

**HINTS ON PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE,
CONTAINING, AMONG OTHER
ILLUSTRATIONS, VIEWS AND PLANS
OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION:
TOGETHER WITH AN APPENDIX RELATIVE
TO BUILDING MATERIALS**

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Hints on Public Architecture, Containing, Among Other Illustrations, Views and Plans of the Smithsonian Institution: Together with an Appendix Relative to Building Materials by Robert Dale Owen

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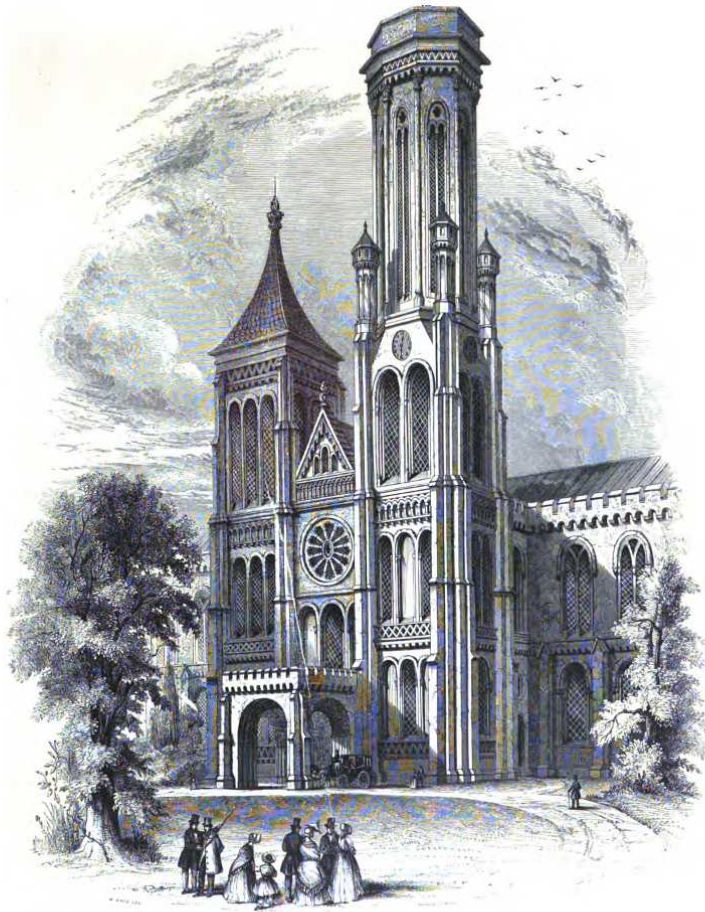
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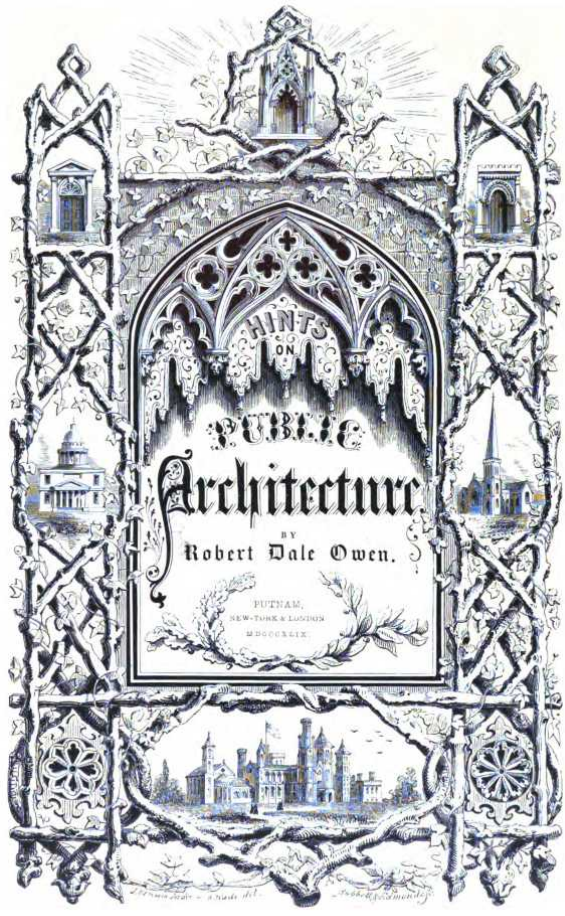
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ROBERT DALE OWEN

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MAIN ENTRANCE, SOUTH FRONT, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.



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PREPARED, ON BEHALF OF THE BUILDING COMMITTEE OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,

BY

ROBERT DALE OWEN,

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE.



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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE,

BY THE BUILDING COMMITTEE OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

THE circumstances which gave rise to the present volume are mentioned in the Preface. But it is, notwithstanding, deemed proper for the Building Committee here to state, that this work is put forth, not by the Smithsonian Institution as one of their series of "Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge," but by the Building Committee of that Institution, under a resolution of the Board of Regents adopted on the 5th of February, 1847, authorizing the Committee to publish, in such form as they might deem most appropriate, a brief treatise on Public Architecture.

The manuscript was submitted by the Building Committee to gentlemen in whose taste and judgment they place confidence, namely, to President Everett, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Mr. Gouverneur Kemble, of New York, and to Judge Kane of Philadelphia; and these gentlemen, without endorsing all the opinions therein set forth, (and for which, in truth, an individual author alone can be responsible,) concur in bearing testimony to the value of the treatise, and in recommending its publication, as shown by the following extracts from their respective letters:

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT EVERETT, DATED CAMBRIDGE, DEC. 4, 1848.

"If it be not going beyond my province, I would recommend the publication of the manuscript, not as a 'Smithsonian Contribution to Knowledge,' but in the usual form in which the Reports of Committees are published. In this form I think it will be regarded as an ingenious, spirited and valuable performance, creditable to the talents and research of the Author."

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GOUVERNEUR KEMBLE, ESQ., DATED GOLD SPRING, NEW YORK, DECEMBER 6, 1848.

"I consider that the 'Hints on Architecture' would be highly creditable to the Institution, as the work of one of its members, a man of talents and of cultivated

taste; and although I should hesitate in giving its sanction to everything that they contain, I would recommend its publication with the name of the Author."

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM JUDGE J. K. KANE, DATED PHILADELPHIA, DEC. 20, 1848.

"Mr. Owen's paper, in its researches and tone, is altogether scholarlike; and it is certainly among the most polished and *readable* of the essays I have met with on the subject. I recommend that it be published by the Institution; and if it be, they will, I think, have done good by aiding in the diffusion of just views and liberal taste."

P R E F A C E .

In the difficulties which presented themselves to the Building Committee of the Smithsonian Institution, when they first entered on the task assigned them, this Treatise had its origin. They now give to the Public that which they would themselves have rejoiced to find in condensed form and language divested of technicalities, and which, not thus finding, they had to seek through numerous volumes and under a load of professional detail.

To the improvement of Architecture are essential, not only genius and skill in the artist who designs, but discrimination in the tribunal to which his designs are submitted. But while much talent and industry have been expended on treatises suited to the wants of the professional student, few works have been prepared having for special object to enlighten the judgment and form the taste of those who are appointed to sit in judgment on the result of his labors, and who have power to transfer, from paper to reality, the creations of his brain.

Such considerations induced the Executive Board of the Institution, under whose auspices the present volume appears, to modify their first intention in the premises; which was, merely to gratify the proper curiosity of the Public in regard to the plan and style of Architecture selected for their building, and to the reasons which governed them in that selection. They have judged it useful and conducive to the increase and diffusion of knowledge in an important department of Art, to go beyond their original purpose, and to authorize the Committee having the erection of that building specially in charge, to cast together, in connected form, such hints in regard to Public Architecture, the merit and cost of its various manners, and the facility of adapting each to modern purposes, as were gathered during investigations and researches first undertaken for an object more restricted and specific.