



CORRESPONDENCE



Objects to Criticism of Institute of Architects of Canada

ARCHITECT C. L. HORWOOD, of Ottawa, objects to "mass of criticism and denunciation" of registration policy of the Institute of Architects of Canada in January issue of *Construction*. Believes Prof. Nobbs has no reason for his enmity to the scheme. Thinks Mr. Eden Smith has nothing to substantiate his statement that proposed Act would "fossilize the profession." Maintains one "Horwood's" opinion as good as another. On the whole Mr. Horwood makes a strong plea for the proposed bill of the I. A. C.

Editor *Construction*:

Dear Sir,—In your January issue you certainly have gathered together a mass of criticism and damnation from professors down to editors, against the proposed legislation to incorporate "The Institute of Canadian Architects," and not one small voice raised in its behalf, although the great majority of practising architects endorse it. Is this accident or design? Far be it from me to assume any brief to take up the cudgels in its behalf, but the arguments used against the measure are so evidently one-sided, that I take an Englishman's privilege of defending the society, to which I have the honor of being a member. The whole of the adverse comments simmered down appears to be:

That the critics object to making the profession a close corporation under an examining body, composed of members of the Institute; for fear of what? Professor Nobbs gives no reason for his enmity to the scheme, but talks of education, hemoans the fact that architectural education is at such a low ebb in the Dominion, and suggests as a remedy architectural museums.

No doubt museums would be a good thing, but with a museum in each of the large centres, how are we to make the student study in them, or how help the students in the widely scattered towns of our great country? Perhaps, though, the professor means this as a joke, and wants the museums to incarcerate the "fossils," which Mr. Eden Smith is so sure will be created by the formation of the Institute.

Respecting "fossilizing the profession," Mr. Smith should not rely on such a bald statement off his own bat, without some arguments to substantiate it. Every precedent of "close corporations" in the professions, of which I am aware, has had the opposite tendency; I will instance medicine, law and dentistry: these professions have made gigantic strides since they became "close corporations." And why? Simply because in "union there is strength," for the mind of the whole profession, bent on attaining and studying certain subjects, must be more advantageous than the separate efforts of individuals.

Mr. J. C. B. Horwood objects "because it would be a very bad policy in these days to enact such a law, and also because it would not give the public the protection needed." So far as the "bad policy" is concerned I fail to see why the policy would be any worse "in these days" than it would be at any time, and also without very potent reasons (which are not given), why it is a bad policy at all; in fact as one "Horwood's" opinion should be as good as another's, I will later try to show why I think it a good policy.

The protection to the public is not exactly in the preventing of unsafe buildings being erected, though that is

a factor, but the greater protection of having a trained body of experts, specially trained for the work, and wearing the honorable title of architect, from whom the unknowing public can select a man with the knowledge that he has the right to use the title, and that he has been endorsed by his fellow practitioners, as a good and safe man. No one would ever question the fact that the proper education and training of the architects of the country, must be a great benefit to the community amongst whom they work, for the standing of the town or city in its culture, and in its progressiveness is largely measured and reflected by its most direct evidences, viz., its buildings; and if you have untrained and uneducated architects, you must have poor cities, and towns, from an artistic standpoint. A poor artist can paint a picture, and hang it in a closet, it hurts no one. A doctor can bury his mistakes, but the architect's work is ever before us in the most conspicuous places, and is an enduring monument either to his ability or incapacity.

The general public have no protection from the unsightly buildings which are erected, and the most direct way of protecting themselves is by making architectural education compulsory, the same as other educational matters are, and the Institute of Architects have this in view in the bill now before Parliament.

As the matter stands at present, any Tom, Dick or Harry can call himself an architect, if he feels that way, without the slightest knowledge of the profession, and in consequence, the standard of the profession is very low and will remain so, until education is enforced.

The architects of the present day have the closest kind of corporation so far as students are concerned, for they have absolute control over those whom they bring into their offices.

The present generation of architects will gain nothing by the legislation sought for, for they will only bring in better trained men into the profession to compete with them. In closing let me beg you to believe that the act of the architects is not selfishness, but a sincere desire for the uplifting of the profession.

Your faithfully,

E. L. Horwood.

Bank Street Chambers, Ottawa, Jan. 27, 1908.

Mr. Chausse Approves of Elimination of "Close Corporation" Clause From Proposed I. A. C. Charter

MR. ALCIDE CHAUSSE, secretary of the Institute of Architects of Canada, calls attention to proposed "Bill to provide for the Registration of Architects," to come before the next session of the British Parliament. Approves of the elimination of the "Close corporation" clause in the proposed charter for I. A. C., and the adoption of a law along the lines of the Illinois measure, or the proposed British Bill, after the I. A. C. has been granted its charter.

—Editor *Construction*.

Dear Sir,—Have you seen the "Bill to provide for the Registration of Architects," which came before the British Parliament in 1905, and which was opposed by the Incorporated Association of Municipal and County Engineers, on the ground that one of its clauses was detrimental to the interests of local authorities and their engineers and surveyors? Since then clauses 27 and 28