

pendent of the tyranny of the incompetents who so often rule the unions, and raising the technical, if not the artistic quality in a marked degree. Every city has not a Col. Auchmuty. New York may be proud of what he has done for her young mechanics. The Builders' Guilds in Toronto are wealthy enough to institute a successful commencement of the good work. It need not be looked upon as a merely philanthropic enterprise; it would pay from every standpoint, and be a wise move even from a selfish point of view.

The suggestion made by us in our issue for March with reference to the widening of Yonge and King streets, Toronto, at their intersection, appears to have met with considerable favor, as was to have been expected, the congested condition of the traffic in that neighborhood being patent to every citizen. Ald. Score, the chairman of the Parks and Gardens Committee, has put himself on record as being favorable to the improvement. The diagram shown on another page indicates one method of accomplishing it, giving a space from east to west between the buildings of about 140 feet, and extending from King street to the first lane, a distance of about 120 feet. A space in the centre could be reserved for a fountain or statue, and for an oasis or stand where a person could wait for a car, or take refuge in crossing the busy and crowded thoroughfare. These corners—the principal ones in Toronto—will never be dignified in appearance, and will never cease to be dangerous and overcrowded till they are widened and beautified. The increased importance of the new corners and frontages thus opened up would greatly add to their assessed value, and while a considerable portion of the cost of the work could be charged against the properties benefited, the work would be so manifestly to the advantage of the citizens generally that there should be no serious opposition to the scheme. No time will ever be more favorable for a change than the present, the buildings being old and of comparatively little value, and we would urge the wisdom of immediate action.

It is a matter of regret to see imposing and important buildings being erected at the cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars and with little or no protection from total destruction in case of fire. The percentage of the increased cost of fire proof construction is so slight in comparison with the advantages to be gained, that one cannot conceive why level-headed corporations with ample means at their disposal do not see their way clear to its adoption as a matter of course. Several important erections now in progress or contemplation are in fault in this respect. The new legislative buildings are rapidly assuming the appearance, internally, of a vast lumber yard. The University buildings are being largely reconstructed in the old manner, some parts, however, such as corridors, being of slow-burning construction. The stack room only of the new library building is to be fire-proof, which, should it survive intact the fearful baptism of fire that it would have to pass through in case of the destruction of the inflammable portions of the building, would be practically useless without the necessary adjuncts of reading and reference rooms. The Confederation Life Building is another case in point—of semi-slowburning type, but once thoroughly aight, doomed to total destruction with its contents, human and otherwise. Two of these structures will be so high that the most powerful stream of water obtainable would break in useless spray before reaching the roofs, and they would have to be left to their fate. We are strongly of the opinion that no building of more than 60 or 70 feet in height should be allowed to be erected unless of absolutely fire proof construction. We are glad to notice that the Freehold Loan and the Bell Telephone Companies' buildings are to be fire-proofed, and time will show the wisdom and foresight of so doing.

"WHAT this country wants in law, legislation and judicial rulings is a procedure less expensive, more effective, with fewer technicalities and more common sense." With this quotation a Toronto solicitor solicits correspondence from material men and others interested in the working of the Lien Acts with a view to seeking further legislation. We quite agree with the quotation, but not at all with the sentiments of the advertiser. Why in the name of all that is just and fair should Jones have a lien on a load of bricks purchased by Smith any more than Brown who has supplied him with a suit of clothes? If Smith is getting too deeply into Brown's debt, the said Brown refuses further credit

fill the debt is reduced. Why should not Jones do the same? We have no hesitation in saying that the present law has fostered most loose and unbusiness-like habits of doing business. The material men will sell and give extensive credit to irresponsible men, who set up in the business of contracting with little qualification for the position, relying on the Lien Acts to protect them from loss, to the great annoyance of both owner and architect, and sometimes with great loss to the former, who, as a rule, is an innocent and unsuspecting victim. The position of the workmen is different, as they cannot in the same manner protect themselves and at the same time earn their daily bread. For their protection a very simple Act is needed, such as that in force, we believe, in Germany, where the workman has simply to notify the owner in writing that his wages are unpaid, and the amount. The owner then becomes responsible to the extent of any wage-monies yet owing by the contractor, and as this can be done every week, or each day if necessary, the workman runs little risk of loss.

A MODEL BUILDING ORDINANCE.

THE American Institute of Architects, the National Association of Building Inspectors, the National Boards of Underwriters and the National Association of Fire Engineers of the United States, recently appointed a committee to draft a model building ordinance for general adoption. The committee having met and considered the matter, report that owing to varying conditions, the task is at present impossible of accomplishment. They, however, recommend the adoption by State legislatures of the following principles essential to safe construction as a basis for local legislation:

1. That all buildings over seventy feet in height be constructed throughout of incombustible materials, protected in the most approved manner for resisting fire.
2. That interior structural ironwork in all buildings be covered and protected by fireproof material.
3. That all buildings over fifty feet in height be furnished with permanent stand pipes and ladders for the assistance of the Fire Department.
4. That the height of buildings to be erected should not be more than two and one-half times the width of the principal street on which they are situated, and that no building, or portion of a building, except church spires, should be more than one hundred and twenty-five feet high, except under a special permit.
5. That the open floor-space, not divided by walls of brick or other incombustible material, in all buildings hereafter erected for mercantile or for manufacturing purposes, should not exceed six thousand square feet, without special permission, based upon unusual and satisfactory precautions.
6. That every building to be erected, which shall be three stories high or more, except dwelling houses for one family, and which shall cover an acre or more than twenty-five hundred square feet, should be provided with incombustible staircases, enclosed in brick walls, at the rate of one such staircase for every twenty-five hundred square feet in area of ground covered.
7. That wooden buildings, erected within eighteen inches of the line between the lot on which they stand and the adjoining property; should have the walls next the adjoining property of brick; or when built within three feet of each other should have the walls next to each other built of brick.
8. That the owner of an estate in which a fire originates should be responsible for damage caused by the spread of the fire beyond his own estate, if it should be proved that in his building the foregoing provisions were not complied with. A certificate from the Inspector of Buildings shall be considered sufficient evidence of such compliance, if the building shall not have been altered since the certificate was issued.

TORONTO WATER SUPPLY.

THE Toronto water supply continues to demand a great deal of attention, and the daily papers are constantly referring either to the quantity or quality of the supply or the management or mismanagement of the water works department of the civic government.

Public opinion, or the opinion of the public, seems favorably disposed to the idea of a supply running down hill instead of being pumped up, and no doubt if it can be got it will be a great improvement. Pure water and plenty of it should be supplied, and every household should be made to pay for his share of the water supply as well as for police protection, street cleaning, etc. The gravitation scheme, even if adopted, cannot possibly be in operation for several years, and the water is required now. A new pipe has been laid, but not yet completed, to bring the