ing the erection of the proposed bridge across the Lachine canal at Wellington street, the estimated cost of which is placed at $80,000. The Minister has promised that the bridge should be completed before the opening of navigation next spring, and that a Government engineer would make an examination of the site, consult with the city engineer and report on the whole question at an early date.

OTTAWA, ONT.—It is reported that Messrs. Reed and Hallet have made application to the Nepean health officials for permission to erect a factory to manufacture a fertilizer in which dead carcasses and offal will be largely used.—The Minister of Public Works has promised to place a sufficient sum in the estimates to cover the cost of constructing a bridge across the Gatineau river.—A number of contractors are looking over sections of the Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound Railway with a view of tendering for the construction of the road between Eganville and Barry's Bay.—In view of the increased prices asked for ice by the local dealers, the hotelkeepers have resolved to form themselves into a company for protection, and will erect a fine brick ice house.

LONDON, ONT.—Messrs. Moore & Henry, architects, will receive tenders until Wednesday next for plastering the Collegiate Institute.—The London township Board of Health has passed a resolution recommending the township Council to grant a license to Messrs. Ginge, Webb or Barnes to erect and carry on a pork packing establishment in the township. The plans of the proposed packing and slaughter houses have been prepared. The buildings will be separate and will cost about $25,000. The slaughter house will be 40x80 feet and the packing house 80x180 feet, and it is expected that before very long the buildings will be doubled in size.—The City Council has passed a by-law authorizing the corporation to borrow the sum of $60,000 for the purchase of an electric light plant.

VANCOUVER, B. C.—Tenders are asked until the 31st of December for the purchase of $80,000 worth of debentures to be issued by the Maple Ridge Dyking Commissioners. Full particulars may be obtained from A. St. G. Hamersley, solicitor, of this city.—Instructions are to be given immediately to the Dominion Government engineer to prepare plans for a deep water wharf and suitable quarantine buildings for either a station at William Head or Albert Head, whichever may be finally chosen.—Mr. Fripp, architect, recently visited the Vernon and Okanagan district for the purpose of chosing a site and preparing plans for fruit canneries and other buildings to be erected on Lord Aberdeen's estates. Probably only one cannery will be erected for a year or two. The building is to be about 100 feet square and two storeys in height.—Mr F. M. Rattenburg, architect has prepared plans for a large brick and stone block to be erected at the corner of Oppenheimer street and Westminster avenue, for a gentleman named Davis. The building will be three storeys high, and will contain stores on the ground floor.—A company will apply for incorporation at the next session of the Legislature for the purpose of erecting furnaces and rolling mills in this province, also for carrying on a general steel and iron, mining, milling and ship-building business.

TORONTO, ONT.—The City Council has approved of the plan recommended by the City Engineer for improving the sanitary condition of Ashbridges' Bay, and tenders will be asked for carrying out the work. The ratepayers will be asked to vote on a by-law to authorize the issue of debentures to provide the necessary funds which are placed at $116,000.—Mr. Robert Simpson, drygoods merchant, has purchased the property at the south-west corner of Queen and Yonge streets, on which his present premises stand, and it is expected will make extensive improvements.—It is the intention of the authorities of St. Michael's College to shortly replace the present college buildings by new ones to be erected on their property on St. Clarens avenue.—It is the intention of the Imperial Bank to erect a new building, the plans for which have been prepared. The Bank owns the land on which the building now occupied as well as the adjoining building stand, and is delaying action for the purpose of deciding upon the advisability of putting up the proposed new building on the site of the old one, or procuring a site elsewhere.—A largely signed petition has been presented to the Council in favor of submitting a by-law to the rate-payers to establish free public swimming baths.—The City Engineer has reported that the drainage of the Queen street subway is unsatisfactory and recommends that a new sewer be built to connect with the Lisgar street sewer, at a cost of $2,000.—Mr. E. J. Lennox, architect for the new Court House, has written to the Property Committee of the City Council again urging that tenders be asked for the completion of the work on the new building.—The greater portion of the necessary funds required for the removal of St. Andrew's church to a site near the corner of College street and Spadina avenue has been subscribed, and in all probability the work will be proceeded with in the spring.—Mr. S. F. McKinnon has purchased the block at the south-west corner of Jordan and Melinda streets.—The City Commissioner's scheme for turning the old immigrant sheds into a public abbatoir has been approved by the Property Committee, and the Council will be asked to provide the necessary funds, which are placed at $6,000.—A sub-committee has been appointed to report on a site for a cemetery. Messrs. Strickland & Symons, architects for the proposed Union station, are at present on a tour through the United States in search of information regarding the construction of the new building.—The plans for an additional storey to the city registry office were prepared two years ago by the late W. G. Storm, the cost of execution being estimated at $10 000. The City Commissioner has approved of the same, and tenders will now be asked for the work.—Building permits have been granted as follows.—Mrs. A. Belford, Close ave., two det. 2 storey and attic bk. dwellings, 208-10 Cottingham st., cost $9,000. C. Durke, three att. b. f. dwellings, east side Sumach street, s. of Oak st., cost $4,500. F. J. Phillips, Queen's Park, alterations and mansard roof 52-8 Gerrard st. w., cost $1,500; M. A. Clancey, 32 Sully st., 2 storey bk. dwelling and store n. e. cor. Grace and Henderson sts., cost $1,800; R. M. Scott, 308 Dovercourt road, det. 2 story and attic bk. dwelling, w. side Tyndall ave., near Springhurst ave., cost $5,000.

FIRES.

A frame house owned by Andrew Baughart, of Smithroy, and occupied by him as an hotel, was destroyed by fire last week. The loss is placed at $2,000, most of which is covered by insurance.—A house owned by Capt. Macdougall, at 48 Wellington place, Toronto, was almost entirely destroyed by fire on Saturday of last week. The loss, which is said to be about $7,500, including furniture, is said to be covered by insurance.—J. Braden's china hall at Woodstock, Ont., was gutted by fire on Monday last. The loss on the building will be about $1,000.—The residence of Mr. Peter Healy, Grange street, Guelph, has been destroyed by fire.—The Mansion House at St. Catharines, Ont., was damaged by fire to the extent of $2.000 recently. The building was owned by Mr T. Conlon of Thorold, and was insured for $3,000.—Mr. Dennis' lumber mill at Grand Bay, near St. John, N. B., was totally destroyed by fire on Tuesday last. The loss is estimated at $35,000 and the insurance $20,000.

CONTRACTS AWARDED.

SARNIA, ONT.—The contract for the supply of sewer pipe for the George street sewer has been awarded to A. Lockhart

DARTMOUTH, N. S.—Arch. Await has been given the contract to extend the water pipe line on King street south to Evans' boiler works, and will proceed with the work at once.

TORONTO, ONT.—The City Engineer has recommended that the tender for the iron work for the strengthening of the Queen street bridge be given to the Hamilton Bridge Company. Messrs. McCausland & Son have been awarded the contract for stained glass for the new R. C. church at Phelpstown, Ont.—The Hamilton Bridge and Tool Company has been awarded the contract to build a steam pleasure yacht for A. E. Goodeman, of this city. Mr. G. L. Watson, of Glasgow, is the designer. The yacht will be built of steel, 101 feet 8 inches long, 9 feet 2 inches deep, and 16 feet 9 inches beam. It will cost about $50,000.

THE STAIRCASE.

IN the design of this often very picturesque feature, it must be admitted that we owe but little to any examples of antiquity. In temples, staircases of ample size were obviously not required, but there are no instances of an internal staircase of striking effect or dimensions in even any Classical remains. Magnificent flights of steps no doubt occur in exterior architecture, and in Belli's "Description of the Greek Theatres of Crete," as well as in other examples, we see evidence of the existence of double returning flights of stairs, similar to those in frequent use in modern architecture, having each flight enclosed within solid walls, and setting us an example of sound and solid construction, well worthy of careful study in the execution of our own public buildings. The newel stair, so characteristic a feature in the plans of a subsequent age, was certainly of purely Greek origin. A perfect example exists, in good preservation, among the ruined temples at Selimentum. Its dimensions, however, are small, the diameter of the circle which contains it being but 6 feet 4 inches—dimensions which were subsequently greatly exceeded it similar spiral stairs within the monumental columns of ancient Rome. The Domestic architecture of Rome seems to have required little aid from interior stairs; and even in so sumptuous a building as the Colliseum, where many thousands of spectators had to be provided with ready means of access to very high levels—a building, too, erected when Roman power and art were in their zenith, expressly to gratify the extravagant love of splendor and display which characterized the Roman people we find no indication of any fine staircase. Among the buildings which remain to us of the earlier Middle Ages, it is still difficult to point to any notably fine stairs. Highly effective flights, no doubt, occur; striking examples occur at Assisi and at the Cathedral in Lucca, where flights of stairs 7 or 8 feet wide occur, with marble balustrading, sufficing to show that Mediæval builders were, to some extent, alive to the fine effects attainable by the artistic treatment of this portion of their plan. Still, these examples are of rare occurrence. It will be difficult to refer to any case in this country of equal importance to that in the cathedral close at Canterbury. The newel stairs, of which so many examples remain, as at Dover Castle and Tamworth Church—the latter presenting an almost singular example of a double spiral star round one newel—were certainly the most usual form of stairs in buildings, even of the most important character, during the whole Middle Age period, so much so, indeed, that the detached turrets which contained these newel stairs became one among the most prominent features of Domestic architecture throughout Europe during that period. No city contains more remarkable examples than that so rich in scenic effects, viz., Nuremberg. Wherever this turreted staircase occurs, it always constitutes a pleasing and striking object, imparting an agreeable variety of outline to the architectural composition. As peaceful arts advanced and man ceased to look for security in embattled buildings, the artistic eye of the builder soon perceived the opportunities that were afforded by interior flights of stairs for pleasing and pictorial effects. Nor could he be insensible to the extreme inconvenience of a newel staircase which, whatever its width, can necessarily offer but one place where the treads and risers are of proportions at all convenient to persons ascending or descending. In the quiet times of the later Tudors, staircases in this country began to assume there proper position and character, and their is no part of our old Elizabethan mansions on which the builders seemed to have dwelt with more pleasure, or on which they were more wont to exercise their fancy, than the staircase.—*Builders Reporer.*

TORONTO BUILDERS' EXCHANGE.

The Toronto Builders' Exchange, following the example of the American Exchanges, has resolved upon having an "Exchange Hour" every Saturday morning for the transaction of business by the members.

MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

THE BEST PAVEMENT.

There is only one pavement extant which fulfills all the modern requirements of cities, and this pavement is vitrified brick. Philadelphia has thirty-five miles of brick paving; Lincoln., Neb, over twenty miles of brick paving; Wheeling, W. Va., Charleston, W. Va., and Steubenville, Ohio, each about sixteen miles of brick-paved streets. Galesburg, Ill., has about five miles of brick-paved roadways. There are in the United States almost 300 cities and towns which have vitrified brick pavements in use. In front of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy freight depot on S. Canal street, just west of Harrison street in this city, there is a brick-paved roadway which has been in use for over two years. Over 4,000 teams a day have passed over this brick-paved roadway, and yet it shows no more wear than would the floor of the ordinary office. Vitrified brick pavements can be laid in the city of Chicago under a guarantee of fifteen years, without requiring the city to expend a single cent for their maintenance. Vitrified brick is the paving material of the future, because roadways paved with vitrified brick are enduring, they are easily cleaned, easily repaired, are perfectly noiseless, are not affected appreciably by moisture, frosts, or fires; the brick fit so closely that there are no interspaces to retain filth and breed diseases.

Brick paving for roadways costs less than either granite or asphalt, is thoroughly free from dust and requires no repairs, and horses do not slip or fall on brick pavements as they do on asphalt or granite blocks. A city can lay two miles of brick-paved roadways for less than the cost of one mile of granite or asphalt paving. The interest on this money saved between the cost of vitrified brick paving and that of either asphalt or granite will keep a brick-paved roadway perpetually clean and perpetually in perfect repair. A thoroughly vitrified brick will not absorb moisture, and hence a brick-paved roadway is self-cleaning of ice and snow under sun effects. The use of vitrified brick as a paving material in many of the cities of this country during past seventeen months has led slowly but surely to brick as the most durable of paving materials, because it is the most durable and economical. The use of vitrified bricks as a paving material for roadways is therefore the trend of the most intelligent sentiment of the times, and the subject is worthy of careful thought by all who believe in permanent street improvements to be made at a low first cost, and to require little or no expenditure for maintenance.—*Brick Roadways.*

LEGAL DECISIONS AFFECTING MUNICIPALITIES.

COLEMAN v. CITY OF TORONTO.—R. Boultbee for the plaintiff, appealed from an order of Galt, C. J., in chambers, reversing an order of the master in chambers, allowing plaintiff to examine Dr. Allen, medical health officer of the city of Toronto, the defendants for discovery. The defendants counsel contended that Dr. Allen is not an officer of the defendants, and also that the action, having been tried and Dr. Allen having been examined at the trial, the plaintiff has been afforded the discovery he wants, which will be available to him at the second trial, the jury having disagreed at the first. It appeared that Dr. Allen had made an examination upon the condition of Ashbridge's bay and reported to the Local Board of Health. The plaintiff is suing for an injunction restraining the defendants from keeping Ashbridge's bay in an