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Reports and Memoranda, 1892, 1893, 1898, 1901?

WARE MC14

ASSISTANTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE.

MEMORANDUM. Jan. 28, 1892.

When first this department was established, the classes being few and small, I had no need of a permanent assistant, and President Barnard agreed with me that such auxiliaries as might from time to time prove necessary had best be obtained by personal arrangement with myself, under his approval, without the formality of an appointment by the Trustees. I was not prepared to recommend any one, without trial, for a permanent ~~position, and if classes were to be held only temporarily, the less~~ the official recognition the easier would it be to vacate them. This worked extremely well and I was able to try a number of promising, though in the end disappointing, experiments, without exciting undue expectations, such as official recognition could not have failed to excite, and to close the connection abruptly when it proved necessary to do so, without embarrassment. Under this arrangement the annual appropriation was gradually increased from \$1,000 in the year 1882-83 to \$2,500 in 1886-87, this covering the cost of all kinds of personal service, including the care of the collections and the making of diagrams, as well as aid in the class-room or in the drawing academy.

In the year 1887, however, I was glad to terminate this

state of things, so far at least as concerned Mr. Hamlin, whose functions had now become so important as to deserve recognition and who was made an Instructor. But the appropriation was cut down to \$1,000, and except for Mr. Schermerhorn's contribution of \$2,000 a year for two years our work would have been badly crippled. This seasonable benefaction enabled us not only to retain Mr. Hamlin in our service, but also Mr. Shorman, who had been made a Fellow in 1837, and an Assistant in 1838, and Mr. Kress. Coming in at first as a draughtsman and man of all work, he had now made himself, by ^{the} familiarity with the collections which he had gained, and his diligent studies in architectural history, an indispensable coadjutor. When I went abroad in 1839, I was glad to recommend him also, as well as Mr. Snelling, who needed no apprenticeship to assure me of his value, for official recognition. A year later my hesitation about presenting Mr. Harri- man's name was entirely removed by the admirable work he had done during my absence.

But neither he nor Mr. Kress, who count among our chief successes, could have found place in our service, if it had not been practicable to try their quality and to train them up to usefulness, in an obscure and subordinate position, from which they could have been at any moment dismissed as easily as we dismissed those other nameless ones who were our failures.

There is a great deal of work to be done in the department, keeping things in order, getting out illustrations and putting them away again, marking diagrams, cataloguing the collections, supervising the beginners and correcting drawings and manuscripts, which is done to best advantage by persons in this unofficial position, who can be paid according to the work they actually do, and can reserve as much time as they choose for their own studies or work. This arrangement seems to have all the advantages of the former Tutorial Fellowships, without their disadvantages. It permits us, moreover, to employ a larger number of persons than would otherwise be practicable and thus secures the advantage of having a different man for each task. Where one man has three or four things to attend to, the least urgent will always be pushed to the wall. At the present moment under this arrangement, Mr. J. D. Sherman, a sophomore in the School of Arts, besides spending two hours a day dispensing drawing materials to the students upon which he makes a moderate profit, gives an hour to keeping our books and photographs in order. Mr. Totten, who is studying for the degree of Master of Arts, gives nine hours a week to supervision of the Second Year men at their drawings boards, and six to service in the Library. Mr. H. N. Hooper, who was last year in the First Year but had to leave the school for lack of means, divides his time between

personal services to myself and miscellaneous tasks in the department. The work of making a card catalogue of the contents of the library, which has been for some time in progress, occupies the rest of his time and that of one or two of the students who have a little leisure on their hands, are in need of money, and are competent to do the work. But the cost of this catalogue is defrayed by Mr. Schermerhorn, who has assumed the charge of completing it.

The special appropriation for "Assistance" having been discontinued, the cost of these personal services now comes out of the appropriation for Supplies.

MEMORANDUM, IN REGARD TO

SPECIAL STUDENTS.

April, 1893.

Of the four men who two years ago were admitted to the Course in Architecture as Special Students, by vote of the Trustees, one gave only an interrupted attendance, his private affairs proving more exacting than he had expected. A second, a Civil and Sanitary Engineer, worked diligently through the year gaining just what he desired. The other two are still in the School. One of them, a physician, had already in the College of Physicians & Surgeons pursued the studies in Chemistry, Physics & Hygiene taken by our men, and in the two years since May, 1891 has, by working diligently through the two summer vacations, managed to do all the other work of the four years course with credit and distinction. At the end of the present term he will have done all the work of the course and passed all the required examinations, and I shall ask the Faculty to recommend him to the Trustees for a degree along with the men of the Fourth Year class with whom he has been associated.

The fourth has in like manner distinguished himself, constantly standing first in the work he has undertaken. He has now made up all the work of the first three years of the course and proposes to join the Fourth Year class in October, as a Regular Student and to take his degree with the class in the following June.

These results amply justify the course of the Trustees in granting to these men exceptional opportunities .

The establishment of University Courses in Architecture, in May, 1891, opened the way for Special Students of an advanced type, graduates of Colleges or of Scientific Schools, or other persons qualified to pursue the prescribed University work in History, Design, Scientific Construction, or Practice. Three students presented themselves in October, 1891, for the regular University Course in History & Design and took the degree of Master of Arts last June. Two others came as Special Students in the same course. One of them fell ill, & had to leave, but the other remained through the year, much to his satisfaction and to our own. Though not a College graduate he had had four or five years experience in office work and was fully qualified to pursue these advanced studies. This year a dozen others, besides the young man whose ill health interrupted his studies last year, have been received on the same footing, and three others have come as Special Students in the University Course in Construction and Practice now first organized. Of these sixteen men seven are college graduates, the others with one exception have had from three to five years training in the practical work of the profession.

As was to be expected, these sixteen men have, without an exception, been serious and diligent workers. Most of them, whatever their practical accomplishments, proved to be extremely uninformed in the things taught to our classes. But these were just the things they had felt the need of and had come to us to get, and they have made rapid progress in them, making the most of the privilege accorded them of occupying time not required for their special studies with any

thing else taught in the department which they could take to advantage. Their own special work has varied, according to their special attainments.

The provision that such students may attend the school for brief periods, of two months at a time, was intended to meet the case of skilful draughtsmen, temporarily unemployed, whose presence in our classes would be equally advantageous to them and to us. It is too soon to say whether any number of young men are likely to take advantage of this privilege. But as it occasions no special inconvenience and may be the means of bringing in a class of men whom it is very desirable to have in the school and to whom the school will be of unmistakable benefit, it will be well to give this experiment a longer trial. But the fee for each period of two months, which has been set at twenty dollars seems too small, and in the draft of the new Circular of Attendance is set at thirty dollars, subject to the approval of the Trustees.

The presence in the department of older men who have already had a practical training in the profession, but have found that a practical training failed to give them what they most need to know, cannot fail to have a salutary effect upon the tone of the school, and their attendance is to be encouraged quite as much on our account as on their own.

It is a recognition of the value of our work of the most practical & authoritative kind. Our men are apt to think that their historical and theoretical studies, however valuable & interesting in point of personal culture, are of but secondary importance compared with the lessons of practical life, to which they are impatiently looking forward. It is a

wholesome corrective of these views to find men who have learned all that an office can teach turning to the school to get what they find after all to be most essential.

Five of them came from the city, four more from other parts of the state, two from Virginia, two from Ohio, and one each from Connecticut, Vermont, Illinois, Wisconsin & Maryland.

May 1. 1843.

Feb. 15 - 98.

(v. Apr. 1893.)

REPORT ON SPECIAL STUDENTS IN THE
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE.

The scheme adopted in 1891 by which draughtsmen of three or four years experience were admitted as University or Post Graduate Students in the Department of Architecture, on the same footing as graduates of Colleges and Scientific Schools, should I think now be modified in the light of these six years' experience.

In the main, the scheme has worked well. Besides eighteen College Graduates, sixty-six professional draughtsmen have been in attendance for periods varying from two months to three years, most of them spending at least a year in the school, and nearly thirty staying two years. Six have finally joined the regular fourth year class and taken their degree in due course. These Special Students have, for the most part, proved to be men of proved ability and experience, and I am convinced, as I took occasion to say in a paper on the subject published last summer in the School of Mines Quarterly, that it is a sound policy to encourage the attendance of such men. Their presence palpably raises the character of the School, and it is only in such students that we can hope to find the maturity of character and the professional skill and experience which are needed to enable men really to profit by the exceptional advantages of our position. At present the museums and libraries, and the buildings, public and private, by which we are surrounded, and which themselves constitute an Architectural Museum of priceless value, are

of comparatively ~~not~~ little service. Most of our students are not old enough nor far enough advanced to study them profitably.

Moreover while most of our regular students come from this city and its immediate neighborhood, as is the case in the College and in the other professional schools, sixty per cent of our Special Students come from other ^AStates, mostly in the West and South, as against thirty-three per cent in the Medical School, twenty per cent in the Law School, eleven per cent in the Schools ^{of} ~~and~~ ~~Minas~~ Applied Science, and eight per cent in the College. It is plain that our best chance of gathering students from the country at large is by encouraging the attendance of this class of men.

In some respects, however, things have not worked just as was expected. I had supposed that men of this maturity and experience would be able to take part without difficulty in the University Courses in History and Design, which are identical with the work of the Fourth Year, which is also of a Post Graduate character. But though they have all taken part in the Historical studies, and have done so with profit, not a single man has presented himself, whatever his age and experience, who has been ready for our fourth year work in Design. They have had to begin with the Third or Second year work, and even that, in many cases, only after some weeks' practice in the work of the ^{first} first year.

As it has thus become plain that the country does not, at present, furnish students for really post graduate

work, so that the present requirements can, accordingly, be only half met, I would propose that these students be hereafter received not as University Students but on the footing of the Special Students who, as the Circular of Information says, may be received for reasons of weight, and that three or four years of professional experience shall be held to be a sufficiently weighty reason in each case. X

The Statutes require that such students shall pay Fifteen dollars a year for every hour during the week spent in the lecture or recitation rooms, and Twenty-five dollars for the use of the Drawing Academy, with the provision that the total fee for men not candidates for a degree shall not exceed One hundred and fifty dollars for any one year.

The provision that our Special Students may attend for briefer periods than one term, coming for two months at a time, has proved a beneficial one and should be continued. The position of a professional draughtsman at the beginning of his career is a precarious one, depending upon the condition of business, and the less well trained among them are constantly liable to find themselves with several months of enforced leisure on their hands. It is a great advantage to such men, and it is no inconvenience to us, for them to join our classes in Design for two or four months at a time, taking up the current problems and doing such other work as they may be qualified to take part in, thus turning their misfortune to serious profit. X

If the fee for each period of two months were set

to such how a work of recitation or lectures,

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at six dollars for the use of the Drawing Academy and four dollars, at forty dollars, ~~instead of thirty as at present~~, it would be conformable to ~~the maximum fee of \$150. which the rules establish~~ ^{for Special Students in the other courses.} ~~The fee of thirty dollars seems to be sufficient so long as it gave access only to the limited range of subjects formerly taught in the department, but now that this range is extended, the larger fee is appropriate.~~

This arrangement would preserve all the advantages of the present scheme while availing its more exceptional features, and would conform to the general rule laid down for Special Students in the other departments except in authorizing briefer periods of attendance and in defining the qualifications for admission.

It is an interesting circumstance, as I have elsewhere pointed out, that the existence of these men in the school side by side with the regular students enables us to try the experiment of conducting, along with our present curriculum, a freer system of study. These special students, like the students in ~~the~~ ^a European university, ~~xxx~~ study whatever subjects they wish in whatever order they are prepared to take them up, the only requirement being that they should ^{all} be qualified to pursue them to advantage and shall take the regular examinations at the conclusion of the study. The two methods go on harmoniously together and each is contributing in a somewhat different field towards the ~~xxx~~ growth and development of our undertakings.

Of the fourteen Special Students now in the Department four are taking twelve hours a week, besides the time spent in the Drawing Academy, and the others, eleven, ten, nine, eight and seven, as against fourteen hours taken by the Regular Students.

Feb. 15, 1898.

These men, under the regulations now proposed, would pay, for a whole year, \$200.00, \$184.00, \$168.50, \$152.00, \$136.00, respectively, instead of \$120.00 as at present.

Letter to IV Year Class Circular
W. R. W.

New York, June 25th., 1898.

I shall be glad to receive from you presently a line saying what you will take as the subject of your Summer Work, or Memoir, so that it may be "approved in advance", as the programme requires. The selection of your subject must be left pretty much to yourself, since it must depend mainly on your own preferences and must be controlled in part by the circumstances in which you find yourself during the summer. If you are within reach of books or can take them with you, a critical or historical topic will probably be most convenient. If you can find several books that purport to cover the same ground, and then compare their views and statements, that would be very instructive. The critical study of some special building, either from the building itself or from books and photographs, would be equally serviceable. Either of these might take a practical turn, if you are so situated as to make it practicable. In either case sketches illustrating the text are as serviceable in explaining the subject to yourself as in explaining it to your readers. Another excellent procedure is to study the works of some particular architect, or of some special period.

This is the third time that the Fourth Year Summer Work has taken this form, and the experience of the two preceding years

seems to show that more serious and valuable results can be obtained in this way than in any other.

But, as I think I have explained to the Class, the chief reason for requiring a written essay of considerable length, illustrated with sketches, instead of drawings alone, is that similar papers are to constitute a part (and by no means the least important part) of the Winter's work, and as this is a kind of work that can hardly be undertaken with satisfaction or accomplished with success unless one has had some previous practice in it, it seems as if the best use that can be made of the summer is to obtain this practice.

These Winter essays have greatly improved in quality since this Summer preparation has formed part of the programme, and each year has shown a distinct advance over the last, so that there is every encouragement to believe that the scheme is a good one, and indeed one of the most useful in the School. Still the results have not yet come up to the full measure of the opportunity. The opportunity indeed is almost unique. The Fourth Year is virtually a Post-Graduate Year, and while the daytime is given to Drawing and Design, uninterrupted by lectures and recitations, the evenings, from October to June, are left free for the prosecution of any studies that the experience of the three previous years have given you an interest in. Moreover, you have at hand in the Avery Library, in our own collections, in the unrivalled resources of the

Metropolitan Museum, and in the innumerable buildings that extend from Harlem to the Battery, aids to study of inestimable service which really no class of men but yourselves are in a position to profit by. Nobody else has the education, the training and the leisure. Some of these opportunities can of course be taken advantage of only by day, but that can easily be arranged. We have really the best environment in the world in many respects, and it is our ambition, as it is to your advantage, that the Fourth Year shall be so spent as to make the most and best of it. There seems no reason why it should not be as fruitful a season as any climate can offer. When you come back in the Autumn, accordingly, I shall hope that you will bring with you not only the results of your Summer leisure and diligence, but a well considered scheme for the diligent leisure of the Winter.

I hear on every side from those best qualified to speak that if we really make the most of our opportunities, we shall presently have as good a school as any in the world, turning out men as skillful and as well informed as any, and, it is to be hoped, with the cultivated taste and sound judgment which the profession needs, and which only such a liberal course of study as our own can give. Each Class seems to me to get a step nearer to this, and thereby to make the School a better and more profitable place to be in for their having been in it.

1901²

ARCHITECTURE.

The work done in all the classes has been of rather better quality this last year than heretofore, and some changes in the arrangement and in the character of the studies have contributed to its improvement. In the first year, some weeks ~~are~~^{were} given in the Spring to measuring and drawing out buildings in the City, with very satisfactory results, and the eighteen highly finished drawings made by the eighteen members of the class have now been hung up in the First Year Drafting Room as an example and incentive to their successors.

In the Second Year, under the name of Architectural Essays, we have introduced as part of the regular work, the writing of descriptions of buildings from photographs and making drawings from these descriptions, the papers being interchanged among the members of the class. This forms an interesting and instructive exercise, as in this way one or two hundred buildings are analyzed, described, and drawn out in the course of ^{the} year.

The concentration of all the work in practical construction in the Third Year instead of extending it through three years as hitherto, and thus bringing it into immediate relation with the instruction of Architectural Engineering, has made it practicable to introduce a series of exercises in which practical and scientific

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instruction both come in play, mutually illustrating each other. This is a distinct gain.

In the Fourth Year, the study of the human figure has been given more prominence, by the introduction of exercises in drawing from the life, and both in this and in the previous years, some practice in Architectural Modelling has been instituted.

The courses of instruction remain the same except that during the Spring the University Course in Design was slightly extended in range so as to make it more distinctly a Post Graduate Course, leading to the degree of Master of Arts. It is hoped that the offer of advanced instruction in Design may be attractive both to our own graduates and to those of other schools, and ^{will} ~~the fact~~ attract a number of men who have time and means to pursue such advanced studies but are not in position to pursue them abroad. Already, although those of our own students who have returned to the school after graduation, have taken our advanced work in Engineering rather than ⁱⁿ Design, a large number of ~~professional~~ draftsmen of mature age and of considerable professional experience, have ^{come into} ~~joined~~ our classes as ^{special} students, and many of them have finally joined the Fourth Year class and graduated in due course.

It is now twenty years since the school ^{was} ~~is~~ founded, the first class graduating in 1884. There have been altogether two hundred and three graduates, eighty three of whom are now in the independent

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practice of ^{their} ~~that~~ profession. About two hundred others, have been in the school for a shorter time, of whom eighty have been Special Students. These, ~~as~~ ^{who take partial work because they are} has been said, are not young men, such as sometimes go by this name, too ignorant to pass ~~our~~ ^{the entrance} examination, but men of ^{such} ~~young~~ age and ~~professional~~ experience that they can be admitted upon their ~~own~~ strength of their professional record to take such studies as they ^{are} ~~have~~ found qualified to pursue.

The ^{travelling} Fellowships open to graduates of the school continue to be a source of great satisfaction. They confer a benefit not only upon the one or two capable and fortunate men who carry off the prize, but also to all the competitors, affording them an opportunity for serious academic studies as if in a Post Graduate school. The more men take part in them, the more good they do, and it is ~~affording extreme~~ accordingly extremely gratifying to find the number of competitors constantly increasing. This year thirty men entered the lists for the McKim Fellowship, nearly a third part of the number of graduates within the limit of age prescribed by the Statutes.

Ten of these who ^{were} ~~are~~ pursuing their studies in Paris, were enabled conveniently to take part in the competition, by the courtesy of ^{M.} Jean Henry Duray, who ^{has for a number of years} hospitably allowed ^{them} the use of his atelier, ^{or when} ~~during a number of years~~ for making their preparatory sketches. In acknowledgement of these amenities, the Trustees

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This year
have sent to Monsieur Duray a portfolio containing a dozen large photographs of the University Buildings and of the rooms occupied by the School of Architecture, with a letter of thanks and acknowledgment.

An agreeable incident of the year has been that we ^{have} ourselves been able to extend a similar courtesy to the Society of Beaux-Arts Architects. This Society, consisting of Members of the Profession, in New York and elsewhere, who have studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, maintain throughout the year a series of competitions in Design among draftsmen in offices. It would be difficult to exaggerate the value of the work thus accomplished for capable young men, ~~and~~ ambitious of improvement, but ~~were~~ not in position to avail themselves of the training given in the professional schools. Finding that the Society was somewhat to seek for a suitable place in which to assemble its students for the making of their preliminary sketches, we were glad to offer them ^{the} hospitality of our Drafting Room, and, it was gratifying to find, they were equally glad to accept it. They have already four or five times availed themselves of ^{it} ~~the~~ opportunity, and on the last occasion more than forty competitors were in attendance. As these competitions are held on Saturday afternoon, they cause us no possible inconvenience, and it is a very great satisfaction to be able thus to lend a hand to the generous and public spirited enterprises of the Society, and thus to estab-

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and in which it has no competitors,

lish relations with an educational enterprise which occupying a field distinct from our own, is actuated by similar motives and seeks similar ends. We are glad thus to make personal acquaintance with their work and to have the Society and their pupils ^{have} ~~take~~ this opportunity of seeing just what we ourselves are doing.