

THE Commissioners of the London Exhibition of 1851, of whom the Prince of Wales is chairman, at a recent meeting decided to contribute £200 a year for five years in addition to a previous payment of £300, in aid of the maintenance of the department for investigating and testing the natural products of the Colonies and India at the British Institute. An English contemporary makes the statement that the Institute "does little but dine and wine its members and tea loungers at sixpence a head." If this be the case the grant in question is not likely to be of much benefit to the colonies.

A NEW application of iron frame and fire-proof construction is likely to find employment in building city residences. A New York architect, Mr. Manly N. Cutter, has recently secured estimates on three houses, showing that this method can be used with very little increase in cost, the difference being only about \$200 on a house worth nearly \$10,000. This difference would be fully made up by the increased floor space which the iron construction would afford. Mr. Cutter's estimates were based on wrought steel uprights, girders and floor beams, with a woven wire netting fastened to these for walls and floors. For exterior walls it is proposed to use 4 inch brick work outside and a terra cotta lining inside the netting; for party walls, terra cotta on both sides of the wire netting. Concrete floors between iron beams to receive the wooden covering, and ceilings plastered on metal lath. The roof would be constructed same as the floors, and the basement story built in the usual manner up to the cast-iron bed plates for the steel uprights.

ARCHITECTS will note with satisfaction every indication of a growing interest on the part of the general public in architecture. The great amount of attention bestowed on the Chicago World's Fair buildings, by visitors and the press, so enlivened public interest in architecture as an art, as to exert a permanent influence in the direction of a demand for good architecture in all kinds of buildings. The recent publication in some of the leading popular magazines of special articles and illustrations of architectural subjects is another strong indication of an increasing public appreciation of the importance of the subject. We are surprised to see in the Engineering Magazine the opinion expressed that it may be seriously questioned whether the publication of such articles is a healthy indication of a growing and widening taste in architectural knowledge on the part of the general public. Publishers of the great magazines are not in the habit of using material unless in their opinion it is of a kind for which there will be the best demand, and their judgment in this matter is to our mind a satisfactory proof of an awakening public interest in architecture. We should be glad to know what our contemporary would consider the kind of indications on this line to which value could be attached.

THE Dominion Parliament at its last session acceded to the request of the labor organizations that one day in each year be constituted a statutory holiday, to be known as "Labor Day". The object of the organized labor bodies in asking for this legislation was no doubt to direct public attention by this means to themselves and the issues for which they are contending. The idea from this standpoint is a good one. Apart from its advertising value in this respect, however, the holiday is not necessary, as there were previously more holidays on the statute books than the frugal workman desired. The wisdom and right of any particular class of the community to arrogate to themselves the title of "workingmen," is also called in question. Such a step is likely to accentuate the lines of distinction between employers and employees, which many had hoped would in future be less tightly drawn. It is hoped that this result may not follow, but that by mutual effort, conducted on reasonable lines, the employer of labor and the workman whose only capital is his ability to labor, will seek to bring about conditions which will be in the highest degree equitable and satisfactory. The labor organizations will also doubtless find it necessary in the future to seriously consider ways and means of bringing into more harmonious relationship to themselves the great number of non-union workmen. There is a growing bitterness of feeling between union and non-union workmen, which is the outgrowth of arbitrary action on the part of the former, and which, if not removed, will eventually bring about the entire overthrow of the labor organizations. In short, the times

demand the adoption of more reasonable methods on the part of all concerned in the solution in all its phases of what has come to be known as "the labor question."

WE print in this number of the ARCHITECT AND BUILDER the letter of another advertiser who has proved the value of this Journal as a medium through which to reach the purchasers of building materials. The abundance and value of the testimony which is being published month by month should convince the most skeptical manufacturer and dealer in such materials, that his business would be helped by a standing announcement in the pages of this Journal. Since the publication of the testimonial letters, in our recent issues, we have been authorized to insert the advertisements of several firms, some of whom were never previously represented in our columns and others who had become weary in well doing and had withdrawn their advertisements. Within the past week we received from a leading firm of architects in Montreal a letter in which they stated that they were inviting tenders for architectural iron work for a certain building, that they had written to the several firms whose advertisements they found in the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER, and requesting to know if we could furnish them with the names and addresses of other manufacturers in the same line. We hope that architects generally will follow the example of this firm, by writing us when requiring materials which they do not find advertised. On this subject the American Architect correctly says: "Architects need all the resources that can be offered to them in the way of novelties in rolled shapes of iron and steel, new modes of constructing fireproof floors and ceilings, new methods of beam protection, improved cements, new marbles, new qualities and colors of brick and terra cotta, and they want to know by simply turning over a leaf in the current number of their professional journal, not by trying to hunt up circulars or calendars, who are the principal terra cotta makers, where are the principal stone and marble quarries, who does concrete work and whether there is any recent improvement in such work, who does copper roofing, and whether it has occurred to any manufacturer, in these days of cheap copper, to furnish roofing plates of low brass or some similar alloy, which would be cheaper, harder and better than pure copper. Certainly if manufacturers and dealers in such materials expect to have their goods used on a large scale, they must be used through the architects, since all important building contracts are made in accordance with some architect's specification, and in order to have them used in this way they must be brought to the attention of the architects who write the specifications, in such manner that when the specifications are being written the name of the thing desired can be ascertained, and inserted in the specification, at a moment's notice."

SOME of our neighbors in the State of New York have taken alarm at the scope of the various plans on foot to utilize the water power of Niagara Falls, and at the unlimited character of the licenses already granted to divert water from the Falls for this purpose. A committee of the constitutional convention of the State of New York now sitting, has presented a report dealing with this matter, which is being opposed by representatives of the power companies. It is to be hoped that the subject will be thoroughly thrashed out. Certainly on investigation it does seem as if there were some grounds for the action which has been taken, and a doubt whether we have not gone a little too fast and too far in granting franchises. It is difficult to get reliable figures on the flow of water over Niagara Falls, but taking those given in the Encyclopædia Britannica—18,000,000 cubic feet per minute, with a fall of 164 feet on the American side and 150 feet on the Canadian side—the gross power would be a little more than 5,250,000 H. P. With such an enormous power to draw from it would seem that we might cut and come again without risk of any appreciable effect upon the natural beauty of the Falls. But on examining the franchises granted a little in detail it appears that if they are availed of to the full extent of the projectors' anticipations, that there would result a serious impairment of the volume of water now passing over the Falls. The present tunnel on the American side is only 100,000 H. P. capacity, but the full projected power on that side is stated to be 500,000 H. P., which at the present available head of 140 ft., would require about 200,000,000 cubic feet of water gross. On the