opinion, may be enough to wreck an administration and to set the tide of civic improvement running in the opposite direction.

The newspaper is the great educator in these matters to-day. But we are already using in Philadelphia moving pictures, parades and exhibitions. The possibilities of these and other means of publicity are not yet fully understood.

Take, for instance, the movement which has led to the formation of large numbers of business men's associations and improvement associations. This affords one of the very best examples of the present vitality of American public life. Our leading men should accept them as something that has come to stay and co-operate with them in such a way as to direct their activities into profitable channels. It seems to me they afford the most promising agency through which, in the first place, the thought of the public on civic questions can be crystallized; and secondly, through which that thought can be given expression in definite public procedure. I have found these associations ready and anxious to hear from men who had definite knowledge on matters of public interest. It should be the attitude of any engineer who wants to play his part in the community, to affiliate with one of these organizations and to help to make it an influence. You can rest assured that the man who is in public life for his own personal advancement is bending every energy to defile and degrade these institutions and to divert them from the high mission which they have it in their power to carry out. So they need our help.

In such a discussion as this, one cannot ignore the civil service. It is always a pleasure to say that personally I could not hold public office if it were not for the safeguards and reliefs that our Civil Service Act affords. At the same time, without repeating what I have said in other public papers on the subject, I want to call attention to one fundamental misconception under which the entire civil service question in this country apparently rests. Civil service appears to be founded on the theory that the best man for the position will apply for it. I think it is the experience of every employer of men —and this is especially true in filling the higher positions —that the best man will not apply. On the contrary, you will usually have to go out on the scriptural highways and hedges to find the best man, and then having found him, fall on your knees and beg him to accept the positions offering such opportunities for public service and professional independence as are most likely to secure him.

This is the way to get good public servants. It is almost impossible to find men who have many of the qualifications for our work combined with a willingness to enter the public employ. Even if public employment should come to be considered more desirable than it is at the present moment, I think that this difficulty in finding the best man would still be encountered. Therefore, if we are to have the highest class of men in important engineering positions we must develop some merit system by which the appointing officer is given a greater opportunity than he now has of finding the man for the job. In this work it is impossible for our engineering societies to take an important part.

I believe, for instance, that if the secretaries of the four national engineering societies could be authorized by their several councils to associate themselves as a civil service board to act in an advisory capacity to federal, state and municipal civil service commissions, it would be a decided step in the right direction. Suppose the president of the Borough of Manhattan should want to secure a competent engineer to put in charge of the highway department. Through the New York City Civil Service Commission he would state the problem to this suggested advisory board, which, in turn, would appoint, say, three engineers to act as his counsellors in finding the man. The appointing officer would keep these counsellors in touch with the search and when he was ready to make a choice, secure their approval before entering into a contract. In this way the merit system would act as a check against favoritism, but would allow the appointing officer the widest possible opportunity to search for the best man available.

This procedure is a radical departure from the present idea of civil service, which is based on the assumption that it is impossible to allow the appointing officer to have anything to do with the selection of his men. Even under the most advanced forms of civil service the appointing officer is confined to a full statement of the qualifications he is trying to secure. One never exactly fills a position with just the kind of man in mind when the search started. It is a question of compromise, and the appointing officer is the one who is in the best position to know where concessions can be made and which among the several requirements are the most indispensable. There would be no objection to a check on this action of the appointing officer through some kind of a written test. But to choose men for positions paying $5,000 to $25,000 a year on the results of a written examination is absolute folly. So far as I know, engineers have never taken a hand in the discussion of methods under which engineers shall be chosen for positions in the public service, and it seems to me high time they should do so.

## TORONTO RAILWAY COMPANY—1904-1914.

The 23rd annual report to the shareholders of the Toronto Railway Company presents the following statistical statement for the years 1904 to 1914:—

| | Gross Income. | Operating, Maintenance, etc. | Net Earnings. | Passengers Carried. | Transfers. | Percentage of Charges, etc., to Passenger Earnings. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1904 | $2,444,534.24 | $1,424,179.54 | $1,020,354.70 | 60,127,460 | 20,480,270 | 58.2 |
| 1905 | 2,747,324.58 | 1,560,437.42 | 1,186,887.16 | 67,881,688 | 23,625,752 | 56.8 |
| 1906 | 3,109,739.61 | 1,646,515.27 | 1,463,224.34 | 76,958,488 | 28,159,558 | 52.9 |
| 1907 | 3,511,197.86 | 1,893,236.41 | 1,617,961.45 | 85,574,788 | 31,370,825 | 53.9 |
| 1908 | 3,610,272.98 | 1,889,046.62 | 1,721,226.36 | 89,139,571 | 32,700,576 | 52.9 |
| 1909 | 3,926,828.43 | 1,995,914.64 | 1,930,913.79 | 98,117,991 | 38,151,596 | 51.4 |
| 1910 | 4,377,116.19 | 2,237,187.75 | 2,139,928.44 | 109,415,264 | 42,630,756 | 51.6 |
| 1911 | 4,851,541.42 | 2,653,361.86 | 2,198,179.56 | 120,997,884 | 48,730,671 | 55.2 |
| 1912 | 5,448,050.36 | 2,866,550.12 | 2,581,500.24 | 135,786,573 | 56,176,985 | 53.4 |
| 1913 | 6,049,018.92 | 3,123,308.55 | 2,925,710.37 | 151,236,925 | 63,083,118 | 52.2 |
| 1914 | 6,127,096.77 | 3,529,546.22 | 2,597,550.55 | 152,966,153 | 65,778,022 | 58.4 |