

expensive character, will add perhaps \$15,000 to the cost of the site. Since the erection of this building, which is five or six stories in height, the lack of space at this point has become more than ever noticeable, and an idea can easily be formed of the condition of affairs which will exist when a similarly tall building shall have taken the place of the low one at present occupying the north-west corner. There is no wiser step that the Council could take on behalf of the city's future than to still endeavor to provide for the carrying out of this improvement, even at the extra cost which the erection of the new building to which we have referred would entail.

THE architects of Australia are to be congratulated upon the announcement recently made that the law compelling registration, for the passage of which the leading men in the profession have been laboring for some time past, will be introduced as a Government measure on the opening of parliament. Under these circumstances its passage in some form may be considered assured. On the other hand we regret to observe that the bill providing for the registration of architects in the state of New York, after having passed the legislature, has been disallowed by the Executive, in compliance with the petition of five New York architects, none of whom are members of the American Institute of Architects, or have attained to distinction in their profession. It is not a matter of wonder that the decision of the Executive has awakened a feeling of indignation on the part of the professional press and of those who have put forth unremitting efforts on behalf of the measure.

THE principal business thoroughfares of Toronto are being torn up to permit of the laying of companion water mains and permanent pavements, and the putting down of tracks for the electric street railway. The excavation, close beside the fashionable promenade on King street, let loose into the atmosphere noxious gases and foul odors to such an extent as to cause pedestrians as far as possible to avoid the locality. The underground conditions thus revealed are not pleasant to contemplate. The earth appears to be completely saturated with illuminating gas and other substances which are continually being discharged from defective mains. These substances, so deleterious to health must find their way into the atmosphere of the streets, and into cellars, where the results are still more harmful. Another thing which a glance into these excavations suggests, is the liability of frequent accidents to the network of pipes buried beneath the surface of the streets. It seems almost too much to hope that the permanent pavements which are about to be constructed will remain long undisturbed.

UNUSUAL dullness prevails in the building trade in Toronto, the result to a large extent of operations having been carried on for several years past on much too large a scale. Hundreds if not thousands of houses were erected by speculative builders in advance of the demand. Many of the houses so erected in the expectation of a speedy sale, were put up in a most unsubstantial manner, and by the time the population shall have increased sufficiently to create a demand for new buildings, will have become scarcely habitable. The work under way and in prospect is principally of a commercial character. Many of the large structures, such as the Confederation Life Association building, the new University buildings, Victoria College, Ontario Legislative buildings, etc., which employed much labor and material, are nearing completion. It is to be hoped that the services of the workmen on these structures will be in demand for the proposed union railway station, the new city buildings, drill shed, etc. It is also to be hoped that the proposal to erect a first-class hotel will soon assume tangible form. The city is much in need of such an hotel, and whoever may carry out the undertaking will no doubt receive ample return from the capital invested.

THE architects of Germany have appointed a committee to arrange an architectural exhibit for the World's Fair. About two hundred of the most meritorious buildings in all classes erected during the last decade have been selected by a competent jury, and special invitations sent to the architects of the same to forward the necessary drawings. The Government will defray all charges for transportation, insurance, etc. December

has been fixed as the time when all drawings for the exhibit must be ready. The attention of Canadian architects was recently called to the importance of taking immediate action to insure a creditable exhibit of Canadian work. Our German friends, who are generally supposed to move more deliberately than the people of this continent, are at least far ahead of us in this matter. The influence of their example should cause us to awake from our seeming lethargy and act promptly in a matter of such importance. Why should not committees be at once appointed by the Associations of Ontario and Quebec to deal with this matter? Since the above was written we have received from the Secretary of the Committee on Congress of Architects a request for the names of members of the Canadian Associations of Architects. It is intimated that the names of architects throughout the world are being collected preparatory to issuing a call for an Architectural Congress to meet during the Columbian Exposition. The practical objects of the congress are stated to be to bring the leading architects of the world into fraternal relations for mutual acquaintance and the promotion of their mutual interests, to review the progress of architecture in different countries and by a comparison of results attained promote the general advancement of the profession of architecture throughout the world; and to consider the principles of architectural art and the relations of architecture to the other arts, sciences and industries.

THE destruction a second time of the city of St. John's, Newfoundland, will, it is to be hoped, lead to the erection of buildings of more substantial character, capable of resisting to some extent the action of fire. The greater part of the city having been built of wood, it was impossible for the few substantial buildings to withstand the intensity of the flames on every side. We are informed that the fire protective service was sadly inefficient, but the most perfect system could be of little value when once fire had got possession of a street of wooden structures. St. John's being the only city in the colony was the site of a number of costly public buildings, most of which were destroyed. Among these were the Government House, erected at a cost of a quarter of a million dollars, legislative buildings, custom houses, hospital and market buildings, court-house, chamber of commerce, commercial bank, Temple Club house, Masonic Temple, Athenaeum Buildings, Methodist college, St. Andrew's church, and the two great cathedrals, Roman Catholic and Episcopalian, which are said to have cost in the neighborhood of \$1,000,000. From the *Building News* we learn that the latter of these cathedrals had been some five and forty years in course of erection in sections. The original designs were prepared in 1847 by Sir Gilbert Scott, and the nave was then erected. In 1880 the next step was taken, when the choir and transept were built by masons sent out from England, under the direction of Mr. Gilbert Scott, to whom was entrusted the completion of his father's designs. The whole of the freestone was exported from Scotland. At the time of the fire the cathedral consisted of a nave with aisles of six bays, lighted by a single lancet headed window in each bay of the aisle and clerestory, and a western narthex; projecting transepts and a square-ended choir of four bays, this eastern work being of fully developed Decorated character, and provision was made for a future central tower, 35 feet square with broach spire. The styles were purely worked out, the whole effect being simple and bold. The Bishop of the diocese is soliciting funds in Canada and Great Britain to aid in the reconstruction of the edifice. A similar appeal is being made for funds to rebuild the Methodist college. The total insurance on property destroyed is understood to amount to about \$6,000,000. Some of our architects and builders who are not at present overburdened with work might find in St. John's a profitable field for their energies.

THE crowds of busy citizens who throng our business streets suspect but little, if they think of them at all, the dangers that are near them through the insecurity of many old buildings, arising from careless and cheap construction in the first place, weakened by the hand of time. And generally it is not until some alterations to existing premises, such as tearing out of shop fronts for the purpose of putting in larger windows, are taken in hand, that the real truth concerning these structures, is exposed to view. But every now and then we are startled by the exposure, and we wonder where our building inspectors are,