

47

Correspondence, Columbia, 1896-1897.

WARE MC14

March 6th, 1896.

My dear Mr. Low:

It does not appear that there is any essential difference, in respect of safety, between a dome held up by iron trusses and a self-supporting dome of tiles. The objection <sup>That</sup> to the iron work and the masonry that rests upon it will expand and contract unequally, under changes of temperature, has, I understand, no scientific support and is not warranted by experience. Such a construction is not specially liable to cracks or to openings of the joints. A Guastavino arch is also, in spite of the contractor's apparent unwillingness to answer for it, sound in theory and sufficiently tested, as I believe, in practice.

If the cost of the two were also the same, I should myself greatly prefer the latter, and if consulted should urge its adoption. The mixed construction of iron and masonry is complicated and heterogeneous, and the iron itself a highly artificial product, chemically unstable, so to speak, and only to be prevented from rusting, and thus returning to the earth from which it was extorted, by constant vigilance. It is its nature to decay. This does not commend it, to my mind, as a material for monumental purposes. Domes of tile, on the other hand, are simple in design and homogenous in construction, and the material of which they are composed is the most indestructible that the arts have produced. They seem a suitable element in a work of which

simplicity and dignity are the leading characteristics.

Moreover the charm of the <sup>a</sup>dome lies not alone in its shape but in <sup>the</sup> conception of it, in the idea that it is self-supported and hangs in the air. It is even more captivating to the mind than to the eye. But the proposed construction is not a real dome, it is only an ingenious contrivance to produce the effect of one. I think this sort of thing,----like the great Gothic vault in the Assembly Chamber at Albany, which was held together by iron frames concealed in the roof, and which as long as it lasted was a reproach to all concerned,----is disturbing and distasteful. One does not like the idea. One can take no real satisfaction in the result, for <sup>there is always</sup> the result is something which has to be forgotten or forgiven. Domes of tile, on the other hand, really are what they appear to be.

But this distinction is based solely on considerations of fitness and artistic propriety, considerations which appeal rather to the architect than to the civil engineer. It is a question of taste and feeling, not a matter of business. But such considerations are not out of place in the present instance and might naturally have a decisive weight, if the balance hung evenly. Unluckily the cost weighs down the opposite scale. How much it would be worth while to give for the satisfaction to be derived from the more suitable and harmonious treatment it is, of course, hard to say. Ten thousand dollars would seem to be an excessive amount. But if the change could be made, as perhaps it can, for Five thousand, or Six, it might

be worth it.

As to the corner stone, there may be some notion among the Freemasons, or other formalists, that it is more properly set in one place than in another. But if so, I never heard of it. In laying the corner stone of the Memorial Hall we put it where it was most convenient, which happened to be in an internal angle toward the north-west. Perhaps this precedent is as good as any for your purpose.

January 9, 1897.

My dear Mr. Low:-

I have no change to suggest in the salaries now given to my assistants. These are the same that I named in my letter of January 22, 1891, with the exception that Mr. Kress is paid \$2,500, and Mr. Snelling \$2,000, instead of vice versa, and that Mr. Warren has been added to the list, with a salary of \$1,000. In other respects the expenses of the Department are the same now as then.

Meanwhile the work of the School has been largely extended, not only by the increase in the number of students, from about sixty to about a hundred, and by our assumption of all the work in Mathematics, Mechanics and Engineering formerly given by Mr. Van Amringe, Mr. Peck and Mr. Trowbridge and by the introduction of a Course in Building Materials, in which we undertake a chief part of the work formerly done for us by Dr. Chandler, Dr. Newberry and Mr. Greenleaf, but by the introduction of stated exercises in the writing of English. This was authorized by a vote of the Faculty in May, 1894, giving us leave to avail ourselves "of the services of the Department of Rhetoric and English Composition in the revision and criticism of Essays upon Architectural subjects." It proved impracticable however, to profit by the good will of that Department, the time of the Professors being entirely

occupied by their increasing work in the College. These exercises proved however so salutary to our men, giving them a much needed discipline and conspicuously elevating the intellectual tone of the School, that they have gradually been extended to the whole School, the lower classes writing reports or essays every week, and the Fourth Year class and Special Students more serious painters once a month.

Under this arrangement every lecture has been carefully reported by two men in each Class, the others preparing every week a brief essay on some architectural subject. The reports are corrected and criticized by the lecturers, and then before going back to the writers are given to our two deaf and dumb students, who are thereby saved much trouble and expense. The Essays are criticized by Mr. Sherman, whose literary tastes and attainments well qualify him for this work. I myself besides reviewing the fifteen or twenty reports of my own lectures which come in every week, have also revision and correction of the twenty monographs of say fifteen or twenty pages each prepared by the Fourth Year men every month or six weeks as the result of their studies in Advanced Architectural History.

Meanwhile the natural growth and development of our work and the increased elaboration of our methods has correspondingly increased the amount of work done by ourselves as well as that done by the Students. The work in Design has been extended from three years to four, that in Ornament from two

years to three, and that in Scientific Construction and Engineering from one year to two. On both sides more is undertaken and it is done more thoroughly. But our standard of performance still advances faster than we can keep up with it.

This makes us all pretty busy, but no one is seriously burdened by it except myself, though my own work is somewhat lightened this year by the presence of Mr. Gunn. He is occupied with what we give him to do mainly out of school hours mostly revising and preparing papers and other clerical work which does not interfere with his own studies. He proves to be a most satisfactory assistant, and seems to be finding the advantages that he was hoping for.

The time I give to these papers myself, and the two or three hours a day taken up by the strictly administrative work which comes to me through the Dean's office, including a considerable correspondence and much interviewing by parents and guardians and by the Students themselves, is in addition to the twenty-five hours a week for which I am scheduled in the Scheme of Attendance, two hours every morning, and three every afternoon. I cannot of course attend to all this work in person, and, as I wrote you in August 1894, I keep constantly at hand an alter ego. This place, as I then said, was at that time filled by Pope, who was helping me prepare my Winter's work during the Summer and admirably served me during the following Winter in carrying it out, and I was hoping for a continuance of this service when in the

summer of 1895 the McKim Fellowship carried him off. In his place I was so fortunate as to secure the aid of Partridge, a Student in the Department for a couple of years in 1886 and 1887, who more than supplied the loss.

The new rooms in the Havemeyer Building will accommodate one hundred and fifty students instead of a hundred. Our present members have come to us without special effort on our part, and indeed until we have begun to get out of the purely formative and experimental stages, I have never felt much inclined to the blowing of trumpets. Circumstances have however within a year or two given the School considerable repute, and it is reasonable to expect that the special means now in hand for extending a knowledge of what we are doing, under the principles and methods that we employ, will presently add to our numbers involving a corresponding increase in our teaching force. But even with our present numbers an additional assistant of high quality is needed if we are to advance or even maintain our present standard of performance. This additional strength is not only necessary, but is for several reasons specially desirable as a matter of policy. In the first place there is a growing demand in this country for a more advanced professional training than is now offered in our Architectural Schools. Forty or fifty Americans, among whom are a dozen or fifteen of our own Graduates,

are now in Paris profiting by the gratuitous instruction offered by the Ecole des Beaux'Arts. But this pressure has induced a restriction of the privilege and only ten foreigners are now admitted at one time, including Swiss, Italians, Germans and English as well as Americans. This for most men means a long, expensive, and not very hopeful delay, and creates an active demand for an alternative that shall be a real equivalent. Already the Institute of Technology, under M. Despradelle, has set on foot a Post-Graduate Course which he does not hesitate to advise his men to take rather than to risk their fortunes in Paris. We have ourselves, among our University Students, a number of men who would be in Paris, if they were not here. Our position is a favorable one for meeting this demand if we are prepared for it as it arises. Not only is our own equipment as good as any, but the Museums and Libraries and the opportunities for studying every species of construction and decoration which the City offers give us advantages which so far we have only begun to profit by. These are advantages however which can be made the most of only by advanced students, as it is obviously our policy to do everything we can to build up our Post-graduate work. It is better worth our while to spend our time and the Trustees' money upon mature Students and to do what we can to attract them, than to stimulate the attendance of beginners, half of whom soon drop off, so that the time and money spent upon them is wasted.

Moreover, as our methods take definite shape they prove to be in many respects quite different from those of Paris, or of the other American Schools, in detail and in spirit, and as I believe, and am encouraged to believe by men in the profession upon whose judgment I can rely, better adapted to the needs and to the temper of American young men. At any rate they constitute what is really a new departure, an experiment based upon our own experience and one that it is in the interests of professional education to develop into its full proportions as promptly as may be, so as fully to test its merits and defects.

accordingly  
The time seems to have come when it is necessary to relieve the present strain, and to provide for the probable needs of the immediate future by adding a highly competent assistant to our force. But men competent, by natural gifts and efficient training, to undertake such difficult and untried work, are few, and among these there are few who care to give up the attractions of active professional life for an Academic career.

It was in view of this that some years ago after saying, in answer to your enquiry, that our present force was sufficient for our present needs, I added that nevertheless whenever I should find a competent person available for such work, I should not hesitate to ask the Trustees to add him to our number. Fortunately no one turned up until now and now he is needed. I shall therefore be much obliged if the Trustees will next year appoint Mr. W: T. Partridge, of whose

excellent quality we have now had abundant experience to be a Lecturer in the School of Architecture, at an appropriate salary.

Mr. Partridge was born in 1867, his father who had been an Officer of Volunteers being then as now in the service of the State Department at Washington. During the two years that he was in the School in 1886 and 1887, he distinguished himself not only by his remarkable draughtmanship, but by great intelligence and by admirable and engaging traits of character. His uncle, Mr. Shearman of Brooklyn, who was bearing his expenses, being then unfortunate in business, Partridge went to Boston in the hope of taking the Retch Travelling Scholarship, as the only available means of carrying on his education. This he easily won in 1890, although, not caring to have a "walkover" he had somewhat characteristically gone out of his way to organize a Class of a dozen Competitors, whose training he began himself and then handed them over to Prof. Letang, M.Despradellés predecessor at the Institute. After two years of eager and intelligent study in France and Italy, he came back to Boston and then after an interval of somewhat doubtful health went by invitation to St. Louis upon a permanent and profitable engagement. The work

of his employers however finally so changed in character that he felt that he was not really the man they needed, and he threw up his engagement and returned to New York in the Summer of 1895.

I had long had him in mind as the man whose help and co-operation would be of more value to us than almost anyone of the several hundred Students that had within thirty years passed under my hands, and in this opinion I had been confirmed by what I had seen of him during a week in Chicago two Summers before, when he came from St. Louis at Mr. McKim's invitation, and we were guests together in Mr. McKim's house. This gave me a chance to renew an acquaintance that had never been wholly interrupted, and to discuss with him the problems of professional education that were occupying my mind. Into these he entered with zeal and indeed confessed that this was a business that he had never been able to keep his hands off, and that he had at that moment a class of draughtsmen in St. Louis upon whom he was trying the educational methods that his study and travel both here and in Europe had suggested to him.

It seemed too good to be true when on coming to New York he said that if I had any work to which he could turn his hand in the School, he would rather do it for a while, and so secure a certain independence, than accept any of the flattering offers which he found awaiting him. He was tired of the routine of office work and had moreover some work of his

own to attend to which would last some months and made it convenient for him to have a part of his time at his command.

Since then he has with increasing efficiency and success done for me so much of my own work as I have not had time to attend to, developing it in ways in which I had myself neither the special gifts nor the training to take the lead. He has taken all my afternoon work in the Drawing Academy with the Second Year men and their Morning Lecture in Design, and has also divided with Mr. Hamlin the Third Year Design and Drawing, the Third Year and the Fourth Year Classes together being more than one man can properly look after.

His interest in the work has become so great, and he is so successful in it, that he is disposed to adopt it as a career. Indeed last summer he refused an offer from Mr. McKim to go to Rome for three years as Director of The American School of Architecture in Rome, preferring the experience he was getting here to the advantages of a residence in Italy.

I propose that he shall be made a Lecturer, since the appointed salary of an Instructor would be inadequate to the quality of his service, and much below what he has been in the habit of receiving as a mere draughtsman. But it would obviously be premature to make him an Adjunct Professor. Moreover his general, as well as his professional education has been so broken and imperfect that he would not feel that he could answer to the implications of such a title.

But he is very desirous to establish a valid claim

to Academic recognition and to achieve an Academic status, and I should hope that it would be practicable for him presently to complete his School studies, as he wishes to do, pass his examinations, get his degree in due course, and as time goes on qualify himself for the degree of Master of Arts.

This appointment would for the present afford adequate relief to a situation which has become untenable. Such further personal assistance as I may next year provide for myself will enable us to get through the year successfully, unless there should be a greater increase in the number of Students than is at once to be expected. But our own experience shows, and I find that the same thing has proved true in other Schools, that the efficient supervision and instruction of Classes in Architectural Design requires one instructor for every twenty or thirty men.

(Coley ~~Beane~~ ~~return~~ ~~to~~ ~~Dr.~~ ~~Chandler~~)

March 31st., 1897

Dear Dr. Chandler:-

I entirely agree with you that your men should study the Calculus, and I am not at all sure that you are proposing to overwork them. But they ought not, of course, to have any burdens put upon them that are at all unnecessary, and I am disposed to believe that the amount of time assigned to mathematics in your schedule is more than is really needed for your purpose.

Very moderate attainments in arithmetic are all that anyone needs, either for the common uses of life or as a preparation for the study of algebra and trigonometry. The simplest operations of algebra, if made thoroughly familiar, suffice as an introduction to analytical geometry. The most elementary conceptions in regard to analytic are all that is needed for the Calculus, or indeed, for Mechanics and Engineering, in which, again, it is desirable to have a thorough comprehension of the theory of Differentiation and Integration, but it is not necessary to be a skillful manipulator of those processes.

In all these subjects what is most needed, even in the study of their application to other sciences, is familiarity with the scientific conceptions which they embody, and with the technical terms in which these conceptions are expressed. It is as a form of thought, contemplating the real relation of quantities, and as a language, expressing those relations, that they are chiefly val-

uable.

It seems to me that all these studies should be pursued by the Architects, and also I fancy, by the Chemists, from this point of view. In each subject they should cover only a limited field, the field defined by the practical applications to their needs. But within that field the ground should be made so familiar that the ideas involved shall get into the fibre of the student's mind and become a part of his common sense. This is not so necessary for the professional mathematician, or perhaps for the Engineers. These continue to pursue the mathematical path, and even if it is at first a little obscure, use soon makes all things plain,. But Architects and Chemists have to get at school all the mathematics most of them are ever to know. They need to have it, what of it they do have, so clear in their minds that they can never forget it. There is not time to learn much in this way. It is wise for us, then, as I have said, to till but a limited portion of the field, the portion that will bear most practical fruit, but within that range to dig deep, and turn the soil over again and again.

Our own experience is justifying this view. Our men give only two hours a week to Analytics and the Calculus in place of four. But they understand these subjects sufficiently for every purpose to which they need to apply them, as well as for the purposes of scientific thought. They tell me the differentiation and integration are as simple, to their minds, as multiplication

and division, or powers and roots.

Involution and evolution, indeed, illustrate very well what I have in mind. We can all multiply fast enough, but the inverse process finds us halting. Getting out the square root is not so difficult, with a little consideration,. But how many members of our Faculty, or of any other scientific body, can extract the cube roots of numbers, or indeed, ever could, without a book? It is not necessary that we should, and this ignorance and incapacity is no bar to our scientific attainments or conceptions in the realm of quantitative discussion. So with Integration. The theory of Integration is one of the corner stones of modern science. A man enters a new intellectual field when it first breaks upon his vision. It is well for him to practice the process in its simpler forms, so as fully to profit by the mental experience. More than this is a waste of time. For this enables one to read the language of mathematics, and to follow the argument of the sciences that employ it, as Chemistry is coming to do. This is all that, in the applied sciences, most men ever have need of. It is all the mathematics that men whose bent lies in other directions have time and attention for, at least in school. If ever they have occasion to extend their range, they can do so when the occasion presents itself. Nobody need expect, even in a school of science, to learn all the science he will ever require, or to study any science with thoroughness except, perhaps, his own.

Within one's own domain a man understands things in order to do them, but outside he does things only in order to understand them. Beyond that point, pains spent in becoming a skillful manipulator and expert solver of problems, whether in the laboratory or at the desk, seems to me to be a misdirected endeavor.

When we some years ago divided our work into alternative courses, as you are now doing, we established this minimum work in Mathematics and Mechanics as a sufficient preparation for the minimum work in Architectural Engineering which we exact of the men who elect the course in Advanced History and Design. If the men who elect Advanced Architectural Engineering are found to need more mathematics ~~and~~ mechanics than this it would be easy for them to study some additional chapters, at the beginning of the fourth year. So far, however, we have found no occasion for this.

In your own case I should think a minimum course of study might in like manner be arranged for the men who are to take Organic and Analytical Chemistry, and then make special provision for the Chemical Engineers, if they are found to need it.

If this should incidentally reduce the total number of hours it would go some way to meet Mr. Van Amringe's objections.

C. J. W.

Competition

126 East 28th Street,

New York, June 21, 1897.

Dear Mr. Carrère:-

You are quite at liberty to show my letter of ~~last~~ <sup>of last</sup> week to anyone interested in these questions. I shall be very glad if any experience I have had can aid in finding a satisfactory solution to them. They are difficult.

The attempts I have myself made in this direction have been intended mainly to diminish the waste of time, labor and expense which competition so often involves. This it seems to me perfectly practicable to do, since the main distinction to be made between ~~designs submitted~~ different solutions of the same problem is ~~mainly~~ one of kind. A comparison of the first sketches in which an idea takes shape shows what sort of thing is intended about as well as the most elaborate presentation of it. Unfortunately a competition of sketches is difficult to bring about, since Committees generally want about all they can get for their money, or for nothing, and architects are eager to give their ideas a "complete presentation." This Public Library Competition is from this point of view an interesting experiment, and it may show by example that less elaborate work suffices for an intelligent choice than is generally supposed.

This was the intention in the case of the Cathedral seven years ago. But the plan was defeated at the last moment

by the Committee's substituting a sixteenth scale for the thirty-second scale which I had recommended to the Bishop. This was substituting finished drawings for sketches, with the result that thousands of dollars were spent upon drawings which, when they came to be examined, never received more than a moment's consideration. It <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ obvious at a glance that they were not the sort of thing that was wanted. Sketches would have made this just as clear.

But of course this procedure has its embarrassments. Sketches are incomplete, and it may well happen that though they suffice to show which among fifty designs are not wanted, they are inadequate to show which one, among several about equally promising, is finally to be preferred. They often will, but sometimes they may not, and this contingency needs to be met by providing <sup>that</sup> in this case <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ fuller development of the schemes in question shall be presented. This seems to me a perfectly reasonable procedure, entirely in the interests of all parties, as so notable an economy of time and money could hardly fail to be.

Whether this second trial shall be promised beforehand, or shall be made contingent on the result of the first trial, is a matter of detail. My own preference would be to leave the question open, and not to ask for further drawings unless they proved necessary for an intelligent choice. This has been my own practice, in general, when I have had my own way.

But it may also happen that it is impracticable

clearly to formulate the problem in the first instance. A Committee may not know what they really want, or, as in the case of this Library Committee, may be divided in opinion. A sketch competition may then be the most satisfactory way of clearing up the subject in their minds. It seems to me a perfectly legitimate one. Another way of course is to employ someone to make preliminary studies and then to base the programme of requirements on the result. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ But I do not think this works very well in practice. In the great Law Courts Competition in London in 1866, thousands of pounds were spent on such preliminary work with the result of <sup>merely</sup> ~~nearly~~ hampering the Competitors. I have once or twice myself, in formulating the requirements of my committees, found that the only way to make sure that it was really practicable to do what was wanted, was to lay out sketch plans of the different stories, trying different schemes. If one of them came out pretty well, there was a strong temptation to save trouble to the competitors and time to the committee, by substantially prescribing an arrangement which was in itself perfectly satisfactory. But I have always been glad that this was not done, other people generally proving to have ideas as good as my own. If the prescribing of a scheme is ever advisable, it would seem to be so in the present instance, as the study given to the Library by the Director has given him a perfectly clear idea of what ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ is wanted. But the Trustees were unwilling to accept it until they had heard from the profession.

In the case of the Madison Square Garden also, although I was perfectly clear in my own mind which of the half-dozen designs was to be preferred, I could not get the Committee to act in accordance with my advice until they had satisfied themselves that certain objectionable features could be overcome. If not, they were prepared to fall back upon their second choice. This seems to me a perfectly rational and businesslike procedure, entirely in the interests of the enterprise, though of course vexatious and annoying to the Competitors. In like manner this last week Mr. Schuyler, Mr. Marquand and myself refused to take the general excellence of Mr. Thomas's design for the Record building as sufficient evidence that he was capable of remedying its defects, or would be willing to do so. We would not recommend the scheme for adoption until the defects had actually been remedied. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and I think that a procedure which enables a committee to know as nearly as may be what they are going in for, instead of trusting that somehow or other their architect will be able to make things all right, is a businesslike and defensible procedure.

The alternative, that a final judgment shall be made at once on the basis of the drawings as first sent in, is of course desirable, and in the nature of things this is what generally happens. But to insist upon it is to require a definiteness of purpose and clearness of idea on the part of the projectors which, in the nature of things, cannot always be counted on. Moreover it requires the competitors to furnish fully

wrought out and fully presented schemes. This involves on the part of the architect a useless expenditure of labor, and on the part of the committee, if the labor spent on the drawings is to be fully paid for, as it should be, a useless expenditure of money.

But ~~xxxx~~ it is plain there can be no substantial reduction in the time and money spent unless provision is made for additional work if it proves necessary. Otherwise there is a waste of time, labor and money which in an open competition is a grievous burden on the competitors. In a close competition the waste is equally great though the ~~xxxx~~ <sup>cost to</sup> the architects is less, since it is shared, at least in part, by the Committee. They should ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ of course bear the whole of it, and they will be more willing to do so if the expense is reduced to the lowest practicable figure.

It may be objected that between the first trial and the second the character of the designs submitted may become known, and unscrupulous competitors may steal each others' ideas. I have heard of such things happening, and I think something of this sort is said to have been done in the case of the Paris Opera House, where the first set of drawings, which were by no means mere sketches, were publicly exhibited. But I cannot attach much importance to this consideration. Even if privacy were more difficult to secure than it really is, the advantage any man can get from mere rumor of what other people are doing seems to me for the most part a negligible<sup>2</sup> quantity. Still, in the Public Library Competition we have warned the

competitors to keep their drawings to themselves.

It is perfectly true of course that the immediate object in view is not to determine the design but to find an architect, and that committees cannot expect to know in advance much more than the general character of what he is going to do for them. But the opposite is equally true, that the ultimate object is to get a building and not the builder, who is merely a means to an end, and committees are right in taking all reasonable precautions to make sure that the result will be just what they want.

The idea that it is well ~~not~~ ~~not~~ that the committee should decide at once, for better or worse, as best they can upon the evidence before them, finds a close analogy in the idea that their professional adviser should pronounce a conclusive judgment in favor of one or another of the designs submitted. This again is what generally happens. In my own practice I have generally, as in the case of the Madison Square Garden, recommended a definite line of action. <sup>BWC</sup> The Committees naturally and rightly claim some freedom, and the practice which I have uniformly followed of submitting to their choice a few of the best designs, with my comments and recommendations, has it seems to me everything in its favor. This is the principle of the Civil Service Examinations which do not deprive the appointing power of all freedom of choice, but <sup>limit its</sup> ~~limit its~~ exercise to a certified list of properly qualified candidates.

It moreover relieves the professional adviser of

an ultimate responsibility which, in the interests of the work, ought not to be thrown upon <sup>him.</sup> ~~it~~. I can decide, according to my ~~like~~ lights, among the schemes submitted, according to their technical and artistic merit. But I do not know and cannot learn which of two buildings is the best machine for doing the work it is made for. No instructions can explain this. Only the engineer who is to run it can say. I have found more than once that controlling considerations presented themselves at the last moment, which nobody had thought of beforehand, but which turned the scale, and rightly so. For the Committee to have followed my judgment would have been disastrous. But I had done all that such an adviser can properly do, by excluding from consideration the schemes that were intrinsically unworthy, and setting forth in a clear light the technical and artistic merits and defects of the rest.

Moreover, though it often happens that one design is pre-eminent, it is not always so. It is commonly said that good plans and good elevations naturally go together. But, this is not verified by experience. One often has to consider whether it is going to be more practicable to patch up a poor plan so as to avail one's self of a fine exterior, or to mend a second-rate facade so as to secure the desired plan. This again is a question that it is better to let the competitors furnish the answer to, by returning them their drawings for further study. But even when plan and elevation are both acceptable, they are very often, though good, not so very good as clearly to distance their competitors. In this case one cannot honestly pronounce

~~an emphatic judgment~~

an emphatic judgment. To do so is to affect a certainty which he does not feel, and this is not one of the matters in which promptness of action is of paramount importance. In this event the personal tastes and preferences of the Committee have a legitimate weight, and this is notably the case when questions of architectural style come in. If two schemes are intrinsically about ~~xxx~~ equal in merit and the Committee prefer a Greek to a Roman building, there is no reason why they should not have their way.

In setting forth what seemed to me to be rational modes of procedure in these matters I <sup>have</sup> inevitably describ<sup>ed</sup>ing my own, for I have naturally adopted in practice what I have believed to be the best. But perhaps I have gone more into detail than I might otherwise have done on account of the language employed in the paper of which I spoke in my letter, and which was some weeks ago made public. To require that professional advisers shall be practicing architects is to exclude, almost by name, Mr. Babcock, Mr. Chandler, Mr. Laird, Mr. Hamlin and myself. As we have had, among us, three or four dozen competitions in our hands during the last twelve years we cannot <sup>but</sup> understand this formal and public expression of distrust as a pointed condemnation of our methods. But I have failed on inquiry to discover any adequate or intelligent ground for this dissatisfaction. All I have been able to get at is that there is an impression

that we have sometimes given our committees more freedom of action than they deserved or than the necessities of the case required,. It is also said that there are certain classes of buildings so technical in construction or arrangement that nobody that has not had a hand in them is competent to judge of their merits. But it is plain that in that case most practicing architects are as little qualified to sit in judgment upon them as are the teachers in the schools, and that the teachers in the schools are quite as capable of getting expert assistance in such difficulties, and I think they are quite as likely to do so, as anybody else. Considering that for a dozen years these men whose names I have mentioned have used their best endeavors to put the practice of competitions on a better footing, not entirely without result, it seems to me,--- though much remains to be done and some of our experiments have proved less successful than others,----that this attitude is unreasonable.

As to the other provisions of the paper, it strikes me that it might have been well to discriminate more clearly between things that are objectionable in principle and those which, for personal or business reasons, the signers prefer not to take part in. A physician has a perfect right to give notice that he is not to be asked to vaccinate children. But he should say whether he <sup>dis</sup>approves of vaccination, or merely does not want to do it himself.

Copy.

Milton August 27, 1897.

Dear Hamlin:-

The days of a man <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ three score years and ten, and if by reason of strength and temperate living they be four score years, as my own will perhaps be, yet after seventy one cannot hope to accomplish much. Perhaps he may not wish to, for the desire for rest and the enjoyment of a holiday, natural to Saturdays and afternoons, may well become chronic in the Saturday afternoon of life, even if his mind is free from any special care about getting ready for Sunday. As

I am already sixty-five years old, these things seem to imply that I have only four or five years left in which to finish my task, and the fact that I have already been thirty years at it, fifteen in Boston and fifteen in New York, and am still in the attitude of a beginner, seems to imply that unless I use greater diligence than hitherto in pushing my endeavors to the point of achievement, nothing will really have been accomplished. The problems entrusted to me will be left unsolved for other people to take up and solve in other ways.

I dare say that their ways may be better than mine. I have no overweening confidence in my own ideas. In fact it is this uncertainty that has made me slow to push them to their just conclusion, or at any rate has made me content to hint and suggest, and try them by fits and starts as opportunity offered, instead of organizing my notions into a system and bringing my assistants work as well as my own with-in it. In fact while I have been a little timid about trying experiments myself I have been still more shy of asking other people to try them for me, knowing that people naturally take an interest only in their own

enterprises, and knowing also that you were all more likely to make a success of it if you followed your own devices than if you undertook to follow mine.

Meanwhile however, time has worked to confirm the prepossessions with which I started, and to make me think that one or two ideas, and the procedures in which they naturally embodied them-selves, were really not deficient in intelligence, as ideas go, and at anyrate that they were sufficiently promising to warrent the expenditure of considerable capital, in time and thought, to test their servicableness. In such case it is a matter of duty to bring things to the test of experiment while there is yet time, if opportunity offers. But in this case the opportunity is at hand, the best that could be desired. I am like an inventor who cannot tell the real value of his patent unless he can get a mill-power, and machinery, and a thousand hands, to prove whether it is worth anything on a commercial scale. But for us all this plant is at hand, the School, the libraries, half a dozen coadjutors,-- a dozen, rather,-- a hundred students.

There is of course no patent in the case, and no novelty of invention. But it happens that there are one or two notions, old as Socrates, at least, which have for some time seemed to me to be of paramount importance and to be of far more practical value than most people, though they recognize their reasonableness, seem to think. This being so, it behooves me to find out whether I am right or wrong. Not to do so is to neglect my personal opportunity. To refuse to follow ones own lights such as they are, is to sin against the Holy Ghost, which is unpardonable.

I am accordingly disposed to take advantage of the present turn of affairs to assume a somewhat different attitude in regard to all

our work, and to put it all upon a somewhat different footing in regard to my own, from hitherto. The change of site, the expansion of our elbow room, the alterations already made in the distribution of our work and the new arrangement of hours combine to create a new opening, and favor a fresh start. I think we may consider that the first period, that of groping and feeling our way, is over, and that we may now well begin upon a more confident and definite course, with the confidence justified by our long and instructive experience. This is as much as to say that it is time we took account of stock, considered what our experience has really taught us, formulated our conclusions, so far as we can, into practical maxims of behavior, and then carefully and consistently followed those precepts. We can thus find out once for all whether our ideas are sound, and whether we are wise or foolish in taking up with them.

What these notions are, notions that we have already to some extent been conforming to, half by intention, partly under the safe guidance of circumstances, I have set forth in a letter that I have just written to Aldrich, hoping that his intelligence and experience would make his reply instructive and suggestive. The fertile typewriter, which enables <sup>one</sup> to reap what he has shown sometimes sixfold, sometime seven, permits me to enclose a copy of this epistle, so that I need not go over that ground again. What remains is to consult with you and Sherman and Kress and Partridge so that all your work may cooperate with and enforce each others and my own. Perhaps even Snelling's and Harriman's and Hornbostel's, though their fields lie a little on one side, may afford additional illustrations. I have a fancy that if this is done, if we all work together to try what is at least an interesting experiment, we can give all our work a unity which indeed it has al-

ready begun to assume, and can soon discover whether I am all right or all wrong. Four or five years will suffice to answer the question and perhaps to amend the programme so as to set right whatever is wrong about it.

The further we go the more clear it becomes that our task is an entirely new one. The questions we are asking are mostly prompted by our environment, and as that is unprecedented questions and answers are alike novel. Our own experience must be our chief guide. Other peoples successes and failures can offer at best only hints and suggestions, to be followed with caution. That there is little need of trying doubtful experiments, or those that seem unpromising and incongruous, so long as our own experience suggests promising lines of conduct, only half explored, and encourages us to pursue them. There are enough such to occupy all our time and thought.

This next year is my "off year" and I ~~think~~ I seem have so little stated work to do of my own that I hoped to find time to attend to <sup>the</sup> adjustment and coordination of other peoples. Much has already been done in this direction, and it seemed as if it would require no more time and attention than, among us, we should be able to give to the matter, to produce an organization that would fairly bear comparison with the Solar System for singleness of purpose and brilliancy of result.

I already seem to hear the music of the spheres, and to be preparing to see my "Nunc Dimittis" to that tune.

*Carroll*

This has lain half written for a fortnight and is now dated at  
Bar Harbor 9th.

Copy.

Milton August 29, 1897.

My Dear Aldrich:-

I have been thinking that you must be at home by this time and have only been waiting for authentic information to drop you a line, and arrange for your visit. Though this has unhappily become impossible I hope that somehow, somewhere, I may be able to see you. It is not only to see you and, I should hope, see what you have been doing, but I should like to have a quiet hour to talk over with you the things that are occupying my mind and which your experience and observation may perhaps throw some light upon. As the work of the School grows, in stature and in favor, it becomes more difficult instead of easier. The obvious and superficial difficulties disappear only to reveal the underlying problems. As obstacles are removed, so that one is free to do what he chooses the responsibility of the choice becomes more oppressive.

Meanwhile we have done not so much what we would as what we could, and have thus fallen into ways which have at least the advantage of being adjusted to the situation, of being native and not borrowed. After a dozen years we find ourselves in possession of a body of customs and traditions of our own. These have grown up without conscious theorizing or doctrinaire purpose. When we come to examine them now to criticize and improve them and see how far they can be justified to ourselves and others, we find naturally that we have really been pursuing tolerably consistent lines of thought which are somewhat at variance with those of our neighbors, and that to vindicate our proceed-

ure we have to formulate theories which are more or less open to debate.

But our methods have as I have said the prima facie justification that they have sprung from the soil, and if the results are not yet all that might be desired there is at least an even chance that the shortcomings are due not to the faults of the system but to the imperfect way in which we administer it. At any rate I am myself disposed to take the ground that since we find ourselves embarked in what is really a novel enterprise, and as it has shown some practical efficiency and is not without a show of rationality, our proper course is to give the experiment a fair trial, pushing our methods promptly to their legitimate issue.

But this is to substitute for a tentative, "opportunist," policy a definite program formulated upon speculative consideration, which is a pretty serious matter. If one is going to lay down "principles", and follow them out, he is bound to define them clearly and to justify them at least to himself.

When I ask myself what the ideas are upon which we are virtually proceeding, I find three tolerable distinct notions which we seem to have taken up with ~~it~~, more or less consistently.

I. In the first place we must needs embody in our work the idea that underlies all modern instruction, both in the practical arts and in the learned professions. Within a generation or two the apprenticeship system has almost everywhere broken down and been replaced by systematic instruction. Much has been lost by the change, the wholesome contact with work and materials and the almost instinctive sense of the situation that comes from familiar acquaintance with them; the vital comprehension that comes from being told, by word of mouth, just what one needs to know at the moment he needs it, so that he needs to be told it only once and never forgets it; the stimulating personal

influence and inspiration that comes from thus being brought into touch with the master workman,-- all this very much disappears. This natural method, by which things are learned incidentally as occasion presents them, and even accidentally<sup>all</sup>, so that it seems a mere chance whether many things are learned at all, was of course slow and cumbersome, wasteful of time and uncertain in its results. One can easily understand that it should have been found unsuitable to modern modes of thinking and working. But it had the prime advantage of starting with facts, and developing the feelings and judgements that come from acquaintance with things themselves. But in the practice of the arts skill is more a matter of feeling than<sup>of</sup> of comprehension, of familiar acquaintance than of understanding, that is, as they say in France, of connaître rather than of savoir. Ideas about things, and understanding of their relations, the "laws of the facts", may be left to come later if at all.

But systematic instruction in schools and by classes must needs begin at the other end. It has its roots in analysis and in a scientific understanding of the relations of things, a sort of knowledge that may be obtained without much acquaintance with the things themselves, as even a blind man may study the theory of colors. It tends to a purely intellectual activity, to make the student know all about his subject rather than to acquaint him with its essential qualities. But this is the business of the connoisseur, and the historian or philosopher, not of the workman or the artist. To begin with the principles and to deduce from them practical maxims and method<sup>s</sup> of procedure is likely to make an intelligent and quick witted performer, but their<sup>is</sup> is danger that his feelings and sympathies may remain undeveloped, and that his artistic instincts may be replaced by consideration of "logique"

and "principe".

The method of instruction by classes being nevertheless imposed upon us by our situation, and these disadvantages being imposed along with its advantages by this method, the only practical question for us is how to reap all the benefits of system, efficiency, thoroughness and intellectual discipline, and at the same time to bring out whatever capacity for the appreciation or the ~~xxx~~ creation of excellence, for its artistic perception or invention, ~~that~~ our students may be endowed with ~~it~~.

The first idea that governs and controls us being then the idea that we must accept frankly, with its advantages and its drawbacks our intellectual and scientific machinery, the next point is to frame a scheme of instruction which while aiming at the exact knowledge and full understanding of things in all their relations that mark the well instructed scholar, shall in the imparting of this information train the active as well as the merely passive faculties of mind, exercise the creative and inventive as well as the receptive powers, and if possible enable the student to regard the masterpieces of art <sup>rather</sup> from the point of view of the artist who conceived them ~~rather~~ than from that ~~of~~ of the historian, critic or connoisseur.

But before proceeding to develop this point and answer this ~~of~~ question it is worth while to say that our position, as thus defined, seems to be intrinsically different from that occupied by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, ~~was~~ indeed the difference of environment and of historical conditions ~~would~~ naturally make it. The Ecole is, as I conceive, the outgrowth and ideal development of the apprenticeship system, of which it is the perfect flower. Its ateliers, as their name implies, reproduce under the most favorable conditions the essential

educational features of the work-shops of old. The newcomer is thrown in among his elders and betters to pick up what he can, as fast as he can, according as opportunity may offer, turning his hand to whatever service he is competent to perform and getting taught how to do this or that, as this or that, in his own work or that of his fellows, needs to be taught him. "This is the way to do this, that is the way to do that, you will find out why, if you want to know, by and by." First come acquaintance with the facts and skill in meeting them. Reasons and principles and an understanding of the relations of things come later.

This seems to indicate an essential and inevitable difference between schools founded in our days and those founded a couple of hundred years ago.

II. But how to develop the inventive, creative, artistic and appreciative temper under a system which is primarily formal, intellectual, literary and scientific, is as difficult a problem as is perhaps the converse problem, yet unsolved, of cultivating the intellect in schools of art. The way we ourselves go about it involves the second of the three ideas with which, as I said in the beginning, we have taken up, for better or worse, and which we are inclined to hold on to until we have proved by experiment how much, or how little there is in them. What this notion is I have already explained at length in the paper on the teaching of Architectural History, which I sent you a year ago. The later paper on the teaching of Drawing still further develops it.

This is of course only the familiar notion <sup>for a student</sup> that it is better to discover things for himself than to be told them. He understands them better. Yet it is so much easier to be told them than to discover them for oneself, and it is so much easier and quicker for the instructor to tell about them than to wait until the student has

found them out, that this principle,-- except perhaps in kindergartens,-- seems to find little practical recognition. We try to bring it to bear however in all our work, for it is as servicable in the sciences as in the arts. In Mathematics and Mechanics it is an enormous gain in the interest and efficiency of teaching, to substituet problems for theorems, wherever it is practicable to do so, tolling the student along, from one discovery to another, and making the results of one problem serve as data for the next. Mr Spencer's " Inventional Geometry" was a somewhat crude essay in this same direction. Of course no boy, nor man, can work his way all by himself from the Pons Asinorum to the theorem of bridges. But with assistance and guidance he can cover a good part of the road on his own feet, and reap the profit and satisfaction of so doing. What we aim to do is to give all the help that is needed and none that is not. This brings into whatever is done an element of independence, if not of originality, which being exercised habitually in small and easy things finally puts men intraining to attack problems of novelty and difficulty. Even those who fail to solve a problem and have to have it explained to them after all, are better off than if they had been told things at first. The explanation is more intelligible, coming to a mind thus prepared to receive it, and is more welcome, coming as the solution of a difficulty.

In the History work I am hoping to employ the <sup>se</sup> methods more systematically than hitherto and thus, even if we cannot abridge the time given to history, to make the results better worth the time they cost. But even at present we believe, and we think our graduates agree with us, that the history is well worth the sacrifices we make to secure it.

But in Design the gain lies not only in this discipline. Composition is the rearrangement in a decorative manner of material

already familiar,-- lines, geometrical figures, ~~and~~ <sup>and ornamental</sup> structural details, <sup>forms</sup> architectural features,-- ~~things~~ that have been tested by experience and approved by custom as well as justified by good taste and the nature of things..This familiarity can come only by study and there is danger in acquiring it not only that habits of acquisition shall starve out the capacity for invention, and that the accumulative resources of the <sup>w</sup>-scholar shall suffice to meet all demands, and so seem to render invention unnecessary, but that all of this wealth of tradition shall become matter <sup>a</sup> of merely scientific interest. The learned architect runs the risk of becoming an archaeological purist. It is the prime advantage of studying the sequence of historical forms ~~as~~ a series of problems that one makes their acquaintance from the inside, so to speak, not merely superficially, that is <sup>to say</sup> as I have said from the point of view of the artist <sup>theory</sup> who devised them, not from that of the critic who classifies <sup>he</sup> and defines them, and whose point of view is likely to be a personal, <sup>one</sup> and is sure to be a modern one.

These methods of work we have so far taken up only experimentally <sup>and</sup> ~~had~~ sporadically, as opportunity has offered, not by system. But so far as we have carried them they have worked well, and , now that we come to reflect upon them they seem to be so well justified in reason, that I am inclined to push them for all they are <sup>worth</sup> . Time will soon show whether there is as much in them as I fancy. If they work on a larger scale as well as they seem to work now, they will justify still further the prominence we give to historical studies. These have so far been developed somewhat at the expense of the study of original design, which is a real sacrifice. But if we can shape ~~the~~ historical work itself into a series of problems in design, we shall gain all that we have hitherto gained, without losing what ~~we~~ we have hitherto lost.

But here again we have the methods of a school, an organized and systematic procedure, not the chances of apprenticeship. If our traditions should finally shape themselves upon these lines, their divergence from the traditions of the Ecole would be the more marked.

The complaint is sometimes made, in comparing American with European methods, that the fixed curriculum and definite term of years that obtain in our colleges afford the student less freedom of conduct in his studies than he finds abroad, ~~where~~ he can take up any subjects in any order. This difference is perhaps more apparent than real, since the French Lycees, the German Gymnasia and the English Public Schools, all of which are fairly to be classed with many of our colleges, have definite courses of study, and in our best universities almost as great liberty of choice is found as in those of Europe. In our own case at any rate, as I have pointed out in a paper I have just printed in the July number of the School of Mines Quarterly, while the younger men follow a curriculum, the ~~University's~~ Students and the Special Students,-- who together are coming to form an important element in the School,-- are free to study what they will, as they will.

But what is more important than freedom of conduct is freedom of mind, and here the methods of class instruction in a school seem to offer opportunities for independent thinking which as I have shown we are trying to make the most of. The apprenticeship system naturally proceeds by prescription and dictation, inspiring a glad obedience by means of personal influence. It thus achieves an immediate success. The results perfectly meet the requirements and <sup>the</sup> accepted standards of the day. The student is swept along with a rapidity which surprises and delights him. The strong currents of the atmosphere which envelops

him bear him along to triumphs for which he is hardly responsible and which he sometimes finds it hard to repeat when left to his own resources in the coldness and calm of his native climate. In class work we are obliged to rely less upon personal inspiration and more upon such ideas as we can embody in methods and systems, hoping as I have said to make up for what we lose by encouraging independence of mind. The immediate results may be less brilliant, but we look to the ultimate end, believing that courage and self-reliance are here as elsewhere <sup>men's</sup> ~~their~~ chief dependence. In the pursuit of these we prefer, as you have heard me say before, to proceed by negative rather than by positive precepts. We prefer to buoy the rocks, and then let the inexperienced navigator sail freely where he will, shaping his own course, rather than by buoying the channel, to restrict his range and deprive him of this larger experience, for which the assurance of a safe and speedy passage is no sufficient compensation.

This is indeed only to prefer self direction to implicit obedience. It is the Protestant way as opposed to the Catholic, the English rather than the Continental, the American rather than the European, the democratic rather than the imperial, the Greek rather than the Roman.

*methods*

III. The analytic and formal <sup>of</sup> class instruction have thus in our economy necessarily replaced looser and more personal methods, ~~if~~ and we are disposed sedulously to profit by the opportunities they offer to foster independence of character, even at the cost of immediate success. <sup>of clear instruction and unwavering heads</sup> These two ideas are already working together to establish and fix habits and traditions which may ultimately become characteristic of the School. A third characteristic, which is <sup>f</sup> persisted in may become an equally important element in determining the spirit

\* the words of Webster's motto: "Liberty and Union - are inseparable"

and temper of the place, we have drifted into very much by accident, <sup>and</sup> Now ~~we~~ find, rather to our surprise, that there is a conspicuous absence of an element that other people in other places have esteemed a chief factor in their work. We perceive that we are making singularly little use of the incentives which, in Paris and London, seem to be considered indispensable auxiliaries, ~~in getting good work~~. We have neither the money prizes which are so numerous in England, nor the series of medals, mentions and other personal distinctions which play so conspicuous a part in France. It is not at all clear as yet whether we gain or lose the most by this abstension. The gains and losses are so different in kind that it is not easy to balance <sup>a</sup> them against each other. The losses are obvious. Our men lose the excitement and entertainment of the race-course and those of them at any rate who are in the running lose an incentive to do their best. They can hardly be expected to show their paces on the common road. Yet it may be said that roadsters are really the most useful animals, that they have a more wholesome training, and that the best of them show a very pretty pace. The best work of our best men is something that neither they nor we need be ashamed of. Moreover the work of the next best men, and so <sup>a</sup> way down to the foot of the class, is singularly near it in excellence, and it may be doubted whether a prize to the winner, though it might incite the favorites to greater exertion, would not equally discourage the men who had no hope of securing it. Any such discouragement is greatly to be deprecated in the earlier years of study. Many of the best men develop slowly, others suffer unduly from the lack of early advantage. Such men ought not to be disparaged or disheartened by comparison with their more fortunate or quicker-witted companions. Competition, I know, is the life of trade and men never can tell how they really stand until measured

against their fellows. But two-year-olds had better be kept off the race-track. *until things are in position, where they stand, is a meaningless inquiry*

I question too whether even for the men who most profit by it, the men who are spurred to a supreme effort, the experience is altogether a wholesome one. Stimulants are apt to create an <sup>P</sup>apetite for stimulants. Its a bad thing not to be able to do ones best,-- "to do onesself justice",-- except under artificial conditions. Schools certainly, one of whose main duties is to foster good habits, should appeal to the permanent motives of conduct and train men to successes that they can match any day, in the ordinary condition of their powers. We certainly, if anybody, can afford to dispense with drams. Architecture is about the most entertaining and interesting study in the world. At any rate nobody who does n't <sup>so</sup> consider it has any business to undertake it, for it promises little other satisfaction to its practitioners.

It has accordingly given me the most sincere satisfaction to find the men of our graduating classes, year by year, putting in two or three months of solid work over their Theses, day and evening, weekdays and Saturdays, just for the sake of doing what they have undertaken to do as well as they could do it, with no external incentive whatever. They knew that any half dozen respectable drawings that they could make would be accepted, and ~~that~~ they would get their degrees, and <sup>that</sup> that was all that would happen whatever they did. There were no prizes, no academic honors, no personal distinctions of any sort. Nevertheless the whole class, the men near the foot as well as the men near the head, laid themselves out flat, as the saying is, and not only one class but half a dozen in succession, following the example that your own class set, so that it has become the custom and tradition of the School to strive to do the most that <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ in them. This has seemed to me a fine sight

for the beholders, and to the performers a most wholesome and manly experience.

I am glad too, that our society should escape the disturbing influence of the rivalries, jealousies and suspicions, which however unreasonable and unnecessary seem to be almost inseparable from such contentions, at least in this country. In France, where people are more used to this sort of thing, it may work better, and in the <sup>LDB-A</sup> ~~Eds-A~~ the rivalry of the different ateliers serves I suppose to prevent the personal antagonisms and animosities that might otherwise even there disturb the peace. Our own conditions are less favorable and I shrink from the trial. We have hitherto by good fortune managed to maintain a tolerably equal temper and the calm of our atmosphere has seldom been broken by personal jealousies. This is a sound and wholesome state of things, and I think that many of our graduates would be as sorry as I should be to disturb the <sup>tra</sup> ~~condition~~ condition.

Here again there would seem to be a marked difference between the situation here and that abroad, <sup>though</sup> ~~as~~ I suspect it is more apparent than real. I suspect that in Paris what really keeps them a going is not the constant <sup>a</sup> ~~reward~~ reward of prizes and honors, conspicuous as these things are, but the intrinsic interest of the subject in hand and the serious concern of the best men to do their best, so that in placing our main reliance upon this we are really at one with serious workers every where.

If in renouncing the aid of these questionable auxiliaries we can really make the School more fit for grown men, we need not regret it, nor will our students.

These differences seem to promise to make our manners and customs as well as our rules and regulations distinctively unlike those which have become traditional in the Ecole. If we add to this that the

whole Paris system rests upon the existance of the Anciens, that these exist only in virtue of the Prix de Rome and the Villa Medici, and that these owe their value to the patronage of the Government after the Pensionnaires' return,--and that we in this country lack all these things,-- it would seem as if the <sup>E. D. B. A.</sup> ~~Ed~~ ~~A~~ admirably as it is suited to its own environment, was too unlike our own scheme, in its nature and condition, to serve as a model for any close imitation. The more we can learn from it in regard to the art itself and its principles, the better. But in respect to ~~the~~ organization and administration it seems to me that we must work out the problem for ourselves, and that any attempt to accommodate our methods to those is presumably a mistaken one.

L. R. W.

I began this letter in Milton nearly a fortnight ago. It has grown on my hands and been continued from time to time as opportunity offered. Hence its somewhat inconsecutive course. Pray let me know how the situation strikes you.

New York, November 8, 1897.

My dear Lefferts:-

I think that abroad things are often conducted in the way you have in mind. Students study what they please, very much as they please, and get their instruction from whom they please, and often go without any, studying by themselves. The authorities concern themselves merely with finding out what they know, by examinations, and certifying to it with some sort of diploma. This system has obvious advantages, but it has the disadvantage that it enormously enhances the importance of the examinations.

It naturally follows that there is either no official instruction at all, as is the case I believe in the London University, and formerly, so far as concerns Design, at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, or that the major part of it, at least, is in private hands, as is the way at Oxford and Cambridge, where the teaching is mostly done by private tutors, and now in Paris, where it is still mainly in the hands of patrons and anciens. In England, where they are anxious to have the examinations fair, they are extremely burdensome, and have had almost injurious effect upon the courses of study. It is complained that it is only the "pass men", who do not go in for honors, who get anything that can properly be called a liberal education. In France, in the Ecole at any rate, they do not care so much whether the examinations are fair or not, and

#2.

New York, 12/8/1897.

they are perhaps less injurious.

In this country a different scheme obtains, the authorities certifying not so much that the men have profited by their instruction, as that they have received it. It naturally follows in the first place that they take upon themselves the responsibility for the teaching, and secondly that they lay more stress upon attendance. This scheme has also obvious disadvantages, but it has the advantage that it favors a more equable mode of life, and study for the sake of learning, not for the sake of marks and honors.

Which method is really the best, and which set of evils can be most easily avoided in practice, has been much debated, but it is a question that does not immediately concern us <sup>here</sup> yet. The statutes of the University under which we are all working, make punctual attendance at all exercises as imperative as passing the examinations and doing the prescribed work. Indeed men who do not put in an appearance at the appointed hours for instruction are not allowed to take examinations at all.

My own impression is that the American way is best in the earlier and more elementary stages of study, but that later a looser system is better. In our Fourth Year accordingly, and with the Special Students, most of whom are older, or at least more advanced, we adopt a freer method, as you may read in my pamphlet, and look more to results. If we continue to



I am very glad to get your letter, as it explains what had seemed quite inexplicable. I hope what I say will also serve to make intelligible and even reasonable, what you did not understand in our point of view, and make easier and more satisfactory the conformity to our expectations and requirements that you now propose, and which I hope you will not regret.

I do not think I shall have any occasion to show your letter, which might be misconstrued, though it seems to me perfectly proper after what I had said. I shall merely say that we have come to a satisfactory understanding.