

and the public in Great Britain and other countries, as being one calculated to induce architects to put forth their best efforts, besides assisting to preserve a record of important buildings. In the present case it is said that the letters were cut by the stone carver while the architect was absent from the city. The letters are about seven inches deep and are spaced fifteen feet apart. Being 72 feet above the ground and imbedded in the ornamental carving, they are by no means conspicuous—indeed, only the closest scrutiny would discover them. As a public advertisement for the architect they would be pronounced a complete failure. This object could have been better served by an inscription placed so as to meet the eye of visitors to the building. Even had the architect gone so far as to have his portrait cut in stone on the buildings, he would have been able to point to local precedents for his action. A prominent feature of the carving of the main facade of the Ontario Legislative Buildings, at Toronto, is a group of life size figures of the architect, Mr. Waite, the late Minister of Public Works, Mr. Fraser, and several of the other cabinet ministers, while on the whole building there are said to have been carved the portraits of a score of prominent politicians. On the Toronto Custom House are also to be seen carved busts of the men who designed and built the structure.

The Ontario Association of Architects.

WE direct the attention of architects to a circular, reprinted in another column, issued by the Registrar to the members of the Ontario Association of Architects, asking for an expression of opinion with regard to the advisability of entering upon certain specified undertakings in pursuance of suggestions and recommendations made at the recent annual convention. It is gratifying to observe that an effort is to be made to increase the usefulness of the Association, and we trust that in this effort the management will have the cordial co-operation and support of the entire membership. With the improved conditions now prevailing, the present is an opportune time for placing the Association on a more successful footing. The proposal to offer encouragement to students is one of vital importance, and we trust that ways and means may be devised of carrying it into execution. It is absolutely essential to the success of the Association that it should have the sympathy and support of the oncoming generation of architects. There are other matters not mentioned in the circular which should engage the attention of the Association. From the report of Mr. Totten, representative of the United States Government at the International Congress at Brussels, it appears that in Germany, Austria, Italy, Great Britain and France, it is the practice of the government to invite architects in private practice to submit designs in competition for important public buildings. This practice was also adopted by the Government of the United States some two or three years ago, and everywhere that it obtains, it appears to give satisfactory results. The International Congress of Architects above referred to, after carefully considering this subject, put on record the following opinion: "It is desirable that the construction of public buildings should be confined to private architects, chosen by public or private competition or otherwise, and that the architects superintend the erection of the works, but under the direction of the government." Why should not the government of Canada step into

line with the governments of other countries in this regard? Would it not be advisable for the Architectural Associations of Ontario and Quebec to memorialize the government at its present session to throw open to competition important public buildings, thereby giving encouragement to the architects of the Dominion, and securing greater variety and excellence in the designing of our public buildings?

Workmen's Compensation Acts.

AN act to amend the law with respect to Compensation of Workmen passed the Ontario Legislature at the recent session. It is the evident intention of the government to deal with the subject in a more comprehensive manner next year, as they have commissioned Prof. Mavor, of Toronto University, to study and report upon the operation of the British Act. Judging by the comments of our British exchanges, the operation of the law in Great Britain is anything but satisfactory. Regarding it The Builder has this to say: "The misfortune of the numerous decisions on the Workmen's Compensation Act is that they do not settle any principle. There arises in these cases the question whether certain facts bring the matter within the Statute. No sooner is one case decided than another, different in its circumstances, turns up, each decision tending to show how unfair is the working of the Act. Last Saturday the question which came before the Court of Appeal was whether painting a house was "repairing" it within the meaning of the Statute, and whether the rung of a ladder was a "scaffold." The Court of Appeal reversed the decision of the County Court Judge, and held that the case did not fall within the Act. We confess that we cannot see why painting is not repairing. Woodwork requires paint for its preservation; a roof requires slates put in. Yet, apparently, if a workman loses his life while painting a building he is not within the act; yet if he were putting a few slates on a roof, he would be entitled to compensation. Again, a carpenter who fastened a bit of wood to a window would be entitled to damages if injured—he was repairing the building. But if he painted it afterwards he would be excluded if injured at that particular time. The truth is, as we have over and over again pointed out, that the Act is most absurdly limited. There is no principle in it; there is an arbitrary limitation introduced simply and solely because the persons excluded had not sufficient electoral powers to make it worth while for the government to include them within the provisions of the Statute." The Builders' Reporter says that if the Act is to remain in force, a special dictionary of the English language will have to be prepared for the use of litigants, as the Court of Appeal has decided that a mortar mill is a factory within the meaning of the Act. In another case the question arose whether a wharf was a factory. These instances will suffice to show the loose construction of the Act, and the difficulties and hardships to which it must give rise. It is to be hoped, therefore, that Professor Mavor will be careful to learn the weak points of the measure, and thus be able to advise the Ontario legislators what to avoid. Laws of this character fall heavily upon workmen advanced in years. The entire responsibility for accidents is thrown upon the employer, who in turn seeks to protect himself as far as possible by engaging only young men who, because of greater activity, are considered to be less liable to injury.