

IN response to representations made for several years past by the architects of Toronto, the Fire and Light Committee of the City Council have decided that hereafter on residential streets within the brick limit, Elizabethan architecture will be permitted, so that above the first storey, which must, as before, be of solid brick, timber framing, filled in with Portland cement or stucco, may be used. Several specimens of this style of architecture have been erected under special permit, and the new regulation will, probably, lead to the erection of many houses in the old English style, thus widening the scope of architects for the decorative treatment of their designs, and greatly enhancing the artistic appearance of residence streets. It was decided also, to place the new front, between Yonge, Simcoe, Esplanade and Lake streets, in the brick limit. South of Lake, wooden structures, covered with corrugated iron, galvanized iron and metallic shingles may be erected. On all wooden buildings hereafter galvanized iron and metallic shingles may be used.

THE owners of the building occupied by the Toronto Technical School have notified the management that in future the rental will be \$600 per year instead of \$300 as heretofore. This notice was not given until after the School had entered upon its winter work, and when removal to other premises could not be attempted. To a letter previously addressed by the Secretary of the School to the owners of the building requesting to know what rental would in future be charged, no reply was given. In view of this, the action of the owners in doubling the rental so late in the year bears the appearance of deliberate sharp practice. In a reference to the successful working of the school in a previous issue, the need of a new building adapted to its present and future requirements was mentioned. The large increase in rental now imposed should determine the erection of a new Technical School building if possible next year. The amount of the present yearly rental is sufficient to pay 5 per cent interest on \$12,000, and this sum would form a considerable proportion of the cost of a new building.

THE building permits issued by the City Commissioner for the City of Toronto, for the year 1893, fall short of those of the preceding year by more than \$1,000,000. This is partially accounted for by the fact that the permit for the new City and County buildings, amounting to \$1,000,000, was included in last year's record. It is yet too early to speak with any degree of authority regarding the outlook for 1894. The opinion prevails, however, that the lowest point has been reached in the depression which has prevailed in Toronto for some years past, and that the tendency will be upward in the future. It seems clear that no building of a speculative character will be done in Toronto for some years to come, and this is regarded by reputable builders and others who have at heart the welfare of the city as something to be thankful for. It is believed that a fair amount of building will be done next year in the business portion of the city. Improvements to buildings used for business purposes have not kept pace with those for residence, and there now seems to be a disposition to even matters up in this direction.

THE sentence of one year's imprisonment which has fallen upon Messrs. McGreevy and Connolly should have a salutary effect upon the propensity for boodling which has prevailed to so great an extent of late in connection with public contracts in Canada, and more especially in the Province of Quebec. The petitions which are being circulated on behalf of the prisoners by persons whose sympathy appears to have overcome their judgment, will have a tendency to destroy the good influence which might otherwise be expected to result from the decision in this case. It is perhaps true that the men upon whom punishment has fallen are not the greatest wrong-doers in the case, but the fact that it is not possible to bring under the power of the law the chief conspirators is no reason for allowing the sinners of lesser degree to escape. It is high time that a check was put on crooked practices in connection with the awarding of public contracts. The system of securing contracts by means of bribery is practiced to such an extent that it has become impossible for firms who are unwilling to resort to this method to obtain any business in certain quarters. The influence of the system upon officials in the public service, and indeed upon the

community at large, is pernicious and harmful in the extreme. Furthermore it leads to a great waste of public money, as contracts which are thus purchased are given at figures greatly above what would be obtained if honest competition prevailed. Viewing the subject in these aspects, it should be a matter of congratulation that punishment has overtaken some of those who have been engaged in crooked dealing, and the hope should be entertained that the Government and public corporations of all kinds would set themselves with determination to stamp out boodling.

THE improvement of the public highways is a subject which for several years has occupied a considerable measure of public attention in the United States, and we are pleased to notice is now being considered in Canada also. Mr. Andrew Pattullo, of Woodstock, Ont., has been largely instrumental in calling public attention to the subject in Ontario, and a convention to consider the question is shortly to be held. A little consideration is all that is needed to show that if the principal thoroughfares of the country were improved in such a way as to present a smooth solid surface on an unyielding foundation, greater loads than at present could be transported over them, and there would be a great saving in horses and wear and tear of vehicles. At the foundation of the present unsatisfactory and in many instances disgraceful condition of our public highways, is the system of carrying out repairs by statute labor. Under this system men are appointed to supervise and to build roads who have had no experience whatever to fit them for the work, but are in this way allowed to pay their taxes in labor. Under such circumstances it would indeed be surprising if the work were done in anything like a proper or scientific manner. Payment of taxes in rural municipalities should be made in cash, and such portion of the taxes as is to be spent in the improvement of the roads should be expended under the direction of an engineer or other experienced person. In this way more work would be done for the amount now expended, and what is of more importance, it would be done in a proper manner and would not require re-doing year after year. The subject of road improvement is one of primary importance to the farming community. The putting of our main highways in a condition approximating in some degree to that in which the roads are maintained in European countries, would vastly increase the farmer's profits and the value of farm property, and result also in benefitting largely the business community. Engineers and skilled roadmakers as well as manufacturers of road-making materials should be interested in this subject.

AN effort is being made to develop trade relations between Canada and Australia, the Hon. Mr. Bowell, Canadian Minister of Customs, having just returned from a visit to Australia with this object. Dr. Benwick, who acted as commissioner for New South Wales at the World's Fair, expresses the hope that a market can be developed in America for Australian woods, which are a complete contrast in character to those of this continent. They are mostly hardwoods, and are especially adapted for railway ties, block roadways and interior house decoration. The *Australasian Builder and Contractors' News* has a lengthy article on this subject, and cites the fact, mentioned in the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER, that the City Engineer of Toronto had recommended the paving of the streets of that city with vitrified brick, as proof that there exists an opening in Canada for the use of Australian wood for paving purposes. We have no doubt from the fact that certain Australian woods are being thus employed to a considerable extent in the streets of London, that the material is well adapted for the purpose, but are inclined to question whether it could be transported to Eastern Canada and sold at a price which would enable it to be used in competition with vitrified brick and asphalt. It might be possible to find a market here for certain kinds of interior finishing woods, which might be partially manufactured in Australia and shipped so as not to occupy much space on steamers and cars. This could not very well be done in the case of paving material, hence we fear that its bulk, and the great distance over which it would have to be transported, would forbid its introduction and use in this country. There seems a probability that an exchange of materials can profitably be carried on between Australia and the Province of