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A SURPLUS OF ENGINEERS?

HON. F. B. Carvell, Minister of Public Works, made the statement recently in the House of Commons that his department had been "driven to the wall" last year for architects. "There were plenty of engineers, however," declared Mr. Carvell, "and the services of a number of splendid men could be dispensed with."

PREVENTED TYPHOID OUTBREAK

FEARING a typhoid outbreak, and suspecting the water supply, the authorities at the Deseronto Camp of the Royal Air Force telephoned to the General Supply Company of Canada, Limited, at Ottawa, Ont., asking for protection. The General Supply Co., who are the Canadian agents for the Wallace & Tiernan Co., Inc., of New York, at once expressed a Wallace & Tiernan chlorinator, and that night one of the company's engineers arrived in Deseronto. By noon of the next day, the equipment was installed and operating,—within twenty-four hours of the time the call for help was received.

That is real public service. The General Supply Co. and their principals are to be congratulated upon their initiative. It will be comforting to many Canadian municipal engineers and waterworks officials who cannot now receive from their councils the necessary appropriations for a permanent chlorinating installation, to know at least that in case of an outbreak, there is prompt help at hand.

Municipalities would be well advised not to depend upon such emergency help as this, however, because a very great deal of harm can be done by polluted water before the pollution is detected, and before even an emergency

chlorinating equipment can be installed. Hundreds of typhoid cases can arise from a few hours' pollution.

The number of lives that have been saved by filtration and chlorination during the past decade are innumerable, and it is a great satisfaction to *The Canadian Engineer* to reflect that it was in these columns that the chlorination of water supplies was first advocated in Canada, and that the first installation of a chlorinating plant in this country was made as the result of the repeated arguments in favor of chlorination that were printed in this paper.

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH

THE powers of the ministry of public health that is being created by Act of Parliament, will include all matters relating to the promotion and preservation of the health and social welfare of the people of Canada.

Certain particular powers are mentioned in the bill, such as co-operation with provincial and other health authorities; authority to deal with questions relating to the preservation of child health and child welfare generally; medical care of immigrants; supervision (as regards public health) of railways, ships and all methods of transportation; supervision of federal public buildings in respect to the health of civil servants and other government employees; enforcements of the rules and regulations of the International Joint Commission in respect to the pollution of boundary waters.

The bill also provides for the creation of a Dominion council of public health, consisting of the deputy minister of the federal department, the chief executive officers of the provincial departments or boards of health, and three others to be named by the governor-in-council.

WINNIPEG WATER DISTRICT FINANCES

THE arrangement by which the Greater Winnipeg Water District was to be financed with the assistance of property taxes, has evidently not been satisfactory, judging by the efforts that have been made during the past few weeks to have it placed upon a self-supporting basis. The system has been financed under the agreement validated by Winnipeg and the adjoining municipalities in 1913, when the district was organized. This agreement was incorporated in the provincial legislation creating the district and can be altered only by the legislature. The suburban municipalities consider that they have been called upon to pay a disproportionate share of the cost and endeavored to secure a legislative amendment at the recent session of the House. Opposition on the part of the city of Winnipeg was so strong, however, that the government decided to refer the subject to a commission.

The only difference between the operation of this system and that of an ordinary municipal utility is that several municipalities are here involved, and the agreement was a contract among several municipal corporations; naturally some municipalities will desire that it should be strictly adhered to. It was scarcely to be expected, however, that an arrangement reached at the inception of such a large public work should be found to be strictly equitable after several years of operation. The provincial government should not hesitate to make such changes as are now found to be in accordance with justice to the users and to the ratepayers.

Owing to the fact that the Winnipeg Water District was incorporated for the specific purpose of providing water, it obviously cannot make up a deficit from general revenue as can an ordinary municipality. The principle of self-supporting public utilities is generally accepted in Canada. As regards the distribution of the cost within the body of users, most cities levy a uniform rate approximately in proportion to the amount used. The Winnipeg system covers such an extensive area, however, that it would be scarcely equitable to have users located near the aqueduct pay at the same rate as those more distantly situated.