

CORRESPONDENCE.

[Letters are invited for this department on subjects relating to the building interests. To secure insertion, communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the author, but not necessarily for publication. The publisher will not assume responsibility for the opinions of correspondents.]

GRANITE AS A BUILDING AND PAVING MATERIAL.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

SIR:—I was interested in reading an article with the above heading from the pen of "Experience." Everyone can agree with "Experience" that no building looks as substantial or wears as well as a granite one. That granite lends a solid appearance to a building, and that it is the best that money can buy, is equally true, but, when the same statements are made concerning granite blocks, for paving purposes, there is not the same reason for agreeing with your correspondent.

The average citizen considers that granite blocks will last for a lifetime, but statistics taken in New York show that the life of the best quality of granite pavement laid on concrete foundation is only from 12 to 15 years, and it costs \$4.50 per square yard, while Trinidad asphalt is laid there with a 15 year guarantee for \$3.50, a saving of almost 30%.

The statement of "Experience" that "In America, from New York to Denver, asphalt is giving way before the more enduring stone," can hardly be accounted for except on the ground that "Experience" does not know as much about this subject as his cognomen would indicate, as quite the contrary result is taking place, from New York to Denver. I need but mention the case of New York city itself to prove my contention. During the last five years New York has taken up over 100 different streets that were paved with granite blocks, some of them in fairly good condition, and has used the blocks for a foundation for asphalt. New York had five years ago more granite paved streets than any two cities in America, but they are getting rid of them with all possible speed. This year alone they are putting down about 30 miles of asphalt pavement, about one half of which will be put down on top of granite blocks. Fifth Avenue was paved with granite 12 years ago, and a contract was let last fall to replace it with asphalt, as the blocks were worn into cobble stones. The asphalt is laid under a 15 year guarantee, and as this is probably the heaviest travelled street in America, it looks as if good asphalt is enduring enough for most people.

Col. E. P. North, the Chief Engineer of New York, says that the difference between the price of granite blocks and asphalt is altogether in favor of asphalt, as with a 15 year guarantee it is much cheaper, and, in his opinion, a much better road than granite as it does away with a great deal of the noise which is such a serious factor in Gotham.

Experience with asphalt in Toronto should teach us that for track construction, such as we have, asphalt is not a success on account of the slight foundation under the ties; the heavy cars shake the pavement loose, causing it to break up and disintegrate.

The tracks should, in the writer's opinion, be repaved with granite blocks between the rails, and, if sides of street are not asphalted, brick should be put in the devil strip, where there is no travel, to accommodate the bicycle traffic, which must now be considered.

Time will show that brick is a fad similar to cedar block, with the exception that brick will not rot, and will last until it is worn out, while the blocks rot as quickly without travel as with it. Brick at the end of three or four years is as noisy as a granite block pavement, and under heavy travel, such as on Yonge street, would not last five years.

Why does "Experience" go away off to Berlin to try to show asphalt paving inferior to granite. It smacks of the brick men referring to what bricks did for Egypt. These cities are both a long way off! Right at home we have Bay street, laid with asphalt nine years ago, and right off it on Wellington is a piece of stone pavement for comparison. Jarvis and Sherbourne streets have been asphalted eight years, and the writer has seen no reports of officers being stuck in their deceitful crusts, but then there are asphalt pavements, and asphalt pavements here, as well as in Berlin.

W. G. MACKENDRICK.

Toronto, June 10th, 1897.

The Globe Furniture Co., of Walkerville, report good business prospects, having several large contracts for church and school seats and desks.

THE ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY.

A BRIEF outline of the history of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, of which a number of Canadian architects are members, will doubtless be of interest to our readers.

The Society was founded by the Marquis of Lorne in 1879, and held its first meeting in Ottawa on the 6th of March, 1880. The first exhibition was on the same date, opened by His Excellency the Governor-General. The title "Royal Canadian" was conferred by Her Majesty, 22nd June, 1880.

The objects of the Academy are: 1st, the institution of a National Gallery at Ottawa; 2nd, the holding of exhibitions in the principal cities of the Dominion; 3rd, the establishment of a School of Art and Design.

The first president was Mr. L. R. O'Brien, of Toronto. Since the formation of the Academy 18 exhibitions have been held—one in Halifax, one in St. John, and the others alternately in Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto. The Academy has contributed the paintings and sculpture in the National Gallery, Ottawa, and donates \$500 annually for the support of drawing classes from the living model in Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa.

Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise took a lively interest in the formation of this society.

CONDITIONS OF ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS.

A MAJORITY of the leading architects of New York have agreed that they will only take part in architectural competitions on the following conditions:—

That in any case the undersigned shall be paid at least a sufficient sum to reimburse them for their cash outlay in preparing their competition drawings.

That in case of limited competition the number of the competitors shall be definitely named and that the number shall not be increased without the consent of all competitors.

That it shall be definitely understood that the ordinary fees as published by the American Institute of Architects shall be paid as compensation for his professional services to the successful competitor.

That in work of any serious importance a professional advisor or advisors shall be appointed to act with the party instituting the competition in the preparation of a proper programme, which shall be definite in its statement of the drawings required, and their character, and of the various rules which shall govern the competition.

In the opinion of the undersigned it is very desirable that the professional advisor or advisors should be practicing architects; and the undersigned suggest that the best result can be gained by first appointing the architects to compete and by inviting them to meet with the party instituting the competition, for the purpose of consultation with regard to the preparation of the programme of competition, and to nominate the professional advisor or advisors.

It shall be the duty of the professional advisor or advisors to examine all drawings submitted by the competitors, and to place out of competition any competitor who has not submitted his designs at the date fixed for their reception, or who presents details or models which are not called for, or whose drawings do not conform exactly in number and character with the requirements of the programme, and that if placed out of competition his plans shall receive no further consideration by the party instituting the competition.

Inasmuch as the object of a competition is to adopt the general motif of a design to be further elaborated, and to select an architect for the work rather than secure plans perfectly studied in all of their details, the undersigned will enter upon no competition unless it shall be agreed that an award shall be made and that an architect shall be appointed on the consideration of the relative merits of the several schemes as shown by the drawings submitted, and that no demand shall be made for additional drawings or for a new competition.

The undersigned are of the opinion that all designs should be signed by their authors, and also that it is desirable that each competitor who has qualified by having his designs accepted by the professional advisor or advisors as complying with the terms of the competition, shall have an opportunity to personally explain his design to the party instituting the competition, in the presence of the professional advisor or advisors.