

companies, which draw their revenues from the country, employ foreign architects. They are the people who should be approached.

If there is anything that can be done by the Government to control these companies and lead them to recognize the profession in the country, it would be an important step, to my mind.

I do not remember, except in one case in Toronto about thirty years ago, that the Government employed foreign architects. Our main difficulty at the present time is that large corporations employ American architects, when they might get the same service—and perhaps even better service—by employing Canadian architects. I believe this is a point which should be studied by the Committee.

The meeting then adjourned to the St. James Club, where the

delegates were entertained at luncheon as guests of the Montreal members, whose hospitality during the entire assembly made the visitors' stay in Montreal a most delightful one.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

The afternoon session was called to order at 2.30 p.m., when President Ouelett introduced Mr. Claude Bragdon, a prominent architect of Rochester, N.Y., who had kindly responded to the Council's invitation to address the Institute on the subject of "Architecture of the Future." Mr. Bragdon's professional reputation, the President explained, had already preceded him to Canada, and he felt that the members would derive much pleasure and benefit from what he would have to say to them on this occasion.

Mr. Bragdon's address in full was as follows:

## Architecture and the Future

*Address Delivered by Claude Bragdon Before the R.A.I.C.*

EMERSON somewhere says that we should suffer no fiction to exist for us. How many fictions sacredly cherished as truths the war has already snuffed out. An earthquake is the only adequate symbol which expresses the effect of this war on consciousness, and it may not be an unprofitable exercise this afternoon to discuss and try to discover some of the fictions in which our particular profession is more or less enmeshed.

Before the war the architectural chariot trundled along a nice, smooth road surrounded by scenery decorated with all the ancient grandeurs, and just when we fancy we are safest the road becomes a yawning chasm, and the ancient grandeurs are beginning to disappear in their own dust.

The logic which has always seemed to me a little thin, that a perfect continuity should exist between the past and the present, and between the present and the future—that precedent should always control and govern progress—has suddenly seemed to become invalid, because architecture in its last analysis is, after all, only a reflex and a reflection of consciousness, and consciousness is now moving in a direction at right angles to every known direction.

If consciousness is moving thus, what becomes of architecture? It must follow the expression of movement of consciousness, otherwise it can only produce works which are dead before they are born. Now, when we come to think it over, is not that very largely what we have been doing—the production of works that are dead before they are born?

We have been immersed in the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome. We have been keenly alive to every manifestation of beauty in every civilization with which history deals. We have made pious pilgrimages to the wrecks and ruins of ancient civilizations. But, how much have we sensed or realized of our own civilization which contains, perhaps, not so much of glory and grandeur, but which is highly dramatic, highly significant,

and which has brought into the world certain things that are unprecedentedly new?

Of course, it is no fault of ours that we have failed to sense modernity, for each is in the same predicament. I do not imagine that the architects of Athens, or the painters of Florence had much of an idea of what we call the age of Pericles, or what we call the time of Lorenzo de Medici. They were up to their necks in what they were doing, and they did what they did instinctively; but, at least they did it with some relation to everything else that was going on around them. They were the moderns of their day, and they strove to be as modern as possible.

Our predicament is that we are in the position of the fish. We do not know anything more about modernity than the fish knows about water, which is the very medium in which it lives and moves. We splash about in this medium, and we are tremendously busy, but we know very little about it. We do not sense it dramatically.

So far as I know the only man in the age in which we find ourselves who sensed it was Walt Whitman, who sensed the idea of a great democracy merging forward to some unprecedented destiny.

Now and then we glimpse the wonder and mystery of modern life, the silence of great spaces, the din and glare of great cities, the clatter of factory windows working overtime, the hunger in the hearts of the people who go to the movies and push away the hero and the heroine so that they may act the parts themselves, the festering slums cheek by jowl with the comfortably protected happy homes, each one oblivious and ignorant of the other. We look at a map of America, and we see those great cities, some of them larger than my own city, which have grown up within our own lifetime, strung along the railroad like beads on a string. We go through them in the night, half awake, and they mean no more to us than so many feathers dropped from the wing of sleep.