

left to the charge of the subordinate officials, these duties would be comparatively light, and only the general direction of the activities should rest with the commissioner. Under such circumstances the commissioner would be able to direct the work without the aid of a permanent head. It is probable, on the other hand, that the work of directing one of the great departments of the very large city would be too onerous and too complex for the layman to discharge without the aid of a permanent administrative head, in which case it would be found necessary to institute the permanent official.

With the development of the commission plan into a more distinctly supervisory character, the people will have worked out a system of city government which does not differ in essential principles from that with which they started out, the council plan. The machinery of the commission government is more centralized and more responsive, but the relation between the elective official and the permanent administrative staff is common to both systems. It is upon these principles that the permanent efficiency of the commission government must rest, just as it was contempt for these principles that caused the failure of the reform municipal systems of the past thirty years. If the commission plan conforms strictly to these principles, there is reason to believe that it will not become the subject of a tale "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

THE TORONTO CITY ARCHITECT'S DEPARTMENT.

The inquest at the time of the Neilson building collapse brought to light considerable evidence which showed the necessity for reorganization of the Toronto City Architect's department. While there have been many rumblings since in the City Council as yet no action has been taken. We hope that the City Council and the Board of Control will seize the opportunity to get a strong man to take charge of this department of the city's work. The City Architect's department is in some respects the most important section of municipal activity. It is perfectly clear to all that some drastic action must be taken with regard to the present organization of the department. The protection of the public demands the appointment of a man at the head who is not only capable of handling the executive end of the work, but also a man who is well versed in the technical details. The ideal head for this department is a man well versed in the strength of materials, one who has made a special study of it, in fact. The various equations in the different handbooks it should be possible for him to deduce, and he should know where they are to be relied upon and where not. In fact, if any improvement is to be made in the department, such a man as outlined must be chosen. The difficulties of the department at the present time are due as much to the lack of technical knowledge as to the lack of executive ability.

The Assistant City Architect Price has been mentioned in the Board of Control as a possible appointment as City Architect. A man who showed himself to be so ignorant of the fundamentals of building materials as the Assistant City Architect did in the Neilson investigation ought not to be entrusted with this important work. Under a competent City Architect, however, he might make a very capable inspector. The Toronto building by-laws are in wretched shape still, even after the past year's revision, and it requires a man well

versed in modern building materials and their strengths to put them in proper shape. All of the above facts demand that the Board of Control and the City Council appoint a man who possesses qualifications which fit him for the position. The history of civic appointments in Toronto has not been above criticism. The necessities of public safety, however, demand that all question of political expediency and personal pull be eliminated. *The Canadian Engineer* is interested, because it is not the artistic, but the scientific or engineering side of architecture which is at stake.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

In recent comments on the new Canadian Pacific Railway building in Toronto, one of the Toronto daily papers speaks very favorably on the style of architecture and the general pleasing appearance of the building. While it is true that it is "a design peculiar to our age and country," we believe that the corner of King and Yonge Streets is no place for a sixteen-story building. It may be "satisfactory" and "satisfying" to certain members of the daily press, but it certainly will not be spoken of in such terms by the man living in its shadow. It is time that the City Council passed the ten-story limit amendment to the building by-law.

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Attention has been called to the fact that the British School of Architecture at Rome is inaugurating a scholarship in architecture open to all British students under thirty years of age. The scholarship is worth \$1,000 per year, and is tenable for three years. The expectation is that a number of Canadian students of architecture will try for the scholarship, full details of which can be secured from the Department of State.

CHANGES DUE TO THE NEW WELLAND CANAL.

The construction of the new Welland Canal will necessitate a number of changes along the course of the first section of the old canal. It is understood that the government has under consideration the changing of the aqueduct under the Welland Canal necessitated by the crossing of the Welland River. Enlargement of this aqueduct would be extremely difficult. As an alternative it is suggested that the aqueduct be abolished and that lock gates be installed in the river at Port Robinson, raising the level of the water in the river to that of the canal. This would mean a raised elevation of about nine feet. Levees would then be built along the shores of the river to prevent flooding. A harbor and turning basin would be built at the intersection of the river and the canal. It is also reported that the government will construct a large pipe line from Lake Erie to provide a water supply for the towns and cities who are now being supplied from the canal.

LARGEST FLOATING DOCK.

The biggest floating dock in the world was launched recently from the Cammell & Laird's yard at Birkenhead. It has been constructed for the British Admiralty. The dock is capable of lifting battle ships having a displacement of 32,000 tons. It covers an area of two and a quarter acres and has three large workshops on board besides accommodation for the dock master, petty officers and crew.