

the source of disease. Deleterious gases may arise from these cisterns, and in thickly-populated districts it is much safer to dispense with them.

ON ARCHITECTURE.

BY ERNEST E. T. SETON, PRACTICAL ARCHITECT.

Among the many arts and sciences which received a direct or indirect revivification from the system of art teaching inaugurated by Prince Albert, and dating from the great exhibition of '51, perhaps none is of greater and more lasting interest to the generality of mankind than that of architecture.

It is with a view of bringing this subject more prominently before the public, and of laying down clearly the fundamental principles of the art that the present paper is written for TRUTH.

Architecture has been defined as the art and science of building, and though many have objected to this definition our purpose will be answered well enough if we accept it as it stands.

The fundamental principle of architecture, as of all arts, and indeed of everything good in the world, is truth. It must be true to its object, true to its matter, and true to its maker. Or, to be more specific, true architecture considers, firstly, the object of building and permits no capricious notions to divert the form to the injury of its utility.

It is true to its material, for each kind is used in the way for which it is most suitable, and in the manner whereby the greatest strength may be secured; i.e., it will be without foolishness.

It adapts itself to the circumstances of the owner, to the varying conditions of climate and locality; without shams and without deceit.

Whatever accords not with a taste cultivated on these lines must be wrong, although not necessarily far astray, still wrong, and, therefore, condemnable as the beginning of evil.

With these three propositions in mind it will be seen that common sense is, after all, the foundation of true art. To give an illustration: It may safely be said that, if a man of common sense and judgment, with a love of nature and a love of home, a knowledge of practical building mechanics, but with no opinions or bias whatever, on the subject of what is conventionally termed architectural style, set about to build himself a house, he will build one in perfect taste. In the face of this what a commentary it is on modern builders to say that twenty years ago, among structures of any pretensions, there was not more than one building in every ten that was not contemptibly and atrociously ugly.

For the further elucidation of the above proposition an explanation may be made. A knowledge of building mechanics was assumed as a *sine qua non*, also that the man was endowed with common sense, for then he would build with each material in a manner adapted to its properties; i.e., he would build strongly, which is most important, and this is one reason why jails and lunatic asylums are among the most admirable of modern buildings. It was also assumed that he had a love of home, for then each part would be studied out and made in the most convenient way for domestic comfort, and, therefore, there would be a perfect freedom from one of the meanest and deadliest enemies of beauty and truth—the unreasoning hankering after machine-like uniformity. Lastly, our type must be a love of nature, for this love will prompt him to decorate his home, not with fretwork of

unmeaning and hideous scrolls, but with natural forms, and these are always beautiful.

Lest any be disposed to challenge the conclusions here arrived at, reference need only be made to the builders of the early centuries after the Conquest; the conditions are precisely as herein proposed, and the buildings that have been preserved are to us now appreciated as masterpieces of that beauty which is but the material form of truth.

After one or more centuries had passed, great changes came over English national life. This really retrograded in a terrible degree from the manly standard of previous ages, and perhaps reached its lowest ebb in the reigns of the Charles. Of the low moral status of the public mind at this period we have accurate records in the architecture of the public buildings of the day, as well as the residences of those of the nobility who then required new establishments.

Without any regard for the object of their edifices, men would twist and contort them into every conceivable form, apparently to be a mere vent for the superabundant folly in their natures. One nobleman would have the ground plan of his new home in the form of his family crest; another would have it shaping the initials of his name; yet another would require the outlines to represent a certain animal or head; the profile of a gable must conform to the likeness of some one whom he desired to honor, and so on to infinity with these absurdities. All were carried out without any regard to the spoliation of the interior of the building, and, moreover, with a supreme contempt for the barbarous work of the past earnest and sensible age.

The decorations of these buildings were in keeping with their general character; ribbons and scrolls, unnatural garlands, bangles, and so forth. Anything indeed, to be grotesque and affected, but nothing of beauty or of nature. The same ignoble spirit pervaded every art and every pursuit of the age. The very trees of the landscape had to be cut in uncouth forms and fantastic shapes, instead of being permitted to grow in the stately beauty which is the attribute of every tree in our land that is left to itself, the sun and the wind.

We will not dwell further on this age of architecture, nor will we shock the sensibilities of the reader by condemnatory references to buildings which are beginning to receive the reverence usually accorded to age, but which are none the less unworthy of admiration as they are false to all principles of beauty. We will rather turn to the more pleasing task of pointing out what is good in such of the buildings of the past as are pictorially familiar to the general public, and such as have recently been erected on our streets.

But, before proceeding to the analytical consideration of any building, let us expand into the practical shape of laws the abstract definition already enunciated.

1st. Let the general shape of the building be whatever is best for its proposed use; leave the beautifying for after consideration.

2nd. Let the material be used so as to secure the utmost strength. Thus, stone or brick must be built perpendicularly, and, the latter at least, always arched over openings. Wood must run in straight lines, for curvilinear wooden structures are almost sure to be across the grain, and, therefore, weak, and a source of annoyance; exception may here be made in favor of timber grown or bent to the form required.

3rd. Avoid monotony. The best buildings have, in similar parts, a certain uniformity or symmetry, but, on examination

it is always found that there is sufficient dissimilarity to guard against any feeling of monotony.

4th. Let the ornamentation in no way interfere with the natural use or true general form of the object. The main outlines are to continue the same, and decoration is to be an elaboration of little more than the surface. Ornamentation not formed on these lines is disfiguration.

5th. Avoid outside color decoration; it is not sensible; some exception, may, perhaps, be made in favor of variations of coloring obtained by using different materials, as red and gray stones, &c., but mere frescoing is altogether false and reprehensible.

6th. All shams are contemptible, and although many contrivances that were once frauds are now so well known as to deceive no one, they are none the less to be avoided; they grate upon a correct taste. A lie is still a lie, even though too clumsy to deceive. In this connection it is worthy of note that good taste will often reject parts which, though not in themselves decidedly wrong, have, through continual association with untruthfulness, become objectionable and offensive.

With these laws in view, let us glance at certain of the buildings about our cities. The Toronto reader must be familiar with the Equity Chambers on the corner of Victoria and Adelaide streets, and if these be subjected to criticism in accordance with the laws laid down, amusement and instruction may be derived from the study.

At the time this building was erected, some ten years ago, it was a vast improvement on the style then generally adopted in Toronto, and for long was pointed out as one of the ornaments of the business part of the city. But even it exhibits many details which are, architecturally, so bad that our wonder is excited at their being introduced by a designer so evidently possessed of some taste. At the outset the general contour is unpleasantly fantastic and annoying, from its entire lack of breadth and repose, and yet throughout this fantasy there is a monotony which is equally irksome. The columns at each window are too small for their apparent work, for parts of a whole should not only be strong but also look strong. The gables on Victoria street are good in form, but that on Adelaide street is spoilt by its window, while the skylines of all are marred by the wriggly, unmeaning iron work, which is the more out of place from its conjunction with the solid and shapely stone coping.

The tower is not a little spoilt by a corrupt hankering after a machine-like uniformity, which the architect would, doubtless, like us to call by the more euphonious term, "symmetry." There is some ugly diaper and unmeaning stone ornamentation about the highest large window, and a vulgar and irrational design for the exclusion of most of the light in the spandril over the door.

But there are many points of great excellence. The diaper of black, red, and white brick on the second story is an admirable specimen of that style of decoration, while the arches on the windows of the third and fourth stories might grace the walls of a palace. Altogether, this building may, by its erection, be said to have marked the advent of a new and better era in the architecture of the business buildings of Toronto.

Lack of space prevents at present taking into fuller consideration the construction of private dwellings, in which branch of the art we have now a number of excellent examples in Toronto, the consideration of which will be found both pleasant and pro-

fitable, especially to such as desire to make for themselves homes which, in style and decorations, shall be above the silly caprices of fashion, and shall continue to be a source of increasing satisfaction, inasmuch as their construction was guided by the principles of true art.

THE CANADIAN REBELLION.

REMINISCENCES OF AN EYE WITNESS.

BY JOHN FRASER, MONTREAL.

III.

The sun had gone down, and that over to be remembered Sunday, the 4th day of November, 1838, closed in darkness over the unlighted streets of old Montreal.

The Lachine escort, after delivering their sixty-four prisoners to the gaol guard, reformed for their return; rain was then pelting down in torrents. They had over ten miles to reach home. That tramp is as fresh in the memory of the writer as if it were to-day. Artillery was placed at every avenue leading from the country, and the city gate at Dow's Brewery closed after us, with a death-like sound. There were no macadamised roads in those early days; it was mud under foot, mud to right, mud to left of us, mud everywhere, and thick darkness all round! Worse still, at any step a concealed enemy might be met. Every few minutes a cavalry man dashed past, hailing us, with despatches to or from Montreal. It was an exciting march. Tired, wet and hungry, the escort reached its headquarters at Lafanimo's Hotel, Lachine, by ten o'clock that night.

Monday morning, the 5th of November, 1838, was dull and cold. The old village presented a grand and cheering sight. It was full of armed men. The Lachine Brigade of three hundred was in full force, not in the same rig as in the previous December. They were now attired in full military costume, having comfortable pilot cloth overcoats, grey trousers with red stripes—all able-bodied men—farmers, farmer's sons, and farm hands, well-fitted for any hard or rough work. The words, "the might that slumbers in a peasant's arms," might be fittingly applied to them.

One dear to all was missing—their old leader, Major Penner, was not there. He had gone over to England the previous summer to pay a visit to his old Hereford home, the home of his youth. The men missed him sadly. Sir John Colborne supplied the vacancy by sending out Captain Campbell, of the 7th Hussars. The boys soon took to their new leader.

Besides the Brigade the village was filled with Indians from Caughnawaga, and there were several hundred of the Montreal men who had joined. It was expected that at any moment the order would be given to advance on Chateaugay. It was with difficulty the men were restrained from making an attack on their own hook, without orders. This would have spoiled the whole affair and might have proved disastrous.

Sir John Colborne's plan was to place the regulars between the rebel camps at Chateaugay and Beauharnois and the frontier, so as to intercept succor or prevent escape, leaving us, the force at Lachine, in their front, to prevent their escape to the northern district. His, Sir John's, headquarters were at St. Johns. Orders were sent for the Glengarry Highlanders to cross at Cotau du Lac and to march down the south side of the St. Lawrence on Beauharnois, to arrive there on Saturday night, the 10th. The Lachine Brigade, with volunteers from Montreal, was to cross to Caughnawaga the same night (Saturday) and to march with the Indians, early on Sunday morning on Chateaugay.