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#### Complicated Contracts.

In the present position of the authorities, and upon the basis of the complicated contracts generally used nowadays, no lawyer would care to give a clear opinion as to the ultimate result of any proposed litigation. It is quite useless of us to go through the decided cases over again. Their apparent contradiction is often explainable by going into the facts involved and the form of contract used. But we take it that the broad effect of the recent judgments in the Courts of Appeal is that any architect supervising and certifying upon a building becomes legally an arbitrator throughout, although that word may nowhere be employed. If this is so, it seems to follow that the only safe and sane plan he can adopt is to accept that position and act up to it, openly and avowedly, as between his client and himself and outside parties. He must also still remain the agent of the building But as regards all disputes between the owner and the builder, he would become sole judge. In this way there should be a finality really final. All three parties to the triangular contract would be legally bound by its clauses. The law allows them to create, or elect, their own tribunal for the settlement of all differences, subject only to those larger questions of law and jurisdiction which no arbitration can always and entirely avoid. The subject is one of much difficulty and delicacy. Various and vested interests may be involved. With questions of that kind we are not concerned in these columns. Our only desire is to suggest some method by which architects, owners, and builders may be able to work together in peace and prosperity, without doubt or discussion, and clear of the law's uncertainty and the law's delay.

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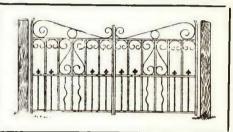
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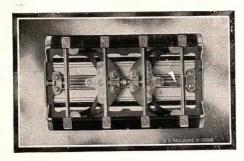
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#### HOPES AND FEARS FOR ARCHITECTURE

EXTRACTS FROM A PAPER READ BEFORE THE ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION BY MR. F. C. EDEN.

Early in the century the Greek revival which had been suggested by Stuart and Revett's great work, and vivified by the importation of the Elgin marbles, attracted to its rather dreary refinements such men as Inwood, Smirke, Elmes, and Cockerell, to be presently thrust aside by the careful, if uninspired, Italian manner which we associate with the name of Barry. Meanwhile, a more remarkable movement was gaining strength—namely, the Gothic revival, with Pugin for hierophant and Ruskin for its prophet. Though these enthusiasts deemed its foundations to be upon the holy hills of truth, eternal and immutable, the Gothic phase proved to be as temporary as any edifice raised with hands. Weakened by the strain put upon it by such essays in the ungainly as Eaton Hall and Keble College, the crushing weight of Street's Law Courts brought about the slow collapse of the movement, and Bodlev was truly the last, as well as the most cultured, of the Goths.

#### Workman becomes Craftsman.

The reaction against mediæval copyism, or what was intended as such, set in with some violence; fretful versions of "Queen Anne," free (and easy) or ungrammatical Classic; Dutch and Flemish motives all had their little day. Soon we began to hear the workman whispered of as a "craftsman." The professional architect became the bugbear of some. The craftsman then it was who was to redeem the arts; though how he was to do so without his ancient backing of tradition and hereditary skill is not even yet apparent. A small vogue, hardly to be called a fashion, was once started in favour of the Byzantine manner by a building not far from here, but I do not fancy it ever came to much.

#### Picturesqueness and a Classic Impulse.

All this time the grand manner of domestic building had been forgotten; picturesqueness was everywhere attempted, and misunderstood to consist of jagged skylines and jumbled incompatibles. In the next stage the hidden stirring of some Classic impulse moved the professors of this nook-and-corner style to prune, chasten, and square up their designs.

Sobriety began to rule.

We are not altogether surprised to notice how large a proportion of the designs submitted in recent competitions are rather bleak and toneless efforts in the sort of Greek that is learned by looking over a Frenchman's shoulder. Whatever excellences they may possess in planning and so forth, it must be admitted that they leave us cold. But of all fashions in art, Paris fashions are now for us the most pernicious. Just as in literature each language has its individual genius and rhythm, so in art. Gallic idioms are not ours, Gallic graces quite other. Consider the influence of French ideas upon the current manner of design as displayed in recent buildings and competitions. I do not know how to describe it except as a kind of architectural cubism. The dominant motif is the block. We watch it standing uneasily on cornices, hanging from sills, stepped, imposed, superimposed applique to the wall-face; tight wreaths of laurel and myrtle clasp and interpenetrate it, guttee

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weep from it—there is no designing without tears now for the young architect—while scraps of columns, mouldings, or carving emerge with Rodinesque inconsequence from ponderous chunks of masoned stone.

#### Fashions and Art.

Are we to account for the incessant change which the last hundred years have witnessed as a stirring of vigorous life or as a restless craving for some new thing? Seeing that all great accomplishment in the past has come from working steadily along a simple line of age-long tradition, it cannot be seriously maintained that such rapidly changing fashions are beneficial to art. Nevertheless, almost every passing phase has left some good behind it.

#### The Gist of the Gothic Revival.

Fur example, there is still something to be learnt from the Gothic revival. The lesson is, I think, two-fold. First, enthusiasm. The writings of Pugin, Street, and others brim over with it. Such books as "Brick and Marble in Italy," or Webb's "Continental Ecclesiology," are most refreshing reading for this very reason. However much we may smile at some of its manifestations of zeal, we may well sigh for a share of that contagious spirit. And, secondly, definite principles, without which enthusiasm runs to The chief apostles of the movement—Pugin, Morris, and pre-eminently Ruskin-made an earnest attempt to decipher and codify the laws of artistic If the principles enunciated by these "intolerant amateurs" were universal and sound, I am not concerned to deny that a certain falseness and partiality in their application has run back like a taint and corrupted the source; with the result that now there is little recognition of any fixed laws The followers of art have or æsthetic standard. become an undisciplined mob with a mob's capricious temper, and the practice of art has become a riot of eclecticism and experiment.

Again, it was the arts and crafts movement which emphasised the importance of a more intimate relationship between material, workmanship, and design; and though the doctrine is sometimes pushed to the point of absurdity, its influence has already been considerable and in the main wholesome.

#### The Craze for Antiquity.

The present is an age of connoisseurship. Old panelling, chimneypieces, and other fixtures are fitted up in new homes. Dilapidated vases, figures, sundials, and worn-out paving-stones grace freshly

laid-out gardens and terraces. Pavements are laid and walls built to give hold to vegetable growths, and sprayed to encourage lichen and mosses symptomatic of hoary antiquity. Oak is greyed with lime and sandblasted to give it texture, marble is stained, gilding and paint are toned and glazed to obtain the effect of age. The same effect is sought by reversion to materials and methods that were used of old time. The materials selected are such as weather well and soon lose their rawness and novelty. Bricks are rough and small, joints are wide and white, and pointing is eschewed; timber is wrought with the adze and peppered with protruding pins; stone is roughly tooled and so left; wall-plastering is finished with an undulating surface; roofs are laid in gently sweeping curves and of second-hand tiles, if such are to be got.

Some may be inclined to divide these methods of treatment into legitimate and otherwise. The use of the adze, for example, though somewhat of an affected archaism, may be tolerated; while the sandblast is a fraud and a fake. The whole tendency will be condemned by others as unwholesome, decadent, and dilettante. But if the surface produced upon timber by the sandblast be artificial, is it one whit more so than that produced by the circular saw or the planing machine? And if greying with lime be illegitimate, what about yellowing with boiled oil? And, finally, if it be a fraud to make new buildings look old, how shall we characterise the really successful attempts of many architects to make old buildings look new?

#### Advancement of Taste.

The question of the education of the architect is ever with us, but what is really pressing is the education of the general public. However scholarly and efficient as a body architects may be, they are powerless until the outside world becomes interested and appreciative. However, there is little doubt that among educated people the knowledge of architecture has made enormous strides during the past thirty years, and I think that for this advance connoisseurship or the collecting mania is largely responsible. It does breed in its victims a feeling for form, an appreciation of good workmanship, and it creates a standard. In other words, it educates popular taste. It would seem to be partly the cause and partly the effect of the present popularity of eighteenth-century art, which is, at first sight, so strange and unaccountable.

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#### Art and Contemporary Life.

What is there in its refinement, repose, and freedom from advertisement, its coldness and aloofness and well-bred restraint to appeal to a bustling and commercial age? For art does not go by contraries. It is an expression of contemporary life. The haphazard, unrelated, and individualistic dwellings of the Victorian era, for example, reflect clearly enough the industrial expansion of the time and consequent emergence of the middle classes. They are eloquent of newly fledged and inarticulate ambitions, of that self-assertiveness and carelessness of treading on another's toes so characteristic of the race of men who have started in life with the proverbial shilling.

The author of a recent article on "The Aristocratic Influence in Art " notes with surprise that this cult of Georgian art is "accompanied by no sign of interest in the human significance of the style. It never seems to be imagined by its votaries that eighteenth-century art, coherent and consistent as it is in all its details, stands for a certain definite philosophy of life. Not a trace does it exhibit of the superabundant vitality and warmth of popular art, but rather inclines to a certain coldness and arrogance of expression, its very perfection of taste lending it an air of exclusiveness, as a thing aloof from common appreciation. It is its aristocratic purpose or tendency which constitutes its note as a style, and is an accurate reflection of the aristocratic ascendency which began with the overthrow of the autocracy of the Monarch in 1688, and lasted until the Reform Bill. The author goes on to suggest that the coming democratic ascendency will be registered in art in the same way, and concludes that "the air is full of promise. Beneath modern connoisseurship, itself the inevitable legacy of the aristocratic epoch, a healthier and stronger movement is fermenting. It is from the workshops of England that the rescuers of our art are coming. In the modern democratic advance lies the best hope of art. This reads like an echo of the old arts and crafts war-cry, but there is room for serious doubt whether great art can be born or thrive under a democracy. Athens was to all intents and purposes an oligarchy, so was Venice. What has Switzerland done for art? And she alone among democratic States has had time to show her capabilities. Still, if there be ground for this hope, if the democratic advance be reddening the horizon, surely our public architecture should catch some reflection of the coming dawn.

#### Vernacular Architecture.

But of this I am convinced, that we have a form of architecture which is pure vernacular, racy of the soil, straight from the "great heart of the people." It is built with entire and obvious singleness of aim, without affectation or conscious striving after beauty, and the materials that are easiest to be got. The professional architect, that bogy of a certain school of critics, has no part or lot in it. It comes as direct from the workshop as anything possibly could do. I allude to the architecture of the typical suburb, of the artizans' quarter, of the speculator. Perhaps this is where the true hope for architecture lies. Who can tell?

#### Reinforced Concrete.

The main purpose of all mechanical inventions, from the printing press onwards, has been not that

things may be better done, but that they may be more quickly done. This, I suppose, is the chief recommendation of reinforced concrete as a building material.

Attempts have been made abroad, if not at home, to originate a style peculiar to a new and untried material. We are to use it in the most direct way possible, with entire truth to its qualities of thinness, toughness, and so forth. A monolithic building should achieve such expression as it is capable of without imitation of other materials or reminiscence of other methods of construction. Let it confess itself for what it is without concealment and without shame. This is the way, we are told, to achieve character; beauty may come later—out of the strong will come forth sweetness. But whatever the material we are using the natural conditions of gravity, weather, and light remain unchanged; and our endeavours to meet these conditions cannot be expressed in ways wholly different from those of the

To be continued

#### KING OF ITALY AND THE BRITISH SCHOOL AT ROME.

Dr. Ashby, the director of the British School at Rome, has been received in audience by the King of Italy, to whom he presented an album containing forty facsimiles of drawings of Roman scenes, by British artists, from the print room of the British Museum. The dates of the drawings ranged from 1715 to 1843.

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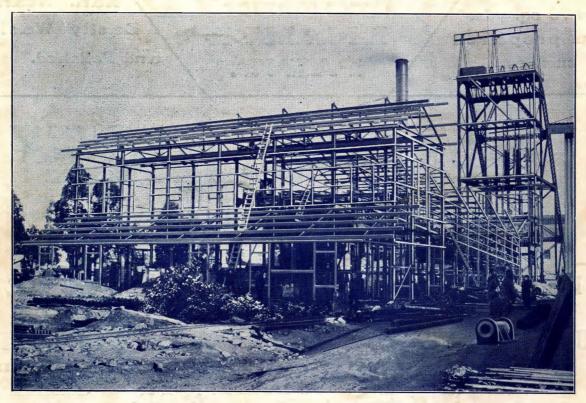
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