

ST. LOUIS, like Toronto, is erecting a city hall, but it is hoped that the experience of the latter will not be that of the former. A committee of investigation has discovered numerous defects and weaknesses in the partially completed St. Louis building, which has already cost the city over \$2,000,000, and which will have to be largely reconstructed. Toronto's complaint is not so much structural as financial.

MR. JAS. J. CURRIE, of Abbotsford, B. C., has sent a long communication to the New Westminster Board of Trade, in which he elaborates a plan for the construction of dwellings for the working classes in London, England, the material to be sawdust and other refuse reduced to pulp and moulded into planks. Artificial lumber of this kind is no new thing, but we question whether the freight from British Columbia on either the sawdust or lumber would not be too high to make it pay.

MR. JOHN J. FOY, of St. Louis, presented to the National Association of Master Plumbers of the United States recently, a lengthy paper, the title of which was, "Should Master Plumbers Handle Tools?" No general answer, affirmative or negative, can be given to this question. If the building business is active in the locality in which the plumber resides, it will probably be more profitable to him to pay journeymen to handle the tools while he devotes his time to securing contracts. If on the other hand, there are few contracts to be got, as has been the case of late in most of the cities and towns of Canada, the master plumber should not allow false notions of dignity to prevent him from taking hold of the tools and doing as much as possible of the actual work himself, thereby adding to his profits the money which under different conditions would be paid out in wages.

WE have recently received a communication from the Secretary of the Institute of Clay Workers, 222 Strand, London, asking our assistance towards obtaining specimens of Canadian manufactured bricks for the Institute's exhibition of manufactures of clay materials. The Secretary of the Institute adds that he would be pleased to see any of the readers of this journal who may at any time visit London, and to show them what is being done in England in the line of brick manufacturing. We trust that some of our manufacturers, in response to this invitation, will send to the Institute specimens of their products. In the manufacture of plain and pressed brick, terra cotta, and other clay materials, Canada has made wonderful strides during the past ten years, and we have little doubt that our productions in this line will compare favorably with those of other countries.

A GUILD of Sculpture has been incorporated in Ontario, to promote and cultivate the study and taste for that art, and for special training in designing, modeling, carving and working in metals. It is the intention to hold exhibitions and offer prizes for statuary, and to promote the establishment of a gallery. Ticket holders will receive statuettes or busts in terra cotta, and have a chance in the drawing of prizes. The president is Mr. L. R. O'Brien, R.C.A., the well known artist, and the Director of Arts, Mr. Hamilton MacCarthy, R. C. A., the equally well known sculptor. Mr. Emerson Coatsworth, M.P., is treasurer, and Mr. James Van Sommer secretary. The studios and office are at 28 Toronto street, Toronto. Officered by such men, and with a promising field, such a guild should, and no doubt will, be a success in promoting a love for this splendid branch of fine art.

A CANADIAN visitor to New York recently was impressed with the difference in methods of construction employed in that city compared with those pursued in Canada. In the construction of long stretches of wall in business buildings, the method usual in Canada of bonding each course of brick, is not followed; instead, it is the practice to lay a bonded course at regular distances, a few feet apart, and to fill in the space between these courses with brick bats, laid directly one upon another with a bedding of cement mortar between each course. It is claimed that this method of construction, which permits of the utilization of a large amount of what is here regarded as waste material, is not only cheaper but actually possesses some advantages over the Canadian method. One of these advantages is, that cracks

due to settlement will affect only sections of the wall and not the entire structure, as is the case where bonded courses are laid throughout the building.

CANADIAN manufacturers who do an export business in iron materials are complaining of the treatment accorded to them by the Government in the matter of refund of duty. With the object of encouraging the use of Canadian iron, the tariff imposes a duty of 20 cents per cwt., or \$4.48 per gross ton, on iron imported for manufacturing purposes from the United States, and in order that our manufacturers may not be placed at a disadvantage with American manufacturers as regards the ability to do foreign business, it provides for a refund of 99 per cent. of the duty paid by the Canadian manufacturer on American iron, when the article in which the iron is used is exported. These provisions are considered fair enough if properly carried out, but complaint is made that the Government has failed to provide any satisfactory means of arriving at the amount of refund, and some manufacturers at least, who are doing quite an extensive export business, have as yet not been able to secure a cent of refund. Manufacturers of iron goods which have to be subjected to steam pressure—as for example radiators—are obliged to use about 60 per cent. of American iron, in order to get the requisite amount of strength for their materials. It is apparent that it would be impossible for the customs inspectors to determine by examining the manufactured article just what percentage of Canadian and American iron it contained. The common sense way would seem to be to compel the manufacturer to submit to the Government proof of the amount of American iron which he is accustomed to use in the manufacture of a certain class of material, and upon this the rebate should be allowed in the case of material exported. Strange to say, however, the Government refuse to adopt this method, while neglecting to make provision of a more satisfactory character. The result is, that manufacturers are getting no rebate whatever, which means that American manufacturers are enjoying an advantage in foreign markets of something like \$6.00 per ton. This condition of things should be remedied without delay.

It is alleged by manufacturers of certain lines of materials that there is need for a revision of the specifications under which tenders are received and contracts awarded for Government buildings. It is stated that under these specifications materials of certain manufacturers, who years ago were the only reliable makers of certain lines of goods, continue to be specified, thus shutting out the numerous other manufacturers who have come into the field in recent years. Some of these goods are of the most simple character, as for example supports for lines of steam piping, which can now be obtained from a score of different sources. It seems only right that all reliable Canadian manufacturers should be given an opportunity of submitting tenders for materials required for use in public works. The following order, recently issued by Secretary Carlisle, of the United States Treasury Department, recognizes the necessity for the change which our manufacturers desire to see introduced: "The supervising architect of the Treasury Department is hereby directed to eliminate from the specifications hereafter prepared in this office for the erection or repair of public buildings all requirements which demand from the successful bidder that he shall furnish certain specific materials or "equal thereto," and shall not use in connection therewith the name or designation of any individual, co-partnership, company or corporation. The said specifications must state in sufficiently descriptive terms the kind and quality of stone or brick desired, without reference to any particular quarry or manufacture; but these, and all other materials must be of the best quality for the purpose wanted, and subject to the approval of the supervising architect, without, however, naming any special make or brand of goods, or in any wise discriminating in favor of one specific kind of material as against similar material of equal quality. The supervising architect is further directed to settle definitely in his designs of public buildings the kind of material with which the walls are to be built, in order that controversies concerning the use of different materials may be avoided. This order shall take effect at once." Complaints are also heard of the difficulty experienced in securing copies of specifications, and answers to