



PUBLISHED MONTHLY IN THE INTERESTS OF

Architects, Civil and Sanitary Engineers, Plumbers, Decorators, Builders, Contractors, and Manufacturers of and Dealers in Building Materials and Appliances.

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Contributions of technical value to the persons in whose interests this journal is published, are cordially invited, and if found to be of sufficient merit, will be paid for. Subscribers are also requested to forward newspaper clippings or written items of interest from their respective localities.

THE advertising pages of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER this month include the names of many reputable firms whose announcements appear for the first time in this number. We commend them and their goods to architects and builders for whose use they are designed.

THE danger arising from the exposure of electric light wires, was illustrated the other day at Welland, where during a thunder storm the electric light wires, highly charged with electricity, set fire to the wood work of a building. The proper place for electric light wires is underground, where doubtless they would be now were it not for the expense connected with placing them there.

IT is a pleasure to learn that it has been decided to replace the unsightly fence which surrounds the Horticultural Gardens in this city by a low iron fence of pleasing design. The high board fence has too long marred the beauty of our residence streets, but there is at last abundant evidence that it will be forced to make way for something more in keeping with nineteenth century progress.

READERS of this journal who may desire to be enlightened regarding any matter connected with their calling about which they may be in doubt, are invited to send their enquiries to this office, and every effort will be made to supply to them the required information. The desire of the publisher is to make this journal a medium of practical information. The answering of difficult questions involves time and trouble. Notwithstanding, we will endeavor to supply the information needed if our readers are sufficiently interested to write us briefly and clearly what they desire to know.

IN the Bill introduced into Parliament to regulate the conduct of railway companies in their relations to the public, it is recommended that the granting of free passes be abolished, excepting members of the Federal or Provincial Government. Wherefore this

exception? It is members of Parliament who travel most on free passes, and who can scarcely be expected to champion the rights of the people as against the railways so long as they are the recipients of such favors. If there are to be any exceptions to the rule abolishing free passes, they should not include members of Parliament, whose efforts should be given free handed in the public interest.

THE recent action of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council on the subject of technical education is surprising and amusing. Having heard that it was the intention to establish courses of instruction in carpentry and devote some time to instructing children in the public schools in the use of tools, the Council have appointed a committee to investigate the matter, with "instructions to interview the Board of School Trustees, and suggest to them that the two hours proposed to be devoted to learning the use of carpenters' tools be devoted to the learning of law and medicine." The reason given for this action is that "there are already too many who know how to handle tools, but nothing more," and that what is wanted are schools for technical education. We are surprised that a professedly democratic body like the Trades and Labor Council should object to any attempt to impart to the rising generation technical instruction. We are still more surprised that they should desire to substitute for such instruction the study of subjects like law and medicine. If a little knowledge of the way to use carpenters' tools is a dangerous thing, how much more dangerous and useless an imperfect knowledge of law or medicine? If there are already too many people who know how to handle tools, are there not vastly too many in the ranks of the lawyers and doctors? It is doubtless true that technical instruction can be imparted more thoroughly in technical schools than in the public schools, but, on the principle that half a loaf of bread is better than none at all, should it not be a matter for satisfaction rather than for objection, that until technical schools shall have been established in Canada, some measure of technical instruction is to be undertaken in the public schools.

THE contractors of Hamilton have locked out all their union men, and seem determined that some solution must be arrived at to settle how far trade unions shall interfere in their personal affairs. The lock-out was brought about through union men refusing to lay stone quarried by non-union labor. If these men do not desire to lay such material, they have the right to drop work if it so pleases them. Likewise the contractors have the right to refuse to employ union men. There is as usual a great cry about the arbitrary conduct of the contractors in locking out men who are not personally directly interested, but who are nevertheless interested as union men. There is nothing said about the tyrannical and harsh methods of the unions which will not allow their members to work alongside non-union men. If a man wishes to exercise his right to act as it may please him, and refuses to join a union, the supposed champions of liberty step in and say: "If you wish to exercise your right to free action and will not join our union, we will see that you and your family are brought as near starvation as possible. We will not allow you to procure work. Wherever there are union men employed, the employers must choose whether they shall employ union men or non-union men, for we will not work alongside of you. You may starve in consequence, but that is nothing to us. We care not for your sufferings

so long as we gain our objects." This is practically the attitude of the unions towards employers and non-union men. The contractors of Hamilton have accepted this challenge by discharging all union men and employing such workmen as they may deem fit in their own interests.

The building trade in Toronto has been very much injured by injudicious strikes. There are some eighteen or twenty different trades or divisions employed in the erection of buildings. Any one of these divisions may retard building by striking, and as they generally strike when work is plentiful in their particular line, they seriously interfere with the progress of the season's building. Of late years we have not had many months peace from strikes. Some one or other of these divisions have had grievances which apparently could not be remedied without a strike, and no sooner is one strike over than there is another. Those out on strike are supported by those at work in the other divisions. The parties building are the principal sufferers, and it is almost time that they took some interest in seeing that they are not made to stand the full loss. Contractors can stand the strikes very well now, as a clause in their contracts relieves them of all penalty for delay through strikes. If they suffered as in the past they would long be for this have had a remedy. The ratio of wages of all the divisions in the building trades does not fluctuate to any extent, and if such ratio as between the different parties interested were definitely settled, it would be possible to have one grand strike instead of some twenty. We would then have a strike for an advance of five or ten per cent. all round, and all would win or lose together, and not one-tenth of the time would be lost in the settlement of disputes that there is now. It is a matter for surprise that the contractors have not made use of their central organization, and forced this matter to a head. Every time there is a strike they must lose through their plant lying idle, and in many other ways. If they could bring about a settlement of all questions in the building trade by one effort, it would improve matters very much. The first time they have trouble with any of their men, if they would lock out all the men engaged in the building trade and inform them that they would not take them on again until they had arrived at a settlement among themselves as to the ratio of wages, and that in future a strike must be for an advance all round or not at all, they would very soon stop this continual interference with a season's building by some small section of dissatisfied union men. These small strikes have become a most serious nuisance, and must be put down in some manner.

We will attempt to explain what is meant by a ratio of wages. Suppose the wages of a mason is \$3 per day; carpenter, \$2.50; painter, \$2.25; tinsmith, \$2; laborer, \$1.80, etc. The difference in these amounts remain at about the same ratio, so that if the mason strikes for \$3.30 per day and gets it, we are likely to have a strike before long with the carpenters for \$2.75, the painters for \$2.50, the tinsmiths for \$2.20, and the laborers for \$2. The advance has been general, and is about ten per cent. all round. Well, what we would like to see would be an agreement as to this ratio of wages, and thus have the fight all along the line for a general advance or reduction. The contractors would not lose nearly so much, and the men would be benefited by losing much less time, as every strike that we now have throws nine or ten more of the other branches out of employment. The