

*Is there a Possibility of a New Style of Architecture?*

as the other. What is to determine it then? The aesthetic taste of the designer. And having once made his choice, his artistic instincts would lead him to adhere consistently to the principles of the system chosen. The leading lines must necessarily be either horizontal or vertical, because every great architectural monument that has ever been produced has been either in one style or the other.

No! it is not thus that a new style of Architecture will ever be invented. Man is always the heir of all the ages, and his heritage is the sum of the learning and knowledge that have been slowly accumulated in the past. Progress is only made by advancing beyond the highest point previously reached. The men who originate new ideas are those who are most familiar with all the ideas of their predecessors. New inventions are most likely to be made by those who are most familiar with all previous inventions. So, in art as in science, that man is most likely to invent a new form whose mind is most saturated with the best of the old forms.

Some attempts have been made to produce a new style by harking back to some old style at an incomplete stage in its development, and trying to carry it onward on some other lines than those on which it was actually developed. This appears to have been Richardson's idea in attempting to revive the Romanesque style, and to that extent his attempt differed from most other modern attempts to revive old styles. None of these attempts have had any better result than to galvanize the old forms into a semblance of life more or less ephemeral according to the ability of the apostles of the cult for the time being. Examples of the more recent attempts will at once occur to you—the Gothic revival, Norman Shaw and the Queen Anne, Eastlake and his so-called principles of "Truth." It is curious to observe in Eastlake's case how some of the designs in his own book belie every one of the principles laid down in it. It is difficult, for instance, to conceive on what principle of truth a book-case can be designed which is finished on top with an imitation of a shingle roof with dormer windows. As regards Richardson, it is futile now to speculate what he might or might not have accomplished had he lived to the allotted span. His experience would doubtless have been that of all others who have trodden the same path. Measured by actual results, his influence upon the Architecture of this country has not been beneficial, not so much because of what he did or failed to do, but because of what his imitators have done. Richardson went to original sources for his inspiration, but most of his imitators have only gone to Richardson, and the result therefore cannot be considered surprising.

Attempts have sometimes been made to combine the outlines of one style with the details of another, but no new style has ever re-