

restricting the use of the titles "Architect" and "Engineer" to persons who shall have given proof of qualification for the work.

DEFECTIVE ELECTRIC WIRING.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

SIR,—As perhaps no part of house fitting has made such rapid headway and none is known less about by the average citizen than electrical wiring, will you kindly permit me to use your columns in giving a few hints in this direction which will be of service to the public.

Let us suppose Mr. Citizen decides to erect a house, electrically equipped for bells and light. He naturally knows little or nothing about the matter, but hands it over to the architect, who in nine cases out of ten knows less, but contents himself with inserting a few stereotyped phrases in the specifications, which he has learned parrot fashion, and as like as not, to save himself a little trouble, includes it in the plumber's tender, (although why, now that the electrical trade is recognized as a distinct business, he does not just as reasonably include it in the plasterer's tender, can only be explained by the parrot theory). The contract is adjudged to the lowest tenderer, whether it be John Jones, who carries his office in his hat, and is here to-day and there to-morrow, or the None-Such Electrical Company of recognized ability and honesty—taxpayers, with an established place of business where they can always be found.

Does Mr. Citizen happen to be skeptical about Mr. Architect's knowledge, he is at once met by the latter triumphantly pointing to the clause that the wiring is "subject to Underwriters' rules" (parrot again). But Mr. Citizen has been posting himself and knows that the Underwriters have never been known to pay any attention to whether their rules were adhered to or not, and that so far as the insurance companies are concerned, this clause might as well read "subject to the rule of thumb." Again Mr. Architect is ready, and inserts another (parrot) clause, that a certificate of inspection will be demanded from the successful tenderer, said certificate to be paid for by the latter (not by insurance company), and the citizen feels that now indeed he has taken every precaution. Vain hope; false security! The initiated know that this certificate reads that "the work has been inspected and found free from grounds and short circuits, at time inspection was made," which is usually before plastering, the most fruitful season for both these evils, and does not cover grounds in wiring of fixtures not then put up. The job is finished, the contractor is paid and the citizen is left—to discover that he has either to do without his light or employ some one to put it in shape, whose account, added to the "lowest bidder's," makes the cost for this patched-up job more than if he had given it to the highest tenderer at first, and he does the inspector a grave injustice by including him in the blame which rightly should be saddled upon himself for sacrificing everything to price, and to the architect, for not advising him otherwise.

This condition of things can only be remedied by adopting the United States plan of putting safety before cost, and by either the city or insurance companies making certain rules compulsory, and seeing them enforced. As it is, an inspection certificate is optional, and is not a complete safeguard if received. A specification may call for rubber-covered wire, and the house be wired throughout under plaster, with cheap weather-proofing

which only a man in the electrical business could distinguish, but which would be likely to cause a fire, and neither citizen nor architect be the wiser, by unscrupulous tenderers goaded on to low prices. I can point to houses in the city of Montreal to-day so wired.

Go into any supply house in our city and ask for dummy rosette, and you will get them; ask their use and you will be told they are merely a blind. Let me try to talk up the superior merit of some article to an architect and he will answer: "A socket is a socket,"—without my daring to remind him (under the penalty of his everlasting wrath) that "an egg is an egg," but there are such things as rotten ones.

I fear I have already encroached too much upon your space for the present, but may take a future opportunity of further expressing my views on the subject.

Yours truly,

"WIREMAN."

Montreal, June 8, 1896.

A GREAT MOSAIC.

THE British Vice-Consul in Venice in his last report says that mosaics still continue in great demand there. The Venice and Murano Company executed last year a splendid mosaic for a palace now in course of construction in Vienna. It measures a thousand square feet, and is copied from cartoons by the painter Edward Weitek. It represents the five parts of the world. Murope stands in the centre of the frieze, represented by the symbolic figures of its various nations, having on one side the emblems of industry and trade, and at the top the emblem of the flying genius of light. On the right are Asia, India, China and Japan, with their rajahs, mandarines and the allegorical chrysanthemum. Next follows Africa, with camel drivers, palm trees and other African symbols; on the left, America and Australia, with natives on horseback and on foot, foliage and other emblems. All this variety of types, from the fair Circassian down to the negro, and the display of costumes from the most decorative to the simplest, have enabled the painter to arrange twenty-four figures with great delicacy of coal and in an artistic manner. Over these figures, which rest on an ornamental base, a blue sky reflects all around its light so as to unite all the tints of the mosaic, and to give the whole a harmony of effect which is said to be most delightful to the eye. The same company is executing another important mosaic for the apse of the Guards' Chapel at the Wellington Barracks, in London, from cartoons painted by Messrs. Clayton & Bell.—London Times.

At the Master Plumbers' session recently held at Cleveland, the Executive Committee was instructed to aid the master plumbers of Canada to organize their Dominion Association.

The roof pitch of forty-five degrees from the horizontal, leaving ninety degrees at the ridge, is not too flat for head-room nor to shed rain and snow. Roofs should as far as possible have one predominating pitch over all the house.

An interesting little brochure relating to the use of Cabot's Sheathing and Deafening Quilt in sound-proof construction, has reached our table. This "quilt" consists of fettled matting of eel-grass, held in place between two layers of strong manilla paper by quilting. Mr. Samuel Cabot, Boston, Mass., is the manufacturer.