

CORRESPONDENCE.

Letters are invited for this department on subjects relating to the building interests. To secure insertion, communication must be accompanied by the name and address of the author, but not necessarily for publication. The publisher will not assume responsibility for the opinions of correspondents.

A MISREPRESENTATION.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

SIR,—In your June number Mr. Langton writes as follows: "Mr. Wells wrote a letter in your March number saying that the Ontario Association of Architects is wrong to advocate education for architects when what is wanted is inspection of buildings."

Mr. Langton is quite mistaken. I made no such assertion. The arguments advanced in Mr. Langton's reply to my first letter were based on this same false assumption. And in my rejoinder to his reply I endeavored to point out this fact. Since Mr. Langton persists in mis-stating my argument, and indeed waxes quite iniquitous that I should not be convinced and silenced by a reply that falls quite beside the mark, it is perhaps useless to continue the discussion.

By all means let the Ontario Association advocate education for architects in all ways and at all times. When have I said a word against it?

What I have said, and do say, is this: The prime object of the Ontario Association's existence has always been—and apparently still is—to obtain from the government power so that it may regulate various matters connected with the profession.

The CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER contends that this power should be granted to the Association in the interest of public safety: I have tried to show that there are other more directly effective means of securing the public safety.

Mr. Langton declares that the architect must be educated; I have sought to point out that the highest education is obtainable in various ways, all quite independent of government-authorized machinery. While the champions of this legislation idea rely solely on arguments such as these, their case is surely not a strong one. And yet it is remarkable that they seem unable to get any further than this.

Anyone, ignorant of the history of the Association, and of what is the chief end of its existence, might read both of Mr. Langton's letters without once guessing that the organization in defense of which he was writing had the least ambition to exercise power in the regulation and restriction of the profession; much less would the ignorant one guess that the Association's desire for such exercise of power was the main object of attack by the correspondent Mr. Langton was engaged in answering. Indeed, the promoters of the legislation idea seem always to have thought it expedient to place much emphasis on some incidental benefits that the public have been encouraged to hope might result from the Association winning new powers; and no emphasis at all upon what the real nature and scope of these powers are to be. Yet this is the all-important question; and it is right that the Ontario government should think twice before delegating powers that might easily at some time or other be greatly abused.

Yours truly,

ARTHUR E. WELLS.

MUSKOGA, July 9, 1898.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

DEAR SIR: In Mr. Wells' letter, which you have kindly sent me, he comes out squarely as an opponent of the Ontario Association of Architects, on the ground that the real object of its existence is "to exercise power in the regulation and restriction of the profession." The only objection that can be taken to this ground is that there is involved in it an accusation of duplicity against certain well-known and respected architects who are serving or have served as members of the Council of the Association; for the avowed object of the Association is different from what he says is its real object, and we can only suppose that he conceives of the members of the Council as attending to its proceedings with their tongues in their cheeks. As a matter of fact, if this is Mr. Wells' only ground of opposition to the Association, there is no occasion for him to oppose it, for the Association has no object other than that which it professes to have, viz.: to establish in Ontario a profession of architecture in which all members of the profession must have the training which will enable them to practise the profession properly. The only way to attain this end is of course the usual way, of examinations on a standard curriculum, so that the Association is practically an educational body.

It has also one professional regulation: the agreement signed by all members of the Association, who sign the Register, that

they will receive remuneration in connection with any work only from the client for whom they are acting in that work.

It might be a good thing to have a society which would regulate the profession more than this. It would probably do good at first, but might degenerate afterwards. In any case regulations are of the nature of medicine. It is better to make for the soundness of the body. It is in this direction that Mr. Wells will find the "nature and scope" of the powers which the Association has now in some degree, and which it has been seeking to improve.

To foster the architect; to make a professional man of him; to exact from him and towards him a certain standard of behavior, is one way of going to work; and perhaps it may be reasonably claimed that by thus improving the status of the architect, the quality of his work will improve. But who is sufficient for the demands of such a mode of regulation. A more certain way to improve the position of the architect, to give him all the recognition, honor and even emoluments which result from holding a place of importance in the world, is to foster architecture; to bring about the recognition of a high standard in what is required from the architect. This is a liberal policy, which no architect need be ashamed to support, nor need any legislator hesitate about giving powers to help on its execution.

The first step to its attainment is held by the Association to be a limitation in the use of the title "architect" to those persons who have passed a standard set of examinations, and have thus exhibited, perhaps roughly, but in the only effective way that has yet been conceived, that their general education and professional training is up to such a mark that they have at least the grounding found necessary for doing good work.

As Mr. Wells truly says, "the highest education is obtainable in various ways, all quite independent of government authorized machinery." This is quite true, but it is not the highest education here and there which will bring about the end advocated by the Association, but the attainment of a general level so fairly high that no man need fall below a certain point. This is the hope of architecture in Canada. We are not in the position of the older countries. We have no tradition, as they have in France and Italy. We are not surrounded by examples of the best periods of architecture, as they are in England, so that one may acquire, from constant association, ideas in unconscious progress, as we do our manner of speech. Everything that we know about architecture has to be learned, and it is necessary both to afford opportunity to those who know this and wish to learn, and an occasion to those who would not otherwise know what there is to learn.

As to the safety of the public, it is obvious that it is not the highest education of a few, but this same general level sufficiently high, that will furnish security to the public. Danger does not lie in tall steel frame buildings, nor in large public buildings where money is easy and an eminent architect is employed. It is the simpler practitioner who has to put the most strain upon his material, and he would be happier in his work, and take less risks, if a scientific training were thrust upon him before he began practice.

I remain yours truly,

W. A. LANGTON.

THE LONDON CITY HALL DISASTER.*

TORONTO, February 5th, 1898.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER:

SIR,—After reading the article in your valuable journal of Jan. 1898, upon the above-named subject, I made a calculation of the strength of the broken beam with the following results, which I beg leave to submit to your journal, with a few remarks upon the actual strength of pine joists or beams under transverse loadings:

I make the area of the floor supported by the beam that failed about 308 square feet, equal one half of 22' x 28'. Dimensions of beam 12" x 14", 21' 6" between the bearings.

Dead load on the beam would be about as follows:

308 superficial feet of 1 1/4" flooring.....	963 lbs.
18 joists 3" x 13" x 15'.....	2,212 "
1 beam 12" x 14" x 21' 6", including bolts.....	800 "
308 superficial feet of lath, plaster, &c., &c.....	2,700 "
	6,675 "

$$\text{Moment of inertia of the beam} = \frac{b \cdot h^3}{12} = \frac{12 \cdot 14^3}{12} = 2744.$$

If we assume the ultimate strength of the lumber in the beam, or of the average stock pine at 4000 pounds, which I believe is a fair allowance, the breaking load would be: $\frac{16 \cdot f \cdot I}{L \cdot h} = \frac{16 \cdot 4000 \cdot 2744}{238 \cdot 14} = 48330 \text{ lbs.}$ Subtract the dead load from this, and we have

* The above communication, designed for publication several months ago, was unfortunately mislaid. Owing to its value, its present publication is deemed desirable.