

THE voters of Chicago are to decide next month whether or not they will erect a new City Hall and Court House at a cost of about five millions of dollars. It is proposed to remove the present Municipal and County buildings which were completed eighteen years ago at a cost of three and a half million dollars or so, and rebuild on the same ground. All the world knows that Chicago has had a marvellous growth within the last eighteen years, but it is not for this reason alone that a new City Hall is wanted. The buildings to be removed have been undergoing repairs almost constantly since completion. The manner in which the Corporation is setting about the proposed new work is likely to result in another gigantic failure so far as securing the best possible design and economy in the expenditures are concerned. Advertisements are out for a farce competition which will probably secure one set of plans and one estimate, duplicates of plans which, it is understood, the committee in charge already have in their possession and intend to use. The great need in the erection of large public buildings here or anywhere else, is honest competition for architects and contractors, and no effort should be spared to bring about these conditions.

ONE of the principal features of the annual convention of the Province of Quebec Association of Architects this year, was the exhibition of architectural drawings in the galleries of the Montreal Art Association. We are pleased to notice that in addition to the large exhibit of the work of local architects, a considerable number of drawings were contributed by members of the Ontario Association of Architects. The exhibition was attended by a large number of leading citizens, and cannot fail to serve a useful purpose in arousing public interest in the work of the profession and in architectural matters generally. This is one of the objects which the O. A. A. at its last meeting proposed to attain by means of a series of public lectures. It might not be out of place for us to suggest to the O. A. A. the advisability of undertaking an enterprise similar to the one which has been so successfully carried out in Montreal. No doubt the authors of many of the drawings which were exhibited at Montreal, would consent to have them come to Toronto. It is several years since anything in the line of a public exhibition of architectural drawings was attempted here, and there consequently exists the better opportunity for a successful effort in this direction. Reverting to the Montreal meeting, it is to be regretted that there were not more papers, and that the opportunity for a profitable discussion on the two excellent papers presented by Messrs. Baillairgé and Taylor, was not taken advantage of.

A NEW organization was formed in New York last month to be known as "The Employers' and Builders' League." The purpose of its formation is that by careful, conservative action, the interests of owners, contractors and journeymen may be conserved; also that by arbitration and discussion all necessity for strikes, lock-outs, liens and disputes may be avoided. One provision in the constitution of the league in favor of workmen is as follows: "The (directors) may nominate, appoint and remove when expedient, four journeymen in each craft, who shall be representative conservative men, to be known as master stewards, and these men shall be the recognized medium of communication between the Board of Directors and the journeymen." The organization is purely defensive, with the object of securing fair play for employers and employees. Union or non-union men will all be treated alike. A strong provision in favor of employees is, that every man will have a guarantee from the organization that he will get his wages. The membership roll includes fifty eight employers and every branch of the building trades. We do not understand just why the objects sought for could not have been as well promoted by and through the New York Exchange of the National Builders' Association, but the fact that another organization was considered necessary by a large number of the most prominent New York builders convinces us that the field for its usefulness is plain and raises the question again, why should not Canadian contractors be more generally and thoroughly organized? It would be simply absurd to say that the conditions are so different with us that contractors do not need to work for each others' interests on the lines that are followed elsewhere. The conditions are not likely to be just the same in different large cities or in different parts of the country,

more or less remote from each other, but as between Canada and the United States the situation will average very much alike. We firmly believe as much good can be accomplished in Canada for contractors and builders through better organization, as in any other country. It is not our purpose in this connection to set out in detail our reasons for this opinion. We have had occasion to refer to some of them in former issues and will probably do so again in the future. We would be glad to assist by all possible means in promoting a greater interest in this question among contractors, and should they provide a suitable opportunity, will endeavor to point out some methods which could be adopted with benefit to all parties interested.

THE statue of Sir John Macdonald, which was unveiled in the Queen's Park on Saturday, 13th inst., before an assemblage, variously estimated at from 15,000 to 18,000 people, and with appropriate ceremonies and speech-making, is the work of Mr. Hamilton McCarthy, R. C. A., the well-known and talented Canadian sculptor. The site selected for the statue, directly opposite the Queen's ave., and in front of the Ontario Legislative Buildings, could hardly have been more prominent or favorable for a purpose of the kind. The criticism, indeed, has been made, that the position is so exceptional that it ought to have been held for a statue of Her Majesty. The work of the sculptor is spoken of in kindly and complimentary terms by those capable of judging of its artistic merits, and it is undoubtedly a marked advance on the statue of Egerton Ryerson, also from the hands of Mr. McCarthy. The statue itself, the work of a Canadian artist, so also is the pedestal entirely a Canadian production. The granite was quarried in the Province of Quebec and was shipped to this city in its rough state. The designing, cutting, polishing, and the whole of the work was done in this city by D. McIntosh & Sons. These unveiling ceremonies naturally suggest a reference to the excellent paper in another column, "Notes on Some Aspects of the City of the Future," by Mr. A. T. Taylor, and which was read before the Quebec Association of Architects at the meeting this month. The particular suggestion of this paper is that the time has arrived, when, in all our larger communities, there ought to be in existence a committee, which will constitute a special artistic authority or tribunal, who will decide in the matter of selection of our monuments, statues, and the embellishment generally of our streets, public squares, etc. Mr. Taylor pertinently remarks: "How intelligent men will consult lawyers on all legal questions, doctors on matters of health, engineers on matters of drainage, hydraulics and machinery, but on matters of art and taste think they are quite capable of judging for themselves". Such a committee, it is to be expected, would be composed of men who were experts in artistic pursuits. Were a committee of this character in existence in many cities of Canada, as well as elsewhere, future generations would not be called upon to ask for an explanation why this manner of designing some public building, locating a citizens' park, or placing some statue or monument, had been done with so little regard to esthetic and artistic thought and observation. In how many cities are large amounts of money wasted in undoing, in the line of public work, what had been improperly done in the first place. In this respect the question has an economic bearing that must touch the pocket, even though the artistic organs, to employ the language of the phrenologist, have been but poorly developed. The suggestion, as Mr. Taylor has pointed out, is not chimerical, as a scheme of the kind is in operation in Boston, and New York has also a municipal art society "established with the express object of providing adequate sculptural and pictorial decorations for public buildings and parks." The argument is sometimes used that in the newer cities public affairs are conducted on too utilitarian a basis to permit of thought in artistic directions. Those in the newer cities, profiting by the experience of older communities, might well avoid the mistakes made in this manner, and if no other influence will move the people there is abundance of force, as has already been suggested, in the purely economic and financial bearings of the question.

Sandpaper is at present made with powdered glass instead of sand. Glass is readily pulverized by heating it red hot and throwing it into water, and finishing the powdering in an iron mortar.