

A PLEA FOR THE ARCHITECTS.

BY F. W. FITZPATRICK.

OUR school children are thoroughly familiar with the names of the heroes and near-heroes of our Revolutionary and Civil and Spanish wars; youths and maidens, in college and university, can prattle interestingly about the heroes of Greek and Roman history; men further advanced in erudite paths can charm us with the depth of their knowledge, even anent the intellectual Brahman, the chivalrous Rajput, the wild Bhil, or the naked Gond. The average man is surprisingly well read upon most subjects. He still remembers the heroes he was brought up on, even to the Spartan and the Gaul; is familiar with the names, too, of the great discoverers and historians; does not balk at those of famed musicians, astronomers, and *some* artists, and has the names of the celebrated authors of fiction right at the tip of his tongue.

But most wonderfully ignorant is he—our average man—of the names of those men who have contributed most to his and to his ancestors' comfort, education, and refinement,—yes, to his civilization,—the architects. Even among our erudite friends above mentioned, few—amazingly few in proportion to those versed in any other one art or science—dabble in architecture or know or care much about the men who are “charged with presiding over the structures that shelter man, his animals and the products of the soil; who build up those immense cities, their splendid monuments to our progress, those thousands of manufacturing-plants, housing the prodigious industries of our times,—men who have written and are writing history in ineffaceable characters of steel and stone.”

Is it not surprising that so little is known of those men, and that so little importance is attached to their works in a science to which we owe such marvelous creations; that is so useful, of absolute necessity to *all* our undertakings, and that absorbs so many millions in money and keeps such armies of men employed? Is it

that familiarity with the results breeds an indifference to the causes? Then, too, is it not strange that the lesser arts outrank in popular esteem the mother art from which they sprang, and that whenever an architect also excelled in any other art he is invariably known and remembered for his works in that line rather than for the greater works he executed as an architect? Michel Angelo Buonarroti is far oftener mentioned as a sculptor or painter than as an architect, though his works in the latter capacity far outshone any of his efforts in the former. So with Bramante and Brunelleschi, and so with Ligorio, who, though a master in our art, is known to posterity merely as an antiquarian. Geber, the designer of the Giralda tower, little dreamed that he would be forgotten as an architect and remembered only as the inventor of a process that facilitated his calculations—for it was he who invented Algebra. So also is Leonardo da Vinci almost as often remembered, and perhaps far more gratefully, as the inventor of the lock-canal system, even now in use, than as a great architect, though mention is made of him sometimes as a painter.

It might be a most fascinating digression but we are not now concerned, in this rambling plaint, with any speculations as to the authors of those ancient structures in the primeval cities of Phœnicia, China, Chaldea, and Egypt, where Architecture, as an art, may be said to have had its birth; nor may we trace down, even briefly, the early history of that art, nor how, through the testimony it offers us, we can trace our ascent back through Britain, France, Italy and Greece to the Druids, and our relationship, through the latter, to the ancient peoples of Syria, Persia, Arabia, and that Sanskrit-speaking race that entered India across the upper Indus and settled in the Punjab, during the Kali Yug epoch, at least five thousand years ago! In these few pages we can give merely a passing glance at the names of a few from among the hundreds of architects of past and present times whose works well merit the placing of their names upon the "tablets of the Immortals," among those of the heroes to whom we and future generations should burn incense.

We read much of Pericles, and how, under his wise management of public affairs, the Parthenon—Greece's most perfect example of architecture—was erected in 428 B. C. Ictinus of Athens was its architect, assisted by Callicrates. Phidias did the statuary and decorations only (although he is generally credited with the entire design) and won immortal fame. That pile is, even to-day, a model for us, a standard of perfect proportions. How many

readers who know *all* about Phidias, Pericles, and the Parthenon, ever heard of Ictinus? The temple of Apollo Epicurius, on Mount Cotylus in Arcadia, is another beautiful example of that master's skill. Archias of Corinth, who flourished in the fifth century B. C., is also a name to conjure with, as is that of Cleomenes of Athens, who planned the city of Alexandria in Egypt, and Isotratus who added much to that city. We ought fondly to remember the name of Calimachus, if for nothing else, at least on account of the pretty fable connecting his name with the origin of the Corinthian capital. Then should we also inscribe upon our tablets the names of Hermodorus of Salmis, who designed the temple of Jupiter Stator, in the Forum at Rome, and of Cyrus, who, just before the Christian era, was Cicero's friend and architect. Who has greater right to fame than Vitruvius Pollio, of Fano, one of the greatest writers on our art, an authority still in use, the Blackstone of architecture? Then, in the same century—the first after Christ—Vespasian and his son Titus astonished Rome with the Coliseum, that vast amphitheater (seating over 80,000 people and built in less than three years) that we know so well and have seen pictured so often even if we have not seen its ruins. I venture to assert that not one out of a hundred thousand people—no, nor one out of a million—ever heard the architect's name. The matter is apparently so very insignificant that some historians merely surmise that Rabirius was the man, while others vaguely hint at the name of Mustius.

Volumes have been devoted to abusing the fawning friends and advisers of the sensuous, albeit great, Nero. Their names and those of his freedmen and principal slaves are well known; but—perhaps luckily for the profession—we never read the names of Celer nor of Severus, his architects and chums—men who, when he and his court grew sluggish in devising new deviltries, were called on and always produced some rare and exciting diversion. They “induced him to build” (how familiar that expression sounds!) his famous “golden house,” and led him into other wild extravagances that contributed much to his final downfall, but gave to Rome some of its stateliest monuments.

Of far different timber was the sage Antonius, better known as senator of ancient Rome than as *merely* an architect, although he was prouder of his design for the Baths of Æsculapius, and they were remembered longer far than any of his brilliant achievements in the political field.

Metrodorus of Persia, who built much in India and in Con-

Constantinople, deserves mention and remembrance as being the first Christian architect.

One of the first acts of Justinian upon ascending the throne of the East, in 527 A. D., was to invite Anthemius, the architect, to Constantinople. He was a Lydian, a man of genius. He designed the Church of St. Sophia for his emperor. While the temple of Minerva and the Pantheon were domed structures and antedated this church, yet it is the first example of an aerial cupola ever built, a noble pile, still standing and the wonder of every visitor. St. Mark's at Venice, built by Auscles the Greek in the ninth century, and hundreds of other buildings down to our own days, had their cupolas patterned after this ancient model.

Architects have ever been known as men of exemplary lives,—there being rare exceptions, of course,—but few, however they may have merited it, have ever been “sainted”! The Catholic Church has conferred the honor of canonization upon but three of the profession, and that for no architectural reasons; all three,—St. Germain, St. Avitus, and St. Agricola,—who lived in the sixth century, being bishops of great sees in France. There have been other bishops,—fifty or more,—and archbishops, abbots, priests, and monks galore in our ranks, or, rather, men of both ecclesiastical and architectural attainments. It is not surprising, however, for, from the eighth century all through the Middle or “Dark” Ages, all learning, letters, and arts were confined to the clergy of Europe; the laity being “confined” mostly in each other's castle-dungeons or to cutting each other's throats. York Cathedral was completed by three succeeding bishops, Egbert, Albert and Eaubald. Old St. Paul's was designed in 1033 by Mauritius, Bishop of London; and Rochester Castle and the old White Tower of London were designed by Bishop Gundulf of Rochester.

The thirteenth century saw, if not the birth, at least the springing into prominence of the semi-religious orders of Masonry, that exercised a most wonderful influence over the art of building; even the name “architect” being lost for a time. “Master-mason,” “Supervisor,” or “Surveyor” were the titles of those under whom great public works were erected, so that in the more powerful states of Europe the Church practically controlled both building and architects for a period of nearly five hundred years!

Why should Romualdus of France be forgotten,—he, who in the ninth century built the great cathedral of Rheims, the first example of Gothic architecture? Or Buschetto, who in 1016 gave us

the Duomo of Pisa, the first example of the ecclesiastical style of art that made the Lombards famous in their time?

Diotti Salvi, who designed the Baptistery of Pisa, and the German Wilhelm, who built the leaning tower of that city, both merit some recognition, and surely so do Pietro Perez and Erwin von Steinbach, who gave us, respectively, the grand old cathedrals of Toledo and of Strassburg. Brunelleschi, born in 1377, acquired fame as a sculptor and as an engineer, but the noble monument he left to his skill as an architect—the dome of Santa Maria del Fiore—should alone suffice to cause his name to be inscribed among the elect.

Bramante Lazzari, who first designed St. Peter's at Rome; Rafaele d'Urbino, the St. Gallos, and Peruzzi, who later carried on the work, surely merit some recognition, although Michel Angelo de Buonarroti changed much and nearly completed that great building. Then, too, Jacapo della Porta, Domenico Fontana, Ligorio, and Carlo Maderno contributed to the completion of St. Peter's, finishing it just one hundred years after Bramante's first design was made. Credit is due them, if for nothing else, for carrying out Michel Angelo's designs with so few changes.

What versatility, what splendid talents, were possessed by those old masters of the Roman school founded by Bramante, and how many there were of them in that sixteenth century, so abounding in great men and great events in the world's history! Michel Angelo—the “grand old man of Rome,” the dignified and haughty, before whom even the Grand Duke Cosmo, the tyrant of Florence, stood uncovered, whom popes and rulers courted—stood prominently alone as an architect. Had he not won fame so, his “Moses” was sufficient to insure him honor as one of the greatest sculptors. Had fame still been lacking, his paintings in the Sistine Chapel would make him rank with Titian as a painter. Still, more, he was a poet whose works, had they not been overshadowed by his towering mastery of other arts, would have placed his name among the greatest of his time. Raphael, the dreamer, the beloved, the idol of Italy, enriched that country with his marvelous works, and Leonardo da Vinci was the miracle of that age of miracles. Think of the endowments of that one man. An architect, chemist, engineer, musician, painter, poet, philosopher, inventor, and discoverer, and *excelling* in each and every attainment! His writings show him to have anticipated by the force of his own intellect some of the greatest discoveries made since his time by Galileo, Kepler, and Castelli, the system of Copernicus, and the theories of recent geologists. Barozzi

da Vignola, the designer of the Farnese Palace at Caprarola, was one of the last of that school, and that palace is to-day used more than any other by our students and disciples as a standard of Italian architecture.

Who has not read of the Tuileries, the Luxembourg, and the Louvre in Paris, and how few ever know or care that Philibert de Lorme, Jacques de Brosse, and Claude Perrault were their designers?

With us of the English race Inigo Jones and Sir Christopher Wren ought to be household names. The first designed Whitehall, Lincoln's Inn, and Covent Garden; the latter—besides being the architect of St. Paul's Cathedral and erecting the largest palace and most stupendous hospital in all England—found time to plan the rebuilding of the city of London after the great fire in 1666, and to design pretty nearly every church in the new city! Old England has contributed many other men "whose works live on among us 'though their names be forgotten." Sir William Chambers, the Pugins, Joseph Gwilt, Fergusson, George Edmund Street, and Sir Gilbert Scott, merit a better fate than the oblivion into which every architect knows he will ultimately be thrust.

One reads of a great battle in ancient or modern history, and the names of the generals who led the contending forces will immediately present themselves to the memory; a quotation from a well-known poem instinctively recalls the author; the recollection of a great speech brings to mind the orator; and the name of the artist is always associated with or appended to a painting. Yet, however great, however beautiful, a building may be, and however much we may admire or appreciate it, how few of us ever care a rap who *its* author is? We all know and admire the Grand Opera at Paris and have seen it, pictured at least, time and again; but who ever associates it with or thinks of Charles Garnier?

Our own country, young as it is, is replete with noble monuments that we visit and cherish and are proud of, but whose authors are to us unknown,—mere insignificant incidents. Even the little children in our schools, living thousands of miles from Washington, know the Capitol building. It is held up to them as one of the greatest buildings of the world. Its history is familiar to them; how it was burned by the British, its great dome and its wings added in later years, and so forth; but I never heard of even a hint being given to a child by parent, teacher, or text-book that Hallet first designed it, or that Hadfield, Hoban, Latrobe, Bulfinch, Walter, and Clark added to it and completed it; or that the Treasury Build-

ing—our Parthenon—the most chaste and beautiful design ever executed in the country, is the work of Robert Mills, Walter, Young and Rogers; that Thomas Jefferson designed Virginia's Capitol at Richmond; or that R. M. Upjohn designed Connecticut's handsome Capitol at Hartford.

The fame of Trinity Church at Boston is spread far and near, and who has not seen in his own town a replica—a copy in a minor chord—of the magnificent court-house at Pittsburg? Another ten years, and how many Bostonians even will remember that H. H. Richardson designed both?

There are men among us who have performed feats of daring, as our American steel and brick structures, the like of which have never even been attempted in other lands, may well be called. We admire those huge many-storied buildings of New York and Chicago; they impress us by their size, beauty, and (in spite of their height) their grace; but it would be altogether uncalled for and out of place for any one to inquire who designed them. And but a while ago we surprised the world with an aggregation of buildings of greater magnitude, of nobler design, and of greater impressiveness than had ever been grouped together on the globe. The World's Fair buildings at Chicago mark an epoch in the history of architecture, a great revival of classic art; yet, unlike other buildings, we have not even their ruins to contemplate. They can be to us but a beautiful dream. Surely we cannot afford to relegate to absolute oblivion the names of the men who by that work contributed so much to our own education and pleasure, and made us, as a people, better known and respected by other peoples of the earth than we had ever been or could ever expect to be by any other agencies. I would not inscribe those names upon mere tablets of marble or of bronze, nor would I erect a monument to their memory; but I *would* make them known and loved by a far surer way; I would inscribe them in our school text-books, that our children and their children's children might grow accustomed to the now unwonted sight of the names of our great architects enrolled among those of our leaders, our warriors, our jurists and our poets.