

## CANADIAN CONTRACT RECORD

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larity in delivery of papers.

### Reasons for Optimism.

Once upon a time an Irishman fell off the roof of a twenty-storey building and rapidly headed downward. His native cheerfulness and hopefulness did not desert him, and as he passed each floor he was heard to shout "All right, so far!"

### The Turn at Last.

A remarkable stimulus to retail business was noted by many Winnipeg merchants on Saturday. It is claimed that it was one of the heaviest days for a year, and one merchant stated that the indications pointed to very active trade for the remainder of the winter.—Free Press.

### Already a Trade Revival.

At a council meeting of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association it was stated that the railways had ceased building cars and the Railway Committee was instructed to point out to the Railway Commission that the result would be a serious shortage in cars this fall, inasmuch as indications pointed to an early and brisk revival in trade. Edward Gurney predicts that 1909 will be the biggest year Canada has yet seen.

### More Building Means Cheaper Money.

Throughout the entire country there was no reason for self-congratulation regarding the returns for new

building in January. Nevertheless the exhibit is not so bad as it might appear, and at the present moment there is much more work coming into view than is indicated by the current run of building permits. Many investors who shrank from putting money into real estate improvements by reason of the high prices of labor and materials prior to the recent period of depression are now investigating the situation with a view to presently embarking on their undertakings. A constantly increasing amount of estimating and figuring is being done and from all accounts a very considerable amount of work is going to be in hand with the coming of spring. Particularly in the West is the opening up of building activity noticeable. In Calgary at the present time there is work under construction to the value of over \$900,000. Prince Albert and Vancouver are almost equally notable examples, and all over the Dominion there is an awakening interest in structural undertakings that bodes well for the future.

Money must become cheaper, however, and until it can be had for real estate investments at 6 per cent. and under there is reason to expect that speculative building will be detrimentally affected. That rate will be reached before many months, in all likelihood, and perhaps even sooner than is generally expected.

### The Use of Concrete and Cement Blocks

As a market for cement products the farm is well worth the serious consideration of any cement man who is located in an agricultural district. Operations in any one instance may not be on a very grand scale, but if you are looking for a class of good, steady customers, cultivate an acquaintance with the farmer. The farm journals and agricultural schools are accomplishing great things in the improvement of farming conditions and the average farmer is already, in fact, an eager student. And anyone who goes out to talk to the farmers on subjects that relate to the farm, need not hesitate to use technical terms if he understands them, for he will find

that farming is fast being reduced to a scientific basis and most of the farmers are, to say the least, pretty well grounded in the rudiments of this science.

Another characteristic of the farmer which makes him a good customer for the cement man to wait upon is this: It is the ambition of all farmers to see the farm stay in the family. The father wants to see the land pass on to the son. And so he does not hesitate to make permanent improvements. He likes to feel that the things for which he is now struggling and sacrificing the best that is in him, will be a source of profit or comfort to his children and his children's children.

The uses to which concrete may be put on the farm are as unlimited in their scope as in any other industry.

### Civic Economy.

The Master Carpenters' Section of the Builders' Exchange who, it was mentioned in our issue of last week, have been interviewing the Board of Control with regard to giving out by day labor work which might, with a considerable economy, be let by tender, have succeeded in impressing the authorities with the validity of their claims. Mr. Arthur Dinnis stated that they were certain the city could not, for example, build the new ferry shed by day labor as cheaply as by tender, and claimed that the master carpenters would be perfectly satisfied to have the City Architect tender on any contract in a similar manner to that in vogue in the Engineer's department.

Moreover, if the contract was awarded to the City Architect, a competent man should be employed to see that the work was done according to the plans and specifications and, further, to keep a strict account of the cost of material, labor, and other incidentals, so that the citizens might be aware of the correct cost when the work was finished.

The Property Commissioner stated that he recommended the work to be done by day labor, because he could not get contractors to do the work in time for the opening of navigation. Mr. Dinnis repudiated this, and stated