

is more than wall colouring. If these paintings have the ordinary success that scale, position and subject matter should give, the decoration of the city hall would be a rival to the building itself; for it is remarkable how, after visiting foreign cities, the recollection of great buildings fades from the mind, while the impression of wall paintings within them remains fresh, and to most visitors the wall paintings are the greatest attraction. If the city hall is intended to form one of the attractions of Toronto, there is no better way of making that end sure than by spending another \$7,000 or so in mural paintings for the entrance hall. The deputation of the Guild was met with sympathy, respect and even admiration, but on the money question all was dark. Indeed, while waiting to be heard, the deputation had the privilege of listening to a discussion by the Property Committee as to whether some alterations required to make one of the civic departments comfortable could be executed, and heard the conclusion that it was of no use either ordering the work or referring it to the sub-committee, because the appropriation for the building has, as was clearly and definitely stated, "come absolutely to an end and there is no more of it." After this the ill-omened politeness with which the Mayor received the deputation, and his unqualified regret that there was no money for the purpose they proposed, were to be expected. But this does not alter the fact that a thousand a year spent on the city hall in this way for a few years would be an incalculable addition to the two millions already spent, perfecting the building so as to give it value outside of its ordinary uses, as one of the attractions of Toronto. It would perhaps be possible, as was suggested afterwards by an alderman, to obtain, by private contribution, money for the decoration of the city hall, but the work is after all a municipal work, and it does not seem proper that persons who are essentially private persons, groaning under taxation like the rest, should be asked to subscribe to this work, only because they have a taste for art. To interest in the project a wealthy man, whose residence in Toronto has proved so profitable that he feels inclined to return thanks by a handsome gift to the city, would be another thing.

Code or Rules for Tendering.

IN another department of this number will be found a code of rules for tendering, recently adopted by the Vancouver Builders' Exchange. The state of affairs that has led to the foundation of this code is no doubt distressing, but, if the cause at the bottom is looked for, it will be found to be the keenness of competition among the builders themselves. This condition, however hard, is unfortunately normal. What has to be guarded against is the degeneration of competition into unfair competition, and it is obvious that the surest way to prevent this, to safeguard the interests of the competitors themselves, is not to surround the tendering with conditions of mystery and suspicion, but to have the tendering conducted as openly and as much above board as possible. The conditions which stipulate for clear drawings and specifications, so that there can be no mistake about their meaning, are excellent. It is also a fair and business like contention that in bulk tendering a commission should be allowed on the sub-contracts, and there is no reason why bulk and separate tendering should not be made in this way. It is an architect's duty to find the lowest price at which he can get good work done, but no architect in respectable prac-

tice wants to be involved or to involve his client in cut rates or scamping prices; and if he knows that the recognized building practice is to make bulk tenders for a commission, he—speaking still of the ordinarily respectable architect—is not drawn to the contractor who offers to go behind the practice of his exchange in this respect. But when it comes to involving the architect in the suspicion which is properly due to shifty competitors in the building trades, concealing from him the details of the price, endeavouring to make him open tenders in public, this is to force him out of the middle position he should occupy, seeing fair play for both parties to the contract, and make him take side with the owner only, leaving the builder, as he will have it so, to look after his own interests himself. The more the architect knows about the prices the better. If he is left to imagine, in consequence of elaborate precautions for secrecy, that the margin for profit is unreasonable, he thinks it his duty to deal with the man who appears to be willing to bring this down to a reasonable limit. If he knew that the price offered him meant failure or scamped work, he would be as much against it as the competing contractors. A bill of quantities and schedule of prices submitted with each tender, to be opened when the tender is accepted, would be the most satisfactory basis for considering the price and would do away with all difficulty and suspicion in adjusting changes. A fair price for good work is for the interest of every one. The more definitely this price can be fixed and known the better for every one; it is only as the readiest means of arriving at it that competitions have been established, and the more mystery is made to surround it the keener will be competition, the more chance there is for unfair competition, and the less chance for the ultimate attainment of the really fair price. Publicity is the preventive of underhand dealing; it acts as a check on all parties. As far as the architect is concerned, if there is reason to doubt of good faith of an architect, if he cannot be trusted to open tenders, to deal fairly in a matter of bulk and separate tendering, to make a proper use of a bill of quantities and prices, the obvious course is to decline to tender in his office. The sooner he is brought to understand that he must stop his practices or his practice the better.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

DESIGN FOR A BUNGALOW.—R. M. FRIPP, F.R.I.B.A.,
VANCOUVER, ARCHITECT.

SPECIMENS OF MAORI ART, ILLUSTRATING MR. R. M. FRIPP'S
ARTICLE, IN THIS NUMBER.

BAPTIST CHAPEL, SOUTH LONDON, ONT.—BURKE & HOR-
WOOD, ARCHITECTS.

The site and position of the lot and the finances of the congregation made it necessary to adopt a basement school room. It was also an instruction of the committee that the entrance should be roomy and attractive, and that it should light up well at night, as the sides of the building would not be seen to any extent. The large porch permits of broad easy stairs to the auditorium and easy and direct entrance to basement.

Mr. R. L. Macdonald has assumed the management of the brick and terra cotta works at Pugwash, N.S.

It is rumored that Mr. George Campbell has secured, for a syndicate, options on all the granite properties in the vicinity of St. George, N. B.