

TORONTO ARCHITECTURAL SKETCH CLUB.

IN the Canadian Institute, that home of Science and Art, the birthplace of so much educational and literary zeal, was organized on the 20th December, 1889, the Toronto Architectural Sketch Club.

To those to whose efforts its formation is due, and to all interested members of the profession, the present prospect of the Club's permanent success must be most gratifying. In an unusually short space of time, it has got into full running order, the membership list has been rapidly increased, the most widespread interest created, and the most kindly greetings and offers of co-operation received from sister art societies. Besides all this, the Club has been most fortunate in obtaining a club room both comfortable and convenient, in the new building, corner Queen and Victoria streets.

In response to the intimation in the last number of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER and to the circulars which had been sent out, a thoroughly representative gathering of architects, artists, draughtsmen and others, was present at the organization meeting. Mr. R. J. Hovenden, on request, took the chair, and the business of the evening was commenced by the committee on organization making their report. The meeting then resolved itself into the Club, and interesting addresses were made by Mr. Jones and Mr. Blatchly of the Art Students' League, Mr. Forster of the Ontario Society of Artists, and Mr. Curry of the Architectural Guild, in which they presented the good will of their different organizations to the new Club, and gave it many words of encouragement.

Mr. Jones, on behalf of the League, very kindly placed one of the rooms of that organization at the disposal of the Club, until such time as arrangements for winter quarters could be completed. This offer was gratefully accepted, and a hearty vote of thanks was tendered to the League for its kindness. (As the club has now secured a room of its own, it will no longer be necessary to avail themselves of this kind offer).

The constitution and by-laws, as drafted by the committee, were then considered, and with some minor changes adopted.

The regular nights for meetings it was decided would be on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, and it was arranged that one should be for some technical lectures or debate, while the other should be devoted principally to the discussion of the monthly sketch competition. These competitions, of course, will be the most important feature of the Club's work, and as planned, will be most attractive forms of study for the members. The idea suggested is, that the conditions of all the competitions may be as liberal as possible, so that members may respond as time and fancy permits.

The election of officers then took place, and the result of the ballot was as follows:—President, Mr. Charles Lennox; Secretary, Mr. A. H. Gregg; Treasurer, Mr. Ernest Wilby; Directors, Mr. Chas. J. Gibson; Mr. Robt. Dawson; these five form an Executive Committee for the transaction of the business of the Club.

The first meeting for "work" was held at the rooms of the Art League on January 4th. A very interesting paper on "Architectural Design" was read by Mr. C. J. Gibson, and elicited some lively discussion. After this, the members employed themselves in sketching from life.

One of the most pleasing features of the organization is the general enthusiasm of the members. Evidently the Club is the outcome of long cherished hopes, and it certainly meets a long-felt want. In the club room, the members will always have the advantage not only of social intercourse, but also of mutual professional aid.

An interesting and instructive programme for the winter will be provided, a number of papers already being promised by well-known architects.

With the extensive use of tin roofing plates came the practice of some importers of offering cheap and nasty plates, thinly coated and full of concealed defects. Merchant & Co., of Phila Delphi, instituted the practice of guaranteeing every box of plates, then stamping the brand and thickness on every sheet, and excluding wasters or defective sheets, and lastly by branding the net weight of the 112 sheets on each box, to satisfy the customer that he obtained full weight and just what he paid for.

"ABILITY OF ARCHITECTS TO ESTIMATE."

WINNIPEG, MAN., Dec. 6th, 1889.

Editor CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

SIR,—It is so gratifying to find endeavours are being made through the medium of your valuable paper to educate the general public to properly appreciate our profession, that I venture to add my modest endorsement to the able letter by "T Square," on the question of the ability of architects to estimate, and the system of providing contractors with bills of quantities. The *modus operandi* is, that after plans and specifications are prepared, they are handed to a Quantity Surveyor, who measures the amount of labour and material, and classifies under each trade, thereby compiling a complete bill of all the labour and material in the building, and the requisite number of copies are lithographed. One of the items of the aforesaid bill is, "allow for quantities," so that every one tendering includes it in his estimate, and only the successful one has to pay.

Unless the system is properly carried out and understood, proprietors instructing architects are inclined to think that, not only are they bound by the quantities, and should there be any mistake made they have to pay for anything not in the bill, but that the cost of preparing the quantities, and which is added to each tender, increases the cost of the building without any consideration to them. Now, while it is quite true the proprietors are bound by the quantities, the rule cuts both ways, the duty of the surveyor being that upon the completion of the work, he should measure the actual building and adjust the account, adding to, or reducing from, as the case may be, the cost of additions or deductions being calculated upon the same rates as the priced bill upon which the tender is made, and which should be in every case deposited with the architect. I have found in practice that unless alterations in the plans are made, deductions more often occur than additions, and should the contrary be the case, the surveyor sees that only work actually done is paid for, which no honest man would object to. Therefore the proprietor, as much as architect or contractor, is benefited by the valuable services of the quantity surveyor, and should be paid by him.

Although many architects make a practice of taking out quantities for their own protection and guidance in issuing progressive certificates, yet, by doing so, they are performing another professional man's work without being paid for it. A quantity surveyor in England is a distinct profession, and when he and his services are recognized here, we may look for closer tendering, and a more healthy state for both the profession and contractors.

I will close this, I fear, already tedious letter, by calling your attention to the existing law in Manitoba, and for what I know in other parts of Canada, which thoroughly ignores architects. Therefore steps should be taken to place us on a par with other professions. I allude to the statute setting out the fees to be paid to professional witnesses, which will be found to mention doctors, lawyers, engineers and land surveyors only.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR T. TIMEWELL.

"CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER" SERIES OF PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

THE following is a list of competitions in Architectural subjects which we have decided to hold during the winter.

1st.—Plans of a serving pantry, 100 square feet in size, showing cupboards, shelving, etc., with details of same. Plans to be sent in on or before 1st February next. First prize, \$5; second, one year's subscription to CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

2nd.—Designs with details for front and vestibule doors, with plan of vestibule. Designs to be sent in on or before 1st Feb., 1890. First prize, \$5; second, one year's subscription C. A. & B.

3rd.—Details of the interior of a small house to include those for staircase, doors, architrave, base and windows. Designs to be sent in on or before 1st March, 1890. First prize, \$10; second, one year's subscription to C. A. & B.

4th.—Design with details for four mantels, two of wood, one of brick and one of stone. Designs to be sent in on or before 1st April, 1890. First prize, \$5; second, one year's subscription C. A. & B.

5th.—Three designs with details, for front fence. Designs to be sent in