

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06997-7 - *An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture*

J. C. Loudon

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An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture

Ranging in coverage from humble cottages to grand villas, this encyclopaedia was compiled by the Scottish landscape gardener John Claudius Loudon (1783–1843). Its ambition, as stated in the introduction, was ‘to improve the dwellings of the great mass of society’. Hundreds of types of rural abode are delineated here by Loudon and his contributors, and the text is greatly enhanced by more than 2,000 illustrations. Later sections examine the subject of fixtures and furnishings – from cornices to carpets – and explain which types were considered appropriate for a particular style of house. Space is also devoted to the principles of architectural criticism. For historians and lovers of architecture and interior design, this substantial resource, published in 1833, sheds light on the fashions and theories of the early nineteenth century. Loudon’s *First Additional Supplement to the Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture* (1842) is also reissued in this series.

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UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge, CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

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It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108069977

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This edition first published 1833

This digitally printed version 2014

ISBN 978-1-108-06997-7 Paperback

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AN
ENCYCLOPÆDIA
OF
COTTAGE, FARM, AND VILLA
ARCHITECTURE
AND
FURNITURE;

CONTAINING
NUMEROUS DESIGNS FOR DWELLINGS,
FROM THE COTTAGE TO THE VILLA,
INCLUDING FARM HOUSES, FARMERIES, AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS;
SEVERAL DESIGNS FOR
COUNTRY INNS, PUBLIC HOUSES, AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS;
WITH THE REQUISITE FITTINGS-UP, FIXTURES, AND FURNITURE;
AND
APPROPRIATE OFFICES, GARDENS, AND GARDEN SCENERY;
EACH DESIGN ACCOMPANIED BY
Analptical and Critical Remarks,
ILLUSTRATIVE OF
THE PRINCIPLES OF ARCHITECTURAL SCIENCE AND TASTE
ON WHICH IT IS COMPOSED.

By J. C. LOUDON, F.L.S. H.S. G.S. Z.S. &c.
CONDUCTOR OF THE GARDENER'S MAGAZINE, ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY
NEARLY ONE HUNDRED LITHOGRAPHS, AND ABOVE TWO THOUSAND
ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD.
The Designs by upwards of fifty different Architects, Surveyors, Builders, Upholsterers, Cabinet-makers,
and others, of whom a List is given.

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LONDON :
Printed by A. & R. SPOTTISWOODE,
New-Street-Square.

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P R E F A C E.

ALL the arts of life have had their origin in some simple natural want, supplied, in the first instance, by every man for himself; till, with the progress of civilisation, from these wants sprang those desires and wishes, which gave rise to that division of skill and labour in supplying them, which is one of the characteristics of civilised society. Hence the origin of all the different arts, most of which, in their first existence as such, were practised by distinct associations as mysteries, unknown to, or concealed from, general society.

It is in the nature of all knowledge held as mystery, to remain in a great measure stationary, because the minds which are engaged in it are necessarily few; and because the great object of such associations is, to keep their peculiar knowledge, and the exercise of their craft, among themselves. Hence the very slender progress which has been made in Architecture, the science and rules of which have been almost exclusively confined to Architects, from the earliest ages to the present time. On examining into the actual state of this art, it will be found that the improvements which have been made in it in modern times, are chiefly confined to those departments which are open to the understanding, and amenable to the judgment, of mankind generally; we mean, such as relate to comfort and convenience in the arrangement, warming, lighting, heating, &c., of rooms; whereas the department of taste in building is little in advance of what it was two thousand years ago.

To what can this be owing, but to the circumstance, that the knowledge of Architecture, as a fine art, is much less familiar to the public, than it is as an art of utility; or, in other words, that the Architect is under the control of public opinion much more in matters of usefulness, than in matters of taste?

This is a state of things by no means peculiar to Architecture. The greater portion of mankind, in even the most civilised countries, has hitherto been kept in the dark with regard to what constitutes truth and excellence in all arts or professions, the practice of which has been limited to certain associations or corporations of individuals. Hence the sciences of government, law, medicine, theology, education, &c., have been in all countries comparative mysteries, and have, consequently, like Architecture, remained nearly stationary for ages. The profound and exclusive attention, which is requisite to enable the professors of any art to become eminent in it, necessarily precludes them, while engaged in its pursuit, from acquiring a proportionate stock of knowledge upon other subjects. Unless, therefore, this stock of knowledge has been previously laid in by a scientific education in early youth, professional men and artists are very apt to assign an undue importance to the facts and views connected with their professions; and to regard as general truths, those which are, in fact, only particular. Hence, universal principles and extended views are much more likely to be entertained by persons who have studied several arts and sciences, though perhaps none of them profoundly, than by those who have confined their attention to only one. Hence, also, we rarely find great reformations made in any art by its professors.

Another cause which has retarded the progress of all arts and professions is, the practice, common in most of them, of implicitly following precedents; or of adhering rigidly to rules (made perhaps in a former age, and consequently adapted to a less advanced state of civilisation), instead of testing those precedents and rules by fundamental principles, and adapting the latter to the state of society for the time being. No art has had its progress more retarded by these means than Architecture; whether by the old idea that the whole of its science was included in the knowledge of the five orders; or by the modern one that Architecture, as an art of taste, is one of imitation, like those of sculpture and painting; and that there is no manner of building worthy of the name of Architecture but the Grecian.

According to our views of this subject, all arts, whether of design and taste, or of utility and convenience, like every thing else relative to man, are progressive, and change with the changing condition of society. In like manner, the knowledge of all arts, from being exclusive, is calculated, through the spread of education, ultimately to become universal; and, the art of printing and the use of the steam-engine being discovered, the time will ultimately arrive, in every country, when all knowledge will be common to all

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mankind. No art or profession will then be a mystery; but, each being reduced to the comprehension of youth, forming a part of that general education which will ultimately be every where established, and being consequently subject to the criticism of the whole of society, the improvement in it will be great, in proportion to the demand which there may be for its exercise and for its productions. Though scarcely any country has arrived at this stage in social progress, even in any one of the arts or professions, yet all countries are advancing towards it with different degrees of rapidity, according to the circumstances in which they are placed, geographical and political.

In accordance with these views, our intention, in producing the work now submitted to the reader, is, to prepare the way for rendering general, a knowledge of Domestic Architecture; for the immediate purpose of increasing the comforts of the great mass of society; and for the more remote objects of improving the knowledge and the taste of the public in Architecture, and of inducing Architects to study their art on general principles, and on a theory formed on the nature of the human mind, and on the changing condition of society, rather than on the precedents and rules of former ages, or on any hypothesis whatever. The means by which we have endeavoured to effect these objects will be found explained at length in our Introduction, to which we refer the reader.

We have only been enabled to accomplish our purpose by the cooperation of a number of Architects, of scientific men, and of men of taste. Several of these we are proud to call our personal friends; and others, who, before we received their contributions to this work, were known to us only by name, have proved themselves friends by their actions. Before proceeding to return our sincere acknowledgments to the various artists and others, whose names will be found in the list, p. xvi., it may be advisable to reply to an objection which has been made to us by some Architects, viz. that, by laying their profession open to the world, we were acting so as to injure their pecuniary interests. The same objection was made to Dr. Buchan many years ago, when he first published his *Domestic Medicine*; and to John Abercrombie, when he wrote his book entitled *Every Man his own Gardener*. Now, without going into details, we shall only ask, what have been the progress of medicine and gardening, and the prosperity of medical men and gardeners, since the time these works appeared, compared to what they were for a similar period previous to their publication? The answer, undoubtedly, is, that their improvement has been great beyond all former example. To what can this be owing, but to the more general diffusion of knowledge on these subjects? The truth is, that public attention can never be turned to any art or science, without benefiting all its professors. A little knowledge of any given subject makes us desire to know more; and, though we first apply to books to acquire this further knowledge, we must ultimately have recourse to living professors to carry it into effect. No book can be framed so as to suit the exigencies of every particular case: all that can be done by any author is, to lay down general principles, and to deduce rules from them. The application of these rules must be learned from experience; and it is evident that a knowledge of the principles from which they are deduced will enable the amateur more thoroughly to appreciate and profit by the skill of the professor.

Among the important uses of this work will be that of pointing out the various capacities for improvement in comfort and beauty, of which each class of building, and each kind of furniture, is susceptible. Now, so far from this having a tendency to injure Architects, it will not only enable those who wish either to build or to furnish, to express more clearly, to the Architect or upholsterer, those wants which they already have; but it will elicit new ones, of which they had previously no idea, and which the Architect, the builder, and the upholsterer will be called upon to supply.

In expressing our acknowledgments to our contributors, it was originally our intention to thank, in an especial manner, those who, by their early contributions, when the work was commenced in monthly parts, in April, 1832, encouraged us to proceed with it; but, on due consideration, lest we might inadvertently appear partial in our acknowledgments, we think it best to return our sincere thanks generally to the whole of our contributors as enumerated in the list, p. xvi. to xviii. How much we feel indebted to the Architects and others, whose names are included in that list, can be only understood by those who are duly aware that the value of a work consisting principally of graphic designs, depends upon those designs being the production of a number of different minds. For the liberality which has been thus shown us, we have made the best return in our power, by publishing this work at such an unprecedentedly low price, as must insure, to the names and talents of our contributors, an extensive circulation; and, for our own labour, we have earned the consciousness of having produced a book, which must inevitably have an important influence on the rural Architecture of the temperate regions of both hemispheres.

Bayswater, June 1. 1833.

J. C. L.

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Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06997-7 - An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture

J. C. Loudon

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Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06997-7 - An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture

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Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06997-7 - An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture

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978-1-108-06997-7 - An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture

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