

**"WHAT PROFESSION
SHALL I CHOOSE,
AND HOW SHALL I
FIT MYSELF FOR IT?"**

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"What Profession Shall I Choose, and how Shall I Fit Myself for It?" by Andrew D. White

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ANDREW D. WHITE

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*WITH A BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE FACILITIES
OFFERED AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY*

And a Prefatory Note

BY ANDREW D. WHITE

ITHACA, NEW YORK

1884

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PREFATORY NOTE.

DURING many years I have been receiving letters from parents asking, "*To what profession and how shall I educate my children?*" and from young men and young women asking, "*To what profession and how shall I educate myself?*" Beside these general questions have usually come special questions as to opportunities at Cornell University. Hence I addressed to several professors in this institution the following letter :

My dear sir: Will you please give me your views upon the following points :

1. What is the present demand, and what the probable future demand, for educated young men in your department?
2. What attractions does that profession offer to students as regards compensation, independence, mode of life, surroundings, etc.?
3. What tastes and characteristics in a young person would, in your judgment, tend to show a natural aptitude for the profession?
4. What advantage does the student who has received a thorough training, scientific and practical, have over the man who "picks up" his profession?

5. Is there at present any difference in favor of the thoroughly educated professional man which did not formerly exist?

6. What facilities are offered by your department for giving the training required in the profession?

7. What preparation would you recommend to young men intending to enter your department?

8. Will you please add any general considerations which occur to you.

From the answers to these inquiries and from other sources has been prepared this pamphlet, which it is hoped may be of use to the public.

ANDREW D. WHITE

Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., March, 1884.

ARCHITECTURE.

DOWN to a recent period trained architects in our country were few; but with increased wealth and improving civilization has come a demand for the application of the science and art of architecture to buildings of every sort. It is felt to be not enough that the public building or dwelling or store be fairly convenient; it must satisfy the growing desire for beauty of proportion, adjustment of parts, fitness of material, legitimacy of decoration. More and more we are learning that a building erected by a true architect will grow more beautiful and valuable for generations, while a building erected by a sham architect will soon be an incubus. Our people are laying out millions on millions in buildings which within thirty years—in the advance of taste and knowledge—will be eye-sores and must come down. Every month we hear of some architectural failure that costs life and treasure. To-day it is a church floor which gives way, and a multitude of children are taken from the ruins mangled and dead; to-morrow it is a whole city quarter swept away by fire, because some half-taught architects knew no other way of producing architectural effect than by piling up combustible ornaments on inaccessible roofs. More and more the idea is forcing its way that men are wanted in this profes-

sion who have scientifically informed themselves regarding the best materials, who can calculate their strength in construction, who can combine material and construction according to the eternal laws of symmetry and beauty and not according to some petty passing fashion.

Hence has arisen a great and increasing demand for thoroughly trained architects in the myriads of towns throughout our Union; at present, though the opportunities are so great, the number of such architects is small.

In establishing the Department of Architecture the Cornell University has had the foregoing facts constantly in view. In the course laid down the endeavor has been to ground students thoroughly in the principles of architecture as a science, and in its historical development as an art, in the application of facts and principles to meet various needs, in the best practical construction, on one hand, and the best means of satisfying the love of beauty, on the other.

To this end there has been accumulated for the use of the department probably the largest and most complete architectural library in the country, beside a collection of over three thousand carefully selected photographs, external and internal, of the most important buildings in civilized nations, a large collection of drawings and models illustrating every department of actual construction, and a collection of samples of building and decorative materials, natural and artificial. The constructive side is illustrated by models showing the best methods and combinations in stone, wood, and iron; the decorative side, by everything obtainable which could be of use in developing a sense of architectural beauty. The latest addition to these means of illustration is a large collection of casts of the most beautiful Gothic sculpture in England.

As to natural aptitudes, an interest in art, and especially in art as connected with construction, whether developed before entering college or after, is very significant.

As to preparation, close attention to the required studies laid down in the University Register is all that is absolutely demanded ; but general reading, during leisure hours, in the history of the leading nations, especially in connection with their art development, and of the biographies of their greatest artists, has often proved a valuable stimulus.

As regards the attractions of the profession, the position of a successful architect is of course socially high. Touching, as he does, both the industrial and the artistic sides of society, he has peculiar advantages as to acquaintance and influence. While he is on the one hand brought into contact with business interests, he touches on the other the domain of the artist, so that his life is better worth living than that of many about him.

As to the process of getting into the active ranks of the profession, it is doubtless rendered somewhat slow by the great number of young men imperfectly prepared ; still there is a very large demand for good draughtsmen in architects' offices ; and, in the position of draughtsman, a young man thoroughly well-grounded and prepared will soon show the qualities which insure rapid advancement.