

Science.

THE ENGINEER IN POLITICS.

"LAW and Politics" is a common phrase; the two are often associated as offering a field of work, perhaps a career. The doctor is not unknown in political life; the business man, representing a constituency backed by his own interests, is a notable figure. But, although "political engineering" is little short of a by-word, we seldom hear of the engineer in politics.

There are reasons for this peculiar lack, reasons superficial rather than satisfying. Three explanations especially might be urged; the engineer, civil or mechanical, is a man of action rather than of words, oratory in the campaign and eloquent defence or sharp invective on the floor of the House are not along his line; he is rarely a man of a limited and fixed constituency and no district would elect a nomad as its representative; he is too much engrossed in his profession to give time to the alien pursuit of politics.

These obstacles, however, are not insurmountable; the orator is seldom a power in the House as compared with the capable worker on committees, the able leader of men; the engineer is not always a shifting element in the life of the country, and in any case the practice of representing a distant constituency is not infrequent. As for the engineer's being engrossed in his own business, the problem of detachment from his immediate interests is not harder for him than for other men in the professions or business, many phases of which are to a great extent combined in the businesslike profession of engineering.

As a matter of fact, the similarity of engineering to professional and business life in its status and value to the community has hardly been fully recognized. The engineer is no longer "the man of the engine," rather, as was pointed out in an article on engineering—*Cornhill Magazine*, January, 1903—"the origin of that word—ingénieur—indicates one who contrives by thought the means of succeeding in his task. The engineer is, in the first place, a designer . . . he must be both a scientific and a practical man. It is on this account that engineering has come to be regarded in the light of a profession." The status of the engineer is even higher on this side of the water. Professor Marx, of Leland Stanford, pleading for the broader education of engineers, writes—*Popular Science Monthly*, April, 1905: "The extent to which engineering enters into some of the most vexing problems of our national life is perhaps fully realized only by men who have an engineering training. The correct solution of these problems can in many cases be given only by engineers, but these must be men trained on broad lines. The work which the engineer is called upon to do is . . . in its nature broadening . . . In a democracy it is of the highest importance that every man realize that the noble duties of citizenship devolve upon him. Public service is what engineering stands for; . . . that such engineers have contributed to the mental and moral uplifting of the nation, no one who thinks deeply will deny."

In two ways, then, the need for the engineer in politics is evident. In the first place he is one of a number of educated men to whom above all the country