

on or before 1st May, 1890. First prize, \$5; second, one year's subscription C. A. & B.

6th.—Essay on Heating and Ventilation. Essays to be sent in on or before 1st May, 1890. First prize \$10; second, one year's subscription to C. A. & B.

The Architectural Guild of Toronto have very kindly appointed a committee from their number to judge the above competitions. We shall publish each report as sent to us by the committee. Draughtsmanship, neatness and clearness of arrangement of drawings will be taken into consideration in awarding positions.

Drawings must be made on sheets of heavy white paper or bristol board, 14 x 20 inches in size, and must be drawn to allow of their being reduced to one-half the above size. Drawings must be made in firm, strong lines, with pen and black ink. No color or brush work will be allowed.

Each drawing must be marked with the *nom de plume* of its author, and the author's name, *nom de plume* and full address, enclosed in sealed envelope, must accompany each drawing sent in.

We reserve the right to publish any design sent in.

Drawings will be returned to their authors within a reasonable time after the committee has given its decision.

**ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS.**

THE Architectural Guild, of Toronto, offer the following prizes in competition:

1st.—A prize of \$10 for the best essay on the History of Architecture. The essay is not to contain more than 600 words. Marks will be awarded in proportion of 75 % to the subject matter, and 25% to the style of composition. The essay to be sent in not later than April 15th.

2nd.—A prize of \$10 for the best design for a country church (suitable for the Episcopal form of worship) to seat 150 persons. The design to be in the late decorated period of architecture. Plans, elevations and sections are to be drawn to a scale of eight feet to an inch. Detail drawings, half inch scale, with full-sized sections of principal mouldings, &c.

Values will be given for correctness of interpretation of the decorated period; for the careful and accurate preparation of the drawings; arrangement of the drawings on the sheets, and for draughtsmanship.

Designs to be sent in on or before March 15th.

Drawings must be made on sheets of heavy white paper or bristol board, 14 x 20" in size, and must be drawn to allow of their being reduced to one-half of the above size.

Drawings must be made in firm, strong lines, with pen and black ink. No color or brush work will be allowed.

Each drawing must be marked with the *nom de plume* of its author, and the author's *nom de plume* name and full address, enclosed in sealed envelope, must accompany each drawing sent in.

The above competitions are limited to students of not more than four years' standing, who are in the offices of architects who are members of the Ontario Association of Architects, and each competitor must send in a certificate to that effect from the architect in whose office he may be employed.

**OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND ROUTINE.\***

THE subject chosen for this paper is a remarkably comprehensive one— one of which it is difficult to define the exact limits and difficult to treat generally, for under this head must necessarily be included, not merely all that concerns the interior economy of an architect's office, but a good deal of outside work in connection with it.

As no two men are alike in business capacity, so no two offices are conducted similarly, and one man's practice differs from another's, as much as the style of their various works.

Every man has his own idea of "running" his office, but it does not always follow that his means will allow him to carry out his ideas, and generally it happens that other calls prevent his spending as much money on his office as he would like.

We are not sure that this country any architect's office to which the term "luxurious" could be applied. I have seen a great many which answer to the description "penurious." Now, as a matter of fact, the one extreme is as bad, as unprofessional as the other. A certain amount of "style" is as necessary as "luxury" is unnecessary. By the word "style" I do not mean so much the actual outlay on fittings and so forth, as good arrangement, general neatness and perfect order. Simplicity is an advantage; it is business-like. Plenty of room is essential and greatly facilitates business. There is nothing so hindering as interruption. Want of sufficient space usually entails a great deal of it. If you are cramped you cannot have all your drawings satisfactorily arranged before you; you have to turn over street after street to get at the one you want to work on, and if when moving about your office, your clerks have to make way for you to pass,—or the risk of being their elbows joggled, considerable inconvenience is felt. Then again, you do not wish to have your clients, clerks and contractors mixed up together in a bunch, and you are much hampered if you yourself have to be mixed up too. And yet this is not uncommon. In cities where rents are high, spacious offices are difficult to obtain within one's means, though in country places and small towns, you are usually not hampered by this consideration.

We have to remember one thing, that the more business-like an office is, the more work will come to it, for it is certain that if the office is conducted in a business-like manner, the architect who owns it will be a good business man, and it is marvellous how much more work a business man can get through in a day than a man without method, unbusinesslike. Order, it is

said "is Heaven's first law;" it is equally the first law of successful business.—a place for everything and everything in its place.

I have seen some offices in London, the great metropolis of the world, occupying the greater part of a house and fitted up in such luxury that one wonders on entering, where the work is done. To take one office in particular, you ring at the front door bell of a house that at all appearances is a private residence, except for a small brass door plate which indicates it as an office. A page in livery opens the door, and you enter a spacious hall, furnished with Turkey rugs on a polished floor. By the dim light admitted through a stained glass window you see quaint old oak cabinets, and settees black with age, brass lampstands, oil paintings on the walls, and rich portieres, all helping to confirm the idea in your mind that you have a very comfortable to the wrong door after all. You ask the principal, and you are shown into a side room, furnished with equal luxury, a little more light perhaps owing to the windows being of clear glass, and this shines upon a treasure of an office desk, with easy chair to match, a small collection of books on architecture in a bookshelf with glass doors all richly bound, but you see no T square or drawing board. The door opens, and in comes the principal, clad in a velvet jacket and with a scarf and never a sign of head lead pencil seen on his thumb. You tell your business and he touches an electric button; the page appears and is sent to the drawing office to get the drawings you want to see; so you transact your business and depart, ushered to the door by the tightly buttoned boy. And yet from this office have proceeded some of the most charming and delightful, picturesque and altogether lovely country residences, as they adorn the face of modern England. An atmosphere of luxury, but an atmosphere of art and of inspirations indeed. But requiring to be seen and experienced to be fully understood.

Naturally one thinks how incongruous such surroundings would be in one's own case. One would not care to have polished floors and Eastern rugs tramped over by the heavy, muddy boots of our contractors and workmen just out of a building, and yet that both builders and often workmen should be able to come in freely, even with the objectionable newer casings, is indeed a puzzle. But the contractor, who is the man who is alluded to in London, the work of the office is nearly all carried out in the country, and then the London contractor is a big man in his way, wears his black coat and top hat, and never dreams of wearing muddy boots.

We have to be eminently more practical, and the worst part of such an office as I have described would probably be sufficient for us. Plain fittings, high stools, uncarpeted floors, drawing presses all plainly labelled, and writing desks, and a few other things, but the arrangement of the office is one thing you won't see, and that is the bestly spiltton, for the disgusting habit which makes such an unsightly thing necessary is not a common practice there.

Office management and routine touches one of the three component parts of an architect's nature more than the other two. As an artist, an architect requires good light, and as a constructor, engineer or builder (whatever you like to call him) he requires the help of the hand. The latter arrangements, but the "business man," the office and its arrangements, mainly belong. As a man of business, an architect must have his office apart from his house, and must not be interfered with in his work by domestic affairs. I have seen an architect's office, composed of the two best rooms of a small house, in an English county town, where they made working drawings to the specs of the infants, and wrote their specifications to the thrumming of five finger exercises, and where inspirations for design, where wafted on air redolent with the odour of cabbage water and boiling beef. This, indeed, must be a relic of the Pecteniffian age, but it is an actual fact, not borrowed from fiction. Such was the office of a man, an architect, who, having won a competition, had orders to carry out his design for a cemetery chapel at the cost of £3,500 sterling. When the works were completed, the contractor sent the cemetery Board for another £3,500 sterling for extras (which doubtless the amount of the contract). The architect, however, removed from that part of the country shortly afterwards. You will find an account of the proceedings outlined in the *London Building News* about the year 1880 or 1881, but as I was a witness, I can vouch for the tale.

After all, everything depends upon the means the architect can command, but certain things are essential. His office must be separate from his house, he must have sufficient room to let, as he is a business man, he must see to the necessity of having the greatest number of desks. That architect who has access to the drawing boards, to let the clerks overhear all the clients have to say, and to let travellers and agents interrupt you, or break in upon an interview with your clients. Sometimes it is an advantage to have an interruption when you are conversing with a client, but it can generally be obtained at the moment without having permanent arrangements made for the purpose. And especially is this so when your client is a woman, but I once had a client in petticoats whom nothing would interrupt, and I could not charge her more than five per cent. Except where such clients are concerned, there should be a time for everything—a certain time allotted every day to the supervision of your buildings in course of erection; a certain time for the visits of agents, and a certain time for your correspondence.

As a rule, the first thing in the morning is the best time for inspection, before you get into the office. Your correspondence is best left to the afternoon, after the last post, when you will have had time to digest your letters, and when you can answer them all together. And as for receiving agents, the best time is your lunch hour, when probably you will be out, or else you can see them sandwich in hand, for they will come, but very few are of any service to you. Everything that interrupts your regular work should be arranged for and have its special time.

A constant cause for prolonged interruption is a request for a certificate by a contractor. Accounts take a long time to go into, and in justice to yourself and your client you are bound to give them careful and serious attention. But sometimes a builder requests a certificate at a moment's notice, to help to pay his wages, or, as the common excuse is, "to meet a note." We are to a certain limited extent, the trustees of our clients in this matter, and our irregularity in the issuing of certificates is not fair upon him. "We may be willing to oblige the contractor, but it is by no means the best course to have settled time for issuing certificates, and not to depart from it. It is as well to have a notice to this effect pinned up where contractors can easily see it, and add to it, that no certificate will be granted until sufficient time has been allowed for you to go into statements. Then when accounts are large or numerous you can set apart a special day for the purpose.

A certificate, as has been decided by the United States Courts, is not in any way equal to a draft or a cheque which must be met upon presentation, and a contractor cannot demand payment upon the strength of it. The architect merely certifies that the contractor is entitled to receive a certain sum, for work done, and the certificate becomes evidence in favor of the contractor as against the proprietor, in case he disputes it. But the proprietor, except according to the terms of the contract, is not bound to pay it upon presentation.

Issuing a certificate out of the regular course of events may put your

\* Paper read by R. W. Gambier Housefield before the first annual Convention of the Ontario Association of Architects.