

# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Vol. III

JANUARY, 1915

No. 1

## The Craft of Tile-Making and Its Relation to Architecture

By J. H. DULLES ALLEN

**B**EAUTY," Mr. Lethaby has said, "is not a question of mere shapes, but is the evidence of mind acting properly on material."\* Thus, in any consideration of a craft product from a decorative viewpoint it is essential to include the raw material and its properties.

When on the dark mental horizon of savages there kindled the desire for self-expression in a primitive art, clay was the most responsive medium. In the earliest dawn of history we may truthfully picture the potter thumping his wet clay, for, although his is an humble craft, yet is it of ancient lineage.

Mr. Wallace, in his book on "How to Know Architecture," has accredited his subject with being "Man's most self-revealing record of his struggle upward from barbarism to the complex civilization of today."

A parallel in the case of clay-working may be pointed, for archæologists tell us that the introduction of pottery marks the transition of a race from a state of savagery to the next higher plane of barbarism. From shards of burnt clay we are able now

\*Mr. W. R. Lethaby so defines beauty in a paper read before the Architectural Association, London, and quoted in the June number of the Journal.

to trace and mark the degree of civilization of prehistoric man.\*

Clay has ever been a human democratic thing in the life of man; a vivid vehicle of expression, and history, profane and sacred is prolific in reference to it and teems with parables and stories of the intimate place held by clay in the minds of the people.†

In China or Japan,‡ in Persia or Peru, in Egypt, India, Greece, or Rome, in any and all civilizations we find clay playing an important part in the literature of the cuneiform brick inscriptions; in the baked-clay cylinders (from legal documents to laundry lists), the prayers of the kings

\*"So enduring indeed, that these crude products of the first potters, together with their fossil remains, form the most important records of prehistoric man."

Again: "The remains of pottery left by the prehistoric mound-builders and cliff-dwellers in America, for example, show that they had acquired quite a degree of skill and knowledge of the art."—The Wonders of Modern Science: H. S. Williams.

†There seems little doubt that in savagery clay-working was a "household industry," if such a term might be used. The man trapped and hunted, the woman made utensils in which to store and cook the quarry, as the Indian squaws at this time do. In fact, apropos of the present discussion of women entering business, it is rather surprising to consider how much work has been taken from them in times past.

‡"The Chinese and Japanese were making glazed pottery at least two thousand years before the secret of its manufacture was learned by Europeans."—Wonders of Modern Science.

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The subject in itself is of sufficient interest to reach a large public, but the translation gives the reader much more than a merely correct reproduction of the author's ideas. So imbued is it with the spirit of the original, that Vitruvius' every characteristic is faithfully expressed, and a human quality of immense interest to the lay reader thereby added. As Professor Howard so justly says in his preface, "Vitruvius was not a great literary personage, ambitious as he was to appear in that character. He has all the marks of one unused to composition, to whom writing is a painful task."

But amongst the pages of technical advice as to the selection of site and materials for a house, there are to be found invaluable glimpses of the daily life of the time of Augustus, in which Vitruvius lived. As we pass from pertinent, even though somewhat pompous, paragraphs on the foundations of city walls, through interesting chapters on the orders of architecture, the acoustics of a theater-site, to the best means of procuring and delivering an adequate water-supply, we renew our admiration for the thoroughness with which these ancient peoples

insured the possession of all those requisites for a safe and healthy life that we, in our time and generation, regard as evidences of the higher civilization of our own century.

Another characteristic of this older civilization is the apparent lack of any specialization in the different branches of architecture. What Vitruvius outlines as the requirements of a well-trained architect encompass the entire field, indicating that such knowledge was expected of all architects. In our times, such a general preparation, if found at all, is unusual, attention being centered upon the accumulation of specialized information in one of the many fields. Architects might well take this characteristic of their predecessors' training to heart, and no thoughtful reader can fail to be impressed by the individual earnestness and thoroughness of the original writer, as well as by the vividly personal interpretation of the translator.

The illustrations selected by Professor H. Langford Warren are appropriate and well placed.

WILLIAM EMERSON (M).

## In Memoriam

JAMES J. EGAN, (F)

ADMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE, 1908

ADMITTED TO FELLOWSHIP IN 1913

DIED AT CHICAGO, DECEMBER 2, 1914

James J. Egan was born in Cork, Ireland, in 1839. At sixteen years of age he entered Queen's College, Cork, graduating at the age of twenty. Shortly afterward he came to New York, where he continued the study of architecture under Clinton & Russell, the elder Potter and James Duckworth. Just prior to the Chicago fire of 1871 he came to Chicago and commenced the practice of Architecture, which was continued until July 6, 1914, when failing health compelled his retirement. Mr. Egan in his many years of practice earned a reputation as enviable as his modesty was pronounced.

CHARLES H. PRINDEVILLE.

# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

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MARCH, 1915

No. 3

## American Schools of Architecture

By E. RAYMOND BOSSANGE  
Professor of Design, Cornell University

**M**OST of our American schools of architecture have temporarily lost the services of the men at the head of their departments of design. The professors in charge, being French in almost every case, have unfortunately been called back to their native land for military service. The schools, therefore, are on a somewhat different basis for one year at least, and practically all the work in design is in American hands. It will be most interesting and instructive to see what the results of this condition will be; how well the systems and traditions already established under French influence will hold, and what changes, if any, will appear. It gives us also an admirable opportunity to review what has been done, and to look somewhat into the future to see if we are working in the right direction.

The shortcomings of our architectural schools are the results of unavoidable circumstances in the past, and if our educational system is too exotic in character, and not properly adapted to America, it is because our schools are still in their infancy and the period of borrowing and assimilation not complete. The public, and in some cases the profession also, does not understand these questions very clearly, and having had an opportunity of studying the

problem on both sides, the writer feels justified in offering an explanation of the situation as he sees it.

We must first go back a little and consider under what circumstances our schools of architecture were first organized. When architecture was added to the curricula of our American universities, the teaching of mathematics, history, and construction was comparatively easily taken care of by existing departments. When it came to design, however, great difficulties were encountered. It was found that we had practically no architects properly trained to teach this most important branch. In this country at that time, architects had no opportunity to take the necessary advanced studies to fit them for the work. The Americans who studied abroad were seldom mature or experienced enough, and in nearly all cases when they returned they were much more strongly drawn to practice than to pedagogy. Thus our American schools were unable to compete with the long established and perfectly organized *Ecole des Beaux Arts*, and the only recourse was to procure the services of the best available Frenchmen to act as *patrons* in our schools. In the last twenty years we have had the good fortune to procure men of exceptional ability, such as

## NEWS NOTES—OBITUARY

August, and September, at the Fine Arts Building, 215 West 57th Street, at 8.30 P.M. By resolution of the Executive Committee, an invitation is hereby extended to members of other Chapters to attend these meetings as guests of the Chapter, upon whose behalf I am directed to assure them of a cordial welcome.

CHARLES BUTLER,  
*Secretary of the New York Chapter.*

### Education

#### The Washington State Chapter and the Architectural Schools

At the last meeting of the Washington State Chapter, attention was called by Mr. Sexsmith to the fact that the legislature was opposed to the duplication of the courses in architecture at the University of Washington and the State College at Pullman. A discussion followed as to the Chapter's attitude on the duplication of schools, and the purposes of the two institutions. Mr. Bebb moved, and it was voted, that a committee be appointed to draft resolutions supporting the location of the School of Architecture at the University rather than at the State College, and to report at the next meeting of the Chapter.

### Official Architects

#### A Committee of the Minnesota Chapter to Investigate the Question

At the last meeting of the Minnesota Chapter, President Hewitt reported a recent meeting between a committee of the Chapter and Mr. Leighton, in regard to what assistance the Chapter could offer the Board of Education in its effort to determine upon a method of selecting a man adequately fitted to act as the Board's architect. Mr. Chapman moved that a committee be appointed to investigate the operation of state and city architects' offices in

various parts of the country, and obtain all possible data, and that this committee report back to the Chapter for further consideration of the matter. Mr. Lamoreaux suggested that this committee be directed to confer with the School Board and, if possible, persuade it to delay any action until the Chapter could submit its data on the cost of and results obtained from offices of official architects. It was so voted, President Hewitt appointing Messrs. De Brauwere, Tyrie, and Van Dyke as the committee.

#### Messrs. Favrot and Owen Elected to the Board of Directors of the New Orleans Association of Commerce.

Mr. Charles A. Favrot, (F.), a Director of the Institute, and Mr. Allison Owen, of the Louisiana Chapter, were recently elected as members of the Board of Directors of the New Orleans Association of Commerce. Both men have given evidence of their keen interest in civic problems, and their election is a fitting appreciation of the services which they have rendered their community.

It would be interesting, in this connection, to know how many architects are chosen to similar positions in this country. We are not at all sure that the value of their counsel has been widely appreciated by business organizations of this character, or that architects have yet become fully aware of the opportunities offered through such service. Slowly and surely we are learning that the man with the "unpractical vision" is merely the man who has the ability to look ahead, and who would prevent the blundering disorder of his "practical" brother. It is a pleasure to note this recognition of architects in New Orleans and we venture the opinion that the Association of Commerce will have cause to congratulate itself upon the wisdom of its choice.

## Obituary

### James J. Egan—1839—1914

Mr. Egan's death was announced in the January Journal. The following brief survey of his career was presented to the Illinois Chapter by Mr. Peter B. Wight, (F), at its meeting, January 12.

James J. Egan was born in Cork, Ireland, in 1839, and died in Chicago December 2, 1914.

His birthplace entitled him to the distinction of having been a typical Irishman, a Corkonian—an Irish gentleman of the old school, such as we seldom

meet,—distinguished for courtesy and urbanity, combined with culture, from which was developed a typical adopted American citizen.

At the age of sixteen he entered Queens College, Cork, graduating at the age of twenty. Shortly afterward he moved to New York. He selected architecture as his profession in the New World, doubtless having become interested in it through personal knowledge of St. Finnbarr's and such other remains of the early architecture of Ireland as abound in the neighborhood of Cork. At New York he worked

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and studied in the offices of Edward Potter and Charles Clinton, the former a Gothic enthusiast and the latter one of the most refined designers in the Renaissance styles, before the invasion of America by the modern French schools. His preparation for his profession was therefore on artistic lines.

He came to Chicago to enter into individual practice in 1870 or 1871, which was shortly before the great fire. We have no record of what he did here at that time. He was then thirty-one years of age, and it is probable that he had very little experience here before the great fire opened a field for great efforts, both among the old-time architects and those who were attracted by the opportunity.

Of prominent buildings designed in 1872, after the fire, we have only a record of the new Criminal Court building and jail on Michigan Street, of which the court building was long since replaced by a larger one, by other architects, but the jail is still in use, having been enlarged and supplemented by another architect.

Soon afterward, in a notable competition for the designing of a new Court-House and City Hall to cover the entire Court-House Square, although it was contemplated to cover only the east side of the square at first for the use of Cook County, Mr. Egan's design was one of the most elaborate and costly of those submitted. It called for twin buildings separated by courts on the north and south fronts and connected by a very high dome in the center. It also had four other domes on the corner pavilions. After dickering for several years with the designs of other competitors, Mr. Egan's\* design for the east or Court-House side of the building was finally adopted by the county board and he was engaged as architect of the building. Several years were occupied with the construction of the building, and although it was practically carried out according to his original design, Mr. Egan was beset by many trials and controversies during its erection, against which he fought manfully.

During the erection of the Court-House, Henry W. Hill, now F.A.I.A. and an honorary member of the Illinois Chapter, came from Hamburg, Germany, and worked for Mr. Egan, eventually being taken into partnership in 1875. This continued until 1881, when Egan and Hill separated, and Mr. Hill became a partner of August Bauer. Mr. Egan continued in practice alone until 1897.

During this period of sixteen years his practice was very extensive, being mainly in buildings for the

\*A photograph of Mr. Egan's competitive design for the whole structure, signed by him, was presented to the Illinois Chapter, by Mr. Wight in connection with this memoir.

Roman Catholic Church. A few only can be mentioned within the limitations of this memoir, as follows:

St. John's Church, at 18th and Clark Streets, Chicago, an elaborate example of modern Gothic, the exterior of which was never fully completed.

The Ryan Hotel, at St. Paul, Minn., and the Spalding Hotel at Duluth. St. Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco, was one of the few buildings that resisted the quake and was used as a place of refuge at that time.

The Cathedral at Davenport, Iowa.

St. Vincent's Church, Chicago, one of his very best works.

St. Elizabeth's Church, Chicago.

In 1897 Mr. Egan took as a partner, Mr. Charles Prindeville, now President of the Illinois Chapter, which partnership was continued until July 6, 1914, when Mr. Egan, on account of failing health, retired from active practice.

During this period, the following are among the buildings designed and erected:

Holy Angels' Church, Chicago.

St. Agatha's Church, Chicago.

Mount Carmel Church, Chicago.

St. Paul's Cathedral, Pittsburgh.

New wings to Mercy Hospital, Chicago.

St. Xavier's Academy for the Sisters of Mercy, Chicago, which is the mother house of the order.

The Hotel Brevoort, Chicago.

These buildings and many others that might be mentioned established a reputation for Mr. Egan which has been seldom equaled.

He became a member of the Institute, through the Illinois Chapter, in 1908, and was made a Fellow in 1913.

Mr. Prindeville says of him: "To the men in his office, James J. Egan was counsellor and friend, and many architects today, at one time students in his office owe their welfare and much of their success to his unflinching interest. In his many years of practice he earned a reputation as enviable as his modesty was pronounced."

### Charles Opel

Admitted to the Institute in 1912.

Died at Kansas City, Mo., February 18, 1915.

Mr. Opel began the practice of architecture in Springfield, Mo., in 1885, and at various times also practised in Kansas City, maintaining offices in both cities during a period of years. He was Secretary of the Kansas City Chapter in 1913-14.