

A New Era

WITH this issue PROFESSIONAL MEMOIRS in a new form and under a new name enters a new era, on the occasion of its twelfth birthday. It must be an era of greater usefulness than that which has passed. We have a more important mission to perform, a larger clientele to whom we must appeal.

The scope of our efforts will be greatly increased. In this issue several new departments make their appearance and certain old ones have been abandoned. It is intended to add other departments in the near future. The news section, which now appears for the first time, is far from being complete or perfect. Still, we feel encouraged by a good beginning. This department has great possibilities of usefulness in keeping each of us in touch with what the others are doing.

Our change of name is in accordance with our change of policy. A "memoir" is a solemn chronicle of a task well done. But a magazine such as ours, to fulfill the mission we have set before us, should not be a mere archive of technical data and methods. It must be a living thing, pulsating with human emotion and interest.

To be instructive a magazine should be entertaining. The journal of a scientific institute, the "proceedings" of a technical society, do not serve the same purpose as a current periodical. They are in effect archives of technical knowledge, and our journal is not such. Our "body politic" consists chiefly of live human interests and passions, men who are doing things, and not "book-worms," or animated encyclopedias of impractical ideas. We aim to dispense and distribute enthusiasm as well as knowledge. Enthusiasm and knowledge combined win many battles where either alone would fail.

The aim of this journal is to promote the practical efficiency, the solidarity and the enthusiasm of the engineering profession, in the service of the country. It is not a mere recital of technical methods but a bond of union, sympathy and understanding between all engineers in civil or military life who are desirous that the profession shall be always prepared to render the most efficient possible service to the nation in case of need.

Accordingly THE MILITARY ENGINEER solicits from all its subscribers, from all engineers and from all military men, articles and news items which will help it to accomplish its mission. For since we have no staff of paid writers we are dependent for existence on the voluntary contributions of those who believe in our mission.

What is the class of articles that will best meet our needs? First, they must generally be current, up-to-date. Second, they must, in general, appeal to a relatively large number of our subscribers. Third, they must be of value for instruction. Fourth, to be read they must be readable. This generally requires a relatively short article. In each issue there should be

a few articles of moderate length and a greater number of short articles or notes.

It is seldom wise to attempt in any article for a current publication to *tell all*, for that is generally tiresome. If the article be, for example, an account of the construction of a dam, it should not aim to be a complete guide with plans and instructions for others to follow in the future. For as such it will never be used. Neither should it be a history of the work. In some articles that have been submitted there has been included what was almost a journal of operations, which cannot possibly be of an interest to our readers proportionate to the space it occupies. Professional memoirs and technical instructions which are in effect text books, have their uses, but not in a current periodical. We need accounts of new and unusual things, new schemes, new difficulties encountered or new ways of overcoming old troubles. Some details are interesting and important. Others are merely tiresome to a reader. The latter should of course be omitted. Important statistics should be summarized when practicable.

The belief that monumental treatises were required has often served to deprive us of valuable contributions. An author having a valuable idea sometimes feels that he must expand it into a long-winded article. The effort required to do this is so great that often we lost a valuable idea that might have been suitably written up in a few hours or even a few minutes time. Some accounts are of most value when, for our purposes, complete and thorough. But the majority are most useful when presented in sketchy and picturesque style.

In any case it is *quality* rather than *quantity* that we need. The most valuable commodities usually come in the smallest packages.

In order to cover a wide field and to maintain an uncompromising standard of excellence in the material presented to our readers we should have plenty of contributions to select from in order that we may, so saying, skim the cream for each issue. The fact that an article is not published does not mean that it is not good, even excellent. It may simply mean that we are receiving many excellent contributions, all of which manifestly cannot be published. Also it is necessary that we present a "balanced ration," and the best of articles judged *per se* may not fill our needs at any given time. Not every shot of even the most expert marksman is a bullseye. And we want nothing but bullseyes.

If you have a valuable idea don't fail to let us have it simply because writing is not your forte. If your literary style is not in accord with our standards it is very easily re-dressed. It is much easier to adapt some-one else's work than to give birth to new ideas. We are glad to re-write the crudest article which contains valuable information—or have some one else do it. It is the substance rather than the appearance

that counts. To see that good ideas are properly and attractively presented is the editor's job. You need not be a finished writer to be a helpful contributor.

However, waste of time may often be avoided if authors before writing articles complete will send to the editor titles and brief outlines of topics they are prepared to contribute. If articles of any nature or on any subject are not needed at the time, the labor of preparing them may thus be saved. Also if several contemplate an article on one subject the editor can designate one to prepare the article and the others may be called on for comments. Thus duplication of work is avoided.

When an article on a particular subject is requested of a particular individual it will be quite plain that the article is specially needed and will most probably be published.

Comments or discussions of articles will never be called for unless it is fully intended to publish them. Literary style and logical arrangement are of less importance in discussions than in capital articles. Therefore when your comment is invited, help the cause by sending it in promptly.

From time to time the editorial columns will indicate articles needed, and those who are in a position to contribute them are urged to volunteer.

It is desired that subscribers suggest subjects that would be of interest. Our journal can be a success only if it continually presents live matter of interest to us all. So tell us what you want.

Increase in Price of Subscription

DURING the ten years that have just passed the costs of all items which enter into the make-up of a magazine have greatly increased. In some cases they have doubled.

Due to legislative restrictions it has become necessary to discontinue the printing of the journal at Washington Barracks and to contract with a commercial press for the work, with a very decided increase in costs of issue.

This occurs at the very time when we are endeavoring to improve the quality and extend the scope of our work.

As a consequence of these changed conditions the publication of the magazine will cost henceforth from four to five times as much as heretofore. We are accordingly reluctantly compelled to make for the first time in our history a small increase in our subscription price, from \$3.00 to \$4.50 per year. This increase in price will by no means cover the increased cost of production. This can be met only by a large increase in the number of new subscribers and the increase in advertisements which will naturally follow.

It is the intention to secure these additional subscribers by issuing from now henceforth a magazine

which no engineer who is interested in the national defense can afford to be without.

Civil and Military Engineering

IT will be the policy of THE MILITARY ENGINEER in the future, as in the past, to include in each issue articles on both civil and military engineering.

Division of articles into "military" and "civil" engineering does not mean that such articles are of interest solely from a military or from a civil point of view, as the case may be. Most of the operations of modern military engineering are adaptations of civil practice to military needs. Military experience broadens the viewpoint and develops the resourcefulness of the engineer; military necessity results in the development of new and ingenious methods. This military experience cannot fail to promote the development of civil engineering. All branches of engineering, civil, mechanical, mining, electrical, etc., find their application in military operations. No military engineer, therefore, can be indifferent to developments in civil practice, any one of which may be employed in the future conduct of war. And no civilian engineer, however highly specialized his work, can be indifferent to the possible application of his knowledge and experience to the service of his country in time of war.

The defense of our country is a duty which any engineer may be called upon to perform. It is a duty quite as important and always more urgent and critical than the development of civilization and the creation of wealth in time of peace.

The obligation of service to the flag involves the duty of preparing ourselves efficiently to perform that service. Accordingly every engineer who is also a patriotic citizen, is interested in all developments in the field of engineering which may find an application to warfare.

A National Military Policy

SOMETHING over a year ago the Armistice terminated the greatest military conflict that this world has ever seen. In the course of the struggle millions of men gave up their lives and billions of wealth were destroyed. As a direct consequence of the war dynasties passed away and new nations came into being. Normal economic processes were interrupted and the conditions of life which obtained before the War will never be restored. But in this interplay of cause and effect the controlling factor—the elemental force dominating it all was not destroyed. In spite of the ordeal through which it has passed, human nature still remains the same. Individuals will continue to disagree and nations will not always find their aspirations in accord. There is