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# Journal of The American Institute of ARCHITECTS



CHARLES BULFINCH

August, 1945

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To Be or Not To Be a Specialist

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What Shall We Do With Our Cities?

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Unification and Tolerance

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“Vis-Inertiæ”

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Honors to Architects

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The Unrealized Cost of Gadgetry

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Architectural Licensing—Treatment and Cure

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT THE OCTAGON, WASHINGTON, D. C.

# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

August, 1945

VOL. IV, No. 2

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The *Journal of The American Institute of Architects*, official organ of The Institute, is published monthly at The Octagon, 1741 New York Avenue., N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Editor: Henry H. Saylor. Subscription in the United States, its possessions and Canada, \$3 a year in advance; elsewhere, \$4 a year. Single copies 35c. Copyright, 1945, by The American Institute of Architects. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1929, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C.

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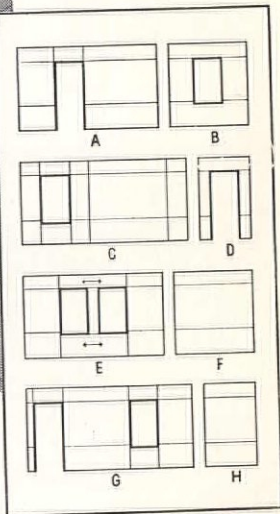
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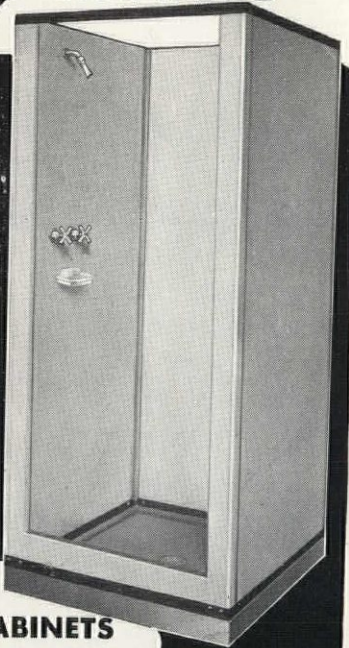
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# 3 out of 4...



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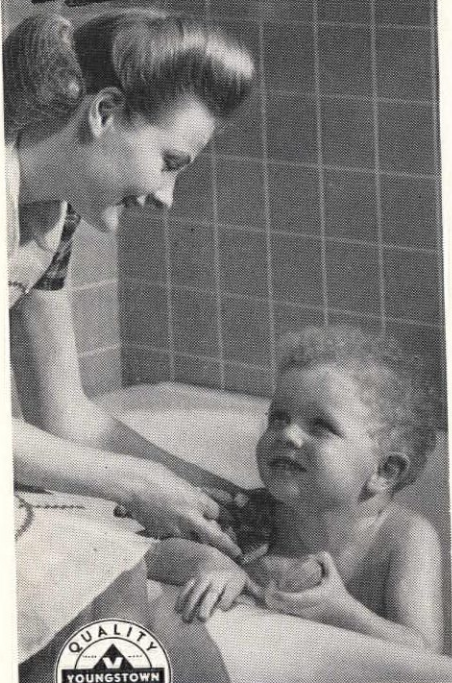
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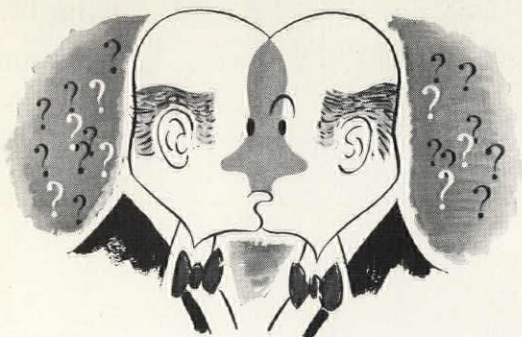
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## Specialization

AT LONG LAST the membership has a subject upon which architects seem moved to express themselves. Much of this expression has been in the form of broadsides, chapter bulletins, resolutions and personal letters. Why not in the pages of the JOURNAL? It was the thought of those who were instrumental in launching the JOURNAL that here would be found a convenient place to discuss our professional problems among ourselves, with no holds barred.

Perhaps the "Indiana Message" would have reached the eyes of more members if offered in these columns rather than in a broadside mailed to each chapter and to Institute officers. At least it would have saved paper.

Resolutions in general agreement with Indiana have been passed by the following chapters: Detroit, Southern California, Northern California, West Texas; and by the Alabama Association.

Unfortunately we have no record of the debates, arguments, or reasoning that brought forth these resolutions. Possibly some of the

thinking on the many phases of the subject will yet appear in these columns; it is cordially invited. Meanwhile, we print herewith a letter written by President Edmunds to George Caleb Wright, President of the Indiana Chapter; a letter from George Spearl, F.A.I.A., to the *Missouri News Letter*, (Mr. Spearl is a member of The Institute's Committee on Hospitalization and Public Health, and also of the American Hospital Association's Hospital Architects Qualifications Committee); and following these letters, some thoughts on the trend and implications of specialization in our professional field by Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A. And undoubtedly there is more to come on all sides of the question, in future issues of the JOURNAL.—EDITOR.



June 18, 1945.

DEAR MR. WRIGHT:

In further reference to the "Indiana Message", it is perhaps too early for the officers or Board to have received many words either

of agreement or disagreement with the feelings expressed in the Message. As to what action The Institute membership would like to have taken in this matter, further discussion will possibly reveal. Some opinion has already been forthcoming and enclosed is copy of one which does not appear to have been sent you. In the meanwhile, I should like to sum up briefly what has been done and why.



The American Hospital Association, as you doubtless know, is an organization of hospital administrative and nursing personnel, including doctors and laymen. In its membership, as associate members, are some architects who have wanted in this way to keep in close touch with the thinking of those responsible for the management of our hospitals.

More and more frequently, the Association says, it is being asked for advice as to the selection of architects. Heretofore, as we understand it, the Association has felt itself unable to offer really discriminating counsel and has been obliged to content itself with the mention of architects who are A.H.A. associate members and for that reason presumed to be more familiar with hospital design than an architect picked at random. Realizing that it should have a better basis than this for its recommendations, the A.H.A. conceived the plan of prequalifying architects

through a competent professional examining body of its own. It thereupon sought aid of The Institute, asking *not* that The Institute do the prequalifying, but rather that the President of The Institute nominate four of the A.H.A.'s existing architect associate members to constitute in part the Association's own Hospital Architects Qualification Committee. If denied The Institute's help, the Association would nevertheless have gone right ahead with its plan.

The choice presented the Board, therefore, was: Shall we counsel with the Association, giving them the benefit of our judgment, not only in the selection of their architect members for the Qualifications Committee, but also in the establishment of rules for that Committee's procedure; or shall we refuse to have anything to do with the matter and let them go their own way?



That choice was not hard to make. In entering upon a friendly professional relationship with the American Hospital Association executives, the President of The Institute made his nominations from the A.H.A. list of their architect members as requested. Some of The Institute's officers and Octagon staff met representatives of the A.H.A. and debated in some detail a preliminary draft of requirements the A.H.A. was suggesting. The Institute's particu-



lar concern at that meeting was to see that the machinery set up would—

1. Allow constant accession of new blood in the A.H.A. pre-qualified list, and that
2. The inclusion of younger practitioners should be provided for and be made not too difficult.

President Ashton went a step farther; he appointed an *Institute* Committee on Hospitalization and Public Health, with the duties of gaining a more intimate knowledge of the general hospitalization policy of the Federal and state governments, and of keeping The Institute membership informed as to both their social and technological responsibilities in this field.

Now, to go back to the A.H.A. The details of the measuring stick to be applied to architects seeking prequalification by the A.H.A. have not yet been finally determined, for the A.H.A. trustees meet next month to accept or reject what is being offered by their committee in charge. Meanwhile, any suggestions as to what these tests or requirements might be, should properly go before the A.H.A.'s Qualification Committee. This is the body having the power and the duty to formulate such future procedure. It must be understood that the A.I.A. members serving the A.H.A. in this, *its* activity, are powerless to adopt any procedure; they can suggest procedure

to secure the objective desired, but until it is approved by action of the Trustees of the A.H.A., it cannot be put into effect.

It should interest you to know that there have been sent to the A.I.A. Committee on Hospitalization and Public Health (Carl A. Erikson, Chairman, 104 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill., who is also one of A.H.A.'s. qualifying body) copies of your "Message", together with those of such letters there-arent as have been received to date, with the request that the matters contained therein be given consideration.



In particular it was requested of his committee that means be sought to:

1. Avoid the "maintenance of membership" requirement as a requisite to permanent inclusion in the register of those qualified.

(It is my own feeling that, having once qualified an architect as fully competent to design hospitals, there should be no disqualification of that man only because his membership in the A.H.A. may have been allowed to lapse. In other words, I feel that the A.H.A. has a perfect right to charge an architect a proper fee for taking the time of its Committee to examine him, but can see little reason for membership therein as requirement for maintaining such qualification.)

2. Stress the desirability of employment of those qualified, as consultants to others not so experi-

enced, to the end that the latter in turn may be "admitted to the bar".

(This would provide a feasible means of expansion of the qualified list, which is most desirable, by the possible future continuing addition to it of many well-grounded, experienced, and competent architects.)

3. Consider, perhaps for later adoption, a method by which competent general practitioners in our profession may, by study and research, seek admission to examination for qualification.

Our own Executive Committee meets August first and second, when all of this will be submitted for their consideration and action.

Yours very truly,

JAMES R. EDMUNDS, JR.,  
Pres.



June 8, 1945.

To the Editor of the *News Letter*  
Missouri Association of Architects  
Columbia, Mo.

DEAR SIR:

An "Important Message" from the Indiana Chapter of The American Institute of Architects, criticizing the action of The Institute in appointing a Committee to work with the Committee of the American Hospital Association, has come to my desk and, inasmuch as the communication was written without a full knowledge of the facts, I am writing a personal reply which is, of course, unofficial.

The article charges:—(1) dangerous specialization; (2) that the architect members of the Committee were specialists; (3) that the list of architects being prepared by the American Hospital Association will tend to become an exclusive and virtually closed list; and (4) that the action increases the cost of doing business.

May I point out:

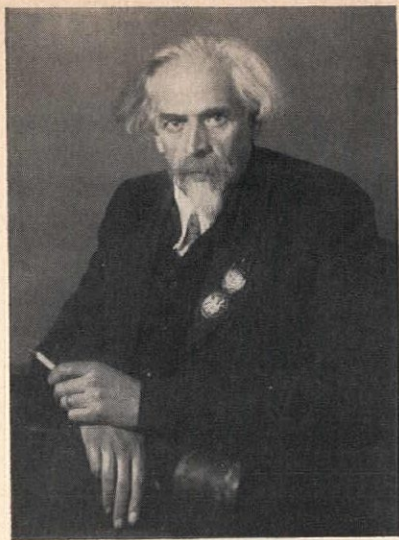
(1) Of course The Institute must maintain that there is no such thing as specialization, but are we to believe that the architect who has done three schoolhouses carefully refrains from mentioning it lest he seem to be a specialist, and explains to his fourth building committee that he knows no more about schoolhouses than any of his brethren who have never built one?

Furthermore hospitals and allied structures are in a totally different class from the other miscellaneous types of buildings mentioned. They have to do with public health, well being, the proper care of the sick and the conservation of the time of the doctors and nurses. Whether the hospital be private or public, if poorly designed it adds to the burden of cost to the community.

(2) Speaking for myself only, our office in the last 40 years has done a good deal of hospital work, but its total value is infinitesimal in a practice which runs the gamut from industrial buildings to college buildings and which includes practically every kind of structure.

(3) The hospital field is one in

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VICTOR VESNIN  
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Born 1882. Graduated from Civil Engineers' Institute in St. Petersburg, 1912. A leader in the modern movement throughout the '20s and '30s, he has maintained his preeminent position in spite of recent changes in design trends. His best known work is the Power House on the Dneiper Dam, built in the early '30s. Other outstanding buildings are: the Palace of Culture, attached to the Stalin Auto Works in Moscow; the Commissariat for Heavy Industry, Moscow; and the Second House of the Council of People's Commissars, Moscow, work on which was interrupted by the war. He is also responsible for the design of the Dneiper city of Zaporozhye, built in connection with the Dam. At present he is President of the Academy of Architecture; Member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.; Deputy to the Supreme Soviet since 1937.



SVEN MARKELIUS  
Stockholm, Sweden

Born 1889. Graduated from the Stockholm Institute of Technology, 1913, and from the Art Institute, 1915. He studied also through travel, chiefly in Germany, France and Italy. Among his architectural works are: the Hålsingborg Concert House; Corps Building of the Stockholm Institute of Technology (with U. Ahren); new building of the Stockholm Housing Society; the "Kollektivhus" on Kungsholm, Stockholm; Swedish Pavilion at the New York World's Fair, 1939; and numerous office buildings, apartment houses, private villas, etc. He was a collaborator in the Stockholm Exposition of 1930. He has also found time to lecture and to write on various architectural subjects. In a ten-year architectural competition he won first prize. His present address is: Kungl. Byggnadsstyrelsen, Hantverkargatan 29, Stockholm.

ELECTED HONORARY CORRESPONDING MEMBERS  
OF THE A. I. A., APRIL 26, 1945

*Journal*  
*The AIA*



DETAIL OF A REMODELED BUILDING IN THE VIEUX CARRE, NEW ORLEANS  
RICHARD KOCH, F.A.I.A., ARCHITECT

Built by the Secretary of the last Spanish Governor  
This is the doorway to the courtyard

which the architect can hold undisputed sway in contrast, for instance, with the industrial field, in which the engineer may justly claim that his services are valuable. Yet anyone who has visited the many poor hospitals which have been perpetrated by our profession must realize the need of doing something about it. It is a sad commentary upon our profession that only about a score of architects have had enough interest in hospital work to belong to the Hospital Association. These men, of whom I am one, are endeavoring to spread the work and the knowledge of hospital work over the entire country. Those of us who are members have not used our membership to get work, but if our Committee succeeds in its purpose, we will have given up any such advantage which we might have used, in favor of the profession as a whole.

Had the writer of the broadside of the Indiana Chapter of The A.I.A. informed himself of the facts, he would have found that, contrary to his assertion, the approved list of architects will grow larger rather than more exclusive.

Moreover, the field will still be open to the good salesman armed with a set of sketches and to the man who is married to the sister of the President of the Board. I am sure that the Committee would join me in emphasizing emphatically that the requirements for inclusion in the American Hospital Association list are a minimum.

(4) The cost of doing business is increasing continuously and the Hospital Association is not adding materially to that cost. Under their program, ample opportunity will be given to young architects as they become experienced.

In conclusion, may I say that I believe the step the Hospital Association is taking to be a constructive and helpful one, and that it will aid our profession and not be a detriment, and I must confess that I feel so strongly on this subject that, had The American Institute of Architects not appointed me on the Committee, and I had been invited to serve by the American Hospital Association, I would have served anyhow.

Yours very truly,

GEORGE SPEARL

## To Be or Not to Be a Specialist

*By Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A.*

OUR MODERN AGE is a highly developed and complex age. The benefits of discovery and invention (lately perverted to sinister use) have been spread to all corners of the earth, and man is

in the throes of discovering how to relieve everyone from the drudgeries and hazards of the past and to provide him with pleasures and comforts hitherto unknown.

It is an age of extreme specialization. Most of these benefits are made possible through the use of modern machinery and knowledge, and through the extensive application of the principle of training each man for a specific task and thus enabling him to develop a high degree of skill and efficiency in his particular specialty.

This is not a new idea. Man has always subdivided his activities. Even at the dawn of civilization, there was the priest, the shepherd, the inn-keeper, the potter, the builder, the farmer, and so on, and the categories multiplied as the world progressed, until now nearly every field of human occupation has been subdivided and re-subdivided, and each such fragment of the whole has been scanned and analyzed and its study pursued to exhaustion. The result has been that there has grown up among us a vast network of specialists, each skilled in his particular specialty and leaning in some cases almost helplessly on others for simple needs which he as a specialist is incompetent to

provide. So extreme has this search for efficiency and perfection progressed that we have woven a delicate economic fabric incapable of withstanding serious strains. Self-sufficiency has become a term for nations, not for individuals, and within the nation private and political devices have been set up to protect the specialist.



The architectural profession has not been immune to these trends. Centuries ago the architect was what the name implies, the master builder. It was he who conceived the plan and correlated the work of the craftsmen and helpers. Under our modern system, the architect has been content to relinquish some of his authority and responsibility. A specialist has appeared on the scene, the general contractor, whose duties are those of producing the building which the architect has conceived and designed.

Here is a specialist intimately connected with the services of the architect and whom the profession has recognized, encouraged, and of necessity taken great pains to regulate and control. (There are evidences that the profession has not always succeeded in this.) Granted that this renunciation was for the

best and is permanently established, let us examine in what other ways the profession has been specialized.

Certain architectural fields have seemingly always had their specialists. Types of work which have occupied the architect to the virtual exclusion of all other work, are churches, schools, pretentious houses, factories, and others which do not come to mind at the moment.

A friend of mine once told me that he had not become a leading theater architect through choice; the public made him such. He designed a number of theaters for one client and found himself definitely established as a theater architect through the excellence of his work for this original client. On the other hand, I remember a well-known architect who had gained an enviable reputation in the industrial field and who was given the commission to design a pretentious clubhouse. He immediately imported from New York a designer with extensive experience in designing clubhouses, indicating that this architect appreciated the value of experience in a certain field.

Some architects purposely choose the type of work they wish to do; others, having done a successful

building of a certain type, accept without protest a surfeit of such work; still others exert a negative preference, refusing to do houses, factories, or other types of buildings where the work is not sufficiently appealing or remunerative. There are of course many who will accept any architectural assignment as an obligation to society.

Among those who have purposely chosen to limit their architectural activities to one type of work, there is the apparent belief that they have developed in their chosen field a service which it would otherwise be difficult or impossible to duplicate. They may rely in some cases, such as churches, on their refinement in design and ability to achieve an appropriate atmosphere, rather than for mastery of intricacy in planning. In breweries, if one may rush from the spiritual to the spirituous, it is evidently quite the opposite, and an intimate knowledge of the modern technique of brewing, a familiarity with the latest machinery used in the process, and the space requirements to house them efficiently, seem to be the criteria upon which their expertness depends. Again in industrial work, an ability to produce plans for large projects with speed and

economy, as well as to achieve a pleasing exterior, seem to be the determinants.

We are all familiar with buildings which have been joint ventures in the matter of design; a local architect, familiar with the local scene, associates with some other firm whose prestige and experience in a given field are solid (in both the new and the old sense of the word).

Whatever may be the points upon which a specialist's reputation may rest, the fact is clear that we have had specialists with us for a long time and their ability as such has not been seriously questioned. To my knowledge, the principle of specializing has never been publicly criticized. There apparently is no stigma attached to specializing. And as new devices, materials and techniques multiply, the case would seem to be in favor of the specialist.



On the part of the public, there has often been a rather foggy notion of what the architect does and how one sets about to choose one. This remark may appear provincial. There may be those enviable spots where such is not the case, and where the architect is

always summoned even at the birth of the mere idea of building. But I am convinced that such architectural oases are few and far between. Else, how shall one account for those contracting and engineering firms with national reputations, and their lesser spawn who thrive locally, who practice architecture as a part of their complete service, who flaunt their wares and flout the architect with his restrictive ethics and whose work through its excellence finds its way into the pages of our leading architectural magazines?

In spite of this, it appears that the public is persuaded that the correct approach to the execution of an important building project is through the services of an architect. Desirous of avoiding any mistake, they turn to the profession for guidance in the selection of their architect.

The Institute is on record as recognizing two methods of selecting an architect, namely, direct selection or by regulated competition. There are circumstances in which these methods may not be applicable, where for instance, inacquaintance or clumsiness may lead respectively to their rejection.

At first glance it would seem



that the profession should welcome an opportunity to aid in such instances. Who should know better than architects themselves the proper talent for particular projects? Why should they not be interested in preparing lists of those whose reputations are unassailably established by the distinction of their executed work in specialized fields?

Here we arrive at a moot point. Those who make no claim to specialized techniques protest vigorously that even tacit recognition of such lists of experts implies an incapacity in those who are not so classified.

They may rightfully point to innumerable examples where a talented architect, intent upon a problem new to him, achieves through his fresh approach something finer than those who have concentrated long upon similar problems. There are sections of the country where the local architect, like the local doctor or dentist or attorney in their fields, assumes the burden of ministering to all of the architectural needs of his community, and he questions honestly what special information or talent is available to the expert which is not available to him.

After all, it is a problem of hous-

ing certain modern functions, not mastering, improving or developing them. And as a member of the community he is more familiar with its tastes, its aspirations, its culture, and therefore better able to design and articulate its buildings. He does not recognize that in some well-defined fields, the planning is so intricate and the changes in techniques so continuous, that it is a matter of almost constant study to keep abreast of them. He also points out that such lists establish architectural castes, and the younger members of the profession, already beset by many difficulties, are confronted by yet another barrier between them and their goal of private practice.



To return to Mr. Public (who after all determines who the architect shall be), his professional ventures contrast strangely with his business transactions. In the latter experiences he has been conditioned to a readiness on the part of the purveyor to satisfy his every whim, to brush aside every perplexing doubt and to make his purchase, whether services or material, a venture of ease and greatest pleasure—"the customer is always right." But when he sets about

selecting an architect, he must learn a new language, he must follow a different procedure, one which the architect imposes and which Mr. Public is often at a loss to understand. This is hardly conducive to the enthusiasm which his venture deserves, nor to the establishment of the intimate confidence which should exist between architect and client.

If the prospective client wishes to obtain a good architect for his project, should he be given positive assistance or should he be allowed to flounder? If there are specialists within the profession, must the fact be concealed from the public? Or if such there be, cannot the lists be promulgated together with a statement that the lists are not all-inclusive and that a good archi-

tect has the capacity to execute any assignment?

Would it not be better to have such lists and such information emanate from the profession rather than from some quasi-official source? I have in mind the recent experience of a school board which, after vainly seeking advice from the profession itself, obtained a list of school architects from a school journal. The list was fragmentary and not at all representative. Men who had made a real contribution to this field had been omitted.

Apparently there is need for such information. Some one will undertake to supply it. How can the public be best served in this matter?

## Unification and Tolerance

*By Henry H. Gutterson*

RECENTLY REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE SIERRA-NEVADA DISTRICT

AS THE WORLD WAR PERIOD enters its final phases, and reconstruction problems loom large in men's thinking, tremendous new demands will be put upon the leadership of the building industry. Architects hopefully claim a large

part in that leadership, but all too often are voicing fears or anger toward others who would snatch it from them. Much is being said by our group that indicates a greater willingness to be important than to be prepared. Also, even

AUGUST, 1945

more is being said by some which indicates their failure to help build up the good qualities in architects and their allies in conformity with modern group techniques.

Moral responsibilities must be maintained as first responsibilities, before personal interests and material welfare, which will unfailingly follow in right measure. Cooperation, as manifested in our national military efforts, must displace self-seeking competition. No longer can architectural commissions even seem to be dependent on strategy involving intolerance or antagonisms between us in this coming time when our whole industry will be taxed to meet pent-up demands let loose.

Many claim that the War period has shown architects to be "starry-eyed dreamers", "servants of luxury," underlings incompetent to qualify as "master builders". It would seem that these claims have been too harsh, too sweeping, too inclusive and therefore detrimental. War was never the architect's field. Its basic problems are military, social, industrial and engineering problems. So, why have we found it necessary, or even expedient, persistently to blast our profession in public? In magazines, in meet-

ings, on the air, we have admitted and bemoaned our falling status when, as a matter of fact, architects have really played their reasonable share of important roles and have gained much favorable recognition in many lines of war endeavor.

Self-analysis is invaluable, constructive criticism can be most helpful, but its value is greatly marred unless it is kept within our ranks for proper evaluation as a basis for reform, and not allowed to crystalize in the public's thinking about us before that reform.

Why do we tolerate such constant display of our professional intolerance of our fellow's conscientious ideals and techniques in practice? Our country will long need the full service of us all. It is not ready to be of one mind, architecturally—about such subjects as style, prefabrication, leadership in reconstruction. Our unified efforts will be required to give it the answers. And it cannot be by decree; by legislation alone, or by "big stick" wielding in any form. There will be need for every form and degree of honest leadership that we can give.

First must be the desire to serve, then a humble willingness to cooperate with reasonable clients and

allied professionals, with tolerance for their honestly held adverse views. In those words, the real spirit of unification will be needed, envisioning a place for all right-minded members of the whole industry, including labor, professionals, producers, bankers and "bureaucrats"!



More specifically, why do the most articulate champions of the "contemporary" or "modern" approach to architecture so generally belittle and bedamn the usually more conservative disciples of historic style development? Architects are not often able to be either philanthropists or prima donnas. They do not provide the funds or face the risks as do their clients. Clients may have good and sufficient reasons for continuing construction designed with historic style background. Yes, even the great majority of clients in the post-War era may write such programs and, regardless of our personal preferences, we shall have to answer their summons one way or another. Many will choose to work in either direction as the problem or the client dictates. If so, what does this blatant cleavage in our ranks accomplish? It is

well-nigh ruinous! It undermines the public confidence in the profession and the courage of our conservatives.

Must a corporation with heavy investments in "stylistic" buildings suddenly abandon its sense of satisfaction in them in favor of a "modern" expression that it dislikes when it expands its plant? Be it a college, a church, or a business concern, can it be dictated to? Not in this era. So what do we face in practice?

The writer, after serving over three years in War work, has recently been so convinced of the needs of important clients in preparing plans for post-War adjustments calling for architectural service that he has re-opened his office. Recruiting a staff was a major problem, especially as fully half of the prospective work was legitimately demanded in conformity with existing "stylistic" buildings. Seven out of ten applicants for drafting jobs were young men and women recently graduated from well-recognized schools of architecture. They wanted the work, but readily admitted almost total ignorance of, and experience with, the styles involved; four stated frankly that their interest had been steered entirely into "con-

temporary" design channels, with the result that they did not draw sufficiently well to handle "stylistic" work! Finally, when a young woman with a master's degree in architecture stated with evident regret and resentment that her instructors had deliberately told her not to work in traditional styles, the full significance of the dilemma was revealed.

Of course, it is fairly obvious that for both faculty and students the relative simplicities of the "contemporary" solutions of school problems make for easier answers. They call for less detailed thinking, research and drawing—less discipline with fewer restrictions, rules and analyses as to why historic solutions have been good and enduring. Current magazines are easier reference sources than books, and history - of - architecture lecture hours are helpful rest periods for disinterested student attendants. These simplifying breaks with the past can be accepted as inevitable, along with more casual habits in dress, manners and morals. But are we really ready to prove that they are indications of progress rather than a too rapid acceptance of a militant, revolutionary minority's leadership? Some good precedents stem from widely loved Eng-

lish, Colonial and other sources dating back beyond our contemporaries. These sources still yield a full measure of satisfaction to millions. If architects are to prove themselves as acceptable leaders to this majority, they must not sever these connections with the people. They must be progressive, yes, but also they must continue to be well tempered by self-discipline, broadly prepared intellectually, manually facile and morally sound. If an easier way looks good to the students, must their teachers and parents give in to remain popular, or must the public, paying for their education, be told that their students must limit their studies to current concepts so that their leadership shall be correspondingly limited? The acceptable answer is NO.

From a professional viewpoint, it would seem to be a poor policy for all architects to limit their practice any further than their lack of capacity dictates. But, if the schools which educate their staff members are so intolerant, indifferent or limited in their viewpoint as to fail in, or avoid teaching, the more disciplinary drafting and design courses, through which even the "contemporary" enthusiasts would benefit by having a greater

facility of expression, then architects may have to become specialists in order to produce working documents, and clients may have to choose between dictated conformity or radical changes in the schools.

It will be instantly argued that students cannot be made to study styles in which they have no interest, cannot be made to go against the trends of the current magazines and the most publicized statements on architecture. This would not be true if the faculties and other articulate leaders were more tolerant. If they, as leaders, designers, and practitioners, would win their cause (as they eventually will when the machine is finally triumphant and the old sense of craftsmanship, ornament and beauty is dead in the minds of the majority) by convincing performance without intolerant thoughts, words and actions against the non-conforming professionals and public, all would be more normal.

Unification is our greatest need in reconstruction. It must be on a friendly, cooperative basis with

the greatest showing of hard work we have ever made. Only then can we hope to produce, in the expected peace time ahead, a more rational, functional, beautiful architecture, whatever its tradition or style.

The American Institute of Architects, in recognition of national trends, is well along with its "Unification Program", which includes the most democratic, tolerant membership campaign in its history. It is but a symbol of its leaders' concern for the future of our private practice in a society supporting architectural bureaus and aggressive unions and beset with political dominations.

Let us, a small but very important group, ponder this future need, honor our ambitions to give it broad leadership, recognize our responsibilities where no equally prepared substitute group exists, and resolve individually to avoid further cleavage in our ranks by adopting with more tolerance a real and complete program of unification.



"It has yet to be proved that mechanical refrigerators have power to promote the good life; but the power of window-boxes has been proved a hundred thousand times."

—JOSEPH HUDNUT.

## "Vis-Inertiæ"

By Daniel Paul Higgins

Excerpts from an article in *Empire State Architect* for March-April, 1945.

THIS IS ANOTHER way of saying that we as architects have "an inherent resistance to change our state."

To whatever extent I may be critical, such criticism includes myself. I am not critical just for the sake of being critical, but rather that such criticism may be a more potent means of concentrating attention on a proposal I submit for your constructive consideration.

I have one important issue in mind:

Shall the War Production Board be continued for a limited period—two, three, five years, after the conclusion of the War?

I strongly urge it.

We are regimented already and a little more of it won't hurt us, provided the regimentation is limited until the forces of free enterprise can flow in normal and natural channels. I agree in advance with proponents of free enterprise, but I agree also that private construction is a famine-stricken invalid and a war casualty. Do we, as planners, plan to extricate the

construction industry miraculously through a gluttonous overdose of simultaneous construction? Do we plan to depend upon a miracle to solve all the vicissitudes which will arise out of the chaos of every man for himself in the clamor for critical materials?

My client will depend on me to help him get his building, and your client will depend on you, and each of us will ultimately contend against each other; and we both will find ourselves with incompleting buildings because we in turn are taking out of the market the material the manufacturer needs in order to keep the processed items flowing to us in logical sequence.

We shall have some scarcities, not in major items such as concrete, steel, brick, plaster and other such items, but scarcities wherein manufacturing plants, ordinarily producing building items, are now producing war goods and must reconvert in order to fabricate in sufficient quantities the items required for peacetime building. The numbers are myriad—refrigera-

tors, motors, electrical appliances, and equipment, copper and aluminum products, etc., etc. We may not be severely troubled in erecting the building in skeleton or in enclosing it, but we shall have major problems in completing it functionally.

If all of us are caught in the maelstrom of competition for limited supplies, we must necessarily be agents in a substantial inflationary rise in building costs, and quite naturally this will decrease the scope of actual building.



What shall I recommend to my client? Shall I tell him he can expect to build when the War is over? Shall I tell him to expect an inflationary cost? Shall I tell him I can find ways and means of assuring a flow of supplies which will give him his needed building on time? Shall I tell him he will be competing with the reconversion of War industries, Federal construction, including the Army, Navy and Veterans' Administration, with new hospitals for incapacitated veterans, as well as with city and state construction? Shall I tell my client the proposed program of construction immediately following the War is so

gigantic that he will be but a meager part of it and has just that chance of being insured the completion of a needed building?

Perhaps the amount of construction will not be so great. Out of the welter of confusing prognostications which have emanated from so many sources recently, how do I know what the total sum problem will be at the conclusion of the War? I know it will be great, but how great I do not know.

Do I want to see copper used for gutters of my building when the very same copper should be in the shops being fabricated into parts I will need later to make the building operate, whereas the copper gutters could just as well be installed later rather than sooner? Am I to decide that?

The construction industry cannot control all this from within itself. Nor can the construction industry gauge its own domestic problem unless it is geared with the post-War lend-lease agreements. It may not be called lend-lease then, but a minimum supply of domestic goods, where we are committed to foreign rehabilitation, appears inevitable.

Where does my client fit into this picture? Should he assume his architect to be better informed



in the probabilities within the construction industry, what assurance or information am I to give him?

This is not my problem alone; surely it is a problem which is peculiar to the entire profession.

We do have a War Production Board, already controlling the industry through material priorities and manpower restrictions. If we want it badly enough, assuming its continuation is advisable, we can have it if we *really* want it. We should want it only as long as it is of constructive value in preventing chaos. Its life can be extended through Congressional action, and if we and others related to the industry and professions believe and can point out that we as planners want an orderly restoration of our national economy, and that the WPB can be a means of assuring such order as contrasted with inflationary disorder, then reasonable legislation will result.

What worries me is the fact that we do not initiate or plan ahead as such conditions become increasingly apparent.

We build a building through

plans and constant job conferences, but we build an enigma for ourselves in an organized sense by failing to exert a leadership within the sphere of influence where we rightfully belong. If we can build a building through plans and job conferences, why can we not contribute to the national rebuilding by having a plan and conferring about its detailed execution?

My client and I can appeal our case before a neutral tribunal, and so can you. Until the most essential needs are met, I may have to wait, or you may, but in either case we have order and certainty.

I think this is worth thinking about. I think it is worth doing something about. If we agree, let's say so. Let all architectural societies say so. Let's pass it on to the engineers, to the contractors, to the Producers' Council, to the National Association of Manufacturers and to Federal, state and city officials. Let's take a constructive leadership!

Maybe then we will think of the organized architects as "Vis" and not "Vis-Inertiae".

"A METROPOLITAN AREA is like some terrestrial body that has exploded; there are just too many pieces and no cooperation between the pieces."—MAJOR E. A. WOOD, Dallas, Texas.

# What Shall We Do With Our Cities?

*By Henry Churchill*

An address before the Architectural Panel, Conference of the Arts, Sciences and Professions in the post-War World, held at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York, June 23, 1945.

THERE IS NO DOUBT that one of the most pressing problems of the immediate present and of the future is what is to become of our cities. It will not be possible, in the short time we have today, for me to do more than outline very briefly what the problems are and what some of the proposed solutions are, and then leave it to you to bring out, in the discussion to follow, what you think may be the most appropriate action by the Committee.

The very rough and broad outline I am going to give applies to nearly all our cities, small as well as large, although of course in varying degrees and with many local differences. I want to emphasize this, and to add that New York is so different, so complex and so nearly insoluble a problem that it should be kept out of the discussion. We are, I understand, a nation-wide organization: we should remember that, and avoid the provincialism of our most cosmopolitan city.

Our cities are suffering from

two diseases: physical decay and economic constipation. The causes of these diseases are many, and for our purposes here today, perhaps not of great importance. It is the social consequences that must concern us.

The typical physical pattern of decay is a business center which is slowly deteriorating. Surrounding this is the old residential section, now largely slums and blighted, a section of mixed uses—run-down residences, tenements, small stores and factories, dog-wagons, empty lots. Beyond this come the better class of city homes and then the new areas of good middle-class houses and the wealthier suburban developments.

For the most part these cities are dreary and disconsolate wastes of drab streets and undistinguished structures. The better residential areas, particularly in small cities, are often redeemed by trees, shrubs and reasonable openness, but there is no such redemption where the vast majority must live and work. We can claim little in the way of

fine architecture or effective city planning. Delight of the eye is not for us.

The blight and decay of the close-in sections, and the prolonged deterioration of the business section, put a financial burden on the cities which they cannot meet. These blighted areas, for the most part tax-delinquent, must be policed and otherwise serviced. They are, often, the centers of vice, crime, tuberculosis, syphilis, and juvenile delinquency.

The outlying sections must also be policed and serviced. They pay taxes, but it would be absurd to expect them to make up for the tax-delinquent areas of slum and blight. If real-estate taxes were boosted to that extent, there would be a general exodus beyond the city limits. It has happened.

Industry has, in the past, been the chief source of municipal revenue. However, industry is also moving out of the cities, for a variety of reasons which I will mention later.

In spite of increasing blight and the trend towards the periphery, blighted and slum properties continue to be over-assessed, so that they cannot be acquired at a price consonant with new and logical use. Consequently, these vast areas

must be left to further decay—running sores on the body of the city, poisoning it physically, fiscally and socially.

I believe this to be a fair, although very broad and extremely generalized, statement of fact. Why has this state of affairs come about?



The chief, over-all reason, I think, lies in the fact that the industrial and mechanical technology of the last fifty years has rendered our city pattern obsolete. A city exists for two things only: it is a place in which people earn a living, and it is a place in which people live and play. If a city fails in either of these functions, the people, who are the city, do something about it.

Not only have our cities grown enormously since the early days of mass-production, but the number of cities has also increased, until by 1940 56 per cent of our people were living in cities. It was the technology of industry that produced them and also produced the super-city; until the middle of the nineteenth century no city in the western world, except Ancient Rome at its peak, ever had as many as a million inhabitants. No won-

der our urban patterns are obsolete!

This great influx of population, this spawning of new cities, encouraged speculation in land—the capitalization of hope. Speculation in land encouraged land over-crowding in an effort to make the hopes come true. The development of the skyscraper and the electric elevator, of rapid transit and sewage disposal plants, contributed mightily to this. But the more the over-crowding, the higher the values attached to the land, and the greater the need for more over-crowding.

Then, fortunately or unfortunately, when the tolerable limits of the over-crowding seemed to have been reached, along came a series of inventions that broke the back of the cities and made possible the present-day conditions of blight and bankruptcy: the automobile, the movie, the radio, the vacuum tube, the airplane, electronics.

It became possible to move out to where there was more room, more quiet, more light, air, green, greater safety and better schooling for children, and at the same time to work in the city, to have the movies and good music, to maintain social contacts. People moved out.

More recently, industry has begun to do the same thing, for analogous reasons. It seeks to escape the high costs of congested streets, insufficient parking space, obsolete factories in dingy surroundings, unhealthy living conditions for employees. This has become possible because the motor truck has freed the factory from the railroad, because electric power permits it to go anywhere wires can be strung, because the airplane has brought new and imperative demands for open space, because the labor force—thanks to the cheap car—is mobile and can and does follow. Last, and not least, scattered factories in smaller units are more efficient and less vulnerable to bombing. So the factories are moving out.



The cities have, therefore, failed or are failing both as places in which to live and places in which to work. To my mind this means that a new city pattern is evolving—not the abandonment of the city or anything like it, but a new pattern suited to the new technological requirements of our world of electronics, jet-propulsion and superpower. In the meantime the plight of the cities is very real, very press-

ing. What will be done about it in the next few years is of the utmost importance. What is being proposed?

Again, broadly and generally, the principal proposals are, in essence, that the over-assessed, over-valued, blighted and decayed properties in our cities shall be purchased by the Federal Government, the water squeezed out, and the land then handed back to private interests to "redevelop" under more or less adequate controls by the local government. The pattern is to remain the same—*plus ça change plus ça reste*. All the urban redevelopment or rehabilitation proposals are variations on this theme; and up to now no other even remotely possible method has been proposed—possible, that is, within the framework of our economy.

These proposals do or do not make sense according to whether or not you believe that government should play such a role, or a greater or a lesser role vis-a-vis to private enterprise; whether or not you believe that democratic planning is possible or that planning is the road to serfdom; whether or not you believe that our present

city patterns can and should be kept, or that there is something better if we want to plan and work for it.

One last word before opening the discussion: The rebuilding and reestablishment of our cities will take place eventually, simply because they cannot go on as they are. Perhaps this will not be until after World War III, or until we have devised a better economic system. It will be a task to arouse the greatest we have in imagination, skill and effort. It can not only give employment to the laborer and artisan, but to the artist it will offer unparalleled opportunities. It will take the utmost in daring by the economist, the lawyer and the politician. These last never do anything unless forced by the pressure of the people—the people who are the city. It is therefore, and immediately, a great educational task; eventually it will be a great political issue. It is this task and this issue that we can undertake and prepare to face here today.

What are your thoughts about it? What do we want the city of the future to be like? How shall we go about getting it?



## Honors to Architects

THOMAS HARLAN ELLETT, F.A.I.A., of New York, has been advanced from associate membership to the rank of National Academician by the National Academy of Design.

GLENN STANTON, Portland, Ore., a past-president of the Portland Chapter and a member of Oregon's Board of Architect Examiners, has been elected chairman of his city's Planning Commission.

ARTHUR B. GALLION, of Piedmont, Calif., has been appointed Dean of the School of Architecture, University of Southern California.

GEORGE A. BOEHM, of Pleasantville, N. Y., and New York City, has been commissioned by the City of Mount Vernon to redraft its codes on building, zoning, electrical work and plumbing.

Baltimore's architectural juniors—all now senior pillars in The Institute—seem to have moved in force upon the civic watchtowers of their community, as indicated by the three paragraphs following:

LUCIUS R. WHITE, JR., President of the Baltimore Chapter, A.I.A., has been appointed to the City Plan Commission, succeeding the late William D. Lamdin, F.A.I.A.

D. K. ESTE FISHER, JR., joins Baltimore's new Urban Redevelopment Commission, by appointment of Mayor McKeldin.

JAMES R. EDMUNDS, JR., F.A.I.A., President of The A.I.A., has been appointed by the Mayor of Baltimore as chairman of the newly formed Lexington Market Authority.

## California's Home Planning Institute

*By Walter R. Hagedohm*

**I**N SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, the first Home Planning Institute started in Pomona in February, 1944. This institute was sponsored by the Adult Education Division of the Pomona Junior College, being the first institute hav-

ing such sponsorship. The results of the first sessions were highly gratifying, as attendance started with 390 adults.

During the ensuing year, with the aid of various branches of the construction industry, including the

State Association of California Architects and the Southern California Chapter, A.I.A., sixteen classes were organized in the various districts of Southern California, from Santa Barbara south. The total registered attendance at these sessions reached 22,000 adults.

Following the success of these meetings, the Adult Division of the Los Angeles Board of Education early in 1945 organized Home Planning Institutes to be held in six locations within their jurisdiction. These classes were arranged on the basis of a ten-weeks' course, with two lectures given one evening each week at each location, making in all twenty lectures on home planning. These lectures covered the following subjects: Why Plan Now; Site Selection; You Design Your Home; Storage Spaces; Color in the Home; Interior Decoration; Adequate Wiring; Proper Lighting; Plumbing, Heating, and Ventilating; Budgeting for Your Home; Construction; Legal Pitfalls to Avoid; Protecting Your Investment; and Assembling Your Ideas Preparatory to Building.

The success of these six courses brought about an additional three courses for a period of eight weeks, covering the same subjects. In to-

tal, the number of registered attendance was approximately 13,000. The interest evidenced by this attendance was such that additional courses specializing in various sessions of home planning and construction have been inaugurated in the Los Angeles High School Adult Division curriculum.

The objectives of the Home Planning Institute can be outlined as follows:

First, providing jobs for returning military personnel and those engaged in War production through the construction of homes, as soon as materials and labor become available.

Second, aiding in the War effort by purchasing War bonds to provide a nest egg to assist in financing the home project. This was encouraged, not in the manner of cashing in the bonds as soon as the possibility of constructing a building becomes evident, but purchasing bonds systematically to be used in ten years as monthly payments on the loan.

Third, to promote privately financed, privately constructed, and privately owned homes.

Fourth, to provide everyone with a definite post-War plan which would be of value not only to the

individual but to the community and the country.

The results of the classes have been very gratifying. There seems to be an unlimited desire on the part of the public to obtain more and more information on good residential construction. The work has presented the architects with an opportunity of performing a public service. Consequently, the architect, in addition to obtaining a better understanding of the client of tomorrow, has had the opportunity of presenting to the prospective client a better understand-

ing of the architect's place in the building world.

Some twenty architects in this area have taken active part in presenting various topics in the lecture series. Their experiences, generally, have far surpassed their expectations. The friendliness of the audiences, their apparent desire for real information, and their cooperative attitudes have combined to make each session a pleasant experience. The opportunity for practical application of public relations has never been greater.

## An International Architectural Students' Association

Condensed from an appeal addressed to architectural students everywhere, by D. G. Barron, Secretary, Architectural Students' Association, 55 High Grove Road, Cheadle, Cheshire, England.

OF ALL THE SECTIONS OF OUR COMMUNITY, student life has always been the most consistently and persistently international in spirit. Students have always been in the vanguard of the movements that proclaimed the friendship of one nation towards another, and students have always been in the fore of the fight against Fascism, as in Madrid and Prague, and elsewhere in Europe. In their desire

to achieve a genuine comradeship with students of other nations, there had sprung up before the War many international student bodies, through which viewpoints and ideas could be exchanged and shared. Tolerance, sympathy and a desire to understand the other fellow have always been the basis of international student relationship in the past, and we may be sure that students will be the first,

AUGUST, 1945



after this War, to dedicate part of their energies to turning the antagonisms and hatreds that have so far been stimulated, into a genuine comradeship and understanding that knows no barriers of nationality and creed. It is in this belief that an international organization of architectural students is being formed.

It is easy to see that within these very broad ideals, architectural students, and, indeed, all sections of student life, can establish a professional international understanding of great educational value. If a national architectural student organization is the first step towards breaking down cultural, educational and technical isolation, then an international association is the logical second step.



Large-scale international comradeship cannot easily find a means of expression except through an organization expressly in being for that purpose. Some authority, in some land, must obviously be responsible for the congresses, the committees, the publications, the finances and so on. This cannot be effectively undertaken by a national organization, and it would follow logically that an interna-

tional body is required—a body that is truly representative of all the nations that wish to participate in the movement.

At the present moment it is not possible to organize an independent international organization capable of maintaining itself. For this reason, the Architectural Students' Association, which is the national organization of architectural students in Great Britain, proposes to undertake the responsibility of organizing international relationship between architectural students of the world, within the broad ideals laid down above, as a temporary measure, pending the formation of a truly international body.

We urge that architectural students from those countries and colleges that are not already in contact with the Architectural Students' Association as corresponding members of the International Committee, should join us now and help us to make real the aims we have set out above. Great tasks lie ahead, and only by the maximum degree of coordinated effort can we overcome them. Now is the time to write a page in the history of international student relationship. *Act now!*

## The Public's Rights, If Any

THE following correspondence is self-explanatory. It has been made available to the JOURNAL by Major Gilmore D. Clarke, Chairman of The Commission of Fine Arts. The letter from Mr. Bard, a New York attorney, is representative of other protests received by The Commission of Fine Arts.

June 7, 1945

MY DEAR MAJOR CLARKE:

I was remiss on the occasion of my recent visit to you in not bringing up the subject of the three-dimensional advertisements which now bedevil the interior of Grand Central Station and are soon, as I understand, to be placed in the Washington terminal.

Presumably you have seen the advertisements which have been affixed to the columns in the Grand Central Station. The concourse in the station has become a good deal cluttered with ticket booths, etc., not originally contemplated but seemingly made necessary by travel conditions. The new advertisements on the walls add substantially to the impression of confusion and clutter and are wholly unnecessary as travel facilities or aids.

The Municipal Art Society of New York has protested to the railroad management against the bedeviling of a noble architec-

tural hall. While technically in one sense the place is not a public building, the essential character of the building is public.

I suppose that the Federal Commission of Fine Arts, of which you are chairman, may not have direct jurisdiction over the placing of similar advertisements in the Washington terminal. But I am wondering if a protest from the Commission might not be persuasive with the railroads to abandon their plan of bedeviling the Washington terminal in a similar way, and, whether that move were successful or not, it might not lead ultimately to a removal of the disfigurement of the Grand Central Station.

Your Commission, I note, is the official advisory body of the Government on matters of art. Might not the Commission stimulate the Interstate Commerce Commission into consideration of such disfigurement of noble structures erected by the railroads? . . .

This abominable advertising movement is being exploited in the advertising journals, and the examples of New York and Washington will be sure to be followed elsewhere unless a stop is put to it.

If the national Commission of Fine Arts took the leadership in expressing public disapproval of the movement, it would be likely

to find a great deal of support, I am sure, all over the country. The mere effort would influence the artistic education of the country. It is a matter in which government might well take the lead. While that is not the Commission's primary function, might it not be a practical step within the framework of its function as adviser to the Federal Government? An expression of opinion by so responsible a body could be quoted and circulated by private and professional groups, all in the interest of the dignity and amenity of public places—which in the last analysis is really the purpose of the Art Committee.

Very sincerely yours,  
ALBERT S. BARD



May 10, 1945

MR. B. R. Tolson, Manager  
Union Station  
Washington, D. C.

DEAR MR. TOLSON:

The Commission of Fine Arts have been informed that the Board of Overseers of Union Station have made a contract with a New York City advertising firm to install about half a dozen dioramas in Union Station.

The Commission express much displeasure over the fact that these advertising media are being installed. They may be temporary in nature, and their value as advertising is limited. Nevertheless,

it establishes a bad precedent to permit such advertising in what is regarded as one of the beautiful and monumental semi-public buildings of the National Capital, and detracts from its dignity.

The Commission express the hope that these dioramas will be removed at the earliest opportunity and that no additional ones will be added.

For the Commission of Fine  
Arts:

Sincerely yours,

GILMORE D. CLARKE, Chairman



### Information on British Experience

FROM JACOB CRANE, Special Assistant to the Administrator of the National Housing Agency, comes word that, in cooperation with the State Department, the NHA is organizing a systematic interchange of information with other countries. In this connection, Major George L. Reed is acting as Consultant on Housing and Urbanism in the U. S. Embassy in London. Inquiries as to any angle of British experience may be made to Major Reed, and it is desirable to address such inquiries via the NHA at 1600 Eye St., N. W., Washington, D. C.



## Architects Read and Write

*Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative.*



### THE UNREALIZED COST OF GADGETRY

BY PRENTICE SANGER, Smithtown, N. Y.

WITH V-E DAY behind us and rumors of reconversion rife, thousands upon thousands of families in this country are awaiting with increased impatience the word which will allow them to start building the house of their dreams.

For the vast majority of them it will be a small house—it will have to be to fit their pocketbook—and they have been planning it for so long they think they know exactly what they want.

But do they?

As an architect who has been intrigued by the challenge of small houses, I am not so sure.

During the War years, when manufacturers could not build home products, they have kept in the public eye by whetting the home-owners' and future home-builders' appetites with a host of wonderful labor-saving devices. The home of tomorrow will do everything but dust itself three times a day. The home group of magazines have been as sold as

the public, and illustrate, with excellent isometric drawings, delightful gadget-filled kitchens and laundries, and bathrooms that can be used by the whole family at once, with privacy for all. And every time Mr. and Mrs. Home Planner see these things they vow they will have them in their new home. If they did not, they would not be human. The trouble is, no one is telling them what all these gadgets mean in terms of dollars in increased carrying and financing charges, in servicing costs, and in what they are going to do to the size of the down-payment on the new home.

The burden of my song in this letter is that I feel the time is come for some plain speaking on the part of all interested in home building, so that the public can count the cost of all this modern design now, before building or buying. If we sidestep this plain talk, I fear trouble ahead—trouble caused by the public's demand for all modern

conveniences in a home they can afford. If they get them, it may be at the expense of the house itself. And I am positive that home-owners do not really want garbage - disposal sinks, deep freezes, dish-washers and dryers, washing machines, and all the rest of the lovely and useful gadgets that they have been sold and sold again, at the cost of leaking roofs, sagging floors, doors that will not stay shut, damp cellars, and all the other problems of a cheaply constructed home.



After all, average American families take twenty to twenty-five years to pay for their homes. They are entitled to have something left for their money on the great day when the last payment on the mortgage has been made and the house becomes theirs, free and clear.

In designing and planning the small home, it is necessary to strike a fine balance between what the customer thinks he wants, and the hidden values of sturdy construction and sound design which make his investment economically safe. It seems to me important that all those who stand to benefit from home construction get started on

a realistic public-education program, so that when the home-buying time comes, the prospective home-owner may have a sound-values yardstick with which to measure his purchase.

Those of us engaged in home building know that there are standards below which we cannot go if a house is to be well-knit and sound. We also know that for the vast majority of home buyers we can just meet these standards and no more, while staying within the price they can afford to pay.

The cost of construction for some time after the War will be somewhat more than it was in the years immediately preceding the War. Labor's wages will be higher and the demand for materials will outrun the supply. Pile on top of this all the fascinating but costly labor-saving devices that every housewife dreams of and every loving husband wants his wife to have and something will have to give.

It must *not* be sturdy construction. And yet if the public is not told of the cost of gadgets it may well be.

The well-built and the jerry-built house look about the same to the untutored eye, so the public cannot be blamed for choosing a

home on the basis of the shiny objects in the kitchen and laundry. If they are not told what these objects must have cost, and also warned of the high cost of poor construction, we shall have on our hands thousands of unhappy home-

owners and a brisk business in foreclosed mortgages.

So, let's all cooperate in giving the public a square deal by publishing in the "Home Books", the building and architectural magazines, the straight story on costs.

## WHERE ARE WE HEADED FOR?

BY ADOLPH MERTIN, New York

ALTHOUGH you report that there was no opposition from architects to your plan, "Qualifying for Hospital Architecture",\* may I offer an observation, viz:— It appears to me that your approval of this "Plan" means that we are now to support the theory of centralizing and specialization in the practice of architecture, which will ultimately have the public believe that there is one class of architects for one type of building and another for some other type; exactly what architects, in my opinion, have opposed in the past.

Is it to be a grouping of architects for hospitals, housing, theaters, etc., etc.? Then in that event The A. I. A., in supporting the

American Hospital Association "Plan", would appear justified to the writer.

Personally I am of the opinion that if future architects for hospitals are selected on the basis of their previous record in hospital design, then architects who are in the position of the one selected by the Committee before he got the first commission for the hospital, now recognized, will have no chance, although the latter may be a better and more qualified architect.

I believe that by your "approved" method of selecting architects, we deny many opportunities for initiative and prevent new ideas on the subject of hospital planning, which have frequently emanated from good architects not necessarily specialists.

\*Our "no opposition" remark referred to the movement represented by Senate Bill 191, looking to a better national distribution of hospital facilities.—EDITOR.

If an architect with his creative ability is successful in one type of building, why should he fall short of that quality in other types? The architect has been attuned to research of detail essential to the design of any structure, and has by training been equipped to provide himself with the latest and necessary information on his subject.

Large firms will naturally derive an advantage under your "approved" procedure, much of their work being obtained because of their contact and not because they were superior to many of our great designers, who will seldom get an "in" on a new project if the award is predicated on their record of hospital buildings alone, as with your "Plan".

Parkchester, one of the best housing developments in the country, was not done by a specialist.

Illustrations of this kind are unlimited in number and variety. Very few of the best buildings were designed by specialists.

The unification of architects will give us greater power. I think a united profession should use such power to avoid the inevitable restriction of originality and initiative resulting from above procedure. What is needed in every community I believe is the selection by the communities of a high type of men on the boards of trustees of hospitals, and less personnel whose presence is only justified by a formidable donation. Men of the former type usually know how to choose good professional services.

Any other plan seems to smack too much of being susceptible of becoming contaminated by political maneuvering, whether by one group or another.

## CONTRACTS AND ACCOUNTING

BY MILO S. HOLDSTEIN, Cleveland, O.

SINCE YOU HAVE ASKED for material for the JOURNAL, I should like to suggest that the question of short contracts between architect and owner might be a subject for discussion.

I find most of my clients skeptical and hesitant about signing even a short form, and I am interested in having a form which would be on one sheet of paper, less technical in wording but equal-

ly as binding, legally, as our present form. In the short form, some mention should be made of the new forms of insurance to be carried by the contractor for the protection of the owner—unemployment compensation, social security, public liability and property damage.

I had thought of employing an attorney for this job, but perhaps other members of the profession

have had similar experiences and have been able to work out some satisfactory agreement.

One other phase of the practice of architecture which has long been a problem is the accounting and cost determination of the work.

If some simple accounting system could be devised for the small office, so that the architect-supervisor-commission-obtainer could also be the accountant, I should be a much happier practitioner.

## ARCHITECTURAL LICENSING—TREATMENT AND CURE

BY LAWRENCE E. MAWN, Alhambra, Calif.

WHERE there are two schools of thought, two classes of opinion, it does not seem to matter what is said—two will remain. Both are often partly right.

Two opinions remain about architectural licensing after long years of experience with its procedure. There will always be two; The procedure of licensing is too easy; It is too hard. Satisfaction of both groups seems necessary and desirable. An attempt at it seems reasonable and defensible. There exist too much dissension and too many reasons for differences in the profession as it is.

At a recent meeting of archi-

ects, the chairman of a committee to study and recommend changes in registration methods made several constructive statements and gave the reasons for them. Some candidates had felt that the requirements were purposely kept too high; so high that the examiners themselves would not pass—a not uncommon suspicion. Fault was found because examination papers were not marked and returned. There was hint of poor faith in acceptance of candidates and grading of results in that they seemed arbitrary. The net result was that in this particular area fifty or more architectural men,



capable and worthy, had not been certificated. Some had proven more capable than many certificated. Most of them had given up all attempts in disgust. The profession was the poorer for that.

One of the audience arose. He had served on the state board for many years at considerable cost in time and money, without one cent of compensation. On behalf of the unselfish and public-spirited members of the board, he objected to the dark hints of unworthy actions and to the fault finding. He cited the failure of some past candidates to answer primary questions and so on. Not too hard at all! The high standards of the profession must be held!

As symbols of the two schools of thought, both sides could be wagging fingers menacingly at each other to this moment and be no nearer common ground for agreement. Possibly neither would concede as much as an egg-and-dart to the other. So it goes. What hope is there?

A far-western state association of architects, after a study of the state's registration laws, reported that repeated tightening of requirements had raised the average age of architects from 42.7 in 1920 to 54.3 years in 1940. A later sur-

vey corrected this to 48.9 years. Architecture was now a portly, late middle-aged profession. The majority of its members reporting recommended that the laws should be revised and made less drastic. In that particular state only 30 per cent of the applicants received certificates. However, a report of the latest examination showed that almost half passed. The former estimation may have been inaccurate or may have been based on an extreme condition, but it does dramatize the general misguided tendency throughout the country to raise the requirements.

Generally the end of the laws and procedure is to protect the lives, health and property of the people by weeding out the unskilled and by increasing the proficiency of the practitioners of the art of architecture. It is not clear that these objects are being adequately attained under the existing systems.

Here comes a young applicant for examination. In addition to the usual theoretical, historical, mechanical questions, he is faced with the design problem of a school for secondary education of so many pupils. So many views on a certain size sheet. The engineering problem is a stress diagram

and calculations of a Howe truss in steel for a specified live, dead and wind load for a given span. There are other design questions about a concrete beam and slab. He is fortunate. Perhaps they are the very things on which he concentrated in his preparatory studies. He passes. He is now certificated and can accept commissions under the law without restriction as to size and cost, for hotels, hospitals, theaters, dance halls, churches, city halls, courthouses, and the dozens of other structures allotted to architects by it. For these intricate and varied buildings, he has by such means shown his capabilities? The procedure very charitably presumes these in generous amounts hidden away to burgeon out under the beneficence of a client.

To those who claim that the requirements are too high, that they will never draw a moment diagram or need a shear diagram in their residence work, the later suggested licensing arrangement should be acceptable. This plan will appeal to those who wish to stiffen the standards lest those unqualified accept a commission for important work beyond their ability, and in resultant failure harm the profession. They will see many

advantages in the plan who would like more maturing study and preparation in continuance of the applicant's schooling and training, before he is sprung full-panoplied in the public's eye, and eager for large, juicy commissions. Harried and unappreciated examiners will see a program that could be readily adapted to their special circumstances. The claims that some are denied the right to practice within the limits of their ability will be negated by its adoption.

This suggested arrangement of grades of licenses will find an analogy in the professions of medicine and law, both of which exact special qualifications for certain licenses. These should be clearly designated by some symbol qualifying the title granted the applicant. Five degrees are suggested—one for each of the following fields possibly:

1. Small homes costing up to \$7,500. This would cover, perhaps, two-thirds of all the residences built in the nation. This would ensure a definite and continuous supply of architects to specialize in small home design, and would make available to the average homebuilder the services of a trained architect. The limitations of the field do not attract

the more experienced architects who are not residence specialists. There would result fewer lumberyard-designed homes. It would be surprising if there were not a quality upswing in the small-home group as a result.

2. Larger residences and commercial work, not involving engineering design, up to a top cost of \$20,000.

3. All types of residences and commercial and industrial work within a limit of \$50,000. Engineering is to be simple, or, if complex, the services of an engineer are to be obtained in this class.

4. Commercial and industrial work, places of public assembly, institutions, public buildings, and community planning up to \$250,000.

5. General building work of all types and community planning without limit.

Applicants would have to show only a reasonable amount of education. The requirement of architectural college graduation would in the past have eliminated some of the country's outstanding architects. The examination would be limited to architectural design and structural engineering problems in each particular field. Two days in the lower three classes and three

days in the upper classes are suggested for the length of written examinations. There would be a year's interval between examinations. An applicant could stop at any class of his own choosing. Out-state architects would be accepted for in-state work only in classes in which they have qualified and can submit examples of actual work.

Advantages of this new system are numerous and readers will discover others that are not mentioned here.

An obvious advantage is the insurance of deeper knowledge and higher skill in each part of the architectural field. An applicant will be able to break the gigantic subject into digestible bits. Concentration on a limited objective will permit better preparation and more convincing proof of ability. Another result will be the distribution of professionals into various spheres of activity. This will avoid an unprofitable massing and crowding in one narrow corner. Here will be a practical recognition of the state which arises in the professional economy under which practitioners work. Most percolate down to specified or combined strata of work—residences for this one, banks for that one, public housing and institutions for

the other. Grade licensing will be a recognition of this natural and inevitable phenomenon.

The most important aim is that the licensing procedure be national, accepted in every state; that a license granted in one state be recognized in another state after application and on stated reasonable conditions. Desirable uniformity would thus be attained. This would be a refreshing novelty.

Perfection is not claimed for

this outlined plan; further development of details will be needed. The scheme contains the nucleus of potential satisfaction to all groups. It has positive worth and this can be strongly set down. It should not be lightly flicked off, and continuance in tried and unsatisfactory ways permitted. Generally satisfactory licensing procedure is intimately connected with the needed and proper rehabilitation of the profession.

## Highlights of the Technical Press

*The Architectural Forum*, June: Detroit—replanned sections to fit an over-all pattern; 7 pp. t. & ill. Proposed National Stadium, Brazil; Oscar Niemeyer Soares, archt. 5 pp. t. & ill.

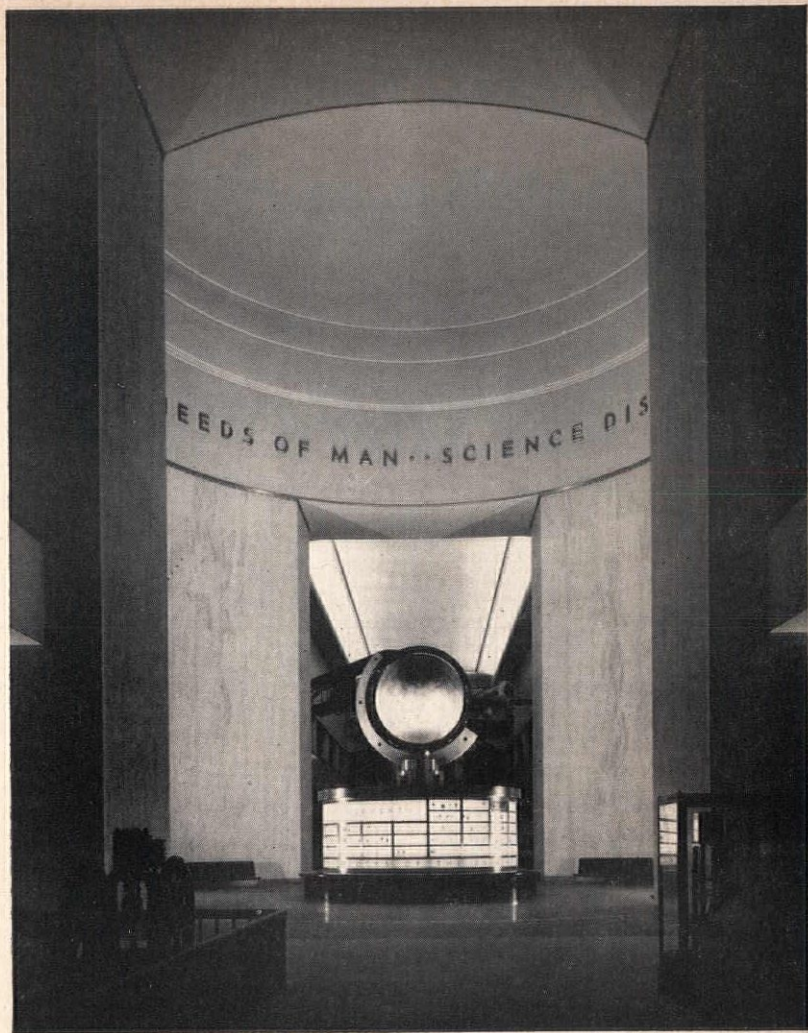
July: Design Analysis—The Vertical Style; 11 pp. t. & ill. Prefabrication (combined with solar orientation and panel heating); 6 pp. t. & ill. Combined Heating and Cooling (for a residential project); 3½ pp. t. & ill.

*Architectural Record*, June: Building Types Study on Neighborhood Schools, in collaboration with *The Nation's Schools*; 29 pp. t. & ill. San Antonio Municipal

Port (revised plans); Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres, archts.; 2 pp. t. & pls.

July: Highway Hotels; 14 pp. t. & ill. Advances in the Art of School Room Lighting, by Frank Wynkoop; 4 pp. t. & ill. A House Divided for Outdoor Dividends; Gardner A. Dailey & Assocs., archts.; 4 pp. t. & ill. Time-Saver Standards—The Household Laundry; 2 pp.

*Pencil Points*, June: Recreation Plan for Lake Texoma, developed by the National Park Service; 12 pp. t. & ill. Community Building, Zurich, Switzerland; Louis Parnes A.I.A., archt.; 7 pp. t. & ill.



*Hedrich-Blessing photograph*

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## Books & Bulletins

A MILLION HOMES A YEAR. By Dorothy Rosenman. 344 pp. 5½" x 8": New York: 1945: Harcourt, Brace & Co. \$3.50.

Not only does Mrs. Rosenman steer an unwavering course between the social theorists and the rugged individualists, but she does so with facts and figures. Even without her clear reasoning, the volume is a handbook of housing data almost as comprehensive and easily found as in the familiar Kidder. Whether you want a chart that shows the final cost of an improved lot, or the front-foot cost of installing public utilities, here it is, without a search through interminable reports and surveys.

HEATING, VENTILATING, AIR CONDITIONING GUIDE, 1945. 832 pp. 6" x 9". New York (51 Madison Ave., Zone 10); American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers. \$5.

The 23rd Edition of this authoritative handbook.

AMERICAN STANDARDS. 24 pp. 7¾" x 10½". New York (70 E. 45th St., Zone 17): 1945: American Standards Association. No charge.

A list of the 800 American Standards and War Standards approved to date, for the electrical, mechanical, transportation, building, textile and other fields, with

prices at which the individual Standards may be obtained.

AMERICAN PLANNING AND CIVIC ANNUAL. Edited by Harlean James. 196 pp. 6" x 9". Washington, D. C. (Union Trust Bldg.): 1944: American Planning and Civic Association. \$3.

A record, published annually since 1935, of recent advances in the fields of planning, parks, housing, neighborhood improvement and conservation of national resources.

REPORT OF THE URBAN PLANNING CONFERENCES AT EVERGREEN HOUSE. Under the auspices of Johns Hopkins University. 270 pp. 6" x 9". Baltimore: 1944: The Johns Hopkins Press. \$2.75.

The fruits of six full week-end sessions at Mrs. John Work Garrett's home near Baltimore, attended by nationally known authorities and discussing the principal bases of urban planning.

THE SMALL HOME OF TOMORROW. By Paul R. Williams, A. I. A. 96 pp. 8½" x 11". Hollywood: 1945: Murray & Gee, Inc. \$3. (in paper covers, \$2).

Sketch plans and perspectives of houses, interior and exterior details, offered with the purpose of crystalizing the layman's desires.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HOUSING AND TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING IN BRITAIN. 20 pp. 6" x 9". New York (30 Rockefeller Plaza): 1944: British Information Services. No charge.

THE LIGHTING OF BUILDINGS. Post-War Building Studies No. 12. By the Lighting Committee of the Building Research Board of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. 164 pp. 6" x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ "; paper covers. London: 1944: H. M. Stationery Office. 2s 6d net.

The methods and principles of artificial lighting being well and widely known, this report deals particularly with design methods for natural lighting, including development of the site for that purpose.

WHEN DEMOCRACY BUILDS. By Frank Lloyd Wright. 142 pp. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Chicago: 1945: University of Chicago Press. \$4.

"This book is written in the firm belief that all true human Culture has a healthy idea of the Beautiful as its Life-of-the-Soul: an Aesthetic-Organic, as *of* Life, not *on* it. One that nobly relates Man to his environment."—F.Ll.W.

AN APPRAISAL METHOD FOR MEASURING THE QUALITY OF HOUSING: a Yardstick for Health Officers, Housing Officials and Planners. Part I—

Nature and Uses of the Method. Prepared by Allen A. Twichell, Technical Secretary. 78 pp. 6" x 9"; paper covers. New York (1790 Broadway, Zone 19): 1945: American Public Health Association, Committee on the Hygiene of Housing. \$1.

STABILIZING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY. By Miles L. Colean. Planning Pamphlets, No. 41. 40 pp. 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ "; paper covers. Washington (800 21st St., N. W., Zone 6): 1945: National Planning Association. 25c.

A penetrating study of causes and effects, with constructive suggestions for improvement. With Mr. Colean's study is presented a Joint Statement by NPA's three standing committees on national policy.

COST MEASUREMENT IN URBAN REDEVELOPMENT. By Miles L. Colean and Arthur P. Davis. 44 pp. 9" x 12"; flexible leather binding. New York (512 Fifth Ave., Zone 18): 1945: National Committee on Housing, Inc. \$15.

Tables, text and charts; the first really scientific attempt at a "slide rule" for computing urban redevelopment costs—the effect of variation in land cost, interest rates and taxes, and the effect of redeveloping with single detached dwellings, row houses, or multi-family houses of various heights.



## The Editor's Asides

WE TRUST that a recent action of WPB will be accepted as coming under the head of good news. The allocation of paper, under which the JOURNAL has been obliged to practice the most rigid economies, has just been increased. No longer will it be necessary for any member to share a neighbor's copy. No longer will it be necessary for us to discourage the entering of subscriptions for associate members of the Chapters, or turn back checks received from laymen who would keep posted on the architect's thinking. Apparently there is to be paper enough for all legitimate purposes. It is our earnest hope that those architects who have refrained from self-expression in a praiseworthy effort to conserve a war-needed commodity will note the relaxation of the WPB and will themselves relax.

THERE ARE THOSE who have been telling us that America's industrial plant is more than sufficient for our own needs in the immediate future—particularly with its recent expansion to meet War demands.

The Twentieth Century Fund does not think so. Its experts esti-

mate that we shall need to spend, over the next fifteen-year period, three and a half billion dollars each year for factories and industrial facilities, plus nearly 1,500 millions yearly for electric power systems, plus 680 millions yearly for commercial and business buildings.

Moreover, if America were to meet all needs for new capital equipment in these next fifteen years, including replacement deferred before and during the War, we should invest twenty-eight billions per year—in terms of 1940 price levels.

This isn't just a figure plucked out of wishful thinking by the Twentieth Century Fund. It is a serious attempt to make detailed estimates, based on past experience and factors of growth. These estimates cover four major categories that together usually account for about two-thirds of our total capital outlays.

Needs that will arise out of the natural increase in population, out of current replacements, out of accumulated deficiencies and their related outlays—these are lumped in the first category. The second is the commercial and industrial

field. The third includes transportation — railroads, highways, waterways and port development, airports, and oil pipelines. The fourth category is rural development—farm housing, flood control, irrigation and recreational facilities.

The estimates assume our economic system to be working at high levels. No attempt is made to indicate whether the money would, or should, come from private or public sources. Certain of the fields are traditionally public responsibilities—highways, for example. Others are traditionally private undertakings—such as the railroads. Still others have in the past been both public and private responsibilities—hospitals and schools as examples.

All of which emphatically points to the fact that the designing professions are going to be more than busy; they are likely to be the national bottleneck.

ROGER ALLEN, as president of the Grand Rapids Chapter, hit upon what he thought was a constructive scheme in gathering specific present-day cost data from his membership and publishing it in the Chapter's bulletin, *Architectonics*. We, too, thought it a good idea

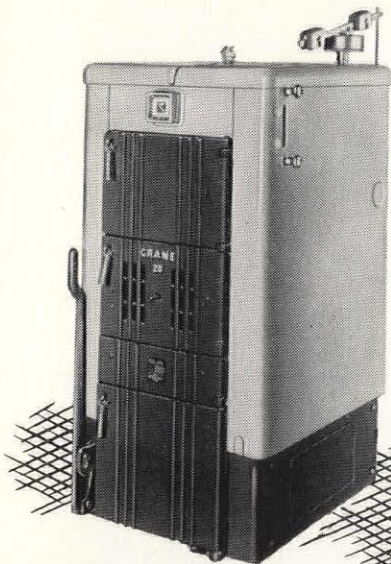
and told him so. And now, a month later, *Architectonics* carries this lament: "Sorry that nobody felt inclined to send in any data for our cost building sheets. I thought this was a good idea, but that seems to be a minority opinion, or someone would have sent in some dope."

We thought you knew the architectural profession better than that, Roger. Haven't you learned that the genus doesn't ever send in replies to invitations like that? He thinks George will do it. But George, being merely another architect, doesn't. Don't let them squelch that cost-reporting idea, Roger, merely because they do not know how to take pen in hand.

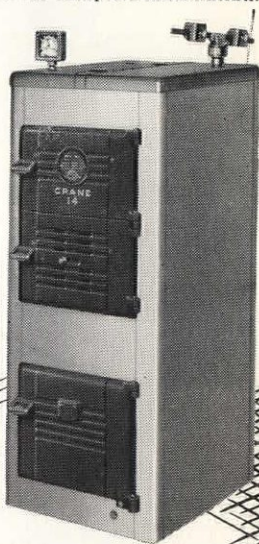
All of which reminds us that some months ago we thought that Joe Smay had a good idea—a clearing-house for architectural subjects in Kodachrome. We, too, printed it and then sat back to await the flood of approval from others who sometimes need a slide of the Folger Library, the Adler Planetarium, or what have you, for a lecture. The silence was, and still is, deafening. But do *we* admit that the idea, therefore, was no good? We do not. It's just that the architect is, above all, a strong *silent* man.

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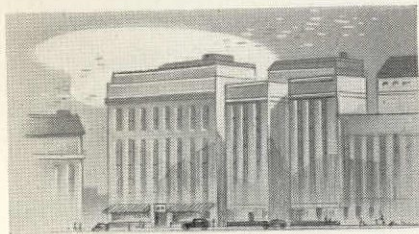
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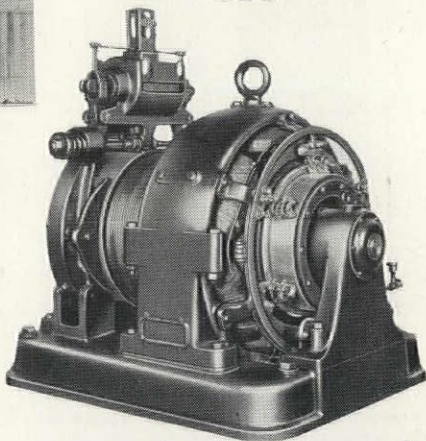
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Official address of The Institute as a N. Y. Corporation, 115 E. 40th St., New York, N. Y.

The Producers' Council, affiliated with The A.I.A., 815 15th St., N.W., Washington 5, D. C.

