

TORONTO, ONT.—E. J. Lennox, architect, has awarded the hardware contract for the King Edward Hotel to Yates & Towns, of New York.—York council have accepted the tender of the Dessen Bridge Co., of Windsor, for steel bridge over the Don river in East York; price \$1,250.

MONTREAL, QUE.—New wing to Hotel Dieu Hospital: A. Contant, architect; Boucher & Huberdeau, contractors. H. C. Stone, architect, has awarded contracts for new building for G. W. Stephens, 84 St. Francois Xavier street, as follows: Masonry, C. O. Lamontague; carpentry, Jas. Shearer Co. Same architect has awarded contracts for alterations to 565 St. Paul street for W. M. Evans, as follows: Masonry, C. Dufort; carpentry, D. H. Scott.—W. E. Doran, architect, has awarded contracts for factory for C. F. Smith, on Mount Royal avenue, Delormier municipality, as follows: Masonry and brickwork, Heggie & Stewart; carpentry, Jas. Shearer Co.; roofing, Campbell & Gilday.

GUELPH, ONT.—L. C. Wideman, architect, has let the following contracts: House for Geo. Dickenson on Woolwich street:—excavating, stone and brick work, Taylor Bros.; carpentering, David Young; plastering, J. J. Mahoney; painting, Reynolds & Son; iron work, A. Rumford; heating and plumbing, R. W. Phillips; electric light wiring, Guelph Light and Power Co. Residence for Chas. Pettiford:—excavating, stone and brick work, Taylor Bros.; carpentering, Fred Darby; plastering, Peter Martin; painting, Wm. Scriven; iron work and heating, A. Rumford. Stock room and office for the Axle Works:—excavating and stone work, Shaw & Dunbar; carpenter work, Maurice Wideman; painting, Wm. Scriven.

BUSINESS NOTES.

T. B. Prophy, contractor, of Ottawa, died last week.

The dissolution is announced of Greer & Wigmore, painters, London, Ont.

P. B. Dionne & Company, contractors, Montreal, have registered partnership.

The National Cross-Ply Veneer Company, of Toronto, has been incorporated with capital of \$100,000. J. E. Davidson and E. A. Webb are provisional directors.

The dissolution is announced of Andrews, Bell & Company, of Montreal. Mr. J. B. Bell will continue business in Liverpool and Montreal in partnership with his father, Mr. Thomas Bell, formerly of the firm of Andrews, Bell & Company. The name of the new firm will be Thomas Bell, Sons & Company.

DAY LABOR vs. CONTRACT.

Very little definite statistical information is available at present, says the London Contract Journal, regarding the relative cost of day labor employed by municipalities as against work of a similar nature carried out under contract. We will leave such jobs as scavenging, etc., out of the question, and confine ourselves to operative work. Even if accurate statistics were at hand they would not help very much, as the conditions of soil, weather, fluctuations in the labor market and in the cost of material would allow of indefinite variation. It is, therefore, somewhat difficult to pronounce upon the absolute merits of one system over the other on the question of monetary profit and loss only. There are, however, sometimes very large works executed by municipal bodies which can be closely compared to similar works erected by contractors, and it may safely be laid down that it does not pay a municipality to do any large work by direct employment, while it may be more economical and save subsequent ructions if the

tenders for work are divided into two contracts—one for the principal and higher class of material to be used, and the other for labour only. This plan is also often of advantage to the contractor, as it frees him from any liability concerning the material of which he is not the maker, and in the employment of which he has sometimes to take the chance whether it turns out all right, or whether it leads him into lawsuits with both the maker and his employer. In repairs and certain small but complicated works where the public interests demand the highest class of work, municipalities may find it cheaper to employ direct labour under their engineer and surveyor, as in these cases contractors would have to include experts' professional services in their tender, while the various corporations of the United Kingdom get a good many little extra jobs out of the excellent body of men who serve on their staff. That the employment of a large body of men by a government or by corporations lead to political abuses cannot be questioned. Another objection denoted by the term, "Government stroke," is too well known to require elucidation. The argument sometimes advanced that by large employment of direct public labour a class of men whose maintenance would otherwise fall upon the public funds is made self-supporting, is hardly good enough. If they are capable of earning what they get, the threatened contingency would not arise in their case anyhow; and if they are paid more than they are worth, then it does not matter whether it is charged in the ratepayers' bill as work-house or as wages. It comes out of the same pocket, and pro'ably the roundabout way costs more than the other.

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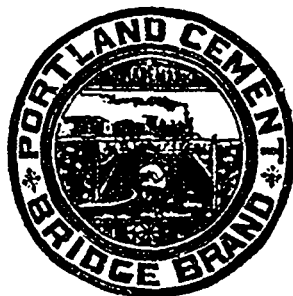
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