

mating prevails among contractors for public works than among building contractors, by which results much more accurate are secured by the former than are usually achieved by the latter.

A GREAT deal of well-merited praise has been bestowed upon the St. Clair tunnel as a type of modern engineering skill. The important feature of ventilation, however, appears not to have been successfully worked out. A suit for \$75,000 damages is now pending against the Tunnel Co., the plaintiff being the widow of a brakeman named Hawthorne, who died from suffocation while the train on which he was working was passing through the tunnel. It appears that the train parted in the middle while in the tunnel. Hawthorne was on the rear part and was suffocated before assistance reached him. The company is said to be considering the question of using electric cars in the tunnel.

THE first prosecution under the new scaffold by-law of the city of Toronto, took place during last month. The prosecutor was the city Building Inspector, and the defendant, Mr. James Hill, a Cleveland contractor who is building a brick chimney stack one hundred and seventy-five feet high for the Toronto Street Railway Co. Mr. Hill contended that his men were perfectly satisfied with the scaffold, and further, that the most dangerous part of the work had been completed, but the magistrate refused to allow him to proceed until the scaffold was re-constructed from the bottom up in accordance with the requirements of the by-law. For the information of builders who may not be familiar therewith, we print elsewhere in this issue the provisions of the law.

A PROPOSAL has been introduced by Alderman Lamb in the Toronto Council for improving the present market accommodation. The suggestion is that an architectural competition be instituted for the purpose of procuring designs for the alteration of the present St. Lawrence market. It has likewise been suggested that it would be desirable to erect new buildings on the esplanade, convenient to the proposed Union railway depot and the steamboat landing. The latter proposal is one well worth considering. The lake front would be almost as convenient of access as the present location, and unless the present buildings can be so altered as to provide all necessary accommodation for the next fifteen or twenty years, it would be more satisfactory to erect new ones.

The recent outbreak of diphtheria in one of the choicest residential districts of Toronto, has drawn attention to the foul condition of the sewers as being the most probable source from which the disease could emanate. It does not appear to be a rule of the city service that the sewers must be flushed at regular intervals; consequently it is left to the rain to cleanse them, and there having been but little rain for a month or two past, they have become the receptacle for all manner of filth. This condition of affairs, bad enough in itself, is accentuated by the fact that the only means in use for the ventilation of sewers are the gratings in the manholes in the centre of the street and on a level with the pavement. From these manholes there is being constantly emitted into the atmosphere the poisonous gases engendered by the foul contents of the sewers. It is quite time that some proper method of ventilating the sewers was adopted. It would be a comparatively easy matter to place in conspicuous positions a sufficient number of ventilating shafts for this purpose.

A railroad man in Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, recently said that the Pennsylvania Railroad Co. have for years been looking for something to take the place of glass for use in glazing the station roofs and for similar positions. He said that the heat and smoke given off by the engines, added to the vibration caused by moving trains, has the effect of breaking the glass, however well it is bedded. The cost of putting in new glass always is considerable because of its high position and the difficulty of getting at it, but that is nothing to the expense that would be sure to come should a piece of cracked glass fall and injure a passenger. Railroads have not only to buy the best because of economy, but have always staring them in the face possible suits for damages. What is required is some sort of a glass having imbedded in it a steel wire mesh so that should the

glass crack the wire will hold the pieces up. A paragraph in a foreign paper states that a material of this kind has lately been put on the market in Germany. It is, however, only made in small sheets, and is therefore practically useless.

A correspondent of the Montreal *Gazette*, writing from St. Johns, Nfld., takes a sombre view of the future of that city. He points to the fact that the value of property destroyed in the recent conflagration amounts to upwards of \$20,000,000, while the total sum paid in insurance reaches only \$4,800,000, leaving the community poorer by \$15,000,000. "One cannot but smile," says this writer, "at the shallow, optimistic views propounded by some here, who have little insight into the reality of matters. These talk flippantly of building up at once a fine city far superior to the former; and even hint airily that the fire is rather a good thing, and that we will soon be in a better position than ever. It is well to be hopeful, but to indulge in childish fancies and hug illusions can do no good. The expenditure in work, and the increased employment given will create a temporary boom and seeming prosperity; but our capital is diminished, our houses, public buildings, educational establishments, halls, etc., have to be restored, and all this implies hard work continued through years. We have to go back fifteen or twenty years, and like a colony of beavers whose dam has been swept away by a flood, begin the work afresh. The beavers are not jubilant or jaunty over the flood that has broken up their homes and destroyed their labors, but quietly go to work and grimly face the disagreeable facts of existence as part of the ordinary course of nature. Our shallow-pated optimists, who are generally non-workers and only talkers, void of all practical talent, had better 'consume their own smoke.' Their idle chatter only irritates the real workers."

It is stated on the best authority to be the intention of the Montreal Street Railway Company to extend its lines as fast as possible to the outlying districts, with the object of attracting population from the crowded central parts of the city, to build up the suburbs and increase the street car traffic. Such a policy would no doubt result profitably to the company and would be the means of greatly improving the appearance of the city as well as the conditions of residence therein. In this connection we quote with approval the following from an editorial article which recently appeared in the columns of the Montreal *Gazette*:—"The Quebec order of domestic architecture runs to terraces. A man's lot is twenty-five feet front running to a lane in rear which is too often the common receptacle for all the refuse of the abutting proprietors' dwellings. His end wall, like his lane, is common to his neighbor. This fashion of crowding may be a survival from the days the towns had walls to keep out the Indians and intra-mural space was too valuable to waste in gardens. The fact that the area of the city was small also no doubt tended to strengthen the traditional style, which had a further excuse in the desire of the people to live as near their places of business as possible, owing to the poor means of transport available. The house-building ways of Montrealers have also been copied by their suburban neighbors, even when there was no excuse in the dearthness of the land occupied. The result is that Montreal and its offshoots present one of the most densely populated areas, outside of New York city, on the continent. The city would be healthier as well as more attractive and home-like, if there was greater individuality in the citizens' residences—if families lived in houses, instead of being domiciled in sections of a block. It is unfortunate that the era of suburban development now promised from the modernizing of the street car service, does not also promise all that is desirable in the way of a change. Farms miles out in the country have been surveyed and sold on the 25-foot plan, and, because the people do not think for themselves, the vendors have met with a success that was hardly anticipated. The process of emancipation from the old rule may evidently be slow unless some real estate man, more keen than his rivals, sets the example that once seen will be appreciated. There is such a thing as costly economy in house building, and Montrealers illustrate one phase of it when they sacrifice individuality, homelikeness, healthfulness and appearance for the sake of half the cost of a dividing wall."