

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the SCIENTIFIC CANADIAN :

SIR,—As you have devoted part of the space of the SCIENTIFIC CANADIAN to architecture, I have taken the liberty of writing a few lines, in the hope that they may be the means of stirring up those who are interested in the art to do something to place it in a higher position than it now holds.

I will not attempt to describe the many evils under which architecture is now struggling, but will be satisfied with drawing attention to what concerns the proprietor as well as the architect, in the hope that both parties will try to remedy the evil when it is brought to their notice.

If we take a glance at the present state of affairs, we will find that an architect's special aim seems to be to get work at any cost, both in regard to loss of self-respect and remuneration, but the lower the percentage allowed the less work will be done. The architect nearly always proportioning the amount of work he does to the amount of remuneration he is to receive. The consequences of such a system may be seen in the planning and sanitary arrangement of our houses, and in their design, or, rather want of design.

Proprietors have apparently imagined that there is just so much work for an architect to do, and that there is but one way of doing it, therefore, the man who will do it the cheapest is the best man to employ. But as there is such a thing as "Paying too much for one's whistle," even when it is bought at the lowest rate, I would advise some of them to balance their accounts and see how they stand. Perhaps they will find that it has been very expensive employing an incompetent man, and paying for his mistakes in the increased cost of the building. There is another point from which I would ask them to consider the advisableness of taking such a course, and that is to take into consideration the results in the completed building. If they find that they have a house which is badly planned, wretched in design, and the sanitary apparatus so arranged as to be the cause of sickness, they will surely be forced to acknowledge the short-sightedness of having employed a man simply because he offered to work cheaper than others, without having considered for a moment whether he was competent or not to do the work required of him.

Where the trouble lies is in the fact that the public do not recognize the difference between a competent and an incompetent man, placing both on the same level, if their terms are the same. An architect may have spent many years in study, and much money to fit himself for his professional duties, and after all may find that the services of one, who is comparatively ignorant, are preferred before his, for the reason that what he has to exchange with the public for money, whereby to gain a livelihood, has not form, so that the buyer may be able to judge of the size, even if he should be unable to decide as to its quality, and thus his superior knowledge avails him little. The man who has intelligent professional skill to exchange, which necessarily can have no fixed value, instead of material which always has a value below which it can not be sold without loss, will always be at a disadvantage, because few are able to judge of its value until experience has taught them. However, there is no reason why the architect should remain at so great a disadvantage as he does at present. United effort on the part of a few, who are really interested in their work, to raise the profession, of which they claim to be members, to its proper position in the estimation of the public, would soon bring about a better condition of affairs. For the present a thoroughly competent man must take one of two courses, either not to do any work except at a proper percentage, and consequently have little to do, or be content to accept what he can get and do as little as possible for it. If he decides to take the latter course he will not loose so much as those who have been the means of forcing him into this way of proceeding.

It lies with architects to improve this unsatisfactory condition of affairs, as it can not be expected that those who are but indirectly interested will be first to take the necessary steps, although assistance and encouragement may be expected of them in any movement which may be made in earnest by those who are directly interested. I would then call on all architects to do their utmost to make matters better for themselves, and thus benefit the public indirectly, by whatever means may be considered to be the most conducive to the best interests of architecture.

The question is how can this be done? It may seem very difficult to do anything in the right direction, but if all will assist something will be accomplished without a doubt. I would,

therefore, with your permission, call on those who have any suggestions which they think would help to solve the problem to state them, a discussion would surely result in some good, even if it did not effect a radical change. I am of the opinion that the proper course to pursue is to see that those who will be architects of the future receive a thorough training in all subjects pertaining to the profession they have chosen, for as soon as our architects are properly qualified all the evils to which architects is now subjected will gradually be removed. But how is this education to be given to students in architecture. I would propose that an architectural association be formed and incorporated, this society to take charge of the training of students in the various branches of architecture, with power to hold examinations and to give diplomas to those who are successful in passing them; and when this society has got into good working order, that powers be obtained whereby it may be able to prevent any but properly trained and qualified men from practising. Those architects who may be practising when such powers are given to be exempt. The details of this scheme can be considered in the future. I would here remind those, who having read this, will say that it is impossible to obtain the powers named, and who will refer to Great Britain and the United States as countries where such powers have not been obtained, that we live in Canada, a country as far advanced in education, if not further than these countries are, and where rings and special interests do not hold sway. I think that I may affirm without fear of contradiction that those who are striving to promote art will receive encouragement and support from those who are, or may be, in authority.

There are many reasons of greater weight than those I have urged, which might be brought forward. For instance, there is the artistic point of view, which in itself is a sufficient reason why something should be done. I hope some person able to handle that part of the question may be induced to do so.

I will now conclude by giving a quotation from a speech made by Sir Alexander Cockburn, Lord Chief Justice of England, "Architecture was a science and an art which could not be too highly appreciated, or too much admired, and the Institute of Architects, standing upon the confines of art and science, combining both, was one to which every man must look with admiration and honour."

Thanking you for the large amount of space I have occupied in your valuable magazine, I am,

Yours, in hope of an improvement,

C. G. S.

Toronto, Oct. 18th, 1875.

[Our correspondent is in error in stating that this country is as advanced in education as Great Britain or the United States. In the study of fine arts, elegance and taste, we can bear no comparison yet with those countries; most of our wealthy men in Canada who build fine houses are very deficient in this respect, and that is one reason why architects do not receive that appreciation to which their profession is entitled, and until technical education receives more consideration in our public schools, this will remain so. We fully concur, however, in the main with the views expressed in our correspondent's letter. The difficulty is to get architects, after they sign an agreement, to keep it.—Ed.]

LIME JUICE FOR RHEUMATISM.—In the *Canada Lancet*, Dr. A. H. Chandler calls attention anew to the use of the old remedy, and reports several severe cases in which good results followed its use. Without regard to the condition of the bowels—unless previously much constipated—he begins with at least ten ounces of lime juice, increasing rapidly to eighteen or twenty-four per diem—from half an ounce to one ounce or more every hour, with not less than double or treble the quantity of cold water, usually diluted and sweetened to the patient's taste. He finds that even on the second day the amendment is decided, and the disease, in acute cases, more particularly sthenic or asthenic, generally subsides on the fourth or fifth day of treatment. He usually prescribes one grain of opium, with or without lead and tannin, night and morning, in order to restrain the bowels which the juice has a tendency to relax. The effects of this treatment are, he says, rapid diminution of joint swelling, diminished perspiration, steady fall of pulse, which often becomes quite slow, with a slight tendency to syncope, the majority of cases requiring quinine and supporting food about the sixth day. Such vigorous treatment should evidently be undertaken only under the supervision of a competent physician.