

cular building or the framing of building regulations.

The series now undertaken by the Committee not only fulfils a want long felt by the professional man, but gives "fire-proofing" trades, too, an opportunity to obtain authenticated records as to the character of their work.

The present tests are of an entirely independent character, arranged on scientific lines, but with full consideration for the practical purpose in view. Absolute reliability is assured, records being mostly taken automatically and by photography, while the temperatures are carefully regulated by the application of gas.

All reports on tests solely state the bare facts and occurrences, with tables, diagrams and illustrations, and on no account include expressions of opinion, nor should any phrase be read as a comparison or criticism.

The general arrangement and direction of the tests is in the hands of the Executive, and in accordance with certain principles laid down after careful study and experiment.

The actual tests are attended by the members of the Council and the members of the Committee in rotation, care being taken that the attendance is always thoroughly representative of the technical professions primarily interested in the specific object under investigation.

As to the Testing Station, it comprises two houses standing in their own grounds near Regent's Park, and backing on the Regent's Canal.

The principal building is used for Committee Rooms and laboratory purposes, whilst the gardens are utilised for the principal or "full-size" tests.

With regard to the financial aspect of the station, the establishment expenses are being met by a special subscription. As far as the funds of the Committee permit, investigations with ordinary (i.e., not patented) forms of construction are undertaken from time to time and duly reported on. Official tests with patented materials, makers' systems, etc., etc., are subject to a scale of charges so figured as to only just cover the actual cost. The Testing Station is also open to members for such private research work or tests as they may desire to undertake, at nominal charges for loan of plant and instruments.

The services of the members participating in the management of the station, conducting or attending tests, are given entirely gratuitously.

IMPROVEMENTS ON THE ST. LAWRENCE ROUTE.

(Our Neighbours' Opinion of our Advantages.)

Whatever may be said, thought or done in connection with the proposed schemes for improving our shipping facilities, we have good reason to be grateful to the gentlemen who have opened some hitherto half closed eyes to the value of the splendid privileges possessed by the people of Montreal. That the equip-

ping of our port with all the most modern facilities for economical and expeditious handling of grain and other freight is likely to result in our acquiring much new trade, is clearly shown by the N. Y. "Commercial Bulletin," of the 8th inst. In the course of an article impressing upon Governor Roosevelt the necessity of deepening the Erie Canal, the "Bulletin" thus refers to Canadian canals and the suggested improvements of what is referred to as the St. Lawrence route:

"A short time ago it was announced that a number of Americans were interested in the construction of a large grain elevator at Montreal. Much criticism of these gentlemen was indulged in by certain American papers, says the Providence "Journal." They were participating in a scheme, it was charged, which would take many cargoes of grain annually from the American routes to the seaboard. Had this been a clear statement of the whole story of the Montreal enterprise, the matter would not merit serious attention, but it is highly important to bear in mind that by another summer Canada will have a fourteen-foot waterway all the way from Lake Ontario to Montreal. She already has the Welland Canal, of the same depth, to connect Lake Erie with Lake Ontario, and with the completion of the improvements along the St. Lawrence her facilities for moving grain from the ports of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior to tidewater will far surpass those of the United States. The Americans will have no advantage over the Canadians in this respect except by rail routes. But there is no question as to the comparative cheapness of water transportation.

With the improvements on the St. Lawrence route, the Montreal shippers will be able to attract new lots of grain to that city. The cost of moving it will be much less than it would be to move it to the Erie Basin at New York. American railroads must expect the Canadians to capture much new trade, and the people of New York may infer that their seven-foot Erie Canal will not be able to compete with the Canadian route except at a rate unfavorable to their own interests. It seems to be plain, therefore, that the Erie Canal, unless soon deepened, must suffer much more seriously from the Canadian competition than it has ever yet had to from the low price for shipments by rail. But, of course, the Duluth and Northwest trade can never be handled economically by railroads in the United States. Thus the products of the spring wheat belt must always seek a water outlet from the lakes. If the Erie Canal does not accommodate this traffic, it must gradually go to the Canada route. In examining the canal frauds of New York, Governor Roosevelt ought to think of this. His work will not be done when he punishes corrupt contractors and State officials. New York will lose much canal traffic if the Erie route is not soon improved or if the American deep waterway from the lakes is not built."

If our magnificent chances, as thus outlined by our neighbours, are not soon seized upon, we have good reason to be ashamed of ourselves. No better reason could be found to illustrate the wisdom of keeping the port of Montreal as free and open as possible, than this admission from a leading New York paper that Americans will soon be unable to compete with the Canadian route "except at a rate unfavourable to their own interests." Let us at once make the most of the advantages we possess.