

THE SOCIAL PERSONAL EQUATION OF THE ENGINEER.

NOT long since I heard a prominent engineer say, when asked to express an opinion of the ability of a younger member of the profession, "he is an excellent man in the office, but has no ability to deal with men." Upon inquiry I learned that this particular engineer was very well qualified to handle difficult engineering problems that came to the drafting room of which he was in charge; but that he had lost several very good chances of advancement because he did not possess the qualifications necessary to manage the broader operations of the firm by whom he was employed. While all persons would recognize his ability in his profession, he was not one who by his tact or manner would readily make friends of those with whom he came in contact, and therefore he was not called upon to fill a more advanced position.

Does not this incident present to us the fact that the engineering profession as a whole devotes too little consideration to the development of the social side of its members? Is not this qualification just as important as the necessary technical knowledge? Does not the engineer lose much because of his lack of sociability? Some people still consider the engineer as a sort of skilled mechanic (and pay him as such) and not as belonging to the ranks of the learned professions. Happily that is not the position generally accorded engineers. The Hon. Joseph H. Choate, addressing a body of engineers, said: "There is necessarily a close, a very close fellowship among all learned professions. We are all alike, studying and applying laws to the uses and conveniences of mankind." President Schurman of Cornell, on the same occasion, said: "Your profession ranks you with scholars, with the men who practice the learned vocations. It is only within the last generation that this has been recognized. But now, in all our universities, the oldest as well as the newest, schools for engineering are established, and the men who graduate in them are placed on the same footing as the men who graduate in what used to be called the learned professional schools. If you take, for instance, the profession of law, there is not an institution in the United