

other important work—not, mark you, to secure the “job,” but merely to get a chance to compete for it against Tom, Dick and Harry.

We are too blessedly cheap; that is all there is about it.

Many doctors and lawyers make their reputations, and then people with important cases wait around with their hats in their hands, pay exorbitant fees for mighty small services, and go away proclaiming the greatness of their advisors, who may have recommended but a drink of plain water to the sick and advised the litigiously inclined to go pay their bills.

How many architects dare charge a penny over the so-called legal five per cent., however difficult or responsible the work, and how many have prospective clients respectfully waiting around? Fewer still are they whose clients proclaim them great after passing through their hands.

A lot of men who will spend \$60,000 in competitive plans for a building committee that did not even take the trouble to look at those plans before “ordering” a new competition, involving a further outlay of \$40,000 to the competitors, and then decided not to build at all—those men, I say, need not wonder why the aforesaid committee did not even thank them for their trouble. This is not an isolated case, but one of many high-handed actions common to people who have buildings to erect. Are you surprised that such things occur? Is it not more to be wondered at, rather, that such a lowly and meek profession is not oftener made to serve the general purposes of a door-mat?

THE SCRAMBLE FOR PATRONAGE.

In our anxiety for business, for preferment, we have spoiled the public, made beggars, yes, often public nuisances of ourselves. There is more violent, cantankerous competition among us than there is in the dry goods or grocery business; fewer ethics observed, though we are long on can. about some alleged ethics, and occasionally hold brotherly pow-wows and feedings. But it is all sputter. We show it plainly, too; people know our ways pretty well; they are fully aware that nearly everyone of us carries a long knife—figuratively speaking—ever ready for our dear brother's back. We have gotten people so that they feel they are doing us a favor in permitting us to scramble for their “patronage.” It amuses them. You have seen a lot of little darkies fighting and diving for nickels thrown them by some festive passenger at a boat landing? Well, as a profession we occupy about the same position in the esteem of the public as do those urchins.

If a doctor goes wrong, or if a lawyer should play both sides of the game, his client's and the other fellow's too, not only his confreres cut him out, but the public generally fight shy of him; he is unsavory and considered apart from the rest of the flock; the flock itself has not suffered; its whiteness is still unblemished. Not so with us. Some of us have sinned grievously. Architects have played double, they have taken fees from clients and “rake-offs” from contractors and material men; they have swelled the cost of buildings and divided the results with the builders; some have done all sorts of things they ought not to have done. But they are not set aside by the public as black sheep. Oh, no! Their sins are visited upon the profession as a whole. We are all under suspicion. People actually figure upon so much per cent. to be added to the cost of building to cover architectural “fleecings.” Some are surprised when told that co-partnerships between architects and builders are frowned upon by the profession, and others smile incredulously when we assure them it is *not* usual for us to get commissions from every contractor about a building.

That is really the meanest part about the whole thing. People do not discriminate. To them an architect is an architect. The individual's experience, ability, integrity and everything else matter not; he is no better, no worse,

than Jim Jones, who may have been a horse doctor yesterday, but who styles himself “architect” to-day. We are all in the same class, a sort of unnecessary evil anyway, to be tolerated at times, but to be dispensed with whenever possible. And, as a matter of fact, the man, who does not feel perfectly confident he can be his own architect and deal directly with a builder, can be found, but one has to hunt for him.

PROFESSION WIDE OPEN.

And, after all, I repeat, can you be surprised at all this? The profession is wide open; there is no hedge about it as there is about the law or the medical practitioners; no examinations to pass, no license from State or school to be gotten. Any man who can afford a sign saying so is an architect legally, actually and beyond any question, whatever his training, his fitness, or however lacking he may be in both.

Supposing I have studied and travelled and delved for thirty years and built great structures and believe myself fully equipped to meet any demand; supposing, in fact, I should have gotten well up toward the top notch of my so-called profession. And, supposing a fellow takes an office next mine and also hangs out the magic word, “architect,” even though last week he was a plumber or a candlestick-maker. Well, what happens? People are as apt to employ him as me. He probably will skirmish around and talk big, and if he is shrewd enough to employ a clever draughtsman he will turn out some pretty catchy sketches; he will cut his rates, and the chances are he will have twice the business I have next year. Supposing he does get things all tangled up, and buildings cost more than they should, etc., his clients may congratulate themselves things are no worse; they feel sure there would have been as much trouble with any other architect. They are all the same, you know.

And why should he not be employed? True, he bears no brand, the State has not licensed him—it does its plumbers—there has been no imposition of hands or other ceremony; he just says he's an architect, and there you are! But neither has the State licensed me. I have come in by the same road as he. We have all come in that way. That I have fasted and prayed and done a long novitiate, and am really thoroughly prepared for the work I am willing to undertake, seems to be no concern of the public's. As a matter of fact, from the public's standpoint, was I not a great dunce to go to so much trouble; am I not lacking in business shrewdness for not having taken as short a cut as he did?

ARCHITECTS MUST CULTIVATE SELF RESPECT.

That is not a lamentation, mark you. I am finding no fault with the dear public. I am simply telling you how things are. Perhaps you have given scant thought to the subject before. I know, indeed, that you have not thought about it at all. What good, then, can I hope for, what result do I aim at, in these few notes jotted down haphazard? What is their purpose?

Well, if you have a sore, a really bad sore, you do not slap a plaster over it and let it go—refuse to look at it, do you? That would be a good way to infect the entire system. You open it and dress it frequently. You look all about for pus, you inject disinfectants; you do not try to hide, but to get rid of it, and it is only by fussing with it that you will succeed, however unpleasant the operation may be. So it is with this question. I want to show it to you in all its phases, in its worst aspect, however unsightly that may be. Architects themselves realize how bad it is, and are at work with disinfectants, so to speak. They are trying to purify their ranks, to have the State place some bar to the indiscriminate practice of all the riff-raff that invades those ranks; they are cultivating self-respect before demanding your respect;

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