

to the engineer in the basement is all that is necessary to start the suction. The best of it is that the dirt is not merely swept off one thing on to another; it goes down a tube and is seen no more, except by the man who feeds a fire with it. There must be sad mortality among the microbes.

#### The American Institute Convention.

The recent meeting at Washington had character of importance somewhat new, indicating a change that has come about recently not only in the status of the profession but in its sphere of usefulness. The point of departure was, without doubt, the Chicago Exhibition, which gave the public a new idea of possibilities in the building of cities, and a greater opinion of the importance not only of architecture but of architects. It is since then that the wave of civic improvement has swept over the country, and when the American Institute of Architects met at the national capital, the beautification of which—a pet idea with all Americans—has been put in the hands of a commission, of which the leading figure is an architect and member of the Institute, the meeting seems to have been regarded as having something of the nature of national importance. The President came to the banquet and spoke in a business-like manner. Other speakers were the Hon. Elihu Root, Justice Harlan of the Supreme Court, the French Ambassador, Cardinal Gibbons, and others who, though eminent, are connected with art and their presence had not the same significance. Other guests were Secretary Hay, Secretary Taft, Bishop Satterlee, seven senators, Hon. Whitelaw Reid, J. Pierpont Morgan, President A. J. Cassatt, Henry Walters, and many others, including Mr. Dooley. And an incident of the evening was the announcement that Mr. Morgan and Mr. Walters had each given \$100,000 to secure the purchase of a permanent abode for the American Academy at Rome.

This was a big affair and shows the way things are going. The architect will have much to do in the present century but in a larger way than before. The proceedings of the Institute at this convention reflect the state of affairs. There were papers on the methods of financing large building operations; an office organization; on the relations of specialists to architects; and on municipal improvements throughout the country. The national importance of the Institute was marked by the *personnel* of the guests at the dinner, and its international standing by the presentation for honorary and corresponding membership of three English architects of eminence.

The growth of the profession in importance is becoming evident in this country also, but, before it can have the national importance that is given to it in the United States by the American Institute of Architects, there must be some national unity. A Dominion Association is the only parallel to the present state of the American Institute, but the need for it must be felt before it can be safely instituted. At present there is no evidence of such a feeling. The Ontario and Quebec associations have each had their conventions recently without any message to one another or any exchange of delegates. And in Toronto the profession is divided into two camps. There is a movement towards union there, and it ought not to fail, for there

is a door partly open to the influence of architects for better taste in public works, but it wants united action to open it altogether.

As President Roosevelt said, in his speech at the Institute banquet, 'there are things in a nation's life more important than beauty; but beauty is very important.' He acknowledged that beauty had not been among the successes of the nation in the past, and looked to such gatherings and to such men as he was addressing to determine whether or not this should be true of the future. This, applied to practice, may be stated as separating the function of dealing with beauty in a nation's life from other functions. We may be perfectly prepared to admit the superiority of administration to that of design, but it certainly is different. And good administration includes the selection of a good designer for important works under its charge. The minor works, and superintendence of the construction of all works, are enough for the departmental architects in both state and municipal affairs. This principle is to some extent admitted now, but the decision as to what constitutes sufficient importance for special design is always being made, and hitherto, in this country, with too little regard for the importance of beauty. The architectural associations are really the only guardians of public taste at present; and the greater their union the wider will be their influence in this respect.

#### SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ARCHITECTS.

At the closing meeting of the Sixth International Congress of Architects in Madrid (Spain) last year the Royal Institute of British Architects was directed to organize the Seventh International Congress in London in 1906, and certain members of the Institute were named and added to the "Comité Permanent des Congrès Internationaux des Architectes" (Permanent Committee of International Congresses of Architects); the Canadian members of this committee are Messrs. W. E. Doran and Alcide Chaussé, architects of Montreal.

The organization committee have announced that His Majesty King Edward the Seventh has consented to be the Patron of the Congress, and that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has consented to accept the position of Honorary President of the Congress.

The congress will be held in London on July 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st, 1906.

The programme will include an inaugural meeting, discussions on architectural subjects of international importance, an exhibition of architectural art, excursions to various points of interest around London, visits to historical buildings and monuments of London, one or two social functions, and a grand banquet.

A special ladies' committee will be formed to see about the comfort and amusements of the ladies accompanying the delegates. They will be admitted to the inaugural meeting, to the excursions and visits.

All communication relating to the Congress must be addressed to Mr. W. J. Locke, Secretary of the Organization Committee, 9, Conduit Street, London, W., England.