

least three feet measured at right angles to the slope of the roof. The wall in question divided one portion of the defendant's warehouse, one-story in height, from another portion, five stories in height. The defendants contended that only the portion of the wall to the height of the one-story part of the warehouse could properly be classed as a party wall, and that above this height it should be classed as an exterior wall. The court sustained the defendants in this contention.

**Queen's Park Improvement.**

THE work of improving that part of Queen's Park in front of the Toronto Legislative Buildings will very soon be completed. The large stretch of sloping and finely graded lawn, with its statues, walks, trees and flowerbeds, produces a very agreeable effect. The driveway in the Avenue from Queen Street north and around the west side of the park has been entirely reconstructed since last season. This is one of Toronto's beauty spots, and it is gratifying to see it being put in a condition somewhat becoming its importance and possibilities.

**The Recent Labour Tr. ules.**

JUST as our May issue had left the press a settlement was reached between the Toronto Builders' Exchange and the builders' laborers with respect to the wage question. The latter have agreed to accept the same rate as was paid during the season of 1895, viz., 18 cents per hour, an agreement having been signed to that effect covering a period of two years from the first of May last. This step removes the possibility of any further dispute between the master builders and employees during the present season, agreements having now been signed with all the trades. This is a cause of congratulation, for while it was imperative upon the laborers to accept the offer made by the master builders, the wisdom of so doing becomes more apparent as the season advances and few new buildings are shown to be in contemplation.

**School Sanitation.**

WE are pleased to learn that the Toronto Public School Board has taken a very important step this season towards bringing all the school premises under their control up to a proper sanitary standard. There are still quite a number of the schools where the closets are the old-fashioned brick pit in open sheds. While they are provided with sewer outlet and kept in as good condition as possible, they are in some respects positively unsanitary. At one of the large schools these outside closets will be removed, and complete new modern water-closets will be provided in the basement of the main building, with the best plumbing work and thorough ventilation. This is the first time that such a change has been made by the Board except in case of rebuilding or enlargement of a school, and will undoubtedly be followed by the same kind of improvement at other schools as rapidly as funds for the purpose can be obtained.

**What Should be Taught in our Public Schools?**

WE have occasionally heard the opinion expressed that our system of public education is too liberal, in that it goes beyond instruction in the three R's. Strange to say, this opinion is sometimes heard from well-educated persons. This is on a par with the opposition of representatives of labor organizations to manual training in

the public schools. Both ideas are wrong. Train the mind and train the hand of the young as liberally as can be afforded. True education need not be feared by anyone, but will prove an advantage to all. Such critics as those referred to would shut out from a public system of education such studies as drawing and hygiene. But a careful grounding of pupils in these studies develops a taste for art and an interest in sanitation, which is of positive advantage to architects and builders, as well as the public, in that it stimulates the demand for artistic and healthful buildings.

**Value of Improved Fire Protective Appliances.**

THE fire which destroyed one of the large departmental stores in Toronto on the evening of the 9th inst., furnished several good lessons to persons interested in city property and business. The building and stock were of a very inflammable character, and were burning fiercely before attacked by the firemen. Had it not been for the improved fire apparatus supplied to the department last year, especially the water-tower and the steam engines, the loss would have been far greater. The outlay for new apparatus was clearly saved many times over in this instance alone. Notwithstanding, had there been a fair to strong breeze the danger would have been greatly increased. Three things are indispensable to prevent the ruinous spread of such fires—first, buildings constructed as nearly fire-proof as possible, consistent with their location and purpose; secondly, the best appliances for extinguishing fires; and thirdly, competent men in a well organized fire department. The first of the above mentioned requirements is first also in importance.

**Safe Construction.**

THE bridge failure at Victoria, B. C., on the Queen's Birthday, involving the sudden destruction of nearly one hundred lives, is a startling reminder of the necessity of proper design and construction not only of bridges but also of buildings, upon the safety of which human life depends. Especially does it emphasize the danger of putting a structure to a different use from that which it was designed to serve. The bridge at Victoria was originally constructed for vehicular and foot traffic only, but was afterwards subjected to the enormously increased strain imposed by overcrowded street cars, with what result is now sadly apparent. Since the disaster the statement has been made that the safety of the bridge had previously been called in question. Presuming this to be the case, the warning, as too frequently happens, was disregarded. Now that a large number of precious lives have been lost, and sorrow carried to hearts in every part of the Dominion, a rigid inspection of the bridges throughout the province has been undertaken. This bears the appearance of locking the stable door after the horse has been stolen, yet it is to be commended, in view of the possible prevention of like disasters, and we trust will lead to similar action being taken by the governing authorities of the other provinces. Investigation would be certain to reveal the existence of many unsafe structures of an engineering and architectural character. Periodical inspection of traffic bridges and buildings by officials of either municipal or provincial authorities, seems to be necessary for the public safety. Of even greater importance than this, however, is the need of legislation such as the Ontario Association of Architects have sought to obtain,