

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA, BRANCH ON ST. CATH-
ERINE STREET, MONTREAL. MESSRS. EDWARD AND
W. S. MAXWELL, ARCHITECTS, MONTREAL.

The photograph we have received can hardly do justice to the peculiar character of this building with its necessary contrasts of colour. Viewed through a magnifying glass, so as to get the appearance from the point of view of a passenger on the street, the front is not only novel and interesting but pleasing. We should question however, first, the desirability of cutting the wall down so low beside the doorway, (it appears to be more than is actually convenient, if one may judge from the curtains that have been strung across the opening at a height of about six feet above the step which runs past the door), and, secondly, the curved lines of the door abutments seem hardly severe enough for their position at the base of the building. Doubtless the subsidiary position of the doorway, as a feature within the structural opening, suggested their form, and they were intended to connect the doorway with the base line; but they might reasonably have been higher, as high as the curtain at least, and, if severely rectangular, could be made none the less interstitial by treatment.

STRATHCONA HALL, MONTREAL.—MESSRS. FINLEY & SPENCE,
MONTREAL, ARCHITECTS.

The McGill University branch of the Y.M.C.A. have erected this building as a residential club for students of the University. There are rooms for about 60 students, besides dining and recreation rooms. The building is on the corner of Sherbrooke street and McGill College avenue, facing the University grounds and nearly opposite to the principal entrance gate. The facade on Sherbrooke street is of yellow sandstone, the side wall on McGill College avenue is of brick, to match the stone on the front, and combined with it by means of string courses of stone running with the heads and sills of the club-rooms as far as they extend. It is the external manifestation of the internal arrangement which gives the design its severity in the upper storeys. Below we have the important and, we may presume, beautiful club-rooms, which get their proper representation on the facade. Above, all is of a private and simple nature; small rooms (though their single windows being paired do not announce that fact) and without predominant motive, for one bedroom does not differ from another bedroom in glory. The upper part is therefore properly plain. But it is not entirely satisfactory. The law that the more severe should be below the more elegant is as inexorable as the law of gravity, and this design suffers from the insertion of those graceful round headed windows, (which should be at the top of something), as the supporting members of the piles of square headed windows which belong to the bedrooms. As the round heads do not appear within the room of the principal storey there is no apparent objection to crowning the double storey of club-rooms emphatically, with a string cornice, and slipping the main cornice up to the top of the building; which seems its proper position, (if the external presentation of internal arrangement is to be carried out consistently), for it hardly seems possible that all the 60 bedrooms are below the attic and, if they are not, there is no reason to mark off the upper storey as inferior. Then the cornice would be in a position to receive graceful

treatment to any extent that was necessary to duly adjust the whole design to the law that the most elegant should be uppermost.

There seems, however, to be some complexity of level, shown in the fenestration of the two lower storeys on McGill College avenue, which was probably at the bottom of the present arrangement of the composition.

THE TRADERS BANK OF CANADA, TORONTO.—MESSRS.
CARRERE & HASTINGS, NEW YORK, AND F. S. BAKER,
TORONTO, ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS.

We cannot regard the arrival of the tall building in Toronto with entire satisfaction, but it is at any rate satisfactory that the first—for this is the root of dissatisfaction, that it will not remain long alone, so susceptible to public approbation are the banks—it is satisfactory to have at least a good example to begin with.

The plan, which devotes the first and second floors to the bank offices, making of them a two-storeyed chamber, is exactly represented on the exterior, giving the bank offices distinction both externally and internally in the same manner. The elevation of the banking room above the street is new in Toronto, but it helps to serve the problem—how to get the public into the middle of the floor space, and keep the clerks in unbroken connection on the outside where the light is. The entry most in use will be no doubt be that from the elevator hall, so that the connection on the ground floor will be still interrupted to some extent but the fact of the other entrance makes for the reduction of the entrance from the hall. The flight of steps (there are only 22) will be the more convenient means of exit, and the bank entrance on the street, which is an exterior essential, gets thereby a justification in plan. The rest of the exterior is admirable. The limestone base, formed by the ground floor and the bank double-floor with its emphatic Doric order is terminated by a terra-cotta cornice, not of the light character shown by the artist in the perspective drawing, but a cornice of ordinary classic proportion, surmounted, however, by the balustrade shown. This is gracefully eased into the shaft of the building by the pedimented tops to alternate windows of the bottom storey of the shaft. The shaft is further united with the base in composition by continuing up the solid corners as a mass more solid and more perpendicular than the rest of the building. The effect of solidity, (which is obtained by projecting the wall slightly for about 17 ft. from the corners and by rustication the brickwork with a recessed course at intervals of about a foot), and the effect of perpendicularity, (which comes chiefly from banding the central portion of the wall at intervals with strings which stop against the projecting corners), gives the corners a value in composition equivalent to that of quoins on a large scale, or of pilasters; giving the corners a firm appearance. The large cornice at the top projects fully 6 feet, and will be, (alas!), copper; covering, however, a steel construction which will make of the cornice a practicable gallery with a view over the lake. A virtue of this projecting cornice for the people of Toronto is that it will reduce the building in appearance to a twelve storey building; for the thirteenth storey is contained in the cornice, and everything above, if it appears at all, will count as roof.