

THE  
OCTAGON

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*A Journal of The American Institute of Architects*

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*Volume 10*

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# THE OCTAGON

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## Visits to the Chapters

THE President has availed himself of opportunities offered him to attend a number of recent chapter meetings.

His first visit was to New Orleans where, in company of Mr. Ingham, he had a foretaste of the delightful hospitality which awaits the convention in April. Regional Director Goldstein gave up several days wholly to conference on preliminary convention plans and was untiring in the ciceronage of his two guests, whose duties involved the responsibility of deciding an open competition between hotel keepers. A large attendance marked the chapter meeting, presided over by Mr. Dreyfous. The very pleasant experience was qualified only by the circumstance of Mr. Charles A. Favrot's illness, which did not bar the privilege, however, of a visit to him at his home.

The cordial invitation of the South Texas Chapter was latter gladly accepted, and The President was met on arrival at Houston by Mr. Nunn and a committee who were prepared with a generous and varied program for his entertainment during the day, which included a visit to the new Airport, the War Memorial, and to the Rice Institute, where the group was met by Mr. Watkin and shown over the buildings which represent the beginnings of the extensive plan. The chapter meeting, which was a large company including ladies and a number of prominent guests, was marked by interesting addresses, The President devoting himself to the various problems which are at present confronting the profession.

Leaving Houston, an unofficial interest called for a hurried visit to Austin, which gave opportunity for a glimpse of the beautiful architecture of the University and pleasant discussion with Professor Goldsmith.

The invitation to Cleveland dated from the Boston convention when the Presidential word was engaged by the enterprising chapter president, Mr. Travis Walsh. The actual visit took place on December 6, 1937. With excellent judgment opportunity was afforded to meet the chapter officers and committee chairman earlier in the day at lunch, permitting discussion of Institute affairs. The evening found The President confronting a very large company, including architects, landscape architects, planners, and representatives of the city government, in an atmosphere of great good feeling. Mr. Garfield was there and Mr. Ingham came specially from Pittsburgh.

The following evening found The President in Chicago, where he was met by Mr. Merrill, President of the chapter, and conveyed to the dinner where he was made to feel very much at home in the presence of many familiar Institute personalities, including Fugard, Pond, Hammond, Hall and Talmadge, as well as Mr. Root, Mr. Alfred Shaw, the new Chairman of The Institute Membership Committee, and a number of other distinguished architects of Chicago. The Presidential remarks were prefaced by a discussion of Institute problems, and led into a revelation of his personal views on the new architectural philosophies which he referred to as the Apologia of a Traditionalist.

A second trip to New Orleans was preceded by a visit to Detroit in response to a joint invitation of The Engineering Society of Detroit, the Michigan Society of Architects and the Detroit Chapter. Mr. Clair Ditchy and Mr. Sukert were ready with immediate greeting. After dinner in the Masonic Building, presided over by Mr. Raseman, at which Albert Kahn was counted among the more familiar notables, adjournment was made to one of the

great halls above, where an audience of six hundred attended to hear The President's discourse on the new architectural philosophies. Professor Lorch came over from Ann Arbor. An inspection of some of the bigger apartments of the building followed under the guidance of its author, Mr. Mason, after which Mr. Maginnis headed South for New Orleans, where he met Messrs. Ingham and Kemper to arrange the details of the convention program. Mr. Goldstein had been advised beforehand that this was so engrossing a business as to exclude the idea of any entertainment, but the chapter was not to be denied, and arranged on one of the days a delightful lunch meeting, Mr. Dreyfous presiding, which was agreeably marked by the presence of Mr. Favrot, now recovered.

The President then entrained for Kansas City with thoughtful plans to be made for a visit which served to strengthen his impression of the stimulation which comes of actual meeting with the men of The Institute in their own setting. Professional anxieties were encountered here as elsewhere. It is good that The President of The Institute should share these at first hand, and a chapter visit is not designed to be a junket. Kansas City Chapter has a president in Mr. Archer with a serious sense of the obligation of his office and an eagerness to accomplish. A meeting with him and his officers at a lunch gave opportunity for a thorough discussion

of chapter problems, and after dinner in the evening, there was long discussion of the significance of the present tendencies in architecture.

The next appointment of The President called for his crossing the line to Canada, where, by a gracious international gesture, he had been invited to be guest of honor at the annual dinner in Toronto of the Ontario Association of Architects on January 29. This was a memorable occasion marked by cordial hospitality and an eager purpose to do honor to the profession in the United States. Mr. Maginnis was met at the hotel by Mr. Mathers, the President of the Association, and by Mr. Hynes, the Secretary, who accompanied him to luncheon at Hart Hall, where he made a brief address. The dinner at the University Club which, out of respect for the presence of his Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, Hon. A. E. Mathews, was ceremonially formal, was attended by many notable architects and educators. The post-prandial hour was given over wholly to the address of Mr. Maginnis, who was introduced by Mr. Somerville, the formal vote of thanks being offered by Mr. Lyle, who startled his guest by the announcement that The President of The Institute had been elected an Honorary Member of the Ontario Association of Architects. The President extended a most cordial invitation to his hosts to come to Washington on the occasion of the International Congress.

## Notice—Meetings of the Board of Directors

THE annual meeting of The Board of Directors—which precedes the Convention—will be held in the Roosevelt Hotel, in New Orleans, La., April 13 to 16 inclusive.

The organization meeting of The Board (following the Convention) will be held in the Roosevelt Hotel, on April 23 or 24.

Members or chapters having communications for The Board should send them to The Secretary of The Institute at The Octagon, Washington, D. C., *not later than April 5.*

The agenda of the annual meeting of The Board must be made up in Washington, for use in New Orleans.

Therefore, communications received at The Octagon later than April 5 may be delayed in reaching The Board, and may not be in time for listing in the agenda.

The chairmen of the Administrative and Board Committees are requested to have their reports at The Octagon *by April 5*, with duplicate copies for use of the Publicist.

Chapter secretaries are requested to have their annual reports, on Form S29, at The Octagon *not later than March 1.*

CHARLES T. INGHAM,  
*Secretary.*

# The Seventieth Convention

## SECOND NOTICE TO MEMBERS

### TO THE MEMBERS:

The first official notice to the members and state association members concerning the Seventieth Convention appeared in the January number of THE OCTAGON.

The Convention will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, April 19, 20, 21, and 22, 1938.

The hotel headquarters will be at The Roosevelt, and information concerning the making of reservations will be found elsewhere in this notice.

Chapter officers, delegates, members and state association members are requested to review the notice in the January OCTAGON which gave information concerning—

- Early Election of Delegates
- Procedure for Election of Delegates
- Chapter Meetings on Convention Business
- Procedure for Nominating Officers and Directors by Petition
- Offices and Directorships Becoming Vacant, and Complete Schedule Showing Number of Delegates—by Chapter and State Association.

### ACCREDITING AND REGISTERING DELEGATES

The attention of the chapters and members is particularly called to the provisions of the By-laws of The Institute with regard to qualifying, accrediting and registering delegates.

It is suggested that chapter officers charged with the responsibility of observing timely and correct procedure in this matter keep the requirements clearly in mind.

In order that full information may be available to all, the following sections of the By-laws of The Institute are quoted in full:

#### Chapter VI, Article 2. By-laws of The Institute.

##### Section 1. Authority and Powers of Delegates.

(a) *Delegates Represent Members.* All rights, powers, and privileges of an annual convention and of a special meeting granted under the laws of the state of New York shall be vested in, and may be

exercised by duly accredited representatives of the members of The Institute elected by them. Each such representative shall be known as a *Delegate*.

(b) *Termination of Delegate's Authority.* All authority, rights, powers, and privileges of a delegate shall terminate and be cancelled when the meeting to which he was elected adjourns *sine-die*.

(c) *Classification of Delegates.* Delegates shall be classified as *Member Delegates*, representing the corporate members; *State Delegates*, representing the state association members, and *Delegates-at-Large*, representing the entire Institute membership.

(d) *Delegates-at-large.* The delegates-at-large at a meeting of The Institute shall be the members of The Board and the past presidents of The Institute present thereat. A delegate-at-large may also be a member delegate or a state delegate, or both.

#### Section 2. Member Delegates.

(a) *Election of Member Delegates.* The corporate members of The Institute in each chapter shall elect the total number of member delegates they are entitled to have represent them at a meeting of The Institute, in the manner prescribed in the by-laws of the chapter.

(a-1) If all of the member delegates elected by the members of a chapter are not accredited to the meeting of The Institute, then such thereof who are accredited shall be entitled to cast thereat the total number of votes which the said members are entitled to have cast for them, and each shall be accredited to cast an equal and proportionate number of said total number of votes.

(a-2) If none of the member delegates elected by the members of a chapter can be present at the said meeting, then the said members may elect any other delegate who is qualified to vote at such meeting to represent them as their member delegate and to cast the total number of votes that they are entitled to cast at the meeting.

(b) *Number of Member Delegates.* The number of member delegates from each chapter that

may be accredited to a meeting of The Institute shall be proportionate to the number of corporate members of The Institute in the chapter who are in good standing thirty days prior to the date fixed for the meeting, and shall be determined by The Secretary from his records, in accordance with the provisions of the table in *paragraph (c) of section 3 of this article*; provided, that said number of corporate members in a chapter shall not include those admitted to the chapter under the provisions of *chapter II, article 1, section 8* of these by-laws.

(c) *Credentials of Member Delegates.* The election of member delegates from each chapter and such other matter appertaining thereto as The Board requires shall be duly certified to by the president or the secretary of the chapter, and he shall present each duly elected member delegate with a credential card furnished by The Secretary.

#### Section 3. Number of Delegates.

(As previously stated herein *The Secretary's notice concerning the number of delegates, by chapter and state association member, appeared in the January number of THE OCTAGON—pages 14 and 15.*)

### Article 3. Accrediting and Registering Delegates.

#### Section 1. Credentials Committee.

The Board, at a meeting held prior to the meeting of The Institute, shall elect three corporate members having the qualifications of delegates to act as the Credentials Committee of the meeting. The Secretary, ex-officio, shall act as secretary of the credentials committee, and the committee shall elect one of its members as its chairman. The term of office of every member of the credentials committee shall expire when the report of the committee has been accepted by the meeting.

#### Section 2. Accrediting and Registering Delegates.

(a) *Presentation of Credentials.* Member delegates and state delegates to a meeting of The Institute must present in person their credential cards to the credentials committee of the meeting as a prerequisite to their being accredited thereto or registered, as the case may be, and the credentials committee shall examine and pass upon all credentials so presented to it.

(b) *Accrediting Member Delegates.* When the credentials committee finds that the credentials presented by a member delegate are in due order, that his election is duly certified to, and that he is duly qualified to serve as a delegate, the committee shall endorse his credentials and accredit him to the meeting as a member delegate to represent thereat the corporate members that elected him, and entitled to sit in the meeting, cast the number of votes he has been accredited to cast on any question or division thereat, and exercise therein all the rights, powers and privileges of a delegate.

(c) *Accrediting State Delegates.* When the credentials committee finds that the credentials presented by a state delegate are in due order, that his election and his authority to cast the vote of the state association member in the meeting are duly certified to, and that he is duly qualified to serve as a delegate, the committee shall endorse his credentials to that effect and accredit him to the meeting as a state delegate to represent thereat the state association member that elected him and entitled to sit in the meeting and cast the unit vote of the state association member on any question or division except on those proscribed in *chapter II, article 2, section 5(a)* of these by-laws, and otherwise exercise therein all the rights, powers, and privileges of a delegate.

(c-1) If the credentials committee finds that a state delegate is duly qualified to serve as a delegate but that he is not authorized to cast the vote of the state association member, then the committee shall endorse the credentials of such delegate to that effect and register him as a non-voting state delegate at the meeting to represent thereat the state association member that elected him and entitled to sit in said meeting and exercise therein all the rights, powers, and privileges of a delegate, except that he may not vote as a state delegate on any question or division thereat.

(d) *Accrediting Delegates-at-Large.* The credentials committee shall accredit each delegate-at-large present at a meeting of The Institute to the meeting as a delegate entitled to represent thereat The Institute membership and to exercise for it and in its behalf all the rights, powers and privileges of a delegate, and to cast not more than one vote as delegate-at-large on any question or division thereat.

(e) *Report of Credentials Committee.* The credentials committee shall report in writing to the meeting, setting forth in its report, over the signature of all members of the committee, as follows:

(e-1) total number of chapters and the name of each, by regional districts;

(e-2) number of member delegates entitled to be accredited from each chapter and the total number of votes entitled to be cast by the member delegates from each chapter as fixed in the notice of The Secretary prescribed in *section 3 of article 2 of this chapter*;

(e-3) number of member delegates accredited from each chapter, the name of each such delegate, the number of votes each thereof may cast, and the total number of votes that may be cast by the accredited member delegates from each chapter;

(e-4) total number of member delegates accredited and the total number of member delegate votes that may be cast;

(e-5) total number of state association members and the name of each, by regional districts;

(e-6) total number of state delegates entitled to be accredited and registered, the number thereof entitled to be accredited and registered from each state association member, and the total number of votes entitled to be cast by each state association member, as fixed in the notice of The Secretary prescribed in *section 3 of article 2 of this chapter*;

(e-7) number of state delegates from each state association member, the name of the state delegate accredited to cast the vote of each such member and the number of votes he may cast, and the name of each non-voting state delegate registered from each such member;

(e-8) total number of state delegates accredited and the total number of state delegate votes that may be cast;

(e-9) total number of non-voting state delegates registered;

(e-10) number of delegates-at-large accredited, the name of each, the total number of votes each may cast as delegate-at-large, as member delegate, and as state delegate, and the aggregate number of votes that may be cast by all delegates-at-large;

(e-11) total number of delegates accredited and the total number accredited and registered;

(e-12) total number of votes accredited to be cast on any question or division *not* relating to the property of The Institute or its chapters;

(e-13) total number of votes accredited to be cast on any question or division relating to the property of The Institute or its chapters;

(e-14) number of votes necessary to decide any question or division not requiring a two-thirds concurring vote in the case of (e-12) and in the case of (e-13), respectively;

(e-15) number of votes necessary to decide any question or division requiring a two-thirds concurring vote in the case of (e-12) and in the case of (e-13), respectively;

(e-16) such other matters as the committee deems essential.

(f) *Final Judge of Delegates.* If the credentials committee does not agree unanimously to accrediting any delegate it shall so report to the meeting. If a delegate is not accredited to the meeting by the credentials committee or if an accredited delegate is not accredited to cast thereat the number of votes that he thinks he is entitled to cast, then such delegate may appeal to the meeting; providing, that such appeal is made prior to the acceptance of the report of the credentials committee. In each of these events the meeting shall decide thereon.

(f-1) Within the limits imposed by law, by the provisions of above *paragraph (f)* and of *section 3 of article 2 of this chapter*, and otherwise by these by-laws, the meeting shall be the final judge of the qualifications and credentials of a delegate to the meeting, and may admit the delegate to sit therein as an accredited delegate and permit him to cast his vote or votes thereat or it may refuse to admit him as a delegate and refuse to permit him to cast such vote or votes.

(g) *Records of the Credentials Committee.* The credentials committee shall retain each credential presented to it and, after endorsing its finding thereon, shall deliver it, with the original copy of its report signed by all members of the committee, under seal to The Secretary.

(h) *Records Available to Credentials Committee.* The records of The Secretary and The Treasurer shall be available to the credentials committee.  
(End of quotation from By-laws.)

## CREDENTIALS

The Credentials Committee will operate strictly under the provisions of Chapter VI, Article 3 of the By-laws which have been printed herein as due notice to that effect.

Chapter officers and chapter meetings should strictly observe the procedure set forth in the By-laws of The Institute in order that their member delegates may be entitled to registration, and to vote.

Member delegates and state delegates must present their credential cards in person to the Credentials Committee as a prerequisite of their being accredited or registered as the case may be.

Prior to April 1, a supply of credential cards will be sent by The Secretary to chapter secretaries and secretaries of state association members.

## HOTEL HEADQUARTERS AND RESERVATIONS

The Roosevelt Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, will be the official hotel headquarters of the convention. This hotel is convenient to the business section of the city, to the old French Quarter and to other places of interest.

A parking service for automobiles is maintained by the hotel.

All of the business sessions of the convention will be held at The Roosevelt; places of other meetings devoted to special functions will be shown in the program.

The Roosevelt is a modern hotel with all of the facilities for handling a large convention, including auditorium, banquet room, secondary meeting rooms and committee rooms.

The hotel will endeavor to accommodate under its own roof all who make reservations in advance—provided those reservations are not in excess of 400. In that event The Roosevelt has been given the privilege of allocating overflow reservations to either of the two nearby first-class hotels, each of which has modern rooms and service.

All reservations should be made direct to the Roosevelt Hotel.

The rates are as follows:

Single room and bath for one person (for seventy-five rooms only) \$3.50 per day.

Other single rooms and bath for one person—

twenty-five at \$4.00—twenty-five at \$5.00—  
and twenty-five at \$6.00.

Double room with double bed, and bath, for two persons—fifty at \$4.50 per day—twenty-five at \$5.50 per day—twenty-five at \$6.00 per day.

Double room with twin beds, and bath—fifty at \$6.00 per day—fifty at \$7.00 per day—fifty at \$8.00 per day.

Parlor suites are \$16.00 and \$18.00 per day.

All reservations—each of which should refer to The Institute convention—should be sent direct to The Roosevelt Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, to be received by the hotel *not later than April 12*.

Your reservation should specify the type and price of room desired and should state the time of arrival. In every case a confirmation should be requested.

Those making reservations that are received by the hotel later than April 12, may not find rooms as desirable as those who make reservations before that date.

## PROGRAM AND TRANSPORTATION

The March number of THE OCTAGON will contain the convention program in detail. In the meanwhile your attention is called to an introductory article on the attractions of New Orleans by Moise H. Goldstein which appeared in the January OCTAGON under the title "Apéritif".

In this February number you will find "A Trip to the Plantations" by Richard Koch. A description of the French Quarter by Nathaniel Cortlandt Curtis is promised for the March number.

The railroads offer reduced rates if round trip tickets are purchased. Inquiry should be made of local ticket agencies concerning the most advantageous rates obtainable.

Good highways from the north, the east and the west, together with the attractiveness of the countryside in spring, are inducements to make the trip by automobile.

If time is a factor, the airways are available.

Whatever means of transportation may be chosen, a hearty welcome will await you upon arrival, and our hosts in New Orleans assure us that none will regret the trip.

CHARLES T. INGHAM,  
*Secretary.*



## A Trip to the Plantations

BY RICHARD KOCH, A. I. A.

THE mention of New Orleans brings recollections of Jackson Square, the old Place D'Armes of the colonial city, with its enclosed gardens, surrounded by the Pontalba Buildings and the Cathedral, its courtyards that we expect to be like Spain but somehow are different, and the low houses of its squares with their balconies of wrought and cast iron crowded one against the other. But today, no one visits New Orleans without at least one trip to the outlying plantations, surprising groups of small buildings like the old French manoirs or Greek Revival temples in an English park, true types of the people who built them.

The French who first came to Louisiana in the early part of the 18th century found a low flat country with a climate very much like the West Indies, where they had settled for one hundred years before going farther to find the waterway that connected them with Canada through an unknown wilderness. They built houses like the ones they had left in France, but added what they knew was suited to a tropical climate and to a land that overflowed each spring from the Mississippi River. These houses were raised perhaps six feet from the ground and had porches on the front and back and sometimes on the sides. The porches are cool; and if you should sit there on a hot summer day, you will give credit to the genius of the French planter who built this house with his slaves from Santo Domingo or Martinique. Fireplaces were added to the West Indian house; and their large chimneys dominated the steep hipped roofs, and the paneled chimney breasts gave a unique character to the interior. Through the French and Spanish regimes, this native type grew, always adding American and English touches, for both these nations wanted Louisiana, and their traders intrigued with the Spanish governors for the use of the Mississippi. Many an American was on the Spanish King's payroll as only through New Orleans could the then West reach the Atlantic.

During the Spanish regime some Spaniards came, but not so many. They were the officials, and the records tell us that they married into the French families; hence our Creoles. The Spaniards changed

New Orleans and left it a colonial town of the Spanish West Indies, as Lafcadio Hearn writes. As they were not planters, they did not change the West Indian house, though perhaps the squatty stucco columns are a Spanish contribution.

The last new owners were Americans and with their push and bustle, they started to rebuild the state. The Creoles resisted, and many of the old houses that might be taken out of an old town in France were built after Andrew Jackson with the help of Lafitte, the Buccaneer, as Cecil B. DeMille would show us, turned back the British. But the Americans could not be downed, and soon they introduced a new style—The Greek Revival. Latrobe built a water works and he must house it in an octagonal domed building with a Doric portico. Another American, the one whose vision added Louisiana to the United States, thought of Roman orders two stories high with galleries between, and his ideas filtered into Louisiana, and soon the American with his Greek and Roman orders supplanted the simple West Indian house with the squatty brick columns in the basement and the graceful turned wood columns of the wide porches.

In the old days, the plantations were reached only by boat. This is slow; but as you should know the river, our trip will follow its windings as we go to visit these plantations. The trip will be started by crossing the river from New Orleans by the ferry at Walnut Street. If the water is high (April is flood time) to be floating above the surrounding land is an experience, and will explain why the river is never seen from the road behind the sloping grassy levees. The interest is not in the levee, but across it in the fields of sugar cane, broken by belts of oaks and pecan groves, many marking the site of forgotten houses. Fires have taken many of these houses, but more have been taken by the changes in the river, which for unknown reasons moves its course from time to time.

Starting up the river road, we soon come to Three Oaks, now a dismal white and yellow. It once was a lovely faded pink, the favorite color of the old houses. It is the old plantation house you have imagined, surrounded by colonnades of Doric

columns, behind oaks, and to top it all a belvedere on the roof from which the old planters saw the ships and steamboats coming up and down the river. The cane fields that Three Oaks symbolizes are gone and oil tanks have taken their place, so to get away from the commercialism of this era, we must go farther up the river. At Hahnville, Homeland appears through an avenue of pecans, and set in a background of oaks, we see a house that represents the days of the French West Indian planters. You may admire the turned wood columns so much like those of the Barbados and the mantels, French in design, American in detail, and with iron fire-backs from where? The paneled chimney breasts with their slender pilasters and simply carved cornices must be taken in, for there are not many left and you may not have another opportunity.

Up the river, perhaps twenty miles, past many small houses with their French shapes, we come to Evergreen. Again American of a period that wanted variety. In the middle of the colonnade, a pair of columns is brought forward, pedimented, and from both sides a pair of curving stairs lead into the garden below. Little is there of the garden, but down both sides are avenues of magnolias past the columbier, the offices and kitchen, and on the edge of cane fields and on axis of the house is exhibit "A" as the White Pine Monograph called this accessory building.

We come back to the river road again, for we shall follow the levee all day, and drive past cane fields to Columbia plantation. The new sugar house is there, the avenue of oaks from the Church to the plantation house, that loses itself in the little village. The Mississippi River changed its course and one day Columbia was taken; the house was moved and lowered, and in that West Indian house, if you can find it, there is a mantel with its paneled chimney breast that tells a story of someone who came from Pennsylvania and decorated a French fireplace with carvings that he knew of at home. The old bake oven, with a shelter of brick columns and a peaked roof, and the smoke house with a stepped gable that could have come from Holland have paid their toll to the river.

On again up the river, we pass a thicket, and the darkies tell you that it is the gardens of Valcour Aimé, the traditional planter of the Romance of the Old South. The brick walls are there, and the

rambling paths, the streams, grottos and bridges in a jungle of ligustrums and magnolias, bring back memories of Old France. The garden was called Le Petit Versailles, and Valcour Aimé's wife, a daughter of Governor Roman, is said to have planned it.

Not far away is Whitney Plantation, they say rebuilt by the Heidels, Germans sent over by John Law to settle the wilderness given him by Louis XV. It is the West Indies type, a relic of Old Louisiana that is going fast. The rear porch with its brick paving is kept red by daily scrubbing with red dust. A sweet garden throws shadows on the white columns, the upper porch is enclosed with blinds, and from the leaking shadows of light, we see the marbled walls like a room at Fontainebleau, with gardenias and bunches of roses done by a passing painter who so paid his keep.

We soon come to Oak Alley where pink walls and columns call you through the *allée* that gives it its name. It was built by a brother of Governor Roman, as a panel on the inside of a false door tells us, as well as the record of those that have made Oak Alley. Lately it was restored to the grandeur of its former days. The West Indies by the '30's were forgotten, and it was of Greece and Rome that the sugar planter dreamed when he planned Oak Alley as a background for his life.

We could go on to Belle Grove with its violet covered walls and marble steps and carved columns of wood from the Temple of Lysicrates, but it is far, so we go back to Vacharie, and cross on the little ferry to Lutcher and again travel up the river by Welham where the road is now at the front door, but once a formal garden separated it from the river. Then on to Uncle Sam, the last of the mighty houses; in its ruin, it is complete. Yellow instead of pink, the color in the late afternoon is beyond belief, and the mechanics of the plantation are there. The main house is surrounded by galleries; on each side the two large garconierres, the office and commissary in the guise of a Greek Temple, all form a court flanked with the tall six-sided dove cotes with their weathervanes of the old slave driving a pair of mules and a sugar cart.

On again to Tezcuca set in a thicket, with its atmosphere of the old days, for it is the only one lived in by its descendants. Then Burnside again

with its octagonal garconier; and, as we pass on up the road, gleaming white across the fields and behind its trees is Brangier, built in 1812. Here there is another Greek Revival building with a high peaked French roof, and the gallery built away from the columns instead of hugging them closely. On again past oil wells—perhaps they will bring the plantations back to their old state. Finally we see Belle Helene across a meadow, but framed back

and sides with heavy trees like a stage set.

It has now grown late, and, as darkness comes, we go back to Darrow and the "pave" as the Cajan says, a strip of wide concrete. In an hour we are back in New Orleans for dinner in the Vieux Carré at some restaurant that we have come this long way to see, but the memory of the plantations we have visited is with us. There is no hurry as the "Dog House" does not open until twelve o'clock.

## The New F.H.A. Program

The following statement, issued by the Federal Housing Administration, summarizes the new program made possible by recent Congressional amendments to the National Housing Act.

**T**HE Federal Housing Administration program under the amended law, signed by President Roosevelt on Thursday, February 3, 1938, is designed to assist families of moderate means to obtain adequate and decent housing on the most favorable terms in the history of the country.

In the language of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, it is intended "to utilize the best available means for achieving a sustained long term residential construction program with a minimum expenditure of federal funds and a maximum reliance upon private business enterprise."

It deals solely with projects and mortgages that are considered economically sound. It is designed to be largely self-sustaining through the operation of a federal mortgage insurance system which has been carefully established and successfully operated since 1934.

The Housing Administration is authorized to insure a total of \$2,000,000,000 outstanding at any one time and with the approval of the President this amount may be increased to \$3,000,000,000.

"This program", said Administrator Stewart McDonald, "should prove a stimulus to the construction industry but too much should not be expected of it at once. The machinery is here for the government to do its part. The success of the program in the long run, however, depends upon the whole-hearted, voluntary cooperation of private capital and private industry, by which I mean the lending institutions, the material and equipment

manufacturers and distributors, the builders and developers, and labor."

### Small Homes Financing.

The total maximum annual carrying charge for an FHA insured mortgage on which a commitment is issued hereafter will be five and one-half percent.

This will include five percent interest and one-half of one percent mortgage insurance premium. In the case of newly constructed homes securing mortgages not exceeding \$5,400 and meeting certain other conditions the premium rate will be one-fourth of one percent, making the total annual carrying charge to the borrower five and one-fourth percent.

The annual service charge of one-half of one percent which the lending institutions have been permitted to charge under FHA regulations will be discontinued on all mortgages for which a commitment to insure is issued hereafter.

The insurance premium in the future will be based upon the outstanding balance instead of the original face value of the mortgage as provided in the old law.

Elimination of the annual service charge and the reduced cost of the mortgage insurance will represent a maximum saving of approximately one percent per annum to home builders and buyers on newly constructed houses carrying mortgages of \$5,400 or less. On all other insurable mortgages the saving will be approximately three-fourths of

one per cent per annum.

On newly constructed houses appraised at \$6,000 or less, the minimum permissible down payment or equity requirement will be reduced from twenty percent to ten percent. Thus, on a \$6,000 newly constructed house, the minimum down payment would be \$600 and the maximum insurable mortgage would be \$5,400, representing ninety percent of the appraised value.

On newly constructed houses appraised at \$10,000 or less, the insurable limit will be ninety percent of the appraised value up to \$6,000 plus eighty percent of the appraised value above \$6,000. For example, on a newly constructed \$10,000 house the minimum down payment would be \$1,400 and the insurable mortgage limit would be \$8,600. On all other homes housing from one to four families, the insurable mortgage limit will remain at eighty percent of the appraised value, but not in excess of \$16,000 under any circumstances.

#### **Multi-Family and Group Housing.**

Under the amended law, the multi-family and group housing program is divided into two main parts, one designed to promote construction of large scale projects covered by mortgages up to \$5,000,000 and the other to encourage building of smaller developments covered by mortgages ranging from \$16,000 to \$200,000.

An important feature of the new program is the provision for insuring mortgages not only on multi-family structures, but also upon developments consisting of single family houses. Under this provision it will be possible for developers to obtain blanket mortgage financing, including funds advanced for construction, on groups of single family houses and then sell them on convenient payment plans or rent them as they see fit.

The regulations will permit partial releases from the blanket mortgage as separate properties are sold.

The Federal Housing Administration will insure mortgages up to 80 percent of the appraised value of projects provided that, in the case of large scale developments constructed under Section 207, the amount of the mortgage may not exceed \$1,350 per room, and in the case of the smaller developments built under Section 210, the mortgage may not exceed \$1,150 per room.

The maximum interest rate which lending insti-

tutions will be permitted to charge will be 4½ percent on mortgages insured under Section 207 and 5 percent on mortgages insured under Section 210.

The mortgage insurance premium will be charged at the rate of one-half of one percent annually on the outstanding principal of the mortgage.

The multi-family and group housing operations will be carried on separately from the small homes program designed primarily for individual ownership. A separate insuring fund of \$1,000,000 has been set aside out of appraisal fees collected by the Federal Housing Administration during the past three years.

The Federal Housing Administration large scale housing program should not be confused with the slum clearance and government subsidy program of the United States Housing Authority. It is aimed primarily to promote the construction of housing facilities for wage earning and salaried families who by preference or necessity live in rented dwellings. Such families make up the great majority of the urban population and they, therefore, constitute the broadest market for new housing. According to the 1930 census, approximately 56 percent of all urban families in the United States occupied rented dwellings. The 93 cities of 100,000 and over range in the proportion of renting families from a high of 78.6 percent for New York City to a low of 37.3 percent for Tacoma, Washington.

At the same time the program provides exceptional opportunities for sound investment. This is true for two principal reasons. First, the relative breadth of the rental market and second, the planning and construction of the project.

#### **Modernization and Repair Program.**

Notices have been sent to 7,000 lending institutions throughout the United States authorizing them to begin making modernization and repair loans under Title I of the amended Act.

Persons, partnerships and corporations are eligible to borrow money under the modernization and repair credit plan. The borrower must have an assured income, demonstrate his ability to repay the loan, and own the property to be improved or have a lease on it running at least six months longer than the term of the loan.

Amounts up to \$10,000 may be borrowed to re-

pair or improve existing structures and amounts up to \$2,500 may be borrowed for the erection of new structures.

Repayment of the loans may be spread over a period not to exceed five years for modernization and repair work and not to exceed ten years for the erection of new structures for residential use.

Banks and other lending institutions will be insured against losses up to 10 percent of the total loans they make under the new Title I program.

If the loan is made for the purpose of building a new home, security will be required in the form of a mortgage or deed of trust covering the property improved. In addition, there will be certain general construction requirements which will assist in protecting the investment of the home owner.

The provision for these new homes costing not in excess of \$2,500 under Title I should not be confused with the plan of home ownership sponsored under Title II of the Act. The facilities afforded under Title I are intended primarily for those citizens who live on farms, or in rural areas or in the marginal zone surrounding the larger cities where the standards established by the mutual mortgage insurance system are not applicable.

#### Operations Under Old Law.

Gross business transacted by the Federal Housing Administration under the old law has passed the two billion dollar mark.

Approximately \$650,000,000 of this amount was transacted during 1937.

The gross total includes:

Mortgages selected for appraisal, \$1,399,000,000.

Large-scale housing projects approved, \$41,694,000.

Modernization and repair notes insured, \$560,603,000.

Notwithstanding the decline in construction activity during the last half of 1937, gains were recorded in the volume of business for the entire year over 1936.

For example, mortgages selected for appraisal during 1937 amounted to \$590,100,000 compared to \$538,900,000 for 1936, a gain of 9.5 percent. Mortgages accepted for insurance in 1937 totaled \$448,167,000 compared to \$438,449,000 during the previous year, a gain of 2.2 percent.

The largest gain was made in premium paying

mortgages. In 1936 premium paying mortgages amounting to \$308,945,000 were recorded, while in 1937 they amounted to \$425,110,000, a gain of 37.6 percent. The total of premium paying mortgages on January 28 was \$857,996,317, not including those on large-scale rental projects.

During the past year mortgages on newly constructed homes represented approximately fifty-six percent of the total value of mortgages accepted for insurance.

Through appraisal fees, premium payments, and reinvestment of funds, the Federal Housing Administration now has an income averaging \$600,000 a month. Part of this is being used under the terms of the National Housing Act to defray expenses of insuring operations and part of it is being added to the mutual mortgage insurance fund to meet possible losses. This fund now amounts to approximately \$22,000,000 and losses chargeable against it are slightly in excess of \$10,000. The loss ratio on mortgages insured is approximately one one-thousandth of one percent.

#### Documents the architect should have.

NOTE: The following new documents are of great value and should be in the hands of every architect in the country. Copies may be obtained by addressing the Federal Housing Administration, Washington, D. C.

National Housing Act As Amended—Including all amendments to February 3, 1938 (F. H. A. Form 107).

Mutual Mortgage Insurance—Administrative Rules and Regulations, revised February 15, 1938 (F. H. A. Form 2010).

Multifamily and Group Housing Insurance—Administrative Rules and Regulations, revised February 15, 1938 (F. H. A. Form 2012).

Property Improvement Loans Under Title I of the National Housing Act Amendments of 1938—Regulations Effective February 4, 1938 (F. H. A. Form 1).

Eligible Improvements To Property—Financed Under Title I, National Housing Act Amendments of 1938—Effective February 4, 1938 (F. H. A. Form 145).

## A Wise Lender Talks to Himself

BY KENNETH K. STOWELL, PRESIDENT OF THE WESTCHESTER CHAPTER AND EDITOR  
OF THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT AND ARCHITECTURE

"I SHALL lend on mortgages again because the shortage in building will have to be made up, rents are rising satisfactorily so that there can be profit. Mortgages will again be considered one of the soundest types of investment. There can be no doubt about it now, the worst offender, the second mortgage, has been pretty well removed from the picture and the FHA system of financing of residence construction has been well received. Confidence is restored by an above-board financing system in which all of the charges are known in advance, and made reasonable instead of exorbitant.

"Of equal importance, I think, is the insistence that is now put upon a complete analysis of the building operation, with emphasis on sound construction and good design. I shall certainly look over the plans and specifications more critically, and have Mr. Jones, of our staff, who is technically trained in these matters, report on the excellence of these plans and specifications. However, I have known specifications to become mere 'scraps of paper' when the owner and builder found that they could substitute this and that for the materials of equipment called for in the specifications. This time when I lend I want to be sure that the plans and specifications are not only good, but will be followed to the letter. The only way I can do this is to insist that the owner engage a competent architect from the beginning, and that the architect perform his full services, which include the supervision of the work as it progresses.

"Neither I nor my inspector can tell whether the physical security behind my loan is what it purports to be after the house is completed. A

house that is going to crack, deteriorate, and come apart in a few years looks just like the best the day after completion, but in five years the owner will be disgusted and probably the sales value of the house will not be as much as my loan. I have seen too many mushroom developments that looked perfect when they were about to be sold. Even though they were full of nationally-known electrical equipment, colored tile, built-in this and that, which are sales points, these things cannot carry the load when shoddy construction and poor structural materials have been covered with paint and paper. I am convinced that, at no added cost to myself, or to the owner, I can be assured of sound construction only by having the one unprejudiced agent in the building industry, the architect, serve both of us by supervising the construction.

"And the owner himself will be better pleased, for the competent architect will give him a house fitted to the needs of his family and his purse, one which is planned for the maximum comfort and convenience for his own way of living, a house properly suited to its lot, and certainly one that will not run up abnormal repair bills.

"For my own protection, and entirely in self-interest, if you like, I will lend only on buildings for which an architect is employed to give full service, planning, designing and supervision—and the greatest of these, for my protection, is supervision. I have had too much of jerry building. I insist now on quality in the materials, equipment and workmanship that in the final analysis create the value of the security for the money I lend."

## Notice - Institute By-laws Amendment

THE Board made the following amendment to the By-laws in the nature of an editorial correction to comply with an intention expressed at the Convention of 1936. This amendment became effective November 17, 1937.

Chapter 5, Article 1, Section 1, paragraph (b) :—  
Delete the words "or any of its component organi-

zations". The paragraph now reads:

"(b) *Authority and Duties of Chapters:*

Within the territory assigned to it, each chapter shall represent and act for The Institute under a charter issued to it by The Board, and no act of a chapter shall directly or indirectly nullify or contravene any act or policy of The Institute."

# Highlights of a Housing Tour of Northern Europe

*Part II: Part I appeared in the December Number of The Octagon*

BY GEORGE H. GRAY, A. I. A.

## France.

Only recently have the French gotten under way on a big scale with housing. They have now attained standards which are equivalent and in some respects higher than American standards—such as hoods over the ranges and the "Garchy System" of garbage disposal (cans and all) direct from kitchen through a special system of pipes to a nearby incinerating plant. They have, however, with characteristic French logic, arrived at a solution of the problem different from those of other countries. A typical arrangement is to locate the w. c. near the entrance, back to back with which is the compact kitchenette and opening off this is a "piece d'eau" (a small room with concrete or terrazo floor and base and a floor drain, a shower and tap to which to connect a washing machine, sometimes a metal clothes drying rack which can be drawn to the ceiling). This brings all the plumbing and the vent ducts into one stack. Often there is a balcony for drying clothes screened in with light concrete trellises—no more family washings filling the courts. There is great economy in this layout, each part being reduced to a minimum working space. The kitchen hood makes it possible to reduce the cubage of air space ordinarily required. Every reasonable requirement of decent and efficient living is economically met. The newer buildings have central heating.

The French have made a few attempts at the English garden suburbs with its double and row cottages, each with flower and vegetable garden; but the larger and more recent "Cité Jardin", although in rural surroundings, is made up of apartment houses fronting on streets and courts, some formally, some informally laid out. About the only gardens are occasional small public gardens (usually formal) and a limited number of allotment gardens. The housing groups do not generally include playgrounds and what there are usually are for small children. Some of the new Cité Jardin are not as yet adequately served by cheap transportation.

Your Frenchman, whether in white collar or blue jeans, enjoys much of his week-end leisure

picnicking with his family, if not in some of the great public forests or parks, then in a small one nearby. To sit and enjoy a bit of formal landscaping means about as much to him as watching a game of baseball does to an American. So formal landscaping is quite appropriate in French housing.

In France day nurseries are a usual adjunct to every public grade school, as is the kindergarten. As might be expected in a nation of individualists, there is no tendency toward standardization in the design of buildings. When brickwork is cheap it will be used, when cinder concrete is cheaper that will be used. For their concrete walls they have developed a great variety of weathering surfaces—stucco, "gratè" (scratched similar to the "cuts" on stonework), to produce a great variety of interesting textures; a crushed marble aggregate; a pebble dash of pebbles of varying sizes and colors, knowingly controlled. There has been some use made of pre-cast slabs.

The much heralded Drancy project is a huge group of apartments, mostly in three to six story buildings and 5 twelve story apartment towers, all connected by surface and underground galleries for communication and central utilities—a la La Carbusier. It is on the edge of a rather drab little suburb, surrounded by weed grown land, no trees, no bushes, no grass. It was abandoned after the first few units were completed and is now a prey to bats and roving boys—windows broken, doors off, balcony railing falling away. No one seemed to want to live there. I am told that the government is taking it over for homes for impecunious war veterans. Meantime other more normally conceived projects have prospered—at Charenton, at Maisons-Alfort, at St. Mandè, at Pré-St.-Gervais, at Plessio-Robinson, at Suresnes and probably best of all at Chatinay-Malabry.

From the high standards of equipment and amenities that have been attained in these groups it does not follow that the lowest income families are cared for. It is the white collar class that has most benefited up to the present. The biggest part of slum clearance in Paris is yet to come, one great area, centering about Notre Dame on both

banks of the river will be completely razed and rebuilt. Long before they reach the end they may yet find it necessary to break down their program into some such classifications as they have in Amsterdam, or observe the cautious restraint of the English.

#### Germany.

In Germany and in Russia one feels the working of a powerful administration functioning on strictly military lines. The difference is typified by the fact that in Russia there is no saluting in the army and soldiers are little in evidence, whereas in Germany in the Labor Youth Camps and Hitler Youth Clubs there is heel clicking and saluting at every turn, and everywhere soldiers are in evidence. At the entrance to a labor camp well out in the country we encountered a black and white striped sentinel box with a khaki-uniformed labor youth standing guard "at attention", with a polished spade instead of a rifle. A similar guard is posted at the entrance to the Labor Ministry in Berlin.

There are many unusually attractive housing projects in Berlin, but urban housing is no longer being encouraged for the working class anywhere in Germany. The industrial population is encouraged to live on the rural side of the plant in which they work. The local industry, which is regulated by the Ministry of Labor, acquires the land and does the planning for subdivision or settlement in conformity with the requirements of the Ministry of Labor, though the government gives no direct subsidy. The minimum of land for the new subsistence homesteads is 1250 sq. meters, every inch of which must be profitably cultivated under expert direction through the labor office—even the shade trees and the hedges must be fruit-bearing. These homesteads are sold on long term monthly payments to the worker, who guarantees his payments by signing a contract to work with the industry the remainder of his working life and by entailing one son to take his place when his work ceases. At the start he is supplied with prescribed seeds, fruit trees and bushes, four chickens and a pair of rabbits. The prospective owner is carefully selected and to hold the place, his labor on it must be prolific. There are larger places in special categories which are more complete subsistence units, and would naturally be sought by the larger families with many to help at the work. These larger

places have sufficient space to raise potatoes for the winter, geese, goats, sheep, meat, milk, wool and feathers. The program is intended to make it possible for the maximum number of workers to own their own homes, become loyal noncommunitistic citizens and to increase the subsistence supplies of the country, while maintaining a steady labor supply for industry.

The houses are attractive, though very simple, one story and attic, with the quarters for the animals attached to the rear. In settlements which we visited the w. c. consisted of a privy in the wing for the animals (covered approach), so that the human manure could be composted into fertilizer, and there was no need for a sewage system. The street surfacing consisted, at the time, of a thin layer of cinders, and there were no sidewalks. The interior arrangement of the houses was compact and attractive; a living room, kitchen with range and running cold water, one or more bedrooms and a shower room. Heating is by means of the range and one or more built-in tiled stoves for the bedrooms. The plans are flexible so that an extra room can be added, either at one end or in the attic.

This is a "back to the farm" movement, back even to the ruggedness of the pioneer. They are called "colonists" and none but hardy people could kept up the factory job and the homestead work. Such people readily get along with fewer amenities and will live more wholesome and healthy lives than many city people with better and more conveniences. It is a heroic measure to meet a complex and difficult situation.

Again we are reminded that standards of housing for health and decency cannot be absolute and rigid, but are relative, relative to the standards of the occupant. Standards of living are both subjective and objective. When a cultured uptown young couple take over an old house in Greenwich Village it becomes desiderata, whereas it was formerly slummy. Some material changes there are, but the principal change is in the occupants.

#### Russia.

Strange to say it is in Russia that the standards of the unit of housing most like those in America are to be found—kitchen, dining room, living room, bedroom, bathroom, with all the accessories, including central heat and a radio—loud-speaker in the



hall. All the housing which I saw in Leningrad and Moscow was in apartment blocks. At least in theory, blue jeans, white collars and the cane-carrying professionals all live under the same roof, the government taking 15% of the earnings of each for rent. The professional man can have one more room than can the others—for an office or studio. In reality the housing near the outlying industrial centers is not as attractive (at least as seen from the street) as are those more centrally located. Many of the designs are conceived in unusual vigor, some so large in scale and drab in color and imagination as to seem impersonal and unattractive. There seems to be little tradition for fine craftsmanship in some of the building trades; is this because the unions failed to train men in proper proportion to the rapidly expanding building program? In Moscow one project covers a large city block to the height of twelve stories, containing restaurant, cinema, day nursery, but no room and no need for outdoor playground. Playgrounds are being made on a scale exceeding anything we know in America or Western Europe—in “centers of recreation and culture”, where aside from the usual outdoor sports, there are cinemas, professional theatres, amateur theatres, lecture halls and innumerable booths where one can hear informal talks and seek information on a great diversity of subjects, including the various vocations. At one such booth I learned that the requirements for the architectural schools are about the same as ours, except possibly for greater requirements of language—two foreign languages are required. There are pavilions where the children can gather on rainy days and play billiards or chess—the latter seems to be the national indoor sport from the grade school on. One afternoon, in a fifteen minute ride on the river, I counted twenty shells, from singles to eight oars, about a third of the rowers being young women.

The millions of Moscow population are increasing 50% per annum. The present program calls for the razing of 60% of the residences in the city (including convents and monasteries) and replacing them with new buildings. I spent many hours wandering about at will through the slums and found nothing worse, if as bad, as in most cities of several million people. Satellite industrial centers are being developed and here a large part of the

workers will be housed. This is but part of a stupendous program of city planning and regional planning which is being pushed twenty-four hours a day in three shifts—a great new canal of strategic importance, a new harbor, deepening the river, walling its banks and raising and greatly enlarging the nine bridges so that ships of some size can pass through (ultimately the Black Sea, the Caspian, the Gulf of Finland and the Arctic Ocean will be connected in one great waterway via rivers having their heads in the Moscow region) radial and circumferential boulevards and subway systems; squares and parks; one hundred and thirty-two junior high schools each for eight hundred and eighty students during their summer vacation; an extensive group of government buildings approximate to the colossal new “Parliament” building—already under way. Enough is done to make one feel that Roman Emperors, Louis XIV and Napoleon III were “makers of little plans”.

A vast peasant population is marching out of the Middle Ages and for them a vast country is being transformed by industrialism, by a comprehensive system of education for young and old, by all the amenities of western Europe, including housing. In the very complete new apartments, will the mass of the people immediately be living more wholesomely than the more simply housed working classes of Holland and England? If so, will it be because of the housing standards, or because of the social training which they will have received?

And that brings us back to the need to scrutinize afresh the standards we in America have set up for the physical environment of the home. Particularly would I plead for more flexible standards, for stressing of basic principles rather than rigid quantitative criteria which in their very nature block off future progress and invention in connection with hygiene, in the use of new materials, new methods of construction, new arrangements. Out-moded building codes must yield. From the sub-Arctic winters of northern Maine to the sub-tropical climates of the Gulf and the southwestern states, from the lower East Side of Manhattan to the shambles of Tooneyville, we have an unlimited variety of problems to meet. We must at all times bear in mind that in the study of our problems we have only made a start.

## A Letter to The Chapters

THE Committee on Public Information will soon send to every member of The Institute a copy of a leaflet entitled "The Value of an Architect". This leaflet has been prepared in response to a very definite demand for a simple, concise statement presented in attractive form giving the most important reasons for employing an architect rather than buying a ready-made home or building without the services of an architect.

We believe that this kind of statement issued by The American Institute of Architects will lend authority to architects who are trying to tell these reasons to prospective owners and the public.

After March 1st copies in any number may be obtained from The Secretary of The Institute, The Octagon, Washington, D. C., at 2½ cents per copy.

The Committee has recently sent a letter to all chapters which may be used to help them give local newspaper editors the reasons for publishing the names of the architects along with the presentations of their work in the press.

We also desire to suggest to the chapters the promotion of architectural exhibitions sponsored by schools or colleges with the assistance of local architects. A special letter has therefore been prepared to present this subject in such form that it may be used for approach to school superintendents and

others. Copies of both of these letters may be obtained from The Secretary of The Institute.

From time to time the chapters will receive from this Committee articles on architectural subjects of general interest, which we hope will be used either in whole or in part, or revised to suit local conditions, and sent to the local press. Further, our Publicist, Mr. James T. Grady, has offered to assist all of the chapters in giving acceptable journalistic form to articles written for the press, and to advise in all matters relating to public information.

To provide our members with both material and guidance we are looking to the chapters to send us reports of interesting methods, programs, news items and articles—for architectural news is made largely by the chapters.

The members of The Institute perhaps do not know of the vast amount of public information going to the press from Mr. Grady's office, but with seventy chapters, each with an active committee on public information, The Institute is capable of accomplishments far in excess of anything we have done in the past. "The Institute is—the Chapters".

We offer you our wholehearted cooperation. We ask for yours.

Committee on Public Information,  
WILLIAM ORR LUDLOW, *Chairman.*

## Rotch Travelling Scholarship

THE examination of candidates for the Rotch Travelling Scholarship will be held early in April. The amount of the scholarship this year will be \$2,500.00, payable quarterly beginning October 1, and will be used for study and travel abroad for a term of not less than fifteen months.

Candidates must be—

1. Citizens of the United States under thirty years of age on May 1 of the year when they present themselves; and
2. Holders of a degree from an approved School of Architecture situated in Massachusetts who have had at least one year of professional work in an office; or
3. Holders of a degree from an approved School of Architecture situated outside of Massachusetts who have had at least three years of professional experience acquired in a Massachusetts office; or
4. "Special Students" who have had one year of professional work as above in Massachusetts and have satisfactorily passed the last two years of an approved School of Architecture as above in Massachusetts. Special students may in the judgment of the Committee be exempted from such examinations as have been covered by their college studies; or
5. Draughtsmen who have had six years of professional experience of which at least half has been acquired in Massachusetts offices who can, on the basis of preliminary examinations, give satisfactory evidence

of an adequate knowledge of history, construction, and freehand drawing.

The Committee will determine in advance whether or not such candidates have given adequate promise of being qualified to promote the best interests of the profession, and candidates failing to satisfy

the Committee from this standpoint may be eliminated from the further stages of the competition.

Candidates must register before March 15, 1938. Full information concerning application blanks and registration will be sent upon request to Mr. C. H. Blackall, Secretary, 31 West St., Boston, Mass.

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## M. I. T. Announces Scholarship

THE Massachusetts Institute of Technology announces that for the academic year 1938-1939, a scholarship is offered for special students in the School of Architecture with an income equal to the tuition fee for the year (\$500.00).

The scholarship will be awarded to the candidate, who, having fulfilled all other conditions stands highest in a competition in architectural design to be conducted by the School of Architecture.

The competition is open to citizens of the United States of good character, who are between twenty-

one and twenty-eight years of age, and who have had at least three years of office experience.

The program for the competitive design will be issued on Saturday, May 7, at a place in each city to be designated for each candidate by the School of Architecture.

Candidates must apply to Dean William Emerson, Head of the School of Architecture, 491 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts, and file with him on or before Monday, April 11, a form of application which will be sent upon request.

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## Seventh Annual Natchez Pilgrimage

THE Natchez Garden Club extends a cordial invitation to architects to participate in the Seventh Annual Natchez Pilgrimage conducted by the club from March 27 to April 3, inclusive.

These pilgrimages have been successfully conducted by the club for the past six years. The revenue derived therefrom is used to restore historic sites and buildings in Natchez and environs and to perpetuate its history and traditions. The fine old houses of the Antebellum period such as

The Briers, Rosalie, Auburn, Melrose and others will be open to the public during the pilgrimage, and many special entertainments are planned.

The Confederate balls, for which Natchez is famous, historical pageants, and other colorful events of the past will be re-enacted.

Full information concerning the pilgrimage may be had by writing to Mrs. Gerald H. Brandon, President of the Natchez Garden Club, Natchez, Mississippi.

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## The Producers' Council, Inc.

Research Bulletin No. 26 is now in preparation and will be available for distribution by The Producers' Council, Inc., in the near future.

The following well known producers have recently been elected to membership in The Council:

Sedgwick Machine Works, New York City, producers of dumbwaiters and elevators.

Shevlin Pine Sales Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota, sponsors of the well known Shevlin pine lumber.

## Structural Service Department

BY THEODORE I. COE, TECHNICAL SECRETARY, STRUCTURAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

### Moisture Penetration of Brick Walls.

Many theories have been advanced to explain the all too frequent penetration of moisture through brick walls. While many have contended the absorptive qualities of the brick used was responsible, others have held that the fault was chargeable to the character of mortar employed. In many instances the most careful consideration to both brick and mortar failed to result in moisture proof walls while in other cases moisture failed to penetrate walls built with apparently inferior materials.

The development and widespread use of damp-proofing treatments reflects the attempt to overcome a condition which frequently defies correction with resulting continuing and substantial maintenance expenses.

In order that the factors responsible for moisture-proof brickwork might be determined with reasonable certainty a comprehensive series of practical tests were made by the National Bureau of Standards, under the direction of D. E. Parsons, Chief of the Masonry Construction Section. The conclusions resulting from these tests are of the utmost importance to the architect, the mason contractor and the brickmason. They refute certain of the theories and conjectures frequently quoted as the factors responsible for the moisture penetration of brick walls and stress the vital importance of workmanship in the laying of brickwork.

Good workmanship must not only be made a requirement of the architect's specification but must be striven for by the masonry contractor and the brickmason if satisfactory results are to be obtained. This requires an intensive campaign of education—for contractors and brickmasons, in the effort to "speed up", have neglected the factor most important to moisture proof brickwork—the good workmanship necessary to completely fill all joints with mortar.

This situation has been recognized by many of the producers of clay products and mortar materials as well as masonry contractors and the representatives of those who lay the brick. One such contractor is Chas. W. Hammett, of Washington, D. C., who specializes in masonry construction and who has prepared a specification embodying the

principles of good workmanship written in the language of the practical brickmason. This specification has the endorsement of the Executive Board of the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers Union of America and has been published by Mr. Hammett in a well illustrated pamphlet, entitled "BETTER BRICKWORK", which also includes Mr. Parsons' illustrated article on "Locating the Causes of Rain Penetration of Brick Walls", describing the tests conducted by the National Bureau of Standards and the conclusions resulting therefrom.

It will be noted that tests of the National Bureau of Standards were based on the use of unfurrowed bed joints, while Mr. Hammett's specification calls for a limited amount of furrowing.

It is expected that further tests will be made by the Bureau of Standards on the basis of the furrowed bed recommended by Mr. Hammett.

A copy of "BETTER BRICKWORK" will be forwarded, without charge, upon request to the offices of the Louisville Cement Company at 315 Guthrie St., Louisville, Ky., or 101 Park Avenue, New York.

### A. S. T. M. Standards and Tentative Standards.

The 1938 issue of the Index to A. S. T. M. Standards and Tentative Standards is now available and a copy may be obtained, without charge, upon request to the American Society for Testing Materials, 260 S. Broad St., Philadelphia, Pa.

The Index refers to 511 Standards and 312 Tentative Standards many of which relate to Specifications, Methods of Testing, Recommended Practices, or definitions on specific subjects in the field of building and engineering which are of interest and practical value to the architect.

### Architectural Acoustics.

An interesting and informative article on this important subject is contained in the circular of the National Bureau of Standards, C418, by Paul R. Heyl and V. L. Chrysler of the Bureau staff.

The pamphlet contains an interesting and useful list of published references relating to architectural acoustics. Copies may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., at a cost of 5¢ each.

## With The Chapters

EXCERPTS FROM MINUTES, BULLETINS AND REPORTS

### Boston.

Chapter president Henry R. Shepley presided at the regular meeting of the Chapter held in the library of the Boston Architectural Club on January 4.

President Shepley gave a verbal report of a meeting with the Architectural League of Boston, whose members appear desirous of some sort of affiliation with the chapter. As this League is composed almost wholly of draughtsmen, they do not feel that they can afford to pay the full dues as at present set up. They did feel that possibly about one-half the present dues would be reasonable. In desiring affiliation, it was not so much that they wished the use of the Club for social or business meetings, but that they felt that with close association with the chapter, the Club might be used largely as an employment bureau.

William Roger Greeley reported on a letter that he had received from President Charles D. Maginnis with regard to the placing of some of the more recent graduates from architectural schools in smaller communities, where, with the help of some established architects in the larger cities as "mentors" they could make a start in the profession and eventually build up a reasonable local practice. During the discussion of the subject it was brought out that a number of the younger architects had started in this way and cases were cited where such a start had eventually led to considerable practice and an established reputation. The chapter approves extending all the help possible in establishing local architects in smaller communities.

Following dinner, which was served in the Great Hall of the Club, President Shepley called upon Mr. Arthur Shurcliff to speak on the planning of metropolitan Boston.

The guest speaker of the evening was Mr. Elliott Wadsworth, President of the Boston Chamber of Commerce and former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

### Central New York.

Following a luncheon at the Hotel Syracuse, Professor Dillenback introduced Dr. Ernest Reed of the Department of Botany of Syracuse University.

Dr. Reed gave a most absorbing talk on his travels into the uncivilized jungles of Venezuela. He has made a very thorough study of the aborigines and their customs. His lecture was made the more entertaining by his own remarkable colored moving pictures.

Professor Dillenback, as Chairman of the Committee on Education and Registration spoke on the need for cooperation of chapter members with recent graduates of schools of architecture to assist them in fulfilling the three years' experience qualification for registration in New York State. The following resolution was then passed in this connection:

*"Resolved,* That the Central New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects co-operate fully with school graduates who are complying with the three-year interim period as required by the New York State Registration Laws.

*"Be It Further Resolved,* That these graduates should receive such encouragement and guidance as is necessary to insure their successful entrance into the profession."

### Connecticut.

President Charles S. Palmer in his address at the Thirty-fifth Annual Meeting of the chapter held at the University Club in Hartford, reviewed the work done by the chapter through its various committees, and mentioned the important work carried out by the Special Committee on the revision of by-laws of which Louis A. Walsh was chairman.

He discussed the efforts of the chapter in cooperation with the Registration Board to strengthen the present registration act to the effect that no permits could be granted by the building department of a city unless prepared and signed by a registered architect.

Mr. Palmer reviewed the action taken by the chapter in connection with the newly created Public Works Department under the State's Re-Organization Program. In this matter the chapter cooperated with the Connecticut Technical Council. He referred to a communication from Regional Director Albert Harkness asking for examples of architectural work done in the state which may be

included in a circulating exhibit.

Commenting on the future of the practicing architect, Mr. Palmer declared that the profession was not all machinery. He mentioned the fact that some public work is being taken away from the private practitioner, at least for a while, but he expressed the belief that the United States Housing Program will be of material help to the architect.

Charles S. Palmer, Herbert Gibson, Douglas Orr, and William Sunderland were chosen as delegates to the Seventieth Convention with George Herbert Gray, Harold H. Davis, Louis A. Walsh, and John E. Nichols as alternates.

The following officers were unanimously elected to serve during 1938:

<i>President</i> .....	Charles S. Palmer
<i>Vice-President</i> .....	Lorenzo Hamilton
<i>Secretary-Treasurer</i> .....	Herbert Gibson
<i>Chairman Exec. Committee</i> .....	Miles H. Mann, Jr.

#### Delaware.

Mr. John P. O'Neill, architect connected with the Historical American Buildings Survey, was the guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Chapter

Retiring chapter president E. William Martin presided at the business meeting following dinner, and in his address thanked the chapter members for their cooperation during the past year and congratulated them for having created a more cordial feeling among the architects of Wilmington, and for the chapter's increased influence in the community. Following the reading of the secretary's and treasurer's reports, new chapter officers who will serve during 1938 were announced as follows:

<i>President</i> .....	Reah deB. Robinson
<i>Vice-President</i> .....	Albert Kruse
<i>Secretary</i> .....	Samuel E. Homsey
<i>Treasurer</i> .....	Alfred V. duPont
<i>Member of Executive Committee</i> .....	E. William Martin

Chapter president Robinson then assumed the chair and, following a short address, introduced Mr. O'Neill, who spoke at length concerning the work of the Historical American Building Survey.

#### Florida South.

The annual meeting of the chapter was held at the Alcazar Hotel in Miami. The high point of the meeting was the address of chapter president Vladimir Virrick, after which the reports of the secretary, the treasurer and the various committee

chairmen were read. Robert L. Weed and Richard Kiehnel were elected to serve as delegates to the Seventieth Convention of The Institute in New Orleans in April.

The officers and directors serving for the year 1937 were unanimously elected to serve during 1938.

#### Iowa.

Henry F. Hoit, Regional Director of the Central States District discussed informally the problems confronting The Institute at the annual meeting of the chapter, held at the Hotel Fort Des Moines. Mr. Hoit stressed the importance of group action, and pointed out the tangible benefits achieved in Kansas City.

Mr. Hoit mentioned the wide use of the standard contract documents by the entire building industry, a greater uniformity in professional fees, standing before courts of law in case of litigation, and the general improvement in the standing of the profession before the public.

E. A. Pickworth of Waterloo spoke in constructive criticism of professional problems, with particular regard to the small house question. The opinion of the chapter was that the architects present a united front to the end that the small house market benefit from architectural service.

#### Kentucky.

At the January meeting of the Chapter, held at the French Village in Louisville, the following Directors were elected: Elliott C. Lea, for 1 year; C. Julian Oberwarth, for 1 year; Stratton O. Hammon, for 2 years; Arthur G. Tafel, for 3 years.

Ossian P. Ward brought up the subject of architectural service for the small home, which The Institute is urging all chapters to foster. His suggestion was that a letter be sent to all members of the chapter, asking whether they would be interested in rendering architectural service on small homes. All members interested could then agree as to the amount of service to be rendered, fee to be charged, and other problems of procedure. It was decided to send out such a letter in an effort to enable the members to come to some definite conclusion as to how such a service could best be rendered in order to obtain the most satisfactory results for both the home builder and the architect.

**Northern California.**

An interesting story of a journey to Java and Bali narrated by Howard Moise was the highlight of a recent meeting of the chapter at the Stewart Hotel in San Francisco. Mr. Moise told of his rare opportunities to study the architecture, music, religion, and other phases of native life on these islands. He augmented his verbal pictures with stereopticon slides and a display of drawings collected during his sojourn. An unusual influence was displayed in the designs for a house styled in the Balinese manner, which he exhibited as having been drawn for his host and hostess during his visit.

**Northwestern Pennsylvania.**

J. Howard Hicks, secretary of the chapter, in his review of chapter activities for the year 1937, recalls the fine spirit of fellowship displayed by the members and their faithful attendance at the frequent chapter meetings. It is hoped that the attendance at meetings during 1938 will be even better than last year.

The officers and members of the chapter are to be commended for their cooperation with the many Institute committees, the Pennsylvania State Association, and other chapters of The Institute.

While much has been accomplished during the past year, Mr. Hicks stated that it was the hope of the chapter officers to accomplish even more during the coming year toward the betterment of the profession.

**Philadelphia.**

The proposed Jefferson National Expansion Memorial was one of the principal topics of discussion at the last chapter meeting. Chapter secretary Thomas Pym Cope reviewed the correspondence on the subject and described the efforts of the chapter in urging that the architect for this important project and other pending Government work be selected by means of competition. Mr. Cope read a letter from Mr. Maginnis, which advised that efforts of the chapter in this direction would be more effective if directed through The Institute rather than through outside individuals.

The Governor of Pennsylvania has appointed John Graham, Jr., as Co-ordinator of Housing for Pennsylvania. Chapter president Karcher telegraphed the Governor, commending the appointment.

**Toledo.**

The Annual Dinner Meeting of the chapter was held at the Commodore Perry Hotel, with Walter R. McCornack, Chairman of The Institute's Committee on Housing as guest speaker. Mr. McCornack gave a most comprehensive address on the policies of The Institute for 1938. He mentioned some of the projects planned for the coming year with regard to the housing needs of the country and the opportunities and responsibilities of architects in relation thereto. There was open discussion after Mr. McCornack's talk, which was wholeheartedly entered into by the members.

George Mills gave an interesting talk on the origin and history of the chapter.

**Westchester.**

There has been splendid response to the letters and questionnaires addressed by the chapter to all lending institutions in Westchester County. The letter which was sent out recently requested these institutions to report whether they were lending on mortgages at this time, whether they required full architectural services, including supervision, before approving such mortgages, and what training and experience they required of their representatives inspecting building operations during the construction period.

Accompanying the letter was a copy of "A Wise Lender Talks to Himself", written by Kenneth K. Stowell, president of the chapter. (This paper is so timely that it is published in full on page 14 of this number of THE OCTAGON.)

Replies received thus far indicate that a good percentage of the lending institutions require full architectural service in connection with all construction on which they issue mortgages, and that more than half were advancing building money.

Mr. Stowell's publicity release entitled "Architects canvass residential mortgage situation" has met with unanimous approval. A letter from Mr. Nathan Straus, U. S. Housing Authority Administrator, was read by chapter secretary Scannel, stating that as soon as a Housing Authority was formed in the Westchester district, it would be empowered to aid in the development and administration of low-rent or slum clearance projects.

Main body of text, consisting of several columns of faint, illegible characters. The text appears to be a dense block of information, possibly a list or a detailed report.



