

An introductory lecture delivered at Queen's College, Birmingham, October 21st, 1858, on the office and duties of architecture / by John Henry Chamberlain.

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INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

DELIVERED AT

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM,

OCTOBER 21st, 1858,

ON THE

OFFICE AND DUTIES OF ARCHITECTURE,

BY

JOHN HENRY CHAMBERLAIN,

PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE TO
THE COLLEGE.

—
PUBLISHED BY REQUEST
—

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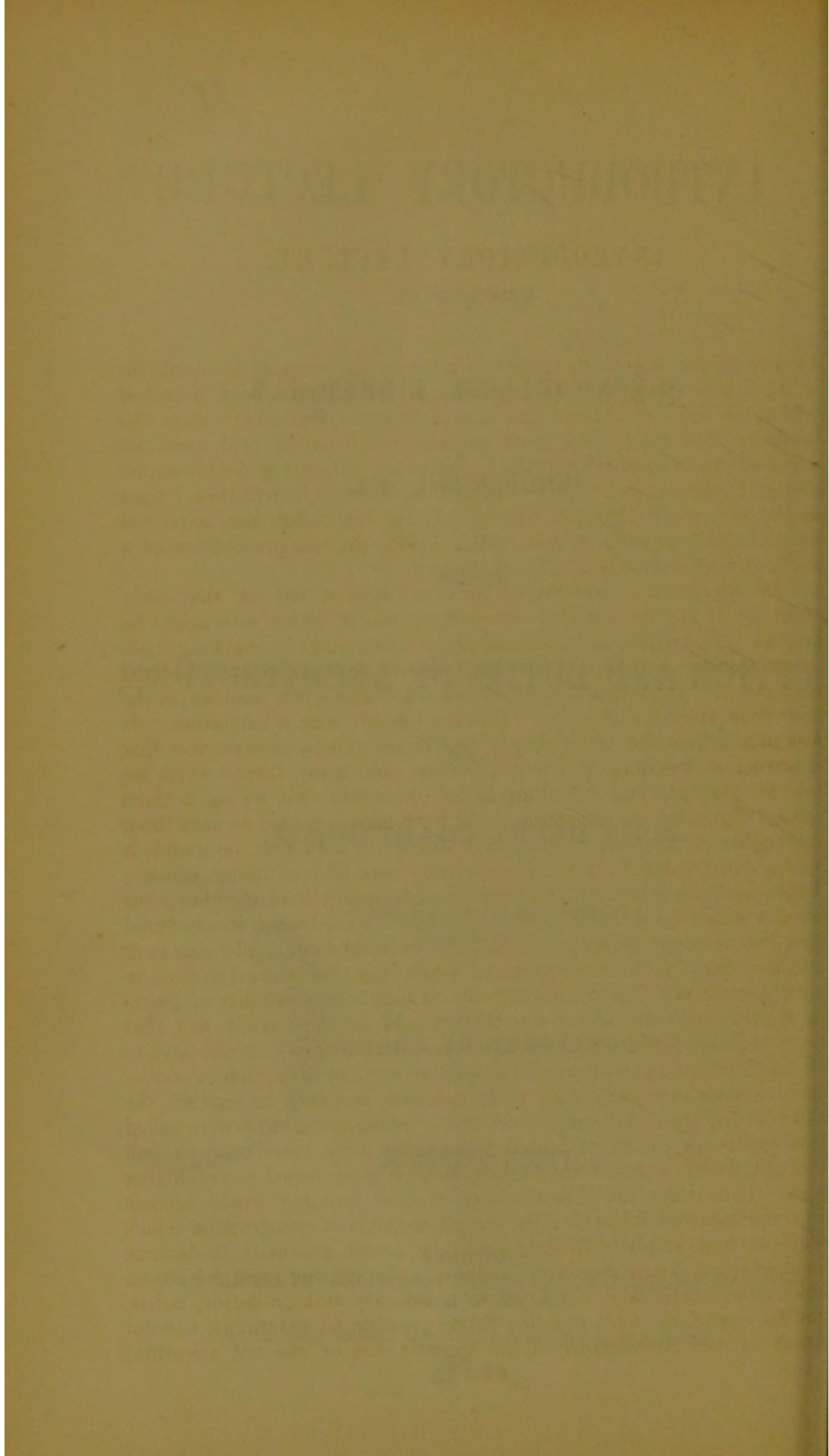


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[1858]



INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

IN having the honour to appear before you this evening to speak for a short time upon a subject which has not hitherto been broached within the walls of this college, it will be my endeavour to show the necessity that exists of a more general knowledge of that great art which so clearly concerns all classes of mankind—the art of Architecture; and, if I succeed, as I hope to succeed in so doing, it will then I trust appear to you all, that the Council of this Institution has acted not unwisely in providing at least some facility for the prosecution of a study at once so necessary and so inviting.

All Architecture has grown by slow degrees out of that early necessity of the human race—a covering under which men might be housed. The palace and cathedral are but later links in that long chain whose earliest ones were a few sticks reared up together and plastered with clay, or a few insufficient stones piled one upon another in the first rude attempts of man to provide himself with a habitation. It was indeed from the most simple beginnings and by slow degrees that construction was developed into a science; and many things which we take for granted, and indeed are so accustomed to that we see in them neither ingenuity nor invention, must have been regarded as something marvellous at the time of their first discovery. At first, no doubt, it was a great thing to have provided any sort of roof under which a whole family or many families might uncomfortably herd together; but what a wonderful discovery that must have seemed when it was found that two or more rooms could still be accommodated under one roof, and that thus the different sizes and sexes might be enabled at least to sort themselves. Then in the fulness of time, the possibility of living in stories one room above the other would develop itself, and that most ordinary feature of all Architecture—the staircase—would have to be invented; and so with many other things, little by little, step by step—first, as some new want made itself manifest, and then, as another, the different features and components of our ordinary building were called into existence; the art of building becoming daily more complex and difficult, as the wants of the builders became more varied and of higher aim. Thus it is evident that sooner or later building would become in some measure scientific; the simple methods of construction which were at first amply sufficient, would be found gradually to become inadequate, and new means to compass a desired end must have been discovered continually; and yet it is no easy task to decide, but is, indeed, one of the most puzzling things possible to determine, how far much of the Architecture of the ancients was or was not scientific;

because science in building is, I think, continually being misunderstood; and parallels have been drawn between early and later styles to the disparagement of the former without sufficient warrant. For if you compare one of the earliest buildings, an Egyptian pyramid or temple for instance, with one of those works, with which the genius of the middle ages sowed Europe broadcast, it may, indeed, be urged not unjustly that the cathedral exhibits more science by far than the temple; yet the problem that the one builder set himself to solve was of so different a nature to that proposed by the other that they will bear no comparison. The Egyptian architect aimed at a certain thing, and succeeded in thoroughly obtaining it; while the mediævalist setting himself a more difficult task, succeeded far less perfectly in its accomplishment. And although, when we view the enormous masses of material used by the Egyptian, the thickness of his walls, or the mass and number of his columns, we are apt to think that had but the same amount of material been used in a different, or as we should say, more scientific manner, a greater space might have been covered, higher walls might have been reared, and an Architecture of a nobler and more spiritual type have been produced; we forget that the Egyptian did not want higher walls, nor greater ingenuities of construction in any other way; but, indeed, had his own views of what Architecture should be, and found science enough so successfully to build all things that he wanted, that while later architectures have left here and there but a stone or two as vestiges of their former presence, these earlier works remain to our day, and save from the effects of wanton spoliation in almost as perfect a condition as that in which the first builders left them. I think this practice of the early builders was the only right architectural one. The scientific element ought never to predominate to an undue extent: just as much science is wanted as will enable the architect to provide in the best and most fitting manner for those wants, individual or national, to which he is called to administer; but pushed beyond this its proper sphere, architectural science becomes an annoyance and an impertinence. Viewed in this light, I have no hesitation in saying that building did at a very early era grow scientific, and by so growing made its first advance to the dignity of Architecture; but to that high dignity it would never have attained, however scientific it might have been, had not another element been added to it, namely—that of beauty. Long before men had succeeded in building scientifically (they did not wait for that), they strove to make their work in some measure beautiful; that great instinct of the human heart which moves even the savage to stripe himself with paint, and wound himself with tattoo, which sets him to carve bow and paddle, battle-axe and canoe, in the midst of a life one would think most adverse to any such occupation, soon found in building a wide field for its manifestation, and speedily windows and doors, supports and roofs, beams and columns, began to appear in shapes modified by other influences, than the necessities of construction, or the dictates of science. How grim and barren, how cold and forbidding, would scientific building be at the best, unwarmed by that love, and unsoftened by that tenderness which

has raised it from mere intellectual mechanism to the dignity of a fine art. Which is the best for us to see and admire; that with mechanical appliances, of which we can form no just idea, the Egyptians were able to transport from the quarry whence they were hewn, ponderous masses of stone, in weight equal to our far-famed Tubular Bridge, and having borne them across the desert, lift them up into their places in temple roof or porch, and that not once or twice, but continually indeed, in the ordinary course of their architectural work; or is it better and pleasanter for us to see, as with but even a small acquaintance with their art, we *do* see, that the flowers which grew upon the banks of their famous river were so loved by them, and their beauty so received into their hearts, that they quarried their gigantic pillars into their likeness, and every column standing in the Temple Court shadowed forth in its appointed degree some thoughts of the fair flowers of the lotus or the pleasant springing of the papyrus?

Happily we are not called upon to judge between the two; we need reject neither the science nor the loveliness, for it is in the perfectness of their union that real Architecture consists. Thus I think we may safely define all Architecture as the art of erecting buildings at once scientific and beautiful, and bearing this definition in mind we shall more clearly see the golden mean which this art occupies, between works of merely utilitarian purpose on the one hand, and those which are purely decorative on the other. Mr. Ruskin has in the commencement of his "Seven Lamps of Architecture" endeavoured to define this art as differing from mere building, in that something unnecessary to its virtues as a building is added to the structure, and by that addition it becomes Architecture. He says:—"Let us therefore confine the name to that art which taking up and admitting as conditions of its working the necessities and common uses of the building, impresses on its form certain characters venerable or beautiful, but otherwise unnecessary. Thus I suppose no one would call the laws architectural which determine the height of a breastwork or the position of a bastion. But if to the stone facing of that bastion be added an unnecessary feature, as a cable moulding, *that* is Architecture."

But it appears to me that the ordinary reader is in danger of obtaining the impression from Mr. Ruskin's words, that to change building into Architecture nothing more is necessary than to add ornamental features to its own natural ugliness; as in the addition of the cable moulding to the stone facing of the bastion. But nothing can be farther from the real truth. It is not by adding ornaments to constructional features ugly in themselves that building is converted into Architecture, but in the first and principal place by making those very necessities of construction otherwise than ugly. For, taking Mr. Ruskin's illustration, let us imagine that we have built a low wall, either of brick or stonework—such as, for instance, those breast-high walls round gentlemen's gardens—and that to protect it from the wet we have put a row of wide coping stones along it, their edge projecting in a continuous line a few inches over the face of the wall, the better to throw off the wet. Now if such a wall is built in the way just described, no amount

of cable or other moulding, added at hap-hazard, can redeem its natural ugliness, for we have only done to it that which on a much larger scale is constantly done with houses. We build them either without the architect, or with the architect humbly following the pointing of his client's finger, in all stages of ugliness, from quiet dowdiness down to ugliness positive and supreme; and then to satisfy that want—which, sneer at or try to crush it as much as men choose, still will have its way, and make itself felt—we call in, not the neglected architect, but the triumphant decorator, and no sooner is he in possession, than unnecessary ornaments are added indeed; but although painted, and marbled, and gilded, papered with French papers, and filled with the foolishness of French upholstery, the building is even less a work of Architecture than it was before, but has on the contrary become a still more grievous stumbling block in the path of the ignorant, and a greater eye sore, and a deeper vexation to those who feel the unhappiness of knowing better. But both with respect to wall and house, our error lies in having overlooked the field open to us for introducing decoration into the scientific forms of the construction, and so making our work architectural, by moulding every feature which the requirements of the construction give us, into beautiful forms, by that peculiar gift whose possessor is alone rightly styled "Architect." Everything that an architect touches, ought to wake up from the death of ugliness into the immortality of the beautiful. So with respect to our wall, the true architect's attention is instantly arrested by the projection of the stone coping. He sees that therein lies the possibility of producing beauty, that it can be moulded into beautiful forms of varying light and shade, or in a hundred other ways made decorative; and, indeed, thus throughout all time he has done; and whether we call his work Egyptian, or Grecian, or Gothic, we acknowledge it still as Architecture, because he shows us, that out of that which is common he can produce the uncommon, and that he cannot handle even the ordinary materials of the most ordinary work without impressing upon them the signs of his intelligence and his love.

Then, when he has done this, he may in highly ornamental work begin to add the "unnecessary;" but at his peril not one moment before he has exhausted every legitimate and natural method of decoration. Thus you will ever find that all good Architecture begins in the first place, by securing the very best and most scientific form for all the walls, roofs, or other portions of the building proper; that it then commences to decorate by making these very things in themselves beautiful, securing every vantage point which the constructional necessities of the work offer, and evolving the beautiful continually out of features which, unless so treated, would have remained in their primitive ugliness. Then when this work is thoroughly completed, he may strive after the highest decorations of which building is susceptible; ornaments which are not in any degree based upon the useful; and so if he loves classic art, and has a taste for pediments, he may fill them with sculpture as Phidias filled those of the Parthenon; or if he seeks his ideal in a later style, he may knit the framework of his roofs together with the flowers of the forest, and people the deep shadows of

his doorways with the likenesses of the great and noble, or adorn them with the carved records of deeds of worth and heroism. I fear you will think that I am laying more stress than is needful upon this point ; but if you will look round at our ordinary Architecture, and listen to the objections of those who affect to despise all Architecture, you will, I think, find that this most mistaken notion lies at the very root of the evil. So much of the Architecture of this day is but objectless decoration, added to the undisguised ugliness of ordinary construction, that I think we need wonder but little that so many think and act as if all ornament is alike useless and undesirable, and that so many architects sink altogether into the rank of decorators, instead of abiding by the very first principles of their glorious art, and so learning to restrain the exuberance of fancy and the license of individual taste by the calmness and gravity of science. Such, then, is Architecture, and it now remains to us to examine what are the special duties required of this art by man. I think they may be divided into two classes, viz., 1st—Those by which it administers to his physical requirements ; 2nd—Those by which it in some measure provides for his spiritual wants.

If we attempt to investigate the first of these classes, it will be speedily evident how vast a field the enquiry will range over ; because there is no possible reason why all building should not be Architecture, and the old error be rooted out once and for ever—that Architecture might legitimately busy itself with great things, but had little need to care for the small. For indeed the true architect is distinguished more by his provident care for all things, however small or humble, that fall within the range of his dominion, than by brilliancy of invention or facility in ornamental design. He has at least done a gracious act when, by his labour and skill he has eked out the little space allotted to the cottager's poor room, and secured light, and cheerfulness, and warmth to those who far too often are so badly housed. Indeed, the architect ought to inquire no more than the physician into the rank or station of those who come to him for help, except, of course, so far as is necessary to the proper understanding of the case presented to him ; but having to provide fit and proper habitations for all classes of society—for the poor, the cottage, and for the monarch the palace, both cottage and place, and square and row—the shop, the villa, the castle, or the palace, all ought to be alike good, differing in size or expensiveness, but not in the thought devoted to them or the provident care spent over them. There are few things more foolish than the sighing of young men over what they conceive to be their lack of opportunity, and few things more hurtful to the cause of art than that feverish desire of theirs to be perpetually "getting on," as they phrase it, instead of that more simple and healthy one of desiring to do their duty, and to make the most of whatever work or opportunity may fall to their lot. A man learns to compose sentences before he is allowed to write essays, and in one way or another the world tries men with small things before it trusts them with great ; so that regarded merely in the light of worldly policy, it is unwise not to give the whole of such energy as we may have to any work that may fall to our lot : then, strengthened by these early trials,

the architect will be ready to grapple with the difficulties of more complicated work. It is true that at the present time there is but little science displayed in that common architectural work of our time, villa building. I know that there are other reasons for this than the ignorance of architects; I know that parsimony has something to do with it, and that a constant and increasing desire for needlessly large rooms has more; but yet something lies at the architect's door also, and it is more than time that such simple things as the better ventilation of rooms—the more facile communication between up and down stairs, and many other things of similar nature were at least partially attended to. For in that scientific half of the art, of which we are now treating, lies the remedy for all such omissions as these. Again, not only is it the duty of Architecture to provide commodious and habitable dwellings, but it ought to take cognizance also of the disposition of dwellings one with another, and at least endeavour to enforce their proper combination in the formation of streets and towns. I do not know how far such a doctrine may or may not be popular, but I am at least architecturally convinced, that there ought to be some power authorized so to regulate town building that health and life might be in some measure protected. How much needless disease and untimely death; how much misery and debasement, moral as well as physical, such an extension of the office of Architecture would prevent or alleviate, it is impossible to say; but this is at least certain, that while houses are crowded together in courts, as they are even here in Birmingham, tall houses with only a miserable slip of yard between, and with no communication to the street, but a wretchedly narrow passage, unopened to the sky—and when in addition these houses are badly drained and badly supplied with water, cut off indeed from all the necessaries of healthy life, and fed only with foul smells in place of the pure air, we are wasting human life and wealth continually. People crowded into such dwellings must be stricken with disease—must become contaminated in mind as well as degenerate in body—must die prematurely and needlessly; and the houses in which they are compelled to congregate miserably together, are, and ought to be regarded as hot beds of disease and vice.

Again, not only in the town, but in the country also, human beings are huddled up into tenements less commodious and healthy than those in which the very horses are stabled. It is known that much of that deplorable vice which so marks the country, that those who have lived in both, unhesitatingly affirm that country morality is on a lower scale than that of the most crowded town, springs from the wretched and abominable way in which the cottagers are compelled to live. Crowded together often in one bedroom, parents and children too; or the parents partitioned off in some wretched kind of crib, while the children of all ages and both sexes are herded together in one other room. Is it to be wondered at that the morality of that large portion of our population is at so low an ebb? That the truth concerning it is whispered and hinted at, but with our modern system of false delicacy never spoken of aloud? Perhaps some may think or say that dealing with these things is foreign to the office of Architecture; but indeed with these things lies the very

chief concern of Architecture. Who is to know if the architect knows it not, what are the ordinary and necessary requirements of even the cottager? And who, these things being neglected, is so fitted to call the public attention to the truth, than one whose whole experience teaches him, not only what amount of space and accommodation is vitally necessary, but also, if he has eyes at all fitted for seeing or ears for hearing, how impossible it is to violate even the laws whose observance is necessary to physical well-being, without injuring the moral character as well; and that out of the habitual presence of foulness and dirt, and the habitual and compulsory disregard of decency, physical and moral debasement has ever sprung and will ever continue to spring?

I cannot pretend this evening to point out even a tithe of the various and ever-varying classes of building which lie within the province of Architecture: places for public assembly, places for public amusement, senate houses, universities, markets, and many others as varied as the occupations of men; but we must not forget to mention one very great and important branch of this art—sacred or religious building. No part of an architect's work is fraught with so much care, nor carries with it so great a reward; but still let us not forget that it belongs after all to the great art, one and indivisible, and in no case or way constitutes a separate art, or calls for special architects; no, nor even for a special style. Whatever style is best for the domestic, that is, the national Architecture of any race—whatever shape they may consider it best to give to the ordinary features of their house Architecture, that style is the only right style for the chapel or the church; and beyond necessary difference in scale or size, or in richness of ornamentation, the main features in each ought to possess an easily distinguishable likeness. I say begin in each with science, and whether you agree that square, or round, or pointed roofs are scientific, so far be consistent to your art as to give to the house the same meed of science as the church, or the church as much as the house. And though perhaps this is hardly the moment at which to say it, do not think that there is any peculiar holiness in any style; and most especially not because people tell you so: that style will be the holiest and best for us all which we see most reason to believe in, and feel to be the best fitted to express our thoughts in; and if you love the classic, it is no use trying to be a hypocrite in Gothic; only I would urge this, that any one having chosen his style, should at least so far carry into practice the unity of Architecture, as to endeavour honestly and successfully to apply it to all buildings entrusted to him, whether that building be called sacred, or whether it be of that other class only recognised as sacred by those who fully understand the meaning of the term "domestic."

It now remains for us in some measure to investigate what service man, as a being living by "admiration, hope, and love," may not unreasonably require from this art, which has—let it be borne in mind, robbed him of something already, namely, of so much green grass and so much blue sky as his house, or church, or public building has blotted out or covered.* And it seems to me that his first question

* See "Treatise on the Principles of Design in Architecture," by E. L. Garbett. Chap. I, p. 6.

necessarily is, or should be, "What can I get out of my building to recompense me for this loss?"—Of course, he has already got something: a warm comfortable dwelling, we will suppose not without its value. But more is required. For in every blade of that trodden-down grass—in every leaf of those uprooted trees there existed a presence, implanted there for the good and gratification of man: a presence not to be despised and sneered at—not to be regarded with indifference, but to be watched and waited for; to be sought out diligently; to be regarded with no little reverence, and with much love; and above all things, not to be in any way or for any purpose destroyed, without, at least, some attempt being made on the part of its destroyers to restore that which, not needlessly, they have taken away. Compensation is the first duty required of Architecture in its character of a fine art. So much of the beautiful has been taken away, and its restoration must be effected. But happily for us all, this so necessary addition of the beautiful to our own work, is not only a duty but an instinct: we have already seen how its indwelling has power to soften even the heart of the untutored savage, and how it prompts him, with such wretched materials as he has at his command, to give some evidence of his perception of the loveliness of that natural world in which his life is cast; and so throughout all time, and from the very earliest dawn of civilization we find that men, moved by that love of which, surely, no human heart is utterly devoid, have stretched out their hands towards the beautiful, and have striven to weave it into their ordinary work; and although often with differing power and varying aim, their love, sometimes obscured by error, sometimes warped by pride, yet, to the one great endeavour they have been ever constant, and their efforts ever crowned, in proportion to the rightness and humility of their seeking, with a greater or less measure of success.

Now we in the present day are still earnest in the pursuit of beauty, for the love of it is a love that nothing can entirely quench, but we are utterly destitute of any leading idea by which to guide, and around which to cluster our various efforts; and, as a natural consequence, that on which we calculated as an adornment, too frequently serves only to disfigure. At the present moment we have no really national Architecture, and no national school either of painting or sculpture; and therefore all the minor arts languish and are perverted and debased. If the manufacturer, goaded by the dissatisfaction with which his works are so often regarded, desires to produce something which shall better satisfy his critics, he neither knows to whom to apply, nor where to turn; he steals an idea from this man and a thought from another, but with no other result than a miserable one: he sets boys and men to design before they are either disciplined or educated for such a work; and finds, to his everlasting surprise, that the workman who can make a good chalk drawing from a cast, and has a portfolio well filled with sketches from the antique, cannot design so much as a milk jug tolerably, or the pattern for a ribband. I have no hesitation in saying, that although vastly improved—and, I hope, every day gradually improving still more—the ordinary works of our manufacturers are devoid

of any real merit, in an artistic sense. Their stoves may be good, but they are ugly; their gas-fittings mechanically perfect, but they are, for the most part, hideous; their metallic bedsteads may be clever, but the decorations bestowed upon them are absurd and outrageous, and as specimens of design in metal work, they are far behind that of those country blacksmiths, who lived and worked hundreds of years ago; in short, the whole range of what I may perhaps term domestic manufactures—things, that is to say, intended to be daily seen, used, and felt, are distinguished by the absurdity of the decoration lavished upon them, and their resultant hideousness. I will ask anyone who has had anything to do with manufactures, confident that I shall have an answer in the negative, if he has found in the ordinary workman either capacity or desire to improve the character of his every day work, by the importation into it of any feeling of the beautiful? If you want any little thing done at all out of the ordinary way, and calling for just a little thought, and just a little knowledge of the way leaves grow in hedge-rows, or flowers spring from stalks, you cannot get it: you cannot get the men even to see, the difference between the work you want and that which they give you. I ask you to look at simple things to test the truth of what I am saying. Look at the patterns, for instance, on lamp glasses, for they are common enough, and see if they are good; test them by by-gone work, and see how far short they fall of the excellence it reached; compare the flowers with natural ones, and think favourably of the modern work if you can.

Again, supposing you want some little bit of stone or wood-carving done at your house; perhaps a crest over a gate, perhaps a memorial stone—you have to send out for a man to do it, and you find him with difficulty; and when he is found, ten to one, the leaves which he has carved are dead, and the faces hideous. Try him with a tombstone—ask him to design one, and see what he will produce. Do you take much notice of those elegant memorials which fill graveyards and cemeteries; for, if so, you must often have seen, how essentially ugly, and tiresomely stupid, the majority of them are; and yet in each separate stone there is space and means for no little evidence of the beautiful. There has been more than one era in the world's history when every such separate stone would have been a separate work of art, full of variety and yet perfect in unity; the true unity of the will showing out all the more clearly from the independence of individual action. But, leaving the workmen for a time, let us see what appreciation of the beautiful is displayed by his patron or employer. Do you who buy chairs and tables, looking-glasses, or chimney ornaments, study the forms and shapes of that wretched upholstery you buy? Have you ever studied the ordinary ornamentation of a looking-glass, or the back of a sideboard? Do you care much about the beauty of the pattern of that velvet with which your chairs are covered? Or do you know that in your crowded drawing-room you have jumbled together the works of differing and discordant styles to the loss of any little value which the separate articles may have originally possessed? And is it not the fact that you have bought this, that and

the other costly piece of furniture, on the strength of the interested advice of the shopman, backed by the whispered intimation that some one notorious for a long purse has purchased a similar costly article the day or the week before? And what comes of this state of things, but the daily degradation of the popular taste, and the daily strengthening of that popular error, that there is no such thing as right or wrong in the kingdom of the fine arts; but as they say "tastes differ" and so the dictates of individual caprice may be both safely and profitably followed.

Again, let me call your attention for a moment to another branch of art, that great and beneficent art of Painting. Perhaps of all the arts, this is at the present time the most popular; people seek their pleasure in the picture gallery and find it there; they ask for prettiness, and they get enough and to spare; they ask to be amused, and the painter tickles their fancy most pleasantly; they want the sentimental, and they get it; the melo-dramatic, and they find that too: pretty children, pretty fields and trees, pretty sheep and rabbits, returning prodigals prettily conceived; pretty firesides with no skeleton in the closet in the corner, all these they obtain plenty of, and are satisfied. But occasionally, and of late more frequently, before the eyes of these pleasure-seekers, a work is placed with some earnestness in it, some truth in it; something in which the first thought is not whether it shall please, but whether the work when done shall be right and good; a work which forces itself upon the notice whether we will or no, and with that terrible earnestness so appalling to those who like all things to be placid, and gentle, and mild—who assent to many things and believe nothing. Then these—and their name is legion—cry out against such a picture; refuse to see any merit in such a picture; ridicule the man who painted it, and the school to which it belongs. This is the appreciation which the good work gets; let those deny it who can. Then, as a rule, painters whose pictures must sell or themselves starve, are forced to paint down to the public appreciation; and the noblest art which any man can follow becomes altogether ignoble and valueless. And yet there was a time, a glorious time, when all painting was valuable, and its every work in measure noble; a time when painters, with a humility which we cannot understand, painted just whatever subject was appointed to them, with an uniformity of success which we are beginning to appreciate; they were sure of their judges, while their judges and employers had equal faith in them; and neither were disappointed. Must not Cimabue's heart have been glad as they carried his picture through the streets rejoicing? And would not such appreciation and such reward make his labour more constant and persevering, and strengthen him in those hours of depression so common to all, when even the strong man doubts his power, and the wise sees in his wisdom but foolishness? The art of the middle ages will also show us that the ordinary stone mason and carver turned into the beautiful or the terribly grotesque, all that his chisel touched; and in other eras, as well as in that noble one, we may most clearly see that furniture and manufactures, great things as well as small, were at once beautiful and

appropriate, and their owners admired and were satisfied with them, as well they might be; and yet we who have in so many ways advantages immeasurably superior, come as we have seen so far behind in all these things.

And why? Because Architecture has neglected her chief duty and has abdicated her rightful throne as the governor and ruler of the whole kingdom of art. She, whose duty it is to provide food for that spiritual want of man, which as we have seen, craves so constantly for the beautiful, has neglected her duty and abdicated her sovereignty altogether. For even where she has not exalted ugliness into high places, as she too frequently has done, she has neglected opportunities that were presented to her; and what with her pride and what with her indifference, she has withdrawn from exercising any influence or rule whatsoever over the greater part of her once flourishing domain. It has been now for a long time very immaterial to her, whether her works were beautiful or not: and so, disappointed and neglected, what wonder is it that men have sought out food for themselves, and gathering their wild grapes from any hedge; have not found out till too late that the food so eagerly gathered was poisonous. For out of the unbridled license of individual taste no good can come, law and order being necessities here as elsewhere; and there being no such thing in fact, as many "tastes" in art; their real number being only two—the one right and the other wrong; and the duty of Architecture is to choose out the right, and give men the right, without stopping to consider whether or not such a course will be the most pleasing to them. And so far is this true, that if Art strives only after the beautiful, and not after the right, she sinks at once into dilettanteism, and ends by losing altogether her care even for the beautiful. Let us but restore, or regain a good and national style of Architecture, and we shall soon find that those arts without which no Architecture is perfect—arts which are, in fact, part and parcel of her substance, will become national also, and will advance to a degree of perfection of which we cannot at present form any adequate idea. Painting and Sculpture unnaturally divorced from Architecture must ever languish, must ever become dissolute; but set the sculptor to fill the pediment or the niche, give the painter the panelled wall space and the breadth of the vaulted ceiling, and then see what new strength and new power both painter and sculptor will assuredly find. They will be working to a definite end, and working in unity; and though it may seem to some that their liberty is thereby checked, and their freedom interfered with, let them think that this will be more than compensated by the concentration of their energies and the fixedness of the determination and the will. Then with these greater arts properly regulated, how surely would the lesser ones be rightly governed also. It would be seen that if sculpture and painting must be in unison with Architecture, the lower arts must make part of the same family also; and the designer of manufactures would receive his education in the architect's office or the artist's studio, and would learn that such neglected qualities as fitness and convenience must be studied and secured in the first place, and that ornament must

adorn and not encumber. And so in a coming day, which I trust is not far distant, it will be seen that all art is one, and that he can best design small things who can design great ones well; and that a man fitted to build a Town Hall, or to be entrusted with the erection of a Church, ought to be better qualified to make ordinary manufactures decorative, than one whose whole qualification consists in readiness of appropriation, and ability in copying acanthus leaves. In that day the architect will be sculptor and painter too; and the painter will have a better place for the display of his works than the exhibition-room; and the sculptor than the bleak street corner, or the dull walls of desolate churches. And in that day, I do most earnestly hope, that all building will be Architecture, and thus in its measure beautiful. For building our streets and towns as we now do, we enclose our poor, our artisans, and a great portion of the middle class population, in a brick prison of constant ugliness, from which, month by month, and year by year, there is less possibility of any escape. We doom thousands of our fellow men, who, when children, rejoiced as much as we did to see the primrose and the violet budding in the spring, or the butterfly closing up his burnished wings in the sunshine; these men, I say, who were created with powers of enjoyment similar to our own, and with at least an equal need for that spiritual food for which they ask because they want, we doom to pass their lives in perpetual exile from those beauties of the natural world which they so deeply love. Perhaps not unnecessarily doomed; these, too, being in some sort "our conscripts." Yet what a different prison house theirs would be, if the rich who build and sustain it, knew but enough of their duty to see that the compensation which I have said is the first duty of Architecture, is most imperatively necessary here; and that it is possible by building beautifully and well, to secure even for those tied through a lifetime to the city or town—at least such measure of the beautiful for their daily contemplation, that their natural love of, and desire towards it, shall not be utterly quenched or destroyed as worthless. Such then, I think, is the office, and such are the duties of Architecture; it now remains that we briefly investigate the necessity of this office, and these duties being more generally understood.

Let me then divide those to whom a knowledge of Architecture would be valuable into three classes:—1st, the public generally; 2nd, the historical student; and 3rd, the architectural student. I need say but little with reference to the first of these divisions, because I think it will be evident, that if I have not in the preceding part of this address arrogated to Architecture too important a position or too high a place, that very importance, and the wideness of the interests involved in it, are in themselves sufficient reasons why the public generally should be enabled to judge better, and more accurately, not only of the real nature of their Architectural wants, but also of the ability of the architects they employ rightly to administer to those wants. For I think that there are few architects, even among those who profit by it, who would not be ready to acknowledge that owing to this general ignorance, a vast quantity of work is palmed off upon the world as

architectural, which has no manner of right whatsoever to lay claim to any such dignity. And again, all men, as Mr. Ruskin has remarked, having to do with Architecture at some time or other of their lives, and having either to build, buy, or rent, houses or shops or offices, or buildings of one kind or another, there does seem good reason for their knowing so much of this science as would serve to prevent their reposing too blindly on the judgment of others, and would enable them in some measure to judge for themselves. Nor need any real architects fear any such growth of knowledge on the part of their clients; it would be a help to them and not a hindrance, and they would reap the advantages continually, of more perfect appreciation, and more firmly placed confidence.

But with regard to the historical student, I must be permitted to say a few words, because it seems not a little extraordinary to those who are at all conversant with the history of Architecture, and the revelation opened to us by works of art concerning their originators and builders, that this study is not far more frequently made part of a general education. For the history of Architecture is not merely the history of ornamental art—not merely the tracing the way in which one style of ornamentation fell, and another arose; but it is in reality a history of the inmost heart and mind of its designers and producers. For instance, I do not think that anyone unacquainted with the Architecture of the Greeks, can thoroughly appreciate the extraordinary refinement of intellect which that nation displayed: but the truth is impressed upon us, indeed, when we find that in their buildings, such as the Parthenon, every line and angle was calculated with the most extreme nicety, and with such wonderful success, that the optical delusions, so frequent in inferior Architecture, were entirely avoided; and yet, the means for their avoidance, conducted with such skill, that it is only by having recourse to most careful measurement that the fact is ascertained that the perfection, that is, the intellectual perfection, of such Architecture, is not accomplished by chance or happy accident, but is the result of foresight and contrivance, and of the most painstaking accuracy. Every dot of stone in a Greek building has its special value: how many tons weight might we not take from some of our modern ones, with no positive loss?

Again, in the great school of Mediæval art, what a revelation do we not find of the inmost thoughts of those earnest workers. Surely, there were never men who loved the beautiful more sincerely; or saw what was right to be admired, and worthy of imitation more clearly. Yet, we are apt to think them stern, rugged men—we call the ages in which they lived the “dark ages”; and a few years ago, all thought these early builders were gloomy ascetics, with no love in their hearts, but for a harsh round of religious observances. But what has the study of their Architecture revealed to us? Their literature was admired long before their art-works; but it might, perhaps not unreasonably, be thought that Chaucer stood alone in his sympathies, singing such words as these:—

“ Wherfore I mervaile greatly of my selfe,
 That I so long withouten sleepe lay ;
 And up I rose, three hours after twelwe,
 About the springing of the day ;
 And on I put my geare and mine array,
 And to a pleasant grove I gan passe,
 Long er the bright Sunne uprisen was :

“ In which were okes grete, streight as a line,
 Under the which the grasse, so fresh of hewe,
 Was newly sprung ; and an eight foot or nine
 Every tree well fro his fellow grew,
 With *branches brode, laden with leves newe,*
 * That sprongen out ayen the sunne shene,
 * *Some very redde, and some a glad light grene.*

* * * * *

“ And as I stood and cast aside mine eie,
 I was 'ware of the fairest medler tree,
 That ever yet in all my life I sie
 As ful of blossomes as it might be :
 Wherein a goldfinch, leaping pretile
 Fro bough to bough ; and, as him list, he eet
 Here and there of buddes and floures sweet.”

But, indeed, while it was given him and others to embody such thoughts in words, a host of humbler men had put the same poetry into forms cut out of stone, times without number. In every cathedral and abbey, almost in every church, we find the carver's work bearing its testimony to its maker's love of the oak and the ivy, or the fair tendrils of the young vine, and the pleasantness of its leaves ; for in their work they placed the likenesses of the flowers of the field and the fruits of the trees, not forgetting the birds singing in the thick branches, nor the wilder plants which trailed themselves about the stems ; not forgetting, indeed, any of the natural beauties which then, as now, adorned the pleasant places of the fair country, covering it with delight. Then how well they loved a noble action, or a gracious one ; how tenderly they thought of those so dear to them, but gathered to their long rest ; how quietly they laid them on the tomb, with the hands uplifted in prayer, the head supported by angels, and the symbols of worldly prosperity or pride banished to the feet ; what majesty and sweetness they pourtrayed in the faces of those recumbent figures, and how they must have loved and revered such traits in the faces of those yet alive ! Then how satirical they were ; how they could ridicule the vices of the monks, and how they could show their hatred of tyranny and oppression ! And again, what a fine love they had for the grotesque and monstrous : the old nursery tales of giant and monster are better understood when we see in what these men believed, half in earnest and half in jest. I have not time this evening to enlarge upon this subject, but I hope what I have said will at least suffice to indicate to the general student, what he may not unreasonably expect to gain from the prosecution of this study.

And now, by way of conclusion, let me address a few words specially to those Architectural Students who are looking to this art as a means of earning a livelihood.

There is a state of ignorance which is positively disgraceful; and there are many architects who have never emerged from it. The public has not been a very exacting public with respect to the abilities it required in its architects; because the art has been so little understood, and so little cared for. But we have reason to believe that the evil day is fast passing away, and that awakening to a sense of the true importance of this art, the world will require better service from its architects than has lately been given. There are certain things which you ought to know, and must know, and yet which I am well aware many of you do not know. The history of your art is one of them. It is a study in itself most entertaining, and certainly most necessary; and it is a thing more disgraceful not to know, than praiseworthy to have made an object of study: indeed, to the young architectural student, its mastery should be his first aim. The elements of construction should either follow immediately, or be investigated simultaneously; the simple theories on which the ordinary practices are based are easy of acquirement, and your own observation must assist you in enabling you to judge how far they are calculated to provide for new requirements, and to meet new exigencies. The art of drawing will be your right hand; geometric and perspective drawing you must understand thoroughly, and you will never make an architect worth calling one, if you neglect free hand drawing also. Indeed you cannot push this art too far, so only that you follow it wisely; it is your principal means of expression, your peculiar language, and the more perfectly and fluently you can discourse in it the better. Especially you must not neglect that branch of this art, which you will particularly need in communicating with the workman; and so you must be able readily and unhesitatingly to draw or set out all kinds of carpenters' and joiners' or stonemasons' work, to its full required size, in such manner that the workman may plainly understand your meaning and appreciate your intentions. The builder's workshop is an excellent, and indeed the only place in which to study many working details properly. You have, next, to learn the art of design in all its various branches; and for this you must have a special and natural gift, otherwise you can never acquire it. And in learning the rudiments of design, patient investigation into the causes of the success of old work will be of great benefit to you. If you go to a church, or a cathedral, and see any thing which particularly pleases you, try and find out the cause, and, if possible, measure accurately the work you admire, and transfer it to paper. You will drink in the spirit of the old artists unconsciously while doing so. Then, in making or trying to make original designs, begin with small things—with windows and doors, before you try your skill with a house, and with houses before you try how you can succeed with a palace. I believe it is no uncommon thing for a very young architect to select either a palace or a range of Government offices as his first great trial of skill; and certainly it serves this good end, if he is wise—

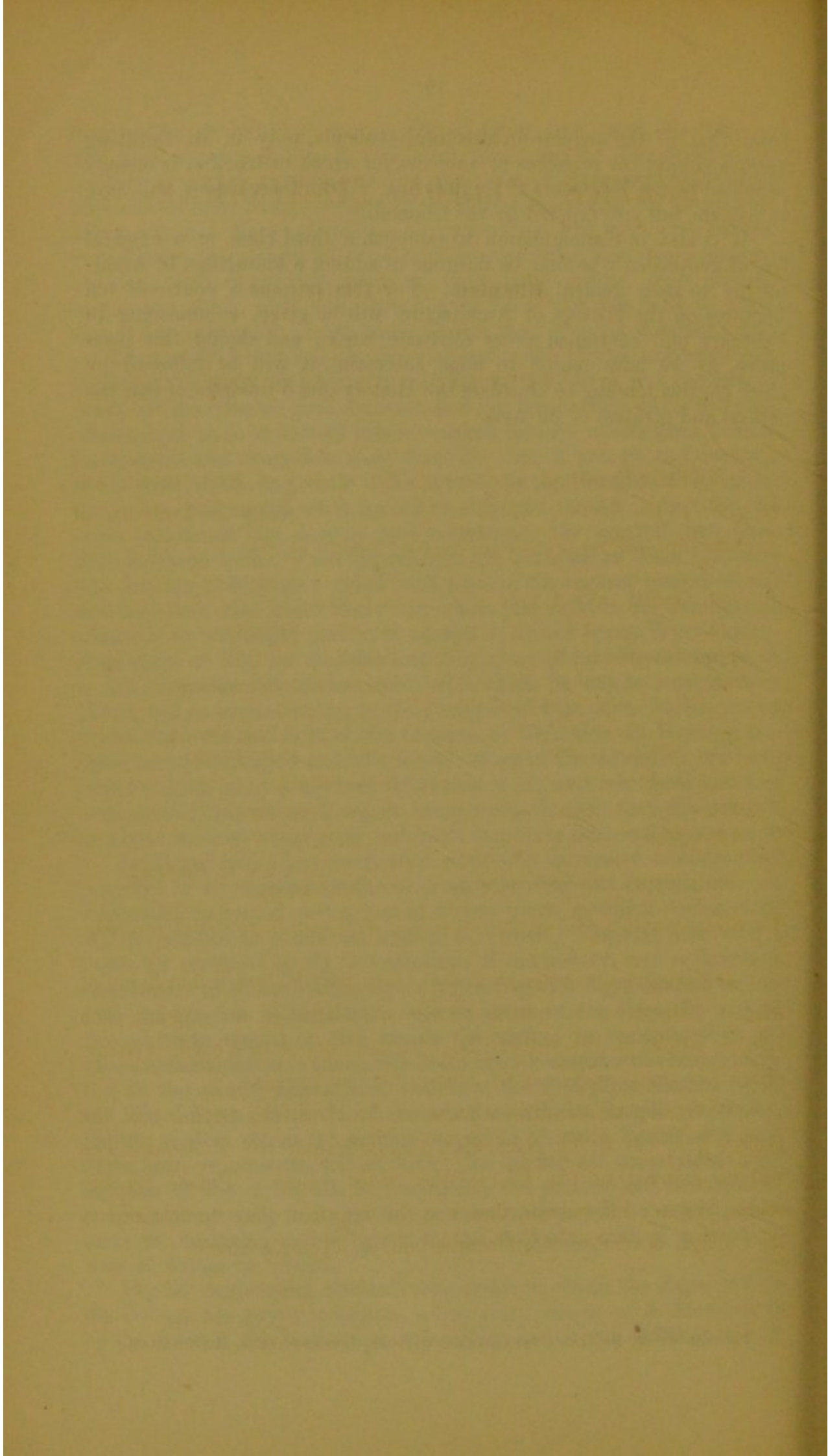
it gives him an excellent opportunity of seeing how great his folly is. But whatever you do, do it with your whole heart. Let us have no inefficient workers amongst us, but men who, working with heart and soul, will at least bring no disgrace upon the cause either by idleness or intemperance. Above all things, reverence those who have gone before, even though you should be wiser or more successful than they; remember that their experience enriches, their light guides, their failures warn you; think what you should have been had you lived in their day. You may easily design better Gothic than Thomas Rickman; and yet Thomas Rickman laid the foundation for the proper understanding of that noble style, and he, a man living in this town, was the first to point out the chronological sequence and the peculiarities of its different phases, and so to render all future research into its merits from thenceforth easier and altogether more feasible. So, if you go to Coventry, check your involuntary smile at his church, by the thought of the good, the noble, and useful work he did so ably and so well. And for the same reasons do not despise past experience: the greatest men have been indebted to it. Take for example Sir Christopher Wren; no man was perhaps more largely gifted with some of the highest powers of the architect than that great man; but when you walk in St. Paul's, and admire it as you ought indeed to admire it, do not forget Wren's childhood spent at Ely, nor that the crowning glory of this his chiefest work is not altogether due to the genius with which he was so incontestably gifted, but is in part owing to the example of that other worker in an earlier day—the architect of the Octagon at Ely, Alan de Walsingham. Once more, be diligent and be upright; think of the fellowship you have joined; think what a glorious fellowship it is, and take heed lest you even unwittingly do anything to bring reproach upon that glorious art, in whose cause so many good and great men have laboured so earnestly.

I will just add a few words with respect to the course of instruction proposed to be adopted for the students attending this department. It is intended to extend over a period of two years, in which Architecture will be studied as a fine art and as a science. The first year will, I think, be occupied by the investigation of art history, and a thorough examination of all the leading styles, beginning with Egyptian and ending with the English Renaissance; only so much of the scientific part of the art being taught as will enable the student to understand an art whose ornamentation is constantly based upon necessities of construction. But in the second year science will have the first place allotted to it, and the different methods of construction will be taught practically, and the student shown the various properties of stone, timber, and iron, limes, mortars, cements, and so forth. In the fine art department, comparisons of the styles will be instituted; the sources and treatment of ornament, especially in its relation to construction, will be investigated; hints on designing will be given to the students; and, if possible, a class of design be formed.

For the engineering students who desire to obtain the degree which the College has power to bestow, a two years' course of Architecture is by the rules of the Institution, imperative; and it will differ in extent

from that of the regular architectural students, only in its omitting various subjects or branches of subjects, for which instruction is already provided by the Professors of Engineering. Both these classes will have to pay the full fees ordered by the Council.

It is also in contemplation to establish a third class, at a nominal fee, of gentlemen who may be desirous of adding a knowledge of Architecture to their general education. For this purpose a course of ten Lectures on the History of Architecture will be given, commencing in February and continued every alternate week; and should this class prove, as we have reason to hope, successful, it will be followed by other courses tending to elucidate the History and Principles of this the earliest and greatest of all Arts.



QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM.

Faculty of Science.

ARCHITECTURAL DEPARTMENT.

A Public Course of Lectures on the History of Architecture will be given in the Reading Room of Queen's College, by the Professor of Architecture, on the following Thursday Evenings :—

I.	FEBRUARY	3, 1859	. . .	Egyptian.
II.	"	17, "	. . .	Grecian. Ninevite.
III.	MARCH	3, "	. . .	Roman.
IV.	"	17, "	. . .	Byzantine. Romanesque.
V.	"	31, "	. . .	Norman. { First Period.
VI.	APRIL	14, "	. . .	Gothic. { Second Period.
				{ Third Period.
VII.	MAY	12, "	. . .	Italian Gothic.
VIII.	"	26, "	. . .	Italian Renaissance.
IX.	JUNE	9, "	. . .	Elizabethan.
X.	"	23, "	. . .	{ The Renaissance in England.
				{ Modernism.

The Lectures will commence each evening at half-past Seven o'clock precisely.

It having been represented that there may be gentlemen living at such a distance as to preclude their attendance in an evening, each Lecture will be re-delivered the following morning at 12 o'clock, if a class of not less than twenty can be formed for that purpose.

To those attending this Course of Lectures, the payment of the College Fee will be by permission remitted, and the Professor's Fee will be reduced to 10s. 6d. for the whole course. Tickets for the course, and any information that may be required, may be obtained at the College, or of Professor Chamberlain, 17, Temple Street.

