

THESIS.

AN ATHENEUM FOR A CITY.

George Edwin Bergstrom,

Course IV.

AN ATHENEUM FOR A CITY.

Atheneum is a word which has come to us unchanged from the Latin, and its origin and symbolism are entirely Greek. Athene was the tutelary deity of Athens, and, as Athens was the center of Greek culture and art, so Athene was the goddess of knowledge, arts, and sciences. Her temple was the Atheneum, the meeting-place of the wise and of the learned. The significance of the idea was grasped by the Romans, and, though Athene became Minerva, the Atheneum remained in its original function. Hadrian broadened the term by founding an "Atheneum", an institution for the promotion of literary and scientific studies. It is this conception which has come down to modern times; and an Atheneum, as we define it, is "an institution for the encouragement of literature and art, often possessing a library for the use of those entitled to its privileges".

Great meetings are a factor of our time, and as time and distance continue to be lessened, more and more will these increase. Societies are multiplied, with members scattered far and near. The meetings of some of these bodies are of great importance, and cities, mindful of their material advantages, are welcoming them.

This gives the cue to the problem. The City wishes to accommodate her guests in a worthy fashion. She desires a building

befitting its future use and worthy of her own importance, wherein these societies of learning may come together.

The site chosen is fortunate. Not inconveniently far from the business portion, yet far enough to ensure a quiet retreat, is a public park of many acres, of which the landscape artists are forming a beautiful garden. Near the center rises a gently sloping hill, the top of which is reached by elm-arched drives and footpaths. To the south is a river, at this point almost as broad as a lake. Upon this elevation the City proposes to build the Atheneum.

That the building should be Greek in spirit is apparent both from tradition and from the character of its surroundings. My inspiration has been drawn almost entirely from the old Greek temples. The large auditoriums required have necessarily prevented a strict adherence to the letter of the style, but throughout I have attempted to preserve its spirit and its character.

The building must fulfill these requirements;

1. ONE large auditorium, capable of seating 1200 people, with a spacious platform and ante-rooms.
2. TWO auditoriums seating 500 each.
3. FOUR " " 250 " .
4. Reception rooms.
5. Small library.
6. Offices, committee rooms, laboratories, rooms for service, etc.

7. Large and easy communication between all parts, compactness of plan, strong and dignified architecture.

In following these requirements, I have grouped about the large auditorium the other rooms, striving always for convenience and utility as well as for effect. The corridors are ample, leading directly from the entrance vestibule. I have distinguished sharply between the public and the semi-public portions of the building, and have grouped the latter, consisting of library, reception rooms, offices, etc., entirely in the rear. The service has been put below, on the plateau level. Besides the front entrance others have been provided, one on each side, opening immediately upon the auditorium, and in the rear two entrances, one for the reception of guests, from which a stairway leads to the suite of reception rooms; the other, of a more private nature, from which lead private stairs to the offices, etc.. Since there should be some means of private communication between the auditoriums, I have provided a small corridor connecting those of each side.

As a solution of the problem I submit

One plan	scale	1/16"	=	1'
One elevation,	"	1/8"		1'
One section,	"	1/16"		1' (longitudinal).