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—THE—

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The "Canadian Architect and Builder" is the official paper of the Architectural Associations of Ontario and Quebec.

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THE competition for the proposed new City Hall at Quebec has resulted in the usual fizzle. Three plans received prizes and the other three were bought for \$300 each. And now one of the competitors is handed all six sets of plans with instructions to draw up new plans embodying the best points of each, the whole to be done under the superintendence of the city engineer. And so it goes on. When will the profession awake to a sense of their humiliating position, and insist, as a condition of their entering a competition, that a proper code be drawn up and that competent judges be appointed.

It was rather late in the day for the Canadian competitors for the Montreal Board of Trade building to cry out about the alleged unfairness of the award. If they had heeded the advice of both the Ontario and Quebec Associations they would have been spared the trouble and expense which they were put to without hope of reward, and would have helped to sustain these Associations in their protest against the unfair clauses in the conditions of the competition. We must say we have no sympathy with these disgruntled parties, some of whom probably thought they had seized a golden opportunity when their more competent brethren had decided to hold themselves aloof.

THERE seems to be a persistent effort in certain quarters to create a sentiment in favor of operating the Toronto street railway by the civic authorities. To our mind the simplest solution of the problem seems the best, viz, the city to own the road-bed only. By this means all questions of repairs, best form of tracks, curves and switches, etc., is in the hands and under the sole control of the city. The city would then be in a position to grant running powers over certain sections to more than one company. It is certain that as the city grows new routes will be developed. These new routes will require access to the heart of the city (as witness already the application of the Metropolitan and the Toronto and Weston companies) and it will never do to grant an independent right of way to each, as down town streets are already more than monopolized to the detriment of

vehicular traffic. It has generally been the case, when the company constructs the road-bed, that development slowly follows the growth of population, whereas, if in the hands of the city, development could be made in certain desirable instances to proceed and attract population. The civic authorities could make all needful regulations as to service, speed, frequency, over-crowding, fares, extensions, motive power, location of stables or power houses, method of application of power, position of wires or cables, rent of tracks, and in fact everything necessary to insure the establishment of a model system, with the minimum of trouble and responsibility on the part of the city.

WE are pleased to notice that an effort is being made by the City Engineer of Toronto in regard to the control or inspection of projecting signs, with a view to the safety of the public. We would go further—abolish them, and that other hideous deformity, the wooden verandah or shed which covers so many of our shop fronts. For our part we cannot understand how civilized beings with the slightest claim to the possession of taste in regard to the architectural appearance of their shops and warehouses can for a moment consent to have the fronts of these buildings disfigured and bedaubed as they are wont to be. No. 1 builds a pretentious front, and lavishes his money on terra cotta, pressed brick or cut stone. He no sooner assumed possession and bid good bye to his architect, than he hoists a great board abomination in front of and covering hundreds of dollars worth of ornament. No. 2 must do something to attract the public gaze from No. 1, and so procures a V shaped structure projecting away out into the street and secured to the light woodwork of a window frame or cornice with equally light rods and bolts which the first hurricane will wrench and hurl to the pavement, to the danger of the pedestrians beneath. No. 3, not to be outdone, conceals something bigger and more atrocious, and so it goes on from bad to worse. Could we not have a by-law forbidding all projecting signs? Surely the street does not belong to these people, and if they will have ugliness, why not compel them to keep off the street line with it? We would be glad to see a commission of public censors appointed, with authority to compel some attention to taste in such matters. Our citizens and visitors would soon notice a wonderful change for the better in our business fronts, and the shop-keepers themselves would be constrained to admit that it was a good thing that they were saved from their own abominations.

THE National Association of Master Builders, of the United States, now a well-organized body, held its fifth annual convention in New York, last month. One hundred and sixty one delegates were in attendance, representing some thirty-five cities scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast. In addition to the regular delegates, the alternates and visitors make up a list of over five hundred. Some important business was transacted. The Committee on Arbitration reported, advocating the settlement of disputes between employers and employees by referees. We are glad to see such an influential organization put itself on record in regard to this most important question, and although no very definite rules were recommended, an important step has been taken which ought to bear good fruit in the course of time. No doubt each year will see some practical detail added in improvement to the suggestions already put on record. The uniform contract, adopted at a former convention, and looked upon as nearly perfect by a complacent committee, had apparently no clause making the contractor responsible and holding the owner harmless for all accidents, damages, &c., through the carelessness or neglect of the former. No wonder lawyers flourish when such looseness in drawing up contracts prevails. The Trade Schools in New York and Philadelphia were visited by the delegates, and the object lessons thereby presented ought to bear good fruit. The leading men in the convention have expressed themselves as convinced that the best and most permanent work which may be accomplished by the Association will be the education of workmen by means of such schools. The quality of the work done by the pupils was a matter of astonishment to those who had not been cognizant of the standard set up by these institutions. The master builders of the Dominion of Canada would do well to imitate their brethren across the line. A Dominion