

factory to him. This is an important point, as the owner is called upon to approve all working drawings and specifications, and such approval applies to every detail indicated therein."

Before the plans are completed the question of the procedure to be adopted in letting the contract will be discussed. The architect's advice should be taken upon this point. Should it be decided to call for tenders by advertisement and anyone calling himself a builder allowed to submit tenders, then it is not by any means necessarily the wisest thing in the owner's interest to accept the lowest tender. The contractor whose tender is the lowest may be approaching financial insolvency—he may be of dishonest character, or he may be an incompetent tradesman employing incompetent workmen. To accept a tender from any of these men against honest and capable contractors is unfair to the latter and unwise for the owner. It may prove indeed a case of "penny wise and many pounds foolish." Again, the lowest tenderer may be a very satisfactory man in other classes of building but without the experience or the organisation necessary for the work in question. But it may here be argued that it is just because there are dishonest and incompetent contractors that the client engages the services of an architect, and if the contractor employed does come within this category it is to the architect the client looks for protection. The writer submits, however, that this, while perhaps a common conception of the functions of an architect, is an almost wholly erroneous one. If after taking every ordinary business care (which in this case infers the asking and taking the architect's advice on the matter) in the selection of a contractor or the acceptance of a tender, the owner does unfortunately find himself in the hands of an unscrupulous or incapable contractor, he can depend upon the architect sparing no effort to protect his interests. It may be pointed out, however, that to protect absolutely against dishonesty is impossible with the amount of supervision that the architect can reasonably and equitably be called upon to give, and, further, that it is equally impossible to teach an incapable contractor or a squad of incompetent workmen their trades within the course of one building work. It may be added, too, that this hardly comes within the ordinary duties of an architect, nor has it been anticipated in assessing the amount of his fees. It is presumably unnecessary to do more than mention that it is likewise not his function to come to the rescue of a contractor tottering to financial ruin, although the latter's collapse may involve the owner in considerable trouble and even monetary loss.

In the case of a small work it is frequently undesirable or unnecessary to call for tenders. The plans may be submitted to a trustworthy contractor, and if his price is within the architect's estimate the contract may be let to him. In the case of larger works tenders may be considered desirable. In the writer's opinion the best method of proceed-

ing is then to select a small number of competent contractors, in any one of whom trust may be placed, and invite them to tender. Where public work of any sort is involved there appears to be no option but to call for public tenders with all its attendant risks.

The contract let and the actual work of erection of the building commenced, an excellent rule to follow is never to alter it in any point. While the plans are in course of preparation one part is adjusted to the other again and again, and no one unacquainted with the practical work of planning and design can possibly realise to what extent an apparently simple alteration made in a building in course of erection may lead to other quite serious "consequential" alterations not foreseen. A client sometimes thinks an improvement might be effected in some part of the building. The order goes forth to make the necessary alteration and the work is done, only to find out later that it has spoilt the design or plan in some other and perhaps more important respect. Sometimes alterations made without very careful consideration involve actual risk to the structure. In any case they spell "Extras"—that bugbear of clients for which the architect is so frequently blamed, sometimes justly but more often unjustly.

Extras can and should be avoided. No good architect will involve the owner in extras without first consulting him. Being human the architect, while preparing plans and specifications, may overlook something necessary to the completion of the work. But a small sum is usually included in the amount of the contract to provide for this contingency. It is the architect's prerogative to expend this sum or any part of it without consulting the owner.

Under no circumstances should any authority be given by the client to the contractor or his workmen for any alteration or addition. Nor should any complaint be made to them. The client should give all instructions in reference to the work only through the architect. On the other hand the contractor who comes to an owner with suggestions, or to call his attention to real or fancied errors in the drawings or specifications, should be referred to the architect.

No moneys whatever should be paid to the contractor except in response to a certificate issued for the amount by the architect. An owner should, at the commencement of the work, ascertain from the architect in what amounts and at what intervals payments for the work are likely to be required. He should then make his arrangements to meet the certificates as issued.

"There are," wrote Mr. C. Stanley Taylor in the *Architectural Forum* recently, "many instances which arise as the work progresses in which the owner may show a fair-minded spirit which will be appreciated both by the builder and the architect. The owner must realise also that as between the building contractor and himself the architect is