

faction to none of those concerned, unless the coal dealer. It will pay owners of steam heating plants to employ competent men and pay them according to results. As a rule it will be found cheaper to keep a large building warm all night as well as all day, than to let it cool down at night, and a skillful freeman can arrange his fire so that for six or eight hours after he has left it the boiler will still make vapor enough to keep the radiators warm.

A MONEY by-law will be submitted to a vote of Toronto property owners on the 29th inst. for the purpose of raising \$57,000 for Public School accommodation. The estimates of the School Board for building purposes in the last two years have been entirely struck out by the City Council. This action of the Council has certainly not worked out in the interests of the ratepayers, as will be seen from the fact that the Public School Board is using twenty-five rented rooms at a cost of about \$6,000 per annum, or more than twice the amount of the interest on the money which the Board is asking for. In any case this condition cannot be remedied for at least a year, and if the by-law is defeated it will probably continue and grow worse for two or three years to come. We should be slow to believe that the Public School Board is so incompetent as to incur this large expense for rent without sufficient reason, and unless it can be shown that this is the case, the money to provide increased accommodation should be voted.

In another part of this issue we publish a report of the second annual meeting of the British Columbia Institute of Architects, an association that has been in existence for about eighteen months, and which, like kindred associations, was formed for the purpose of improving the standing of the profession. At present this Institute is incorporated simply as a Literary Society, but means for its incorporation as a distinct professional association are under the consideration of the Council. The Institute has been active in the matter of the proper conduct of competitions, and we are glad to find that its efforts have met with a fair amount of success. It is gratifying to see how architects in various parts of the world are "taking up the cudgels" against the preposterous treatment that is everywhere meted out to the profession. Every new association formed for this purpose strengthens the hands of the individual architect wherever he may be situated, and we would strongly urge all architects wherever possible to lose no time in associating themselves together not merely for their own good, but for the benefit of the public, for the real result of such societies is *pro bono publico*, and affects them in a more important manner than it does the architects themselves.

ONE very striking difference exists between Montreal and Toronto in cities and in which Montreal has an immense advantage over Toronto. Toronto is so spread out and straggling that a heavy and continual expense is incurred in making and keeping up the roads, with water supply and police protection and other items altogether out of proportion. One of the results of this spreading out is that many an acre within the boundaries is left without an inhabitant, and while the suburbs still grow the city proper is at a standstill. Montreal is so compact, that an effort is now being made to attract the people to the suburbs. The policy of spreading out, as has been done at Toronto, has proved an expensive one, and is entirely due to speculators and wire pulling, the result being that the few speculators have gained at the expense of the public. It is high time Montreal spread a little, for the population is closely packed. The system of "tenements" (houses of four floors, two floors is a tenement with separate entrances) that prevails even in the best localities, disguises the fact of the overcrowding from the casual observer. But while the plan may seem to lessen taxation, rents are very high, the majority of tenement tenants paying far more for their two floors than people in Toronto pay for a "self contained" home and bit of garden. Consequently the attempts to populate the suburbs there ought to be easily carried out.

THE verdict given at the recent Toronto Assizes in the case of the Citizens Milling Co., Ashdown, Page and Webb against Defoe, was only what must have been expected, judging from similar cases before the English Courts. The building owned

by the defendant, in which was stored merchandise and other property of the plaintiff, suddenly collapsed in February last, and the owner was sued for the value of the goods. The plea of the defendant was that the cause of the failure of the building was *dry rot*—unavoidable, and therefore he was not responsible. It has been held, however, in England, that the owner is responsible for the condition of his building as far as the purposes to which it is put are concerned, and that he should have ascertained by careful examination that all timbers were sound and capable of bearing the weight put upon them. In cases where the owner of a building that he wishes to use for a special purpose, has employed an architect to examine it for him, and the architect has certified that it was sound enough for that purpose, the owner has been able to recover from the architect in the event of subsequent failure. An architect is required to examine into the *hidden parts*, and it is generally a very risky thing for him to saddle himself with the responsibility of the soundness of construction unless he has been personally acquainted with the details from foundation to roof. In the present case the amount sued for is about \$6,500.

Despite all that has been said and done with regard to architectural competitions the Corporation of Toronto has not yet learned that architects who have any respect for themselves will not send in plans unless a guarantee is given that the competition will be carried out in a proper manner. Suggestions for the conduct of such competitions have been drawn up in order to guide promoters, that they may be able to secure the best designs and work for the object in view. The notice given by the Markets and License Committee that they are desirous of receiving suggestions for the proposed enlargement of the Toronto Market show how absolutely at sea the Committee is. These gentlemen do not know how best to effect their purpose, and instead of employing some one as their consulting architect, they ask all architects to send whatever they like in any shape they choose, and the Committee, without any professional advice, will select the scheme that seems to them best. \$1,000 of ratepayers' money is to be the award for the three best plans, which are to become the property of the Committee. This is but throwing away \$1,000, for none but the very needy or youthful architects would have anything to do with such a competition. Again, this Committee may be entirely changed in a fortnight's time at the civic elections, and the new Committee may not be willing to carry out the ideas of their predecessors. Such things have happened before, and the probability is that anyone who did send in a plan would have all his trouble for nothing. Nearly seven months have been given for the preparation of schemes, and this will prove just so much lost time, for we feel confident that not one plan of any merit will be found waiting for the Committee to meet at the end of the seven months.

THE novel sight of a brigade of axe men engaged in chopping down poles erected by the Street Railway Company has lately been witnessed on the streets of Toronto. The City Engineer's action in ordering this to be done seems justifiable. The agreement which the Street Railway Company entered into with the city provides that the character of the construction and equipment of the system shall be subject to the approval of the City Engineer. The Company has lately acted as though its intention was to evade as far as possible compliance with this agreement. It has erected poles which would disgrace the streets of a backwoods village, and has accentuated their native ugliness by painting them a variety of colors. In many cases a brilliant red is the prevailing hue. There seems to be manifest in the Company's dealings with the city as well as with private corporations and individuals a disregard for the rights of others as well as its own promises. To get possession of what it wants now under promise of remedying in the future what is below the standard, seems to be the policy pursued. Whatever the other party to the contract may do, the Company appears to have always in mind the fact that "possession is nine points of the law." If the company intends to continue to own and operate the road, it is making a huge mistake by antagonizing public favor, and even if, as is asserted, its intention is to dispose of the franchise, the fact of its being at loggerheads with everybody must tend to lower the value of the privilege in the