

daily papers, by reporting the opinions of every Tom, Dick and Harry who assumes to represent the views of the workmen, are assisting to arouse feelings of discontent, the result of which may prove disastrous to all concerned. Bearing in mind the great distress to workmen, and the loss to the entire community which resulted from the protracted strike of last summer, it should be the aim of every one to do all that is possible to prevent a repetition of such conflicts. The present position of affairs may be fairly stated thus: A large amount of building is contemplated, and will be undertaken if the feeling of uncertainty regarding workmen's wages is at once removed. The probability of strikes would have the effect of delaying or stopping entirely a great deal of this work. Therefore, every workman and every employer who desires prosperity for himself and for the community, should seek to have all matters of possible dispute definitely and permanently settled without further delay.

It is to be hoped that some action will be taken to show how much or how little there is in Mr. Davies' scheme for the relief of the esplanade. Now is the time to give the scheme the careful consideration it deserves. The C. P. R. are about to erect a station building, and if erected to serve trains running on the present levels it could not be altered except at a very large outlay. The whole question of the esplanade is practically up at the present time for settlement. Whether the city will be cut off from the bay for all time to come, has now to be determined. If the railways are allowed to make further outlays on their present tracks, and to erect buildings to serve the present grades, it will be exceedingly difficult and much more expensive to make the change in the future. That the erection of an elevated track system will be of incalculable benefit to the city, if the bay front is to be taken advantage of, will readily be admitted. If the frontage on the bay is to become the home of manufactures, there is very little to be gained in doing away with the present dangerous "level crossings." But if we are to have a drive along the bay front in connection with the park system, and close and convenient points for the departure and arrival of the island ferries, nothing should prevent the doing away with the present dangerous system of level tracks, except our inability to carry out the work.

Very little care has been taken in the past to study out what may be the future requirements of the city, and to make intelligent provision to secure all the advantages possible. There is little doubt but that this city will increase very much in size and enormously in wealth in the next few years. What may now seem a heavy burden will then be but a light one, and we must not forget that the increased value of the property south of the present tracks will go a very long way towards paying for the erection of the iron work necessary to carry all through traffic above the esplanade.

It has been suggested to lower the tracks to a depth sufficient to allow of the free use of the esplanade by bridges at the street crossings. This does not seem a reasonable proposal. The present tracks are but little above high water line, and it will be impossible to place them any lower at the most than high water mark, except at an enormous cost. It must be remembered that the tracks ascend on the east and west to much higher ground, and that consequently to sink the tracks will increase the grade, but to raise them will make the grades much easier than they now are. The fact that Front street is so much higher than the esplanade, gives every opportunity for the arranging of proper station accommodation.

There can be but one opinion, and that is, that the placing of all tracks used for through traffic on trestle-work would be a most decided advantage from every point of view. That it may be too expensive, is another matter, but until it has received full consideration, and the cost has been carefully estimated, it should not be assumed that the construction of the necessary trestle-work would be beyond our means. It is absolutely necessary that this matter should receive the most careful consideration of our aldermen. The city has suffered long enough and sufficiently from the shortsighted, careless and indifferent policy of the past. Let us not give our descendants just cause to charge us with similar indifference to their welfare.

The accommodation furnished by the union station is very inferior, and by no means sufficient for the wants of the travelling public. That some very material enlargement of this station must be made very shortly is ad-

mitted, if any attention is to be given to the comfort of travellers. The through and local passenger traffic has grown immensely in the last few years, and must continue to increase. It is the intention of the C. P. R. to build a station between York and Yonge streets, on the south side of the esplanade. As everything which the C. P. R. does is well done, this new station will be fully equal to the merits of this city and of the C. P. R. traffic. But, if this station is built only to accommodate the traffic of the C. P. R., the city will have two stations, with all the accompanying inconvenience to the travelling public. The convenience of the railways should not alone be considered in the erection of station buildings. The public are very much interested in being supplied with the most convenient and ample station accommodation. One station is much more convenient than two or more. It does away with the trouble of transferring of baggage and the inconvenience of going from one station to another. It would be a great benefit to Toronto if the C. P. R. and G. T. R. would unite and build a grand union station, into and from which all trains would arrive and leave. One large and commodious building could be built much cheaper than two. The salary account would also be much smaller for the large station than for the two small ones, and the travelling public would have the benefit of ample and commodious station buildings arranged with the utmost attention to their wants. This great station could be erected south of the esplanade between Yonge and York street, and if the tracks on the esplanade were elevated for the through traffic, the general floor of the station could be on a level with the viaduct system. Passengers could gain access to the station by passing under the track system at all times and without danger. As it is at present it is impossible to gain access to the union station without crossing tracks over which trains are continually passing. This will likewise be true of the proposed C. P. R. station. A more inconvenient and dangerous arrangement it would not be possible to conceive, especially when the traffic will have increased to much greater proportions. It is time that by the erection of over-head bridges access could be gained to both these stations, but not in nearly so serviceable or convenient a manner as by the former method. That commodious stations can be erected with the train platform above the ground level has been successfully demonstrated. The ticket and baggage offices can be arranged on ground floor, and the waiting room on the platform level. Passenger and baggage elevators will give ready means of communication between the two floors. A large portion of the space on the ground floor could be advantageously given up to the use of carriages and cabs, and the public would have the benefit of being able to get out of and into cabs under cover, fully protected from the weather.

We are pleased to notice that since the above was written the Mayor, in a message to the Council, strongly urges the carrying out of the scheme which we advocate, and a committee of the Council has been appointed to co-operate with committees from the Board of Trade and other corporations interested with that object.

PERSONAL.

Phillips & Mottshatt, builders, Hamilton Ont., have dissolved. Jas. Phillips continues.

It is said that Mr. Theo. Raphael, contractor, will be the Conservative candidate in Russell.

John Keefer, a plumber, was badly scalded by the bursting of a steam pipe at the Industrial Home, St. Catharines.

Alfred Hastings died at his mother's residence, 304 Parliament street, Toronto, on the 14th of Feb. He was an estimable young man, and had served an apprenticeship with architect Mallory, of this city.

Zeehoue Perault, contractor, Montreal, has failed. Liabilities \$17,000.

M. C. M. Chardon, builder, Vancouver, B. C., has been visiting in Lindsay, Ont.

Architect Gordon, of the firm of Gordon & Hewitt, this city, has just returned from a three months trip to Europe.

A well-known Montreal architect, Mr. Victor Bourgeois, died in this city a fortnight ago, aged 28 years.

F. J. Leigh, superintendent of the Canadian Locomotive Works, Kingston, has been elected an associate member of the Institute of Civil Engineers, England.

Mr. A. H. Gregg, architectural student, of this city, has obtained a position in the office of a firm of leading architects in Boston, and has gone to take up his residence in that city.

Architect Roberts, of this city, has just returned from a trip to Chicago and other Western points.

The painter's union at London has decided to make \$1.75 the standard rate of wages per day of nine hours, after the 15th day of April next, that the hours of work shall be from 7 a.m. till 5 p.m., and that all overtime be charged time and a half.



PRIZES FOR COMPETITIVE DESIGNS.

THE editor of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER has decided to offer the following premiums to the best designs sent to him not later than the 20th of April next. The subject of the competition is a town house, to cost not more than \$2,500. The house is to be placed on the north-west corner of two intersecting streets. The size of rooms and their number will be left to the decision of the competitors. In deciding the competition, the location and size of rooms for their several purposes will be taken into consideration. A good plan with a poor elevation will receive higher marks than a good elevation with a poor plan. Each competitor will be allowed to choose the material of which his design is to be constructed. Competitors will be required to give a short and concise description of their design, and state the material they propose to use.

The editor of this paper reserves to himself the right to publish any design sent in. All designs to be sent to the office of this paper, No. 31 King street west, Toronto, postage paid. All designs will be returned to their author within a reasonable time after the competition is decided.

The first premium will be \$10; second, \$5; third, fourth and fifth, one year's subscription to the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER. The best perspective sent in will be entitled to a premium of \$5, and the second, third and fourth to one year's subscription.

The decision as to the respective merit of the different designs submitted will be made by a committee appointed by the Architectural Guild of Toronto. The designs must be made with pen in black and white to allow of publication. No color will be allowed on any drawing, not even tinting the rooms on the plan.

If the designs submitted are not in the opinion of the examining committee of sufficient merit to deserve the premium offered no award will be made.

All architects practising in cities are debarred from this competition.

THE TORONTO FIRE BY-LAW.

Editor CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

SIR,—It is about time that we had a revision of the fire by-laws in Toronto. As at present constituted they militate against picturesque designs, while affording little real protection against the spread of a conflagration. Under the cloak of re-construction, the most flimsy devices are allowed to pass, as witness a building within a stone's throw of Lombard street fire hall. If any architect wishes to construct, on a detached residence, an overhanging gable of frame covered with tiles, making a practically fire-proof wall, he is told by the Commissioner that he cannot do it unless he backs it up with good brickwork—frequently an impracticability. But by giving this same wall a slope of 3 or 4 inches, and calling it a mansard, he can build it in as flimsy a manner as possible, providing it be covered with tin, slate, or shingles in mortar.

Another restriction which curbs variety in design, is the refusal of the Commissioner to permit the construction of oriel windows which project beyond the street line on upper stories. Such projections are permitted in all the large cities in the United States, and there is no reason why they should not be permitted here under proper restrictions. Of course, in the business portion of the city, the framing of such projections should be constructed entirely of metal. Very good effects can be obtained on copper, which does not require painting, and improves in appearance with age, taking on a "bloom," which often gives exquisite effects in color.

The following from the Chicago Bulletin hits the nail on the head: "The idea of protecting the city from another general conflagration by the passage of the fire limits law was a good one, and worthy of commendation. In the central portion of large cities frame improvements should be prohibited; that is all right, not only because of their depreciating the value of business property, but their increasing the danger of fire. But some judgment must also be exercised in the enforcement of this particular kind of ordinance, and while public safety should be well guarded, the rights of citizens in other respects must be taken into consideration. The fire limits law as now enforced, but on the