

the conditions will not show that this competition was one of draughtsmanship, and yet it would seem that the quality of draughtsmanship was a most important feature in the decision. The drawings may have "fully expressed the intentions of their author," but so did the others. But what has this to do with the competition? We always had the opinion that it was the conception or the design as a whole that should win in a competition, and not the draughtsmanship or methods of expressing that conception. He gives a high position to the plan because the two portions of the building were distinct in themselves, except a portion of sixteen by thirty-two feet. Nearly all the plans show the two portions of the building distinct, as a party wall is as good a separation between two buildings as a tower emphasizing the entrance to a lane to a dry goods store. His contention as to obtaining light and safety from fire by the arrangement shown exhibits his knowledge of the points raised. Many of the other designs had much better arrangements both as to light and safety from fire. We have yet to see the building which can be lighted from a lane 15 feet wide, or which is rendered safe from fire by a space of that width with windows in the opposite walls. Nearly all the points raised by him as being in favor of the plan can be found in many of the other designs in a more highly developed form. He certainly seems to think that an elevation without a tower is rather a poor sort of thing. He places all designs with towers in first position, and those without nowhere. As towers cost money and are not of practical use, their introduction simply means the diverting of funds from other portions of the building, and where the money limit is insufficient to build a thoroughly good building, this should not be done. In this competition the money limit was too low, and consequently the designers who conceived a good design without a tower should receive more consideration than the one who had to fall back upon a tower to give dignity or excellence to his design.

Here are some of the criticisms on the other designs: "Elevation not particularly novel or specially attractive"; "Drawings very carefully made"; "The type-writers have not the full space asked for, 133 feet instead of 150 feet"; "Flat roof throughout"; "The elevations of the main building are of a neat character"; "Elevations are neat and substantial." They give a very fair idea of the method of criticism adopted by the expert. The terms mean nothing, and are of no value whatever. Instead, we should have preferred to have a statement showing wherein one plan excelled another, or was inferior, and a carefully worded and studied criticism of the different elevations submitted. A design which was very much admired at the exhibition, and which was without doubt one of the best in the competition, he dismisses with the statement that "elevations are plain in character." Well, suppose they are plain in character, is not a good design all the more valuable because it is plain in character, more especially when there was little or no money for elaborations? We should like to know on what grounds the expert allowed the design "Utility" to remain in a competition when he threw out so many because they had not the full number of drawings, when the size of the rooms were not figured as called for in the instructions. The expert made a number of very close decisions where they were not called for, and very loose ones when they should have been close. The question of the relative cost of executing the designs does not appear to have been considered by him; for certainly the one selected is not by any means the cheapest. It cannot be built for \$300,000, and where he was so desirous of following out the instructions, he should have given the relative cost of the designs more consideration. It is to be deeply regretted that this important competition has resulted so very unsatisfactorily, more especially as the Confederation Life Association did nearly all in their power to make it successful. The profession can console itself with the fact that on the shoulders of one of its own members must be laid the entire blame for the results, such as they are.

We have written the above because it is necessary that the methods of conducting competitions should be closely watched, and all defects pointed out. So long as experts make decisions

on no definite plan, but instead follow their own caprice, there can be no satisfactory settlement of this most vexed question. There have been several important competitions in this city during the past few years, and it can be said that not one of them has been perfectly satisfactory, while one at least has been dishonorable. The rightful winner of the competition has seldom if ever won any of these competitions. So long as this can be said of competitions, they are most harmful to the profession. We purpose to follow out the line which we have taken in this number, and state what our opinions are on the conditions and instructions of all competitions and the decisions of the experts, to the best of our ability. Any professional man who is prepared to assume the duties of an expert, should be prepared to have his report criticized; for if he is not, he cannot be considered a capable and fit person for the position. It is also a matter of great importance to the profession that the best designs submitted in a competition should be erected, as every building erected according to a design, the outcome of a competition, is looked upon as the best work which the profession at the time were capable of doing. Therefore, we have determined that in the interest of the profession and all its members, every competition taking place in this country will receive our attention, that a more definite set of conditions may be the result, and that a more definite line of procedure will be adopted by experts in deciding the relative position of competitive designs. Our columns are open to any person or persons who desire to object to anything we have written above, or who wish to supplement our remarks.

CONVENTION OF THE ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS.

THE first annual Convention of The Ontario Association of Architects was held in the Canadian Institute, Toronto, on Nov. 20th and 21st. Mr. W. G. Storm of Toronto, President of the Association, occupied the chair.

The following gentlemen were present:

Toronto—M. B. Aylsworth, E. Burke, R. W. Gambier-Bousfield, A. E. Boulton, Joseph Connolly, S. G. Curry, Frank Darling, D. B. Dick, R. J. Edwards, J. A. Fowler, H. B. Gordon, Chas. J. Gibson, John Gemmell, Geo. W. Gounilock, Wm. R. Gregg, Mark Hall, Geo. R. Harper, Grant Helliwell, G. W. King, Henry Langley, F. C. Law, E. J. Lennox, W. J. Mallory, Robt. Ogilvie, Almond E. Paul, Herbert G. Paul, James Smith, W. J. Smith, W. L. Symons, Henry Simpson, W. G. Storm, S. H. Townsend, Chas. F. Wagner, Mancel Wilmott, H. J. Webster, A. Frank Wickson, E. A. Whitehead.
Ottawa—Alf. McCall, D. Ewart, John W. H. Watts.
London—Geo. F. Durand, H. C. McBride, S. Fmak Peters.
Hamilton—James Balfour, W. A. Edwards.
Kingston—Jos. W. Power.
Whitby—A. A. Post.
Ridgeway—H. F. Duck.
Port Elgin—G. S. Kinsey.
Chatham—Jus. L. Wilson.
Peterborough—J. E. Belcher.
Woodstock—Thos. Cuthbertson, Alex. White.

The Secretary, Mr. S. H. Townsend, read the minutes of the preceding meeting, which were adopted.

The Chairman delivered his opening address as follows:

Gentlemen of the Association of Architects of the Province of Ontario:

As President of this Association, it is my pleasing duty in opening this first annual meeting of the Architectural Association of Ontario to welcome, on behalf of the Toronto members, those of our brethren residing at a distance from this city, many of whom have at great personal inconvenience and expense, and all of whom have at considerable loss of time, responded to the call of the Secretary and are here to-day prepared to take part in the deliberations of this convention assembled in the interests of the profession at large. Before proceeding further in these remarks, I would embrace the opportunity of extending to the Association my personal deep sense of the obligation I am laid under for the honor conferred upon me in electing me the first president of an Association destined in time to take a position amongst the learned associations second to none on this continent—well assured as I am that there is metal and talent in the Ontario profession, that when