

P R E F A C E.

“WHETHER successful or not, it seems well worth while that an attempt should be made to interest the Public in Indian Architectural art; first, because the artist and architect will certainly acquire broader and more varied views of their art by its study than they can acquire from any other source. More than this, any one who masters the subject sufficiently to be able to understand their art in its best and highest forms, will rise from the study, with a kindlier feeling towards the nations of India, and a higher—certainly a correcter—appreciation of their social status than could be obtained from their literature, or from anything that now exists in their anomalous social and political position.” (Fergusson's *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, preface).

“The natives of India long ago found out that it is not temples and palaces alone that are capable of ornamental treatment, but that everything which man makes, may become beautiful, provided the hand of taste be guided by sound judgment, and that the architect never forgets what the object is, and never conceals the constructive exigencies of the building itself. It is simply this inherent taste and love of beauty, which the natives seem always to have possessed, which enables any-one to work successfully in any age and under any conditions.” (Fergusson, p. 487).

Photography has done much to make us acquainted with the general character of the magnificent buildings which are to be found in many parts of India, and the Archæological Department has done something in preparing plans of ancient buildings and in producing plates for archæological purposes, and individuals here and there have made sketches, but it is believed no regular attempt has yet been made to produce any collection of architectural details in such a shape as would be of *practical* use to the architect and the artizan.

The Indian Public Works Department, as a body, has not hitherto been successful in its architectural efforts, and all who take an interest in architecture, and who know what vast stores of material lie scattered over the land, must regret the poverty of design and detail which, as a rule, characterises modern buildings in this country. Take any simple building—such as a sentry box, for instance—and see how it is treated by the Public Works Department, and compare it with the graceful little domes which surmount the battlements of an old native fortress. Not only do they charm the eye at a distance, but on looking closer one sees the stone plinth with its carved base and coping, and its cutstone pillars which do not obstruct the view, and its deep projecting eaves to shelter the soldier on duty, and protect him from sun and rain. In some cases expense may be the cause, but too often this is not the case. It does not cost much more to break a wall surface up into ornamental panels than it does to build it solid. Standard plans are too often produced, and buildings are erected by men who have no sympathy with Oriental architecture, men who have never made any attempt to take advantage of the architectural wealth which is scattered around, and hence the poverty of design, especially in details, and the stereotyped conventionalities which destroy all individuality, and characterise most of the buildings raised by Anglo-Indians.

Few men in India have the time or opportunity to make for themselves a collection of architectural studies, nor is it likely that the opportunity will again occur of erecting any buildings so grand as those we see around us; noble specimens, it is true, but designed to meet the requirements of an age that has passed. Still there is no reason why the details which everywhere meet the eye, so full of vigour, so graceful and so true in outline, and so rich in design, should not be made use of in modern buildings.

It is not pretended that this collection is anything like exhaustive; it has been compiled mostly during leisure hours, chiefly from works in or near Delhi and Agra and parts of Rajputana, and does not attempt to deal with other parts of India. The drawings have all been carefully done, and have been arranged together in parts,—each sheet loose—so that different examples of architectural details may be compared and selections readily made. The plates have been reproduced to a large scale with the hope that they will be found not only, as studies, interesting to the student, but chiefly as *working drawings* for the architect and artizan. Many of the designs can be used in wood, in stone, or in metal, as well as in wall decoration; and if the work proves generally useful, the object with which it has been prepared will be fulfilled. In any case, one object will have been secured; that is, putting these designs on record. Many of the patterns—notably those on the old doors in the Amber Palace (Part III)—are, even now, scarcely recognisable; the wood work is rapidly decaying, and in a few years will probably perish altogether; and yet a reference to them will shew how beautiful and how varied many of these patterns are, and how far they excel much that is seen in wood carving of the present day. To rescue such designs from oblivion and give them new life is worth something.

It is some years since the idea occurred of making this collection, and it was hoped that Surgeon-Major F. W. A. de Fabeck, late of the Bengal Medical Service—who at that time was Principal of the School of Art at Jeypore, and took an interest in the scheme,—would have been able to enrich the collection with freehand sketches. Unfortunately, circumstances prevented this, but as the lads who made these drawings received their first lessons under Dr. de Fabeck, it is a pleasant duty to acknowledge how much is due to him. Special thanks also are due to Mr. H. Cousens, of the Archæological Department of Western India, who, at Dr. Burgess's suggestion, kindly allowed some of the draftsmen from Jeypore to attend his office at Poona for three months in 1887, and who personally taught them how to prepare the drawings, and freely rendered valuable help. Thanks are also due to many friends for advice and encouragement kindly given, especially to Sir Edward Buck, K.B., Secretary to the Government of India; Jas. Burgess, LL.D., C.I.E., late Director-General of the Archæological Department, for the interest he has shewn and the help given from time to time; Mr. C. Purdon Clarke, C.I.E.; Dr. T. H. Hendley, Surgeon Lieut.-Colonel, Jeypore; and others.

The compiler undertook the work at first at his own expense, but as the collection increased the expenditure became greater, and had it not been for the liberality of H.H. the Maharaja Sawai Madhu Singh of Jeypore, and the support of his minister Babu Kanthi Chandra Mookharjee, Rao Bahadur, it is probable the work would never have been completed. Much credit also is due to Lala Ram Bakhsh, head draftsman and teacher in the Jeypore School of Art, for the trouble he has taken to insure accuracy, and the interest he has shewn in the work from first to last.

The lads who have been employed in preparing the drawings are all natives of Jeypore, trained first in the School of Art, and then in the office of the Executive Engineer.

Acknowledgment is due to Mr. W. Griggs, Elm House, Hanover Street, Peckham, London, for the great assistance received, and for the interest and trouble he has taken in reproducing the drawings. It is unnecessary to say more, as the work speaks for itself.

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1894.

S. S. JACOB, Colonel.
Engineer to the Jeypore State.

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