

throwing open to competition in the future the designing of public buildings. Such a step would give a much needed stimulus to Canadian architects, and the competition thus engendered would result in the erection of buildings in which both excellence and diversity of the design would be displayed. In view of the fact that a successor has not yet been appointed to the position made vacant by the recent retirement of Mr. Thos. Fuller, late Chief Architect of the Public Works Department, the present would seem to be an opportune time for the Government to consider and deal with this matter. It might be advisable for the Architectural Associations of Ontario and Quebec to memorialize the Government on the subject at this juncture.

WE have before us details of the requirements of the proposed Federal Palace for which an international competition for designs has been instituted. The printing of these details would occupy too large a portion of our space and is therefore not attempted. Should any Canadian architect feel a disposition to take a hand in the competition, he can by calling at this office see a copy of these requirements. The edifice will be constructed in the centre of an elliptical area, surrounding which will be structures of similar architectural composition. The principal conditions are that solidity and the rational employment of materials shall not be sacrificed to decorative fancies. The total cost must not exceed \$1,500,000, without counting the foundations to the level of the street. The designs must be sent, accompanied by an explanatory specification and description written in Spanish, French and English, and estimate of cost, to the Ministry of Communications and Public Works, either directly or through the diplomatic or consular representatives of Mexico, on or before the 30th of November, 1897. The designs will be submitted to a jury composed of seven architects or civil engineers appointed, one by the Chamber of Deputies, one by the Senate, one by the Ministry of Communications and Public Works, and four by the candidates by means of a written ballot, from among ten experts proposed by the Ministry of Public Works. They must not be participants in the competition and will be chosen by the absolute majority of ballots. For this purpose the candidates must send with their drawings and specification a list containing the four names of the persons whom they choose as members of the jury. Before the award is made the official journal of the Government will publish the result of the ballot held for the formation of the jury, over which the Minister of Public Works or his representative will preside. There is here an opportunity for Canadian architects to distinguish themselves, and also for Canadian manufacturers of supplies to get a share of the orders for materials required in the fitting up of these important buildings.

BY THE WAY.

ANOTHER example of the low level to which architectural competitions in Canada have been reduced is now before us in a competition instituted by the St. Thomas Board of Education for plans for a twenty-room school building. The estimated cost of the building was \$30,000, and the prizes offered were \$50, \$35 and \$25 respectively. Seventeen architects are said to have submitted plans in this competition. The first prize has been awarded to E. T. Macdonald, of St. Thomas, the second prize to Neil Darrach, of St. Thomas, and

the third prize to Mr. Ogilvie, of Toronto. I regret that I am not in a position to publish the names of all the competitors.

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A JOINT committee, appointed by the Royal Institute of British Architects and the College of Organists, to determine the most suitable position for church organs, recommends that as a rule the organ be placed at the west end of the church and the choir in two divisions at the sides of the nave.

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SENATOR THURSTON, chairman of the special committee of the Senate upon International Expositions, has recommended that the appropriation of half a million dollars be made to cover the cost of an exhibit at the Paris Exhibition of 1900; also that provision be made for the expenses of five commissioners. Has the Government of the Dominion of Canada yet given any thought to this matter? Canada should have adequate representation at this Exhibition, which promises to eclipse all of its predecessors.

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A WELL known Toronto plumber related to me a bit of his experience the other day which seems to indicate that the conditions at present prevailing in the trade are by no means favorable to the making of profits. In view of the dull times, he determined to figure more closely than usual on a certain contract—in fact, his purpose was to make no allowance for profit, but simply to cover the cost of doing the work, and rest satisfied with keeping his workmen employed. After completing and sending in his tender, calculated on this basis, he was startled by the discovery that he had failed to take into account the cost of three boilers required by the specification. He hurried away to the company who had invited him to tender, and began to explain to them his mistake, when they interrupted him to remark in the coolest possible manner that the error was of no consequence, as they had received bids which were very much below the one he had submitted. Notwithstanding the unsatisfactory condition of the trade indicated by this incident, there are plumbing firms—some of them not old-established either—which appear to be doing a prosperous business.

BUILD WELL.

High on the granite wall the builders, toiling,
Heaved up the massive blocks and slabs to place,
With swart and streaming brows and straining sinews,
Under the summer's blaze.

And higher yet, amid the chills of autumn,
Tier upon tier and arch on arch arose;
And still crept upward, coldly, wearily,
'Mid winter's sifting snows.

From stage to stage up springs the master builder,
Instructing, cheering, chiding here and there;
Scanning with scrutiny severe and rigid,
Each lusty laborer's share.

Anon his voice to those most distant shouting,
Through the hoarse trumpet makes his orders swell;
Or utters words like these to rouse and hearten:
"Build well, my men, build well!"

"The ropes are strong, and new and sound the pulleys;
The derrick's beams are equal to the strain;
Unerring are the level, line and plummet;
Let nought be done in vain!

"Build that these walls to coming generations
Your skill, your strength, your faithfulness shall tell,
That all may say, as storms and centuries test them,
The men of old built well!"