finding. They state clearly and emphatically the conclusions to which they have arrived. The task has been a difficult one. The information that had to be collected was

voluminous, plans had to be studied, stress sheets checked, methods of manufacture and construction inquired into, nothing spectacular, but persistent plodding, and six long months of keen application and steady grind.

Their findings will be generally accepted and the Commissioners are to be commended in that they state definitely on whose shoulders rest the blame for the collapse of the structure and for the death of the workmen.

From an engineering standpoint the two important findings were that the "professional knowledge of the present day concerning the action of steel columns under load is not sufficient to enable engineers to economically design such structures;" and that "a bridge of the adopted span will unquestionably be safe can be built." If a discussion, profitable to engineers, is to be entered into in reference to this report it seems to us it must be in reference to the phase of the question suggested by these two clauses. If the discussion is focused on this section of the report good may come out of it.

It will not be worth while wasting paper trying to prove that the Commission were not severe enough on the Government for being so careless in inspection where they had such a large financial interest. Of course they were to blame, but Government Commissions don't censure Governments. For years Governments have been lax in the inspection of bonded and public works. They have granted millions of dollars and accepted miles and miles of railways after the most perfunctory, inconsistent and unsystematic inspection. Why should they be more careful over a bridge?

That the Quebec Bridge and Railway Company were penny wise and pound foolish is more remarkable. Large corporations are usually more careful. That they had not on the work an engineer of wide experience in large bridge work, a man capable of detecting faulty design and with courage to insist on correction was a grievous fault. To much trust was placed in their consulting engineer, and the glamour of his past success seems to have dimmed the eyes of that otherwise clear-sighted engineer, the venerable consulting engineers of the Canadian Department of Railways. If Mr. Schreiber had only insisted on Mr. Douglas' recommendation being carried out, but if—

The bridge fell, after six months, we know who to blame, but are we any wiser as to economic suitability of the design? What information have our Commissioners secured that will assist in the speedy completion of the bridge?

The Quebec Bridge is of the past, but is yet of the future. Its erection is not impossible. Engineers have not lost confidence in themselves, nor have the Canadian people lost confidence in the ability and resourcefulness of civil engineers. The clear complete report of the Quebec Bridge Commission should be a splendid guide by which to locate the steps to be avoided in planning the second Quebec Bridge.

THE UNSUCCESSFUL.

Every now and then some unsuccessful tenderer states his tale of woe to the public. Occasionally this is wise, but only when he can follow it up with information such as will lead the public to see the justice of his claim.

Sometimes the engineer responsible for the selection of machinery or material does not recommend that the contract be granted to the lowest tenderer. When an engineer does that you may be sure he has made the recommendation after mature deliberation, and having regard to the available in-