

IN reply to a letter from Mr. Jas. Robertson, of Montreal, concerning the use of galvanized pipe for conducting water into buildings for drinking and culinary purposes, Prof. J. T. Ronald, of Bishop's College, writes as follows: "Certainly it is unwise to use such pipes for the distribution of water for domestic use; some waters would in all probability have very little effect on the zinc, others again might dissolve notable quantities of this metal, and all compounds of zinc which are soluble are poisonous. It therefore follows that in some cases no trouble would arise from the use of galvanized pipe, whilst in other cases such pipe might be the means of introducing into the water a larger or smaller quantity of a corrosive zinc compound. It would be safer not to use such pipe."

THE second appeal of Mr. Neelon, the contractor for the Toronto City buildings, from the decision of the lower courts, refusing him an injunction to restrain Mr. Lennox, the architect of the building, from interfering with or preventing him from carrying on the work on the building under his contract with the corporation, and to compel the defendants to deliver up possession of the works and for other relief, has been dismissed by the Court of Appeal, with costs against the plaintiff. The ground on which the trial judge refused the petition of the plaintiff was that under the contract the architect had power to dismiss the plaintiff without the consent of the court house committee of the City Council. It has not been learned whether it is the intention of the plaintiff to carry the appeal further.

A REAL estate boom similar to the one experienced by Toronto a few years ago, appears to be setting in at Buffalo, and speculation in land and building in that city, is at present unusually brisk. Several Toronto real estate men are said to be operating at Buffalo, neglectful of the experience which many of their class received in Toronto so recently. As mentioned elsewhere, a number of Canadian contractors have also gone to Buffalo in view of the extensive building operations which are in progress in that city this year. It is believed that the Buffalo boom is on a somewhat more solid foundation than the one through which Toronto passed. The location of the city is such that it is believed to be certain to become one of the greatest commercial and manufacturing centers of the United States.

In our Montreal correspondence we print a petition which has recently been presented to the City Council of Montreal, by the Council of the Province of Quebec Association of Architects, asking that a committee be appointed to supervise the erection of public monuments, the laying out of parks, etc., in that city. We are pleased to see this action taken, and trust that the example of the Province of Quebec Association will be followed by the Ontario Association of Architects, so that if possible the appointment of committees of this character may be secured in the leading Canadian cities. The need of some properly qualified authority to govern the erection of public monuments is apparent in Toronto at the present time. Had such a committee been in existence, the Volunteer Monument now in the course of erection in Queen's Park would probably have occupied a different site. The proper place for monuments of this character would be in the rear of the Parliament buildings. The space in front of the buildings should be reserved for statues, and the mixing up of statues and public monuments of the character of the one mentioned should not be permitted.

No understanding has yet been arrived at between the Builders' Exchange, representing the master builders of Toronto, and the bricklayers' and stone masons' unions, for the renewal of an agreement to govern the rate of wages to be paid the workmen in these trades. The only union with which an understanding has been reached is that of the labourers. The other trades are apparently not satisfied to accept the reduction of about 20 per cent. agreed to by the labourers' union, and we feel quite safe in saying that these are the best terms which they will be able to make. In an article elsewhere in this paper, the fact is mentioned that contracts are being taken to-day at one-half the figures obtained twenty years ago, and that never before in the history of Canada were prices so low as at present. Under these circumstances it is folly in the extreme for the trades

unions to demand or expect to be paid the same rate of wages as they have been accustomed to receive hitherto. We are informed that owing to the refusal of the unions to moderate their demands, a number of their members are deserting their ranks and are making their own terms with the employers, whilst others are being expelled owing to their inability to pay their dues. From these two causes the strength of the unions is being sapped, and they have everything to gain by endeavoring to come to an early understanding with the employers.

THE information comes from London that electric radiators have been successfully employed as a means of temporarily heating the Vaudeville theatre in that city, and that in consequence electric heating is likely to come into use in a number of public buildings in that city. The advantages of the electric system are that radiators can be placed in out of the way corners which would be difficult to heat by steam pipes, and that they can be stored away when not required for use. While the system is undoubtedly more expensive than steam while in operation, yet less than half the time is required to bring the temperature of a public building up to the required standard of comfort than when steam is used: thus the extra cost while in operation is offset by the shorter time in which it performs its work. Another advantage is, that the temperature can be perfectly regulated to suit the requirements, and the employment of skilled attendants is to a large extent avoided. The question as to what heating methods will be employed in the future is an interesting one. One thing is absolutely certain, viz., that the use of coal as a means of generating heat is not likely to be continued much longer. The manner in which gas is superseding coal for cooking purposes shows clearly the trend of public opinion. The coal stove is being banished from the kitchen, and it is safe to say that the coal furnace will soon follow.

WHILE a fair amount of building is being done throughout Canada this season, contracts are being taken at figures lower than ever before, and consequently there is little profit in the work. A warehouse building which was destroyed in the recent Toronto fires is being rebuilt at exactly one-half its original cost. In other words, a building which twenty-one years ago cost \$12,000, is now being put up for \$6,000. At the time it was originally built, the brickwork cost \$15.00 per thousand, as against \$11.00 per thousand to-day. Prices of material have also gone down, but it cannot be said that the cost of manufacture, in the case of brick, for instance, has been reduced in like proportion. It is true that by means of improved machinery the cost of making brick has been considerably reduced, but on the other hand the cost of burning has increased by about \$1.00 per thousand as the result of the increased cost of fuel. Apparently, the keenness of competition has served to reduce tenders in other cities as well as Toronto. As an illustration of this, the contract for one of the new churches to be erected in London, is said to have been let at about \$10,000 below the architect's estimate. The majority of contractors have been so long without employment that now an improvement has set in, they are willing to tender at ridiculously low figures in the hope of securing work. The result of such a state of affairs is by no means satisfactory. It tends towards inferior work both on the part of the contractor and the architect, as the latter is affected by low prices in the same way as the former. Cheap work by contractors means additional worry for the architect and reduced commissions. We learn that quite a number of contractors have recently gone to Buffalo and other American cities where building operations are brisk, and this will no doubt tend in some measure to improve the condition of things in this country.

News comes from New Brunswick that the St. George Red Granite Works have ceased operations because of the refusal of the employees to accept a decrease in wages, demanded of them because of the competition of Scotch granite in Western Canada.

Mr. Charles T. Cote, inspector of factories for the City of Quebec, and Mr. Joseph Lessard, inspector of factories for the Montreal district, have been appointed inspectors of religious institutions for their districts, to enforce the new Provincial laws respecting the safety of those buildings.