

IN the present number of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER is commenced the publication of a series of short biographical sketches of the City Engineers of the most important Canadian cities. The problems which the City Engineer of modern times is called upon to solve, demand that he should represent the highest ability in his profession. It is expected that the majority of our readers will be interested in knowing something about the gentlemen who occupy this important position, and the history of their successful efforts should prove an incentive to young men entering upon their career.

SCARCELY a week passes during the building season that is not marked by serious injury or loss of life by reason of defective scaffolds. It is unfortunately true that the responsibility for most of these accidents rests with the workmen themselves rather than with their employers, and for this very reason it is impossible to guard against their recurrence. The workmen themselves construct the scaffolds, and should see that in point of material and construction they possess the necessary margin of safety. Reckless overloading of scaffolds has probably led to most of the accidents. Workmen are justified in refusing to venture upon a scaffold which they have reason to fear is too weak to support the strain to be put upon it. Difficulty is often experienced, however, in inducing them to exercise necessary caution in this direction.

AN article headed "Who is the Rumper and Where does Rumping Start?" appears in the *Monthly Circular* of the Stone Cutters' Association of North America, over the name of Albert Phillips, of Toronto. Mr. Phillips places the man who does more work than the average man, in a worse category than the so-called "scab," "copperhead," and "snake-in-the-grass" who works for under pay. He says: "How often do we hear the remark made 'Bill spoiled this yard'; it used to be a good, easy shop before he came." To prevent other workmen from following Bill's bad example of working too fast, Mr. Phillips advises: "Keep your place, and consider it two bats behind." From the above, may the inference not fairly be drawn that the teaching of unionism is that it is the duty of its members to carefully guard against outstripping the efforts of the average workman, while at the same time endeavoring on all occasions to secure an advance in wages. This is, we take it, the meaning of "keeping two bats behind," and the reference to the "good, easy shop." It is another method of enforcing the unreasonable demand that all workmen must be paid the same wages, irrespective of their earning capacity. The workman is held to be worthy of being despised who exhibits any ambition to excel. The idea is one which, if attempted to be carried out in all branches of human industry, would speedily put a stop to the world's progress.

THE Toronto Architectural Sketch Club may properly be said to have been a successful organization from the outset, nevertheless its promoters think that in some respects it is open to improvement, and they are laboring earnestly to bring it up to a higher standard of perfection and of usefulness. New and more commodious quarters have been procured, and the work for the coming winter has been entered upon in a spirit which bids fair to result most satisfactorily. Prof. Wright, of the School of Architecture, has very kindly offered to conduct the classes in mathematics, and Mr. John Kiely, the classes in modelling. These classes will meet alternately on Tuesday and Thursday evenings of each week, and are certain to be the means of affording much valuable instruction in these important branches of knowledge. The officers have also been successful in arranging a series of lectures by gentlemen of recognized experience in the building trades on a variety of subjects pertaining to building construction. Thus means have been provided for students to make rapid advancement in the knowledge required in the practice of their profession. It remains for them to properly improve the opportunities thus placed within their reach. It is gratifying to learn that the Club starts the season with a largely increased membership. The officers elect may, we think, be relied upon to put forth every effort to make the future of the Club increasingly prosperous, and if properly supported by the members, they will no doubt succeed.

A CERTAIN class of real estate owners appear to be always on the look-out to take advantage of municipal authorities. If a public improvement is proposed, and any portion of their property is required for the purpose, they immediately place an exorbitant price upon it. The slightest pretext is made use of to prefer claims for damages. The action of such persons has frequently been the means of blocking public improvements, and in some cases the municipality, and indirectly the citizens, has thereby suffered great inconvenience and loss. In view of this, we note with satisfaction an instance which occurred in Toronto recently, wherein the tables were turned and the bitter bitten. A certain speculative land owner some months ago brought suit against the city, claiming heavy damages on account of the construction of a sewer through his property, and to the public surprise, was awarded the sum of \$35,000. The city authorities thought their best course would be to purchase the land outright and convert it into a public park. The owner was asked to state a price, which he did, but the amount, \$74,000, was considered so ex-

orbitant that the idea of purchase was abandoned. A week or two ago, the owner was surprised to learn that the assessment on this land had been appealed against by the City Solicitor on the ground of undervaluation. The City Solicitor insists that the property shall be assessed at the valuation put upon it by the owner, which would seem to be a reasonable enough proposition, although the latter indignantly refuses to view it in this light, which may be taken as proof of the old saying, that "circumstances alter cases."

THE builders and contractors of the Australasian colonies have determined to adopt the British system of basing their tenders upon Bills of Quantities prepared by competent quantity surveyors. The tendency in this direction is becoming very marked in the United States also. In Canada the uniform basis of tendering is perhaps as urgently required as in any other part of the world, but as yet no steps have been taken to obtain it. The *Australian Builder* describes the English method as follows:—"In London the Quantities are usually taken out by a quantity surveyor (or firm) appointed by the architect, and responsible for the accuracy of such Quantities. In large and important jobs two independent surveyors usually are appointed and work together, sharing the commission between them, by which the risk of error is reduced to a minimum. The Quantities are then lithographed along with the Specification, before tenders are called for. The lithographed Bills of Quantities and Specification are supplied together to tenderers, and the former bear, after the first Total, on the Summary of Trades sheet, the words, "Surveyors' Commission on the above (so much) per cent.," left blank. This, every tenderer fills in, in order to arrive at the gross amount of his legitimate estimate (which may, or may not, form the amount of his actual tender), and the successful tenderer pays the surveyor out of the first cash instalment he receives upon his contract. The tenderer, as a rule knows nothing as to who takes out the Quantities, until they are taken out and lithographed, and tenders are called for. We know of no practice or proposal more thoroughly equitable and satisfactory to all parties than this."

AN enterprising firm of architects in Montreal have opened a school for architectural students. We are not aware what subjects are taught that would assist students to gain a knowledge of architecture, but are informed that nothing in the shape of practical teaching relating to building construction is imparted. At a meeting of members and student associates of the Province of Quebec Association of Architects recently held for the purpose of listening to a paper on "Architectural Training" by Mr. Hutchison, a representative of this firm appeared and proceeded to advertise the merits of his school. In view of the fact that the Quebec Association had appointed a committee of its members to report on the institution of classes and lectures for the instruction of students who should become members of the Association, this action must be regarded as a somewhat presumptuous one. It is surprising that the Association should have permitted it. It is still more surprising that some of the members should actually have opposed the proposition for the formation of classes and deliverance of lectures under the auspices of the Association, notwithstanding other members had volunteered to place their time and talent at the disposal of the students for this purpose. They surely must have overlooked the fact that they were aiming a serious blow at the prosperity of the Association, while working into the hands of those interested in preventing instruction being afforded the students by the Association. We are informed that the private school referred to, gives instruction in the French language only, and thus, no matter what may be its advantages to the French student, it is of no service to many students who are unfamiliar therewith. We were of the opinion that the education of students by means of classes, lectures, &c., was one of the most important of the objects which the Association was designed to accomplish. The fact ought at least to be apparent that the Association cannot hope to build up a successful future if it disregards the interests of the students. If the idea of affording instruction to students is abandoned, one of the strongest inducements which could be held out to them to become members will have been taken away. We hope that those who have at heart the present and future welfare of the Association will see the wisdom and necessity of making it a source of benefit to the rising generation of architects, and thereby rallying them to its support.

#### OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

CARVED WOOD CAPITALS, ST. ALBAN'S CATHEDRAL, TORONTO.—EXECUTED BY THOS. MOWBRAY, TORONTO.—R. C. WINDVEYER & SON, ARCHITECTS, TORONTO.

PROPOSED NEW DRILL HALL, TORONTO.—THOS. FULLER, DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS, OTTAWA, ARCHITECT.

"ALPHONSO BLOCK," VICTORIA ST., TORONTO.—DICK & WICKSON, ARCHITECTS.

The Rathbun Co., of Deseronto, Ont., recently shipped a carload of doors and window sashes to South Africa.

Mr. C. S. Nellis, from the headquarters of the Admunt Manufacturing Co., Syracuse, N. Y., is at present making a tour of the Dominion in the interests of the Toronto Branch of the business.