ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS' CONVENTION.

THE second annual convention of the Association, held under the Act of Incorporation assembled in the School of Practical Science, Toronto, on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 2nd and 3rd inst. The following members were present:

Messrs. Storm, Langton, Curry, Price, Jas. Smith, Jos. W. Power, Wagner, Helliwell, Gambier-Bousfield, Gregg, Jarvis, Wickson, J. A. Ellis, Willmott, Law, McBride, Burke, Maycock, Jas. Adams, Belcher, Billings, Townsend, Whitehead, W. A. Edwards, Darling, Moore, Sproatt, Edwards, Webster, Kinsey, Gordon, Langley, Gemmell, Symons, E. J. Lennox, McCallum, Bowman, and Kennedy. Among the visitors present were Hon. G. W. Ross, and Messrr. Hutchison and Clift, of Montreal.

THE President of the Association, Mr. W. G. Storm, took the chair at 3 p. m. He regretted the fact that a large number of members had written to him expressing their inability through sickness to be present.

The minutes of the last annual convention were read by the Registrar, and after having been slightly amended, were on motion adopted.

On rising to deliver his annual address the President was received with applause. He spoke as follows:

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

Gentlemen,—In opening this annual Convention of the Architectural Association of Ontario, I desire to extend the right hand of fellowship to our brethren residing at a distance from the city, to welcome them on behalf of the resident members, and to express a hope that their visit at this time may be a means of drawing us all more closely together and of promoting the interests of our noble profession. This meeting is the second held under the authority of the Act of the Ontario Legislature, which became law on the 7th of April, 1890, but the fourth since our first organization as an Association, and now that we are fully organized with a statutory constitution, it is to be hoped that our annual meetings may increasingly stimulate enthusiasm and energy, and afford profit and instruction to the older as well as the younger members of the profession, for we must never forget that, irrespective of age, we all are, or ought to be, students to the last.

Architectural students of the present day, and especially in this city, are to be congratulated on the educational advantages they possess. In addition to the carefully prepared curriculum of this Association, there are the benefits to be derived from connection with the Toronto Architectural Sketch Club in the study of architectural drawing and in hearing the lectures or talks which are given from time to time on subjects intimately connected with the practice of the profession. This Club might further extend its usefulness by establishing classes for the study of structural drawing and building construction. The lectures and drawing classes conducted by Prof. C. H. C. Wright in the School of Practical Science, I have no hesitation in strongly recommending to the consideration of all students who may be able to avail themselves of them. They are, in my opinion, the best ground work for the future study of the profession in all its details, besides saving for the student two years study in the office of an architect. It will certainly be strange if architectural students are not in future good draughtsmen and learned in the various subjects appertaining to their art, for it cannot be said that ample opportunities for study, or able professors and teachers, are not at their command. I venture to express the hope that architects who have pupils in their offices will in a liberal spirit afford them every possible facility for deriving full benefit from the exceptional educational advantages to which I have referred.

In connection with the topic of students' advantages, permit me to say a few words upon a kindred subject of great interest to the profession at large, and affecting it quite as directly as any other. I am led to refer to it because the attention of the Association will shortly be directed to the first examinations of students and candidates for enrolment on the register of the Association as fully qualified architects, which examinations will be held under our new code of laws as directed by the Act of Incorporation.

There are some who say that architecture is an art, and that as it is impossible to establish any uniformity of opinion in matters of taste it is equally impossible to set up any uniform test. This is partly true; but is this a full definition of architecture? In these days of invention and demand for scientific knowledge and treatment of every requirement of human life, building has become proportionately scientific, and the architect must accordingly be a man of education in all that pertains to constructive science. Buildings in these northern climates have to exclude severe weather and to be constantly occupied, and they must be well adapted to all the conditions of comfort and health. The architect must therefore be an expert in the nature and qualities of material and also in sanitary science. Without this he is like a student of language who has never learned its grammar, and from whom we may expect nothing but blunders.

I yield to none in my appreciation of the nobility of our calling as the embodiment of the highest form of art. But architecture is more than an art. It is an art, a science, and a profession. And what nobler or more elevating occupation can be conceived than to design with fitness and clothe with beauty those permanent necessities of every-day life so that each in its turn may contribute to the convenience and pleasure of mankind? The unique characteristic of our calling is, that it combines such different qualifications—artistic taste, scientific knowledge, business proficiency. We have no claim to be architects in the true and full sense of the word unless we are artists—able so to dispose and clothe the materials with which we have to deal as to produce beauty of form and proportion. But we must also be scientists, so familiar with the strength and properties of materials as to combine them in sound construction. And we must, moreover, be men of business, so conversant with affairs as to be able to protect the pecuniary trusts which are committed to us. Of what good to society would be the most graceful design in architecture if it was so devoid of constructive merit as to collapse on the first test of stability? Or conversely, what claim to architectural merit has the most perfect construction unless clothed with beauty? Architecture is composed of elements, each one of which is essential to the unity of the whole, and without any one of which it would be incomplete and useless to society. There are those amongst us whose proclivities and aspirations are specially artistic; there are those whose genius is constructive; there are those who are *par excellence* men of business. The ideal architect is the man in whom these qualities are united—who is an artist, a constructor, and a man of business. It is given to few to excel in all, though there are many who, possessing a general knowledge of each, are proficient in one or the other. And is one who is distinguished by artistic taste to regard with indifference or a species of contempt others who may be less artists and more scientific? Or is one whose genius is constructive to look askance at others who are more purely artists? No! architecture is not merely an art; it is not merely a science; it is not merely a profession; it is the combination in one of the artist, the constructor, and the man of business; and those who claim that it is one only, to the detriment of the others, detract from the nobility as well as from the unique character of their calling. They vainly strive to disintegrate things which are inseparable, and which must go hand in hand. As well seek to sever cause from effect; as well assert that neither root nor stem has any part in providing the rich foliage or the delicate flowers on which the eyes of man feast with delight.

I have been led to offer these remarks upon what I consider the true standard of the profession for the reason—as you have all been informed by circular from the Registrar—it is proposed to hold in April next our first examination in preliminary subjects, intermediate and final qualifications for full membership in the Association. The subjects which have been selected for the present examinations are not of a very abtrsuse character, as it has been deemed more prudent at this time not to be too severe or exacting in the standard of qualification, inasmuch as those candidates for membership in the Association expecting to present themselves for this ordeal have not had the advantage of previous training so as to be properly fitted for a rigid examination. But as years roll on, and the students become better educated and have greater facilities for qualifying themselves in every branch of the art and science of the profession, it is expected that the standard of qualification in the several examinations will be elevated by degrees, so that in a few years, to be a member of the Architectural Association of Ontario will be a talisman into the best kindred associations in the known world.

I indulge in the anticipation, the fulfilment of which I may not live to see, that every member of this Association will be a qualified architect in the sense of having passed an examination instituted by his brethren as the necessary qualification for membership. The affix "M.O.A.A." would in such circumstances, and in the eyes of the public, mean much more than it does now, for it could then be used only by those who had passed the test of a qualifying examination. When my confident anticipation is realized some years hence, members of this Association will be proud of their proper distinguishing letters, and will take care to relegate them to no second place, because they will be acknowledged and accepted by the public as the evidence of professional qualifications which no other letters can convey. And it is to be borne in mind also, that, to retain this privilege the architect must keep himself clear on the register of the Association, which, according to the Act of Incorporation, the Registrar is directed to revise and publish annually in the month of January for the guidance of the profession as well as information for the public.

And here I might be pardoned for digressing for a moment to refer to the series of tests of building materials which through the kind courtesy of Professor Galbraith, Principal of the School of Practical Science, have for some time past been, and are now being conducted in this building, in association with the professors of the School, by a Committee of the Council of this Association, to determine the strength of our native stone, and which will be followed from time to time by the testing of all other domestic materials used in building; these tests when completed and the results properly set forth in tabulated form, will be of inestimable value to the profession, from the fact that the tables will be more reliable as a basis of calculation than those now in general use. And there can be little doubt from the information gained in the tests already made, that there are many native stones now little known to the profession which will be brought into general use, replacing the imported stones