

Architecture in Canada

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ONE cannot be at all sure that writing or talking about architecture is of any value except as writing and talking, and there being no doubt whatever that architecture is made to be seen rather than to be heard about, an exhibition of one hundred examples of building in Canada has been provided. For this we have to thank McGill University for the illustrations of work from the French and the Georgian periods, the Canadian Pacific Railway in the case of most of the Victorian examples, and for photographs of work designed and executed by Canadian offices since 1900, the architects concerned, who most willingly and kindly provided what was asked of them. The collection will, I trust, be found representative of Canadian architecture. Many of the most important buildings in Canada are not illustrated for the reason that they are not the work of Canadian offices. Many common, and therefore characteristic, types of house, church, office, store and mill are ignored in this collection on the ground that, by no stretch of the imagination—not even the application of an undiluted Crocean æsthetic doctrine—can these things rank as works of art. What is shown in this little exhibition is meant as fair samples of our varied best.

It is perhaps not necessary to embark on a critique of the ugly to justify a claim to your gratitude for not unduly stressing our work from the third quarter of the nineteenth century in this exhibition.

Much of what is shown must appear strange to the English eye, and strangeness as an element of charm has very discreet limits. The remarks which follow are intended as explanation supplementary to this exhibition, in the hope that critics here may thereby find themselves in a better position to extend that sympathetic understanding of our problems which might be the beginning of an appreciation of our efforts.

Previous to the cession in 1763, French Canada had a well-established tradition in rubble building, with shingle, and later with sheet tin roofing. Strange to say, the French never evolved a log architecture in Canada, and their clapboard and framing was an adaptation of New England methods, founded on prototypes evolved between the Thames and the Channel, where the typical English forests of oak ever gave way to pine. The French-Canadian steeples have always had distinctive character, and the earlier ones are characterized by simplicity of composition, combined with extraordinary grace. The French window (casement, opening in) has been adhered to with a tenacity almost as great as that bestowed upon language and religion, and only of late years has its supremacy been challenged by the mullioned ranges of casements, and the sliding sash, respective heritages of the English Gothic and Classic traditions. But by far the most characteristic feature of old French building craft in Canada is the exaggerated bellcast designed

for shade and shelter and an essentially bad snow form. Perhaps its grace has been sufficient justification. It is dead; but it has died hard.

Just after the end of the French regime there was a school of crafts established at St. Joachim, on the north shore of the St. Lawrence, below Quebec. There, among other things, iron latches, locks and cockspurs were made with distinct signs of Gothic method—the only trace of natural, traditional, unrevived Gothic culture I know of in America. Again, from about 1800 to 1825, one Quevillon established a school of design and craft at St. Vincent de Paul, near Montreal, and much of the quaint and interesting work in the way of pulpits and altar pieces in French-Canadian churches is to be ascribed to his school, which at one time numbered about one hundred apprentices.

Until a century ago there were two well established traditions in Eastern Canada, with French and English origins, both curiously parallel to the contemporary work in the cities of the Baltic. The English tradition was, of course, closely allied to that of New England. These traditions, inherited from the France of the Louis and the England of the Georges, were partly ameliorated by climate and partly by the use of that greatest of all timbers, now well-nigh squandered out of existence, white pine. But these semi-indigenous traditions are no more, for to build in the good old ways is now become desperately expensive, and that part of the goodness which was craftsmanship is quite unattainable. In Halifax and St. John, Quebec, Montreal and Kingston there are buildings from the design of men trained in the offices of Adams and Cockerel, who came to Canada as civil officials attached to naval and engineers' services. Their works are equal in delicacy and grace—and, I may add, in stability—to anything of the kind in England. But such treasures are in a sad way, and public interest in their preservation is as yet non-existent. A survey of the older architecture is now begun by the students of the Department of Architecture at McGill, while the Province of Quebec Association of Architects has a scholarship for travel and study of old French work. These are poor expedients when public pride is lacking.

Such things, belonging to an era that has passed, exceed in grace and accomplishment anything done since in Canada. Here and there, up to 1860, a little work in the older manner was still occurring, but a grander scale soon supervened, bringing with it a somewhat vulgarized taste in detail. Thereafter the most virulent phase of "American Victorianism" had a vogue. Some fine square houses were built about this time, with better detail outside than in, but the vernacular taste became wholly corrupted, and the use of galvanized iron for feigned stonework made all things possible. By 1880 people were no longer building so large; the cycle of economy in scale had set in; but prodigality in

Architecture in Canada (Continued)

the use of pine and oak was still manifest. By 1900 rapidly rising prices and the depletion of the supplies of the better qualities of timber had inaugurated an era of condensed planning and inferior construction. Craftsmanship disappeared.

Some time about the fifth year of this century, I had the pleasure of showing Mr. Salm, the Dutch architect, the charms of Montreal in midwinter, and it befell that we sat us down in a then famous hostelry before a mighty jig-saw doorway, manifesting in sundry natural and grained woods, with pediments and chamfered whatnots. "Why did he make it so ugly?" asked my friend; and again and again, "But why did he make it so ugly?" And then, after a long pause, finding me still discreet, he grabbed me by the thigh in enlightenment, and chirruped, "I know! I know! *Because he could not make it any uglier!*" After that we went slumming, and he was charmed with some of the gracious and dignified simplicities of a by-gone day, more particularly several buildings since demolished.

The horrors into which the Neo-Greek tradition in Canada degenerated, after a good start, laid open the way for Gothic revivalism, even in its crudest forms, as a welcome relief. This was in turn supplanted by the robust American Romanesque of Richardson during the last twenty years of the century, only to be superseded by a second phase of Gothic, which looks to Mr. Goodhue, rather than the Tudor originals, for inspiration. Our mediævalism is thus seen to be both artificial and exotic in its inspiration. It has been most successful when least scholarly, as in the case of the choir in St. Patrick's Church, Montreal, in which material and climatic considerations join with a vaguely felt tradition to embody a noble scale and sensitive proportions.

In 1903, Messrs. McKim, Meade & White, of New York, designed the head office of the Bank of Montreal in that city; in 1918 Messrs. Sproatt & Rolph, of Toronto, built Hart House, Toronto University—the first an affair of rarified classic taste, the second a matter of mullions, timber roofs and tender, textured rubble masonry. McKim's work is often indistinguishable from Smirke's; Sproatt almost uses plates of measured work as working drawings, albeit with a fine selective taste. Each achieved a notable building and, a thing rare in our time, a great popular success. Neither can claim much originality in these buildings, except on the score of the plans, both brilliant in their very different ways. But only a few, even among architects, apprehend an accomplished plan. I cite these two cases as important milestones. McKim has had many followers in Canada, and Sproatt leads a devoted band. These traditions are incompatible. They cannot both represent the right thing in the right place when the place is Canada.

In the 'nineties the Canadian Pacific Railway built two hotels, in Quebec and Montreal, and labelled the former the "Château Frontenac." Mr. Bruce Price, of Boston, was the architect, and they were made French out of compliment to the Province, and Old French for the delectation of American tourists, who, as the late Sir William Van

Horne, President of the company, well knew, love a romantic setting. Mr. Painter made some bold additions to the Frontenac before the War, and the Messrs. Maxwell have made still bolder ones last year. All have drawn freely on the Loire. When the Grand Trunk was becoming a transcontinental railway, it also went into the château business and, taking a leaf out of the rival railway's book, instigated the design of a notable pile, "the Château Laurier," at Ottawa, also making heavy draughts upon the Loire. A chain of "châteaux" has been embarked upon by both railway companies. In the Canadian language "château" now means railway hotel.

A corollary of Confederation in 1867 was the erection of the Houses of Parliament at Ottawa, and in 1917 the main building was burned. Fuller, who had been concerned with the State House at Albany, was the architect, and his manner showed the influence of the Ruskin, Street, Butterfield and Nesfield School.

The design for reconstruction was put in the hands of John Pearson, of Toronto, and Joseph Marchand, of Montreal—the first a Yorkshireman with a sentimental attachment for the "middle flowing," the latter a French Canadian trained in Paris, with a flair for a fine plan. Thus Ottawa retains its neo-mediævalism.

The various provincial parliament buildings have now all been built. Halifax has her old Georgian "Province Building," dating from 1811, and still the gem of the collection; the New Brunswick building at Fredericton is of little interest; Quebec has her Parliament House in the manner of Louis Philippe, tasteless and banal; Ontario possesses in her Legislative Building a rare example of "masonry brute mishandled." The legislative building at Victoria, B.C., has a freer and more graceful character. The three prairie provincial capitals possess parliament buildings of more recent date, of the recognized State Capitol type, with pedimented porticos and central lantern domes. That at Winnipeg, by Mr. Frank W. Simon, is a truly notable achievement, in the full dress of European classic culture.

Office buildings are a highly specialized line in what used to be listed as "Yankee notions," and many thoroughly effective examples have been built in Canada both by American architects and Canadians. So also with the institutional work and collegiate buildings, the American models have, for the most part, been followed, with their good and bad points evenly accentuated.

Standardization is the vice of the Americans; one town becomes like another throughout the States of the Union and, by an infection which there is no possibility of avoiding and no use in denying, throughout the provinces of Canada as well. The older towns still have the bouquet and saviour of individuality. Halifax and St. John retain their rugged silhouettes on ridge and crag; Quebec her discreet fronts on narrow and precipitous lanes, with dainty spires wherever a church may cling upon her slopes; Montreal the disordered picturesque of a lingering eighteenth century civilisation at odds with modern commercialism; Kingston

Architecture in Canada (Continued)

her forts and her palladian façades; and London (in the bush) her shaded avenues of elms.

The smaller towns of Ontario still retain a certain charm due to a not over-accelerated development. But the cities of Ontario, and the cities and town of the plains, are American, with certain very American standard features such as useless but elegantly designed columnar porticoes to the banks, and useless and ill-designed Gothic towers upon the churches; and where educational institutions of any importance occur, a display of collegiate stage setting, mullions and buttresses and parapets all turned out by the yard, with a singular lack of all that Mr. Prior would understand as of the Gothic spirit. Now, in the Eastern States of the Union, the demure and legitimate classic inherited as a real tradition from Georgian times is able to achieve solutions for all manner of collegiate problems, and cheaply too.

We have reviewed the traditions, natural and exotic, affecting Canadian architecture, and taken some account of the Government buildings and the character of the cities and towns from sea to sea. It remains only to make note of the climate, the materials, and the culture—lay, professional and industrial—and then to hazard a guess at imminent economic conditions, if one would prognosticate the future of Canadian architecture. Enough has surely been shown and said to maintain the thesis that, beyond the practicalities of window and roof making, at the moment Canadian architecture is a polite fiction. But it is in these very practicalities that there is hope, for they are due to *force majeure*, that most potent agency for making a distinctive character in men and things—weather. Of the Canadian climate, the worst that has ever been said is that there is too much of it. It is a high-powered affair of desperate ranges in temperatures and humidities and pressures, both from summer to winter, and from mid-day to midnight. Moreover, east and west, there are at least six varieties of climate in Canada, all severe and most of them sunny. Ultimately, we might therefore expect in Canada as many architectures as climates, since architectural character is largely resultant from window and roof forms. If only landmen were as logical as seamen or beavers, or birds, architecture would be an exact science. Climate has already shown itself in Canada to be a powerful solvent of exotic tradition. Bear in mind, please, that most of the building in this land of 8,000,000 people on 3,700,000 square miles has been constructed within the last thirty years, under the influence of ten distinct traditions. Give the north wind time!

The climate being classed as "northern" and "arid" by the geographers and weather authorities, we find, when compared with England, that exposed woodwork lasts long, brickwork and masonry require much metal coping, and covering on water tables; copper and galvanised iron take the place of lead and zinc; slates are an extravagance, gravel roofs a commendable economy, and double windows an essential to comfort (except in British Columbia and the Niagara Peninsula). It is a land of bright sunshine, and deep shadow accompanies all modulations of form.

Materials throughout Canada vary about as much as they do in the similar range of distance from London to Moscow. Of lumber the best goes abroad. White pine has been wantonly exhausted. British Columbia fir is now used, even in Nova Scotia. Except birch and maple for flooring, the best hardwood comes from the United States. In Alberta there are superb brickfields, whose product matches the best in the United States—that is, in the world—the brickfields of the chief centres of population yield sound material, but it is uninteresting in texture and colour. Much first-class face brick-work in Canada is done with American bricks. The situation as to stone is similar. Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia have granite, and some of the plants are as highly developed as any in the world. The grey limestones of the St. Lawrence Valley—Kingston, Montreal and Quebec—are unsurpassable as a dignified material, but they are costly to work compared to the softer sandstones and limestones from the States. Winnipeg has a pale limestone with a strong shell mark admirably suited to large scale work; this finds its way as far east as Montreal and as far west as Edmonton. Material has thus but little local significance in Canada. In many cases, whole streets of buildings have involved transport in the raw over five hundred miles and more, from half a dozen directions.

Now, as to the culture which finds a general expression in Canadian architecture through the co-operation of the lay and professional minds, there is, of course, that easy generalisation to fall back upon about Canada as an interpreter of Britain to America, and America to Britain. For this view there is some superficial corroboration in the fact that to English eyes Canadian architecture is very American, while to American eyes it often appears a little English. But all travellers are predisposed to react to the unfamiliar.

Strenuous efforts are made from time to time in magazine articles, novels, histories and caricatures to elaborate a Canadian type—so far without success, for the all-sufficient reason that there are many types, all abundantly characteristic, and much water will pass down the Great Lakes before there is assimilation. The best rooted elements of society in the Maritimes, in Quebec, in Ontario, on the plains, and on the coast, are all distinctive, and long will they remain so. Current Canadian architecture, however, does not reflect these distinctions at all. An understanding of the constituent elements of the architectural profession in Canada is necessary to explain this.

It is only within the last twenty years that the means for a complete technical professional education of Canadian architects have existed in Canada, and only within the last ten years that the recruitment of the profession from the University Schools has become commensurate with the opportunities. There are in Canada to-day between eight and nine hundred architects, and about a score are now entering practice each year, with the diploma of one or other of the Canadian schools. Previous to the institution of these schools, the Canadian offices which claimed a reputation for teaching were never numerous. Indeed, the offices have been all too blithe and irresponsible in trans-

Architecture in Canada (Continued)

mitting their teaching responsibility to the schools. At this time, then, the schools are just beginning to make an impression on the general output of architectural design in Canada.

The Canadian work illustrated at this time must not, therefore, be fathered on the schools. By the middle of the century it will perhaps be possible to judge of the architectural schools of Canadian Universities by their fruits.

The variety and characteristics of Canadian architectural efforts from 1900 to 1923 can only be partially explained, then, by the varied climates, the varied materials, and the varied provincial cultures. The circumstances of recruitment and training of the profession in Canada, as it is to-day constitute the main factors.

Broadly speaking, our architectural body consists of three elements:

(1) Born Canadians who have studied abroad, for the most part in the United States, seldom in England.

(2) American immigrants trained in the United States, and for the most part in the French academic tradition;

(3) British immigrants, the majority hailing from Scottish offices, often immature, and picking up their experience in Canada before becoming practitioners.

Now, I have had abundant opportunity to observe the contributions of these three more or less distinct elements to the problems of Canadian design, and I have no hesitation in attributing to the British immigrant the sincerest and most inventive efforts to modify traditions to new requirements and local conditions, and incidentally to appreciate the good work done in Canada between 1700 and 1900.

The Canadian-born contingent has, with a few notable exceptions, been a little prone to accept American solutions *en gros*, as the "Académie des Architectes du Roi" in the time of Louis XIV accepted Vignola's orders. The American immigrant architect has made a contribution with indefatigable accomplishment of those elegant insincerities which obscure the path of natural evolution in design. Artificiality, however, is the life-blood of architecture on the American continent.

In this our period of experimentation, with the forces of crude nature and economic law, with competing cultures, social problems and the artificial rivalries of traditions, it is inevitable, perhaps, that design and architecture should suffer some divorce. Whether the teaching of architecture at the Universities will tend to the inculcation of those first principles on which a tradition can be re-established, or to further fortify the confusion of the Babel which is with us, remains to be seen. First principles are illusive things to discover, and notoriously difficult to teach, and schools of architecture slip with fatal facility into the exploitation of rival propagandas in Canada as elsewhere, thus defeating the ends for which they exist.

A word upon the building trades in Canada is now in order. They are not as highly unionised as in England, but unionisation is an international affair in the United States and Canada. The effect of this is complicated by the racial appor-

tionment of the several labours of building in a district and the prevalence of racially homogeneous gangs for different work on a job. Apprenticeship is practically non-existent. The trade schools have so far failed of their purpose. As a result the skilled trades are recruited by immigration from overseas. Against such recruitment the "progressive" influences marshal their strength. Meanwhile the building booms of our prosperous protectionist cousins to the South rob us of such skilled labour as we may generate or capture.

In the large communities of Canada skilled men can, indeed, be found to carve, model, hammer, cast or paint anything the wit of man can conceive, but they are few, and very inadequately remunerated, and facilities are woefully lacking for the dissemination of their craft knowledge. A few shops still retain the high standards of execution of a former generation, but very few. Within my own experience the standard of execution has gone steadily down in spite of a great improvement in professional services, so far as drawings and details are concerned. A certain mechanical perfection of execution can, it is true, be realised at a price, but for the time being the vital touch and sense of craft have departed from our midst.

As to Canadian contractors, generally speaking, both great and small are of high ability, conspicuously so in all matters of organisation and administration. They are not, however, invariably masters of their craft. The present tendency is for the execution of works to be regarded as a profession requiring a college training in civil engineering or in architecture. The man bred in the builder's yard thus often finds himself in a subordinate capacity, and so tends to extinction. As a consequence, great actual responsibility falls on the clerk of works. A good one will often shoulder the real control on a job, the contractors putting themselves quite cheerfully in the position of agents to assemble material and provide labour, as required, leaving the clerk of works to issue all instructions. This leads to rather subtle situations now and then; but generally to very good value for the client's outlay.

As the ordinary surveyor is all but unknown in Canada, and the contractor takes his own quantities (rarely requiring more than a week even on a big undertaking), everyone concerned on a job has a good deal more discretion as to interpretation than with the English system. This adds to the architect's responsibilities, but on the whole it makes for self-respect and professional dignity and standing on the part of the contractor.

I have endeavoured to present to you our historic background, our lost tradition, the considerations of a material, cultural and technical kind which underlie and modulate our efforts in architectural expression, and I leave it for you who view the photographs to make your appraisals, begging only that you will take account of our difficulties as well as our opportunities.

Editor's Note.—The exhibit of photographs referred to in Mr. Nobb's address included the following:—

Church of St. Louis de Terrebonne, near Montreal, built 1787, demolished 1885.

Church of St. Charles de la Chenaye, near Quebec. C. 1750. A Church near Quebec, C. 1750, now demolished.

Architecture in Canada (Continued)

- Church of St. Bartelème at Berthier, P.Q. Quevillon School. C. 1830.
- The Basilica, Quebec—Architect for Facade and Unfinished Tower, Baillarge. South Tower, 1770; Facade, etc. 1844, burnt 1923.
- A Church at Quebec. C. 1800.
- The Grey Nunnery, Montreal. Architect: Bourgeau, 1871.
- St. Patrick's Church, Montreal. Architect: Rev. Fathe, Martin, S.J., 1847.
- Church of St. Cunegonde, Montreal. Architects: Marchand and Haskell, 1906.
- Seigneurie de Lossier at St. Vincent de Paul, P.Q. C. 1830.
- A House on the Island of Orleans, P.Q. C. 1770.
- House on Beauport Road near Quebec. C. 1750.
- An Old Farm House near Montreal. C. 1820.
- An old House in Montreal. C. 1750.
- Doorway to the Grand Seminaire, Quebec Quevillon School. C. 1820.
- The Champlain Market, Quebec. Built from ruins of Parliament Buildings and now demolished. C. 1860.
- St. Paul's Church, Halifax, N.S. Founded 1751.
- The Anglican Church, Grane Pré, N.S. C. 1760.
- Anglican Cathedral Church at Quebec. Architects: Capt. Hall and Major Robe, 1804.
- Governor's House, Halifax, N.S. Architect: John Merrick, 1801.
- Legislative Building, Halifax, N.S. Architect: John Merrick 1811.
- The Custom House, Quebec. 1833.
- The Court House at Kingston, Ont. C. 1825.
- The Court House at Brantford, Ont. C. 1850.
- Osgoode Hall (Court House) Toronto. Architects: Cumberland and Storm 1860.
- An Office Building in Montreal. Architect: Thomas, 1870.
- A Residence in Montreal. C. 1850.
- A Private House in Kingston, Ont. C. 1860.
- A Residence in Montreal. Architect: Thomas. C. 1860.
- A Residence in Toronto. Architects: Wickson and Gregg, 1917.
- House of the Architect: Eden Smith, Toronto, 1912.
- A Residence in Toronto. Architects: Sproatt and Rolph, 1923.
- A Residence in Victoria, B.C. Architect: S. Maclure, 1920.
- A Residence near Montreal. Architects: Nobbs and Hyde, 1923.
- A Residence in Westmount, P.Q. Architect: Robert Findlay, 1918.
- Gold Club House, Beaconsfield, P.Q. Architect: David R. Brown, 1904.
- The City Hall, Toronto. Architect: E. J. Lennox, 1890.
- The Library of Parliament, Ottawa. Architect: Fuller, 1875.
- New Parliament Building, Ottawa. Architects: John Pearson and Joseph Marchand, 1919.
- Legislative Building, Quebec Public Works Department, 1880.
- Legislative Building, Victoria, B.C. Architect: F. M. Rattenbury, 1894.
- Trinity College, Toronto. Architect: Kivas Tully. C. 1850.
- The Arts Building, Toronto University. Architects: Cumberland and Storm, 1865.
- The University Convocation Hall, Toronto. Architects: Darling and Pearson, 1908.
- Knox College, Toronto. Architects: Chapman and McGriffin, 1912.
- Hart House, University of Toronto. Architects: Sproatt and Rolph, 1914.
- The Physics Building, McGill University, Montreal. Architects: Taylor, Hogle and Davis, 1898.
- McGill University Union, Montreal. Architects: P. E. Nobbs (F) and Hutchison and Wood, 1904.
- The Women's Residence, Dalhousie University, Halifax. Architect: Frank Darling, R.C.A., 1910.
- The Medical Building, University of Alberta, Edmonton. Architects: Nobbs and Hyde, 1920.
- The Montreal Technical School. Architect: John S. Archibald, 1910.
- The Mother House, Congregation of Notre Dame, Montreal. Architects: Marchand and Haskell. 1907.
- A Synagogue in Westmount, P.Q. Architect: J. M. Miller, 1922.
- Canadian Bank of Commerce, Winnipeg. Architects: Darling and Pearson, 1906.
- Canadian Bank of Commerce, Montreal. Architects: Darling and Pearson, 1907.
- Bank of British North America, Montreal. Architects: Barott, Blackader and Webster, 1914.
- Public Library, Montreal. Architect: E. Payette, 1912.
- The Bathing Pavilion, Harbour Commission, Toronto. Architect: A. H. Chapman, 1920.
- The Alexandra Theatre, Toronto. Architect: J. M. Lyle, 1910.
- The University Club, Montreal. Architects: Nobbs and Hyde, 1913.
- The Royal Bank Building, Toronto. Architects: Ross and Macdonald, 1914.
- The C.P.R. Building. Architects: Darling and Pearson, 1913.
- The General Accident Assurance Building, Toronto. Architect: F. S. Baker (F) 1920.
- The Southam Building, Calgary, Alberta. Architects: Brown and Vallance, 1913.
- C.P.R. Hotel, Victoria, B.C. Architect: F. M. Rattenbury, 1908.
- The Chateau Frontenac, Quebec. Architect for Original Building, 1890: Bruce Price. Architects for New Tower, 1923: E. and W. S. Maxwell.
- C.P.R. Hotel, Banff, B.C. Architect: W. S. Painter, 1913.
- C.P.R. Station, Vancouver, B.C. Architects: Barott, Blackader and Webster, 1912.
- The Union Station, Toronto. Architects: Ross and Macdonald; Hugh Jones and J. M. Lyle, 1919.
- The Legislative Building, Winnipeg, Man. Architect: Frank W. Simon (F), 1920.
- The Legislative Building, Regina, Sask. Architects: E. and W. S. Maxwell, 1910.

Architecture of the Queen's Doll's House

BY LORD GERALD WELLESLEY

IT is to be hoped that there is not, in the whole world, anyone so unchildlike as not to appreciate the Queen's Dolls' House. It must surely be the most wonderful present which has ever been given since primitive man first shaped wood and clay to his own uses. Never before can the labour of hundreds of skilled and gifted people have been concentrated into so small a space. As I am writing under the heading "Architectural Notes," I must not describe the wonders of the electrical and sanitary arrangements, the rarities of the wine cellar and library, and the beauties of the garden—perhaps the most astonishing feature of the whole Palace—where every minute leaf is made of iron. In the popular imagination these delights quite naturally overshadow the architectural and historical importance of the Dolls' House. But the house is far more than a grown-up's toy. The elevations represent an ideal house designed by our

greatest living domestic architect. They form an exact compromise between Palladio's correctness and refinement, and Wren's English common sense. Although many of the rooms are lofty, the general proportion of each storey is wider and lower than an Italian house. Conversely, Wren could never bring himself to use the truly classical slope for a pediment which he felt was not steep enough to throw off our northern rains. But Sir E. Lutyen's design, although frankly inspired by Wren, has a personal flavour about it, which becomes more pronounced in the interior. This has certain obvious pleasing anachronisms and inconsistencies of style about it which render it typical of the furniture and decoration of the present day. Perhaps the best thing is the grand staircase. One feels that the "going" would be perfect, and the rounded sweep of the bottom flight is magnificent.

—*The Spectator*