

THE BYSTANDER.

As a back ground to the most esthetic callings is found after all a strong scent of shop. Agassiz, the famous naturalist, once rebuked a friend of material tendencies, who thought he might turn his tastes to better money-making account, by saying that he had no time to make money. Everyone will admire the devotion of this great man to his calling; but, whilst artist and naturalist, or one engaged in any vocation, may have chosen such because of the love of the work, and do their work from day to day because they love it, yet it is true there is danger of the edge being taken off this devotion, if the calling does not also prove a means of providing bread and butter. The artist who finds no market for his work of brush or pencil is apt to lose much of that inspiration and enthusiasm that is one of the first elements of success in art. So, there is nothing remarkable in the statement of the Bystander, that in moving around among those engaged in architectural pursuits he finds them ready to discuss the business side of the situation, equally as much as the esthetic. That they possess a strong business instinct the Bystander has sometimes thought has been a help to their success. In the architect must necessarily be combined the taste of the artist and the skill and shrewdness of the business man. Designs prepared for the finest buildings must go into the hands of contractors and be put into execution, ere the work of the architect is shown to its fullest advantage. And this will not be done properly unless he has that business instinct that enables him to deal in a business way with contractors and others.

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Talking the other day with Secretary Phillips, of the Builders' Exchange, Toronto, the Bystander formed the impression that the past month has taken on strength in building directions. Work is getting better forward in many of the large buildings replacing those recently destroyed by fire. Additional to these, Mr. Phillips said, the fact that contracts are now out for the work sanctioned by the Public School Board, as also for the erection of the new building of the Toronto Lithograph Co. and others that might be named, has given a fresh zest to building operations. Queried as to the discontent in labor circles, he said that there was no change in the situation within the month. Apparently contractors, as work has increased, were able to secure all the labor that was required, and each was going on the basis of making his own arrangements with bricklayers and other workmen. That this open arrangement will in the end operate against the interests of labor seems more than likely. When trade slacks off it seems to the Bystander, workmen will see the mistake made in not coming to a reasonable arrangement with employers, based on the conditions of the business and labor world as it exists today. But the more thoroughly one looks into this question, at least this has been the result of observation and study by the Bystander, the clearer does it become that few classes of the community are more short sighted and constantly stand against their own advancement than the average workman. He has always a grievance, and is constantly in a ferment; at the same time he is seldom in a position to listen to reason and recognize that conditions change from season to season, and year to year, in the labor world as they do in the economy of nature and elsewhere.

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Were the erection of tall buildings, or, as they are familiarly known, sky scrapers, as common in Canada as in the country to the south of us, there would be more interest felt in the remarkable advance that has been made this season in the cost of structural steel. "Where other building materials are somewhat depressed," remarked Mr. Edmund Burke to the Bystander, "steel is going up in leaps and bounds." Perhaps the only building of consequence in Toronto, where a large amount of steel will be used, is that of Mr. R. Simpson, Toronto, with less or more used in the Globe building and some others; but contracts for the steel in these cases were fixed before the present large advance took place. The time will come, no doubt, when there will be many more of these steel buildings erected in Canada. Where they have their disadvantages, and some of these have been brought home closely to the people of Toronto, there is also much to be said in their favor. And the close study that is being given to this class of work is an

evidence that steel structures will become an institution of all large cities in the near future. The best architects and knowing builders, it is said, now see that every piece of steel is carefully tested and if not up to the standard they are thrown aside. Experts are hired and controlled frequently by the architect at the cost of those who put up the building. So exacting has this work become that two concerns in Pittsburg are making a specialty of furnishing experts to supervise and are doing the principal work of this character in the country. The Builders' Gazette, of Pittsburg, Pa., summarizing some comments on this subject, has this to say: "In steel frame construction the skeleton of the building is generally erected first, before the masonry is started. Under the old method the iron and masonry were used together in the building of each story. Where bolts were used largely in the last mentioned form, the steel sections are riveted almost wholly in the first. A steel thus riveted can be compared to an inverted bridge, for in fact the modern building is built on the bridge plan, and it is riveted in such a manner to make it, to all intents and purposes, one piece of steel from top to bottom. Thus any strain which may be put upon the building will be shared by the structure as a whole and not confined to any one spot, as in the ordinary building." As the Simpson building advances, and the Bystander understands that the erection of the steel pillars and girders will commence at once, no doubt progress will be watched closely by everyone interested in building operations, as features of construction, that will be to some extent new to our people, will be developed.

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The Bystander has been pleased to observe, in the interests of the lumber trade of Canada, that the yellow pine of the southern states, which at one time appeared to be securing a good foothold in building operations here is losing in favor. This change has been brought about, in part, by the action of Canadian lumbermen, after the recent big fires in Toronto, when the attention of all concerned, and the insurance companies in particular, was drawn to the fact that because of the resinous nature of this wood, it was more inflammable than Canadian white pine, and was therefore less desirable for building purposes. One result of this enquiry has been that yellow pine does not occupy the same place in the specifications of architects; and in large buildings now being erected in Toronto, Canadian dimension timber will be almost entirely used. An Ottawa dispatch to the Canada Lumberman also carries some information on this point. It is there stated that an Ottawa firm made the experiment of bringing southern pine into that city, but discovered that although they were not at any loss, yet they did not consider that there was anything gained and have decided to stick to home manufacture for the future. Where the products of the forest are one of the richest resources of the country, there ought to be a pride taken in giving Canadian woods a preference in every case, unless there is some remarkably strong reason for an adverse course.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

MASONIC TEMPLE.—R. MACKAY FRIPP, F.R.I.B.A., ARCHITECT,
VANCOUVER, B. C.

INSANE ASYLUM BUILDINGS, BROCKVILLE, ONT.—KIVAS
TULLY, C. E., ARCHITECT.

FOREMAN AND WORKMAN'S HOUSE TO BE ERECTED ON THE
COLDSTREAM ESTATE, NEAR VERNON, B. C., FOR HIS
EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF
CANADA.—R. MACKAY FRIPP, F.R.I.B.A.,
ARCHITECT, VANCOUVER, B. C.

A judgment has been rendered at Montreal, in the case of Mrs. Thomas vs. the estate of the late Duncan McIntyre, awarding the plaintiff the sum of \$1,400. The widow of the late Mr. Thomas, architect, of Montreal, sued to recover some \$38,000 for services rendered by her husband to the late Mr. McIntyre. There were six items, one for \$60, three for \$2,800 each in connection with a proposed house on Peel street, one for plans for stable, and another item for services in connection with a house on Drummond street. The judge fixed the amount at \$1,000 for the Peel street house and \$400 for the stable, dismissing the other claims.