

eyes of intending purchasers. We refer to this matter because such conduct is calculated to increase the prejudice against which promoters of electric railways have had to contend, and thus to retard development.

If we were asked to give a word of advice to the builder that should be of the greatest possible value to him we should say "Get acquainted with men in your own business, especially those who are frequently competing against you." We have in mind nothing of the nature of a "combine" or even of anything approaching an agreement that should affect prices. Such a proceeding in the building trade would be worse than useless, for if such an agreement as to prices were made, those who wanted to build would be driven to other places to get their work executed. But leaving out entirely the question of prices, there is a very decided advantage in men in the same business being well acquainted, because it destroys to a great extent unbusinesslike competition and encourages a healthy system in its place. There are other advantages, one of which may be given as an example. A man desirous of building a house invites bids from three or four builders. When the estimates are received he at once goes to Mr. Jones who is the lowest bidder and talks to him something like this: "Mr. Jones, you know very well that I would rather you should build that house for me than anyone else, because I know that you will do an honest job"—and so on, with as much of similar talk as he thinks poor Jones will stand. "Now Jones, you see you are not the lowest bidder—in fact there are two above you, but if you can see your way to take off something you shall have the job." Jones reasons that if the other builders can do the work for a lower price than his bid, he can, so he takes off a hundred dollars or so, with the result that he either loses on the transaction or comes pretty close to doing so. Now, had Jones been on good terms with the other builders, he could easily have found out whether he was really the lowest bidder or not, and the little "confidence game" that is as a fact carried on every day, would not have succeeded.

We understand that the Council of the O. A. A. has decided upon holding the next annual convention in February, the opening day being the 7th inst. We have not as yet seen any programme of the meetings but we have no doubt one will be arranged that will be equally attractive to both town and country members. The last two conventions were very unfortunate as regards the weather, so much so that going about town was to be avoided as much as possible. It is at any rate to be hoped that the coming convention may be more fortunate in this respect, and if this could be foreseen, we feel sure that the Council could not include anything in their programme of greater interest and practical importance than visits of the whole body to some at least of the many large buildings that the city architects may at the time have in charge. This would be a feature that would commend itself very favorably to the country members, and at the same time an opportunity would be afforded to city members to see buildings they cannot help being interested in, but which from a variety of causes they have hitherto not visited. By making an early start, say between 8 and 9, one morning, a good many buildings might be seen, and more would be accomplished at the convention than if, as is generally the case, the meetings cannot be called to order till nearly eleven o'clock. We venture to suggest that one reason why members have proved themselves so lacking in punctuality in attending the sessions is that the country members at any rate have been trying to see as much for themselves of the city and some of the larger works as they possibly could during the hours of recess. No doubt there is a great deal of interesting matter read and discussed, but it is a question whether this should occupy all the time. Judging from the interest taken by all who met last year, in the visit to the Children's Hospital, visits to the Court House, new Drill Hall and some of the Banks already completed would meet with general approval.

An extraordinary and dangerous move is being made to have the work on the Toronto Court House carried out by day labor. The public need to be put on their guard against such an innovation for they perhaps hardly understand the full importance of the move. Not merely is it an injustice to the taxpayers as affecting their pockets, but it is utterly impossible that a build-

ing of the size, quality and character of the Court House should be successfully and properly completed in the manner proposed. Day labor is all very well for works of a rough description, such as road making or drain laying, but the intricacies of a large building entail an amount of responsibility that we should imagine the architect and clerk of works would be very unwilling to shoulder. For two men, however skillful they may be, to undertake the superintendence of the details of ten or a dozen different trades and to be responsible for the work of 200 or 300 men, is out of the question. The time of the architect (and for this purpose he is employed) should be taken up with the elaboration of his scheme, not with ordering of material and the constant looking ahead to prepare for the next piece of work to be done on the building. We do not see how an architect can give his time to all the necessary works that day labor would involve. There is another matter to be considered—every year the personnel of the Court House Committee is changed, and who can say whether some future committee, without the experience that the existing committee has gained, would not decide that some other method should be employed. Prices, too, vary; wages may increase; a strike may be inaugurated by the men employed; and these and a score of other contingencies may possibly arise, all of which would mean delay and useless expense. We have had enough trouble over the Court House, and the taxpayers are getting restive under the continual expense of litigation. The only safe and right course to pursue is to have the work tendered on in the usual manner and carried out by responsible contractors.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

STATUE OF THE LATE RT. HON. SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD, TO BE ERECTED IN HAMILTON, ONT.—MR. WADE, SCULPTOR, LONDON, ENG.

HOUSES ON SYDENHAM STREET, TORONTO.—HENRY SIMPSON, ARCHITECT.

ILLUSTRATIONS ACCOMPANYING MR. CHAS. BAILLAIRGE'S PAPER ON "ESCAPE FROM BUILDINGS IN CASE OF FIRE," IN THIS NUMBER.

NEW ISOLATION HOSPITAL, TORONTO.—HENRY SIMPSON, ARCHITECT.



Edmund Burke
1892

ACCEPTED DESIGN FOR OFFICIAL SEAL FOR THE ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS.



At the first of the Chb's meetings during the last month, Mr. J. Wilson Gray read a paper on the high buildings of Chicago, and the methods employed in their construction.

At the second meeting, papers on photography as applied to architecture were read by the President, Mr. A. H. Gregg, and Mr. J. J. Woodhough. These papers and the illustrations which accompanied them, will be published in a future number.