

Trade Commissions
to Architects.

OUR attention has quite frequently been called to the fact that some architects in Canada expect and in some instances attempt to exact a commission from manufacturers and dealers whose materials they are asked to specify or purchase. Complaints have come to us regarding this matter from so many different sources, accompanied in some instances by names and full particulars of the transactions, that we are reluctantly forced to the conclusion that they cannot be unfounded. A Toronto manufacturer states that he recently received an order for certain goods from a well-known architect in an Eastern city, with accompanying letter, which read: "I understand you are accustomed to allow a percentage to the trade off your catalogue prices. I want you to credit this percentage to me." Such practices on the part of an architect are undignified and dishonest. They are unfair to the client, who employs the architect to impartially select for him the best goods, and also to the manufacturer or dealer who is desirous of doing business in an honorable way by selling his goods on their merits. The architect who accepts a favor of any kind from a manufacturer or dealer at once places himself under obligation to give favors in return, which favors usually come out of the pockets of his clients. On the other hand, the manufacturer and dealer are liable to press the advantage they have acquired to such a degree that by and by the architect feels himself bound to resent their implied ownership of him by specifying somebody else's goods. There is fortunately a brighter side to this picture. We have been told of instances in which goods sent as presents have been promptly returned, accompanied by a message more forcible than polite, and the person offering the bribe thenceforth occupied a conspicuous place on the architect's black list. For architects of this character the public, the manufacturer and the dealer have the highest respect, while those who ask and accept favors must often feel their ears tingle as the result of the opinions freely expressed behind their backs.

BY THE WAY.

BUILDING INSPECTORS, like other public officials, come in for a fair share of criticism for their alleged sins of omission and commission. Some of the criticism is well deserved; some of it is not. But what man with a spark of humanity in him could find it in his heart to find fault with the Building Inspector of Denver, Colorado, whose duties are thus defined: "The commissioner of inspection shall have charge of the inspection of buildings and parts of buildings, drains, drain laying, elevators, boilers, gas and electric fittings, gas and electric lights and all other apparatus and machinery requiring inspection and regulation, as the same may be authorized by ordinances; the inspection and control of electric wires, the inspection of weights and measures, the smoke nuisance, the erection and care of work houses, charities and corrections, and the care of markets and public baths."

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To know the actual cost of various classes of completed work is a help to the architect and builder in approximately estimating what work of a similar character should cost. For this reason the following calculations recently published in an American review, based on returns from the City Building Department, as to

the cost of various classes of building in New York, should have an interest for readers of this journal: Frame dwellings, of the cheap two-story class, average in cost \$3.71 per square foot of ground covered, or \$1.85 per square foot of floor space. Brick dwellings of three storeys average \$3.65 per square foot of floor, counting nothing for the cellar; five-storey houses cost exactly the same, and four-storey ones, averaging the few examples found, cost a trifle less. Flats of five or six storeys average only \$2.03 per square foot of floor; flats with stores underneath cost \$2.83; "stores and lofts," that is, ordinary mercantile buildings, give \$3.12 per square foot of floor, where the building is not over six storeys high. A six-storey hotel cost \$3.33 per square foot of floor, and a twelve-storey warehouse a little less than \$3. Office buildings of the "sky-scraper" sort are much more expensive, one of nineteen storeys costing \$116.82, and one of twenty-one storeys \$123.34 per square foot of ground covered, or \$6.14 and \$5.37 respectively per square foot of floor-space. Of course, prices for material and labor are considerably higher in New York than in any part of Canada. It is this difference in prices as between one locality and another that renders it exceedingly difficult to estimate the probable cost of work in one locality by the cost of completed work of a similar kind elsewhere.

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CANADIANS will be interested to learn that the Princess Louise, whose skill as an amateur painter and sculptor is well known, has recently turned her attention to architecture. Workmen are at present engaged in completing a building designed by the Princess (with the assistance of a young London architect) and erected on the Argyll ducal estate in Scotland. The plans designed by Her Royal Highness were for an extension of the little hostelry at Roseneath, a sylvan shaded resort most charmingly situated on the western bank of one of the long blue lochs that open off the Firth of Clyde. Roseneath is one of the quietest retreats on the Clyde. Few trippers profane its walks, and house-letting accommodation is limited in the extreme. On this account the Marchioness and Marquis of Lorne have for some past found in Roseneath a delightfully quiet recruiting-ground at the close of the London season, and the little inn has been their home. The enlargement designed by the Marchioness is being carried out to provide a wing for the distinguished couple when they visit the district. The wing will include some half a dozen bed rooms, public rooms, a spacious hall and offices, and the plans have been drawn up with an architectural success so great that the work may in coming years be looked back upon as the pioneer design in the opening up of a new field for the ever-widening work of womankind. The drawingroom is a handsome apartment, and its large windows face the picturesque waters of the Gorelock and Ben Lamond while a spy window has been inserted, no doubt for the purpose of commanding a pretty peep of the western sunsets and the Argyll hills. There is also an alcoved fireplace with arched stone mantelpiece. In the dining-room the windows have Mediaeval arches and iron mullions, with casement and small panes. A gun-room has been provided, and, as becometh a lady architect, the kitchen is a poem in red tiles. Internally pretty in design, externally the building is straggling and far