

Ingress and Egress ; Elevator Inspection ; Boiler Inspection ; Ventilation ; Sanitation ; Plumbing Inspection ; Gas Fixtures Inspection ; Appointment of Building Inspectors ; Best Methods of Enforcing Building Laws ; Electric Wiring in Buildings, etc., etc. The Toronto City Council have appointed Mr. Coatsworth, City Commissioner, a delegate to this convention. We would like to indulge the hope that as the result of his visit the Council may be induced to revise the city building by-laws, substituting for the many glaring anomalies at present existing therein some of the carefully considered recommendations contained in the draft by-law prepared and submitted a year or two ago by the Ontario Association of Architects.

Cost of Operating Elevators.

THE cost of operating elevators by steam, water and electricity has properly become the subject of careful investigation, in view of the extensive and growing use of these appliances. It is stated that in New York, the home of so many sky-scrapers, a larger number of persons are carried vertically in elevators than are transported horizontally by the various forms of traction. Experience with electric elevators in the United States is said to have shown the cost of carrying a useful load of 1,500 pounds to a height of 100 feet, inclusive of return to starting point, to be one cent. In Berlin and Vienna the cost is reported to be considerably below the figure mentioned. In the former city the cost of lifting by electricity a load of 850 pounds to a height of 80 feet, inclusive of descent, was only one-fifth of a cent.

National Art Commission.

A BILL has been prepared by the Board of Managers of the Public Art League of the United States for presentation to Congress, which provides for the appointment of a National Art Commission. It is proposed that the Commission shall be charged with the duty of passing upon the merits of all works of art which may hereafter be purchased or constructed by the government. The bill provides that the commission shall be composed of the presidents of the American Institute of Architects, the National Sculpture Society, the National Academy of Design, and two other citizens of the United States, to be appointed for a term of six years, and from time to time, as vacancies occur, by the President of the United States. This is an extension of the idea advocated for several years past by the Ontario and Quebec Associations of Architects that there should exist in each of these provinces a qualified commission to whom should be submitted designs for public monuments, parks, squares and other improvements of an artistic character. We are pleased to note the growth of sentiment in this direction, and trust that it may shortly take practical form in Canada as well as the United States.

Speculative Building.

THE business depression which settled down upon Toronto five or six years ago, due in large measure to the collapse of the real estate boom, was severely felt by speculative builders. In consequence of the drop in prices of real estate, in which most of them were more or less interested, their equities were wiped out, and they were stripped of their possessions. Under these circumstances, many of them removed from the city, and some from the country, in the hope of being able, amid more favorable surroundings, to start life over again and

repair their shattered fortunes. Persons who had suffered by their operations were not loth to witness their departure, and the more legitimate class of builders comforted themselves with the reflection that when better times should return they would be free from the competition of the speculative builders. Recent observation, however, goes to show that some of the speculative builders of the boom days have managed to live through the dull times, and with the return of improved conditions are ready for business again. Owing to the great decline in land prices, these men are able to operate in even the best residential localities, the attractiveness of which they are likely to seriously impair, unless the building regulations are amended so as to compel the erection of a class of buildings suited to these localities.

Development of Trades Unionism.

THE Building Trades Unions of Chicago are considering the best method of labelling buildings which have been entirely constructed by organized labor. The suggestion that a metal flag be adopted which should also serve as a weather vane, has met with favor. The idea is to provide a means by which the members of trades unions may distinguish and keep away from houses erected by "scab" labor. The ultimate end in view will no doubt be to boycott every occupant of a building which does not fly the union badge. The narrow-minded tyranny of some of the labor organizations is fast reaching the point where it will overstep the bounds of public tolerance and bring about its own defeat. Our readers will not be slow to recognize the ridiculousness of measures such as the one we are considering, but the originators are apparently oblivious to the fact that they are making themselves the laughing-stock of sensible minds. In Great Britain the unions are not less tyrannical. The bricklayers refuse to allow any but the sons of bricklayers to be apprenticed. The President of the National Association of Master Builders, in referring recently to the arrogant demands of the unions, expressed the belief that they would have to fight once for all as to whether capital should rule labor or labor rule capital. Recognizing as we do the interdependence of capital and labor, we would like to see these two forces working in harmony for the advancement of the best interests of the race, but it seems futile to hope that this desirable condition can come about so long as the labor organizations submit themselves to the leadership of unreasoning demagogues.

Competitive Designs for Government Buildings.

CANADIAN architects in common with those of the United States will be pleased to learn that the Tarusey Bill, passed by Congress in 1893, which provides for obtaining designs for government buildings by competition among the leading architects of the country, is to be put in operation at once. We publish elsewhere in this number the regulations which have been framed to govern these competitions. The first buildings to be erected on the competitive plan will be in Camden, N.J., and Norfolk, Va. There is little doubt that as the result of bringing to bear upon the designing of public buildings the best architectural talent of the country, there will come a marked improvement in the public architecture of the United States. The Dominion Government might, with advantage to the architectural profession in Canada and still greater advantage to the country, follow the example of the United States in