

Journal of The American Institute of  
**ARCHITECTS**



June 1944

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Civilization's Cultural Treasure Chest

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Our Responsibilities to Service Men

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Architectural Criticism of 1854

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A Washington Gypsy

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Boston Seeks a Master Plan

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The Twentieth Century Architect

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Baltimore's Reaction to Dimensional  
Coordination

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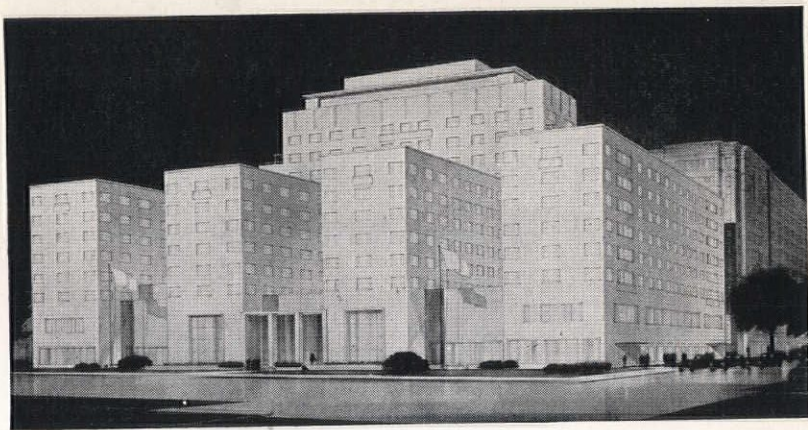
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# The Twentieth Century Architect

By *Walter T. Rolfe*

CHAIRMAN, A.I.A. COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

THERE IS great stimulation in the prospects of what the Twentieth Century Architect might be. Architecture is a peaceful, creative, and constructive profession, but it cannot escape the realism of opportunity and responsibility in an age that has given us a century of development *almost in the last decade.*

To the breadth and depth of an age that unleashes the social forces of world conflict, vision of a world constitution, world collective security, *what have we comparable to offer?* In the presence of such astounding ideas as radar, television, electronics, modern surgery and medicine, and world aviation, *what can we contribute?* Obviously, in the presence of such contemporary progress we should be a progressive profession.

The scientific world, in which we all live, has made more progress since 1830 than it had made up to that time. This is an astonishing fact and the impact of it has not been reflected as it should

by the profession of architecture. We are supposedly an imaginative profession, one of the very few; yet we have not fully used our inventive powers in our own times when all around us are people doing magnificent contemporary thinking. We accept contemporary progress in our scientific world, our transportation, and our food. We see it in our shows, we operate it in our equipment and devices, and we are proud of it. We *are* abreast of our times in practically everything except in our architecture.

How then can we defend our reluctance to leave the architectural past when we have traveled so far from its cultural causes, particularly when we have so freshly attacked our other problems at the time level of our own century? Only when we do use our competence, ideas, and contributions to the fullest extent shall we make ourselves the force for progress we want to be and now are no little disappointed to discover we are not.

We often linger in the emotional aura of the nineteenth century, when the usefulness of architects was taken for granted—by us. When the war broke, our usefulness was so misunderstood or unknown that architects were given no professional classification. Yet in every theater of the war, in industry, in special assignments—civil and military—and in education, architects have repeatedly acted with courage and imagination in situations of great breadth and responsibility. But too often we have been commended as individuals and not as *architects*.

Our lack of a clear and decisive program has forced the public to grope for its architectural education, and naturally it accepted the architecture we left for it to see and use. Timidity begets timidity, and the public cannot respond without a stimulating leadership. We have often turned our faces backward toward the past and are frightened at turning them resolutely toward the future. In retaining the significant contributions of history we often confuse the architectural corpse with the spirit of the age. The architectural tombs of the past are empty, but the spirit of tradition should animate and encourage us to create

an architecture that is as distinctive in our times as those of history have been in theirs.

*We are still dispensable* because we have not created an architecture so appropriately related to our own times that it cannot be reproduced by laymen. Having been a frontier people, we often cling to the things we remember rather than create new ones for ourselves. Less than twenty per cent of our buildings have been designed by us. The fact that we are only this effective shows the relative significance of our contribution—in the public mind.



The welter of bad examples in our country testifies to the general confusion of taste in architecture. Good architecture is the exception rather than the rule. The architecture of entire communities should be good. Our interpretation of a better integrated twentieth-century community life and environment should make it so. We must now create this architecture for a whole new age, an age that brings its own challenging opportunities and responsibilities.

Some schools and many architects realize the necessity for a community architecture that



springs from local resources. Naturally those schools are not training men to be mere draftsmen. They are training future architects and planners, requiring powers of thinking, vision, courage, and performance. This emphasis is encouraging and important to everyone—and very different from mere training at the vocational level.



We are still training professional people while other countries are using theirs for fighting. Unprecedented professional opportunities will come when the world conflagration subsides, and design and redesign begin again. America will emerge as a world power in a unique position of great influence. Its architects should be respected, and their advice and consultation sought, as never before. We certainly do need great architects—*now*.

We need architects who can *unite* the esthetic and emotional contributions of the past with the technical and scientific present, to plan a great and adequate architecture of the future. Engineering and technology alone are not enough—and never will be so long as human beings have imaginative minds. We must keep our sense of

the dramatic, the magnificent, and the beautiful and to our sensitive emotions and creative abilities add the ingredient of our scientific century.

We need a simple and understandable yet challenging professional policy. The very title of THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS implies authority and competence world-wide in influence. We cannot be content to be mere members of a professional society that believes its mission is complete. It is our professional task and responsibility to bring ourselves resolutely up to date. This must be done by the *members* of The Institute, for *we are* The Institute.

This is our opportunity for a new kind of leadership based on an entirely different concept of architectural performance. With the help of scientific invention we must create an architecture so adequately related to local environment, materials, tradition, and culture that our people will demand originals and will not return to documents for copies.

These are the practical steps we should take to attain this respected, significant, and authoritative position:



1. We must found, direct, and conduct an Institute Research Foundation to determine the value of inventive ideas, architecture, and commodities in the interest of the consumer. Those meeting minimum standards should be so certified.

2. This new architecture should be the result of careful scientific experiments in shelter, comfort, and function—insulation, heat loss and control, acoustics—as well as in workable planning . . . not left to theory that becomes an experiment at the owner's expense. This indigenous and inherently honest architecture will be very inspiring, and, because of the prestige of research in our age, very desirable.

3. A professional director of public education in the Institute foundation should be available to all our professional people. Education and practice could go to him for findings and information that are up to the minute and based on facts resulting from study conducted by the profession. He should coordinate the *public* education program.

*Professional* education should remain in the schools, but it is the responsibility of practitioners to aid the foundation in determining the needs of the future, so the schools may best accomplish their educational purpose with an even greater freedom.

By using them in its work program, the foundation should give valuable manual and inventive experience to young architects and

planners in research, in writing and drawing their findings, and in working with contemporary materials.

4. We need an illustrated professional publication, progressive and distinguished, distinctly twentieth-century in professional character.

5. We need a professional, authoritative handbooklet on "Architecture—A Twentieth Century Career" (or a better title) that is lively, readable, and challenging. It should be available everywhere for anyone interested in architecture. It should represent the entire profession—education, accrediting, registration, practice, and research.

6. The foundation should serve as a national institute of design (for regional and national judgments, regional exhibitions, and program creation only). This impersonal national service is needed in the development of a national architectural point of view and for schools to compare impersonally their progress with that of other schools.

This is but part of the whole broad program we should develop. Through such a program we can be of much greater practical value to *all* our people. We must envision an improved service to society as a whole. Then we must inform the public in a fine professional way, and move as a profession and a people toward a better



architecture of the future. We must use our planning abilities for the whole community and offer freely the indispensable contribution we can make, over and above private practice. We must make our purpose and value so clear through our own attitudes and works that the community will understand and desire them.

Only when we have attained a superb performance through indispensable service will we be included in all community councils. When the Twentieth Century Architect successfully projects the stimulation of the current scientific age into our own architecture, there will be no question of his indispensability.

## Our Responsibilities to Service Men

**D**OUTBLESS MANY Institute members feel a sense of responsibility to the architects, draftsmen and architectural students who have entered the armed forces. Out of this widespread feeling there are emerging some suggestions as to what we can do about it.

FROM DOUGLAS WM. ORR, F.A.  
I.A. Director of the New England District:—

For some time it has been quite obvious from communications received from men in the service that they are greatly concerned about their post-War position. There seems to be a strong feeling that in planning for the post-War building effort, the established practitioners are so organizing it that all of the work will be in their offices

and that the discharged service men will come home with no prospects of commissions. This, in my opinion, would be a tragic error and it is a question which needs the closest attention of the profession. I recall that reference was made to it at the Memphis meeting of the Board by Director Provine. I have given the matter considerable study and had prepared some suggestions. Joseph Leland, President of the Boston Chapter, has also something to offer on the subject (See below). I am therefore submitting these suggestions for consideration with his.

The service men concerned seem to fall into three general categories:

1—Students whose training was not completed when they entered the service.

2—Young architects or drafts-

men who had been employed in established offices.

3—Architects who were practicing under their own names and who closed their offices on entering the service.

As to the first classification, it would appear that this might be a problem to be worked out with the schools, to provide for the reentry of these men for the completion of their courses or for special accelerated courses without too great a loss of time. This might well be considered by the Committee on Education.

Under the second classification, articles 3 and 4 in Mr. Leland's suggestions would seem to offer a solution, provided it is actively carried forward by every Chapter and Association.

As to the third classification; this is a somewhat more complicated problem, but one which, in my opinion, is most important. If it is left unsolved there might arise a definite line of cleavage between architects who have been in the service and those who continued their practice. This would be extremely detrimental to the whole scheme of unification and, beyond that, would probably tend to cause the establishment of service men's pressure groups. This would be a distinct liability to the pro-

fession and would result in a most unfortunate situation.

Therefore, I think it is incumbent on each Chapter and Association, at least where public works are concerned, to attempt to have assigned to offices of men coming out of the service such public work as would be applicable to their practice and which do not call for immediate planning.

In private work it would also be extremely desirable to recommend to private clients the use of such men for private work, where it seemed possible to do this. In other words, genuinely try to share the work with those men.



I agree very much with Mr. Leland that such an unselfish act on the part of the members of the profession would undoubtedly not be without its reward, but it certainly would show some vision and faith in the future of the architectural profession. It would help to provide future architects and to keep the profession intact. Justice, as well as Charity, begins at home and it seems to me entirely proper that the profession reward the service men for fulfilling a larger duty, and assure them that their service was not in vain.



FROM JOSEPH D. LELAND, F.A.  
I.A., President of the Boston  
Chapter:—

There seems to be no reasonable doubt as to the adequacy of Army and Navy provisions for the physical well-being of the men in our armed forces. It is safe to assume that everything humanly possible is being done for their physical welfare. It is in the matter of mental health, however, that the problem is not so simple, though much has been attempted in this direction through liberal recreational and mail facilities coupled with furloughs.

It would be idle to overlook the fact, nevertheless, that many of the men in service have much to disquiet their minds—particularly as to the problems which will have to be faced immediately after the war. High on the list of such problems ranks the matter of a man's own economic niche. In an attempt to relieve, in some measure at least, this preoccupation with post-War placement, it is proposed that The A. I. A. undertake the following:—

1—Urge every Chapter and State Association to compile and keep up to date a list of the organization's members in the services. This list should, so far as possible,

include draftsmen who may not be members.

2—Have the organization officials keep in touch with these men by writing them at least twice a year, as evidence of our interest in their welfare.

3—Urge the active offices to assume the duty of providing work for returning service men who seek it.

4—Have the organizations appoint committees to interview the returning architect or draftsman and guide him into professional activity.

The above is but a sketchy outline of what might be done, but it might be mentioned that the primary purpose is not only economic placement in the future, but also mental reassurance in the present. To a service man perturbed about his post-War future, few things could add so much to his peace of mind as would the knowledge that a friendly agency was interested in his behalf and doing all that is now possible to assure his reassumption of peace-time activities.

To those inclined to argue that such a committee would merely be one more employment bureau, duplicating the activities of other agencies, I urge that such a contention is only a half-truth. A service rendered to architectural men by fellow members of their profession

cannot fail to have an especial appeal. The semi-annual letter alone would carry a message of interest and cheer, a mental fillip to help bridge the gulf between induction into service and return to active practice.

Seldom is an unselfish act without its substantial reward. It should not be overlooked that the war, through stopping of teaching alone, has made serious inroads into the number of men engaged in architecture.

Many more potential members of our profession will be lured into other fields by the prospect of greater rewards and more immediate employment. For the good of our profession it is advisable, even urgent, that all qualified men should have their interest in architecture not only sustained but quickened to the point where no thought of desertion is possible. Then will The A. I. A. have retained these men for the arduous post-War period of construction.

## The Architect's Horizon

A report of the New York Chapter's Committee on Fields of Practice, received by the Board of Directors, A.I.A., with enthusiasm and with approval of its publication in the *Journal*. The Committee: Morris Ketchum, Jr., chairman; Morris Sanders, vice-chairman; James Gordon Carr; Robert D. McLaughlin, Jr.; Jacob Moskowitz; Kenneth Reid; George Cooper Rudolph; Perry Coke Smith; and Lester J. Tichy

**Y**OUR COMMITTEE believes that the tremendous change during the past ten years in an architect's everyday activities necessitates a new definition of that shop-worn phrase, "the general practice of architecture."

Many members of the profession do not realize even today that architects are no longer isolated specialists in building construction. Instead they have become, through training and ability in design, organizers of all the phases of man-

made shelter, of man's environment, and of those durable goods that he needs as adjuncts to his daily life. Architects today are qualified to coordinate every phase of the physical surroundings that human beings inhabit and every kind of equipment that contributes to their means of living.

Not only the profession but, more important, the public is uninformed as to the true scope of architecture. The old delusion, popular for the last hundred years,



that architects are masters of esthetics but not of the practical problems of daily life is still with us.



But this is the twentieth century—not the nineteenth. Time and the architectural profession have changed. Architects are taking advantage today of the fact that they belong to the only profession in which education and practice combine to equip its practitioners for generalized thinking—the coordination of all the elements of a building project—practical, esthetic, scientific, financial, utilitarian—down to the last small detail.

More than that, they are ready to handle the larger phases of living—city planning, regional planning, housing, the problems of prefabrication, the design of consumer's goods, furniture and equipment. Architects have been outstandingly successful in these and many allied fields.

We do not claim that all architects are experts in such fields, but we do claim that they can fit themselves to master such specialized branches of architecture with time and practice, and that they should be encouraged to do so, not only

for their own welfare but also that the profession may survive and give its best service to the nation.

For architects have a splendid foundation to build on. They are trained to analyze building problems in terms of contemporary life and they have acquired a thorough knowledge of modern materials and how to use them.

The scope of the architect's services in these newer fields may be grouped under five headings—advisory, research, product development, public education, and delineation, as follows:

#### ADVISORY

Chain stores and hotels, banks and other organizations have constant need of advice on purchases, repair, design, maintenance, etc.

*Planning*—All manufacturers and distributors must constantly shape and reshape their policies in a competitive world. Architects with knowledge of their fields could serve them well as planning coordinators.

*Technical*—Surely architects with high degrees of knowledge on fabrication, on materials and on end-usage can serve building material manufacturers. It is a fact that they do, usually by going into the companies. This should not shut the door to independent architects who can cooperate with the inside staffs—for the outside advisor brings a breadth and fresh-



ness of understanding to problems that the inside staff cannot match, together with an independent authority and a broad judgment. Nor need the architect confine himself to companies in the building field. He can advise steel, plastics, container paper-box, ceramic, or any other kind of company on technical matters if he gives their field a little more study than he would apply to a tough architectural job—say, a hospital or a fabricating plant. His advice can be made profitable to the company—and to himself.

#### RESEARCH

The architect can engage in market or product research for clients. He can do so on his own or in conjunction with market analysts. Sensitive by nature and training, the architect brings a creative approach to this most important and profitable field. He has to learn the jargon of the trade, the pet methods of reporting in written, figure and graphic forms—but these are only details. The architect can explore competitive activities, potential markets and trends better than others—if he puts his mind to the job.

#### PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

The architect can learn to design for the machine and for the mass market. The discipline and personal demands are more severe than most architects like to believe but, once they are respected, the architect can be unusually successful.

Packaging, layout, homefurnish-

ings, consumers' durable goods, producer goods and transportation are all segments of design for the machine. Some are tougher and more specialized than others. All offer opportunities.

#### PUBLIC EDUCATION

Call it promotion if you will. A manufacturer with a good product needs promotion, for, unlike the architect, he has long given up the old delusion that the world insists upon beating a path to the door of the man who designs a better mousetrap.

The architect has grasp of people and things; his imagination arms him for the job of explaining to lay and professional people how they can use the things—by written word, exhibit, display and diagram. This can be a profitable field.

#### DELINEATION

As is obvious, the architect can use his more purely esthetic talents. Art direction, drawings, advertisements, brochures and the like must be made.

In short, architects are not merely building specialists, but valuable advisors on all problems relating to the planning, construction, coordination and equipment of the many phases of the material framework of living.

Not only does the architect bring to these fields a unique background of education and practice in planning; he also is equipped, thanks to



the thorough foundation work of the A. I. A., with a code of ethics and a system of fees and charges that have stood the test of time.

This Committee believes that experience proves that fees for architectural services based on either the lump-sum system, the cost-plus-a-fixed-fee system, or the percentage system, as formulated by the A. I. A., can be used as a basis for reimbursement for the design of either a building or a building product.

The only obstacles in the way of further broadening the architect's activities are: first, his conception of his own abilities; second, the public's conception of those abilities.

As a group, architects are unusually well equipped to engage in the widest variety of fields outside of the building field. But, as a group, architects are handicapped by the following:

1. Incomplete education, both at school and as adults, plus a "conditioning" that shuts out the possibility of lines of endeavor related to architecture.

2. An archaic, squeamish attitude regarding self-promotion that frequently leads to barren fake modesty or its opposite—exaggerated self-confidence.

3. An immaturely broad ap-

proach to curricular vocations that overlooks the fact that the more specialized the field, the more intensive must be the study.

On the other hand, at the present time the public does not think that it will get its money's worth from an architect unless there is actual construction to be done. We, as architects, must convince the public that we have something to contribute that is worth paying for; that our advice is worth what it costs in many other fields beside the technical one of construction.

To further this end, this Committee proposes that immediate steps be taken to familiarize the profession and the public with the full scope of architecture. These suggestions can be grouped as follows:

#### LOCAL

The Chapter should discuss the Committee's findings, revise or enlarge them if it so desires, and then recommend to the National Convention that these new fields of architectural practice be given recognition and proper promotion on a national scale.

Since actual performance is the surest proof of ability, it would be advisable to organize, at a later date, an exhibit by members of this Chapter of their work in these fresh fields. This exhibit might form a nucleus for a future showing throughout the country.



## NATIONAL

The Committee believes that this Chapter and the National Convention of The A. I. A. should consider an important step that would benefit the entire profession: namely, to engage the services of a firm of alert and able promotion managers. This firm should be one with a national reputation as public relations experts. Their duties would include the education of the American public, by every legitimate means, in the value of the architect to all the activities in which society is engaged.

For it is only by thinking about these fresh fields of architecture; then by gaining experience in solving their problems; and, finally, by convincing the public of our value as proven experts, that we will succeed in permanently enlarging the scope of the profession.

The alternate has been in the past, and will be in the future, a gradual strangulation of our oppor-

tunities. Pseudo-professions will become the established inheritors by default, of field after field of architecture. Architects are in real danger of becoming mere technicians and employees of those more alert to the opportunities of contemporary life.

The present war has underscored this condition. The public and its government have been told for many years, by prominent publicists of our profession, that architects were merely esthetic experts—exterior and interior decorators. As such, their services were not felt by the public or by the government to be vital to the war effort. It is time that this insulting libel to all of us be supplanted by a truer picture; otherwise we can never take our rightful place in the post-War world.

## Boston Seeks a Master Plan

*By William Roger Greeley*

THE BOSTON CONTEST is on. Individuals and team to the number of 175 registered by April 15 their intention to compete. By June 19 their schemes will be in the hands of the judges. Prizes are \$5000, \$2000, and ten of \$100 each.

What is it?

The first opportunity ever offered lay citizens of this community to express publicly, under distinguished auspices, their views on how to steer this metropolis through the perilous waters ahead. The Contest, open to any indi-



vidual or team, asks the contestant to outline for the metropolitan area, policies upon which it may hope to thrive and upon which intensive city planning of a technical nature can be based.

The Contest requires no maps, diagrams or technical plans. It deals with the philosophy, as you and I would call it, which must underlie future progress. Its main point is correlation of policies or programs in one master-program. It demands that each entrant shall coordinate his program upon the wide and inclusive consideration of:—

#### *A. Political Organization*

The relation of state, metropolitan, and municipal jurisdictions. Among possible solutions are the following—one greater city, local governments with over-all county or district control, semi-official collaboration to direct such public activities as affect the area as a whole.

#### *B. Taxation and Revenue System*

Means of securing adequate revenue. Methods of assessment, control, and collection, in relation to distribution of industry and business.

#### *C. Assessment and Depreciation*

Public requirements for amortization of underlying encumbrances on real estate, property "life insurance," etc., as affecting assess-

ments, obsolescence and condemnation.

#### *D. Industrial Relationships and Development*

Industrial destiny of the area. Incentives and inducements that must be offered to industry by government, industry, labor and the general public. Basic policies necessary to provide conditions of full employment.

#### *E. Commercial Relations and Development*

An integrated metropolitan policy regarding location and types of retail centers. Essentials of commercial development: ease of access, parking areas, physical facilities, labor supply, related establishments.

#### *F. Educational Development*

Policy toward educational institutions; their potential part in the general well-being of the area.

#### *G. Recreational Development*

Coordination of the unusual recreational facilities of the metropolitan area so as to secure their greatest degree of utilization. Developments to meet future needs.

#### *H. Welfare Systems*

Policies for public and private relief, health, and hospital agencies on a regional basis with common objectives.

#### *I. Residential Redistribution and Development*

Provision and planning of housing facilities. Coordination of public and private housing interests.



Slum clearance. Residential decentralization and urban redevelopment.

### *J. Transportation*

Transportation policies required to carry out proposed development program for the metropolitan area. Coordinated development of motor, rail, water, and air traffic. Transportation needs of the future.

### *K. Citizen Participation*

Development and maintenance of citizen interest in following up the Boston Contest, and insuring that public officials carry out cooperative policies which are in the public interest. Organization and enrolment of volunteers, publicity, etc.

The sponsors include a Republican Governor and a Democratic Mayor, two great educators and their Universities, the Chamber of Commerce, and the original instigator of the whole thing—the Boston Chapter of The A. I. A.

Note the judges:

Charles Francis Adams, President, Greater Boston United War Fund.

Harold S. Buttenheim, Editor of *The American City*.

William Roger Greeley, Chairman of the Boston Contest.

Joseph Hudnut, Harvard University.

Daniel L. Marsh, President of Boston University.

Lewis Mumford, Author of "The Culture of Cities," etc.

Henry J. Nichols, President, Boston Chamber of Commerce.

There are in this community perhaps 10,000 groups of from four to twelve people who meet once a week or once a fortnight to play cards. Let me paint you, in a flight of fancy, the millennium. If each group would tie a string around the deck until June 19th and play the Boston Contest game—just for fun, mind you—the result would be a tide of citizen interest that would carry Boston over all the sand-bars and hidden rocks ahead of it. Whatever the proposals contained in the 10,000 essays might be, the mere act of discussing together and expressing ideas on civic programs would engender a community will-power sufficient to perform undreamed-of civic reformation. Only one, and that a minor, disadvantage would attend this resurgence of good citizenship: the judges would take one glance at the 10,000 papers and commit suicide. Well, every great advance is bought at a price.

Other metropolitan areas have already asked for help in setting up similar contests.

Here is an idea so simple, so plainly based on democratic prin-



principles, so easy to carry out, that it may be worth the efforts of other

architectural bodies throughout the country.



## Architectural Criticism of 1854

Excerpts from an anonymous article, "New-York Daguerreotyped" in *Putnam's Monthly* for March, 1854

PRIVATE dwellings in a country like the United States, where every man labors for his own individual comfort, and not for the glory of the state, or the ambition of a monarch, offer the best evidences of the prosperity, the intelligence, and the general taste of the people. It is in the private mansions which are built, ornamented, and furnished to conform to the tastes, the incomes, and the exigencies of their occupants, and not in the public edifices that we must look for the true development of the national taste . . .

The old economical style of buildings, without a shadow of ornament, which succeeded the more imposing structures of ante-revolutionary times, have nearly all disappeared, and scarcely a vestige of old New-York remains.

The old houses in Broadway were all of brick, and plain in their exteriors beyond belief; and the cheapest "colony houses" of the

present day, built for the accommodation of poor emigrant families, are elegant structures, externally, compared with the city residences of our wealthiest families but few years since. Plain brick fronts have been succeeded by dressed freestone and sculptured marble; plate glass has become universal, and lace window drapery has displaced the old chintz curtains which once flaunted their bright colors through small window panes.

The introduction of pure Greek models into England and this country, produced some slight improvement on this plain brick style, and in houses of the best class exhibited designs similar in character to those in Bond and Great Jones streets. But the most elegant Grecian mansion in New-York is, without doubt, that in College Place at the corner of Murray-street. The Grecian style, however, is not easily adapted to modern uses, though

more so than the Egyptian, which has been less successfully adopted by Mr. R. L. Stevens in his house in Barclay-street. The semi-circular Corinthian portico of the house in College Place has a bold and graceful appearance, being ascended by a handsome flight of steps in front, to the old level of the College ground, on which it is built. Although two stories of architraved windows are not in strict accordance with a single Grecian order of columns, we should have preferred them to the mere slits between pilasters which are made to serve for windows in this building. The conservatory to the right, and the dome upon the roof extend and raise the composition to a good proportion. The opposite view from Murray-street, in which the portico appears backed by the trees, is even more picturesque than the one here given.

"Every man's house is his castle," says the law-maxim; but in these days of peace-societies, we cannot think the *castellated* Gothic the best style to build it in! This observation applies to the two houses at the corner of Twelfth-street and Fifth Avenue; in which, even if we excused the choice of style, to which we have several objections to offer, we are obliged to notice

several faults that might easily have been avoided. The attic windows are too wide; and all are without stone mullions, which are essentials in Gothic construction; while the external blinds—inappropriate for Gothic windows, when closed, destroy all depth and shadow. The balconies and porches have no connection with the general design. In point of solid execution the buildings deserve praise, being entirely of brown stone, and the doors of real oak.

Mr. Waddell's residence, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-eighth-street, may be called a suburban villa, and is remarkable for being inclosed in its own garden ground, which is as high as the original level of the island, and descends by sloping grass banks to the grade of the street.

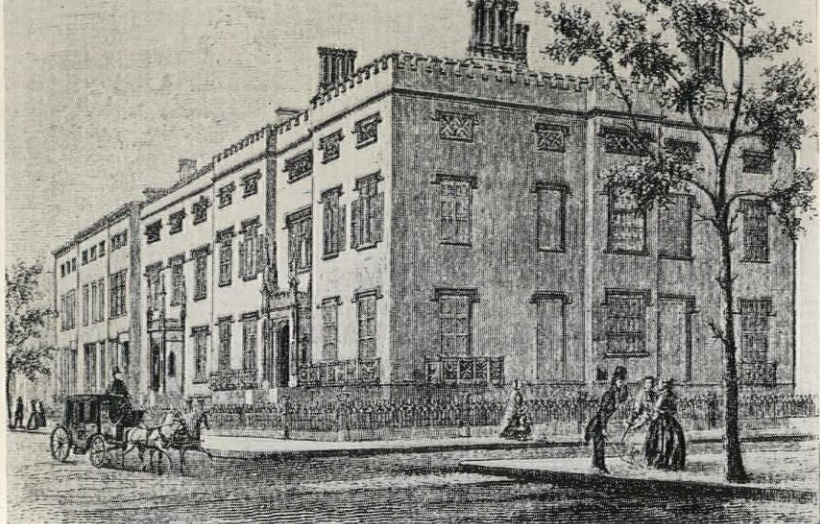
Our objections to *rows* of houses in the Gothic style, do not apply to this case. The general composition and effect is picturesque and commendable, notwithstanding an occasional want of character and correctness in the details. It is built of brick stuccoed, with brown sand-stone dressings, the color of which does not quite harmonize with the yellowish gray of the



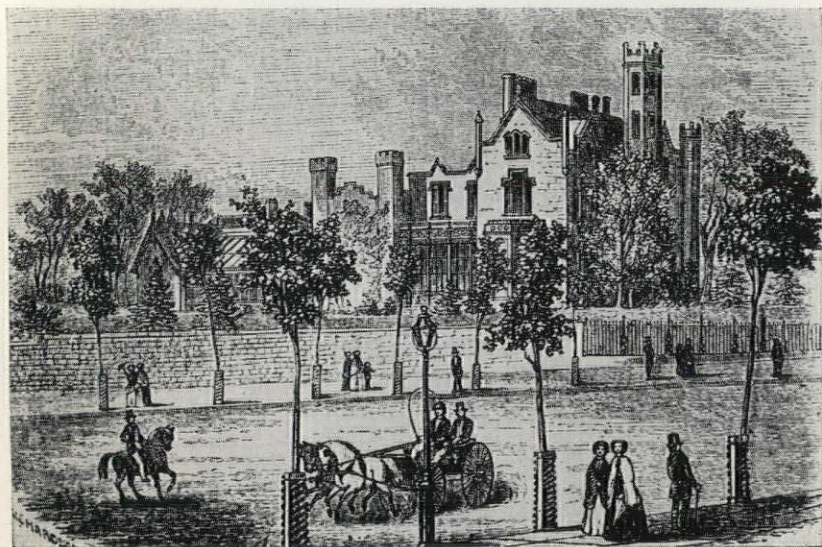


"The most elegant Grecian mansion in New  
York, in College Place at Murray-street"

*From a woodcut by Richardson and Cox.*



"We cannot think the castellated Gothic the best style to build in!"—houses at Fifth Ave. and Twelfth-street



Mr. Waddell's suburban villa at Fifth Ave. and Thirty-eighth-street—"picturesque and commendable"  
*From woodcuts by Richardson and Cox*



walls; external blinds we have already noticed as incompatible with Gothic mullioned windows. A conservatory, and various offices extend to the left; there is also a Gothic cottage lodge on the north side of the garden, of which, and of the whole ground, a fine view is obtained from the terrace of the Croton Reservoir; while two or three old trees still standing in the garden on that side add to the semi-rural character of the edifice.

The above is a specimen of our "Domestic Architecture"; which, we think, considering its very recent pretensions to attraction as a fine art, has made a far more satisfactory progress than our public, commercial, or ecclesiastical structures, except in a few instances. For the sake of our distant, and foreign readers, we may add, that the *interiors* of the stores, hotels, and private dwellings we have represented, are, besides being replete with every modern convenience, in point of decoration and furniture, of a more elaborate, showy, and generally tasteful character than the exteriors; and, owing to the greater diffusion of wealth and luxury, more rich and costly than those of corresponding buildings in Europe.

Objections have been made, on moral and economical grounds, to the display of wealth and splendor in architectural decoration, but, we cannot think with justice: we regard it as the mere natural and normal expression of progress, the counterpart of that formerly exhibited by the great commercial republics of Italy and Holland. Luxury is a vice, only when it is extravagance in an individual: the private vices of ostentation and extravagance become public benefits to trade and industry. The due scale of expense for every grade of society can never be fixed by lawgiver or moralist. The sumptuous environments of the richest merchant are by use and familiarity no greater luxuries to him, than more homely comforts are to the mechanic; and in a country, where all are striving to get rich, it may seem to be hypocrisy and envy, to cavil at the use and display of riches. But, viewed in a public light, every external indication of prosperity tends to add attractions to a city, and to promote its increase and influence in more important objects . . .



The improved methods of lighting and warming houses, and the

use of Croton water, together with the general system of drainage now almost universally adopted have led to great economy of space in the construction of city dwellings, and it seems hardly possible that any thing more compact, cosy, comfortable and elegant in the shape of a dwelling house will ever be invented, than the first class houses

now built in the upper part of the city. Painted ceilings, gilded cornices, and floors of colored marbles, or inlaid with vari-colored woods were once very rare, even in the houses of the wealthiest merchants; but now these elegancies are so common that their absence would be much more likely to excite remark than their presence.

## Charles Frederick Bowers

FIRST LIEUTENANT CHARLES FREDERICK BOWERS, Air Corps, Army of the United States; Architect, Professor of Architectural Engineering at Iowa State College, was the first member of The American Institute of Architects to make the supreme sacrifice for his country. He left a family and a secure position on the faculty to enlist, because he felt the urgency of active participation.

Those of us who have had the pleasure and privilege of working with him miss his cheerful spirit, his sincerity and his willingness to assume Chapter assignments. To

his many students he was inspiring teacher, wise counselor and loyal friend.

WHEREAS, the Iowa Chapter of The American Institute of Architects has lost a member graced with unusual ability and high ideals, a man we are proud to have known and to have been associated with;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that it is our desire to express to his family, to record in the Chapter Proceedings and publish in the *Journal of The American Institute of Architects*, this tribute to his memory.

WAR WORKERS buying new homes through the FHA plan in 1943 paid an average price of \$4,500, made an average down payment of \$410 and carried an FHA-insured mortgage for \$4100.





## Civilization's Cultural Treasure Chest

By *Herbert L. Mathews*

Excerpts from the author's "Allies to Spare Treasures in Europe During Invasion," in the *New York Times* of May 5, 1944. The article describes the purposes of a body with the rather unwieldy title of "The American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in Europe."

PLANS TO prevent unnecessary destruction of the cultural, art and religious treasures of Europe have just come to fruition after many months of preparation and agitation. A military mission, headed by a high Army staff officer, is about to leave for the Mediterranean and England, armed with authority to give the necessary orders and with thorough documentation prepared here by commissions which have been working since last August.

It is hoped this will silence criticisms that enough efforts have not yet been made to save for posterity works whose value far transcends any question of nationality or religion. It is also hoped that permission to publicize the new plans will bring about a reconsideration in the public mind of the true factors involved, which have been somewhat distorted by war passions.

The criteria in the future, as in

the past, will be those set down by Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower in his letter to all commanders on Dec. 29, 1943: military necessity and the saving of Allied soldiers' lives. However, within these limits, fresh and determined efforts are going to be made to see that every officer and soldier, down to the bombardier who releases his destructive load, the artilleryman who pulls the lanyard of his gun and the dogface who is going to charge into a town or village, know what must be saved if it is humanly possible. Moreover, they are going to be indoctrinated with a better understanding of the reasons for saving what is left of the cultural heritage of Europe.

Men like Francis Henry Taylor, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and all the other prominent figures who have been working on this problem for months, are particularly

anxious that harmful issues like religion and revenge be kept out of the picture. Just because the Germans carelessly or callously destroyed some 4,000 Protestant churches in England is not considered a valid reason for destroying an equal number of Catholic churches in Italy or elsewhere. The world is the poorer for such destruction, wherever it occurs.



For instance, in a recent bombing of Padua, Italy, the Augustinian Church of the Eremitani was badly damaged. It so happens that this famous little church, built in the late thirteenth century, contained a series of precious frescoes by Mantegna, examples of whose work are rare. The loss to the world of art is therefore a serious one, and the task of the Army group now going over is to see whether such calamities are avoidable in the future.

In this case problems of weather, visibility and defense enter, which would explain what happened; but there are also the questions of whether the bombardiers were told in advance of the location and importance of the church and whether the bombing run could not have been planned at the strategic air

base so as not to fly over the Eremitani, which is some 800 yards from the railroad lines.

In the same way the bombing run for the first great raid on Rome was plotted directly over the Basilica of San Lorenzo, and, as was announced later, that church, which was one of the most important in Christendom, was all but destroyed. The writer was on that raid, and he is in a position to say that the bombardiers were not warned of the locale of San Lorenzo. The destruction gave the Germans and Italian Fascists wonderful propaganda, as all such incidents will, and it is one purpose of the new commission to avoid giving the enemy such comfort in the future.



As far back as last November the writer had an exchange of correspondence with General Eisenhower's chief of staff on the subject and met with sympathetic response. There was no question about the desirability of sparing Italy's treasures, but the question was whether the Germans would not take advantage of such a determination if it were made known. It was finally decided that Allied good intentions should be made known and the



onus for destruction placed on the Germans if they deliberately used any cultural or religious building for war purposes.

The second and much graver problem was how to see that not only the order but the knowledge of what to spare were spread downward to the men who did the actual bombing and shooting, and only now that problem is being solved. Many factors are involved, and it would be foolish not to expect a certain amount of destruction under the best circumstances; but it is hoped to avoid a repetition of such outstanding examples of avoidability as the destruction of the Cathedral Benevento and the Church of Santa Chiara in Naples.

Both these tragedies occurred before the invasion of Italy by the Allied troops. Benevento is a road center with an important bridge which the Germans were using. We bombed it in daylight in a more or less block-busting raid, which incidentally completely destroyed the cathedral.



The bronze doors, which were made in Byzantium, were among the greatest treasures of their kind in Europe. The facade was partly medieval and inside were paintings

and other treasures of great value.

I stood before the wrecked facade with the Bishop of Benevento, who literally wept in telling me that, aside from a few of the treasures in the sacristy and on the altar, nothing had been saved.

Santa Chiara in Naples was generally considered the finest example of Gothic in southern Italy. It was high up on the hill, away from the port. It was destroyed in a night raid.



Americans sometimes do not stop to think of the extent to which history is being made by our campaign in Italy. Our bombings of the ruins of Pompeii (photographs of which have been published by the Army Signal Corps) caused destruction that will forever figure in the accounts of those ruins.

We damaged some famous and beautiful heritages of the Roman Empire, particularly houses on the Via dell' Abbondanza—those of the Vestals, the Vettii, Sallustius and Fortuna, not to mention the museum at the main entrance. It was done on certified information that the Germans were using the ruins to store material and for anti-aircraft guns. The problem which future historians will argue about



is whether such use by the Germans justified the bombing.

In the same way the bombing of the Abbey of Monte Cassino has made history and provided an argument for future generations.

This was a case where religious as well as artistic and cultural susceptibilities were hurt. The abbey, which is on the spot where the Benedictine Order was founded 1,400 years ago, is one of the most sacred places in Christendom, and no one now denies that the Germans have a better fortress there than they had before. Consequently, the argument hinges on the justifiability of the reasons for the bombing at that particular time.

In the same way the bombings of Rome have become part of a religious as well as a cultural controversy. The commissions working here on the whole European problem—there are three of them, one appointed by the State Department and headed by Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts—desire that the problem of Rome be looked at from a nonsectarian basis. After all, a great part of the treasures of the Eternal City long antedate the Christian era, and a work like (to pick one of thousands) the statue of Moses by Michelangelo in the

Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva has an artistic value that has nothing to do with religion.

However, the question of bombing the railroad station in Rome and, if need be, fighting for every street of the city, has been settled and is beyond the competence of the authorities working to save cultural treasures. Their efforts, therefore, are to be concentrated on making known to every soldier involved where the treasures are, so that as much can be spared as possible.



This sort of thing is going to be done not only for Italy, but for every country in Europe. Italy has been used here as an example because it is the first country into which the Allies have penetrated and because there is much first-hand knowledge available on what has happened. It has provided valuable lessons upon which to base a campaign to save as much as can be saved in the coming invasion, when works of incalculable value in France, Belgium and the Netherlands—and even Germany—are going to be endangered.

The staff officer who is going over now is taking with him atlases with more than 600 maps of all the



important cities, towns and villages in Italy, France, Germany and the Low Countries. Every point with five or more important monuments has been mapped, and for the other places regional maps have been prepared. These atlases will be turned over to all the strategic Air Force staffs to be placed at the disposal of those who plan and direct bombings, as well as to high commanders in the infantry and artillery. It will be made certain that they reach the lower ranks as well.

Each map has marked on it the points of importance, which are numbered. The numbers are tabulated below with one, two or three stars, in Baedeker fashion, according to the importance of the monument. From now on bombardiers and others will be ordered peremptorily to avoid hitting such objects unless they have specific instructions, which will be given only in extreme cases.

Lists of monuments in twenty-two countries have been prepared, and these, too, will be furnished to all concerned. Several manuals have been drawn up for circulation among all officers, telling among other things how to give first aid to damaged treasures and how to protect them. A large group of experts has been assigned to the work

and will be available at all times. They will know where to look for known works of art and will make a careful note of those lost, damaged or missing.

Public relations officers of divisions, regiments and battalions will receive instructions to give talks to the soldiers on the general problem of protecting cultural treasures, particularly those objects in places that are going to be attacked by their units.



The huge job of research, collation and listing that is making this project possible has been done in the library of the Frick Museum in New York under the direction of Sumner Crosby of Harvard. Every known instance of looting by the Germans, every illegal purchase, every object sold at auction in the last few years in Europe, has been carefully noted, and the Germans will be called to a reckoning some day. The Dutch masterpieces in Adolf Hitler's Museum at Linz, Austria; the Bayeux tapestry that Reichsmarshal Hermann Goering received as a "gift"; the Ghent altarpiece now in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, are not going to remain where the Nazis have placed them.



# A Washington Gypsy

By Daniel Paul Higgins

A GYPSY is a proud person. He travels about the country, his worldly possessions—including his family—with him. He seemingly asks nothing. He turns up in the most peculiar places. He never seems to be a part of the surrounding scenery, but by what may be described as furtive glances he appears just about to have arrived and the next moment to be on the move. He seems to be ready for business if business comes his way, but if it doesn't smile on him, he was just stopping temporarily, prior to keeping on the move.

This is not my disinterested observation, but rather my own picture of myself as I wondered and wandered through Washington, every now and then observing a group of other gypsies. My inclination is to hail them with a friendly greeting and say, "Move over, here's another gypsy—at least *you* seem to know where you are going and why."

I exchanged greetings with a passing brother architect. What did he know? Had he just found a project? As I recalled our important conversation, consisting of

—What hotel are you staying at?  
—Have you a room?—Are you leaving town today?—Why not have a cocktail or dinner tonight?  
—yes, we both agreed but not meaning it. No, not an iota of information.

On to the allegedly heart-warming comfort of the hotel room, from which a chambermaid is hurriedly removing traces of the preceding guest, his stale cigar smoke defying removal.

The telephone!—a way out. No, the travel desk says not a chance for a train reservation today or tonight. Well, I really didn't want to go. After all, I just reached here.

I wonder if that architect really landed something. Well, if he did and I don't, there's something wrong with me. Wonder if he knows someone. I doubt it. Certainly, I'll not meet him tonight; suppose I had to listen to him brag about getting some big project!

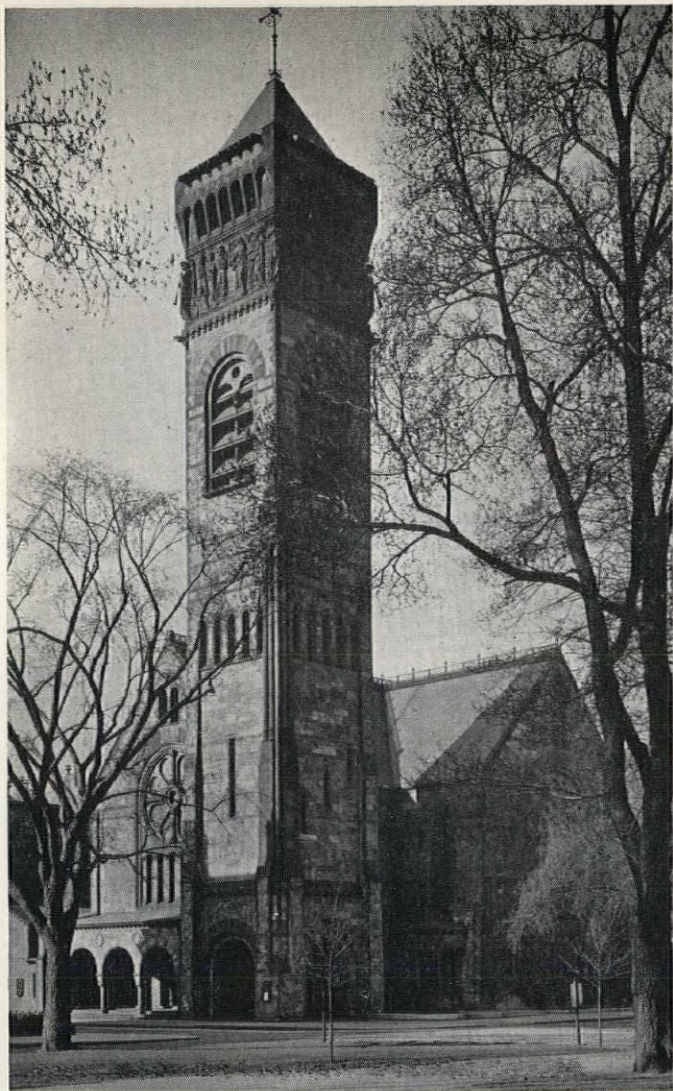
After 4 P. M. now, so no use trying to pass one of those boards of inspection in a Government building lobby. How's about having a drink downstairs?—somebody may want to cry on my shoulder.





DETAIL OF THE MEETING HOUSE (1787)  
ROCKINGHAM, VERMONT

*From a photograph by Frank J. Roos, Jr.*



*Do you know this building?*

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, BOSTON  
HENRY HOBSON RICHARDSON, ARCHITECT



Wonder if I ought to follow up that tip I got this morning. That was something—from an architect who once had to budget his time, who was sought by everybody and could meet and serve only a few. And today, like myself, he finds himself in the bar, in a cocktail lounge, roaming the lobby, in someone's room, dinner with a barely known gang, joined by newcomers—who must have names, but what are they? Quite a night!

Those fellows, though, seem to know what's going on. Where, in Heaven's name, did all those projects spring from?—one here, one there—why they're on every bush.

"Oh, yes Operator, please give me a 7:30 call in the morning." Not bad fellows, those contractors and salesmen. We architects should get to know them better.

Breakfast seems to be about the only square meal one gets down here these days. Brother X must have come in on a sleeper to have joined me so early. Hope I didn't give myself away when I so knowingly answered at length his question as to how I found things in Washington. By tonight, if I haven't dug something up, guess I better call at Lost and Found.

Taxi—yes, to the War Department.

"Is your firm registered, Mr. —? Yes? Please fill out this form. Have you an appointment? What is it about, may I ask? I'm sorry, sir, he asked whether you could come back this afternoon about three, as he has just had to go into an important meeting."

Well, there goes that reservation on the Congressional! But he must be working on that big project. Yes, I'll bet that is coming up. Sure I'll be back! The boys at home will be glad for a little encouragement.

"Why yes, young lady, please tell him I have a few other appointments, and I'll be back at three."

Might as well walk—the real gypsies are the ones to ride in the big cars these days. There goes a plane. Wish I were on it, wherever it's going.

That's funny—to kill time, I call on the Commissioner and am shown in with fanfare. How pleased he is with that job "we did together." Yes, he's right: these new fellows exercising swivel chairs down here don't know what it's all about. Well, that's a little boost for my morale. It's not my fault that I don't seem to get to first base.

Time for lunch. What a gang



in the hotel lobby! Even these elevators get to be minor conference rooms. Everybody has his brief case and apparently on his mind the responsibility for the world's salvation.

Lunch wasn't so bad, at that. Certainly if you want to meet your friends from home, you've got to come to Washington. They seem to be having their troubles, too. They almost gaped when I told them I wasn't sure when I could get away, as it would depend on a few appointments I had for the afternoon.

You really can't blame the gypsies. If they can't find a store, they just pitch a tent and let the world go by.

I wonder how all the other architects would feel if someone proposed that they all march into Washington like Coxey's Army. No, that wouldn't do. What's left of architectural dignity better be preserved for the future. Future what?

Finally my big appointment.

He wasn't such a bad chap at that. As a matter of fact, he was a little more confidential than I expected. Yes, I think he was serious about it, at least he was complimentary. I realize he didn't promise anything, but he did re-

member the dozen visits I had made here to try to see him, and he said frankly he had actually been tied up and was hoping I would drop in later. He really seemed to be expecting me.

That poor fellow sure has a tough job; six telephones all going at once—Senators, Congressmen, Chief This and Chief That. He sure knows them all. I wouldn't want his job—I don't see how he stands up under it. He seemed to mean it when he asked me to drop down again in a week or ten days to see him personally. If everybody knew how hard these fellows actually work, there would be less griping about Washington.

The boys at home will be glad when I get back and tell them we have had a direct and unquestionable invitation to come down again in a week or ten days.



Well, here we are again. Washington looks mighty fine. That little warm spell certainly pushed spring right out on the stage. Better go right on to his office, and check in at the hotel later.

"Oh, you want to see General Blank. I'm sorry, sir, he left Washington yesterday for a new assignment."



## Baltimore's Reaction to Dimensional Coordination

THE STORY of Dimensional Coordination was told to the architects and engineers of Baltimore in April at a meeting sponsored by the Producers' Council Chapter of that city and six other related groups of the building industry, including architects, engineers and builders. Harry C. Plummer, Chief Engineer of the Structural Clay Products Institute, explained the system, with slides. His talk was followed by one detailing actual experience in the use of this simplified aid in design, by A. Gordon Lorimer, Chief of the Bureau of Architecture, City of New York Department of Public Works. Mr. Lorimer is an enthusiastic proponent of the system and has put it into effect in preparing drawings for some of New York's vast post-War building program.

Dimensional Coordination has already been explained in these pages by Frederick Heath, Jr. (*Jan. Journal*). The questions that followed the talks by Messrs. Plummer and Lorimer—questions put forth by the architects and engineers present—are worth noting, for they may represent typical difficulties in making the system

clear to those who will soon be using it. Here are some of these questions with their answers:

*Q. Why not go to the metric system?*

A. This step, desirable as it is, was felt to be beyond the scope of the building industry alone, and is a task that would involve every industry of the nation and every individual as well. It is too big a job to be undertaken without long preparation and public education. Should this desired step, however, eventually be achieved, it is felt that the small dimensional changes necessary to convert from modular 4" units to metric units can be achieved without upset of the principles of modular coordination. It should be noted that a meter is 39.36", which is within .64" of ten 4" modular units. The changes required in masonry and other materials to bring them into a metric division would be very tiny.

*Q. Why not shift to the engineer's rule of feet in decimals?*

A. Here again a tempting improvement was considered, but rejected as necessitating too great a change in habits of dimensional re-



cording and dimensional thinking on the part of the workmen.

*Q. In alteration work, where building between existing buildings or to building lines, with perhaps fractional inches dimensions, how proceed?*

A. Use dimensional coordination with the necessary minor adjustments at the two ends.

*Q. In successive floors of a building the column sizes will diminish, leaving differing lengths of panels between. How reconcile these dimensions to the grid?*

A. In steel-frame buildings, it is often possible by selection of lighter-weight sections to carry out a uniform width of pier for the height of the building, thus producing uniform panels. In reinforced concrete, a variation in the quantity of reinforcement will achieve the same purpose.

*Q. For alteration work, will it be possible to get the old brick size to patch, etc., after manufacturers have switched to the modular sizes?*

A. Yes, one of the modular sizes to be made conforms to present average course heights of 3 to 8"; the horizontal change in dimension would not be noticeable in patching.

*Q. Suppose I want a rough brick laid with 3/16" joints?*

A. You can have it, or any other deviation you prefer, but of course you will be paying for it by depriving yourself (or client) of the economies of using a brick size with mortar joint size found by experience to be best for it.

*Q. Will the contractor understand the significance of the simplified dimensioning? Will he know that figures read to a joint center or to an imaginary line beyond the outside face, instead of to the actual face of the brick?*

A. He will if the fact is once noted on the drawings. The carpenter, for instance, constantly works to an imaginary line in the location of what we call 4" studs, and dimension them as 4", knowing that they are not that size.

*Q. Will the architect using the new system really be able to get modular materials in any local market?*

A. Some of the largest producers of brick and tile and concrete blocks have given written assurance as to their products. Other branches of the industry are falling in line.

*Q. Will the necessity for several modular sizes of brick, namely three courses to 8", four courses to 12", and 4" modular units of*



*3 1/2" x 3 1/2" x 7 1/2", merely transfer the extra costs from the building operation to the manufacturing plant?*

A. No. A number of the most

successful brick manufacturers now maintain in production many lines of brick, and it is not felt that modular dimensioning will place an undue burden upon them.

## Detroit Architects in Civic Design

*By Suren Pilafian*

RECENTLY THERE has become evident among many citizens and influential public officials a tendency to confuse planning of post-War construction projects with planning for urban redevelopment, or to be concerned only with the former while the latter is left to so-called "long-haired dreamers."

Seeing in this tendency the danger that favorable opportunities for rectifying some of our city's ills might be overlooked during the expected construction surge, several architects in Detroit came together last summer for the purpose of doing their part to demonstrate the advantages of planning on a large scale. To achieve this objective the group is preparing a series of suggestions, in the form of drawings and models, for the physical redevelopment of the Detroit Area, based on a collaborative research study program undertaken independently by the group. It plans

to bring these suggestions to the attention of the public by means of exhibitions and publications.

This organization of more than fifty architects, known as the Architects' Civic Design Group of the Detroit Metropolitan Area, has been sponsored by both the Michigan Society of Architects and the Detroit Chapter of The American Institute of Architects. Under the leadership of an executive committee headed by Branson V. Gamber and Buford L. Pickens, it is collaborating with the Cranbrook Academy of Art in this program. Eliel Saarinen, president of the Academy, is coordinating the work of the members and preparing the overall maps and studies that serve as the bases for, and explain, the individual studies.

By adopting an over-all pattern of urban development that exemplifies Saarinen's principles of organic decentralization, the group has facilitated the division of the



metropolitan area into clearly articulated sub-areas assignable to different members for isolated study. Each sub-area is thus a complete comprehensive community in itself. Accordingly the group has been divided into about twenty teams, each of which has undertaken the study of one of these subdivisions.

While each team works independently of the others, basic assumptions relative to the development of major thoroughfares, railroads, principal centers of employment, distribution of population and general characteristics of the communities, are derived from the over-all area studies prepared by Saarinen with the assistance of J. Davidson Stephen. In addition, monthly meetings are held by the group to permit its members to acquaint each other with the progress of their studies and to benefit by the interchange of ideas. By these means the completed projects will be correlated as a unified consistent proposal for the entire Metropolitan Area of Detroit.

These proposals are being planned for conditions which are expected to exist about fifty years hence. The eventual radical transformation of the area projected in these studies may therefore seem over-ambitious to the casual ob-

server, but it is planned to demonstrate the practicability of the proposals by illustrating the manner in which they can be executed in a series of progressive stages, say at ten-year intervals.

The aim, then, is to go beyond palliative solutions. Certainly the primarily educational purpose of the program will best be served by some such attempt to stir the imagination of the people—an attempt to show the best practicable design for its city which these architects as a group are capable of envisioning. In this respect it is in a more advantageous position than strictly official agencies, since it is less constricted by such immediate considerations as political boundaries, existing legislation and certain vested interests.

As a corollary to the aforementioned objective of this program there are benefits which will undoubtedly accrue both to the profession as a whole and to the participating members.

In the first place this kind of program offers an opportunity to demonstrate the value of the architects' leadership in the affairs of the community. While much has been said about the failure of the public to look to our profession for such leadership, perhaps positive



group actions and programs of this nature will do more to alleviate the situation than ineffective deplora- tions. Considerable interest in this group's program has already been shown by local newspapers and civic organizations in Detroit.

Then again, any influence this activity may have on the stimula- tion of the desire for better things in the city should repay to the en-

tire profession the efforts of its participants.

Finally, while it is possible to become over-optimistic in expecting far-reaching results from the ef- forts of this group, the self-educational value of its program is ap- parently far from hypothetical, for many of the members feel already that what they themselves are learning about city planning in the process is in itself adequate reward for their efforts.



## Architects Read and Write

*Letters from readers—discussion, argu- mentative, corrective, even vituperative.*



"CONSISTENCY, THOU ART A JEWEL"

BY ELLIS F. LAWRENCE, F. A. I. A.

A DECADE or so ago, the writer found himself on three In- stitute committees at the same time, dealing with: 1—Government and private industry; 2—Taxation; 3—Housing.

As he recalls it, the first com- mittee had no difficulty in arriving at a unanimous decision. It rec- ommended that The Institute should go on record against govern- mental interference with private industry and the professions.

An A.I.A. committee today deal- ing with this subject would prob- ably agree that the architect must

be free from interference if he is to deliver the service he is capable of delivering, and that the moment he accepts dictation from any agency his professional status is endangered.

It is well to consider what has happened in the decade since that old committee report, for now is the time for definite and precise statements of policy.

Compilation of the records, the cold facts and evidence gained by architects who tried to serve their country professionally for the Army, Navy, or the various and



sundry Housing agencies, would be timely in determining where The Insitute should stand and what its pronouncements should be.

Most architects are familiar with the directives, the kind of plans, the ultimatums that have emanated from Washington since the war started, to which often the architect had to put his name with its implied approval.

Perhaps the order or directive was to use copper pans to protect against termites which never had existed in the territory where the buildings were to be built. That \$80,000 (in one case) worth of this vital material was involved, the buildings easily inspected, and planned for but a life of five years, made little difference.

Perhaps the order was to provide an elaborate system of bracing for earthquake resistance, although there were no records of earthquakes thereabouts.

Perhaps it was for plans made for the sunny South ordered built in the gray North.

Perhaps the order was to build a cantonment without a site plan, or a naval base with such a poorly studied group plan that it would take thirty minutes to man stations, thus courting another Pearl Harbor.

Perhaps it was the order to build a Pentagon, to concentrate in the finest bombing target that man could devise, the vital War administration of our nation.

Perhaps it was a plan of defense housing units that appeared hardly strong enough to resist a stiff wind, to be destroyed in two years after the war ended—while in the private office were plans of a salvageable, demountable, better planned house that had been built for less cost.

Multiply these by the number of architects' offices that have done defense work, and the evidence at hand would demand the attention of our legislators and their support for any pronouncement The Institute might make.

We face the test of ideologies in post-War times. Somewhere the line must be drawn to determine if we really want democracy enough to try to preserve it.

No one gainsays that government should have something to say about its planning and its building, but certainly the profession of architecture, if anybody, should be wise enough to state the fundamentals of the case and determine what is for the greatest good.

The National Council of Planners, approved by The Insitute at



its convention, might have stemmed the tide had it been organized. It still offers the best solution for combating the current trend, for it could become a clearing house for evidence of the waste, inefficiency, and the cost of poor or no planning, in money, safety, health and morale.

Ten years ago the writer signed, with great satisfaction, that first committee report to keep government out of private business, for he, even then, believed there was real danger in too much centralization of government in Washington.

The Special Committee on Taxation was composed of nine men, among whom were one former president of The Institute and three former vice-presidents.

Among the findings of this committee were the following:

"If natural and healthy improvement in architecture is to come, double payment of rent and taxes must cease, a legal stop must be made to private appropriation of public values, and public confiscation of private wealth; the public's rent must be used for public purposes, and private wealth left inviolate for private purposes; rent must be collected for government revenue and all taxation of whatever sort must be abolished."

The writer, pondering these

findings and the arguments sustaining them, said to himself, "Why, this is like excess condemnation that I found so effective in Paris; this does away with penalizing good building and improvements; this would make city planning possible and would solve the housing problem; this stimulates production of wealth; this is the only solution to insure one's ownership of the wealth one creates"; so he signed this report with even greater satisfaction than he had the first committee report.

Just before the convention, back in that recent past, came the draft of the report of the Committee on Housing; it recommended that The Institute endorse subsidies and governmental control of housing for those in the low-wage earner group (the great majority of our people), as private industry could not be expected to enter that field. Here was a test of the writer's consistency. He had signed two reports already, one recommending that government keep out of business, the other offering a plan for collecting the public rent that would make possible the reentry of private building into the field of housing for the low-wage earners. So he did not sign this Housing report.



If it is recalled correctly, The Institute, without a debate, accepted both the report of this committee sponsoring government's going into the housing business and that of recommending that government keep out of private business.

In writing the Committee why he couldn't sign the Housing report, the writer opined that the year's study of the Committee had clearly demonstrated the four causes that had driven private enterprise from the field of housing the low-wage earners. If these could be removed, it appeared reasonable that private business and individual enterprise could go far in solving the problems.

The four causes, in the opinion of the Committee, were: 1—High cost of land; 2—High cost of construction; 3—High taxes; 4—Wages inadequate to pay sufficient rent or payments to amortize the purchase price.

The Committee on Taxation had suggested a sane method for collecting public revenues; a just, business-like, economical plan. Under it the four deterrents would be removed, for: 1—Land would be available simply on payment of economic rent, thus eliminating in the financial set-up the present

high cost of land; 2—Cost of construction would be materially lessened by the elimination of taxes; 3—Taxes would be removed, and the saving between payments for tax and economic rent would be considerable; 4—The purchasing power of wages would be greatly increased. A survey of one California county, before the present excessive hidden tax load, showed that every wage earner of \$1500 paid, then, at least \$350 in hidden taxes.

What would the statistics show today? Who can truthfully say that private industry cannot solve the low-wage earner's home problem?

Revolt is certain against bureaucracy and the alphabetic authorities. This is still America, in spots. Every suggestion to meet the crisis ahead deserves careful analysis. The Institute must make its pronouncement.

Why not carry on the research where the Special Committee on Taxation stopped in 1932? Prove it wrong or prove it right. If the conclusions are true, put The Institute, and perhaps the National Council of Planners, behind them. It is dangerous, these times, to straddle the fence. "Consistency, thou are a jewel."



In matters of health, the medical profession has been militant. In the field of law the legal profession has always been heard from when

justice is at stake. Can The American Institute of Architects do less in the field of planning and good architecture?

### Appointments with Honor

RAYMOND J. ASHTON, F. A. I. A., has been elected an Honorary Corresponding Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

EDWARD L. FRICK has been named president of the San Francisco Art Commission; Mayor Lapham has appointed Eldridge T. Spencer a member of the Commission for a five-year term. This gives the architects four members: Frick, Gardner Dailey, Mark Daniels and Spencer.

Upon EDGAR I. WILLIAMS, F. A. I. A. of New York, King Gustaf of Sweden has bestowed the Royal Order of Vasa, Knight, First

Class, in recognition of Mr. Williams' efforts to promote American understanding of Swedish architecture.

### New Members of The Producers' Council

Recent elections to membership in The Producers' Council, with the names of their Official Representatives:

Calcium Chloride Association, Detroit; Ray A. Giddings, Executive Secretary; H. Hershey Miller, Senior Engineer, Alternate.

Norge Division, Borg-Warner Corporation, Detroit; Howard E. Blood, President; M. G. O'Harra, Vice-President in Charge of Sales, Alternate.

## Highlights of the Technical Press

*The Architectural Forum*, April: Planned Neighborhoods for 194x; a symposium of articles and a presentation of case histories in Boston; New York; the Tennessee

Valley; Delano, Calif.; Tucson, Ariz.; St. Louis; Portland, Ore.; Burlington, Vt.; Kansas City, Kans.; and Harlem, N. Y. C.; 82 pp. t. & ill.

*The Architectural Record*, April: Permanent Plant for Torpedoes, Forest Park, Ill.; Albert Kahn Assoc. Archts. & Engrs.; 6 pp. t. & ill. Officers and Directors of the A.I.A., 1943-44; 6 pp. portraits & biog. Building Types Study—Stores, prepared in collaboration with *Chain Store Age*; 18 pp. t. & ill.

*Journal of the Optical Society of America*, April: Aesthetic Measure Applied to Color Harmony, by Parry Moon and Domina Eberle Spencer; 9 pp. text, tables and diags.

*Architect and Engineer*, March: Rebuilding Devastated Areas of Soviet Union, by Fred W. Jones; 5 pp. t. & ill.

*Civil Engineering*, April: Coordinating Engineering and Architecture, by Aymar Embury, II; 3 pp. t. & ill. (Excerpts from an address before the A.S.C.E. annual meeting in New York. See *May Journal*, p. 223). May: Post-War Sanitary Engineering Work for New York City, by Richard H. Gould; 3 pp. t. & ill. American Inter-Regional Highway System; I. How It Affects Cities, by Thomas H. MacDonald; 4 pp. t.

& ill. Roadway and Intersection Capacity, by Guy Kelcey; 4 pp. t. & ill.

*Magazine of Art*, March: Modern Architecture Comes of Age, by Anneke Reens; 5 pp. t. & ill.

*Pencil Points*, April: Franklin D. Roosevelt Hospital, Bremerton, Wash.; archts: F. A. Naramore & Assocs., Clyde Grainger, Clifton J. Brady, Perry B. Johnson; 7 pp. t. & ill. Suburban Hospital, Bethesda, Md.; Faulkner & Kingsbury, archts., John W. Stenhouse, assoc.; 5 pp. t. & ill. University Medical Center, Jerusalem; Eric Mendelsohn, archt.; 5 pp. t. & ill. Asutah Private Hospital, Tel Aviv, Palestine; Joseph Neufeld, archt.; 4 pp. t. & ill. U. S. Public Health Service Hospital, Sheepshead Bay, N. Y.; Alfred Hopkins & Assoc., archts.; 7 pp. t. & ill. Building Product Facts, a new service by Don Graf; 4 pp. table & ill.

*Task No. 5: Post-War Plans—*a Survey, by Martin Meyerson; 4 pp. t.; Experiment in Planning (failures and accomplishments of the N.R.P.B.), by George S. Duggar; 7 pp. t. New Kensington Saga, by Isabel Bayley; 8 pp. t. & ill.





## The Editor's Asides

ONE OF the shortest inscriptions of the many that are carved on Washington's public buildings is found flanking the entrance of the Archives Building: **WHAT IS PAST IS PROLOGUE**. I never pass it without being impressed with its vital significance. And always there follows the doubt that our generation is conscious of its truth.

In the *March Journal* we recalled, through General Grant's historical summary, the architects' part in preserving the plan of our Federal Capital. He told of L'Enfant's plan and its vicissitudes. A photograph of the great planning engineer's tomb was reproduced, but there was no mention of how that tomb came to replace a forgotten grave near Bladensburg, Md. There is so much to be remembered—so much that should never have been forgotten.

It was through The Institute that L'Enfant's grave was given a place of honor in Arlington National Cemetery, on the north brink of the eminence on which the Lee Mansion stands. A competition arranged among the élevés of the

Ecole des Beaux-Arts was won by William Welles Bosworth, whose executed design was shown in our March illustration. Ambassador Jules Jusserand, naturally proud of his compatriot, was a powerful ally of The Institute in its efforts towards a suitable recognition of L'Enfant's contribution to our Federal City. Upon the occasion of the reinterment the Army, under General Leonard Wood, gave him a belated military funeral. His services were acclaimed by President Taft, by Elihu Root and others of distinction. Upon the marble slab, supported on its six colonnettes, is recorded the date of L'Enfant's birth—August 2, 1756; his death, June 14, 1825, at Chilham Castle Manor, Prince George's County, Maryland and the date of the reinterment in Arlington, April 2, 1909. Above the incised inscription is cut a facsimile of the plan itself, that all who visit this grave of the son of a Royal Painter under Louis XVI may realize to whose genius we owe the order and dignity of the city which lies just beyond, across the Potomac.



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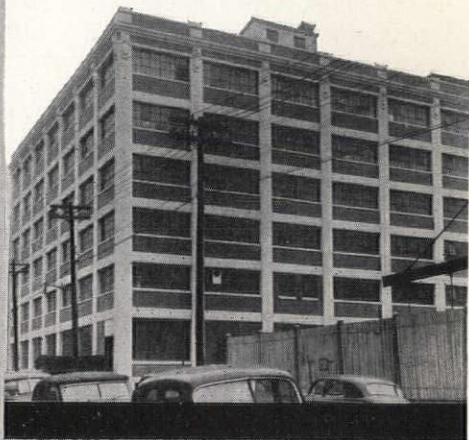
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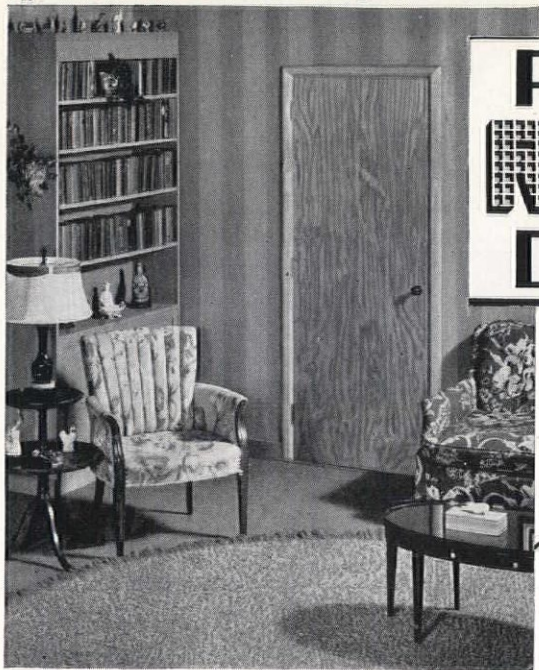
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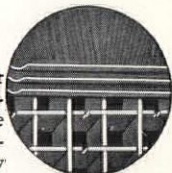
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