

TORONTO HOUSING

Labor Scarcity Affects Matter—New Type of Cottage

City Architect Submits Plans — Action Is Deferred — Board of Control Does Not Share Pessimism of Mayor Church.

(Toronto Mail and Empire.)
The pessimism of Mayor Church regarding the housing situation in Toronto is not shared by his colleagues on the board of control, as may be noted from the fact that Controllers Maguire and Cameron did not think it necessary to attend a special meeting called by the mayor yesterday. His worship was not too well pleased at the publicity given his remarks of the previous day regarding the number of families alleged to have been evicted from houses by rapacious landlords. He declared that he had been misunderstood, and that he never intended that homeless people should be housed in the police stations and fire halls. What he really intended was that the police stations and fire halls should be utilized as information bureaus, where people might go for advice in case they received notice to quit their homes. This explanation was accepted by Controllers Ramsden and Gibbons, but they were not at all disposed to endorse the mayor's scheme for a campaign of wholesale house building. They were quite willing to give fair consideration to his suggestions and to support any reasonable and properly thought-out scheme for providing homes for the workers and others who find difficulty in securing accommodation, but they could see no reason for haste, and were convinced no hardship would be caused by letting matters stand until this afternoon, so that all the members might attend.

City Architect Price submitted a number of plans for a variety of four, five and six-roomed dwellings that might be erected on short notice if thought desirable and suitable sites could be obtained. He suggested a type of house, built in pairs, with brick foundations to the first floors, with stucco or shingles above. He estimated these would cost \$2,240 per pair for four rooms each, exclusive of the cost of land. In reply to Comptroller Ramsden, Mr. Price said it would be possible to erect four-roomed houses in rows at a cost of about \$2,300 each, exclusive of the land, but it would be necessary to amend the building by-laws if brick party walls were to be eliminated. He was requested to prepare an estimate of the cost of building rows of eight or ten houses.

Mayor Church suggested that a number of large buildings now vacant, like the old Arlington hotel, the demobilization buildings at the exhibition grounds, and similar structures, might be secured, renovated and altered into apartments to house the people. The city architect said it would be far cheaper and more advantageous to give the people real homes than to attempt to alter old buildings. In fact, small houses of the type suggested, could be erected in less time than would be required to change old buildings, some of which had been condemned as unsafe and unsanitary.

W. Swain, secretary and manager of the housing commission which erected a number of houses last year, said there was about 1,000 feet of land available for sites on Coxwell avenue, but the real difficulty to overcome was that of labor. It was impossible to secure men to do the necessary work, particularly unskilled labor.

The whole question is to be discussed this afternoon and it is possible that something will be done towards relieving what is fast becoming an intolerable situation.

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Two Dangers.

The friend of an English clergyman, who was spending a few days in the latter's parish, says the Guardian, went up to a neighboring country one day and found an old woman just turning away from the door. "Locked and bolted," she said. She then told him that she lived in a neighboring village and that she came every now and then to the church in which she had been christened and confirmed and married, but it was always the same; she could never get in. "But what reason can the vicar have for keeping the church shut up?" asked the friend. "I don't know, sir, I'm sure," she said. "I should think either he must be afraid of some one getting in and praying, or else he's afraid of God's getting out and seeing what a state his parish is in."

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