

may be threshed out and if possible the blame put where it should belong. Even when a meeting is secured, the object is not being attained, and the guilty party goes free. Some architects have to a large extent got over this difficulty by including the roofing and tinner's work in the carpenters' contract. Some are now considering the advisability of making the roofer responsible for any damage which may be sustained by the carpenter or plasterer by reason of leaks in the roof.

**The Value of
Simplicity,**

"The older I grow the greater is my admiration for simple things," said an architect of conspicuous ability to the writer recently. He added that as a rule people now-a-days do not want simple things. All sense of repose is destroyed by crowding modern houses full of ingle nooks, bow windows, fire places, &c. As a result there remained no wall surface, no place to put anything; "You can't sit on the fireplace, you know" he remarked, and characterized as "rot" the idea that a modern house should have a Turkish room, a Japanese room, etc. On the contrary the house throughout should have one character. Much of the recent architecture in the United States has actually been spoiled by the fact that the architects had too much money at their disposal, and therefore were not compelled to exercise restraint in their designs. That the public taste has been perverted is illustrated by the remark of a prominent citizen of Toronto, when referring to the new residence of another wealthy citizen, the exterior of which is characterized by simplicity of design, that he did not want HIS new house to look like a barn.

**Up-to-Date Building
Methods.**

Swiftiness is a predominating characteristic of this age. Every device that will save time and labor is eagerly sought for and when found is quickly adopted by progressive business firms. Sometimes we think that many things of perhaps greater importance are sacrificed to speed. However this may be, it is undoubtedly true that when the majority are aiming at accomplishing their work with the greatest possible despatch, the man or firm who pursues a leisurely gait, is likely to be left behind in the race. It is therefore gratifying to observe the builders falling into line with other departments of industry by adopting modern business methods. One of these is the placing of a telephone on the job, so that constant communication may be had by the foreman with the offices of the architect, the contractors and supply firms, and vice versa. The value of the time which may thus be saved is considerably more than the cost of the telephone service. Wide-awake builders are coming to recognize that by adopting every possible time saving device they may add considerably to their profits and be able to underbid the contractor who still pursues old fashioned and out-of-date methods.

Asbestos in Building

It is interesting to learn that the product of the asbestos quarries in the province of Quebec is in France being manufactured into bricks, roofing slabs and outside and inside lining material for buildings. At an Exhibition of dwelling houses held in Paris in

August last, a model was shown of a modern house built entirely of asbestos bricks, which are claimed the advantage of being absolutely incombustible and unattackable by acids, while at the same time bad conductors of sound, heat, cold and electricity. They are composed entirely of asbestos, lime, and silica in strictly defined proportions, and the substances intimately mixed by special machines, are compressed in the form of ordinary bricks by powerful presses. The bricks are afterwards subjected to the chemical action of high pressure steam, owing to which a double silicate of lime and magnesia is formed. These new building materials, the structure of which is perfectly homogeneous, are said to be equal to the best clay bricks as regards resistance to crushing stress. They are easily cut with the trowel, and take mortar well, while the thickness of joint is reduced to a minimum owing to the perfectly regular form of the brick. The external appearance is that of dressed stone; and, as the bricks can be colored unalterably while in the state of paste, they lend themselves admirably to polychrome decoration.

**British Exports and
Imports of
Building Material.**

The Board of Trade have recently published a blue book, from which some particulars are extracted relative to this subject. One of the most startling facts disclosed from the British standpoint is the tremendous drop in the exports of cement; shipments to the United States in 1902 being only one fifteenth as great as in 1901 and to other foreign countries, about one sixth. While the exports to the colonies are reported to have been regular, it is a well known fact that the Canadian market has been largely supplied by home manufacturers and by the product of United States mills, while in 1901 Australia, Natal and the Cape are said to have purchased from foreign manufacturers to the value of £20,000. The shipments of bricks to the colonies increased by one half from 1892 to 1902. Very little if any of this material found a market in Canada, as our manufacturing resources in this line are ample. In painters' materials the exports both to foreign countries and to the colonies substantially increased. Increased quantities of manufactured articles of iron and steel were also sold in the colonies; as well as stones and slates. The foothold which foreign manufacturers of iron and steel are getting in the British market is shown by the import figures. The quantities of bar, angle, bolt and rod iron, unwrought iron and steel, iron and steel girders, beams, joists and pillars imported into Great Britain from Germany, Holland and Belgium increased from 99,942 tons in 1899 to 529,970 tons in 1902. The value of these imports increased during this period from £667,528 to £2,810,723. The imports from the United States increased from 71,608 tons in 1899 to 172,105 tons in 1900, but, owing to the extraordinary home demand has fallen in 1902 to 3,853 tons. The present slackening of this demand will no doubt lead to another vigorous assault on the British market. These statistics are now being very carefully dissected and considered by the Journals representing the various branches of trade in Great Britain, in the light of Mr. Chamberlain's preferential tariff campaign. Viewed from this standpoint they should also have an interest and a meaning for Canadians.