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THE twenty-seventh annual convention of the American Institute of Architects will be held at Chicago on July 31st, in conjunction with the World's Congress of Architects, referred to in our issue for May.

THE gentleman who for some years acted as quantity surveyor for many Toronto contractors, having recently removed from the city, there would appear to be at present a good opening for a competent man to set up business in this line.

IT seems to have been finally decided by the architect of the new city and county buildings at Toronto, that the buildings shall be completed by day labor, under the immediate supervision of the architect and his clerk of works. This in the case of such an important work is a new departure, and the outcome of the experiment will be the subject of much interest to architects and contractors as well as to municipal corporations and other public bodies in this and foreign countries.

A NO less personage than the general manager of the New York Herald, announces by advertisement that he is prepared to receive proposals for plans of construction with estimated cost of a steel office building of from twelve to twenty stories, and that he will pay the sum of \$500 for the plans selected as combining the greatest advantages, and \$250 for the second best. This, considering its source, makes easily excusable the like exhibitions of ignorance on the part of persons residing in less highly civilized communities to which we have frequently referred. Surely the height of absurdity with regard to architectural competitions has now been achieved.

THE largest hydraulic testing machine in the world is said to be one designed by Prof. J. B. Johnson, consulting engineer in the Washington University at St. Louis. The purpose for which the machine was designed is for use in the experiments being made by the United States Government to determine the strength of commercial woods grown in the United States. The machine can be made to exert a pressure of 1,000,000 lbs. During some recent experiments at the above named University, a piece of timber capable of sustaining 8,000 persons was crushed like an egg-shell when placed in the machine. Brick piers two feet square, columns of granite a foot square, and sandstone three feet square were ground to powder.

THE volume of building operations for 1893 is less in the city of Toronto, as compared with the first five months of 1892, by half a million dollars. Contractors who have been in business in the city for twenty years state that never within their recollection were the conditions so unsatisfactory as at present. Work is being done cheaper to-day with wages at 36 cents per hour than when years ago the rate required to be paid was but little more than half this figure. Scarcity of contracts has engendered competition to an extent which makes it exceedingly difficult for honest work to be done at a profit. Moreover, the financial stringency is such that builders complain that after having fulfilled their contracts, much effort is often required before payment can be obtained.

THE time set for the reception of designs for the improvement of St. Lawrence Market, Toronto, will expire on July 1st. We are not aware what number of architects will respond to the invitation of the Committee of the Council having this matter in charge, but from the indefiniteness which marked the