

and expensive labour, should be secured from the unfair competition of unaccredited and unqualified competitors. This measure of protection had also been long accorded to other professions. But it was not alone self-interest which caused the architects to ask for State registration. They recognised that the public required the same protection from the unqualified architect as it already had from the quack doctor and the unqualified lawyer. It was a manifest absurdity that while the law required that the man who did the plumbing and he who laid the drains of a building should be licensed, anyone who cared to erect a brass plate at his office door could make himself responsible for the design of the whole structure, involving its planning arrangements, its æsthetics, its hygiene, and its very safety! While, however, Parliament undoubtedly passed the Act with a view only of giving the public a measure of protection in the direct sense of safeguarding persons from knowingly employing an unqualified practitioner, yet the Act has served the public interest in another way. Indeed, this other way may at present be said to be largely the only way in which it has fulfilled its purpose; for Parliament, strangely enough, did nothing to prevent any one who cares to do so from practising as an architect without any qualifications whatever! He must not, of course, describe himself as a registered architect, nor as a member of the Institute of Architects, but he may describe himself as an architect and practice as such.

In yet another respect the Act is at present faulty. The Code of Ethics of the Institute quite properly says that a member of the Institute must not act in the dual capacity of architect and builder, for the architect should surely be always in the position to give full and frank advice removed from the slightest possibility of being affected by self-interest. But the Act does not prohibit a registered architect practising also as a builder, and the Courts have decided that the Institute cannot enforce its code in this respect. This is so obviously an oversight and operates so manifestly against the public interest that it cannot be long before the Act is amended in this direction also.

If the Act has not given that direct protection to the profession and to the public which some had hoped, it has, however, as has been said above, benefited both in another way. It has enlarged, strengthened, and given an enhanced status to the Institute of Architects. With this improved status, widened powers, and extended scope for service, there inevitably followed an increased sense of responsibility, more clarity of aim, more definite ideals of public service. Since the Act was passed the Institute has been a steadily growing influence in the profession; it has crystallised high ideals of practice; it has been steadily organising so as to help its members to better performance. It has been steadily working to promote the education of

students—the architects of the future—to see that they shall be as fully equipped as possible to serve the community in an honoured profession. It has framed a Code of Ethics governing professional conduct as between architect and architect, and as between architect and client. All this is in the public interest. The Institute has, too, established a Scale of Charges for professional services to which every registered architect is bound to adhere. The scale is arranged as far as possible so as to secure for all kinds of work a payment which, while being fair to the client, will yet enable the architect to keep up the means of performing it properly. This, too, is a service to the public. It makes known what is the established usage and prospective builders need not be in any doubt as to the amount of fees which they may be called upon to pay for architectural services; it prevents architects being brought into competition one with the other in point of fees and thus supplements the Code in wisely safeguarding the architect's disinterested position from the standpoint of self.

A copy of the Scale of Charges will be given to any prospective builder upon request made to any registered architect. It is sufficient here to say that the remuneration for architectural services, as is customary throughout the world, is in general based upon a percentage of the cost of the completed work. In considering the fee which he is to pay the architect the client should not fail to remember that it is not net profit to the architect. He has to allow a large percentage for various overhead charges, and for wages to the draughtsmen who assist to prepare the drawings. It should further be remembered that besides the professional skill and knowledge required of the architect he also has to bear a burden of responsibility which cannot be paid for at so much per hour. This responsibility is one by no means to be lightly regarded, and should be kept in mind by the client in assessing the value of architectural service. Any fees lower than those provided in the Institute's Scale are most certainly unremunerative provided that the full and proper service is rendered.

(Concluded.)

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