

decided that usage alone should settle a question of this kind. It certainly seems as if usage that requires an edict in its favor cannot be called predominant yet. There is reasonableness in the English system too, and a certain descriptiveness which is strong in the mind of anyone who has been accustomed to its use. It is interesting to note that in Mr. Burnham's plan for the Union League Club House, Chicago, the entrance floor is called the ground floor. It is only two steps above the street and is devoted to such uses—the office, telegraph, telephone, coat rooms, lavatories, barber shop, etc.—that it seems proper to call it the ground floor and leave the term "first floor" free for the floor above, which is entirely given up to what the architect calls a "State Suite." Herein is a moral which may often be found in American affairs,—that the most American practice is not always the best American practice; that in the higher developments there is a tendency to return to an old world way of doing things. Let us, who inherit in many things the way of the old world, make quite sure, before we change, that a change is necessary.

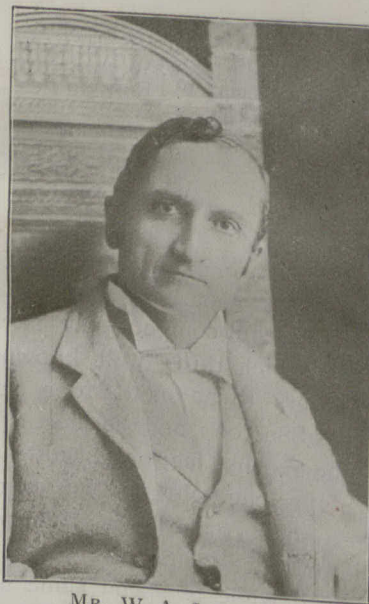
Theatre Exits.

The manager of a theatre in Montreal had to appear in court the other day, at the instance of the Inspector of Buildings, because on a single date his programme had not fulfilled the terms of the building by-law, that on every play bill shall be printed a plan of the theatre showing exits and stairways. This is an excellent regulation. It secures an exhibition of the floor plan in a place where it is sure to receive study, along with the jokes and advertisements on the programme which get such careful attention during the waits. To make the regulation fully effective there should be some provision in the by-law for a manner of representation that would invite attention, and a scale of drawing that would be understandable, so as to guard against mere compliance with the letter of the law by the insertion of a half-inch blot that would represent nothing to the inexpert, for whom it is most intended. An incidental advantage of the prominence thus given to exits would be to dispose theatre proprietors more to their consideration. If the law requires a nightly display of the exit qualities of a theatre, it is likely that some pains will be taken that this part of the plan may bear inspection. If, for instance, the plan of the Toronto Opera House were made prominent on the programme it would say in the plainest language that for the sake of space to let in the front of the theatre the lives of visitors to the theatre are nightly endangered, from the way in which the audience from the floor and the balcony are brought to a common exit. The streams from the balcony on each side enter at right angles the stream from the floor. It is true that a balustrade is interposed at the bottom of the balcony stairs to turn the flow from the balconies in the same direction as that from the floor, but it would not stand for a moment a panic rush; and its wreck, thrown down under foot, would insure catastrophe. If the balustrade could stand, the people from the floor might perhaps escape, but what would happen to the people rushing down from the balcony? At the bottom of the stairs from the balcony, which is about six feet wide, they would find a fence, about four feet from the bottom step, obliging them to turn at right angles through a door three feet four inches wide. This is a

fine illustration of the feat known as coming out of the small end of the horn. If set down in plan it would look like the section of a sausage machine; and those persons who object to theatres, and hand tracts to people who come out of them, might make use of it to hand to them going in as a graphic representation of the tract entitled, Prepare to meet thy Doom.

Canadian Building Stone.

It is surprising that the abundant building stone of this country is not more widely used. There is plenty of it and in great variety. A valuable paper read before the Ontario Association of Architects by Mr. Andrew Bell, and printed in the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER for March, 1896, ought to have had more effect than it appears to have had in introducing some Ontario stones to notice. Recently the Pan American Exposition has afforded an opportunity which has been to some extent taken advantage of by the Bureau of Mines in making the mineral exhibit of Ontario. The first consideration with the Bureau of Mines was an exhibition of ores but incidentally there was a very fine exhibition of building stone, and the descriptive catalogue of this exhibit should be in the possession of architects who are in the way of using stone. There were eight kinds of granite shown; half from the Lake



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Superior neighborhood and half from that of Lake Ontario. The best specimens were exhibited by the Bureau of Mines itself, showing presumably that there is as yet no commercial development. There was a fine red from Brule Point, L. Superior, and a beautiful grey from Ignace on the C. P. R. in the Rainy River district, where the material is said to be found in immense quantities. The only private exhibitors were T. Sydney Kirby of Ottawa, who showed a sample of grey granite and W. C. Caldwell of Lanark, Ont., who had a dark red. There were twelve examples of Syenite, which looks like granite and often takes its place in ornamental work. The only commercial exhibit was perhaps the most beautiful, a polished block of dark, solid green from Gananoque quarries, sent by T. J. Stewart, Hamilton Granite Works, Hamilton. Sandstone is said in the catalogue to be of common occurrence throughout the eastern and southern parts of the Province. The Credit Valley and Medina sandstones of Messrs Carroll & Beharriell's and Carroll and Vick's quarries are well known. There was also a good red stone of a rather dark colour sent by the Chicago and Vert Island Stone Co., Port Arthur, Ont. Other exhibitors were F. N. Gibbs, Port Arthur; the Cataragui Quarry Co. Kingston, Ont., and L. O. Armstrong, C. P. R. Offices, Montreal. F. N. Gibbs also sent some cut