

CORRESPONDENCE.

[Letters are invited for this department on subjects relating to the building interests. To secure insertion, communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the author, but not necessarily for publication. The publisher will not assume responsibility for the opinions of correspondents.]

UNFAIR COMPETITION.

VANCOUVER, B. C., March 4, 1897.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

SIR,—Enclosed please find two dollars, my subscription to the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER. Things have been very bad in the building trade here. It is so hard to get hold of a few dollars even after one has earned them. A great deal of harm is being done by persons taking contracts who haven't a cent to lose, and who take the work so low that a bona fide contractor has no show to compete and pay wages. There are carpenters working here for \$1.50 per day, and many of the so-called contractors don't make \$1.00 per day. I think that you ought to censure our architects for assisting to make possible such a condition of things, for I think your paper does a great deal of good in this direction.

Yours truly,

S. G.

[It should scarcely be necessary for us to point out to architects the injustice of placing unskilled and financially disreputable contractors in competition with qualified and honest men, who in tendering try to make provision for the discharge of their honest liabilities. The evil results of such unfair competition must ultimately come back upon the architects themselves. The effect will be to drive reputable contractors out of the city, thus leaving the business in the hands of the "Cheap-Johns," who have neither the knowledge nor the disposition to do a good piece of work, when such is required.—EDITOR C. A. & B.]

COST OF EXCAVATING.

CHATHAM, ONT., Feb. 25, 1897.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

SIR,—Would you kindly furnish me with the approximate cost per cubic yard of removing material (clay and fine sand) from a pit about 800 feet long, 90 feet wide and about 8 feet in depth, with sloping sides about 1 in 1½, containing roughly about 20,000 cubic yards. About 11,000 cubic yards of the material excavated is to be banked on the sides to a height of about 6 feet and the balance of the excavated material is to be hauled to an average distance of 600 feet. The work is to be done by scraping the earth on to the embankment by horses and scraper, and the balance of the material to be excavated to be removed by waggons and wheel scrapers to an average distance of 600 feet. The waggons to be filled by men with shovels. The material is easy to dig and there is no water to contend with. The cost of teams per day, \$3; cost of men, \$1.25.

E. B. JONES,

Supt. Chatham Waterworks.

[In answer to our correspondent's enquiry we beg to submit the following:

Cost per cubic yard of loosening earth	2½ cents.
“ “ “ loading in carts	5 “
“ “ “ hauling 600 feet	8 “
Contractor's profit	2½ “
Total cost per cubic yard	18 cents.

If the embankment is to be carried up 6 feet above the natural level, as the enquiry suggests, then a por-

tion of the earth will either require to be handled twice by shovellers or otherwise carted out of the cutting to the bank of the embankment. The cheaper way, of course, would be to cart the earth from the cutting to a platform, and again from this platform to the embankment. All the conditions are not given, but judging from what can be gleaned from the enquiry, we should think that 20 cents per yard would be the average cost of the work complete.—EDITOR C. A. & B.]

RECENT CANADIAN PATENTS.

HENRY Stauton, of Flushing, Ohio, has obtained a patent in Canada, No. 54,558, for a hot air furnace, having the combination of a grate, a brick fire-pot, and a perforated top over the fire-pot, a metal arch enclosing said fire-pot and top and arranged to direct the products of combustion downward, a cold air heating chamber enclosing said arch, and flues arranged to draw the products of combustion downwards between the fire-pot and arch and keep them separate from the air in the air chamber.

A patent, No. 54,569, has been granted to Lewis Skaife, of Montreal, for a sewer trap.

Mr. J. M. Gander, of Toronto, has taken out patents for a plaster board, comprising a composite material made in flat form with one underlying flange designed to be affixed to the joists, and overlapping flange fixed over the underlying flange of the abutting end of the adjacent board, with longitudinal tongue in one edge of board and a groove in the opposite edge, and a series of depressions or recesses formed in the back of the board. This board is designed to be fitted directly to the joists of ceilings and walls, and is formed of a composition of plaster of Paris, ground asbestos and grassy fibrous non-igniting material. Mr. Gander has also patented a fire-proof covering for steel beams.

A patent for a brick kiln has been granted to Edward M. Pike, of Chenoa, Illinois.

Albert B. Shantz, of Caledonia, Ont., has secured a patent, No. 54,664, for a ventilating apparatus.

A new roofing compound has been patented by T. Sparham and Jas. Thompson, of Lyndhurst, Ont. It is claimed to be a roofing having the felt or paper covering fastened by wires, secured by staples, and covered with a compound composed of blue clay and coal tar mixed together and spread while hot.

A water filter patent has been granted to James H. Blessing, of Albany, N. Y.

A CREDITABLE PUBLICATION.

MR. O. T. Springer, Burlington, Ont., writes: "I received your New Year number, and must congratulate you on your effort; it is very creditable to you when your somewhat limited constituency is taken into consideration."

CORRECTION.

In our annual building review published last month it was stated that the Canada Life Building in Montreal was built in Ohio sandstone. This was an error, as the building is built in Oxford bluestone from Wyoming county, New York State.

Mr. Peter Brown, an Ottawa contractor, accidentally took a dose of carbolic acid, and at time of writing is in a precarious condition.