

he had that rare ability to talk intelligently and entertainingly with any man. I have frequently heard him say that to be successful an architect must be well versed in all branches of the fine arts; that a man who cannot appreciate good music cannot appreciate good architecture. He made friends easily and frequented clubs and societies where desirable acquaintances might be cultivated. To this, as much as to his professional ability, I laid his ability to get big commissions.

In the matter of getting out preliminary sketches he used a discretion that is sometimes lacking. For the real estate promoter who looked at all things from a cold business stand point, plain businesslike sketches were furnished, sometimes no more than rough plans coloured in with a red pencil; but if the client seemed likely to be attracted by highly decorative drawings, White was permitted to amuse himself for a day or two with water colours and gold tape.

Withal there were many things that a draftsman might have learned to his profit, but there were flaws, costly flaws, in the running of the office, and it is with them that I shall henceforth concern myself. Perhaps it is safe to say that we learn more from the errors that we note than from the successes that we observe without comment. The business was a success—that is to be admitted; but I soon learned that with better management the profits might be materially increased.

The greatest fault may be described as lack of team-work among the powers that governed. A dozen times I have heard a new draftsman exclaim, "Who is the head of this drafting room?"

A man would be assigned to a new job. White would give him a few instructions and he would prepare his drawings under the occasional supervision of Gray. Then, when his work was well along, Black would look at it and straightway announce, "That's not the idea at all." Gray would be summoned, and forgetting the fact that it had been his job to keep his eye on the draftsman would join Black in criticism. The draftsman, nettled would start again on a clean sheet, or "to save time" would spend half a day in erasing his innocent errors. Then, when he had finally satisfied the two lieutenants, Mr. Smith himself would saunter in, study the drawing and remark, "That's very pretty, but it's not right." Hours, days wasted because the triumvirate in command of the drafting room didn't know in the first place what was required.

How different from another office in which the head draftsman, now a member of the firm, made it his practice to devote an hour each day, outside of office hours, if necessary, in studying the requirements of the problems in hand, and then, the first thing in the morning, assuring himself that every draftsman understood exactly what his day's work was to be. Machine-like efficiency, perhaps, but worth while, and it may be added that the man was liked and respected by his subordinates.

The second flaw in our office management is illustrated by an incident which occurred when a number of new men were hired at a particularly busy time. We were hard at work just then on a large bank building. At the same time we were preparing sketches for a Gothic church. Now it

happened that several of us had had considerable experience in church designing, while one of the new men had come to us from an office noted for its banks. The logical thing would have been to put the new man on to the bank work and to permit one of us to make the sketches, which we could have done in a few days. What did happen was just the reverse. The new man was assigned to the church, and finding himself up against an unfamiliar problem was obliged to take two or three times as long as one of the rest of us would have required besides calling us in occasionally to help him. For him it was valuable experience, but for the firm a costly piece of mismanagement.

It was not long after this that it became necessary to rush through a set of drawings. "Every drawing done by May first." When a week or more had gone by it became evident that the force of men then employed could not do the task in the allotted time. It could have been done if each man had put in two or three evenings a week, but we were not supposed to put in overtime except by request and we were not then requested. The firm decided to hire new men. Obviously a new draftsman, unfamiliar with his problem, will accomplish less in a given time than one who has worked on the drawings from the start. On May first the work was not completed, and it was decided to ask the men to work nights. Here again the policy of the office interfered with its work. Almost any draftsman is willing to do extra work occasionally, but when he is required to work nights he has a right to expect pay for it; if not "time-and-a-half," at least at his regular rate. In our office, however, we were seldom paid directly for overtime. Instead, we kept account of our time, and later when the rush was over, we were allowed a vacation equivalent to the time we had worked. Fair enough, sometimes, but there are times when a man needs the money more than he does the vacation. Moreover, it meant an actual loss to some of us; we were obliged to buy our suppers which meant an extra expense to those of us who otherwise would have gone home. We frequently found that in the course of a charette we were paying two or three dollars for the privilege of adding a few days to our vacation, perhaps three months hence.

*(To be continued.)*

"If an architect should err a hand's breadth in the proper relative proportion between the diameter and the height of a Doric column, all the educated world would cry shame on him; and if he should venture to alter the distribution of the triglyphs, or attempt an interference with the mutules, he would be condemned forever by professional critics. But if he applied the portico of the Parthenon one day to the County Jail, and the next attached the same feature to a Protestant House of Prayer or to a Panorama, the learned few would see no harm, provided the proportions were correct; but we ought not to be surprised if the unlearned million should shake their heads in astonishment, and feel no great interest in the mysterious craft."