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IN the lack of any authoritative answer to those correspondents who have complained to us of the special tax levied by the last Convention of the American Institute of Architects for publication of its proceedings for two years, we shall venture to give our opinion of the case, not assuming to speak for the Institute, but simply to record the impression of a somewhat careful observer. The difficulty of this year is that which naturally befalls an association that hastens to diminish its assessments without giving up its sources of expense. Two years ago the Convention, under the spur of some of the Chapters which protested against the amount of the annual assessments, arbitrarily reduced them by twenty-five per cent, in spite of the representations of the Treasurer and some of the more cautious members that the income was no greater than the necessary or established expenditures required; and a special Committee on Finance was appointed to consider the question of revenue. The diminished assessment was found inadequate, and at the Eleventh Convention, a year ago, the Committee on Finance reported a scheme for adjusting the annual fees as closely as possible to such expenses as were decided on, by providing an estimate of the expenses, and levying a corresponding tax on the Chapters, to be collected as they saw fit, while the direct tax on Associates and half of that upon Fellows was remitted. This scheme, adopted readily by the Convention, but referred to the Chapters for ratification, was rejected by some of them, possibly for want of anybody interested to explain its working and purpose to them, and the system of diminished assessments was continued. The report of the Treasurer at the Twelfth Convention (last month) showed that the only thing which had prevented a deficit had been the omission of the publication. This omission, however, did not please the Convention, and a resolution was passed, rather hastily, levying the special tax of which our correspondents complain for the publication of the lapsed Proceedings and of those of the Twelfth Convention.

THESE things we say in explanation of the difficulty in which the Institute found itself and the way it took to relieve itself. It was an ill-considered way, we think; a better one would doubtless have been to restore the annual assessment to its old rate, which would have provided for the Proceedings of the last Convention and for future ones. The omitted publication might have been made up by private subscription, which would probably not have been difficult, or at worst it might have been allowed to lapse entirely for one year rather than pass a measure so unpopular as that we are discussing is likely to prove. As for the main question of publishing or not, it is pretty clear that the prevailing feeling of the Institute is in favor of the publication. A great many members regard it as their chief means of keeping *en rapport* with the Institute, and their chief tangible evidence of its work. We believe that it would be a mistake to give it up. The record in the *American Architect* is of value for immediate information, and for a wider publicity than the Proceedings give, but is hardly sufficient or convenient as a permanent record, nor can it well be made to contain all that it is desirable to preserve. The history of the Institute is a history, directly or indirectly, of the profession in the United States; its debates and reports record pretty accurately and pretty clearly the course of professional thought and architectural development had since they began, as any one will see

who will take the trouble to examine them. The question is not, as one of our correspondents suggests, whether in the present state of the book-market the members' copies of the Proceedings for two years are worth eight dollars, for they are not upon the market, and that is not their price, nor are they sold at full price to Fellows and half price to Associates, but whether their publication and distribution is, on the whole, worth the two hundred and fifty or three hundred dollars which is annually voted for that purpose, and of which our contributors are called upon to raise their share, and whether the Institute is willing to vote it.

As between the Institute and its Associates, one correspondent asks whether they, by joining the Chapters, have put it in the power of the Institute to tax them, who have no votes in the Convention. We understand that they have, as any constituency puts it in the power of its representatives to vote taxes. The Chapters, Associates and all, are represented in the Convention by such of their Fellows as choose to attend, or by special delegates for whom the Associates vote, and whom they may and do instruct as to their action in convention. So that the grievance of the Associates is not taxation without representation, but taxation without a direct vote, which befalls many people. It is certainly possible, as the same correspondent suggests, for the Convention to vote an assessment of fifty dollars on each Associate, or, as another instances, to make the Associates pay all the assessments; but this is not even an imagined danger. On the contrary, the reduction in fees from which the difficulty of this year springs was made at the pressing instance, if we are not mistaken, of Chapters in which Associates predominate; and we may remind our correspondents that the very tax against which they protest has thus been already more than made up to them beforehand by the remitted fees of two years past. We do not undertake to champion the organization or policy of the Institute; we are simply stating what we believe to be the facts, with our belief in the expediency of continuing a publication of its Proceedings. But for the Associates who object to taxation without a vote, there is an easy way to cure it. It is the policy of the Institute to encourage the transformation of Associates into Fellows, and there are no restrictions, we believe, except the nominal one of two or three years of additional practice as architects. There are a great many Associates whose influence as Fellows would be of value to the Institute, and who apparently have no better reason for remaining as they are than want of interest or the small difference in the annual fees. Dissatisfaction with the policy of an association, or lack of interest in its work, may be helped by lending a hand to reform the one or improve the other; and if the seventy Associates, or the greater part of them, were turned into Fellows, it would so improve the revenues of the Institute that those who wish to abate its assessments would find safer ground to stand upon.

THE report submitted to the United States Senate by Mr. Corcoran on behalf of the Washington Monument Commission, of which he is chairman, will perhaps not gratify the persons who are in distress at the deliberation with which the government engineers do their work; but it looks like business, if only the business of preparation. The engineer's estimate of the cost of securing the foundation according to his plan exceeds the part of the congressional contribution appropriated for that purpose, says Mr. Corcoran; nevertheless, "the Commission has limited the cost of that part of the work to the amount named in the joint resolution of Congress." How this discrepancy between the engineer's plans and the intention of the Commission is to be got over does not yet appear, but the engineer's preparations are going on; we may therefore infer that things are expected to come right in the end. A good amount of material has been collected; pugging-mills for the concrete have been set up, and steam-engines to run them; sheds have been built for the workmen; oak and pine timber provided for framing and shoring in the trenches and tunnels of the new foundation; and, what is of great importance, considering the old controversies on the stability of the monument, bench-marks have been set for permanent levels, by which it is proposed to take daily observations that will detect any settlement that may occur as the work goes on. Contracts have been made for various materials, — lumber, stone (blue gneiss), and broken

stone, cement, sand, and gravel for the concrete. A large array of derricks and tackle has been provided, the old roof and derrick taken down from the top, and a staging built to carry the new derrick and workmen, so that work may be commenced at both ends of the monument. As yet no great inroad has been made on the appropriation, the amount spent being, to the end of November, only \$1,150, and in preparing for the continuation of the superstructure \$7,800; but we doubt if in the long run even the government engineers will find any difficulty in spending the money furnished for the monument as fast as they get it.

MOST of our readers have some familiarity with the name of Sir Edmund Beckett, the thorn in the side of our profession in England, of whose Book on Building and its wholesale attacks on architects we gave some account not very long ago (*American Architect*, March 30, 1878). It is not a great while since the Royal Institute of British Architects undertook to weave their thorn into a crown by electing Sir Edmund, with several other men of note, to their new grade of Honorary Associate. This, which might have seemed to outsiders an indication of a change of heart on his part, is declared by our *confrère*, the *Architect*, to have been universally recognized as a simple act of propitiation. It would appear that, as propitiatory acts are apt to be, this was fruitless, and the thorn continued still to turn inward. At about the time of Sir Edmund's election the *Athenæum* reported that Mr. Street, who has been for some years busy with a careful restoration of York Cathedral, had been superseded in this work by Sir Edmund, who is the bitter adversary of restorers. A rumor so preposterous as this naturally proved untrue; but Mr. Street soon informed the *Athenæum* that nevertheless his services as consulting architect of the Diocesan Church Building Society, whose office it was to revise the designs of churches built in the diocese, had been dispensed with, and that, as he understood, Sir Edmund was reigning in his stead. When the Archbishop replied in a published letter that the office was simply discontinued, and that no one occupied it, Mr. Street rejoined that he had just examined the designs for a church in Yorkshire, whose specification was scored with remarks, "meant to be practical, all of them characteristic, and some of them satirical, as to the authorship of which there could be no mistake, since one of them directed the architect to 'see my Book on Building, page —.'" —

DOUBTLESS the question of church restoration is at the bottom of this disagreement. Mr. Street has been reproached for his restorations of the cathedral, which nevertheless, touching mainly the thirteenth-century work of the south transept, that had suffered severely at the hands of earlier and less skilful restorers, have been made, we believe, with great skill and conscientiousness. It is not so strange that persons who have a tender regard for old buildings, and who dread the enterprise of architects, should be willing to put their maintenance under control of men whose only care will be to stay what exists, and who will rigorously refrain from addition or substitution. But as a question of actual restoration, it is fair to ask, How does the restoring of to-day compare with that of a century ago, under Wyatt, for instance; or a generation ago under Smirke, perhaps, or Gwilt? and who are responsible for the improvement if not the architects? If the English clergy, whose church-building has been the nursery of modern English architecture for this generation, should break with architects and betake themselves to dabbles, it is hard to tell what would become of their architecture, to say the least. It is very queer to find a paper of the standing of the *Athenæum* saying that "the appointment of Sir Edmund Beckett is not the only, nor by any means the least justifiable instance of a tendency we observe on the part of custodians of ancient buildings to entrust these remains to others than professional architects." But when we find the Archbishop of York appointing a clever barrister to supervise church designs because he has shown himself an active tormentor of architects, we are not surprised to learn from Mr. Street that "a very formal protest against Sir Edmund Beckett's interference as consulting architect has been sent to the Archbishop by four of the most eminent architects of the day, who have had practical experience of Sir Edmund Beckett's action." It looks like a curious instance of the prevalence, in places where we should look for a better knowledge of human nature, of the popular impression that the one qualification of a reformer is the ability to find fault.

DURING the past week or so we have had our due share of building accidents, two of which are characteristic. In New York, a pair of unfinished houses, built by a speculating builder, went to pieces in a storm. They were brick houses "with Ohio-stone trimmings," separated by a party wall which is said to have been only ten inches thick. This wall had to support its half of three floors and a roof, of twenty-five feet bearing, in each house. During the storm of a few days ago it crumbled into the cellar, carrying the floors with it, not being blown down, since it was stayed by the floors, but sinking in a heap at the bottom. The only explanation that we see offered of the phenomenon is that the wall was drenched, and the cellar full of water. This is an explanation which has been not uncommonly given in like cases, from which we may begin to infer that we must expect to see a new building washed away unless it is covered in before it rains. Another case is that of a building in Pittsburgh, where a thousand bushels of malt, weighing some thirty-four thousand pounds, were put into a large room in the upper story with a safe weighing a thousand pounds, and broke the floor through in the night. We are not told over what area of floor the load was distributed, a point which seems in the newspaper view immaterial, while the lessee and proprietor are disputing who is to pay for the damage, — the lessee because the floor was too weak, or the proprietor because it was too heavily loaded. Both this and the other case teach the same lesson, which is the absolute ignorance that prevails among people who own and occupy houses, and even those who build them, of what can be expected from building materials. Building laws specify the proper thickness of walls, but so long as tenants and owners take it for granted that any building may be expected to hold whatever it is convenient to lay on it, the only safe way will be to insist on a maximum of strength everywhere.

DR. SCHLIEMANN has written to the London *Times* an account of his renewed explorations on the site of Troy, which he began with the month of October. The Turkish government oblige him, while doing all the work at his own expense, at a cost of \$2,500 per month, to give to the Imperial Museum at Constantinople two thirds of all his findings. A Turkish officer with a guard of soldiers is set to watch him and see that this condition is fulfilled. He expects in this season's work to uncover the whole western and northern sides of the circuit wall of the four superposed cities, the second of which he considers to have been the historic Troy; and to finish the unearthing of the great ruins in the northwest corner, which he has described as the Cyclopean foundations of Priam's palace, in and near which his rich collection was found. The nine or ten feet of ashes, red, black, and yellow, with which these foundations are covered give proof to the doctor of a very high and stately wooden building. He has already in continuing his excavations found a considerable number of gold ornaments, pins, earrings, necklaces, and beads, some of them like ornaments found at Mycenæ. One of his most curious discoveries is a wooden distaff eleven feet long, with the thread still upon it, though charred to a coal; and three successive broad gates have been found before the so-called palace, which he expects to demonstrate beyond a cavil to be Priam's. It would be rather curious to know on what principle the authorities will arrange their division of spoil with him. Gold and silver are easily appraised, and duplicates distributed; but in the offsetting of one thing against another the Turkish officials will be very likely, one would think, having no standard of their own, to gauge their estimate of each thing by Dr. Schliemann's desire to possess it. But Dr. Schliemann is the most disinterested of discoverers, and would prefer, we may be sure, that all the tangible fruits of his explorations should pass out of his hands, rather than that his work should be interrupted.

ARCHITECTS' COMPETITIONS.

I. TRIAL BY PLANS.

WE noticed in our summary of last week Mr. Barry's protest against architectural competitions, and the advice he had given in a case where he was asked what kind of competition he would recommend. An open competition, he said, was the worst course possible, a limited competition was only less bad, and his advice was therefore not to choose from plans, but to select a man. He nominated half a dozen, and following his advice the committee selected Mr. Waterhouse. We quoted also the *Architect's* comment on this, — that it was to get rid of

the ascendancy of names that competitions were devised; and that of the *Building News*,—that they are the only means of bringing forward the young men of the profession. The question at issue between Mr. Barry and these journals is the existence of competitions at all, into which we shall not enter here. Competitions have many disadvantages and some advantages; but at present they are the accepted means of choosing a design or an architect for important buildings. Mr. Barry's remarks, intended as an absolute protest against this means, suggest a distinction, which is really important, between two different views of their uses, and two correspondingly different ways of administering them, so long as they are accepted.

It may be the purpose of a competition to select a plan, or to select an architect; and though these two things may seem at first glance to amount practically to but one, they really imply very different attitudes in the client, and lead logically to considerable differences in management. The ordinary building-committee considers that its office is to select a "plan," meaning a design, and this is the theory of common competitions. In this theory the design is everything, and the architect is considered to be impersonal, or a fixed quantity,—a constant term in a formula, to be allowed for once for all, and without effect in the comparison of values. Therefore, since one architect is like another, the only difference between them being in their plans, or in their power to influence a committee by favoritism, which is illegitimate, the necessary condition is to eliminate the architect absolutely from the trial. Hence the competition must be anonymous, and the names of all but the successful competitor may remain unknown. The architects may be trained or untrained, faithful or negligent, discreet or reckless, but since the trial is a trial of plans these things must be put out of court, except so far as they are indicated in the drawings, in order to reduce everything to a competition of designs, pure and simple. When it is limited to a selected few it is possible to include in the selection only architects in whose skill, experience, and faithfulness there is reason to have full confidence, and they may be taken from the top of the profession,—if they can be induced to compete,—but in an open competition no such limitations are possible. This is the ideal in which the lovers of competitions delight, and it is the only logical form of trial by plans. It gives an opportunity for young and unproved ability to come to the front, and is intended to exclude favoritism; these are advantages, but they have their offsets.

This sort of thing leads necessarily to certain conditions requisite for due protection of client or architect, which do not always consist very well one with another. A client or a committee, pledged to adopt a design without knowledge of its author, may with some fairness insist on being so thoroughly informed by the drawings and descriptions of it as to know just how it is to be carried out and constructed, and just what its cost is to be. Hence the natural, but to competitors vexatious, tendency of building-committees to insist on full drawings, specifications, and estimates,—enough, in fact, to enable them to make contracts. These they are not apt to get absolutely, and their failure to get them often makes misunderstanding and mischief; but their requirements do lead architects to spend an enormous amount of work on competitions, nineteen twentieths of which, in the gross, is of necessity thrown away. The expenditure of so much work on the part of competitors makes the trial a very costly one to somebody. The committee might reasonably be expected to bear the cost, since the benefit is theirs; but usually a committee takes advantage of its position to shirk it, and can induce a number of architects to compete at their own expense. Except for a trifling premium or two, the first of which, by a fine figure of speech, is often declared to "merge in the commission,"—that is, not to exist at all,—no pecuniary benefit inures to the architects who take part, since the successful one gets no higher fee than if he had been directly chosen, like any other professional adviser, and the rest get nothing. It is a very cheap device for the client, but is none the less prodigal because the cost falls only on the architects.

It is natural that architects, considering the benefit to the client and the cost to them of such competitions, should incline to insist on some conditions, and accordingly they regard it as a breach of faith if some one of the designs submitted is not adopted, and if the author of it is not employed to carry it out, or even feel injured if in the end the author of the selected design is allowed or obliged to make any important change in its carrying out. Still more inconvenient in practice are the conditions, which nevertheless are strenuously insisted on by archi-

tecs, and indeed in fairness must be, that the limits of cost and of time allowed for the preparation of designs must not be exceeded. These things are more or less logical deductions from the principle of trials by plan, or from the way in which they are conducted, particularly from their eleemosynary character; but they hem in building-committees with restrictions which are apt to be found irksome, and which therefore, when it comes to the pinch, are very apt to be disregarded, to the indignation of competitors and the stirring-up of endless recrimination and strife. Yet here there is something to be said for the client, and it would not be altogether strange, from his point of view, if, having set up a trial for designs, and nothing but designs, he should object to being in the end saddled with an architect whom he may have reason to distrust, or to giving up the design he really preferred, because it cost more than he at first intended. Perhaps after all the really consistent form of open competition would be one which eliminated the architect altogether, but this would be far from palatable to the profession. In fact, the whole system is so hedged about with inconveniences, awkward restraints, and temptations to unfair dealing that it is an unending source of complaint, and whatever its advantages, the objections to it, stated in detail, would make a very long catalogue.

But even the effective results are by no means so good as it is common to assume. To say nothing of the showy, *ad captandum*, and often misleading manner in which architects are tempted to finish their drawings, economy and success in competitions require great promptness in decision and rapidity in execution; the more because, as we have seen, the logical condition of trial by plan is that designs shall be fully worked out, and fortified by complete descriptions and estimates. This means that they must be maturely executed without being maturely considered, and the architect having done this with much labor, but with insufficient thought, is mentally, as well as outwardly, committed to a design which, with more deliberation, he would have changed, but which, having taken possession of his mind, is therefore an obstacle to progress, even if the fact of having carried his work to completeness were not in itself a strong inducement, and a kind of bond with his committee, to take it as it stood. Thus the result is usually a collection of designs produced at great cost to a company of architects, wrought out with much completeness but yet immature, presented by architects who are assumed to be capable and trustworthy, but of whose qualification the committee have presumably no knowledge; and a code of restrictions which, having in the beginning been a serious inconvenience to the competitors, is likely in the end to be a serious annoyance to the judges,—a very fair opportunity for blundering and disappointment on the one part, for dissatisfaction and recrimination on the other.

Perhaps, however, the greatest practical difficulty of trials by plan is still another, and that the one which those who administer them are least inclined to suspect,—the difficulty of deciding them. An ordinary building-committee is probably inexperienced in its duties, not qualified by knowledge or experience to judge of an executed work, still less to prejudge a building by the drawings from which it is to be executed. Here, if anywhere, the knowledge of a professional adviser is necessary; and if it were a *sine qua non* with a committee to do with as little professional assistance as possible, we should be tempted to say: "If you must stint yourselves in professional service, get a trustworthy and skilful architect to select for you among your competing plans, and then put the successful design into the hands of a competent superintendent,—if you are allowed,—rather than trust yourselves to select a design and an architect by an open competition." If it were a company of architects in search of a design, a trial by plan would be a natural resort, for they would know the meaning of the designs, and could, in some degree, trust themselves to draw from them the most necessary inferences as to the architects who made them. The more purely monumental the work, to be sure,—that is, the less dependent on practical considerations,—the less important are such personal qualifications as are not indicated in a design; but then the more purely technical are the qualities demanded, and therefore an ordinary jury is the less competent to decide them without professional assistance. But these considerations seem not often to occur to building-committees. They seldom distrust their own capability to judge what is set before them, or imagine that there is anything more in an architect's design than they can see. The natural consequence is that they underrate the professional skill which they do not

measure or even see, and the profusion with which professional labor is offered them makes them undervalue that. The habit of considering the architect's plans as the whole test of his importance tends to make them regard his function as simply ministerial, to the loss of his dignity and the injury of his work.

Whatever then may be the benefit to the profession of the system of trial by plans, which is the essence of open competitions as they are commonly understood, it is clear that their faults are very serious. They are extravagantly costly and their cost is borne by the profession; to be fair, they must be hedged about by complicated and embarrassing restrictions; they are breeders of distrust and recrimination, if not of fraud; they encourage hasty and immature, and therefore inferior work; they are uncertain and disappointing in their results; and they tend, in some ways at least, to lower the standing and repute of those who take part in them. At another time we shall consider how some of their evils may be modified,—not, as Mr. Barry suggests, by avoiding competitions altogether, but by using them for the selection of architects.

A RETROSPECTIVE GLANCE AT SOME OF THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE FRENCH EXPOSITION.

I.

YOUR readers have had opportunities of becoming acquainted with the general plan of the Paris Exposition buildings, as well as of making themselves familiar, from the descriptions and illustrations given in your columns, with their cost, size, and other like details. I will therefore confine myself to the impression left on my mind by the architecture of the main buildings, after repeated visits to them. It is as well from what different witnesses tell us of the effect on them of a work of art, as from detailed statements about it, that those of us who have not seen it usually form an idea of the nature of its merits. And I shall also endeavor to describe what I have to speak of so far as to enable those who have not given attention to plans and illustrations of the Exposition still to form some idea of the adaptability of the buildings to their site and for architectural effect.

In the first place as to the site itself. Nothing in some respects can be finer. Every one, whether he has seen Paris or not, knows, in a general way, that the Seine flows through the heart of the city, dividing it into two unequal portions, which are connected here and there by bridges. Most persons know also that on one side of the river is the Latin quarter or students' quarter, with its schools of art and science; the Faubourg St. Germain; the dome and hospital of the Invalides; the palace and gardens of the Luxembourg; and that on the other side of the river stretches the major part of Paris, where are the Louvre, the Hôtel de Ville, the Tuileries, the Boulevards, the Champs Elysées, the opera houses great and small, the principal theatres, hotels, cafés, restaurants, and shops. In the middle of the river, on a small island, which itself forms a little city in the midst of this vast city, stands the Cathedral of Notre Dame, one of the most splendid of the monuments which have been spared to us. If one mounts to one of the airy galleries which adorn the west front of the cathedral, and, with his back to the building, looks towards the setting sun, he will look down a broad and magnificent water avenue, lined on each side with palaces and beautiful gardens, perhaps every one famous for its historical interest or as a work of art, and the whole presenting, especially in the months of May and June, when the foliage is at its best, one of the most splendid spectacles that the eye can rest on.

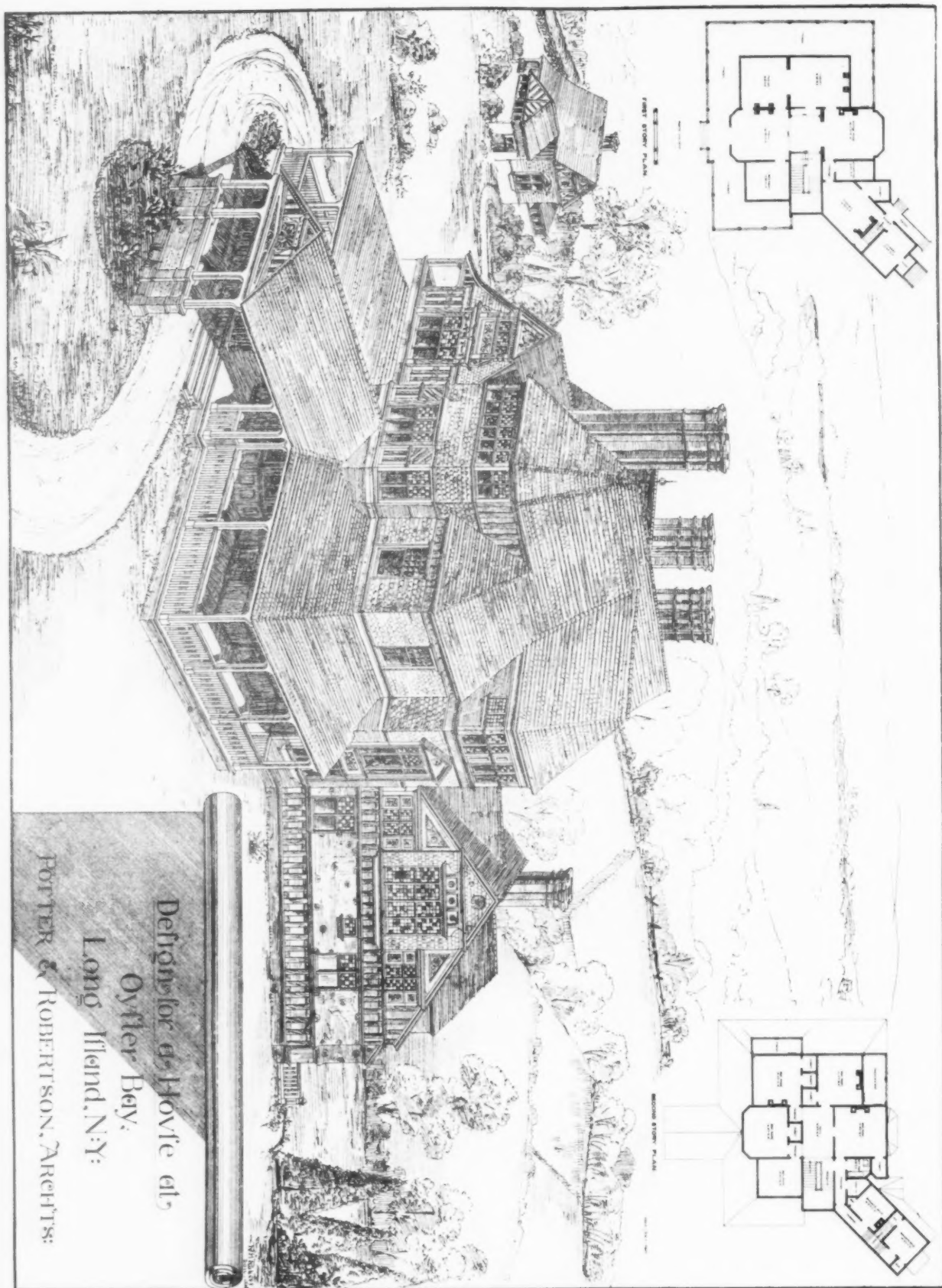
It was in the month of May that the Paris Exposition was opened, and it is at the end of this magnificent vista, and closing it in, where the river takes a bend to the left and is lost to view, that the permanent building of the Exposition, the latest great building to attest the enthusiasm and skill of the present age, stands, on the heights of the Trocadéro. At its feet, on the other side of the river, in the angle formed by the bend of the stream, on a flat, open space used as a parade-ground and known as the Champ de Mars, stand the series of non-permanent buildings, built to house the major part of the Exposition. The ground between the permanent building on the heights and the river is laid out in a beautiful garden, embellished with fountains, descending in terraces, and admirably managed so as to give an effect of space and freedom, while not too large for its purpose. The temporary buildings on the other side open on a flowery terrace which forms here the river-bank. This terrace on one side of the river and the garden on the other are connected by a broad, avenue-like bridge, and the two form thus one composition, not too wide, not too much filled with shrubbery, but just wide enough, open, smiling, lying spread out in a sort of semicircle before you as you come out on the terrace, of which the terrace on which you stand makes the base or straight side. While the whole is very brilliant and striking, it is also very inviting, and gives a most refreshing change after the heat and bustle of the necessarily long walk through any of the many avenues of the non-permanent buildings. That the site of the permanent building gives a splendid opportunity to the architects will be seen even by those who have had no better opportunity of forming a notion of it than that just given.

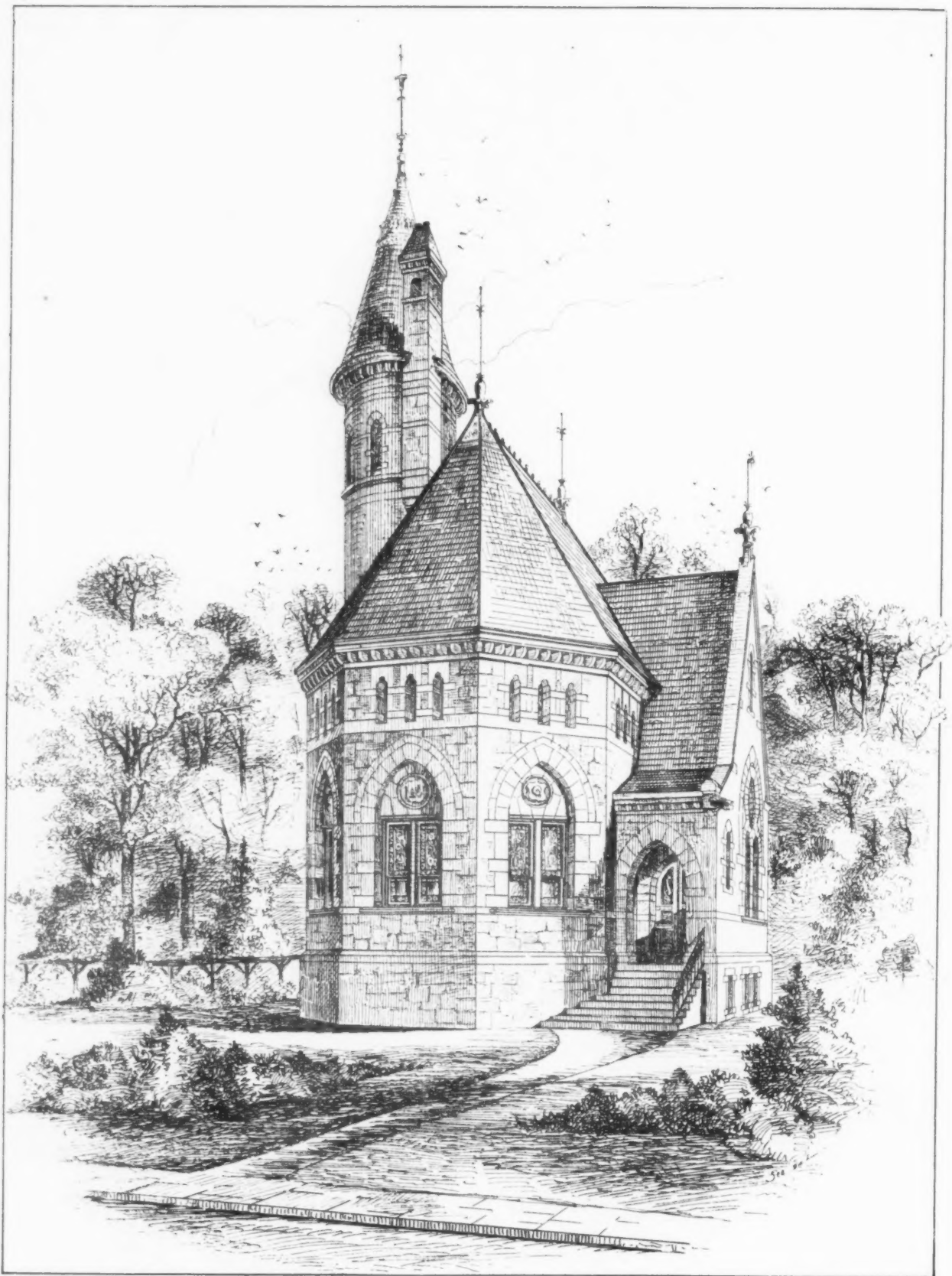
The Trocadéro or high ground on which the building stands is almost or quite the highest ground within the lines of Paris. It in fact overlooks the greater part of the city. It is situated where it is on one of the outer rings of the city, but yet not outside of it. It is close to the most fashionable and in many respects the finest of the new quarters of the city. The view from it is superb. A building erected on this magnificent site has only to be beautiful to atone for all lack of architectural display or effect in the temporary and necessarily major part of the buildings required to house a great exhibition. And it is fortunate that this superb site is so close to the river, and to all these buildings on the other side of it, that it is no fatigue to pass from one to the other. The one and the other can form thus, not two things, not a sprawling pair of things too wide apart, but a well-combined and concentrated whole.

It seems to me that as far as plan goes every advantage has been taken of this splendid site, and the splendid opportunity which the Exposition gives to make use of it. The temporary buildings are convenient, commodious, well lighted, and well arranged in their general relation to each other. There was no occasion to try and make an architectural effect and *ensemble* with them, as has been the case with other exhibition buildings, and was so successfully accomplished in the Vienna building. For architectural effect, for which one involuntarily looks wherever there is a great enterprise involving building, one naturally, in this case, turns to the permanent building on the Trocadéro, which crowns, dominates, and finishes the whole. In the non-permanent buildings, therefore, the architects seem rightly to have studied use and convenience more than beauty or architectural effect. They are laid out upon a sort of grid-iron plan. The buildings are big iron-and-glass sheds or galleries, seeming lofty enough when seen from the inside, but not remarkable in any way as exteriors. These sheds or galleries answer to the bars of the gridiron, while the spaces between them form narrow, long courts, used for light, and planted with grass and flowers. Some of these courts are so wide as to have buildings in them. One of these is called the Building of the City of Paris. Another is devoted to the fine arts exhibition, and so on. They are frame buildings. But the frame is of iron, not covered but shown, and the interspaces, when not glazed, are filled in with brick laid in patterns, or sometimes overlaid with tiles, often highly glazed, and so painted that one picture covers a large surface made up of many tiles; besides tiles there is a variety of ornamentation with porcelain and terra-cotta work, and much color and gilding is used, principally on the iron-work. These are interesting buildings because of the comparative newness of the methods of building, and to some extent of decorating, which they show. A small iron frame building of this kind, but with little or no decoration, was sent out to the Philadelphia Exhibition, set up in its grounds, and used for the exhibition of French stained-glass and ecclesiastical decorations. Here at the Paris Exposition we have the same method of construction employed on a much larger and more important scale. Tension, which hitherto architectural usage has charily employed, or, when driven to use, has hesitated to handsomely acknowledge its obligations to, is largely employed in these buildings; but, unlike the concealed chain around Brunelleschi's dome, it is here a confessed principle of construction; unlike the tie rods in the arcades of the Venetian ducal palace, it is here a decorated and boasted principle of construction. It is curious how a principle sleeps, though always existing, until the moment comes when its general recognition becomes useful to mankind. The invention of railroads makes easy the moving of iron; this stimulates its production; it is the readiest material for ties; since the archaeologist says architects may not use them, the profession of engineers arises unhampered to do so; now comes architecture creeping along to take part in the benefit. But that things can be tied up, as well as stood up or propped up, and so kept where you want them, in other than Greek or Gothic fashion, has always been known. Man now comes to employ in architecture a method which he has always employed in daily life. And as the arch, unknown or neglected by the Greeks, used but not adorned or handsomely acknowledged by the Romans, comes later to be both, until at last in the Gothic it takes our breath away in wonder at its achievements, so the tie, unknown or despised, now coming to be taken in hand, promises a future probably more wonderful.

But, though these Paris buildings are interesting from their construction, and also from the great reliance put upon tiles, porcelains, and color in their decoration, all things of which much has been written and hoped of late years, yet they cannot, I think, be fairly called handsome, or even pleasing. That they were meant to be pleasing, and more than merely pleasing, we infer from the expense evidently put upon them. There is an effort, or at any rate a great expenditure of means, to make them admired; but the result is painfully incommensurate. The fashion is new, the material rich, yet the cut of the coat is not happy. But the first examples of new methods are apt to be ugly; perhaps because the attention of the artist is directed rather to the method than to the importance of using it with grace. Indeed, until an artist is familiar with the use of a new means, he can scarcely employ it with freedom, and so scarcely with grace. And then, even, he must have the gift of grace,—a rare gift.

It is opposite these buildings, and in one of the large courts, that the principal nations which have taken part in the Exposition have erected a series of façades, which serve as entrances to the portions





THE HELIOTYPE PRINTING CO. 230 NASSAU ST. BOSTON.

EPSILON CHAPTER HOUSE OF THE ΔΨ FRATERNITY
TRINITY COLLEGE

J. CLEVELAND CADY ARCHITECT N.Y.

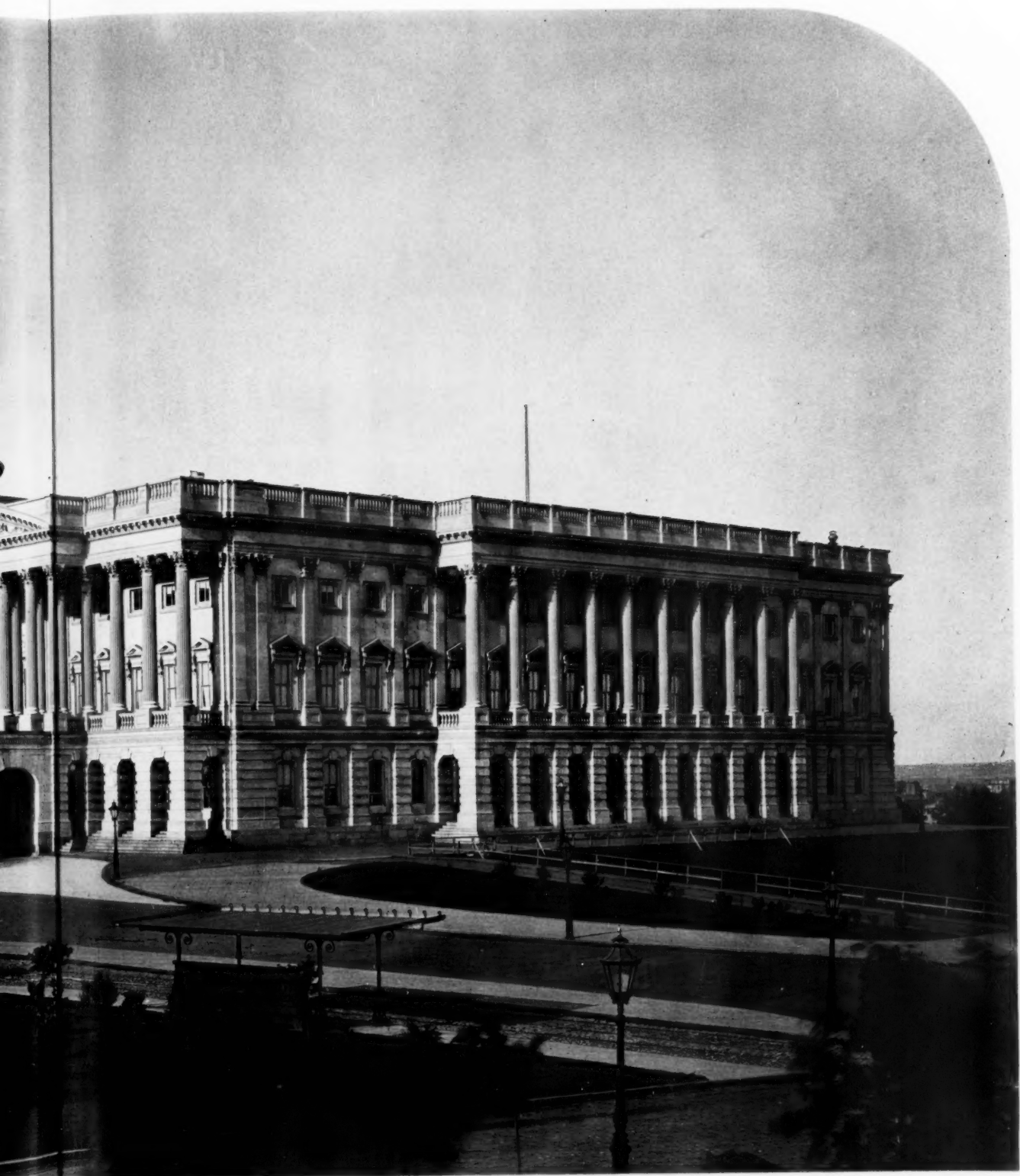


ARCHITECTS.

STEPHEN L. HALLT (France), 1792-94.
GEORGE HADFIELD (England), 1794-98.
JAMES HOBAN (Ireland), 1798-1803.

THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

EAST FRONT



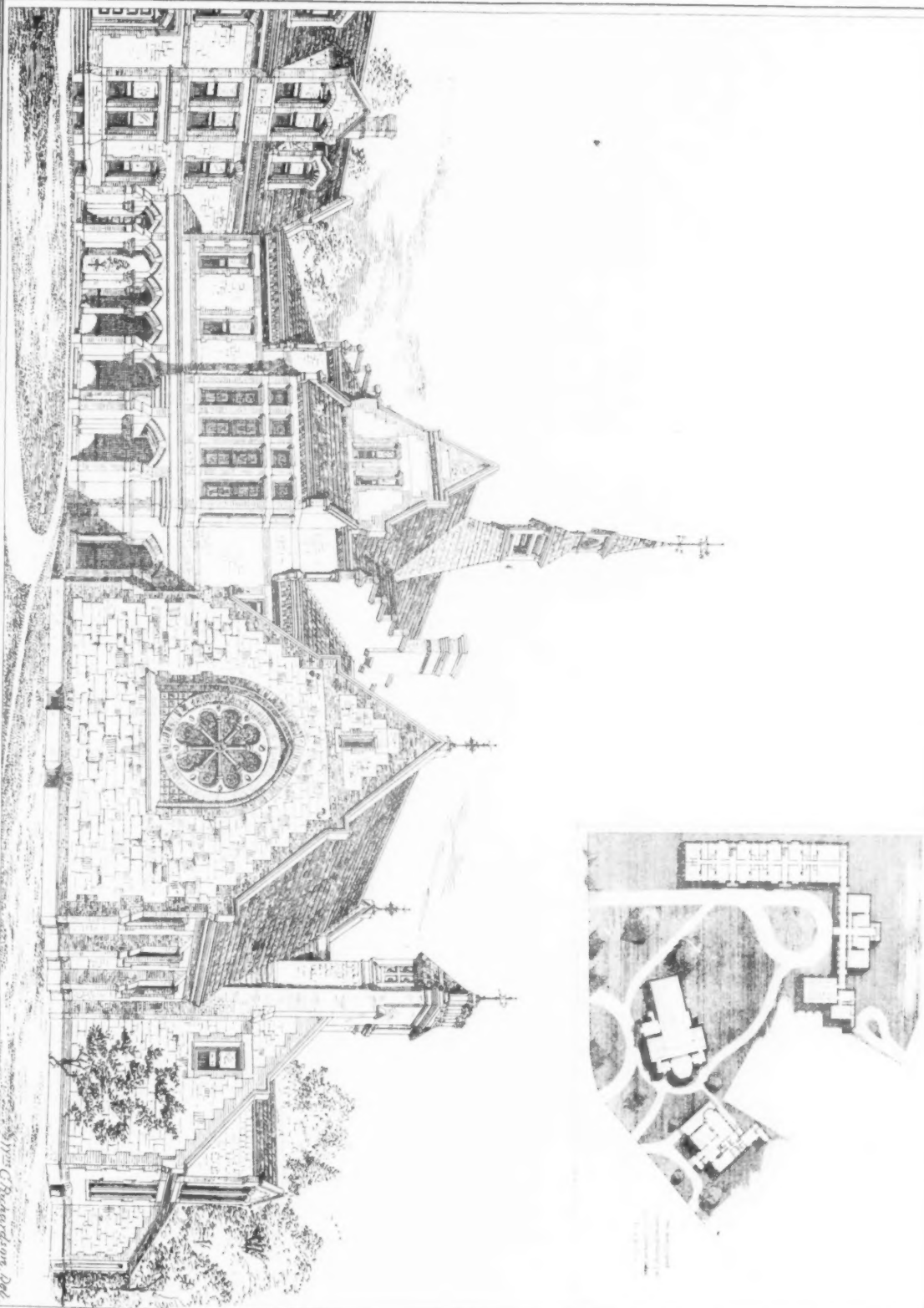
UNITED STATES CAPITOL, WASHINGTON, D. C.
EAST FRONT.

ARCHITECTS.

BENJAMIN H. LATROBE (*England*), 1803-17.
CHARLES BULFINCH (*Boston, Mass.*), 1817-30.
THOMAS U. WALTER (*Philadelphia, Pa.*), 1850.



* A STREET IN SEVILLE * SPAIN * THE GIRALDA * L.S. IPSEN, DEL.



N. END OF LAWRENCE HALL

REED HALL

REFECTORY

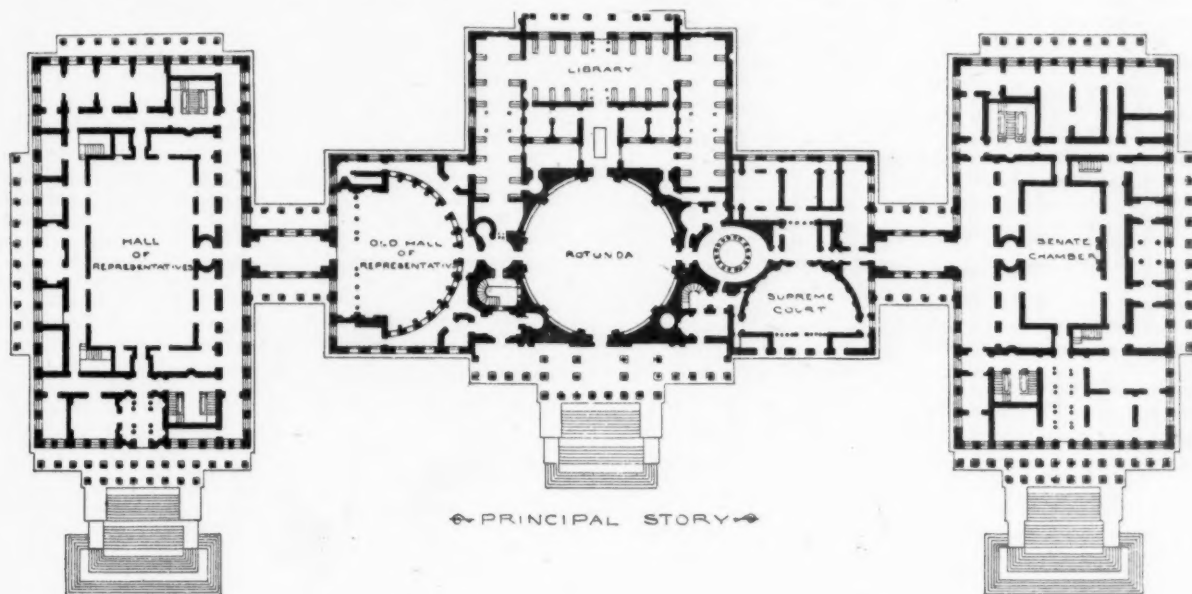
KITCHEN

EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL — CAMBRIDGE MASS — N. END OF QUADRANGLE — WARE & VANBRUNT ARCHITECTS —

THE BUILDING FURNISHED BY THE BOARD OF THE SCHOOL

of the Exposition devoted to the products of each of them. Of these the Belgian is remarkable, as seeming much the most costly. It is built of brick and stone, with columns of polished marble. It is several stories in height, and of considerable length. It is also remarkably handsome. Near it is a very pretty, quaint English house-front in the prevailing Queen Anne manner. I happened to see a perspective drawing of this house-front at the Academy Exhibition in London. The drawing was prettier than the house. The house had more quaintness and character than the drawing. The drawing seemed made by one who was rather an artist than an architect; the house seemed made by one who was rather an architect than an artist. The architect was learned in the detail, and deeply imbued with the fashion of the day. The artist was imbued with that sense of grace and happy proportion of parts which belongs to no fashion, which no fashion carries with it, however fashionable, and which need be absent from no fashion, however unfashionable. These and the other fronts in this street of façades are supposed by the Parisians to be representative of the architecture of the several countries to which they belong. But they are really representative

rather of the temper than of the architecture of those countries. Spain has erected something with the details of the Alhambra and other now scarce Moorish buildings in Spain; and so recalls a past glory, without a future. The material prosperity of Belgium and what it owes to a liberal and good government, as well as the picturesque of its past and the promise of its future art, are all seen in the Belgian façade. English wealth, individual enterprise, and the lead in matters of taste which England is now taking are all seen in the series of English façades. Again, the American façade, which is tawdry and without character, looks like nothing which I ever saw in America or elsewhere. But the very fact of its not being more a credit to Americans, and not being at all representative of American buildings, is thoroughly illustrative, in the money spent, of the kindly feeling of the American people and government toward the Exposition, and in the carelessness as to the way the money is spent, of the lack of material interest in the Exposition intuitively felt by both the mass of the people and their government; illustrative, in fact, of the adage that what is everybody's business is nobody's business.



THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL, WASHINGTON.

(Gelatin Print.)

THE United States Capitol at Washington, of which we publish to-day a double page heliotype illustration, has a varied and not uninteresting history. In July, 1792, the task of building the Capitol was awarded to Stephen L. Hallett, by birth a Frenchman, whose design was successful in the competition instituted by Thomas Jefferson. On September 18, 1793, the corner-stone was laid by George Washington. Hallett was the object of much jealousy, and was, during his short term of office, which lasted only until July 1, 1794, engaged in a struggle with a would-be usurper of his position, one Dr. William Thornton, an amateur. It was not until 1871 that Hallett's claim to be considered the first architect of the Capitol was finally allowed and his designs restored to their proper place in the archives. The next architect in charge was George Hadfield, an Englishman, who carried on the work until he was driven from office, in 1798, by the same treatment that had banished his predecessor. James Hoban, an Irishman, next succeeded to the office, and under his administration the north wing was finished in 1800. In 1803, Hoban was succeeded by Benjamin H. Latrobe, an Englishman, who continued in office until 1817. During this period the south wing was finished, and both wings, which, on August 24, 1814, had been partially destroyed by fire set by the British troops then holding the city, were rebuilt. In 1818 the central portion of the building was begun under the direction of Charles Bulfinch, who finished the original building in 1827 at a total cost of \$2,433,844.13. The necessity of providing further accommodations for the ever-increasing body of government officials had become so apparent in 1850, that a competition was held which resulted in the award of the premium of \$500 to Charles F. Anderson, an Irishman. His design was not, however, carried into execution, as the government had reserved the right to build in accordance with the accepted design, or adopt a new plan which should combine the good points of the several designs submitted. This last course was followed: Mr. Thomas U. Walter, of Philadelphia, now president of the American Institute of Architects, was appointed architect of the Capitol extensions, and remained in office until they were virtually completed. Since that time the building has been under the charge of Mr. Edward Clark,

who is the present incumbent of the office. Work on the extensions was begun by laying the corner-stone July 4, 1851, and was finished in 1867. The original building, the present main building, was built of a porous sandstone, obtained from Aquia Creek, Va., which is painted white so that it may harmonize, as far as possible, with the new portions, that are faced with white marble obtained from Lee, Mass. The wooden dome of the original building was taken down in 1856 to give place to the present iron dome, which is said to contain 8,909,200 pounds of iron. This dome, unquestionably one of the great achievements of architecture in this country, was finished in 1865. It is surmounted by a bronze statue of Freedom which was modelled by Crawford. The figure is nineteen and one half feet high, and weighs 14,985 pounds. The apex of the dome is 288 feet above the base line of the east front, and is therefore a less lofty dome than St. Paul's at London. Its height above the balustrade of the main building is 217 feet; its greatest diameter is 135 feet 5 inches; it surmounts the circular entrance-hall known as the Rotunda, which is 95 feet 6 inches in diameter. The interior of the dome is at present being decorated in true fresco by the veteran artist, Brumidi. The greatest length of the building, which is said to have cost more than thirteen millions of dollars, is 751 feet, and the greatest width is 324 feet, including steps and porticoes. The wings of the building, which are commonly known as the "extensions," are placed at the north and south ends of the building and contain respectively the Hall of Representatives and the Senate Chamber, which are of nearly similar size, and in spaciousness offer a marked contrast to the somewhat gloomy and cramped chambers in which sit the houses of the English Parliament. The semicircular hall shown on the left of the main building is the old Hall of Representatives, now the National Statuary Hall, or Hall of Heroes, in which each State of the Union is to be represented by statues of two of its most noted citizens. Here Rhode Island will be represented by General Greene and Roger Williams; New York by George Clinton and Robert R. Livingston; New Jersey by General Kearny and Richard Stockton; Massachusetts by Governor Winslow and Samuel Adams; Connecticut by Jonathan Trumbull and Roger Sherman; Maryland by Charles Carroll and Roger B. Taney; and Pennsylvania by Robert Fulton and General Muhlenberg. The Library, on the west of the main building, was burned by the British in 1814, and was again partially destroyed by an accidental fire in 1851, when 35,000 volumes were burned.

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL BUILDINGS AT
CAMBRIDGE, MASS. MESSRS. WARE AND VANBRUNT, ARCHITECTS, BOSTON.

The marginal plan shows the condition of the grounds of the school when the additional buildings now in contemplation shall have been completed. Of the buildings already erected, St. John's Chapel was built by R. M. Mason, Esq., as a family memorial, and presented to the school in 1870; the Dormitory, by Hon. Amos A. Lawrence, also as a memorial, in 1873; and the Central Hall, containing the library and recitation rooms, by the late Benjamin T. Reed, Esq., the founder of the school, in 1875. The drawing exhibits the north end of the quadrangle completed, on its west side, by the northward extension of Lawrence Hall, according to the original plan, and on its east side by the erection of a refectory with kitchen, waiting-room, and other offices; the Dean's house east of the chapel will be built in 1879. These buildings are of Roxbury "pudding stone," with dressings of red brick and Pictou sandstone. The Dormitory completed will contain chambers for about forty students. The central corridor of the Dormitory, communicating with an open cloister carried along the front of Reed Hall, will enable the students to obtain access to the library, recitation rooms, and refectory, under cover. The three main buildings of the quadrangle are thus connected by an extension of the cloister in each corner; but they are otherwise separated. The library and refectory are open-timbered halls.

THE GIRALDA TOWER, SEVILLE, SPAIN.

Seville, the city in which is the Giralda, one of the most interesting towers in the world, was, during five centuries, held by the Moors, and during that time it was almost wholly rebuilt, the material used being in great part the ruins of the Roman town Hispalis. The city, which is nearly circular, was fortified by walls five miles in circuit, pierced by fifteen gateways, and surmounted by one hundred and sixty-six towers, of which about a hundred have perished. The tower which is the subject of this illustration was begun in the eleventh century, and finished about 1195, in accordance with the intentions of its designer, who is commonly supposed to have been Al Geber. It is thus about two hundred years older than the cathedral to which it is attached, which was begun in 1401, completed in 1519, and is attributed to Alfonso Martinez, architect of the Chapter in 1386, or to Pedro Garcia, who held that office in 1421. The cathedral is four hundred and thirty-one feet long and three hundred and fifteen feet wide, its width being divided into seven aisles. As may be inferred from the time consumed in building and the different architects employed, the architecture is not purely of one style; but one is not prepared to find among the last architects of the building Diego de Riancho, a man of such eclectic tastes as to design and build in the same year the Gothic Sacristia de los Calices, the plateresque Renaissance Sacristia Mayor, and the modern Italian Chapter House. Gwilt says of the cathedral, a small portion of which is here shown: "The cathedral at Seville was principally rebuilt by Ferdinando Ruiz, who was much engaged in the city, and especially on enlarging or raising the well-known tower called the Giralda. This singular edifice was begun in the eleventh century, the original idea of it being given by the architect Geber, a native of Seville, to whom the invention of algebra is attributed; and also the design of two other similar towers, one in Morocco, and the other at Rabata. The tower of which we are now speaking was at first two hundred and fifty feet high and fifty feet wide, and was without diminution as it rose. The walls are eight feet thick, of squared stone from the level of the pavement; the rest, for eighty-seven feet, is of brick. In the centre of this tower is a smaller one, the interval between the two towers being twenty-three feet, which serves for the ascent, one so convenient that two persons abreast can mount it on horseback. The central tower does not diminish; but as the edifice rises in height the walls gather over, so as to allow the passage of only one person. Upon the Moors of Seville negotiating their surrender, one of the conditions of it was that this tower should not be destroyed; to which Don Alphonso, the eldest son of the king, answered that if a portion of it were touched not a man in Seville should survive. In the earthquake of 1395 it was partially injured, and remained in the state of misfortune that then occurred until 1568, when, by the authorities, Ferdinando Ruiz received the commission to raise it one hundred feet higher. This height he divided into three parts, crowning it with a small cupola or lantern. The first division of his addition is of equal thickness with the tower on a plinth, whence six pilasters rise on each façade, between which are five windows, over which is an entablature surmounted by balustrades; the second is lower, with the same ornament; and the third is octagonal with pilasters, over which the cupola rises, crowned with a bronze statue of Faith, vulgarly called La Giralda." This statue, although it is fourteen feet high and weighs two thousand eight hundred pounds, is a weathercock, and veers with the lightest breezes.

HOUSE AT OYSTER BAY, LONG ISLAND, N. Y. MESSRS. POTTER AND ROBERTSON, ARCHITECTS, NEW YORK.

EPSILON CHAPTER HOUSE OF THE DELTA PSI FRATERNITY, TRINITY COLLEGE, HARTFORD, CONN. MR. J. CLEVELAND CADY, ARCHITECT.

Extreme width and length sixty by fifty feet. Tower, something over one hundred feet in height. Material (including cornices, etc.), New Hampshire granite. The situation near the colleges commands

a view of the Connecticut River and Farmington River and valleys, a circuit of some forty miles.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES.¹

In these days the conditions for a healthy development of art must involve a knowledge of its past, of its greatest masters, of their greatest achievements, and under what circumstances these achievements were rendered possible; for we very well understand that there can be no art commensurate with the attainments of the nineteenth century in science and literature without some intelligent comprehension of the history of art, at least in its outlines, not by artists alone, but by the public through whom they must live. In our own country, where, notwithstanding its wealth and enterprise, there is existing, out of the countless pictures by the old masters, scarcely a single authentic example, this desire to know and comprehend the great precedents of art is almost pathetic. The less expensive autotype processes of reproduction, the heliotype and the photograph, are doing something to meet the emergency, and the drawings of the masters are already becoming familiar to those who care to know them; but of course the questions of color, of chiaroscuro, and of the technical qualities generally must remain a dream of possibilities or probabilities; most of us must be content with getting them at second or third hand in some more or less irregular fashion, by dim copies and by dimmer reflections in the works of modern artists, produced in the atmosphere and under the impulse of the great galleries of Europe.

To us, therefore, so ill furnished with the inspiration of high example, the literature of art becomes a more important element of knowledge than to others more happily placed, and the eagerness with which cheap books on the subject are purchased is a pretty fair indication that the interest is genuine. Conspicuous among these, and admirably contrived to suit our conditions, are the biographies of the great masters, issued in an inexpensive and uniform series by Messrs. Houghton, Osgood & Co. This series comprises the lives of Titian, Michel Angelo, Raphael, Fra Angelico, Dürer, Murillo, Rembrandt, Claude, Guido, Leonardo da Vinci, Van Dyck, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Turner, Landseer, and Allston. These appear in separate volumes of about one hundred and fifty pages each, and contain all that the general student needs to know of the persons through whom, by the will of God, since the Renaissance of classic learning, the arts of painting and sculpture have been transmitted to modern times and have taken their present form.

Around most of these famous lives tradition, commentary, and conjecture have woven a veil through which the modern eye finds it hard to pierce to the truth, unless assisted by some such intelligence, trained in literary labor and animated by a love for art, as the author of these books, Mr. M. F. Sweetser, has amply evinced. Moreover, the standard lives of the masters, which are the result of the most diligent search, and in which are gathered together all that history has directly or indirectly revealed to modern times in regard to the subjects, are for the most part voluminous and costly works, to be found only in the libraries of specialists. On the other hand, the sketches in the encyclopædias and biographical dictionaries are mere perfunctory outlines, and for the most part take up the familiar traditions and fables without emendation. Other great names, like those of Guido, Claude, and Murillo, founders of schools, the influence of which has been directly felt in all subsequent art, have never received the honor of biography in any distinct form, at least in English. By a strange fate it seems to have been reserved for the author of these modest little books to be the first to present in our own tongue the stories of these three masters, a knowledge of which is so essential to the popular comprehension of the history of art.

It is, therefore, no superfluous contribution to the literature of art thus to revive for popular use the memories of these great characters. The series is very neat and attractive in form; each volume may be comfortably and profitably read in a couple of evenings. In each have been carefully collected, from the most trustworthy authorities near and remote, all the authentic facts and all the best general criticisms which have appeared in any language, and each leaves upon the mind a distinct, concrete impression of a man of men. To the reader the result must be a far more intelligent comprehension of historic art, and a greater and more worthy respect for that prolific sort of genius which can not only add to the happiness and delight of mankind and make life the better worth living, but can teach how more profitably to enjoy and understand the beautiful things in nature. We have carefully examined and compared these little volumes, and find that within their narrow compass not only the essential facts have been carefully set down, but that in each case the idle tales which, by a curious fortune, have survived as a part of the picturesque story of the lives of the masters, have been rejected, and that many new facts which have been revealed to the judicial and industrious investigation of modern literature take their due and fitting place in the narrative. But Mr. Sweetser has exhibited not only an industry fruitful in results, but an ability to draw fresh conclusions. Thus he shows, with regard to the brilliant and eccentric Guido, so little known to us as a personality, that the well-known picture called the "Beatrice Cenci" is probably no portrait of that unhappy maiden, and that it is not a work

¹ Artist Biographies. Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co. 1878 and 1879.

of this master; the dark cloud over the fame of Rembrandt is in a great degree dispelled; Murillo is no longer the shadow of a name, but a master, who, following Fra Angelico, stood almost alone, among his contemporaries, as a painter of serious Christian art without taint of the universal paganism which beset the inspirations of his time, a master who prayed as he painted, and painted as he prayed; Turner, with the assistance of Hamerton and other modern investigators, is relieved of the overweight of Ruskin's magnificent eulogies, but still retains his due position of mastery in modern landscape art; Claude is shown as a careful student of nature and not merely a composer of pompous landscape effects with classic episodes going on in the foreground; our own Allston, in an extremely well written narrative, is elevated to his proper place in the Valhalla; and in short all these fruitful lives are rehabilitated in the spirit of truth and relieved from the factitious atmosphere of romance which imagination has been fond of drawing around them, and from the reproaches and misconceptions to which ardent critics have subjected them that their own ideas might have the better chance of life.

These librettos enjoy the advantage of having been written not by a schoolman in the interest of any especial set of theories, or by an artist in the service of any especial school of art, whether pre-Raphaelite or post-Raphaelite, whether Italian, Spanish, German, or English, but by an American scholar with a genuine respect for art, and concerned only to get at and duly set forth the whole truth. Each book is preceded by a preface indicating the principal sources of information, and serving as a sort of bibliography of the subject, and concludes with a list of all the known works of the artist and their present places of deposit so far as they are known. The limitations of space confine the writer to a narrative often condensed, and intense in interest by reason of its abundant incidents, but never crowd out what it is well for us to know of the testimony of the greatest critics with regard to the peculiar character of the genius exhibited in each life. The uniform character of the books subjects the writer at first sight to the charge of book-making, of adjusting facts, in Procrustean fashion, to the publishers' limits of space; but the work is really done in a workmanlike manner and with a certain judicial partiality and completeness which are deserving of praise. It must be confessed, however, that the limitations of these books with regard to number seems arbitrary; for a scheme which admits Landseer and Allston of modern artists, but takes no note of any of the great French leaders, whose characteristics are really exercising more influence over art in these days than those of any other set of men,—a scheme which does not include such distinct masters in art as Rubens, Delacroix, Delaroche, Holbein, Teniers, and Gainsborough,—is wanting in completeness. Let us, however, hope that the publishers may be encouraged to make this interesting and useful series more complete in the immediate future; we commend what has already been done very heartily to all who would furnish their minds with a fuller knowledge of the great achievements in art.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FRENCH FURNITURE AT THE EXHIBITION.—TAPESTRY.—FAI-
ENCE.—STAINED GLASS.

PARIS.

In my last letter I criticised the English furniture in the Exhibition as showing great skill in cabinet-making, but offering little beyond that; still, as joinery is the anatomy, so to speak, of furniture, it is an excellent foundation for the latter in its broadest sense, where it includes the application of various arts, indeed so overlapping it as to form a neutral zone in which it is difficult to determine whether an object is a bit of furniture or a pure work of art, as is the case with sculpture in mantel-pieces and bas-reliefs, finely worked bronzes, faïences, tapestries, etc., employed where use and ornament are combined. It is into this wide domain of *moblier*—which thus includes more than our word furniture—one enters as he looks down the long vista of drawing-rooms and boudoirs which chiefly fill the French furniture gallery. One's attention is at once drawn to an endless variety of sumptuous sofas, divans, tête-à-têtes and arm-chairs, poufs and other pieces, so thoroughly French that I doubt if we have ever found English equivalents for their names, and all these, as well as rich curtains and *portières* draped with consummate art, charm the eye by the exquisite taste with which the tints of costly fabrics have been harmonized and contrasted. It is a feast of color worthy of the old Venetians, from whose pictures many a rich tone has been copied. One is not surprised, then, to come upon some well-known painter lingering with half-closed eyes before some clever scheme of color; for good as the color of French painters generally is, there seems to me a deeper instinct shown for rich and brilliant harmonies here than is to be found on the walls of the annual *Salon*. It is curious to note that there seems no prevailing fashion in the tints or their combinations. New shades are of course discovered every year, and the later ones show the influence of the *bric-à-brac* mania, which, as in recent paintings, shows itself in the use of rich brocades and heavy embroidery, and in some lovely faded shades of velvet, pale amber, soft mouse-color, dusky maroon, etc.; but then beside these would be the deepest tones of rich color, so it cannot be said that even these new tints especially are the fashion.

The most admired and conspicuous interior is a wonderfully beau-

tiful boudoir. An immense velvet curtain of a strange but lovely dark blue-green is draped in magnificent folds, here and there revealing inner draperies of pale coffee-color and light blue silk, over a splendid gilt couch covered with the palest rose satin; a deeper rose drapery is arranged behind it, and a white satin coverlet, embroidered in strong colors, is thrown in careless folds across the foot. Behind the couch on the wall is a metallic blue and buff satin, and in the back ground is a large tapestry picture of nymph and cupids, with prevailing tints of pale pink and primrose, while in the foreground stands a bright garnet seat and a picture on a draped easel; on the dark garnet carpet near the couch is a gilt stand on a tiger skin, and these with a large alabaster pot of palms complete a picture extraordinary for masterly simplicity and beauty of color. Of course words are hardly less impotent to convey an idea of harmonies of color than they are in the case of those of music, and I give this description to show how few objects finally composed an exhibition to which months of study and experiment must have been devoted. An exhibition so far removed from a mere commercial display shows how high into the regions of pure art furniture may be carried. This exhibit was rewarded by a gold medal and a decoration. Gold medals were also awarded to Beurdeley, Meynard, Sauvrezzy, Quignon, all well-known men. But it must not be thought that only upholstery is exhibited, for there is a perfect museum of everything which is best in French furniture since the sixteenth century, when Italian art, led by Leonardo da Vinci himself, received a hospitable welcome to Paris, and the imitations of the ebony work inlaid with ivory then imported may be here compared with the identical work continued in Northern Italy, and now an important manufacture of Milan. So also the modern Florentine *pietra dura* inlaying is confronted with reproductions of Louis XIII.'s time. French furniture, however, became thoroughly national under Louis XIV., when Boule invented a variety of inlaid and *appliqué* ornaments, which were pushed to the fantastic during the succeeding reign. Side by side with these large cabinets and heavy tables are the delicate and refined secretaries and work-stands of Louis XVI., where classic taste insisted on lightness and simplicity of form, and twisted spider legs gave way to slender colonnettes, while the ornamentation was confined chiefly to inlaid brass. There are fine examples of carved wood, but nothing Gothic, chiefly Renaissance cabinets, where the extreme delicacy of the carving, or rather of the engraving, is shown off by the highest polish. In these, as in all the previous examples, the workmanship in the various arts employed is beyond criticism, and the working out of the details shows the highest art; but what shall be said of the designs in general? "*Toujours les mêmes documents*" was the remark of a Frenchman, and it is a fair criticism. Since the first empire the French have been chiefly occupied in adapting to modern wants historical examples, and perfecting their imitation, and this reached its culmination in the Exhibition of 1867. Excepting progress made in coloring and upholstery, and an advance in skilled bronze work, at the head of which stands M. Barbadienne, this department of French art has gained nothing, and apparently sought nothing, since the last exhibition. To be thus stationary for long can but lead to a decadence. This danger is appreciated, however, and vigorous efforts doubtless will be made to throw new life into this department. The recent association formed under the auspices of distinguished artists and amateurs for the promotion of decorative art promises to give the needed impulse and awaken interest in these matters. A Museum of Decorative Art is to be opened shortly in the Pavillon de Flore, with both permanent and loaned specimens. I noticed that numerous examples of English faïence had been purchased for this museum, which is a deserved compliment to England.

It is, in fact, from England that the idea of this new museum has come. Imitating some of the functions of the South Kensington Museum, it will organize from time to time exhibitions which will make the tour of the provinces, besides establishing in the principal cities permanent branch museums, well supplied with casts, models, etc. For some time the French have felt that, in spite of the technical skill of the workmen, their decorative art was not what it should be, and needed to be pruned and remodelled in various ways. The rapid progress England has lately made, especially in the ceramic arts, has confirmed this uneasiness, and roused them to preserve their ancient supremacy.

This supremacy, however, never seemed more inapproachable than in their exhibition of the national Gobelins and Beauvais tapestries. From the Gobelins works come two immense carpets of Savonnerie work for the Palace of Fontainebleau, besides allegorical panels and several wonderful copies of old masters. In all these examples the shading and soft blending of tints are marvellous. The Beauvais work is represented only by panels of fruits and flowers, but they too are perfect in their way. Not only has France distanced during the three centuries of these manufactures all former foreign competitors,—the present exhibition of the Flanders tapestries, once so famous, measures that distance,—but no private works have ever been able to compete with them in this long and difficult process. Now, however, M. Cleis has invented a different and shorter system, which consists in coloring the threads when in place, instead of laboriously working out the design with the previously dyed threads. If he really can dye and fix the tints in this way it will enable the artist to work himself upon the tapestry, but it is doubtful whether this can be done, and still more so whether the effect of the present Gobelins could be given.

Although the exhibition of the Sèvres works is very complete, and contains as beautiful specimens in form and color as ever, it does not, as with the tapestries, thus stand alone; for though no other works can produce vases of such exquisite designs, private enterprise is pressing nearer to its perfections, and in the matter of mere coloring can almost rival it in the simpler and smaller pieces. These private manufactories are scattered over France, Limoges taking the lead with a fine school she has lately established to train her workmen, who include most of the inhabitants. This porcelain is generally white with delicate colored designs. From Rouen comes the well-known blue china; from Nevers the tint is usually gold or yellow; while quaint old Bourges sends designs as quaint as herself, with flowers and queer monsters.

Ancient as are these establishments and their advantages, England with her new manufactories fairly rivals them in certain things, and Doulton's exhibition, as well as Maw's and Minton's and the Worcester Works, contained specimens in some ways superior. The English tiles were in general better than anything French of the kind, and attracted much attention. One reason of this may be that in tiles it is particularly essential that the design should never destroy the sentiment of a flat surface, which secret I believe lies at the bottom of the recent improvement of the English in decorative design, and of which the French too often lose sight; for the recognition of the surface to be decorated is essential to good design. The English coloring was unexpectedly beautiful, and had the forms of their vases been as graceful as were the shapes of Mr. Webb's wonderful glass show (*grand prix*), their success would have been unqualified. There is another department of art in which the English were unrivalled: the strength and delicacy of the wood-cuts exhibited by the London *Graphic* surpass those of any other paper, and the best Continental work appears coarse and stiff beside it. There was a large collection of the original sketches from their Russian war correspondents, which showed from what meagre data their fine illustrations are worked up by home artists.

The exhibition of stained glass was one of the unsatisfactory things of the Exhibition. Among the large number of French exhibitors there was little pure and rich toned glass. The small, finely-pencilled heraldic panes and engraved, tinted glass were perfect in their way, but nothing which showed serious approach either to the clear, simple colors of the thirteenth century style, or to the deeper tones and more picturesque compositions of the succeeding styles. M. Oudinot, who has sent a number of windows to America, notably to Trinity Church, Boston, received a gold medal, and his certainly were among the best examples; but though the drawing is fine, and the coloring agreeable, his glass does not have the clear, pure tone which gives the luminous breadth to old glass. Generally the best glass in France is done by workers in the cathedral towns, where having studied patiently the native glass they will repair or imitate it with skill, but given an original design they lose breadth and purity in futile details. Lorin, of Chartres, showed noticeably these virtues and defects. Although I looked in vain for Clayton and Bell, whom I believe superior to any Continental manufacturers, the English glass seemed nearer to the mediæval models in breadth and purity, though here too there is a tendency to overdo and confuse by shading. Among the English makers I noted Radcliff & Co., Ward Hughes, John Hardman. A gold medal was given to extremely delicately-pencilled panes for dwellings by Caunn Brothers.

R.

MODEL-TENEMENT COMPETITION.

NEW YORK.

A VERY interesting attempt has been started by the editor of the *Plumber and Sanitary Engineer* in offering a prize for the best design for a New York tenement house to cover a lot twenty-five by one hundred feet. In association with D. Willis James, F. B. Thurber, Henry E. Pellew, and Robert Gordon the editor has provided a purse of five hundred dollars as an inducement for the architects to prepare designs. The conditions suppose a lot inclosed on sides and rear by buildings of adjoining lots, so that little or no aid from side or rear openings can be looked for in securing ventilation and light. The investigations which have been made of late into the horrors of the tenement house system have shown the need of reform, and, probably, the fact that dividends from this class of property are falling away has induced the real estate owners named above to take part in the offer. They have selected a committee of award consisting of R. G. Hatfield, architect; Prof. Charles F. Chandler of Columbia College, and the President of the Board of Health; Rev. Henry C. Potter of Grace Church; Rev. John Hall of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church; and Robert Hoe, the head of the press works and machine shop. The workmen in the establishment of the last named gentleman have been discussing the project for some time past, and at several meetings held on the subject of improved dwellings have appointed committees of investigation from among their own number. The points to be particularly looked at by the committee in fixing the points for the several designs are: (1) security against conflagration (including fire-proof stair-cases open to the air); (2) distribution of light; (3) ventilation; (4) drainage, and other sanitary appointments; (5) section of each suite of rooms, and publicity of access to them; (6) convenience of arrangement; (7) inexpensiveness. Sufficient drawings in line to show the general features, with such detail drawing as will exemplify any peculiar features, will be required, all to be done in India ink without color or washes.

The drawings are to be accompanied by a concise, clear description of the arrangements and materials of construction, together with a detailed estimate of the cost of construction, which is to comprise masonry work, cut-stone and plastering, iron work, carpenter work, roofing and painting, plumbing work, sanitary appointments, and other required work and materials, and contingent expenses required to render the building ready for occupancy. The estimate to be given for each of the kinds of work above named separately. The estimates to be made in good faith from trustworthy data, the prices those ruling in the city in which the design is made, and the name of the city given.

The motto plan will be adopted to prevent the committee of awards from knowing the names of the several authors of designs. The closing hour is fixed for two P. M. on the 4th of February, 1879, and the committee of award will on or before the 18th of February give an opinion, numbering the designs from one to the highest number received in the order of their merit. From February 5 to February 15 the designs will be on public exhibition.

To the author of the design "No. 1" will be paid \$250; to the author of design "No. 2" will be paid \$125; to the author of design "No. 3" will be paid \$75; and to the author of design "No. 4" will be paid \$50. The designs will all be returned to the authors, or mailed to their address.

In all this competition there is no distinct provision that the houses shall possess any distinct architectural merit. This is left, if it is to be looked after at all, to the architects personally, but in securing the several points laid down, a barn, fulfilling the requisites of physical ends laid down, must take the first prize be it as devoid of beauty as a rebuilt factory.

Many architects declare that the idea of attempting anything of this sort within the narrow limits of a city lot is sure to end in failure, and point to the blocks built for Alfred T. White, in Hicks Street, Brooklyn, as meeting the problem of a model tenement. The first block was opened February 1, 1875, and since that date the same plan has been carried out in two larger blocks. Mr. White estimates from his experience that a return of seven per cent net upon the capital invested might be realized upon land in this city, supposing the land to cost \$3,000 per lot and the cost of building to be the same as in Brooklyn. But in this competition the conditions are purposely narrowed to single lots in an endeavor to see if they, too, cannot be made profitable and yet supply tenements fit to live in.

W.

NOTES AND CLIPPINGS.

WE wish to draw attention to a change in the publishers' advertisement on page vi. of the advertising pages, where it is stated that the numbers of this journal for November and December, 1878, will be given, gratis, to new subscribers who pay their subscription for the ensuing year before December 25, 1878, instead of December 15, as hitherto stated.

We wish also to draw attention to the prospectus for the ensuing year, and to the new and enlarged premium list, which we have tried to make attractive and useful, which will be seen on the following page.

BUILDING LAW.—A case was decided lately by Judge Yapple of the Superior Court of Cincinnati, that may be of interest to our readers. It seems that the firm of Louis Stix and Company, owners, contracted with M. Marcus, principal contractor, for the carpenter work of a store building. Stix and Company paid Marcus amounts from time to time upon the estimates of the architect, according to contract, up to a certain time, when Marcus made an assignment. After this assignment was made Stix and Company paid or rather advanced Marcus \$1,500 without any estimate from and contrary to the advice (so the prosecution stated) of the architect. Messrs. Mitchel and Rowland, and Greenless Ransom and Company, bring suit under the lien law to recover the amounts due them, and hold that the \$1,500 was not legally paid to Marcus. The court held that the money was not illegally paid, and that the owner had the right to do better for the contractor than his contract called for, and gave judgment for the defence.

ARCHITECTURAL REFEREES.—Messrs. Hodgson and Brown, architects, of Indianapolis, Ind., and Mr. Charles Crapsey, architect, of Cincinnati, have been appointed by the County Commissioners of Vigo County, Indiana, to examine and report upon a set of plans prepared in 1872, by J. A. Vrydagh, architect, for the Court House it was then proposed to erect. It seems that Mr. Vrydagh's plans were prepared and adopted and bids tendered, when at this state of the case a committee appointed by the citizens vetoed the whole matter, for what reason is not known to our correspondent. Mr. Vrydagh thereupon entered suit for \$15,000, and this commission of architects is appointed to report as to whether that is a proper amount to pay an architect for plans of a building that was to have cost about \$300,000; the commission is also to report whether the building could have been built for that sum according to the plans. The commission commenced its sessions at Terre Haute, Ind., on the 17th inst., and will continue until its labors are completed.

ANEROID BAROMETERS.—The Giffard Captive Balloon, at Paris, has, it seems, been made to serve for some interesting experiments with aneroid barometers. It was discovered that all, or nearly all the barometers, after registering the ascent, failed to record the difference in altitude until some time after they had been returned to the earth.

HARDENING COPPER.—Dr. J. S. Mayer, of Virginia City, Nevada, claims that he has discovered the lost art known to the ancient Egyptians, of tempering copper so as to produce an edge which will cut like steel.