

# CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.

VOL. IV.—NO. I.

TORONTO AND MONTREAL, CANADA, JANUARY, 1891.

PRICE 20 CENTS  
\$2.00 PER YEAR.

## —THE— CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER,

*A Monthly Journal of Modern Constructive Methods,*

(With a Weekly Intermediate Edition—The CANADIAN CONTRACT RECORD),

PUBLISHED ON THE THIRD SATURDAY IN EACH MONTH IN THE INTEREST OF  
ARCHITECTS, CIVIL AND SANITARY ENGINEERS, PLUMBERS,  
DECORATORS, BUILDERS, CONTRACTORS, AND MANU-  
FACTURERS OF AND DEALERS IN BUILDING  
MATERIALS AND APPLIANCES.

**C. H. MORTIMER, Publisher,**

14 King Street West, - TORONTO, CANADA.

62 TEMPLE BUILDING, MONTREAL.

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*The "Canadian Architect and Builder" is the official paper of the Architectural Associations of Ontario and Quebec.*

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WE observe by the daily papers that the Building Committee of the University of Toronto has adopted plans for the new Library building. But we are sorry to notice that from motives of economy, so called, they instructed the architect to cut \$10,000 off the estimated cost by designing plainer elevations. As the site is to be quite as prominent as that of the main building, being the east side of the Campus, it will be a serious mistake to so mutilate the design as to make the building in any marked degree inferior to the main structure. If there has been any advance in architecture since the days of the first building, surely here is an opportunity of exhibiting it. If the committee pursues a cheese-paring policy in this respect, they will call down upon themselves the execrations of lovers of art in architecture for generations to come.

It is yet too early to speak with any degree of certainty concerning the building outlook for 1891. It is, however, worthy of note, that the approaching spring is being looked forward to with a hopeful feeling. Anticipations of a fairly active season are based on the belief that many of the building enterprises designed to be undertaken last year, but which were withdrawn owing to the strike, will be carried out the present year. The falling off in architects' incomes last year, in some instances to the extent of thirty and forty per cent., is conclusive evidence of the effect of the strike in diminishing the volume of business for the season. The belief that much of the work thus prevented from being done in 1890 will go forward in 1891 seems to be a reasonable one. The prospects for the coming season, therefore, so far as they are discernible at this distance, appear to be of an encouraging character.

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ONE of our esteemed American contemporaries observes that "one of the exponents of mind in this age, as manifest in its current architecture, is shown by a grasping after effects that come by the power of mere size, or the prodigious." The new Parliament buildings now being erected in Queen's Park, Toronto, will alone suffice to illustrate the truth of the above idea. Covering, as they do, several acres of ground, and being planned on an enormous scale, it would be impossible for them not to be conspicuous, but they are altogether wanting in those features of artistic interest which, when embodied in the designs of public buildings, are a perpetual source of pleasure to the refined, and an educative influence on the masses. The President of the Toronto Art Students' League, in a paper on "Art Education in Canada," published on another page, laments the common-place character of the carving, which is intended to ornament the exterior of this structure. It should be borne in mind, however, that the use of ornament of a higher order would obviously be incongruous with the design from which the buildings are being constructed.

A YOUNG correspondent makes use of our columns to express, in a good-natured way, his opinion that the first annual dinner of the Toronto Architectural Sketch Club would have been more enjoyable had certain features of the proceedings to which he refers been omitted. We sympathize, to a certain extent, with this opinion. The students and their interests might properly have received a larger share of attention from the speakers. In fact some of the speech-making might well have been laid on the shoulders of the younger members of the Club, an expression of whose opinions would have been valuable as indicating what is likely to be the standard of practice of the succeeding generation of architects. It would be too much to expect perfection to mark the first undertaking of this kind. On the whole the Club deserves to be heartily congratulated on the pleasure and profit which marked the occasion, the annual recurrence of which will be looked forward to with pleasant anticipation. Such re-unions serve to bring together representatives of kindred interests, and to strengthen individual aspiration and the national spirit.

THE proposal to secure additional park accommodation from the University authorities is strongly opposed by many of the citizens of Toronto who think, not only that the exchange for the Front Street property will not be in the interest of the city from a financial point of view, but that we need a number of smaller parks and recreation grounds, rather than an increase of the size of Queen's Park, which is already sufficient for the needs of as many as can conveniently reach it. What we urgently need is a system or series of public play grounds, so located that the children of any locality may reach one in say five minutes from their respective homes. In connection with this may be mentioned the suggestion of the Public Places Association, of which Mr. O. A. Howland is President, viz., the possibility of securing the present Upper Canada College site. There would be space at its west end for a magnificent playground, while the east end is already a park with well-grown trees. The buildings could well be utilized for museum and art purposes. The city has at present no proper accommodation for art schools. Here is a place ready at hand, and which would suffice for years. After a time it might be possible to erect buildings worthy of the city, and which would properly house our art, historical, musical and scientific societies.