result is, that on the approach of wet weather, this wall, like the old barometer, a piece of sea-weed, is always damp, and throws out particles of salt. The injury done to the Duke of Wellington's books at Walmer Castle through the use of sea-sand in the walls forming the library, has been often mentioned.

A distinguished engineering officer, writing to us on the subject, says :—" When I was a very young officer I had charge of building a Martello tower, and of improving the quarters of the governor of a small fishing town. The mason, contrary to my directions, used salt water for the mortar, as fresh water was scarce, and one of the principal rooms in the governor's house was stuccoed partly with salt water, or with mortar made of sea-sand, I forget which. The result was, the tower was always damp, and the appearance of the room was spoiled because the paint was in blotches."

An architect much engaged on the coast writes us as follows :—" There can be but one opinion about the effect of salt-water-sand in mortar or plastering. The atmosphere acts on it, as far as I know, for centuries, certainly to my own knowledge of walls of fifty years' standing. No paint, colour, or paper will stand without discolouration."

A practical man now holding a responsible position under a government commission says :—

" As regards the use of sea-sand for mortar, I have used sea-sand for mortar on the Kentish coast. For hydraulic building, coarse sea-sand makes a most excellent mortar ; but for house-building sea-sand of any sort is ill-adapted, on account of the salt which it contains causing the mortar to be always in a *sweaty* state. The degree of moisture varies with the dampness of the atmosphere. Like salt itself, sea-sand readily imbibes and retains moisture. Its use, therefore, cannot be recommended. Thorough washing with clean *fresh* water will remove much of the salt from it, but cannot altogether do so."

One of the commissioners appointed to select stone for the Houses of Parliament, replied to us thus when we asked his opinion :— " I consider sea-sand for mortar would be objectionable to a certain extent, under *any* circumstances, if dampness is to be avoided. Supposing all other things to be equal, an addition of salt, however small, will prevent the mortar ever attaining the same degree of induration which it would have done had no salt been introduced."

The corporation surveyor of one of our sea-coast towns replied to our inquiry in these words :—" I am so convinced of the injurious properties of sea-sand as to induce me always to put a clause in my specifications precluding its use, *either washed or unwashed*, under a heavy forfeiture. If unwashed, there is no doubt but that the work in which it is used will always be more or less damp ; and I could give you an instance of the same result, when, as I believe, the sand was washed."

The case which we stated at the beginning of these remarks, or something like it, took us, professionally, to Edinburgh, and is still *sub judice*. It may be regarded by our readers, however, as hypothetical, and is placed before them simply as involving questions which may be usefully considered. Even if it could be proved that sea-sand were as *good* as pit-sand, and that no evil *could* arise from its use, the substitution of it, in the face of such a stipulation as that we have cited, would be a breach of contract, and would prevent the builder from recovering payment, if nothing more. If a builder contract to erect a dwelling-house, he can have no right to recover for building a chapel in lieu. But, by the use of sea-sand, we are satisfied a risk is incurred, even under the most favourable circumstances, of a very serious nature,—such a risk as no builder should be allowed to subject his employer to with impunity.

ON THE STYLE OF THE RENAISSANCE AND ITS ADOPTION IN ENGLAND.*

THE subject of the following remarks is one which, until recently, has neither been revered nor esteemed. The style of the " Renaissance " it has been too fashionable to consider merely as the factious usurper of the dominion of pointed architecture, and the author of the debased atrocities which sprung up in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But the uncharitable exclusiveness which would centre in one style, and in one only, all beauty, completeness, fitness, and propriety, but ill accords with the temper of the nineteenth century, and those must now be regarded as illiberal, if not insane, who can laugh at the accessory decorations which were practised by Angelo, superintended by Raffaelle, studied by Julio Romano, and adored by Cellini. Such names might be sufficient to impart to any style, or modification of style in art, an archæological and historical interest, but it will be my object to show, in as few words as possible, that the style of the Renaissance, with all its inconsistencies, is from its innate merits entitled to our sympathy, and worthy of our most careful attention. The feelings of man have been the same in every age and climate. The power of wealth, the machinery of commerce, the acknowledgment of hereditary distinction, the craving after novelty, tempered by reverence for antiquity, and, above all, the sacred influence of religion, guided his actions, and displayed themselves in his productions as palpably in the land of the Pharaohs as they have since done in the countries of Europe. But a variety of circumstances have ever been incessantly at work, actuating each performance of literature and art, and in the latter department exchanging in time the hovel for the parthenon, the clay memorial for the pyramid, and the catacomb for the cathedral. The same circumstances which produced alterations upon the face of society upon so grand a scale, affected in their minute ramifications the principles upon which every scheme was conducted. Architecture, the most important of the arts, since all others depend upon it, and tend to its perfection, has therefore always moved ; progressing or retrograding with the spirit of the times ; and its details, now ennobled by civilization, and now shaded by barbarism, have fluctuated according to the influences I have pointed out, as acting upon them in concert. One style succeeds another sometimes rapidly, at others by slow and imperceptible gradations ; and an unvarying law of change governs the artistic as certainly as it does the physical world. The history of inorganic matter is indeed but an extension of the history of mind and its results.

" Not only," says Professor Ansted, " is part of the earth's surface carried from one place and deposited in another by every dash of the never-tiring wave, and every drop that falls in the form of rain, but there is a constant tendency in the parts below the surface to rearrange themselves in some other *order*—to obtain an equilibrium which is no sooner obtained than it is lost. All nature is thus animated : the sea is never so quiet, the air is never so calm, the earth is never so fixed, but that these silent and invisible, but appreciable changes still go on." And the world has seen gradually merge from the most primitive forms, the Egyptian temple, decorated with every portion of the papyrus, and diapered as it were with symbolism, succeeded by the majestic Grecian, again by the less chaste erections of the eternal city, the wonders of mediæval intricacy, and the revival of antique taste, the style of the Renaissance. Through the whole of this long series, each successive edifice has been marked by the characteristic of change, of departure from the past and anticipation of the future ; and moreover, every change has taken its origin from habits, introduced ceremonies of religion, or circumstances over which man has no control. It is impossible for any other agency to effect such change, or that it should be effected by individual caprice or the probably well-intended efforts of a particular clique. From a conviction of the truth of this fact, confirmed as it is by every thing which can be brought to bear upon the subject, we smile at the dreams of those French enthusiasts who desired that the reign of each of their sovereigns should represent a fresh school of architecture and decorative art, and more recently at the still prouder pretensions of Felix Summerly.

But to continue the illustrations from nature : " Large tracts of land are being now upheaved, and others are depressed. But a few years, and what is now a flat coast line may present a steep cliff ; and large tracts of land now above the water may then be submerged." Land, after having been submerged, may sleep for ages beneath the bosom of the ocean, and again appear above it ; but it will be in a new form, composed of a different substance, peopled with a new order of inhabitants, and presenting shells and plants of different species from those which formerly occupied the same position. Precisely similar is the case with reference to the history of art. A style may be revived, but the revival is no longer the same style as that which it imitates ; it exists under different circumstances (under a new form of Government and a new theory of political liberty), or it may be under a new creed of devotion—influences deep and powerful, wherever they may act, but eminently so upon architecture, which, seen by the popular mind, dares not sin against it.

Such a revival was that which sprung up in Italy in the fifteenth century, extending its sway step by step over the then civilised world. But fully to appreciate its importance and magnitude, it is necessary to glance back at the state of Europe at that remarkable period, whereby it will be found that the style in question was in perfect harmony with the spirit of the times ; that every impulse of the newly free-breathing world tended to foster and cherish it ; and that every fresh idea in philosophy or discovery in science was calculated to give it deeper root.

During the middle ages, the Gothic style reigned supreme in Europe. It had been established, as it were, for a perpetuity of existence. Its most trifling details were adapted for their purpose ; and it seemed as though the religion of Christianity could by no possibility exist without it. But strange to say, in the fountain of the religious world,—in Italy,—it never became thoroughly naturalised. In being introduced into the south, it was " transferred to sun and soil not native to it," and the consequence was, that it was there silently withering at the same time that other countries were tending it with the most lavish care, and expending upon its culture all the magnificence of centralized wealth and the skill of a complete and elaborate system of true freemasonry. It never gained in Italy a firm hold, and any reason for exchanging it for a more congenial style was greeted with applause. The schools of painting were beginning, in consequence of the increase of classical learning and extension of the study of anatomy, to deviate from the beaten track which had been trodden for centuries, and to impart to subjects of the Madonna,—sometimes, perhaps, at the sacrifice of solemnity,—a purer outline, a bolder character of drawing, and a more natural colouring than had ever before been exhibited. Such a marked improvement partly owed its origin to the statues of Greek and Roman antiquity, which, buried for ages, were now carefully exhumed, having grown in public estimation since the days of Petrarch. The struggle, therefore, of the popular mind was between the relics of pagan beauty, which every day was bringing to light, and impressions based upon the artistic development of its own religion. The invention of printing now circulated information at a comparatively cheap rate, granting to every one an opportunity of joining in the battle of opinion, while a majority of the people, surrounded by the splendid monuments of ancient Rome, exhi-

* The following paper was read at a meeting of the Freemasons of the Church on the 11th inst., Mr. French in the chair.

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