

### SERVICE OUR AIM.

A publishing house can find no end of branches which it may exploit in the hope of finding new and profitable business. Many departments are opened with that object in view. Not so this new department of *The Canadian Engineer*—the Information Department. It is opened solely with the view of giving quicker and surer information to employers and employees.

During the past year we have been able to furnish men for many different kinds of work in every part of Canada. If we had been provided with the information we could have placed twice as many men.

Then again, there are many men holding positions that are not to their liking. They do not hear of the openings, and when openings occur no one has a record of suitable men for the work. We hope to fill the want.

In a short time this department will have information that will make it possible to select a man for any vacancy. To-day we have four vacancies in different branches of engineering for which we cannot provide men because we have not a record of the men.

If you think we can help you, and you are an advertiser or a subscriber, let us send you a blank.

### THE BRITISH VIEW OF COLONIAL CONTRACTS.

(The Contractors' Record, England.)

A great deal of shouting has been indulged in concerning the work which ought to be secured by contractors in this country from the colonies, but whilst obstacles exist, rendering it almost impossible for proper tendering, very little real benefit is secured, except, possibly, to those who do the shouting. Proofs continue to reach us of the need for more time in which to tender upon large contracts. We refer more particularly to important municipal and Government work. Possibly there are many who find that in most cases the usual time limit is amply sufficient for their own purposes. With such, these considerations will find little favor. There are different ways of looking at every case. Probably these firms are either right on the job, or have little difficulty in getting a representative there. But what about the men who depend upon the press for their advice of contract work to be done in the colonies? There is very little chance for them within the limits already allowed for tendering. In the course of a season, for instance, great quantities of cast-iron and other pipe and all kinds of materials are needed by the various municipalities throughout, we will say, Canada, in connection with waterworks, sewerage, and general improvement work. To whom are these contracts generally awarded? In most cases to Canadian or American firms. Now, in these competitive days, when it is a maxim in municipal as in individual affairs, to get the best value at the lowest cost, it is manifestly unfair to bar any good competitor by not giving him sufficient time to tender. It is poor consolation for the British competitor, for instance, to know that he can get his goods into the country upon more favorable terms than the American manufacturer, and be forced to realize at the same time that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred he is handicapped right out of the running by inability to deliver his tender within the specified time. There is a certain amount of humor in the situation, but there is

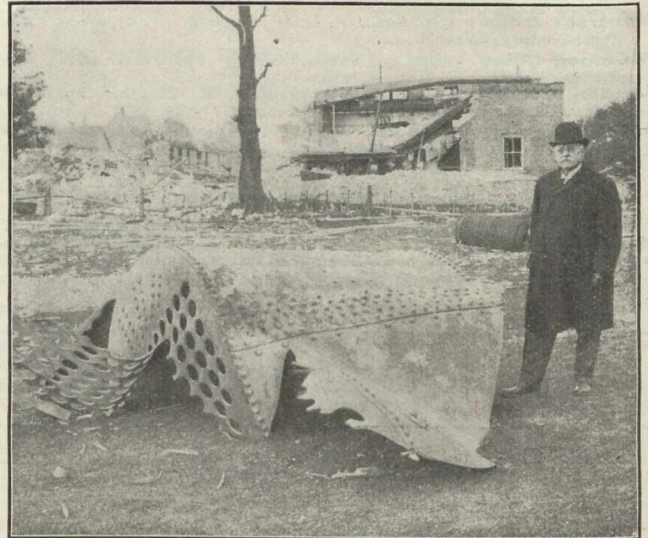
something far more unjust in it than there is funny. Of course, there is but one sequel, in so far as the British contractor is concerned. He gives up all idea of tendering on Canadian work. We contend that any work which involves the expenditure of a large sum of money should be advertised within such a duration of time as to allow British firms to make some investigation, and submit a proper estimate. Inadequate notice of projected work means limited competition, ill-considered estimates, and many other resultant evils, apart from the injustice perpetrated on the long-suffering individual who foots the bill.

### BOILER EXPLOSION.

On the evening of October 12th the boiler in the Aylmer electric light and water plant exploded and wrecked the plant, spreading fire into the adjacent buildings. The engineer in charge was killed.

The boiler, which was of a hundred horse-power, and was situated at the west end of the building, had been recently overhauled and was inspected a week or two ago. This was the first time that it had been used since it was renovated.

The wreck of the building was complete. When the explosion occurred the boiler was literally torn in two. The



**Building and Boiler after the Explosion. This 4,000 Pounds' Boiler thrown 300 Feet.**

western half went through the side of the building, and was carried over a hundred and fifty yards, completely demolishing the footbridge across Catfish Creek. The other half flew through the east end to a distance of three hundred yards. A piece of the boiler struck the top of the standpipe of the waterworks, knocking it off. The loss will be about \$35,000.

At the inquest the chief witness was Mr. F. Mitchell, of the London Engine Supplies Co., who gave expert testimony. He said there had been no burning of the flues or any part of the boiler. There had been no low water, and the explosion, in his opinion, had been caused by a weakness in a plate, which was cracked. There were two boilers in the plant, and they were used alternately. This meant that this boiler would be hot and cold by turns, and the constant contraction and expansion had aggravated the original trouble. Also, the crack in the boiler was situated underneath a spot