

requirements in this line and in the interest of their clients to specify the character of the work and judge of its efficiency when completed.

Signed Buildings. THE Council of the Royal Institute of British Architects recently adopted a resolution, as follows: "That it is not derogatory to the profession for an architect to sign his buildings in an unostentatious manner, similar to that adopted by painters and sculptors." We should be pleased to see it become the practice of architects to attach their names to such of their buildings at least as they might consider to be satisfactory architectural examples. It would help to define more clearly in the public mind the character and duties of the profession, enhance public respect for it, and awaken greater interest in architecture. On the other hand, a stimulus would be given architects to design more carefully.

Canada's Mineral Production. From the annual preliminary statement published by the Geological Survey of Canada, it is learned that the production of minerals in this country has more than doubled during the last three years, the increase for 1899 being 22.2 per cent., of which 15.52 per cent. is to be credited to the output of gold from the Yukon. Building materials contributed only 8.99 per cent. to the total production, the total value being placed at \$4,250,000. There was a large increase in the production of cement. The quantities and values of building materials are given as follows: Asbestos and asbestic, 25,285 tons, value \$483,299; limestone for flux, 53,202 tons, value \$257,329; Natural cement, 131,387 barrels, value \$119,508; Portland cement, 256,366 barrels, value \$513,983; flag stone, \$7,600; granite, \$9,542; slate, \$33,406. Some of the figures given above would appear to be under the mark, as for example granite, the total value of which is placed at less than \$10,000.

Lessons from the Ottawa Fire. NOT even a disaster such as the recent destructive fire at Ottawa has sufficed to lead to the adoption by the authorities of that municipality of proper safeguards to life and property. A few months previous to this calamity the Ottawa Board of Trade attempted to secure certain amendments to the building by-laws of the city corresponding with enactments already adopted by the leading cities of the United States and Canada, with the object of lessening the fire risk. These amendments were strongly opposed by some of the local contractors on the ground that they would result in restricting building enterprise. Some of the leading architects as strongly urged their adoption. Again since the great fire an attempt to restrict the use of inflammable materials was defeated. On the contrary the city of Hull has adopted precautionary measures in this direction. It is probable that when insurance rates in Ottawa are largely increased, as they are certain to be, the force of public opinion will compel the council to follow the example of the neighboring city.

Proposed Combination in the Heating Trade. IT is learned on apparently good authority that American capitalists are endeavoring to secure control of the works of Canadian manufacturers of stoves and heating apparatus. The Canadian firms in this line were first approached on behalf of the syndicate to learn whether

or not they would be willing to sell a controlling interest in or dispose of their business entirely. Subsequently representatives of the syndicate visited the various factories to make estimates of the value of the plant, buildings and patterns, and to learn, from an examination of the books what had been the profits of the last three years. The idea of the syndicate is said to be to close up some of the smaller factories and operate the others on special lines—that is to say, one would make nothing but heating apparatus, another ranges, another base burners, and so on, the capacity of each shop being made to equal the demand for the special line of goods manufactured. The Canadian manufacturers interested have been given until first December to decide whether or not they will sell out to the syndicate or keep in their own hands the control of their business.

Tests of Non-Combustible Wood. A SERIES of valuable tests of wood rendered fireproof by an electric process, were recently made under the direction of the Board of Underwriters and the Building and Fire Department, of New York. Wood treated by this process was but slightly charred by being subjected to a temperature of 1,900° Fahr. A still more practical demonstration of its fire resisting qualities was shown by a recent fire in the Dun building, New York. So fierce was the fire that glass melted and iron twisted, but the "fire-proof" woodwork proved to be an effective barrier to the flames, which by its agency were restricted to a single room. Material so effective in checking the spread of fire, should find extensive employment, especially in a country like Canada, where wood is so abundant. In the presence of such great conflagrations as those which have occurred at New Westminster, B. C., Windsor, Nova Scotia, and Ottawa, the larger use of fire resisting materials in the construction of buildings, should commend itself to the judgment of all. But if not, then public safety demands that the municipal authorities should legislate in this direction. We observe that a company has just been formed in Montreal to fireproof wood in the above described manner.

Toronto Technical School. IT is to be hoped that another great mistake has not been made by the City Council in purchasing the Toronto Athletic Club building with the object of remodelling it for use as a technical school. The peculiar purpose for which the building was originally designed, makes it extremely doubtful if any portion of it beyond the four walls and the roof, could be made available for a technical school. Can it be considered economy to pay \$60,000 for the site and outer shell of a building and an unknown amount on an attempt to adapt it to a purpose for which it was never intended? A wiser method would surely be to choose a suitable site, and erect thereon a new building which should be most carefully designed to fulfil the special requirements of the case. An influential committee of citizens was recently appointed to promote the establishment in Toronto of an Art Museum. The views of this committee should be sought regarding the proposed so-called technical school. This school ought properly to be known as the Toronto School of Industrial Art and Design, and as such should form a part of the Art Museum scheme. There should be prepared, a carefully elaborated scheme for the establishment in Toronto of a building, or group of buildings, to serve as the home of the arts. To such a group of buildings the above mentioned school would fittingly belong. It is therefore to be regretted that the Council should have acted with such haste in the matter, without allowing time for the consideration in all its aspects of the larger project.