

Modern Architecture

VI

The XIX Century.

Our previous lectures have each been concerned with one type of Architecture, or, as it is usually called, one "Style". At ~~every~~ ^{each} period which we have examined the "Style" was the same for all types of building. A Greek house & a Greek temple were both built in the same manner though the temple might be of marble richly carved & the house probably was of mud brick plastered.

So again the ^{English} people of the XIV Century always built "Gothic" whether they were building Churches or houses, & yet in the XVIII c they built "renaissance" with Roman columns & arches again both in Churches or in Houses.

To put it otherwise, an architectural "Style" is an historic event. The Greek style is the kind of building built by the Greeks about 500 years B.C. The Early English Style is the kind of architecture built by the English of the XIII century and so on. At every period of history we find some style in use. But in any one place there is & can be only one style & that style is always the ^{modern} style of the time. ~~etc~~

For example we never find the English builders of the XIII century building their Abbeys in the Greek style, nor do we find even that those of the XIV century ever built in the style of the XIII century. For every time & place there is one kind of Architecture & one only.

But when we come to the XIX century & to our own day we hear a very different tale. Churches are in the Gothic style. Banks are in the Classic style, houses in the Queen Anne style & so on. Are we then doing something in architecture which had never been done before, are we building in ~~two~~ more styles than one? We may appear to be - but as a matter of fact we are not.

We have seen how, in the XVII & XVIII centuries, a pedantic knowledge had to some degree ~~and~~ dried up architecture by insisting on the accurate copying of classic forms. This great stress laid upon knowledge was of course a leading note of the whole Renaissance movement.

Now knowledge made great strides in the XIX century. It is not necessary I am sure for me to insist on the numberless inventions which have complicated our lives today. The telephone, the steam engine, the telegraph, the gramophone. & all these things are due to

love
 the ~~size~~ of scientific & accurate knowledge. Better things than
 these too, ~~our modern medical knowledge, our modern~~
 medicine, chemistry, geology & many similar sciences, prove
 that the XIX century was a period consecrated to knowledge.

But art depends on knowledge as little as she does upon
 nature. Art is concerned with human feeling & every fine
 work of art is the record of some good human emotion.

Human nature, we are often told, is very much the same always
 At some times & in some places men have had finer feelings
 than at others & have been able to express them. These are the
 great periods of art. Each one marks a period of strong &
 vigorous human feeling.

But we have also heard of those cultured people who knew
 so much that they had forgotten how to feel. & men of ^{too} great
 knowledge are proverbially dry as dust. Feeling & knowledge
 are hard to mix. The greatest periods of art have been those
 in which a fine feeling was guided by a sufficiency of knowledge
 but ⁱⁿ the XIX century the knowledge very nearly swamped the feeling.

When dived into the past, from its vaults they drew out the styles
 of every period, they ~~classified them~~, wrote books on them. They
 examined them, they wrote books upon them, they classified them
 until they knew far more about them than ^{had} the original builders.
 It has often struck me as sad that the Greeks never knew that
 their architecture was classic or that the Englishmen of the
 XIII century ^{were quite ignorant} that they were building very correct Early English. Archit.
 These misguided folk all thought that, in their times they were
 building quite modern buildings in just the modern way that everybody
 built. & the Parthenon was once the most modern building in the world.

The scholars of the early XIX century knew better. Having classified
 all the styles of architecture & having published examples showing
 exactly how every capital, every column & every moulding should
 be made they started to copy the old buildings. We believe the
 daring individual who dared to stray from correctness. The first
 duty of an architect was to select the "style" in which he wished
 to build, his second was to build that style correctly. The
 highest praise that could be given to architecture was that it should
 be scholarly & correct. The one faculty required to appreciate
 architecture was ~~knowledge~~ archaeological knowledge.

They began, in the first years of the XIX century, with 2 styles, the classic, largely Greek, & the Gothic. and by the middle of the century they had attained to extraordinary skill in imitating these styles. Of course their copies were never quite copies. Buildings had to be useful & an exact copy of the Parthenon would have been no use for anything excepting, of course, for worshipping Athena. So they copied the details at least & made everything else as like as possible to what they thought the old architects would have done. If the windows, & chimneys & other unpleasant things got in the way, they concealed them. Greek architecture did not admit of chimneys & plate glass windows so - so much the worse for the chimneys. English ~~parish~~ churches had no heating systems so, in building a church a chimney was not to be thought of, but the smoke could quite conveniently come out of the spire.

~~Under these conditions it says a~~

No artist would willingly forge such chains & it is not the architects who are to blame. They reflected, as they always do, the spirit of their time & in a century of science they were archaeologists. It says much for ~~their~~ the unconquerable spirit of beauty in man that ~~they built~~ many of their buildings are very beautiful, in spite of their architecture. We will begin with some good examples & take Greek ones first will take some Greek examples first.

- 1 Edinburgh. National Gallery & Royal Institution. 1826.
one Ionic, the other Doric. ? chimneys. lighting.
- 2 ~~do. Regent bridge. 1815. Waterloo. cols copied from~~
~~Monument of Lysicrates~~
- 2 Edm. Royal High School. Splendid grouping of parts
but the parts mere archaeology. 1825 Hamilton
- 4 do do another note railings - a zoo.
- 5 Hyde Park Lodge - franker, but the "architecture" has
nothing to do with the building. Like the Roman decoration
it is empty adhesion. Burton 1825

~~In other countries~~

The buildings were not all copied from Greek examples.
Roman was quite as eligible.

Bank of England by Sir John Soane 1788.

Order from the Top of the Vestal at Tivoli

Sham windows. architecture has little to do with the building.

Similarly buildings might be copied or adapted from examples of the Italian Renaissance.

~~Athenaeum Club 1827. Barton. Very delicate & good, even~~

~~if most of the thought had been done before.~~

~~As a result clubs were usually built in the Italian Renaissance Palazzo style.~~

Reform Club. 1837. Barry copied from the Farnese Palace.

Foreign Office London. - Venetian + Oh!!!

~~In other countries the same thing was going on.~~

~~France.~~

The man rose superior to this mere copyism. Professor Cockrell. He was architect for many business buildings during the middle of the XIX century & in these he used a type frankly inspired by the delicacy of Greek work but equally frankly modern.

London Western
Bk

Lothbury Bank. 1837. A business building for sensible business men. No overelaboration & no ostentation but the forms are all beautifully delicate, & the architecture is in the building. "Orders" are hardly used - only in the porch we find two Doric columns very suitably placed.

do detail

The building is not striking. The great London Banks prided themselves on their solidity & respectability & did not advertise. The building does, most perfectly, convey the feeling of the well established English business firm.

Whilst Cockrell was producing fine work however the copyism went on gaily. Let us look at other countries

Germany.

Berlin Brandenburger Thor 1789. Imposing nothing to do with Germany.

~~National Gallery all columns.~~

Old Museum 1824 all columns

National Gallery 1830-40. A Roman Temple

France.

Arc du Carrousel. 1806. Arch of Constantine Rome
a little smaller.

~~Arc de l'Étoile 1806-36. A fine design. The French
never copied in the same slavish way as either the English
or the Germans but they came very near it.~~

Le Madeleine 1807-42. A big Greek Ionic temple.

But copyism was never at home in France + the artists returned to a more
natural Renaissance.

In 1863 Garnier built the Paris Opera. a building which
had a tremendous influence on later continental architecture.

Paris at this time was a gay capital + the Paris Opera is the
gayest part of it. It is perhaps the most magnificent
building in France. It was built in the style of the French
Renaissance, rather freely treated, every material + every
form of classic architecture is used to give an effect of
complete magnificence + all the taste of a highly refined
nation was necessary to keep the result from vulgarity.

As it is here is no vulgarity only a lavish magnificence
but had it been built anywhere but in Paris it would have
been simply vulgar.

- Paris Opera front
- " " Side
- " " Foyer.
- " " Staircase.

Unfortunately the Paris Opera was copied elsewhere. + a
school of official architecture, deeply influenced by French
work sprang up all over Europe. The result was
French luxuriance without French refinement. French
work always retains its delicacy, refinement + innate taste
the copies of French work elsewhere are simply bad. They were designed
Herrn Imperial Opera by rule not by imagination.

- " New Hofburg Theatre
- Berlin Palace. Parliament House } dreadful.
- Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial.

Such stuff is still I regret to say being built. but we will not
linger on it but return to another school.

The Gothic Revival.

At the same time that all this copying of Greek & Roman & Italian & French styles was going on in Europe ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~English~~ one section of the English Architects rediscovered Gothic Architecture & began copying it too. The results were quite as unsatisfactory as had been the case with the Greek copies.

Here is a modern Church.

Choir E. English XIII c

Nave Dec. XIV c

Spire Perpendicular XV c.

all built at the same time. Its real style is

XIX c archaeological Gothic.

The type of building did not matter - all were equally clothed in a Gothic dress.

Edinburgh Jail 1822. Castellated

Exeter Coll Oxford. English XIII c.

St Marys Cathedral. Edin. English early XIII c.

These were all English Gothic. By the middle of the century we have Italian Gothic too.

St Pancras Hotel. London

† in all these buildings correctness of style was looked upon as essential. whether the building was classic, Renaissance or Gothic and by the year 1875 or thereabouts the number of such styles was almost infinite. An architect might build, French, English, or German Romanesque. French, English Italian Spanish. XIII XIV XV Gothic. Italian Early or Late Renaissance. French Louis Francis I Henri IV Louis XIV Louis XV English Georgian & so on. These & many others such as Egyptian & Assyrian & Greek & Roman were all looked upon as equally good & all could be built equally by the aid of books be built equally correctly & with equal lack of imagination. The designing indeed was already done & all that remained was to stick together the various bits.

Gradually a kind of convention grew up. Churches were to be Gothic, because old churches had been, largely Gothic, but Romanesque or Byzantine was also allowable. Roman Catholic Churches were largely classic Italian Renaissance because

St Peter's at Rome was Italian Renaissance. Banks were classic because, somehow, classic was so respectable.

I would only mention that, despite this multiplicity of styles only one style was really being built.

The XIX Century archaeological style, probably the duller & most pretentious style ever built, for all its supposed variety.

However better times were coming & the new movement really started in England.

Public buildings might be sham temples & Churches might be sham antiquities but houses had to be comfortable. The modern needs of life were not those of any past period & though the architects tried to build sham antique houses, they failed. Balmoral Castle. Sham Scottish XVI c. castle. Keep & so there arose a perfectly modern & unaffected style of house building.

I have here ^{a slide} 2 slides from Selchworth Garden City. Cheap houses, quite modern & quite unaffected. They are quite good architecture.

Norman Shaw

→ But there is no need to go further. Westmount is full of houses of excellent architecture. Some are better than others but ~~all~~ they are quite genuine & this English School of Domestic Architecture is one of the real artistic achievements of the century. (All Westmount is not of course good - there is plenty of sham archaeology & imitation construction here too).

The next step was taken in commercial buildings. Modern commerce was not medieval commerce & its practical needs had to be satisfied. Again hard practical facts. The price of land. The use of steel & concrete, the needs of business, these were the beginnings of a new artistic movement.

We may not admire skyscrapers, but they are genuine & they are modern. They are also very expressive of modern conditions.

I have 2 contrasting examples

1. Treasury, New York. c. 1830-40. a sham temple.
2. Park row Building. not the best of skyscrapers, but honest

Even in Germany, that land of officialdom a reaction took place.

Even whilst the New Cathedral was rousing the laughter of Architectural Europe & the Sieges Allée was being acclaimed as the most comic war memorial in Europe, a new school was growing up. Opposed by the official world - publicly denounced by the Emperor, it has done good work in Berlin & throughout North Germany.

- 1 Cathedral
- 2 Store Alexanderplatz.
- 3 Gas office Berlin. Columns used as supports.
- 4 Berlin U den Linden. Supports - not columns.
- 5 Wertheimers Store.

Handwritten mathematical calculations, including long division and multiplication problems, some enclosed in boxes.

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 209} \\ \underline{63} \\ 146 \\ \underline{146} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 166} \\ \underline{122} \\ 44 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 126} \\ \underline{42} \\ 84 \\ \underline{84} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 178} \\ \underline{59} \\ 124 \\ \underline{124} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 209} \\ \underline{60} \\ 149 \\ \underline{149} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 116} \\ \underline{39} \\ 77 \\ \underline{77} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 166} \\ \underline{55} \\ 111 \\ \underline{111} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 166} \\ \underline{102} \\ 64 \\ \underline{64} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 209} \\ \underline{154} \\ 55 \\ \underline{55} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 258} \\ \underline{86} \\ 172 \\ \underline{172} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 258} \\ \underline{86} \\ 172 \\ \underline{172} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \overline{) 258} \\ \underline{86} \\ 172 \\ \underline{172} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

Again.

Pennsylvania Terminal Railway Station N. Y.

Outside, dull Roman orders -

Hall - copy of a Roman Gate + not so good

Concourse - Real modern steel architecture, as delicate
+ graceful as many a cathedral. Tho not yet
a perfect type of architecture it is at any rate
not second hand.

In conclusion. Architecture is the art of construction
and anything that is beautiful by reason of its being made
+ put together in a beautiful manner is good architecture.
A spoon that is good to spoon with is architecturally fine, just
as a house that is good to live in or a church that inspires
to worship. This is the end of Architecture, to make beautiful that
things should be beautiful in their making.

Architecture is not a matter of learning or of books, above
all it is not a matter of "styles". We do not think to
speak Greek today because Greek is a beautiful language.
Why should we build Greek. A Gothic church is the
crystallized thought of the people who designed it. We may
admire that thought, we have no right to steal it. It is our
privilege to think our own thoughts + they will be as modern
as we are.

No art ~~more than~~ Architecture is a truer reflection of its
time than Architecture. We, living in an age of Commerce
and comfort have developed an architecture of business ~~houses~~^{blocks}
and houses. So it must be, but let us at least make
there the best that we can do, reflections of our best ideals
not ~~the~~ second hand shadows of the thoughts which, centuries
ago, were thought by Greeks. Romans or our own
Medieval Ancestors.

And how shall we judge Architecture? Like any other
Art. Architecture must be judged by its appeal to our feelings, not
by any appeal to our intellects. For this judgement experience is
the only guide. ~~If we have seen many buildings~~
Only by seeing many buildings can we

come to judge the goodness of any one building. If we had never ^{before} seen any church save one built of corrugated iron the first stone built church we saw would appear indeed a miracle of Architecture. Only when we have seen the Parish Churches of England or the Cathedrals of France will our stone church + our iron church alike sink into their proper place.

To understand Art does not require deep knowledge, a little no doubt is useful but Architecture is not a kind of Archaeology. To understand Art requires rather a trained ~~for~~ ability for feeling + a sympathy with the aims + ideals of the people who produced it.