

FIFTY YEARS AGO.

From the *Builder* of April 2, 1864.

Military Idea of the Status of an Architect.

ON the hoarding of the new buildings of the Foreign Office is a huge placard, evidently issued by some of the officials of the War Office. It is no quiz or hidden joke, but a genuine official red-tape document. It commences by stating that "a few young men of good character are wanted to serve in her Majesty's Royal Engineers." Then follows a list of trades, such as carpenters, bricklayers, blacksmiths, wheelers, coopers, etc.; and the inquiring public are informed that these young men, wanted to serve her Majesty, "should be able to read and write."

Then follows this further announcement:—

"Men of other *trades* are required, only in limited numbers, *such as* clerks, draughtsmen, photographers, ARCHITECTS, printers, collar and harness makers, shoemakers, and tailors"; and, for the further encouragement of those of the respective *trades* of an architect, collar-maker, etc., there will be "a bounty of £2 and a free kit." We, the architects, collar-makers, etc., are then directed to apply to Sergeant R. Griffith, R.E., Blue Boar's Head, King-street, Westminster; and the whole performance winds up, like the last bounce of an exhibition of fireworks, with "God save the Queen!"

Here is encouragement to the rising young men of the architectural profession. Only a limited number is required, so "be in time!" Having passed the examination in mathematics, physics, languages, etc., would no doubt be accepted as a proof that they are "able to read and write"; and then, think of the advantages of the fellowship with the collar-maker and the tailor, and, above all, the "bounty of £2 and a free kit." What the architects' "kit" is to consist of we are not informed. We hope, however, there will be no mistake as to allotting their "kits" among the "trades," or the tailor may get a T-square and drawing-pen, while the architect may receive a pair of shears and a goose. No bad premium, by the way, this last would be for men who go in for those swindles facetiously called "competitions."

[** Our War Office may be out of date in some ways, but hardly as much so as it was fifty years ago, to judge from the foregoing extract.—ED.]