

announce by advertisements in the daily press that "It is the intention of the vestry of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, to enlarge and improve the Cathedral at an expenditure of from \$30,000 to \$35,000. Competitive plans for said work will be received by the church wardens until the 10th day of May, 1890. Vestry do not bind themselves to accept any plan. In event of one being accepted, the second *best* by vote of Vestry to receive \$50." The italics are ours. Truly a magnanimous offer! We would advise all unemployed architects, if any there be, who are blessed with a passion for labor for its own sake, irrespective of either glory or reward, to submit designs in this competition for the approval or otherwise of the trained (?) judgment of the gentlemen composing the vestry of St. Paul's Cathedral. Joking aside, we regard as nothing short of contemptible the conduct of church officials who, forgetting the precept, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," are seeking to make use of the products of the architect's brain without making him compensation. There would seem to be need of greater harmony between the preaching and practice connected with the church in question. So far as the architects are concerned, it is a foregone conclusion that not one of them who is in the least degree entitled to the name will have anything whatever to do with the so-called competition.

THAT accidents to life are not more frequent than they are is almost sufficient proof without other evidence that there is a merciful and all powerful ruler of our destinies. Man certainly takes but few precautions to preserve life, and if a life was sacrificed for every piece of reckless disregard of statics which is exhibited by man, a very few weeks would convince us all that it would be necessary to do something to remedy an evil which resulted in many deaths and much suffering. There now stands, or did stand a few days ago, in the town of Barrie, Ont., a brick wall of one storey in height, with three openings in same which is carried on a rotten breast-sumner supported at both ends by brick walls, and at two intermediate points by light turned wooden columns, which are not under the centre of the wall, but rather to the inner edge. This wall has been the front wall of a two storey building which has lately been burned. The owner has apparently not made up his mind as to what he will do with what is left of his building, and in the meantime allows the above wall to remain, hazarding the lives of those who may pass along the sidewalk beneath. It seems incredible that a man endowed with common sense will allow a danger so threatening to stand on the very edge of a sidewalk along which many persons pass each day. The town council or some of its officials should have sufficient knowledge to be aware of the danger, and have the same remedied at once. It should not be argued that the fact of the wall having stood thus far, is a guarantee that it will not fall. It is possible and very probable that it may fall or be blown down, and therefore it should be removed at once.

THE Ontario Architects' Act, as passed by the Provincial Legislature, does nothing at all to prevent the execution of bad work in the construction of buildings, and although it professes to be for the protection of the public, the Government eliminated a clause in the draft of the Act, which was the one practical clause for this object. Architects may be thoroughly qualified, and about the work of qualified men there need be no question, but unhappily architects are not employed to carry out or superintend one half of the buildings that are erected; these buildings are carried out by men who must be looked after, and it is with this object that Inspectors of Buildings are appointed, and that plans for all buildings must be submitted for their inspection before the buildings are allowed to be proceeded with. The system of inspection, or rather the means by which the inspector gets his first information about a building, differ materially in almost every city. In some places it is necessary to deposit on a certain day of the week, prior to the meeting of a committee, a copy of the plans, elevations, etc., and of the specification. In others, the drawings only need be deposited; while in others a regular form must be filled up which will give the fullest description of the house or whatever the building may be,

the materials of the construction, sizes of timbers, etc. In Toronto there is no system worthy of the name. The only thing approaching a system is the permit book, which does look business-like, but as to the rest of the proceedings for the "protection of the public" the following conversation, which actually took place at the Toronto City Hall when some plans were brought down for inspection during the past month, will serve to show how the "public" of Toronto are "protected." Architect's Clerk—"Good morning Mr. —." Inspector—"Good morning, sir!" A. C.—"Want you to have a look at these plans, please." Insp. (opening out roll)—"Oh! Ah! Nice job this! What is it to cost?" A. C.—"About \$5,000 I suppose." Insp.—"Well, I suppose your boss knows how to make a plan?" A. C.—"I guess so." Insp. (to his clerk)—"Guess it's all right; make out a permit Mr. —." (Permit made out, plans signed in name of City Commissioner, building proceeded with forthwith.) The time has come when we should have a system of inspection of plans if there is to be any inspection at all, and the very variety of systems in vogue in various cities shows that inspection is not an easy matter and that there is a great difference of opinion as to the best method of procedure. Now it is putting a qualified architect to a great deal of trouble when he is obliged to submit his drawings for inspection just as if he were some ignoramus who knows nothing whatever of building but nevertheless makes an attempt at it, or as if he were no better than the unqualified dabbles in the profession. The mere mention of the name of a fully qualified architect in connection with plans ought to be a guarantee for the proper construction and management of a building, and it may be that this was the reason why the Inspector in the conversation above, passed the plans without more ado. He knew the architect was incapable of doing anything which he could point out as wrong. But there is a looseness in this procedure which requires correcting. A good man's name might be used in order to pass absolute death-traps, with which he had nothing to do. But civic committees have apparently found it impossible to draw the line, and good and bad must submit to the same regulations. Even this is better than having no regulations.

Of all the systems we know actually in use, we think there is no better at present devised than that of submitting plans (for inspection only, not for filing) together with a form of specification, filled up in the form of questions and answers, the questions being printed and the answers written in by the architect, this form to be filed and used by the Inspector in his visits to the building. When the drawings are taken down and left, together with this form, the Inspector, who it is presumed is a duly qualified person, has his regular appointed time for examining all that have been submitted. His work cannot be hurried, and it is far better that it should be the understood thing that the answer respecting the drawings will not be given till the next day. In one place we know of where it was necessary to deposit tracings of the drawings, it was the rule to leave them at the Inspector's office before five o'clock every Thursday. If a permit was required during that week, the Inspector made his examination on Friday and made up his report on all the plans submitted for the meeting of his committee in the evening of the same day. If he reported such and such things were amiss or not according to the by-law, these drawings were sent back with a memorandum to have them altered accordingly, and if the matter was a slight one, the Inspector could pass them when submitted to him as altered any day afterwards. If, however, the alterations necessary entailed, as it might in the hands of builders' clerks, the remodelling of the place, the passage of the plans was thrown back a whole week. Now in this way, the architect who knew his business had no trouble except that of preparing a tracing, whereas the man who did not know how to build soon found it necessary that he should either learn how or give it up. Undoubtedly the position of Inspector is one in which a disagreeable man can make himself very obnoxious. The choice of Inspector must always be made with the greatest care, and his duties and the limitations of his authority very clearly defined. He must be a man of high principle, above bribery and corruption, for we have known a case where an architect, do what he