

merits of their original design, and if they do not think that it is worthy of illustration, we can only sympathize with them, while making the best of our disappointment at not being able to present to our readers all the competitive drawings as we were desirous of doing. In future numbers we shall publish the pre-meditated Canadian designs by Messrs. Darling & Curry and Gordon & Helliwell, of Toronto.

JUDGING from letters which we have recently received from builders in different parts of Ontario, there seems to be an earnest desire on the part of many of our readers for the formation of a Canadian Builders' and Contractors' Association. We are pleased to observe that such a feeling exists, as we believe the time has come when such an organization is necessary for the protection of the rights of master builders and the advancement of their interests. It is time that a standard form of contract applicable to Canada and for use throughout the Dominion, was agreed upon and put in operation. The relations of the builder to the architect require to be more clearly defined and better understood. The relations of master builder and workmen employed in the building trades have in recent years been anything but satisfactory. In connection with all these matters, as well as in the influence it could bring to bear on the shaping of legislation, whether municipal or provincial, a strong organization of Canadian master builders might work with very great advantage for the interests of its members. We hope that, as suggested by one of our correspondents last month, a meeting will be called at an early day for organization. We shall be pleased to do anything we can to aid the object, and as a preliminary step would like to receive for publication the opinions of any builder who has anything to say for or against the project.

THE Ontario Legislature has been asked to amend the Mechanics' Lien Act in such a manner as to afford greater protection to mechanics. We notice that in Minnesota it is the mortgagee who is alleged to be suffering from the combination against him of "rascally owners and builders." An article in one of our contemporaries goes to show, however, that the owners have as good cause to complain of the provisions of the law as the other parties affected by it. The writer says:—"It may surprise a good many people to know that when once you have bargained to have a job done about a building you occupy, and may have paid for, the mechanic who makes the bargain with you has the right to go at once and put a lien on the building, and that before he has done a single stroke of work. His contract may be for a few hundred dollars only, and your building may be worth fifty thousand, but he can so far destroy the value of that building to you, for selling or other purposes, until his claim has been satisfied, which may not be for months. He may send you in what seems to you an extortionate bill, making charges away beyond the contract figures, and which you don't feel inclined to pay without showing fight. Until the matter is settled, however, that mechanics' lien clings like a nightmare to the value of your building, and you might very easily be paralyzed in your efforts to sell it, should you think it desirable or necessary at any time to do so, for months or even years. Ask any reputable lawyer of your acquaintance, and if he does not tell you what infinite botheration may be caused by Mechanics' Liens, we shall be surprised."

IN view of the many accidents which have occurred on account of insecure scaffolding, the City Council of Toronto is considering the appointment of an official whose duty it shall be to see that all scaffolding is constructed in a manner to ensure the safety of the workmen who may be employed upon it. No doubt the proposed new inspector will find enough to do, if he determines to faithfully fulfil the objects for which he is to be appointed. We trust if the appointment is made, the inspection of scaffolding will be done in a more satisfactory manner than the present inspection of new buildings. The number of examples of faulty and even dangerous construction to be seen on the streets of Toronto, is truly alarming. We could point out

to the Building Inspector as one such example a pretentious store building in course of erection on Queen street, in which the weight of intermediate brick piers of the upper stories are carried on wood beams which plainly indicated their inadequacy by the graceful curves they assumed on the lower surface. Another instance may be seen on Dundas street, where turned hard wood columns about 5 inches diameter, painted to look like iron, carry the wood beams which carry the brick walls above. We do not know whether the blame for the existence of such a state of things should rest upon the Building Inspector or upon the City Council. It is not improbable that the Building Inspector has too much to attend to. If this be so, he should either be relieved of some of the duties which do not properly belong to his office, or the Council should appoint an additional inspector. There is need for the prompt inauguration of a more thorough system of inspection of new buildings, which if not entered upon and carried out, will result some day in disastrous consequences similar to those which have occurred in New York and other cities owing to ignorance and criminal carelessness on the part of those engaged in building construction.

WE believe the Board of Works of the city of Toronto has taken an unwise and retrograde step in deciding that in future no pipe sewers shall be laid, but that all sewers shall be brick. This opinion is shared by every engineer to whom we have spoken on the subject. It may be that brick is to be preferred to pipe for sewers of 18 inches diameter and upwards. For sewers of smaller diameter, there can be no doubt that pipe of good quality serves the purpose better, and is much less costly. The recent investigation as to the condition of the pipe sewers of the city tends to bear out this statement. We quote from the City Engineer's report as to the character and result of this investigation: "At the last meeting of the Committee on Works I was ordered to stop work on all the pipe sewers now under construction, on account of statements having been made that a certain class of pipe now being used by the city was defective; and in order to test the matter, I was ordered to open a number of sewers built at different dates throughout the city. For this purpose trenches were sunk at several places throughout the city, 24 openings being made in the streets. On Tuesday and Wednesday the Committee on Works examined these sewers. As far as the examination goes the testing was confined to two qualities of pipe—one manufactured in England, and known as the Scotch pipe, and the other manufactured in the United States, by different manufacturers. Altogether we uncovered for the inspection of the Committee on Works 140 pipes, and of these, three Scotch pipes were found defective and fifteen American. This is not however, a fair test of the quality of the pipe—the openings for the American pipe being more numerous than those for the Scotch pipe; and further, it is a most imperfect test as to the quality of either pipe. The total number of openings made was 24; the greater number of these openings being made at such places where it was known the defective pipes would be found. As to the cause of the defects, it is difficult to decide; but I am inclined to think that the defects found in the sewers were caused by the removal of the shoring; as by its removal pipes were broken by having no support at the haunches, and with a sufficient load would be very liable to give way. The shoring at the present time is done by short lengths of timber. The lower portion can now be removed and the sewer properly strengthened by filling in at the haunches, thereby securing the pipe from any unreasonable strain." It will be seen that the inspection revealed very few defective pipes, and in many instances the defects discovered were not due to the quality of the pipe, but rather to the unfair strain to which they were subjected owing to the want of proper support. There was nothing revealed by the investigation tending to show the inferiority of pipe sewers. On the contrary, the evidence is strongly in favor of their continued use, and we are at a loss to understand on what grounds the Board of Works based their decision, especially in view of the Engineer's statement, that it was "a most imperfect test as to the quality of either pipe."