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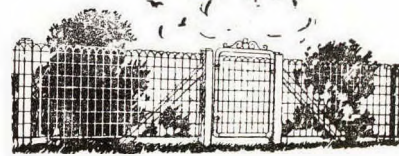
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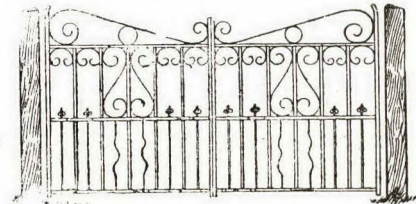
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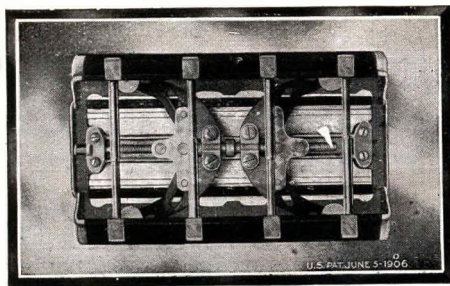
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## ON THE NEED FOR AN ENGLISH SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

### PROFESSOR SIMPSON'S VIEWS ON THE NEW R.I.B.A. SCHEME

To the opinions of Professor Reilly, of Liverpool, on the need for an English school of architecture, and the possible effect of the new problems in design set for the final examination of the Royal Institute of British Architects, we may add the following opinions of Professor F. M. Simpson, F.R.I.B.A., of University College, London. In the course of an interview with a representative of "The Architects' and Builders' Journal," Professor Simpson said:—

"The scheme undoubtedly has good points, but I think it also has defects. I understand that the matter is to be reconsidered before next session, so I do not wish to enter into detail now, but the two chief defects to my mind are—(1) The subjects are not 'set' as I understand the word. Little more is given than the titles of subjects, so that the picture which Professor Reilly draws of the meeting of two students working on these designs would hardly be possible under the present syllabus. It is more likely that after a few minutes' conversation one would say to the other, 'Oh! but my problem is altogether different from yours; my site is different, my aspects are different, my accommodation is not the same. Good-bye.' (2) The second defect, it seems to me, is the impossibility of maintaining a standard if designs are to be 'approved' (which presumably means certified as reaching a certain standard) by local societies. These societies are not in touch with one another, and, in the majority of cases, their members have had little experience in judging students' drawings."

Asked whether he thought it possible to examine a student in architectural design, and, if so, how, Professor Simpson said: "This, of course, is a very old question, and one which has not yet been satisfactorily answered. The Institute ask for four approved designs as testimonies of study, and, in addition, set a subject and give the student three days in which to work it out. The first day is for the sketch, and two whole days—a liberal allowance!—for its elaboration. These three days are either too much or too little. If there must be a 'scramble,' which I deny, let it remain a short and merry one. The solution suggested by me more than twenty years ago is, I still think, the right one. At that time there were no schools of architecture in England, and the Association were considering a day scheme of education, which, unfortunately, was not carried through. In an article which I wrote four years before being appointed to the chair of architecture at Liverpool, and which appeared in 'A.A. Notes' for April, 1890, my views on design were thus expressed: 'I do not think I am at all singular in holding that it is impossible to examine a man in architecture. By examination you can find out, perhaps, what practical knowledge he has, what his acquaintance is with the history of architecture, but that is all. It is only in his designs that he can show whether or not he is a good architect. The Institute gives one day to the design; a week would be none too much. Many a man can make a pretty enough drawing to  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch scale who comes utterly to grief over the  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch and full-size details. As I said before, I do not think you

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can examine a man in architecture. To do so you would have to shut him up for two or three months, and let him make designs; and that is impossible. The next best test, it seems to me, is the work done by students during an entire year from subjects set by visitors or masters. The Institute, of course, cannot manage that now; but if the suggested education scheme comes into force, then it can be managed, and that is one of the chief reasons, in my opinion, for supporting the change."

How, then, do you think the suggestion you make would work out?"

"In the following ways:—

(1) Design should be kept quite apart from the final paper examination, and the existing scramble should be deleted altogether.

"(2) Four designs, as suggested, should continue to be set every year (alternatives permissible) by the Board of Architectural Education, but in consultation with the heads of the different architectural schools throughout England (if possible Great Britain). This consultation is, in my opinion, essential for success, and would help greatly in bringing the schools into touch with one another, and also into touch with the Board of Architectural Education.

"(3) Students should prepare for their sketch designs unaided outside the school (or inside under restrictions), and should hand them in to the master of the school, who would retain, date, and initial them; the students keeping tracings.

"(4) In due course both designs and sketch designs should be submitted to the Board of Architectural Education and marked, and, according to the marks, students should be accepted or rejected.

"(5) The number of designs to be submitted might remain at four—or be increased to six if desired—and any design executed in its proper order during the three years previous to sending in should be eligible.

"If some such scheme were adopted, the design made within the walls of the Institute would disappear. The original sketch design submitted with each finished design, with the master's initials or signature on it, would be the guarantee that the work was the student's own.

"Instead of sending in such designs as testimonies of study before the paper examination, I think a far preferable course would be that they should be submitted after a student had passed that examination. Design is the crown of a student's career. A student must possess practical knowledge before he is allowed to practise, and the profession owe it to the public that this safeguard is provided; otherwise men will obtain their knowledge at the expense of the public. Students could, of course, try their 'prentice hand' at design during their early years of training, but let the problems set them be such as they can understand. When they are too difficult, the master makes the design, and the student merely has an exercise in draughtsmanship. Another advantage in placing the design last is, that the testimonies of study required before the paper examination might consist entirely of measured work. Such work has, I believe, been cut out before the final now."

Asked how he thought such a scheme would affect provincial students, Professor Simpson said: "Advantageously, I think. There are very few towns of importance in which architectural classes of some sort

do not exist, at which students can work, and it would be an additional inducement to the towns not possessing them to start such classes. Moreover, students in the country or in small towns would, to a greater extent than is the case at present, be led to regard a year or two spent at a school in London or some other large centre as an essential part of their architectural training."

"What other defects in the new Institute scheme do you see?"

"The chief blot is the retention of the preliminary examination unaltered. That has for long been admitted to be insufficient by everyone who has experience of students. Yet it remains as before. The new regulations pile up weight on top and leave the foundations insecure. Of all people, one would have thought architects would have been the last to make such a mistake."

"Do you think that all schools should aim at an ideal?"

"By all means have an ideal, and let it be as high as possible, but—and this is the important thing—let it also be broad; especially at the base."

#### THE CENTENARY OF WATERLOO

The Brussels correspondent of the 'Times,' writing on January 20th, says that the committee which has been formed under the presidency of General Baron de Heusch to arrange for the celebration, on June 18th, 1915, of the centenary of the Battle of Waterloo, has decided on the construction of a mausoleum at Plancenoit or Braine l'Alleud. The memorial, according to a design which is to be submitted for final decision to a council of British, German, Dutch, French, and Belgian artists, will consist of a mass of dark porphyry on which the principal group, carved in white marble, will stand out in relief, with bronze figures round it representing the various nations. All the bones found on the field of battle will be laid within this mausoleum, which will thus in a measure become the tomb of all who fell at Waterloo.

#### THE EGYPT EXPLORATION FUND

Reuter's Agency is informed that the chief work this year of the Egypt Exploration Fund will be the excavation of the Osireion, the great subterranean building in Abydos connected with the Temple of Seti, which is regarded as one of the important tasks which still have to be accomplished in Egypt. The excavation of the Osireion was begun nine years ago under the general supervision of Professor Petrie, but the work was not continued, and it is now proposed, if possible, to prosecute it to its conclusion. The building, at first thought to be the tomb of the supposed Pharaoh of the Exodus, is in reality a subterranean temple, probably intended for the performance of the mysteries of Osiris. Its stone walls are covered with sculpture and hieroglyphs illustrating a portion of the Egyptian scriptures dealing with the adventures of the soul in the underworld after death, and contain charms and prayers to protect Pharaoh against the assaults of devils. So far as at present excavated, the Osireion consists of a broad way descending to a great hall from which opens a large chamber and a second hall leading towards the temple. —"The Times."

**TRADE NOTES.****PUNCTUALITY**

is a virtue, as the axiom puts it, and many are the devices devised to attain the accomplishment. Clocks and watches are more or less the accepted mediums, and the range and nature of these is as diversified as the times which many of them record. However, science has once again stepped in, and the present-day impulse clocks are just about the acme of accuracy for timing purposes throughout hotels, institutions, works, and factories, etc.

The goods are not delicate scientific instruments needing expert manipulation and attention, but strong, sturdy, substantial articles, designed to be dealt with by the electrical contractor, and can be maintained by the works engineer and handy man.

Most of the clocks are in closed cases and sealed to prevent tampering, and the makers are responsible while the seal remains unbroken and the article is undamaged.

The "waiting train" turret clocks are compact mechanisms, easily fixed in position, and their action as easily understood by any intelligent workman, electrician, or clock maker, and in nearly every case have been fixed entirely by clock makers, electricians, and works engineers.

The contractor places the transmitter and dials in position, connects them in a simple circuit with an ordinary Leclanche battery, and finally adjusts the pendulum in position, when the system will keep time without any further attention to within a few seconds per week. In twelve or eighteen months the battery may need a few minutes' attention, and a warning bell is automatically sounded to announce this fact. Surely this is simplicity itself, but Messrs. Jenkins and Co., of Main Street, Johannesburg, will be glad to show and explain the mechanism to any interested.

**EARTHQUAKE-PROOF DWELLINGS AT MESSINA**

Although reinforced concrete is excellent for the construction of buildings to resist earthquake shocks, this material does not always furnish the most economical means of affording safety, especially in countries like Italy, where steel bars are relatively costly. This consideration has decided the authorities of the Italian State Railways to adopt timber-framed buildings for the housing of their employees at Messina. The new dwellings, to the number of seven hundred, replace the temporary barracks constructed after the recent earthquake. These houses contain four or six rooms, all on one storey, and are covered with a flat roof. Ample space is left between them, so as to minimise risk and to provide land for gardens. The exterior and partition walls consist of expanded metal, covered with cement mortar and supported by pitch-pine standards treated with a preservative solution. The walls are constructed with an interior air space, twenty-five centimetres wide, which reduces the transmission of heat and sound. The timber standards are connected by steel brackets to the foundation sills and roof beams, and are braced suitably to insure rigidity. The roof is of generally similar construction, and covered by a composition of wood and cement coated with tar. The floors are finished with coloured cement tiles.

**LEGAL****ARCHITECTS' CLAIM FOR FEES.**

Judge Bradbury gave judgment in the Bolton County Court in several motions for the reversal of decisions of the official liquidator in rejecting claims against the Pansy Spinning Company, Wigan. There had been several sittings, and lengthy argument over a claim by Messrs. Stott and Sons, architects, Manchester, for £8,475 damages (based on a commission of five per cent.) for breach of a contract for the building of two mills. The building scheme never matured, and the question was whether the commission was payable to Messrs. Stott on mills "to be" built, or mills "when" built. The judge said he agreed with the Official Receiver's contention that the commission could not be due until the building had been erected. After reading an estimate given by Messrs. Stott of how a mill of the kind could be financed, the judge said there was no binding contract. "I go further," he said, "and I don't hesitate to say that if the intention of the directors and Messrs. Stott was that the company should be liable upon an absolute contract at all events to build two mills, such a contract was so utterly reckless and improvident that it was not and could not have been passed in the bona fide interests of the shareholders." It would have been a gross breach of trust on the part of the directors. The question remained, Were the architects entitled to anything at all? The official liquidator had said they were entitled to nothing. He did not agree with that contention. They rendered service to the company at the latter's request. As to the rate of payment, he ridiculed such a charge as £10 per hour. He allowed £250 as a reasonable remuneration for the work done; they had received £1,500; so they had been overpaid £1,250. On a claim by Mr. A. H. Stott for £1,941, representing £1,770 loan money, and £171 interest, the judge said that as to £270 the claim was good, as that was money lent in cash to the company. The remaining £1,500 was money alleged to have been lent in several sums to the company. One cheque for £550 was sent by Messrs. Stott to the company, which was asked to place it to the credit of Mr. A. H. Stott as a loan, and to send on a cheque for £500 on account of services rendered. The real substance of the transaction was the conversion of a claim for architect's services into a claim for money lent. He gave judgment for the £270 lent and interest, for £250 and interest for services rendered, making a total of £520 and interest. Against that the interest actually paid to Mr. Stott must be deducted. In this case the liquidator must pay the costs.

**PRESERVATIVES INTO WOOD**

A simple method of determining the penetration of inorganic preservatives into timber is described in a circular issued by the United States Forest Service. In this method visual inspection of prepared specimens is adopted for determining the depth to which the preservative agent has penetrated. A specimen disc of the treated wood is cut, and in the case of zinc chloride the freshly-cut surface is immersed for ten seconds in a one per cent. solution of potassium ferro-cyanide. It is dried with blotting-paper, dipped

in a one per cent. solution of uranium acetate, and allowed to dry. Unimpregnated portions of the wood then exhibit a dark-red colour, and treated portions are whiter than the natural wood. It is stated that chemical tests show that proportionate amounts of zinc chloride as small as 0.2 lb. per cubic foot can be detected in this manner. In the case of copper salts, the specimen discs need only be dipped in potassium ferro-cyanide solution, and the penetration zone is marked by a deep red stain. The same test for iron salts is followed by a dark-blue stain. Mercury perchloride is made visible by a solution of hydrogen sulphide resulting in a black stain. A great advantage of the method is that it can be quite readily applied by anyone desiring to ascertain whether treated timber has been adequately impregnated.

#### DRIVEN ABROAD

At the annual dinner of the Edinburgh, Leith, and District Building Trades Association, held recently, the chairman (Mr. David Wilson, J.P.) said the flower of their tradesmen had been driven from their homes abroad to get their daily bread. The effects of the Insurance Bill would be felt by the building trade in a greater degree than by most of the other trades. With regard to the unemployment part of the Bill, he said that section had been inadequately discussed. When framing the Bill the Chancellor of the Exchequer had consulted the employees' organisations, but no organised body of employers had been consulted. Their committee had urged that workmen's compensation should have been included in the Bill as a contributory measure. Along with the English Federation, an endeavour was being made to get the Government to make an enquiry into the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act. That burden had been increased fourfold since the introduction of the Act, and it was a very heavy item in the cost of production. Malingering was responsible for much of the increase, and only by a contributory scheme would that scandal be averted.

#### TALL BUILDING RISKS

The fall of a stone minaret from the tower of the Trinity Building, New York, emphasises the necessity for exceptional care in the design and construction of lofty structures. In this case the minaret weighed about two hundred pounds, and fell from a height of two hundred and seventy-five feet above the street. On reaching the pavement it was smashed into numerous fragments, which flew in all directions, causing injury to some innocent pedestrians. As it is stated that the minaret was torn from its pedestal by a large flag, it is obvious that the element of contingent risk had not been taken into account so fully as could have been desired.

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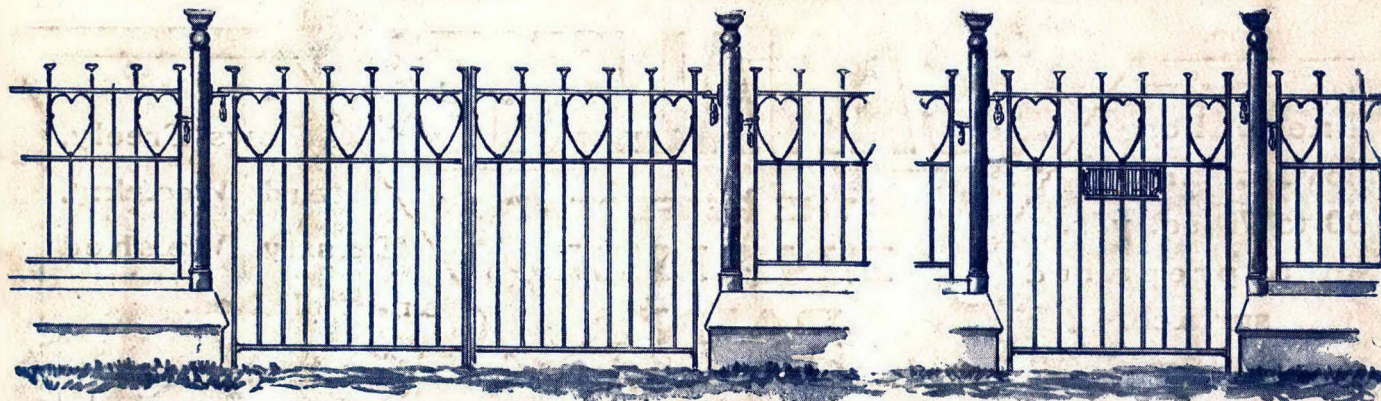
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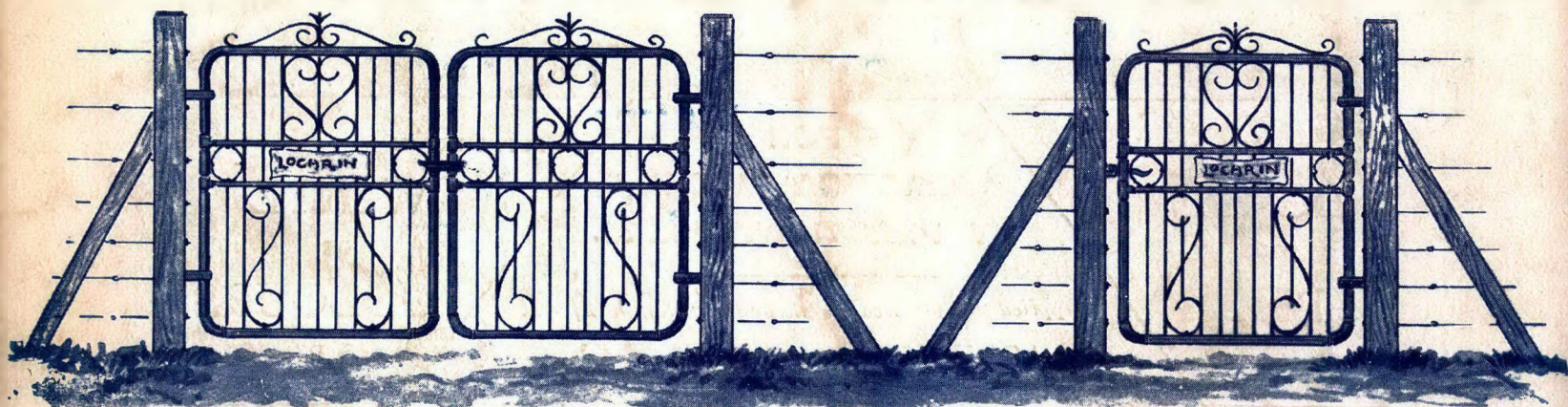
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