

vented them from giving up a few hours of their time to the consideration of matters affecting the general welfare of the profession and the cultivation of the acquaintance of their professional brethren. There were about fifty architects in attendance. A gratifying feature, and one which contributed greatly to the success of the Convention, was the presence of representatives from every section of the Province.

In Mr. W. G. Storm, the Convention found a presiding officer capable of discharging with grace and decision the duties of that important position. Under his direction, and with the assistance of able coadjutors in the persons of the executive officers of the Association, the work of the Convention, from the commencement to the close, progressed harmoniously and satisfactorily. A number of excellent papers were read, which we shall take pleasure in presenting to our readers in subsequent numbers. The exhibition of architectural drawings, specially noticed elsewhere in this paper, was a source of surprise and delight to every architect, as well as to hundreds outside of the profession who were invited to make an inspection of them. Finally, the banquet at which the visiting members were entertained by their Toronto brethren, proved to be in harmony with all that had gone before, and resulted in promoting acquaintanceship, good-fellowship, and *esprit de corps*, upon the cultivation of which the success of the Association so much depends.

The coming year will be an important one for the profession of architecture in Ontario. A carefully considered draft of an Act of Incorporation is to be submitted for the approval of the Legislature at its approaching session, and its fate will be watched with no little anxiety. It is within the power of every member of the Ontario Association of Architects to bring some influence to bear upon his representative in the Legislature for the promotion of the passage of this measure. Let every particle of such influence be exerted before the opening of the Legislature. If this is done, we see no reason to doubt that the Incorporation, with its accompanying advantages, will be secured.

COMPETITIONS, before they can be satisfactory to the profession, as well as to the public, will require changes to be made in the conditions and in the methods of deciding them, which will insure that all parties interested will receive their proper positions. As now conducted, it is as probable that the successful competitor will win by a "fluke" as by the merit of his work, and that the party or parties holding the competition will proceed to erect a building according to a design much inferior to the one which they should have adopted. Conditions of competitions have been a fruitful source of complaint, and much effort has been given to make them perfect. Notwithstanding such effort, the conditions still remain a source of trouble, especially if they are interpreted in a sense that they were never intended to bear. It had been thought that conditions were very nearly perfect, but it would seem from a recent competition that such is not the case. It now devolves on those drawing up conditions to word them carefully, so that no possible meaning can be taken from the wording other than that intended by those who prepared them. Competitors must study out carefully the exact purpose and meaning of the conditions, and also all interpretations which a man seeking for non-intended meanings may be able to draw from the wording of such conditions. It has been generally understood that the literal meaning of many conditions need not be fulfilled if the spirit of such conditions were adhered to. Now it would appear that the literal meaning of conditions must be adhered to, even when such close adherence is absurd and unreasonable. There might be something said in defence of requiring competitors to fulfil conditions of doubtful usefulness if they were paid for their work, but when they are not so paid, and there is no necessity for unreasonable restrictions, they should be treated with a slight amount of consideration if not courtesy, as they have spent time and money in preparing a design with small hope of benefit. Moreover, those who are at the expense of a competition should not discover that one-third or one-half

of the designs submitted have been ruled out on the most trivial technicalities, more especially as among the designs ruled out may be the design which they are seeking, and to obtain which they have gone to a large expense and much trouble.

When competitions were in their infancy, nothing was said of the number of drawings which should be sent in, the scale to which they should be drawn, nor the style of execution. It was found that competitors sent in numberless drawings to all imaginable scales, and executed in all styles of draughtsmanship. It was most difficult to decide which was the best design when the drawings were prepared to different scales and according to very different methods. This resulted in conditions being drawn up defining the number of drawings to be sent in, the scale to which they should be drawn, and the style of draughtsmanship. Any one can easily perceive that the intention of such conditions was to prevent a competitor obtaining any undue advantage over his opponents. Such was perfectly just and right. Now, it would seem that in justice to his competitors he must not neglect to do everything possible to obtain first position in the competition. Where a competitor failed to supply a drawing called for in the conditions, it was supposed that he did so to his own disadvantage and not to that of his fellow-competitor. If he supplied sufficient information for a competent, intelligent and liberal-minded expert to decide as to the relative merit of the design, it was taken into consideration, and if it was the best submitted, it was awarded first place. When a design was such that two elevations called for were practically alike, one was always considered sufficient. Such interpretations of the conditions were reasonable and according to common sense, even though the conditions stated that "the following drawings will be furnished" or "are to be furnished." In any case, common practice has made such interpretation the commonly accepted one. Where it was the intention to insist on the drawings called for being sent in, the wording should have been more definite, such as "shall be furnished" or "must be furnished," and a clause inserted calling attention to the fact, for where conditions have been interpreted very liberally, if not loosely, in the past, a hint of an intention to be more strict should be given. Nearly all competition conditions have contained a clause stating that all drawings or set of drawings not made in conformity with these instructions will be thrown out from consideration, thus showing that it was the intention that all designs should be considered on their merits upon the drawings and information placed in the hands of the expert after the drawings had been examined by his assistants. If this was not sufficient information for him to arrive at a decision favorable to the competitor, it was to the loss of such competitor, but it did not bar him from consideration. It has been considered that each and every competition was closely bound by any instructions which were given as to the use to which the building was to be put, and to provide all requirements exactly as stated in the conditions, if such were possible. For a competitor who strictly adhered to the instructions might be so hampered by such instructions that he could not do his best, and if he refrained from departing from the instructions, and thus did not follow his own choice, it was only right that his fellow competitors should be likewise restricted. There has thus grown up a well-defined and clearly understood principle that a competitor may depart from the conditions of a competition when he only injures his own chances, and that he must not do so when he gains or may gain any advantage over the other competitors. Such a principle seems reasonable and just, and to go beyond it is unnecessary, unreasonable and unjust.

In the competition for the Confederation Life Association building, the expert threw out a number of designs because they had not the full number of drawings asked for. Such ruling cannot be supported by precedent and would appear to be most unwise. If all experts were to hold themselves bound to throw out designs on technicalities, there would be few designs submitted in competitions, for no one could say what an expert would consider important and what unimportant. In this case,