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ARCHITECTS; THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIVILEGES.

In a leading article in the May number, we dwelt at length upon the anomalous position an Architect is placed in when he assumes, with his own artistic duties, those of a Clerk of Works, by taking upon himself the superintendence of the whole of the minor details of construction. Of course we mean it to be understood that these observations apply only to the profession in cities and large towns, and not to small places, where it would not be convenient to obtain the services of a practical superintendent; but in any case, a trustworthy foreman should always be on the spot to see that the Architect's plans were carried out in all their *details*, in accordance with the spirit of the plans and specification. It must be evident to architects in Montreal, Toronto, and other prominent cities of Canada, that there is now in those cities a sufficient number of buildings erected annually to create a want of a certain number of practical builders to occupy the position of Clerks of Works, similar to those employed in England, but whose duties should be modified to suit the method of carrying on the building business in this country. We require some one who should always be on the spot to superintend the execution, in every part and in every branch, of an architect's design, to see that the materials were sound, and every portion of the building constructed in a proper and workmanlike manner; for to hold an architect responsible for all the inferior workmanship and materials that a builder can cover up and hide from view, during the intervening periods between his visits to the building, is a great injustice; and if the members of the profession were unanimous in insisting that their clients should provide a superintendent to supervise the construction of large buildings, and to be continually on the spot, watching over every portion in progress, it would, in the end, be much more satisfactory to the clients, the architect and the builder.

The term "Clerk of the Works," and the duties appertaining to the position, are so little known to the public

in Canada, that in introducing this office in the architectural profession, with the view of its being ultimately generally accepted, it would be better to drop the old title, and adopt one that would distinguish the line and application of his duties; and as we have architects, and architectural surveyors, there is no reason why the term Architectural Superintendent should not be adopted in lieu of clerk of works. For the information of the general reader, we here lay down the line of his duties. An architectural superintendent should be thoroughly acquainted with all the practical methods of construction, the value of building and decorative materials, the quality of cements and mortar, &c., and in fact he should be practically educated in most points of all kinds of modern construction, and not a man of mere superficial knowledge who imposes upon the public by a bold pushing manner and a smattering of technical terms. It is not necessary that he should be a practical draughtsman, although he should be able to make drawings in detail for the workmen when necessary, and to thoroughly understand all working plans, sections, &c.; for the architect, with his assistants of practical draughtsmen, does not require a superintendent with such proficiency in drawing or design as to usurp his position, nor does he require either his judgment in the matter of decoration, strength of iron girders, roofs, ventilation, heating, &c.; in these matters, if he requires an opinion, he seeks it from those of known ability. For the strength of iron girders, he would, if he needed it, seek the advice of an engineer; ventilation and heating are entrusted to special men, whose systems are well understood and accepted by the architectural profession generally; what he wants in a superintendent is a person of known integrity and of thorough practical knowledge of the details of construction in all branches of building, in order to assist him in perfecting their arrangements, and to see that his plans and designs were not spoiled by the ignorance of the builder; for it must be borne in mind that the number of builders in this country who are thoroughly educated to their business, are very few, and those few are principally from the parent country.

When it so happens that you have a builder, as a contractor, who possesses very little practical knowledge of his business, beyond putting up a plain building; and mechanics who can only work by "rule of thumb," it