

# CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

HELD AT WASHINGTON, D.C., DEC. 14, 15 AND 16

The forty-third annual convention of the American Institute of Architects, held at the New Willard Hotel, Washington, D. C., December 14, 15 and 16, like its predecessor was fruitful of the most valuable results.

The officers elected for the coming year were: President, Irving K. Pond; First Vice-President, Walter Cook; Second Vice-President, Edgar V. Seeler; Secretary and Treasurer, Glenn Brown. Directors: Cass Gilbert, Ralph Adams Cram, John G. Howard. Fellows nominated by the Board of Directors and elected, were: E. W. Donn, Jr., Abram Garfield, William D. Hewitt, C. Grant La Farge, Octavius Morgan, Ernest J. Russell, Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Douglas H. Thomas, Jr. It was voted that the next place of meeting of the convention should be in some city on the Pacific Coast.

Full reports of the convention, together with reports of committees will appear in succeeding issues.

## ADDRESS OF MR. CASS GILBERT, THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

From year to year, as the delegates of the Institute gather in convention, it is fitting that they should review the past and plan for the future.

The fundamental principles of the good practice of our profession do not change, but if we should content ourselves with the enunciation of principles alone, without action, we would become "academic" and ineffective. To have a part in the right upbuilding of our profession in this great nation is a privilege, and to fulfill that part wisely is the paramount duty of all of us.

While we rightfully devote much time to those matters which relate to Architecture as a *profession*, we must not neglect its development as an Art. Scholarship, intellectual achievement, scientific research, and, above all, the art of design are, and always will be, of the first importance to this organization.

The Institute, founded over fifty years ago, has from time to time formulated certain definite principles, which have become, through use and custom, the basis of practice in this country. We have grown from a small local society to a national organization of twenty-nine chapters, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast, and carrying on its rolls over on thousand members. With that growth we have encountered new problems and assumed new responsibilities.

We must, therefore, conduct our affairs so that we will deserve confidence and respect. After fifty years of development and experiment we are just beginning to formulate our codes—and we may spend some years yet in trying them out before we are able to state in final terms the best rules of practice, suited to all conditions.

The Board of Directors and your committee will report upon the subjects especially under their charge, but it may not be amiss for me to review some of the incidents of the Institute's work for the past year and to make certain recommendations for the future.

## COUNCIL OF FINE ARTS.

As an outgrowth of the discussions at the last convention the first step was taken by the Government for organized control of its art works. The idea advanced by the Institute was put into action by the Executive Order of President Roosevelt, under date of January 19, 1909—creating the Council of Fine Arts. This council, composed at first of 30, then 31, men skilled in the arts of Architecture, Painting and Sculpture, was selected from men representing the various States of the Union as widely as possible, from New England to California. The Executive order directed "The heads of Executive Departments, Bureaus and Commissions" that "Hereafter, before any plans are formulated for any buildings or grounds, or for the location or erection of any statue, the matter must be submitted to the Council I have named and their advice followed unless for good and sufficient reasons the President directs that it be not followed," etc.

The Council met and organized and performed efficient service during the brief period of its existence. It, in common with the other commissions created under Executive order, did not receive the support of Congress, and the Executive

order was consequently rescinded by President Taft. The appointment of the Council called forth general expressions of approval by the press and the people widely throughout the nation. It is certain that favorable action by Congress would be acceptable to the whole country. I recommend, then, that the Institute take such action, through its committees or otherwise, as may be deemed most effective in seeking the favorable action of Congress and of the Executive to the end that a permanent Bureau or Council of the Fine Arts shall be established by the National Government. The reasons why such expert control over the art works of the Government is desirable were fully set forth in the reports of your committee at the conventions of 1907 and 1908.

It has been urged that the Institute should advocate, in place of the Bureau or Council of the Fine Arts, a Department of Public Works, under which would be placed the construction, adornment and maintenance of all public buildings, bridges, parks and roadways. Such a department, co-ordinating the functions of both structural and artistic design, would seem to be justified by the vast extent of the Government's enterprises. But the exact method by which the general result should be obtained is of comparatively minor importance.

## CONTRACTIVE SYSTEM.

The Institute has from time to time considered the conditions arising from the expansion of the large contracting corporations. The assumption by these corporations of the functions of promoter, owner contractor, financier, and even of architect, have constituted a serious menace to the building interests, and particularly to the interest of the architects. In many instances the system of executing works under a general contract is desirable and proper, but the *abuse* of the system should be checked. Where contracting organizations usurp the function of the architect the abuse becomes at once apparent. The solution of the difficulty appears to be very simple after all, and its correction lies entirely within our own hands; namely, by returning more generally to the old-fashioned system of letting the various sections of the constructions of our buildings to minor contractors without the intervention of the middle man, or general contractor. In other words, deal with the man that does the work. Our schedule of practice and charges makes provision for this method of handling construction. The resultant saving in cost and quality is obvious. The architect's labor is to some extent increased, but his fee is increased to meet it. It then remains for the architect to give as efficient service in the management of the works as would be given by the general contractor. This can be done very readily by employing upon each building the necessary additional superintendents and adding to the clerical force of the office as necessary.

## GENERAL.

There are many useful and highly important matters in which the Institute has taken a more or less active part, and in which it should continue to interest itself. Among these are: The American Academy in Rome, the founding of a National Academy of Art in America, the development of our National Capitol City, the advancement of Civic Improvement in various parts of the country, the conservation of our Natural Resources, educational work for architectural students, our relations to other Architectural Societies and the acquisition of an endowment for the Institute in order that its usefulness be extended. I can no more than state these things, leaving for this or future conventions to consider them and act upon them as wisdom may dictate or opportunity permit.

## COMMITTEE ON COMPETITIONS.

The last convention directed the appointment of a Committee on Competitions, and action was taken accordingly. This committee has performed admirable service, but it is apparent that the "machinery" of the Institute is not yet sufficiently perfected to meet the needs. It appeared desirable to appoint the committee members from one locality, so that they could get together and act quickly. There are practical difficulties, however, of time and distance, which must be met. It appears necessary, therefore, to revise and improve the conditions under which this committee works.

## SCHEDULE OF CHARGES.

Immediately after the last convention the schedule of practice and charges as then revised was printed and issued. In order that it might be widely and effectively known, copies were sent not only to all members of the Institute, but to all practising architects in America, so far as their names could be ascertained. Copies were sent to all other architectural societies in this country and abroad, so far as they appear on our list of correspondents. Also to all the departments of the National Government, to all State and municipal authorities,

to the great financial and railroad corporations throughout the country and, of course, to the daily papers. In short, a comprehensive list was prepared and a schedule was mailed twice to every one on it, to the end that in putting it into operation the members of the Institute should have all of the assistance such publicity would give.

The new schedule, with its basic rate of six per cent., has been well received and adopted. It is found to be acceptable to public authorities except, of course, in cases where a definite limitation by law exists, or where negotiations precedent to its publication had been started. The reasons for the increased rate are considered by business men generally to be sound.

Several of the chapters have under consideration or have adopted local schedules of charges, in each case, I think, starting with the Institute's schedule as a basis, and increasing the rates for certain specified services. No objection could be raised to a member of the Institute issuing his own schedule of charges, provided he uses the Institute's schedule as a minimum basis; but when a chapter does so, it tends to confuse the public, and therefore to nullify our efforts towards a clear understanding. For the public does not always differentiate between the *Chapter* and the *Institute*. Conflicting schedules would seem to exist even if they did not exist. Conflicting rates would, in fact, soon appear in those items for which a specific rate is not mentioned in the schedule of the Institute. We would find, for example, programmes of competition based on one schedule for New York and another for Brooklyn—both boroughs of the same city, or conflicting programmes from the several States. Where two chapters exist in the same State there would be variations which would certainly be embarrassing. The courts or public authorities, as well as individuals, would, I think, find this confusing, and the effect would be that they would ignore our schedule and attempt to fix the rates themselves. I therefore ask your consideration of the subject and some expression from the convention as to whether special chapter schedules should be encouraged, or, at least, that the matter be referred for consideration to a committee.

#### CODICES.

What has been said of chapter's "schedules" will in some respects apply to chapter codes, and particularly to competition codes. The chapters should see to it that their codes are not at variance with the policy of the Institute. To do this may at times seem inconvenient, but in the long run it will prove to be the wisest policy. Admitting that different conditions prevail in different communities, that the chapters are best fitted to deal with local conditions, and that "home rule" is an attractive proposition, it must after all be apparent that the general rules of practice can be better formulated by the national body, and coming from it have greater force and effectiveness.

It is a grave thing to put the stigma of "unprofessional conduct" upon a member of the Institute. Under our system of organization this apparently may be done for the violation of some purely technical chapter rule, involving no moral dereliction. And what is perfectly proper for a practitioner in one city under the Institute's rules becomes "unprofessional" for a practitioner in another city under the chapter's rules. Inconsistencies of this sort, growing out of well-intentioned but unwise legislation, place burdens upon good practitioners and benefit no one. The convention itself, therefore, must be more careful to avoid adopting rules that will embarrass the chapters, and the chapters must make their local rules in harmony with those of the Institute. We will have before this convention a code of ethics prepared by your committee with great care. I trust the delegates will give it full consideration, with a view to its national application. A code at best is but the statement of fundamental and well-understood principles. If we could instill these principles into the minds of all practicing architects, we would not need to codify them. The architects should make it their duty to instruct their subordinates and students in these matters, so that when they come to practice they will follow well-understood principles, and not approach each new ethical problem as an experiment.

#### FINANCES.

The finances of the Institute need your thoughtful attention. By the closest economy, cutting down committee work to the very minimum, and by the generous voluntary contributions of our friends, we have been able to make this satisfactory showing contained in the treasurer's report. Instead of a deficit this year, we have been able to pay our obligations and meet this year's expenses with this year's income. We have wiped out our debt. The process has been a hard one. Officers of this Institute, the members of committees have in many cases borne committee and Institute expenses from their private funds, and many useful and necessary features of our work

have been reduced or abandoned. If the Institute is to maintain its position and carry on its work, it must have funds. In order to keep out of debt and to continue the proper work of the Institute, I recommend an increase of the initiation fees and dues, and that 15 per cent. of our total income shall be set aside as a reserve or sinking fund, which shall be inviolate, except under definite restrictions. It is a duty to ourselves, and it is necessary for the future welfare of the Institute that we should provide against emergencies and not again allow the finances of this body to be reduced to so low an ebb.

#### CONVENTIONS.

I recommend that the Institute continue its policy of holding two successive conventions in Washington and the third convention in some other city. This policy, if continued, will build up the chapters where conventions are held and increase the influence and effectiveness of the Institute. We have never held a convention on the Pacific Coast. It is time we did. I recommend that the next convention be in that section of the country. It is a serious financial burden for the chapters at a distance from the place of convention to pay the expenses of delegates. An amendment to the by-laws has accordingly been drafted for your consideration, permitting the sending of delegate proxies under certain restrictions.

#### CONCLUSION.

I need not urge upon you the high ideals of ethics and practice for which the Institute stands, but I feel impelled to say to you, *National Your Ideas*. Take always the large and generous view of every subject, and remember that the Institute is now a great national organization, and that it must be conducted upon broad, national lines, with wisdom and foresight which will guarantee its continued success. In conclusion, I wish to thank the officers and members for their very hearty and loyal support throughout my term of office. I have made many demands upon your time and drawn heavily upon your resources, but you have encouraged me to do so by your cordial response to every appeal. I thank you for this on my own behalf and on behalf of the Institute.

#### AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS.

##### A CIRCULAR OF ADVICE RELATIVE TO PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND THE CANONS OF ETHICS.

The American Institute of Architects, seeking to maintain a high standard of practice and conduct on the part of its members as a safeguard of the important financial, technical and esthetic interests entrusted to them, offers the following advice relative to professional practice:

The profession of architecture calls for men of the highest integrity, business capacity and artistic ability. The architect is entrusted with financial undertakings in which his honesty of purpose must be above suspicion; he acts as professional adviser to his client and his advice must be absolutely disinterested; he is charged with the exercise of judicial functions as between client and contractors and must act with entire impartiality; he has moral responsibilities to his professional associates and subordinates; finally, he is engaged in a profession which carries with it grave responsibility to the public. These duties and responsibilities cannot be properly discharged unless his motives, conduct and ability are such as to command respect and confidence.

No set of rules can be framed which will particularize all the duties of the architect in his various relations to his clients, to contractors, to his professional brethren, and to the public. The following principles should, however, govern the conduct of members of the profession and should serve as a guide in circumstances other than those enumerated:

##### 1. On the Architect's Status.

The architect's relation to his client is primarily that of professional adviser; this relation continues throughout the entire course of his service. When, however, a contract has been executed between his client and a contractor by the terms of which the architect becomes the official interpreter of its conditions and the judge of its performance, an additional relation is created under which it is incumbent upon the architect to side neither with client nor contractor, but to use his powers under the contract to enforce its faithful performance by both parties. The fact that the architect's payment comes from the client does not invalidate his obligation to act with impartiality to both parties. The architect should not, without authority, assume to act as the owner's agent.

##### 2. On Preliminary Drawings and Estimates.

The architect at the outset should impress upon the client the importance of sufficient time for the preparation of drawings and specifications. It is the duty of the architect to make or secure preliminary estimates when requested, but he should acquaint the client with their conditional character, and in-

form him that complete and final figures can be had only from complete and final drawings and specifications. If on the basis of approved preliminary sketches and specifications, definite expenditure has been mutually determined, the architect should bring his working drawings and specifications to meet such cost, provided that the client has requested no departure from the original basis of estimate, and that conditions beyond the architect's control have not arisen. If an unconditional limit of cost be imposed before such drawings are made and estimated, the architect must be free to make such adjustments as seem to him necessary. Since the architect should assume no responsibility that may prevent him from giving his client disinterested advice, he should not, by bond or otherwise, guarantee any estimate or contract.

### 3. *On Superintendence and Expert Services.*

On all work except the simplest, it is to the interest of the owner to employ a superintendent or clerk of the works. In many engineering problems and in certain specialized esthetic problems, it is to his interest to have the services of experts, and the architect should so inform him. The experience and special knowledge of the architect make it to the advantage of the owner that these persons, although paid by the owner, should be selected by the architect under whose direction they are to work.

### 4. *On the Architect's Charges.*

The Schedule of Charges of the American Institute of Architects is recognized as a proper minimum of payment. The locality of the nature of the work, the quality of services to be rendered, the skill of the practitioner or other circumstances frequently justify a higher charge than that indicated by the schedule.

### 5. *On Payment for Expert Service.*

The architect when retained as an expert, whether in connection with competitions or otherwise, should receive a compensation proportionate to the responsibility and difficulty of the service. No duty of the architect is more exacting than such service, and the honor of the profession is involved in it. Under no circumstances should experts knowingly name prices in competition with each other.

### 6. *On Selection of Bidders or Contractors.*

The architect should advise the client in the selection of bidders and in the award of the contract. In advising that none but trustworthy bidders be invited and that the award be made only to contractors who are reliable and competent, the architect protects the interests of his client.

### 7. *On Duties to the Contractor.*

As the architect decides whether or not the intent of his plans and specifications is properly carried out, he should take special care to see that these drawings and specifications are complete and accurate, and he should never call upon the contractor to make good oversight of errors in them, nor attempt to shirk responsibility by indefinite clauses in the contract or specifications.

### 8. *On Engaging in the Building Trades.*

The architect should not directly or indirectly engage in any of the building trades. If he has any financial interest in any building material or device, he should not specify or use it without the knowledge and approval of his client.

### 9. *On Accepting Commissions or Favors.*

The architect should not receive any commission or any substantial service from a contractor or from any interested person other than his client.

### 10. *On Encouraging Good Workmanship.*

The large powers with which the architect is invested should be used with judgment. While he must condemn bad work, he should commend good work. Intelligent initiative on the part of craftsmen and workmen should be recognized and encouraged, and the architect should make evident his appreciation of the dignity of the artisan's function.

### 11. *On Offering Services Gratuitously.*

The offering of professional services on approval and without compensation, unless warranted by personal or previous business relations, tends to lower the dignity and standing of the profession, and is to be condemned.

### 12. *On Advertising.*

Advertising tends to lower the standard of the profession, and is therefore condemned.

### 13. *On Signing Buildings and Use of Titles.*

The display of the architect's name upon a building under construction is condemned, but the unobtrusive signature of buildings after completion has the approval of the Institute. The use of initials designating membership in the Institute is proper in connection with any professional service and is to be encouraged as helping to make known the nature of the honor they imply.

### 14. *On Competitions.*

An architect should not take part in a competition as com-

petitor or professional adviser or juror unless the competition is to be conducted according to the best practice and usage of the profession as formulated by the Institute. Except as an authorized competitor, he may not attempt to secure work for which a competition has been instituted. He may not attempt to influence the award in a competition in which he has submitted drawings. He may not accept the commission to do the work for which a competition has been instituted if he has acted in an advisory capacity either in drawing the programme or in making the award.

### 15. *On Injuring Others.*

An architect should not falsely or maliciously injure the professional reputation, prospects or business of a fellow architect.

### 16. *On Undertaking the Work of Others.*

An architect should not undertake a commission while the just claim of a fellow architect, who had previously undertaken it, remains unsatisfied, unless such claim has been referred to arbitration or issue has been joined at law; nor should he attempt to supplant a fellow architect after definite steps have been taken toward his employment.

### 17. *On Duties to Students and Draughtsmen.*

The architect should advise and assist those who intend making architecture their career. If the beginner must get his training solely in the office of an architect, the latter should assist him to the best of his ability by instruction and advice. An architect should urge his draughtsmen to avail themselves of educational opportunities. He should give encouragement to all worthy agencies and institutions for architectural education. While a thorough technical preparation is essential for the practice of architecture, architects cannot too strongly insist that it should rest upon a broad foundation of general culture.

### 18. *On Duties to the Public and to Building Authorities.*

An architect should be mindful of the public welfare and should participate in those movements for public betterment in which his special training and experience qualify him to act. He should not, even under his client's instructions, engage in or encourage any practices contrary to law or hostile to the public interest; for as he is not obliged to accept a given piece of work, he cannot by urging that he has but followed his client's instructions, escape the condemnation attaching to his acts. An architect should support all public officials who have charge of building in the rightful performance of their legal duties. He should carefully comply with all building laws and regulations, and if any such appear to him unwise or unfair, he should endeavor to have them altered.

### 19. *On Professional Qualifications.*

The public has the right to expect that he who bears the title of architect has the knowledge and ability needed for the proper invention, illustration and supervision of all building operations which he may undertake. For that and other obvious reasons, such title should not be assumed without adequate qualifications.

## THE CANONS OF ETHICS.

The following canons are adopted by the American Institute of Architects as a general guide, yet the enumeration of particular duties should not be construed as a denial of the existence of others equally imperative, although not specifically mentioned. It should also be noted that the several sections indicate offences of greatly varying degrees of gravity.

It is unprofessional for an architect

1. To engage directly or indirectly in any of the building trades.
2. To guarantee an estimate or contract by bond or otherwise.
3. To accept any commission or substantial service from a contractor or from any interested party other than the owner.
4. To advertise.
5. To take part in any competition the terms of which are not in harmony with the principles approved by the Institute.
6. To attempt in any way, except as a duly authorized competitor, to secure work for which a competition is in progress.
7. To attempt to influence, either directly or indirectly, the award of a competition in which he is a competitor.
8. To accept the commission to do the work for which a competition has been instituted if he has acted in an advisory capacity, either in drawing programme or making award.
9. To injure falsely or maliciously the professional reputation, prospects or business of a fellow architect.
10. To undertake a commission while the just claim of another architect who has previously undertaken it, remains unsatisfied, or until such claim has been referred to arbitration or issue has been joined at law.
11. To attempt to supplant a fellow architect after definite steps have been taken toward his employment.
12. To compete knowingly with a fellow architect for employment on the basis of professional charges.