

these sites are erected substantial buildings, planned and furnished after the most improved types, and to meet the advanced ideas of the present day.

Among the many legacies inherited from the boom is the saying "good enough," which is frequently made use of by workmen, when their work is objected to. They learned it in the days when houses were rushed up in a week, and the motto was to build honestly if you can, but build, and when a load of timber would be followed to the site of a proposed dwelling by parties anxious to rent or buy in order to secure a dwelling place. The result of the above, and of contractors taking work too cheap, is that to-day an architect has to be very watchful of his buildings in progress in order to obtain a fairly satisfactory job. However, the workmanship is improving and the materials are of a better quality than formerly, for the public are growing more fastidious and require a higher class of work. If contractors would refrain from taking work too low in order to obtain a job, and insist on receiving a proper price, so that there would be no necessity for them to scamp their work in order to obtain a profit, the architect's lot would not be such an unhappy one.

PERSONAL.

Fowler & Bowe, architects, Montreal, have dissolved partnership.

Mr. A. L. Husbands, Architect and Civil Engineer, of Cookshire, Que., has recently been elected a member of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers.

Ald. J. C. Waine, a prominent builder and contractor, of Sydney, New South Wales, accompanied by his wife, spent a short time in Toronto recently, en route to the World's Fair.

In a recent issue of the *Australasian Builder and Contractors' News*, appears the following:—Mr. W. H. Wheeler, late Assistant Hon. Secretary of the Architectural and Engineering Association of Victoria, and winner of last year's Prize for the best Design for a Mechanics' Institute to cost £8,000, offered by the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects in connection with the Classes of the above-named Association, sailed on Thursday by the new Canadian liner, *Warrimoo*, for Vancouver, British Columbia. Mr. Wheeler has been residing for some months in Sidney and its vicinity; but with so great a dearth of architectural business in that city, as in every other portion of these colonies, he has wisely decided to seek "fresh fields and pastures new" in the great northern Dominion, where we trust his undoubted abilities and steady industry will find employment. Mr. Wheeler carries with him the good wishes of his many old friends in Melbourne, and of not a few, more recently made, in Sydney.

CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE.*

In a previous portion of this address I defended—I hope, in your judgment, successfully—the works of contemporary architects from the reproach of want of originality. It does not, however, follow that the perception of the beautiful displayed in such works is commensurate with the originality of their design. I have, indeed, on a previous occasion recorded my conviction that the craze for novelty in the present day—not alone in art—is excessive, and not infrequently results in the grotesque. Is novelty the goal of our attainment? Is it not rather Beauty? When the Greeks produced what is the purest form of art, so far as we know, that the world has seen, it was not the outcome of a rage for novelty, but of the effort to crystallize in a beautiful form the requirements and conditions of life. It was in the days of their decadence that an intelligent observer recorded of them that "they spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Can it be that such decadence is overtaking us? Judging by some modern works, their authors might not inappropriately be referred to in terms similar to those applied to the late Athenians; for their desire appears to have been, not so much to produce what is beautiful, as to evolve "some new thing." A column was originally designed to support the superincumbent weight known as the entablature, and in such juxtaposition is dignified and consistent; but divorced from such relationship, and applied to the face of a building with nothing to support, it is degraded to the position of an incongruous feature of ornamentation. An Order, again, is composed of certain parts, which, in the relationship they were designed to occupy, produce admittedly proportions that are dignified and beautiful; but when applied—one can scarcely say designed—in a ridiculously attenuated form, with parts misplaced or omitted, the result is grotesque. The conglomeration of familiar forms and features, divorced from the conditions they were designed to fulfil, and thrown together regardless, apparently, of any consideration but the attainment of novelty, produces the incongruous and silly effect that might have been foreseen. Yet by critics who ought to know better this sort of architectural quackery is lauded as original design, and its authors are praised as men of exceptional ability. Whatever it may be, it is certainly not the original work in the true sense of the words, but the parody that passes muster for it with the ignorant. The impress of original power is stamped on features not necessarily new, and imparts to them distinctive life and character, instead of rendering them ridiculous by divorcing them from their proper purpose. Contrast with such grotesque productions the works of the late Sir Charles Barry, and tell me in which you find the truer originality or the purer taste. In Barry's classical work there are dignity, repose, proportion, ample undisturbed wall-space, every feature and moulding adapted to its position, and in all

the stamp of individuality without any appearance of straining after novelty. In the hotch-potch work I refer to, there is neither dignity nor repose; features and mouldings are indiscriminately applied, instead of being designed as inherent elements in the composition; and the deplorable absence of purity is in no way compensated by fulsome profusion of ornamentation. This practice of covering every bit of wall-space with ornamentation, composed of details pretty and original in design, but applicable from their petty scale, to cabinet-work and not to buildings, is the curse of our modern street architecture, and demonstrates an absence of grasp and appreciation of breadth which it is sometimes painful to observe. In walks about London one longs to apply the scalping-knife in stripping off meretricious ornament, in order that the eye may find repose on some bit of undisturbed and undisfigured wall-space.

It is not often I have found myself in sympathy with the utterances of the venerable statesman who now occupies the position of Prime Minister, and it is consequently agreeable to be able to concur in views which he expressed a few months since when speaking of Industry and Art. "There is a circumstance in architecture," Mr. Gladstone said, "which terrifies me, and that is the tendency which appears to prevail in modern domestic architecture. I am speaking of their exteriors, and I refer to their redundant ornamentation. There are a great number of new buildings in London with regard to which, if you look at them, you will find that the architect had either a horror or a dread of leaving bare a single square foot of wall, as if there were something indecent in leaving bare a square foot of wall. Excess of ornamentation is, of all things, the most hostile to a due appreciation of proportion, because it is in proportion to the preception of breadth and beauty and line, and in the adjustment of lines to one another that the essence of the art lies, and in that you will find the hope of attaining high excellence in great works." Not in great works only, I would add, but in all works, great or small.

But while I deplore this meretricious tendency for redundant ornamentation, and while I decry the craze for novelty, which together are responsible for disfiguring many of our modern domestic buildings, I yet desire to record my conviction that there is much that is hopeful and promising in contemporary architecture. Even the rage for educating some new things, exaggerated as it is, demonstrates that men prefer to think for themselves rather than to reproduce the works of others. If only the remarkable ability which is displayed in the designs of many recent buildings were directed less to the production of novelty and more to the study of proportion, less to the elaboration of ornament and more to the aspiration for simplicity; if only architects were to lead the taste of the day by impregnating their designs with "the perception of breadth and beauty and line," instead of pandering to the false and meretricious taste of a luxurious age; we should be able to congratulate ourselves—and perhaps at no distant date—on having reached the attainment of an architecture, pure, simple, dignified, and beautiful.

PEMBROKE WATER WORKS.

On November 22nd, 23rd and 24th, the system of waterworks at Pembroke, which has been under construction during this year, was tested by the Chief Engineer, Willis Chipman, of Toronto.

All the water is taken from Lake Alouette through an intake pipe half a mile in length and pumped by Duplex pumps to a Water Tower placed at such elevation as to give an efficient fire service over the business portion of the town. If a serious fire should occur in any of the high residential portions, a check valve at the Tower can be closed from the pump house by an electric switch.

The system consists of about 5 miles of piping with 52 fire hydrants, and the cost will be about \$50,000. The pump-house is a very neat structure.

ROOF AND-ROOF COVERING.

In actual execution the roof, of course, precedes the roof covering; but in working out the design it is frequently the covering which decides the shape of the roof. When once settled, it fixes at least the lower limit for the pitch, and it may even have an influence on the question of hips or gables. In olden times this influence was marked. In many districts hip tiles were scarcely to be had; lead hips were too costly for common use, and hips made up with slates and mortar were both unsightly and insecure. This difficulty has long since vanished. Facilities for transit are, from one point of view, even too great. Materials can be so readily taken from place to place that local peculiarities in building are tending to die out. The country and one might almost say the world, is getting too much alike all over it, and amongst other things we now find tile hips and ridges everywhere. They have, however, usefulness at least to recommend them. They supply a practical want; but this is more than can be said of all the materials which are nowadays becoming fashionable in localities to which they do not belong. Travelling has become easy; but when all places becomes pretty much alike, what will there be to travel for? It is time that all architects set themselves, as some have done, to fight against this impending uniformity, and it is worth noting how many roofing materials, and how many ways of using those materials, may still be found within the boundaries of England alone,—
Manufacturer and Builder.

*From the annual address of the President of the Royal Institute of British Architects.