

tering, W. J. Hynes; painting, C. Chawner; tinsmithing, Wheeler & Bain; plumbing, Fiddes & Hogarth; heating, Toronto Furnace Co.—Same architects have accepted the following tenders for alterations to residence, 17 Hayter street: Masonry, John E. Webb; carpentry, P. Curtis; painting, C. Chawner; gas-piping, Mr. Clark; heating, Toronto Furnace Co.—Mr. Henry Simpson, architect, has let contracts as follows for a row of seven houses on Arthur street: Brickwork, James Nurse; carpenter work, J. C. Scott & Co.; other trades not let. For alterations to a hotel, corner Simcoe & Queen streets, the contract for carpenter work has been given to William Simpson and that for brickwork to John McClue. Mr. Simpson has also accepted the following tenders for alterations on Bay street for James Crowther: Masonry, James Crang, carpenter work, J. B. Baker.

THE CEMENT MARKET.

The imports of cement at Montreal last week were 30,745 barrels Belgian and German and 850 English, as against 1,366 English and no Belgian and German for the previous week, making a total to date for the season of 193,083 Belgian and German and 23,640 English. Although the arrivals have been large, yet there is still a scarcity of spot supplies, owing to the fact that out of the above quantity received fully 25,000 barrels had to be delivered on government contracts, leaving only about 6,000 barrels to be distributed on other contracts and late orders. A feature of last week was a sale of 8,000 barrels of Belgian on western account for delivery this month. The demand is good, and an active trade is reported for the season. The tone of the market is strong, and the advance in prices of 5c. to

10c. per barrel noted two weeks ago for stock for prompt delivery is still maintained. We quote: English brands, \$2.25 to \$2.35; German, \$2.35 to \$2.50, and Belgian, \$1.85 to \$2.05 per barrel, ex wharf Montreal. The receipts of fire bricks at Montreal last week were 10,000, as against 78,000 for the previous one, making a total up to date of 710,650. Business in this line continues fairly active, there being a good demand for small lots at prices ranging from \$16 to \$21 per thousand as to brand.

THE DECAY OF NATURAL MATERIALS.

Whoever expects to find a stone that will stand from century to century, deriding alike the frigid rains and scorching solar rays without need of reparation, will indeed search for "the philosopher's stone." There is scarcely a substance which, after having been exposed to the action of the atmosphere for a considerable time, does not exhibit proofs of "weathering"; it may even be observed on the most densely compacted siliceous rocks. The fullest extent of this inquiry can only be to elucidate relative duration and comparative labor of appropriation to useful or ornamental purposes.

By examining the various productions of nature we find evident proofs of her industry in all ages; changes have been going on from the remotest antiquity to the present time on every substance that comes within our observation. All the actual combinations of matter have had a former existence in some other state. Nothing exists in nature but what is likely to change its condition and manner of being. No material is so durable as always to retain its present appearance, for the most solid and compact bodies have not such a degree of impenetrability and so close a union of the parts which compose

them as to be exempted from ultimate dissolution.

Even in the great globe which we inhabit nothing is more evident to geologists than a perpetual series of alterations; there can be discovered no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end. In some bodies these changes are not so frequent and remarkable as in others, though equally certain at a more distant period. The venerable remains of Egyptian splendor, many of them executed in the hardest granite between 3,000 and 4,000 years since, exhibit large portions of exfoliation and gradual decay, thereby following the primitive, immutable, and universal order of causes and effects—namely, that all objects possess the materials of which they are composed only for a limited time, during which some powerful agent effects their decomposition and sets the elementary particles at liberty again to form other equally perfect combinations. Thus by divine and unerring laws order is restored amid apparent confusion.—The Architect.

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