

Journal of The American Institute of  
**ARCHITECTS**



WILLIAM STRICKLAND

October, 1948

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An Editorial by Harold S. Bутtenheim

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The Famous Louvain Library Inscription

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Leopold Arnaud on Teaching History

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Dr. Edman on Artistic Expression

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Wm. Adams Delano's Memoirs

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Enforcing Registration Laws Locally

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What Architects Have Visioned for Detroit

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# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

OCTOBER, 1948

With the aim of amplifying, as through  
a microphone, the voice  
of the profession

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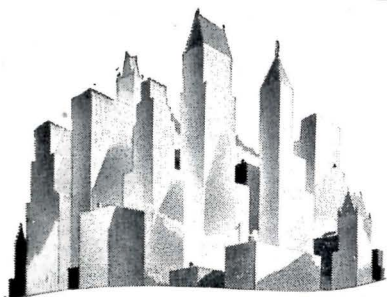
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by *Otis*

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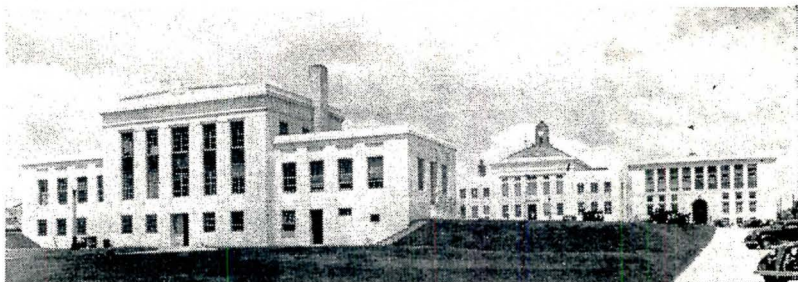


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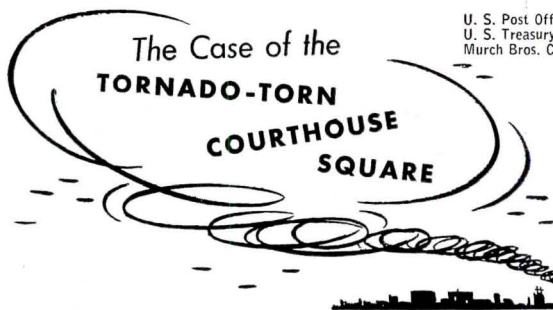
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*Here is the third in our new series of Guest Editorials. These have been instituted on the premise that a lot of conviction about various professional matters is bottled up here and there about us for lack of a convenient outlet. Our guest editorial page should furnish the valve that will ease this pressure. The opinions expressed will be the uninhibited ones of the Guest who occupies a particular month's driving-seat. If you would argue with him, please do so in the JOURNAL; if you feel that you must sue for libel, mayhem or whatnot, sue him, not the JOURNAL. This month's Guest Editor is—*

*Harold S. Bутtenheim*

EDITOR THE AMERICAN CITY

## The Architect as a Force for Civic Progress

WHEN I BEGAN editing *The American City* in 1911, foremost among my new-found friends to volunteer helpful ideas for the then struggling magazine was the late George B. Ford. An able architect who would rather plan a town than design a building, Mr. Ford gave me hope that the architectural profession was on its way to becoming a major factor in civic advance.

This was thirty-seven years ago. With time's relentless tread the flame of that hope has flickered more than once, but its glow is

brighter today than ever before. Forward-looking architects are showing more and more concern with the planning and rational development of the neighborhoods and communities in which they or their clients live, and with emerging problems of urban redevelopment.

But the city and regional planning movement could be greatly strengthened, I believe, if a larger percentage of men with architectural training were to enter the planning profession. Some figures may be of interest.

The American Institute of Architects, according to its 1947-1948 Directory has over 7,000 members. The corresponding figure for the leading professional organization in the community planning field—The American Institute of Planners—according to its latest (1947) directory, is 318 members. As there are hundreds of times as many structures to be designed as towns to be planned, this numerical disparity between the two professions is not surprising. Disappointing, however, is the fact that when the two lists are compared, we find only 38 A.I.A. members on the roster of the A.I.P.

The British picture is quite different. Listed in the 1947-1948 directory of the Town Planning Institute are 1,542 members, of whom 617 are members of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

If one could imagine that study of these figures would cause hundreds of hopeful American architects to invade the pastures of the planners, the question of "how can we eat?" would soon become acute for many. Nevertheless, the paid planning profession has room, I am sure, for a much larger percentage of architects than its mem-

bership now includes. New types of civic architecture must meet the growing demand for more spacious and wholesome community life.

For most architects, however, the opportunity is for voluntary service as citizens concerned with the rational growth or redevelopment of their home towns and metropolitan areas. Here the field is large and challenging. Planning commissions need more architects on their unpaid boards. Citizens' councils, chambers of commerce, housing and planning associations, and other civic organizations need more architects on their committees and boards of directors. State and national groups in these fields are growing in number and need the skill and the vision of the architect for more effective functioning.

Architecture is a profession, and a profession is a public trust. Traditionally, our ablest doctors and lawyers and educators give much free community service. The same is true, but perhaps not so generally true, of the architectural profession. The opportunity is there—and the need was never greater than it is today.

A 13-year-old boy remarked to his father, "Dad, I think the world is getting awfully close to the

future." Whether that future will bring a finer civilization or a relapse toward barbarism will depend not only on the functioning of the United Nations and of the governments of the great powers. It will depend also on how we cultivate the soil of our local communities and plant the seeds from which freedom and order rather than tyranny and regimentation may grow.

Speaking to the theme, "The Organized Community—Bulwark of Democracy," at the National

Conference on Community Improvement, in Washington, D. C., last May, President Harold W. Dodds of Princeton University said:

"My thesis is the simple one that unless both local government and community civic activities of a non-governmental character are continued in full vigor and effectiveness, democracy in any accurate sense of the term will vanish before we know that it is gone."

Is there not a challenge here to every member of The American Institute of Architects?

## History and Architecture

*By Leopold Arnaud*

DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

A paper read at the 34th Annual Meeting of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, Salt Lake City, June 21, 1948

THE VALUE of the history of architecture as a study for those who are preparing themselves to be practising architects has been the subject of dispute for the past two decades, and there is as yet no generally accepted conclusion.

Until the mid-twenties of this century it is perhaps true that undue importance was given to the history of architecture, treated as archeology rather than as a con-

sideration of the interrelation of art, structure and social development. During the latter part of the nineteenth century the Western world was fascinated by the novelty, as well as by the intrinsic interest, of the new science of archeology. Creative art being then in decline, academic imitation took its place. This condition was particularly acute in America, intensified by the fact that the country

was passing through a phase of cultural development during which, suddenly conscious of its youthful crudity, it craved the mellowed beauties of Europe, copying rather than adapting the styles that had evolved through the centuries. It was considered necessary, therefore, that the young architect should acquire a complete repertoire of the classics—to be repeated upon request. Immediately he began to learn the Orders as the standard of beauty for all time.

The inevitable reaction came about fifteen or twenty years ago. The extremists, however, would still have it that the student is hampered by knowing what has been done before, and that he should study modern forms only. Comparison is made with the doctor who knows nothing of the history of his science (unless he acquires it as a hobby), as the study of discarded theories would only clutter his memory, and add nothing to his understanding of present findings. But the two subjects have no basis for comparison. There is no relation whatever between an esthetic ideal and a discarded theory. A masterpiece of art can be an object of enduring use and pleas-

ure, whereas an outmoded scientific theory can be nothing more than a stepping-stone, forever left behind.

History is too intricate and penetrating a subject to be dismissed summarily, and it is surprising that its value should be questioned in an age that is definitely "history-minded." It is generally conceded that the study of the past helps us to understand the present and prepare for the future. How necessary, then, is this study in the training of an architect; for architecture is the art of building beautifully, and as an art it is a living expression of the social and political status of the people. The history of architecture combines the development of civilization with that of structure; it is not merely a tabulation of the sequence of styles, but includes an analysis of the reasons—social, political, racial and regional—that caused the differences in the manner of expression.

Like political periods, stylistic periods will be found to follow the cycle of growth, flower and decay. During the early phase, the expression is chaste, simple, experimental; as familiarity with the new structural and esthetic principles develops, the manner is freer and

more decorative, increasing finally to blatant self-confidence that shows itself in exuberance of ornament and technical ingenuity. The sincerity and restraint of the early phase is lost, and decline follows. Having traced this process through its many recurrences, the student will gain a flexibility of mind that will save him from the fallacy of considering the conditions of his own day as static; he will detect error in the rigid tenets of the extremists who fail to see that an undecorated style is characteristic of the early phase of a new cycle through which we are now passing, and who think, consequently, that ornament is banished forever, just because machines have been invented, and new uses have been found for steel and concrete.

The study of architectural history is a practical demonstration of what can be done, of what should not be done, and why. The evidence of trial, error and success can be studied through the buildings that have been erected in every age. If a structural or esthetic principle has been inadequately applied, the result can be clearly seen. Or if a building is beautiful, the elements that have produced that beauty can be analyzed; and it will

be found that this beauty does not result only from correct externals—finely balanced relationships of voids and solids, interesting play of light and shade, or tasteful application of ornament—but proceeds also from essential rightness and fitness of plan, logical use of material, practical adaptation to usage, and conformity to the ideals of the period. The record of experiment has an importance, different in architecture as compared with pure science, because the same problems recur, though in different form; though the various structural and esthetic principles pass through periods of favor and disfavor, they are never wholly discarded and will return on the curve of a new cycle.

The cultivation of taste and discernment is an essential factor in the training of an architect. It is not always realized how undeveloped, in this respect, is the average beginner. After repeatedly analyzing the beauty of great buildings in all their aspects and qualities—mass, plan, decorative detail, craftsmanship—the student will absorb (in proportion to his receptivity) a sense of beauty. Balance, variation, monumentality, delicacy, spaciousness, refinement, exuber-

ance, restraint—all are potential attributes of architecture. They must not remain as abstractions to the student; they must be illustrated by concrete achievement. For this, the whole history of building is needed, as each period excels in certain qualities. These lessons may be later applied to a warehouse or an airport in an entirely contemporary manner; but the historic examples will have helped the student to know what effects *can* be obtained, and how materials *can* be used. His own narrow experience could not give him the same understanding.

The study of the history of architecture is inevitably a refutation of the extremist's theory that the creative artist is hampered by the study of existing forms. Men of genius, amongst them some of the most admired radicals of our own day, are known to have studied thoroughly the work of their predecessors, deriving therefrom the rudiments of their knowledge. The historic styles of enduring beauty show clear evidence of the derivatives from which they evolved. The burst of creative energy that usually marks the apex of a cycle is but the flowering of a healthy plant

that has its roots in the past. The mistake of some extremists of our day is that they are making a laborious, self-conscious departure.

The question, then, is not: *shall* the history of architecture be taught; but *how* shall it be taught? What should be the point of emphasis? Throughout, that the historic styles shall not be regarded merely as a compilation of discarded forms, but as a fertile, well-worked terrain from which new forms continually emerge. And how shall this study be correlated with the others?

In all professional schools, and so too in a school of architecture, it is essential for the student to realize that only *one* subject is being taught—in this instance architecture. But the subject is so complex that it must be divided, each division being offered by a specialist who, at the same time, knows the profession as a whole. In other words, the staff should be made up of architects well versed in modern practice.

In order to express himself in the vocabulary of his own age, the student of architecture should *begin* to design without any special knowledge of historic forms. Similarly, a baby learns to talk by

hearing current, spoken language. But a man, wishing to use language effectively, will study grammar, etymology, and ancient and foreign writings, as well as the literature of his own time and country. Furthermore, to obviate a limited conception of architecture, the beginner should be made to realize its breadth and scope. His introduction to the subject should be as free as possible, not hampered by the limits of some ancient and unfamiliar civilization. The student should begin his studies with a survey of architecture in its fullest sense: building as an art, a science and a social expression. He should, therefore, see what is being done today, for he will understand the present better than the past. Contemporary needs and problems should be analyzed, modern methods and materials should be investigated in all their potential applications; and the important relation of engineering to architecture should be seriously studied. Only after this general introduction through current history should the student begin the study of the past. Stripped of artificial and pedantic importance, invaluable lessons can be derived even from the Orders: the tradi-

tion and reasoning that produced their development, the evolution of their detail, the enduring influence that they have had on succeeding styles.

Throughout, the problems and solutions of the past should be brought into relation with those of the present. The history of architecture will then be a great experimental laboratory as well as a cultural agent.

Finding that the solution of difficulties caused the progressive development of structure and design, the student will not be distracted by the chatter about practical circumstances hampering the creative artist; nor will he be discouraged by the bewildering complexity of contemporary problems. He will consider these as his working materials, knowing that beauty born of logic can result from their proper use.

Though the lives of great men seem to prove the contrary, it will be repeated now and then that genius needs no school, and that the gifted architect will solve his problems in a creative manner without looking to the works of his predecessors. Be that as it may concerning genius, the vast majority

of students do not come under this classification, and the "average" youth is certainly guided and improved by studying the past in the proper way.

As the student assimilates all the branches of his profession, he will be confronted by the fact that he must solve problems hitherto unknown; that he must cope with complex mechanisms; that he must use materials having entirely new structural possibilities, requiring a new canon of proportions. But history will help him to realize that man is still the standard of meas-

ure, and that many of his problems endure through the ages. Despite all the ado about modern civilization, such considerations as topography, climate, tradition and the requirements of the human being in all the phases of his gregarious living, have their age-old significance quite unchanged, differing rather in externals than in essence. For all our steel beams, electric wiring, structural glass and new materials, our contemporary architecture has its foundations grounded in the bed-rock of the past.

## Architecture and Other Forms of Artistic Expression

*By Irwin Edman, Ph. D.*

PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

The keynote address opening the Ann Arbor Conference on Esthetic Evaluation, held in April last at the University of Michigan

I AM SPEAKING in the capacity of what may be called a general esthetician; that is, a man by training a philosopher and by inclination interested in the arts. I am speaking to a group of architects who are at their best artists working within the conditions of engineering and of economics. The general esthetician must learn from

each art the special and peculiar limits and resources of each art. The workers within each art must reflect occasionally, or the more reflective of them often, on the relation of their art to the general problems of, and values of, human life, and the general contours of human experience.

Architects particularly must,

OCTOBER, 1948



especially when perhaps as young men they first made the grand tour of Europe, have been impressed by the expressive character of the buildings they saw: the churches and chancelries, the palaces and chateaux, the towers and castles, Mont St. Michel, the Pallazo del Tè at Mantua, Giotto's Tower, the Wartburg at Hildesheim, the walled city of Carcassonne, Sainte Chapelle with its stained glass, and Bourges with its flying buttresses. Once when I was quite young I took a trip through Northern France with two young architects, both greatly concerned with technical problems and delighted with the relation of form to function in Gothic architecture. But one night in the shadow of Chartres we all three fell to talking about form and function, and it became clear to the young architects and to me as we talked that—it seemed matchless discovery—functions were not only technical but socially formed expressions of ways of living. We had all three of us come to think of expression largely in terms of words or sometimes of music or of painting, In the more obvious sense architecture is not an expressive art. But in a subtle and deeper sense it is perhaps the most expressive

of the arts. For a building takes time and takes money and takes social approval on a wider scale than a sonnet or a sonata. What a building is for determines often whether it is built at all, and the way in which it is built depends on what it is that a society or certain dominant elements in it feel needs to be accomplished or to be celebrated by a building. There is probably no other art where social purposes are more forcibly and centrally expressed than in the characteristic style of its buildings, both large-scale social ones and relatively private dwellings.

There is a second sense, too, in which architecture is expressive: a building has willy-nilly to reveal, express and to plot physical and natural conditions. An architect is necessarily an engineer—he is limited by the facts of pressure, strain, gravitation. But the same facts which condition him give him an expressive opportunity. Columns express support; buttresses represent enforcement and its necessity. There is an appositeness about a façade that expresses a structure, a surface used to bound or show forth a space. One of the irritations about many modern buildings or allegedly modern ones is the way in which the outside sur-

face, as of many branch banks, is a Greek temple overlaying a steel structure; or, in modern Gothic, façades that have nothing whatever to do with the structure which they disguise rather than express; squares in London were forms in tone of a whole settled middle-class commercial civilization, just as the cathedral and the market place of a small French town were lineaments in actual materials of the ways of living of a part of medieval society. The looks of a whole city may express even a political philosophy by intention or by accident. Its streets and its buildings may reveal or embody a planned economy or betray sometimes by accident beautifully a free, or even an anarchic, economy. There may be the revelation of timidities, conventionalisms and traditionalisms, as branch banks made to parade as Greek temples or restaurants as Renaissance palaces. There are flurries of fashionable architecture as anywhere else, rushes of Spanish villas or Cape Cod cottages or erstaz Colonial in places where they have no function and where they do not belong, where they bear no relation to the materials of which they are composed or the conditions under which they are used.

The expressive aspects of architecture to which I have chiefly been referring are predominantly social in character. There is no other art where the conditions of society so predominantly determine the expressive effects. Even if an architect in earlier ages was commissioned by a liberal-minded and imaginative patron, he was limited by the social necessities. He was building a villa, a manor house, a town house, a chapel, a library. Within limits he could impose his own taste but his own taste necessarily subjected to concessions to the prevailing modes of life and of architecture. They incarnate in the very façades of the dwellings which surround their dignified little parks the settled bourgeois life which once inhabited them. Even architecture not notable for beauty may be highly expressive in a melancholy and depressive way, like the mile after mile of stolid suburbia, identical, indistinguishable units through which one passes, say on one's way from central London to the cathedral town of Salisbury. The houses of suburbia, no less than the spires and the cathedral close, speak eloquently of the life to which their forms and presence testify.

Architecture, then, is expressive because of its functions socially. In the celebration or the idiom of a given culture, or in the implicit attestation to it, the strictly architectural forms are expressive. But architecture has never been isolated from the other arts any more than it has been isolated from life. It borrows from painting, it is suggestive of the rhythms of music—the phrase “frozen music” is notorious—it has used the resources of sculpture, of stained glass, to fortify and punctuate and italicize its intentions. It has sometimes seemed the comprehensive art which Wagner wished opera to be. It has, as Walter Pater long ago pointed out, in its suggestion of the pomp and ceremony, the intimacies and permanences of life, the quality of poetry itself.

There are, I think, several reasons why the expressive character of architecture has been neglected. Like Monsieur Jourdain who used prose all his life without knowing it, so we have been living among architecture all our lives without knowing it.

Under the conditions of an increasingly socialized civilization and with the new technical resources in steel and glass, with the

changed requirements in public housing, architecture may more and more be expected to be expressive of the social needs and interests of a democratic, industrial civilization. New materials will encourage experimentation but large-scale mass needs will also tend to make experiments more difficult and variations less easily embarked upon; large-scale housing projects involve, for example, so many necessary cooperations and compromises among engineers and administrative officials that an architect's individual taste may be greatly impeded and modified in the eventual architectural result.

In the other arts, especially the literary arts, expression is not infrequently taken to refer to what is called the artist's intention. There is an artist's style as well as that of a period or a school or a class or a culture. There is that in the artist's mode of saying what he has to say, of uttering what he is impelled to utter, that comes to be recognized unmistakably as his signature. There are architects, too, with their own styles. There is Giotto with his Tower, Christopher Wren and his churches, and in our own day and time Stanford White, and Frank Lloyd Wright. But an architect is not as free

as a poet, and he has to move even more strictly than a poet within the limits of his time, his materials, the needs of his clients and the prejudices and temporary requirements of his public. There must be architects who wish that they were as relatively free as a lyric poet. But poets have discovered how they may turn the limits of language, the very limitations of rhyme and rhythm to their own individual purposes. There is no reason why an architect, beset on the one hand by costs, on the other by the limitations of public needs and tastes, may not succeed in expressing his own conception of the functions and uses, the designs and the decorations possible to building in his own generation.

There is perhaps less opportunity and less justification for eccentricity or perversity or over-emphasis in architecture than in other arts. There are certain kinds of value which an artist-architect may greatly cherish: playful decoration, an extravagant manipulating of space and light that economic necessity may preclude him from incorporating in his buildings. On the other hand, architects may project into buildings ideals of more spacious and more generous and more radiant living by reject-

ing the notion that public housing means the building of rabbit warrens, or that the conventions of nineteenth-century industrial cities impose their dreary patterns of spaceless, lightless narrow streets upon modern industrial civilization. We are beginning to think in terms of garden cities, of centralized factories, of walls that admit light and are surrounded by space. The architect comes to conceive a building project as part of a whole visual pattern of life and culture. The conditions of both traffic and of the life of the spirit are changing rapidly. The pleasure dome for the idle rich has been succeeded by the ideal of cooperative living under the conditions of space and light that cooperative planning makes possible. The architect of some scheme of public housing may indeed be expressing his own ideal when he is expressing some larger public concern. Architecture is a way of saying in tangible, usable, livable forms what are the basic conditions of life for modern man in a cooperative society.

In this sense the art of architecture is no less, perhaps more because more intimately, expressive of life than poetry and drama. But, as in those arts, expression

values are presented as impressions, as immediate vistas, as seeable surfaces, contours and interiors. Social mindedness has become so much an ideal that the architect is sometimes ashamed to be an artist, or to realize that his buildings are seen as well as used, that they are designs as well as utilities, compositions as well as enterprises; all the resources of all the other visual arts at his disposal, though he relies now perhaps more than he used to on composition and design rather than on brilliance of detail, of light, of color. Modern architecture is edging toward not a revived but a revised classicism.

The problem posed by expression in architecture is analogous to that posed by it in the other arts. For architecture clearly illustrates the way in which, in any art, surface and substance, medium and content are inseparable. In painting it seems superficially to be possible to distinguish subject matter from form and color. But the subject matter of a painting is expressive only in terms, if one may so put it, of light and line and color. In music the words of a Mozart mass are expressive in tonal relations; whatever music says it says musically. Words and music

are in a profound sense one. And in wordless music whatever is expressed is indistinguishable from the tones of its saying. Something of the same sort may be said to be true in architecture. What is the subject matter of architecture? Its use, its function, its social or private utility. But what converts use into beauty, what makes a social necessity an artistic triumph and an expressive victory is the actualization of the purpose in designs, in orders, in the visually composed objects which buildings are. Architecture has been called "frozen music." It is perhaps more appropriate to call it a three-dimensional poetry in which, in the common space of human experience, the qualities of human needs are presented to the eye aided often, in ancient edifices, by the "unimaginable touch of time." For buildings express not simply present and recurrent needs but vanished urgencies and half-forgotten aspirations. A building not at all in ruins, like a Georgian residence in today's London or a Tudor country house, may speak of a way of life doomed or dying or long since dead. All history has an element of poetry in it, and that history in stone or wood or steel which is architecture

is the residual poetry of social and religious and even personal patterns of life.

Architecture has been till recently so imitative, derivative and traditional that it is hard even to guess of what values modern architecture will be expressive. I suspect that, conditioned by engineering and social and regimental economics, it will pass from private and expensive soliloquies for the vanishing wealthy to cooperative celebration and fulfillment of wide public needs. It will abandon, as many modern poets have abandoned, romantic rhetoric and the clichés of tradition. It will be

simpler, barer, bleaker in some way than architecture of the recent past, less given to flourish and façade. But there will be a grace and expressive beauty to the art of building that expresses in dwellings, in places of work and relaxation, the common needs, the usual joys possible to the widely enfranchised lives and the liberated eyes of mankind. Holland and Scandinavia were beginning to have public housing projects of this nature, and a generous and imaginative housing program in America may give men and women not only homes to live in but a new communal art.

## The Architects' Civic Design Group of Metropolitan Detroit

*By Suren Pilafian*

THE Architects' Civic Design Group of Metropolitan Detroit recently completed a research program in city planning and presented the results of this program at a public meeting arranged by the Detroit Chapter of The American Institute of Architects.

This project was initiated five years ago by a group of forty civic-minded architects for the purpose

of conducting voluntarily an independent research study of the broad application of basic principles of city planning to specific areas in and around Detroit, and for the purpose of presenting the results of this study to the people of the Detroit Area as the Group's contribution to the stimulation of public interest in city planning.

The program was sponsored and

supported financially by both the Detroit Chapter of The A.I.A. and by the Michigan Society of Architects. It was conducted under the guidance of Eliel Saarinen, F.A.I.A., in collaboration with the Cranbrook Academy of Art.

The development of the Group's program over its five-year duration consisted of three distinct processes. First was the agreement on a set of basic planning principles to be followed in its studies; second, the adoption of a simple yet effective technique of study that could be used to apply these principles broadly and logically to actual existing areas; and third, the presentation of this material to the people in an understandable and convincing form.

In the first of these processes (the adoption of a set of planning principles), the following seven fundamental rules were accepted as mandatory requirements for all good city plans:

#### 1. *Plan for Fifty Years*

Much transformation can take place by gradual stages over this period of time. A long-range plan is more flexible than a short-range plan. Fifty years is about long enough for most of our present buildings to become obsolete.

#### 2. *Plan for People*

The family's needs and interests should have precedence over the expedient planning of streets, airports, sewers and the subdivision of land for the purpose of making the largest number of profitable lot sales.

#### 3. *Plan Organically*

Families should have all the advantages of neighborhood and community living in a city. Groups of neighborhoods should be planned to foster community life.

#### 4. *Plan for the Maximum Desirable Number of Persons*

A growth of population that falls short of what was contemplated in the plan is preferable to one that exceeds the anticipation. Densities should be reduced where now excessive.

#### 5. *Plan to Reduce Traffic*

Transportation within a city is only a means to an end. People should live as near as possible to where they work. Functional concentrations of urban life, such as employment, shopping and recreational centers, should be decentralized and made pleasant enough to make people want to live near them.

## 6. *Plan to Protect the Community*

Generous uses of greenbelts tend to pay for themselves in appreciably preserving the initial advantages of decentralization.

## 7. *Plan Across Temporary Restrictions*

Limitations of political boundaries should be overcome by metropolitan authorizations. Legislation should be designed to make possible the execution of good plans.



The planning technique used by the Group to apply these principles to specific areas consisted of making a series of diagrammatic studies, street-pattern layouts and models. These were made in such a way as to facilitate close adherence to these basic planning principles in the face of the need for making adjustments to conform to limitations of substantial importance imposed by existing conditions.

And this was done by following a systematic procedure.

From an over-all population-distribution study for southeastern Michigan, a plan of the Detroit Metropolitan Area was studied diagrammatically over a blueprint of the area which showed all exist-

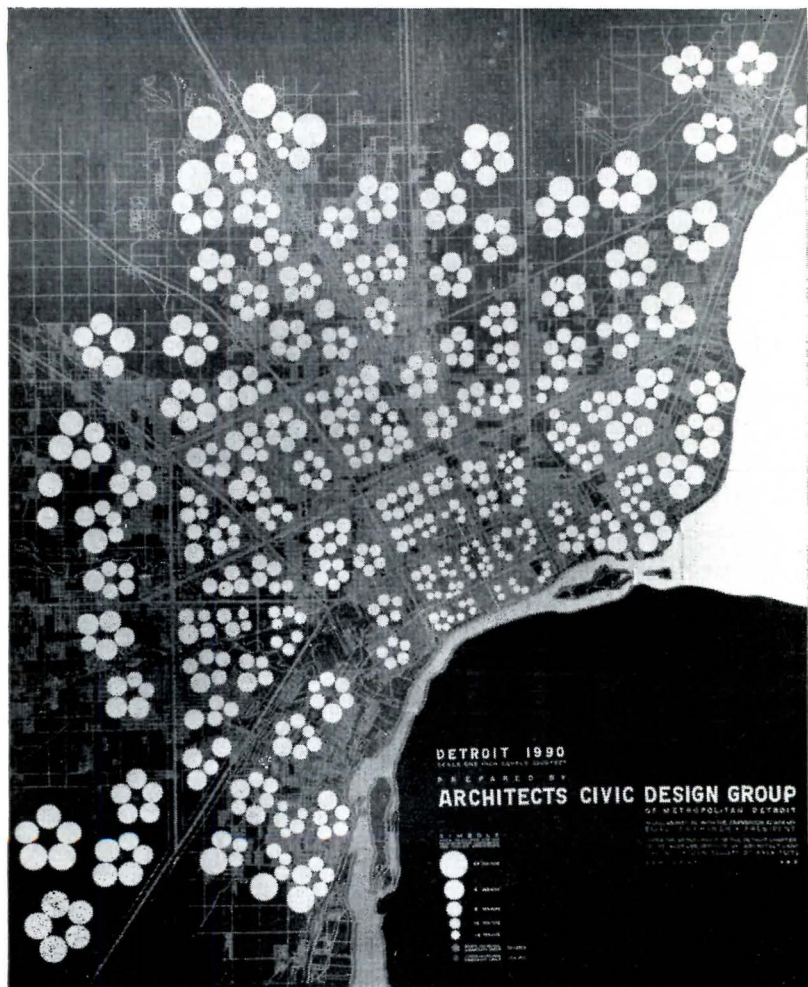
ing streets at the scale of 2300 feet to the inch. After a general pattern of thoroughfares had been laid out on this over-all plan, each area bounded by these thoroughfares was studied by a member of the Group, who juggled cardboard discs of various sizes and colors on a plan of his particular area until a symbolic pattern was found which represented pictorially a desirable distribution and grouping of neighborhoods, services and densities in some organic relation to each other and to the existing street pattern.

Red discs were used to designate localized services serving particular neighborhoods and communities. Tan discs were used to represent a neighborhood each, the size of disc indicating the average density within that particular neighborhood.

After each member had arrived at a satisfactory disc, or "bubble," pattern, these were compared with each other, and adjustments were made in all areas to achieve a well-related group of subcommunities, especially as regards the graduation of densities from the central part of the area to the outskirts.

The same process was followed, but in greater detail, for the central portion of this area (Detroit

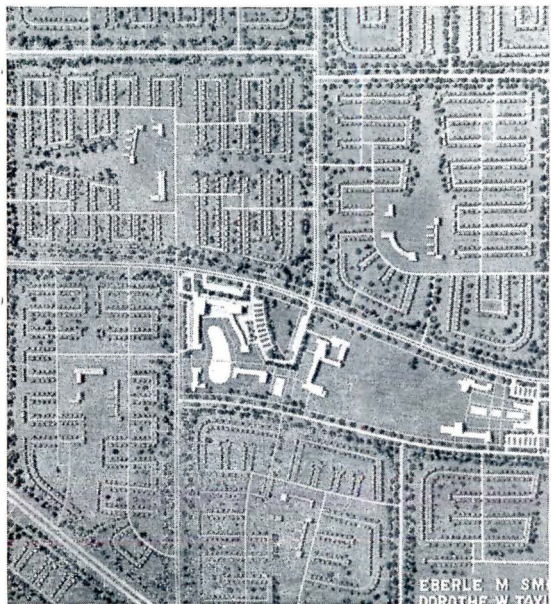




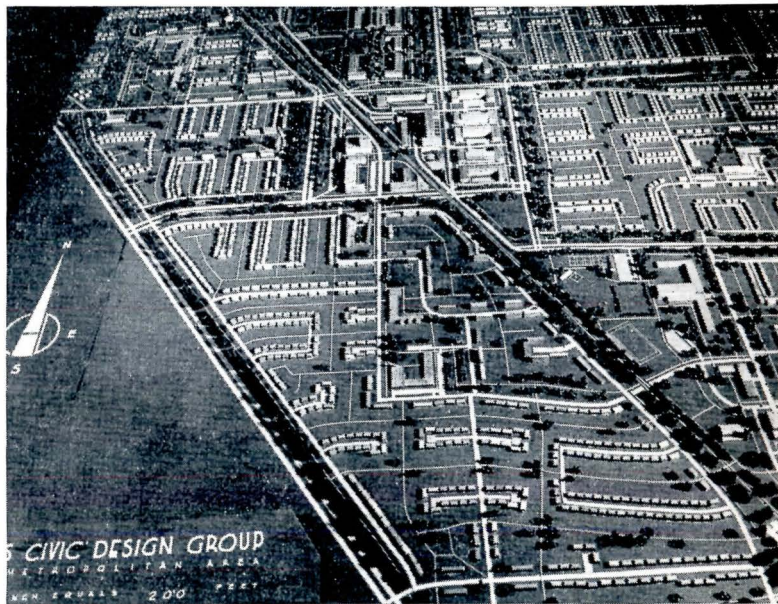
WORK OF THE ARCHITECTS' CIVIC DESIGN GROUP OF METROPOLITAN DETROIT

On this over-all population district study the largest discs represent the area required for a neighborhood of 1000 families at 2.5 per acre; the smallest light-color discs, 16 per acre. Original scale, 2300 ft. to the inch

*Journal  
 The AIA*



Model by Smith and Taylor of the street-pattern study phase, made at a scale of 200 ft. to the inch



Model by Ditchy and Wetzel of the street-pattern study phase, enlarging a portion of their area to 200 ft. to the inch

proper) at the scale of 1,000 feet to the inch, on a plan about ten feet square. In this study additional colors of discs were used to show community services in greater detail, such as brown, purple and green discs to designate shopping, public service and recreational areas.

Upon the completion of these two stages, each member studied his individual area further by proceeding from his symbolic plan study to a more realistic study in which the locations of proposed streets and the actual shapes of blocks of residential units were determined. This was called the "street-pattern" study, and it was made again at the scale of 1,000 feet to the inch, although not on one over-all plan, as the earlier, symbolic, studies had been done.

Following this stage, each member selected the most interesting part of his particular area and made a model of it at the scale of 200 feet to the inch.

It was interesting to observe the variety of forms which the completed plans and models presented. For while each member followed exactly the same basic planning principles, the diversity of existing conditions in the many areas studied resulted in a much greater

variety of solutions than would otherwise be expected.



The presentation of this material to the people was a continuing process which started from the inception of the program as a public educational campaign conducted by the Group through local newspapers. These papers frequently published accounts of the progress of the program and explanations of some of the basic principles.

Throughout the progress of the work, relations were constantly maintained with public organizations and agencies. The staff of the Detroit City Plan Commission was very cooperative and sympathetic with the work. Meetings were held at which representatives of interested civic organizations were invited for informal discussions of the work. These helped the Group gauge the public's probable reaction to its work. Members of the Group were asked to speak at meetings of several interested civic organizations. The completed work was presented to a large gathering of people by means of illustrated slides. Then the drawings and models were exhibited for several weeks at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The organization and administration of the work of the Group was assigned to an executive committee which met frequently to work out policies and to organize and schedule the work. It consisted of six members at one time, led by a chairman. Each member had a particular duty, such as the chairmanship, secretary, treasurer, design coordination, standards coordination and public information.

Throughout most of the life of the program, meetings of the entire membership were held monthly. At these meetings individual studies were discussed and criticized. Sometimes these meetings were held in Detroit, and sometimes at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, where the facilities of the Department of Architecture were offered generously by the Academy and used by the Group. Some of these meetings were devoted entirely to discussions, while the later ones were devoted to actual work by several members of the Group on the presentation material.

The value of the Group's work lies in its usefulness as educational research. It does not in any way duplicate or conflict with the work of the Detroit City Plan Commission, or any other agency.

The unusual character of the Group's studies was a result first of the planning technique it used, which had been developed by Mr. Saarinen, and second of the fact that in its work the Group did not allow itself to be restricted too rigidly by the many artificial and fundamentally unnecessary barriers which prevent official agencies from doing the kind of objective planning which they know is best for their community.

The Group's freedom from artificial restrictions was best manifested by the metropolitan scope of its studies and by its frequently ignoring temporary and unreasonable obstacles to good planning. It is largely by these two means that the Group hopes to be most effective in its effort to spur the people of the Detroit Area to provide their official planning agencies with encouragement and with the opportunity of producing their best plans.

For the members of the Group, the entire program was an exciting and an educationally valuable experience. All the members consider themselves fortunate in being able to participate in such a program under the inspiring guidance of Mr. Eliel Saarinen.

The executive committee has consisted of Philip Brezner, Helen L. Fassett, Buford L. Pickens, Suren Pilafian, Louis G. Redstone, Eberle M. Smith, Jonathan A. Taylor and Branson V. Gamber—Chairman.

Other members of the Group are: George Andrews, Alfred L. Bruner, Philip Chu, Wei Foo Chun, Robert O. Derrick, George F. Diehl, Clair W. Ditchy, Philip J. Funke, Edgar D. Giberson, George Hellmuth, Arthur K.

Hyde, Oakie C. Johnson, Stewart S. Kissinger, Robert Kremer, Joseph W. Leinweber, Amedeo Leone, Leslie M. Lowery, Owen A. Luckenbach, Dorothea Mackenthun, George Matsumoto, Arthur H. Messing, Morris Jackson, Grant Mounteer, Dirk Van Reyendam, Carl H. Schwenkmeyer, John Skart, J. Davidson Stephen, Fred Stickel, Malcolm R. Stirton, Fred Strauss, Peter Tarapata, Dorothe W. Taylor, Edward W. Waugh, Lewis M. Wetzels, Donald F. White, and Kiyoshi Mano.

## Registration Law Enforcement at the Local Level

*By Clinton H. Cowgill*

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE, VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

**N**OW THAT laws regulating the practice of architecture have been adopted by practically all of the states, and through the functioning of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards a reasonable degree of cooperation between the boards which administer these laws has been accomplished, it is highly proper that more attention should be devoted to securing more general compliance with the provisions of the registration laws.

In some states the registration boards are given the responsibility of securing enforcement of the registration laws and in some states these boards are also given the means to carry out this responsibility. At the other end of the line, some registration laws prohibit only the misuse of the title, Architect, and permit the practice of architecture under other titles. Some state registration laws define architectural practice so that architectural service can be ren-

dered legally on certain buildings by persons who are not legally qualified architects. There is no state in which architectural practice is actually limited to registered architects for buildings of all types and all sizes and costs.

As everyone knows, for the more important buildings and those in which the safety of life, health and property is involved to the greatest extent, registered architects are almost always appointed. There is general agreement, also, that it is impractical at present for registered architects to design and supervise the construction of all the buildings which are erected. To accomplish this would require a vast increase in the number of registered architects, and it is doubtful if those who undertook to render service for minor buildings could collect fees large enough to justify the effort. Possibly architects can devise a means of reducing the cost of designing and supervising the construction of small houses and small commercial and industrial buildings, and still give these projects sufficient attention so that the responsibility for their design and construction can be borne. If this is impossible, the alternative is to recognize the place in the building industry of

the builder and the stock plan. Instead of opposing the combination of the functions of the architect and contractor for buildings for which an architect can not be employed, perhaps the architectural profession should attempt to collaborate with builders and thus enable them to serve the public better.

In many places, architects have collaborated to make available stock plans of improved quality, and some attempts have been made to give limited supervision to projects erected from stock plans. Such activities should be continued. But there is still an astounding amount of building done from inadequate drawings and specifications covering ill-conceived and unsound designs and without any intelligent supervision. An attempt is being made in Blacksburg, Virginia, to improve this situation by means of a building code.

This proposed Building Code establishes two classes of buildings, as follows:

#### BUILDINGS COVERED

*"Section 21.* For the purpose of this Code all structures shall be classified in two groups:

Group 1. Those structures whose construction is completely covered by this Code:

(a) Buildings used as single or two-family dwellings of frame construction or ordinary masonry construction not exceeding two stories in height with or without an attic.

(b) Buildings used for stores, offices, shops, or warehouses not exceeding one story or 25' in height.

(c) Private garages not exceeding two stories in height, of frame or ordinary masonry construction, with a capacity of not more than four (4) cars; wood sheds, chicken houses, and other similar buildings accessory to those allowed in parts (a) and (b) of this section.

Buildings designated in parts (a), (b), and (c) of this section involving the use of structural reinforced concrete, structural steel, heavy mill construction, or roof trusses, shall be regulated as Group II buildings, except that the incidental use of steel beams, columns, lintels, and hangers and of reinforced concrete slabs shall be permitted in Group I buildings.

Group II. All structures not included in Group I shall be classified as Group II.

Dry-cleaning establishments, garages accommodating over four (4) cars, and places of assembly or detention shall be regulated as Group II buildings."

For Group II buildings, no permit will be issued unless drawings and specifications prepared by a registered architect or engineer are submitted; and upon completion, the architect or engineer is required to file an affidavit stating that the provisions of the Building Code have been complied with. Thus the responsibility for compliance is placed squarely upon the profession. The filing of a false statement would, of course, be grounds for revocation of the registration license.

For Group I buildings, adequate drawings and specifications must be filed. Whether or not these are prepared by a registered architect or engineer, they must be accompanied by a certificate signed by a registered architect or engineer as follows:

"Having examined and checked the drawings (Sheets No. .... to ..... inclusive) and the specifications (Pages ..... to ..... inclusive), the undersigned hereby certifies that these documents conform to the requirements of the Building Code of the Town of Blacksburg, Virginia, and that the design of the building illustrated and described is structurally safe and is neither detrimental to health nor a hazard to life.  
Signed.....Registered Architect  
Registered Engineer"

If a builder wishes to erect a building from stock plans or from drawings and specifications which he has prepared, he may employ an architect or engineer to check them and make changes necessary to justify the signing of the above certificate. After becoming accustomed to such services, some builders may be led to seek help in design.

If an owner or builder applies for a building permit and submits drawings and specifications which are not accompanied by the certificate referred to above, the Building official is required to submit the drawings and specifications for review by a registered architect or engineer. Again, the responsibility for compliance is borne in large

part by the architectural and engineering professions.

The supervision of Group I buildings is furnished by the Building official. This usually is limited to three inspections. When an architect is employed by the owner, of course, supervision will be furnished by him as usual.

It will take time to determine the effectiveness of this Building Code. Similar plans possibly may be effective in other places. For such a plan to be effective in many small towns, the services of architects and engineers would have to be made available in those localities. At the present time, this proposed Building Code is being supported locally by all elements of the building industry.

## Diruta Teutonica Furore

IN TWO PARTS—PART I

The story of the famous Louvain Library inscription by the only person alive who knows the whole story

*By Ian C. MacCallum*

**W**HITNEY WARREN was the architect of the Bibliothèque de l'Université de Louvain, familiarly called the Louvain Library, and he treated it, as he did all his own work, with a personal attachment all too rare among architects.

The job had been in the office for at least six years and by 1928 it was entering its final stages of construction. Greenough, in Paris, had carried through during the years of construction and had seen the design and details of the very

OCTOBER, 1948



capable office designer, Ralph Calder, well materialized.

The Library was designed in the sixteenth-century Flemish style and, contrary to general belief, was not simply a restoration of the original building destroyed by German troops in the early days of World War I. It was an entirely new structure, placed in a very good setting along one side of the Place du Peuple, about a quarter mile from the old library.

In January of 1928, Whitney Warren sent me over to Belgium to stay on the job and, among other things, to design and draw some four hundred minor inscriptions which were to be cut there. I had no way of knowing what experiences lay ahead, although I think the old gentleman rather expected storms before the building's dedication on the following July 4th.

In Louvain, I took up residence at the old Majestic Hotel in the Avenue des Alliés and found Monsieur le Patron and Madame Raemaekers obliging and flattered. The old patron, with his seven chins and his chef's cap tilted permanently on the back of his head, was a huge man, always laughing, and a really excellent cook on occasion. I learned that

there is no better French wine than that which is kept in Belgian cellars, and the patron honestly believed that the reputation of all Belgian cellars had originated in his own which, he said, had the ideal subsoil composition, or something. When he laughed, his seven chins laughed with him, while the Madame kept the books and controlled discipline.



Shortly after the close of World War I, during a visit to America by Cardinal Mercier, the war cardinal of Belgium, the proposed rebuilding of the Library was discussed with Whitney Warren and with others. Cardinal Mercier expressed a wish that some permanent record be placed in or on the new building to indicate the reason for its existence, and gave to Whitney Warren a slip of paper on which he had written the words *DIRUTA TEUTONICA FURORE DONO AMERICANA RESTITUTA*—destroyed by Teuton fury, replaced by American gift. When the plaster model of the proposed building showed a balustrade extending the full length of the front with his inscription forming a decorative running floral pattern interlaced in its stone balusters (in Latin and

not very legible), Cardinal Mercier expressed his pleasure and approval.

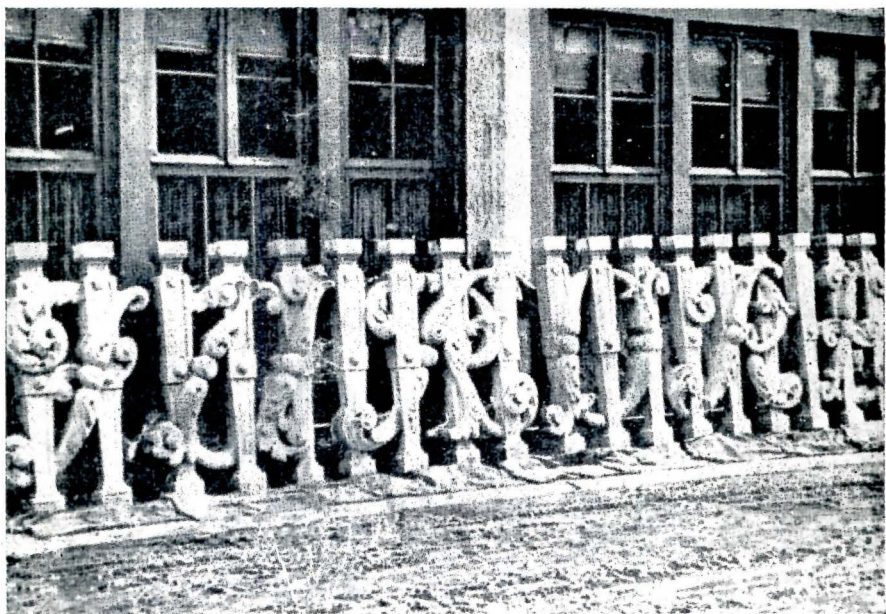
If I may digress a moment, a charming incident happened during the speaking campaign planned to solicit contributions from various educational groups. Whitney Warren spoke at the University of Virginia, explaining the purpose. At the conclusion of his talk a middle-aged woman in the audience came to him and offered a five-dollar goldpiece toward the fund. Warren explained that he was not personally collecting money but, on her insistence, promised to see that it should reach the proper place. A short time later a man approached him saying he believed Mr. Warren should know that the goldpiece was an especially treasured thing inasmuch as it had been returned to the mother among other effects found on the body of her son who had been killed in action in Belgium. As such, it could not be thrown into a general pot simply as a few more dollars, and so Warren resolved to hold it until some quite special use should occur.

A long time after, when the French sculptor Dampt had finished the working model of the figure of the Virgin destined for

the central niche on the façade of the building, Warren suggested that a design of lilies be overlaid in gold on the white marble of the Virgin's breastplate and, accordingly, at his own expense had the goldpiece melted down, refined and beaten into goldleaf. It made a small boxful which I carried over with me to Dampt, who had it applied. Attempts were made to find the woman who gave it, but with no success. No one knew who she was and it is supposed she must have been a tourist in Charlottesville at the time Warren spoke there. The story was published in this country and abroad (*L'Illustration* carried a beautifully written account) but, if she ever read of it, the mother never made herself known. It can only be hoped that she does know, wherever and wherever she is, what became of her treasure.



From January to June, there was much work to be done. But before June there began to be apparent certain undercurrents and references to differences of opinion concerning the principal inscription. They had been sharpened by the death of Cardinal Mercier and his friends, one by one over the



LIBRARY OF LOUVAIN

A portion of the balustrade as designed by Whitney Warren, set up temporarily on the ground, showing the FUREORE of the inscription



Plaster model of the Library of Louvain and a photograph of one end of the lateral façade, with its outdoor pulpit dedicated to Cardinal Mercier. A bust of the beloved Cardinal interrupts the pediment over the doorway to the balcony pulpit

years, and it was necessary that they be resolved before the dedication date, then rapidly approaching.

Monseignor Paulin Ladeuze had succeeded to the presidency of Louvain University and he assumed the leadership of a small but powerful group opposed to any reference to the horrors perpetrated by the German Army in 1914. He was a pacifist, prepared to fight for his convictions, and believed that a permanent record of the more unpleasant aspects of war could only prolong hatred.

Warren's convictions were directly opposite in that he believed the best way to final peace was to publish such facts so clearly that everyone might see what war had done. He also felt a moral obligation to carry out the wishes of his friend the dead cardinal—an obligation which he felt had devolved upon him as the lone survivor of the original group. He argued, too, that an artist has a right to complete his conception, once his design is accepted, regardless of what might happen to it at the hands of others (including the owner's) thereafter. It is interesting to note that this later became a major argument and withstood four years of battle in the Belgian courts without denial.

In any case, there had been too much procrastination, so that when the matter at last required a quick settlement, conciliation was clearly impossible between the two characters and the question flared into the open, involving spectators and mass emotions as well as the principals.

It is true that the Monseignor did arrange for the cutting of separate plain stone balusters in a Brussels stoneyard—balusters without the interlacing floral letters of the inscription, and in secret. I remember seeing a few of them in the yard during the first months and my inquiry was passed off at the time with a remark that they were "sample cuttings for profiles and would probably be destroyed." A prophetic remark — when no one could foresee the circumstances under which they were to be later destroyed. It became clear later that the Monseignor's intention was to have them finished and raised into position on the building before the floral inscription could be completed. I thought no more of them at the time, nor until events reached their bursting point.

In due course, it became necessary to draw full-size details of the balustrade. In view of

the smouldering differences, it seemed as well to do the drafting as inconspicuously as possible. Every evening, after a day on the job, I would carry a roll of paper into the hotel—drawings had gone in and out of there regularly, of course—and every night I would use the entire wall of the hotel room (the balustrade was 6' high and 200' long) to draw sections letter by letter. Every few days I would take a few more letters in to the stonemasons in Brussels and watch previous ones being turned into stone there.

The minor inscriptions were going into place well. The hardest part of the job was over, I thought. There was little design left and the construction questions were all worked out. Pleasant relations had been established in the town and two friends, George Sturdevant and Merrill Prentice, had come up from Paris to help out for the fun of it. The usual Belgian weather had turned magnificent at last, and in June it was good to sit out at a sidewalk table and have a glass of sherry before one of M. le Patron's good dinners.



I had made a good friend of Felix Onfroy, the contractors'

job superintendent, and one evening he made a small point of joining me. This evening there was an unusual constraint in his manner and he stayed only long enough to tell me that "a lot of stones are coming out from Brussels at six o'clock in the morning. After all, I work for the Foundation Company, Mac."

In itself, that would mean little—but six o'clock is early and the inscription wasn't finished; those plain balusters seen in the Brussels stoneyard months before suddenly took on new meaning.

The first thing to do, of course, was to call Warren in Paris, which I did. He answered at once and when I told him of my suspicions he said they had been confirmed within the hour by an old school-friend of his. I was told "to keep my chin up," that he would arrange to reach Louvain as quickly as possible, and that meanwhile I was to do whatever I could do to keep the stones from being placed.

Back in the hotel, I typed a letter to the Foundation Company directing them to stop all work on the front façade immediately, "pending certain changes in the work," sent it to their Brussels office and delivered a copy by hand

to Felix Onfroy. He accepted it, said it was good enough for him, and I went to bed for a good night's sleep.

Truckloads of plain balusters, enough for the entire job in one caravan, arrived at six the next morning. I had the trucks moved, still loaded, as far from the building as possible in order not "to obstruct building operations." There was no inclination on the part of the workmen themselves to do anything about unloading them before the regular seven o'clock starting hour, anyway; they were all perfectly willing to take anyone's word that there was no hurry, and the opposition, expecting no delay, had sent no foremen along under orders.

The stop-order still held at eight o'clock when the general manager of the Foundation Company, a Mr. MacNair, arrived from Brussels. He was very sorry, but the Monseignor was most insistent that the stones be unloaded and placed at once and as Mr. Warren was not there the delay could be most embarrassing to MacNair.

The trucks were again pulled up and unloading began. At that point my draftsman, Desiré Vanderauwerau, handed me a telegram from Warren giving me full

authority on the work in his absence. That stopped the work again and called for a conference between MacNair and the Monseignor in his quarters.



When it appeared that the Monseignor had made his point to MacNair and the unloading began again, I wrote a memorandum condemning the balusters as not having been made according to the architect's details, and pointed out that it might be necessary to reload the trucks, causing double work.

Another half-hour was gained, during which time MacNair discussed the telegram and the condemnation with the Monseignor, and I prayed for a sight of Whitney Warren. About nine o'clock, Monseignor Ladeuze stormed into the Library, demanded to know who was responsible for the delay and, when he found the quiet little American who had been making pretty drawings, went into the finest rage I have ever seen. He was magnificent, but when his face went purple I was uneasy for fear his emotions would finish him then and there. When I explained that I was the resident representative of Whitney Warren

and produced the telegram, he shouted that he "would take care of *that*" and left.

A little later, I was handed a letter from him dismissing Whitney

Warren from that part of the work, and the Foundation Company was given a written order to proceed.

*(To be concluded in November)*

## The Ethiopia Competition

**A**NNOUNCEMENT has been made of an international architectural competition for the Imperial Palace of the Empire of Ethiopia. The Institute's Committee on Competitions, Lorimer Rich, Chairman, with the approval of the Executive Committee of The Board, points out several pertinent facts.

The provisions regulating this competition, in their present form, do not contain three of the essential requirements of The Institute for a competition to be held in the United States, namely: That there be a professional adviser; that there be a jury of at least three members, one of whom is a practising architect; and that the program contain a contract for architectural services in accord with good practice.

It is pointed out, however, that this competition is not within the jurisdiction of The Institute with respect to competition procedure. Therefore, members will be gov-

erned by their individual judgments as the advisability of participating.

### Honors

RICHARD J. NEUTRA, F.A.I.A., has been nominated as an Honorary Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. An honorary degree as Doctor of the Technical Sciences also has been conferred upon Mr. Neutra by the University of Graz and Austria's Secretary of Education.

### News of the Educational Field

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN'S College of Architecture and Design announces the appointment of C. Theodore Larson as Professor of Architecture. Willard A. Oberdick and Edward V. Olencki have also been appointed to the faculty as instructors in architec-



ture. These appointments take effect with the opening of the fall semester of this year.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE COLLEGE, School of Architecture and Landscape Design, announces the appointment of Matthew Nowicki as visiting professor and acting head of the Department of Archi-

ecture. Mrs. Stanislawa Sandecka Nowicki, wife of the professor, is appointed visiting assistant professor.

Mr. Nowicki is the Polish architect who has acted as design consultant for the United Nations; he is a former faculty member of Pratt Institute.



## Calendar

*October 11-13:* Nineteenth annual meeting of the Institute of Traffic Engineers, Hotel Warwick, Philadelphia, Pa.

*October 11-13:* National Planning Conference of the American Society of Planning Officials, New Yorker Hotel, New York City.

*October 13-16:* Annual meeting of the National Association of Housing Officials, Olympic Hotel, Seattle, Wash.

*October 17-29:* Show of members' summer work and work of new members of The Architectural League of New York, 115 East 40th Street, New York, N. Y.

*October 28-30:* Annual Convention, New York State Association of Architects, Colonie Club, Albany, N. Y. For reservations address Edward J. Toole, 93 State St., Albany, N. Y.

*November 29-December 4:* Annual meeting of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, featuring the 18th National Exposition of Power and Mechanical Engineering, Grand Central Palace, New York.

*December 1-4:* Semiannual Meeting of The Board of Directors, A.I.A., Cloister Hotel, Sea Island, Georgia.

*December 9-10:* Thirty-fifth Annual Convention of National Warm Air Heating and Air Conditioning Association, Hotel Cleveland, Cleveland, Ohio.

*March 29-April 1, 1949:* Third International Lighting Exposition and Conference. Sponsored by Industrial and Commercial Lighting Equipment Section of National Electrical Manufacturers Association. Stevens Hotel, Chicago, Illinois.

# Memoirs of Centurian Architects

IN FOUR PARTS—PART IV

By *William Adams Delano*, F.A.I.A.

Written for the hundredth anniversary memorial book of the Century Club (Copyright, 1947, by The Century Association) and now published in the *JOURNAL* by permission of the club and the author

**D**URING the seven years I endeavored to instill the principles of design at Columbia, my good friend, Professor A. D. Hamlin, was at the head of the Architectural School where he succeeded Professor Ware. He was a spare man; I never knew whether it was glands or a too meagre salary which kept him so thin; judging by my own salary, I suspect it was the latter. I can see him now as he hurried, with a book under his arm, through the draughting-room. Hamlin was always in a hurry, as if what he taught, the history of architecture, could not endure a moment's delay. His book on that subject had a fine reputation and a wide circulation. Coming, as I did, fresh from the Beaux-Arts to teach at Columbia, I was loyally supported by Hamlin in my attempt to establish an atelier system like the one in Paris. I thought the system would produce a spirit of emulation among the students, who seemed more interested in fraternities and athletics

than in the arts. For a time it worked fairly well but conditions in New York were not the same as in Paris.

Columbia had moved to the Heights and, in those days, the long journey—an hour by horse-car and Elevated—did not favor frequent attendance at the Century. In my own case, this trip, three afternoons a week, plus a growing practice, led to a sudden and serious operation and put an end to my seven years of teaching. To convalesce, I was sent to Aiken, South Carolina, where I met a most delightful Centurian, Robert H. Robertson. He was a good raconteur and we passed many pleasant hours on picnics in the tall pine woods where yellow jasmine added color and scent to his tales. He had been a friend of Robert Burnside Potter's—a cousin of mine by marriage—through whom we were drawn together, though we were separated in age by many years. At the Long Table we had neither the pine

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needles nor the jasmine, but our friendship continued until his death—I hope to his pleasure, I know to mine.

Speaking of separation of years, I wonder how many Centurions remember Alfred J. Bloor of the *Ancien Régime*? He was a quiet, sociable man who, when I knew him, had retired from practice but loved to talk of the past. He had been a great friend of another Centurion, my father-in-law, Edward T. Potter, who formed our spiritual bond of friendship. Mr. Bloor had built a marble house at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Eighth Street—very simple and dignified—of which he was extremely proud. It is still standing and, as I pass it, I think he had reason for his pride. I am told it may soon be demolished for an enormous apartment house, which will further detract from what was formerly a friendly and distinguished neighborhood. I enjoyed hearing Mr. Bloor's stories of the great ones of the past and listened with the respect the young owe to their elders. Is this a lost art? I sometimes wonder.

There are three Centurions whose portraits must be hung in my gallery, though I stray from the path I plotted, for none of

them is a practising architect and one is still alive:

Charles Moore, for twenty-three years the guiding spirit of the Commission of Fine Arts in Washington, was so understanding of the architects and their point of view that he was their perfect mouthpiece, interpreting tactfully, sometimes forcibly, their decisions to Presidents, Senators and Congressmen. His task was not always easy but he performed it superbly. While he was chairman, he became as familiar a landmark as the Washington Monument. During the four years I served on the Commission, I came to have a great affection for him as a man, and unbounded admiration for the skill with which he drove his team of artists along the often rough road of contention. He had no special training in the arts and came to his position by way of his secretaryship to Senator McMillan's original Senate Committee which, under President Taft, became the Commission of Fine Arts. The orderly development of Washington was his passion for fifty years. He wrote about Washington, talked about Washington and loved Washington. When he died in 1942, he had written many books on the history of the city

and its builders. During his life he received well-deserved honors, degrees and membership in learned societies. If one had to name *the* man most responsible for the development of our present Capital, it would be Charles Moore. As Centurions we should be proud of him.

Speaking of the Commission of Fine Arts, I was interested to note in looking over the list of Commissioners past and to the present date, that forty out of forty-five were Centurions. Whether this speaks well for our membership or is a form of nepotism, I hesitate to say. The answer probably is that, during the years since the Commission was established, it has never had a superabundance of funds, because Congress considers all commissions that deal with the fine arts as boutonnières on the lapels of really serious matters. Hence the difficulty of appointing men from the West, who would have had to make a long and expensive journey to Washington once a month. Now that the country can be spanned in a few flying hours, and provided a generous Congress increases the budget, the make-up of the Commission may change. I think it would be to the advantage of its

work if its base could be broadened; meanwhile the Century may well take pride in those members who have served so unselfishly over the past thirty-five years, for five dollars a day while on duty, plus travel expenses in an upper berth!

Royal Cortissoz, our recent President, began his career, as he has often told us, as office boy at McKim, Mead & White's. From there he drifted into the role of critic of the arts. He was so indoctrinated with the classical point of view by McKim that he has never departed from his early schooling. The art critic's life is not strewn with rose petals. If he is honest, he has to contend with art dealers, artists and, at times, with his own publication; for the whole art business today is something of a racket: "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours." My impression is that the art column is too often an implement for the benefit of dealers who have invested heavily in some fad, so that an honest critic like Royal, who has always believed in sound craftsmanship, is most wholesome for a bewildered public. How much the public benefits from his work, I am not prepared to say. Like a ship built of solid timber and launched from the ways

of a good shipyard, Royal set forth to weather many an artistic storm. He has never foundered on the shifting sands of fashion. As art critic of the *New York Herald Tribune* for many years, he held steadfastly to his course and today has come into a quiet haven.

There was another Centurion, not listed as architect, to whom I owe much and must pay tribute. Willard D. Straight was schooled as an architect at Cornell. He would have been a success if he had pursued the profession but his spirit was too roving to sit at a draughting-board. He heard the call of the East and, in a round-about way, entered diplomacy in Korea. I first knew him in Havana as Secretary of Legation to Centurion Edwin V. Morgan. During the four days, or rather nights, that we spent together under the stars, on the roof of his house at Marianao, we found much in common and formed a close friendship. Our tastes were the same and when, later, he came to New York, became a banker, and conceived the idea of a club for foreign traders, he asked me to design India House on Hanover Square. Together we ravaged ship-chandlers and antique shops

in New York, Boston and Philadelphia for ship models, engravings—anything to do with the sea. India House has been a successful club from the start, because of Straight's vision and enthusiasm. Later, I built for him in the City and on Long Island, and our friendship grew. When our country entered the first World War, Straight was among the early volunteers. He rose to be a major, fought in the Argonne, and shortly after the Armistice, came down with "flu." I was with him when he died in Paris. I felt then and still feel that our country and the Century lost a dynamic personality, who would have had great influence for good.



Before I bring these wanderings to a close, I should like to say a word about my partner, Chester Holmes Aldrich. I find it hard to write objectively of one whom I knew so intimately for nearly fifty years. Our friendship was formed at Carrère & Hastings' office in 1898, our engagement announced when I went to Paris, and our marriage took place on my return in 1903.

I fear that during those years, I was far too aggressive, too in-

sistent on my own ideas, for anyone to endure who was not a saint: Chester was. I don't think he ever had the passion for our profession that I had. Too many outside interests lured him: Greenwich House, the Kips Bay Boys' Club, his farm for boys on Staten Island, his reading and his music, and his many, many friendships left him less time; but these interests made him beloved of many. Now, as I go on alone, I realize more and more how much I leaned on him. When he was chosen for and agreed to take the directorship of the American Academy in Rome a few years before his death, he stepped into the niche he was made to fill; for he loved Italy. He had served there in the Red Cross during the first World War and made many warm friendships among the Italians, so he went home, spiritually, in 1935. From the many inquiries made by members of the Century and the Coffee House about his activities and health while in Rome, I realized how much he was esteemed. He was a rare friend and a most beneficent savoring in this boiling pot we call New York. He was a charming water colorist and second only to Eggers in his ability to render architectural drawings. I am glad he did not

live to see the destruction wrought in his beloved Italy in the late war.

I have wandered thus far among the architectural tombstones, only pausing before those where the names awakened some pleasant, more or less intimate, association. I have regretfully passed many others where the names recalled friendly greetings at the Club or elsewhere, but only as ships we pass in the night.

I found a vast number of stones where the names were still sharply cut or, more often, partly obliterated. They were the names of architects who had died before my day or who came seldom to the Club, where I failed to meet them.

Then too, there are living architects on our roll of resident and non-resident members: I have been urged to write about them. It is unfortunate that they, like myself, must wait another century for recognition, but years have taught me discretion, if not wisdom. I have learned that the printed word is a two-edged sword; one may say too much or too little.

I must thank Mr. Bolton, our Librarian, for his patience in looking up names, dates and other facts. If I had not had his help, these memories might have been a task, not a pleasure.



# Architects Read and Write

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



## THE KUMP EDITORIAL

BY R. CLIPSTON STURGIS, F.A.I.A., Portsmouth, N. H.

AS ONE OF an almost lost generation of architects, may I be allowed to endorse most heartily Mr. Kump's excellent editorial and especially his concluding sentence: "... we must think of architecture as the transcendent and generic art . . ." The architect cannot know in detail all the branches of his complicated profession but he must know enough of them all to be able to lead and direct.

To take a very usual problem, a country house. Often I have heard it claimed that the landscape architect should determine the site and the approaches. To my mind this is wholly impracticable. Only the architect can

so determine the site as to fit the needs of the plan of the house. The consideration of the aspect, the view, the position of the dining-room and the services, of the approaches to the front door and the services—these are the architect's responsibility.

The landscape man can help in matters of planting and of the layout of the garden, but the architect must determine where the gardens are to be.

Planning all this is as essential a part of the architect's service as the design of the exterior or interior of the house. In brief, the architect, if worthy of the name, must be the boss.

## "YOUR SOLAR HOUSE"

BY CHARLES A. PEARSON, JR., Radford, Va.

SUFFICE it to say that practically all architects over the country (including, no doubt, most of the designers represented, themselves) agree with Edmund G. Krimmel in his "vitup" (July JOURNAL) concerning the very bad "Your Solar House" put out a few months ago by Libby-Owens-Ford Glass Company.

Why couldn't Mr. Krimmel have expressed our views simply and saved space in the valuable JOURNAL for more important discussion by stating: "it stinks," and "most of the designers represented made asses of themselves by, first, putting out such sorry, immature, conglomerated messes; and, second, by having anything to do with

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such a publication that did not first foster *good design*, in which

Thermopane would have automatically become good design."

## MUST AMERICA BE A CHURCH MUSEUM?

BY CHARLES E. THOMAS, Colorado Springs, Colo.

BEING an Episcopalian, I got a great kick, a few nights ago, out of the picture, "Life with Father"; being an architect, I got an equal kick out of the article, "Must America Be A Church Museum?". Knowing nothing

about Franklin D. Elmer, Jr., I can only assume that he is a young man, hence the Christian name. Too bad he can't get together with Father for they have much in common. Father wanted to be a Christian but in his own way.

## Books & Bulletins

AN INTRODUCTION TO COLOR. By Ralph M. Evans. 340 pp. 7½" x 9¾". New York: 1948: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. \$6.

The author, head of Eastman Kodak Company's Color Control Department, takes the reader farther into the many ramifications of the subject than most of the books on color offered to the architect. Not only colored light, but the properties of vision, and the mental interpretation of color are discussed informatively and entertainingly. A valuable book.

SEARCH FOR FORM: A Fundamental Approach to Art. By Eliel Saarinen. 354 pp. 6¼" x 9¾". New York: 1949: Reinhold Publishing Corporation. \$4.50.

When Eliel Saarinen speaks, architects listen. But it is not easy to read this book. It is written in

a style that varies widely from stereotyped English and is for that reason a bit hard to gallop through. Probably that is an excellent property, for when one does become accustomed to Mr. Saarinen's way of thought and of expressing that thought, the fruits of that thinking carry conviction. Profound reasoning such as this is not easily translated into the printed word, nor would it be registered so clearly in the reader's mind by a smooth-flowing stream of polished sentences. The subtitle, "A fundamental approach to art," is explicit labeling, for the book is just that. As such it should have the earnest study of every architect who feels something of the heavy responsibility carried by our generation in seeking to slough off the habit of form-imitation which has marked the past few hundred years of design. Naturally we

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shall be for a long time groping blindly for the road ahead. But with Mr. Saarinen's sound reasoning we shall make fewer mistakes, follow fewer will-o-the-wisps. Here is a book which, having been read word by word to the end, compels turning back to the first page for re-reading, lest any of its constructive thoughts should have been too faintly etched on the reader's consciousness.

**THE HOUSE FOR YOU: To Build, Buy or Rent.** By Catherine and Harold Sleeper. 313 pp. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". New York: 1948: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. \$5.

The Sleepers, husband and wife (Mr. Sleeper is president of the New York Chapter, A.I.A.), have written the housebuilders' book to end all housebuilders' books. Any author of tomorrow who has a yen to tell the young married couple how to go about building the house which they will eventually make their home, should take a look at the Sleepers' book, and then go write on some other subject. Some architects may feel that all the secrets of the profession, and all its technology, have been given away, thereby making the architect unnecessary. On the other hand, any prospective client who reads the book and digests it, and still feels himself competent to go it alone, should have his head examined. It's a great book to give your prospective housebuilding client—great from his standpoint and also from yours.

**RUSSIAN ARCHITECTURE.** By Arthur Voyce. 298 pp. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". New York: 1948: Philosophical Library. \$6.

A Hoover Institute Fellow in Slavic Studies looks at Russia's architecture with particular attention to what brought it about. With the striving to find an architecture that will express the people's social and cultural aspirations, the goal has not yet appeared. Unfortunately the many illustrations are not as well reproduced as one might wish.

**NEW YORK: The World's Capital City.** By Cleveland Rodgers and Rebecca B. Rankin. 398 pp. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". New York: 1948: Harper & Brothers. \$5.

This biography of the metropolis is vividly written by its City Planning Commissioner and the Librarian of the N. Y. Municipal Reference Library, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the consolidation of the five boroughs into Greater New York.

**PRINCIPLES OF URBAN REAL ESTATE.** By Arthur M. Weimer and Homer Hoyt. Revised Edition. 512 pp. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". New York: 1948: The Ronald Press Company. \$4.75.

Revised edition of a work first published in 1939. A comprehensive text for college and university courses dealing with real estate and land economics.

THE PLANNER'S NOTEBOOK. By H. Myles Wright, A.R.I.B.A. 390 pp. 5¾" x 9". London: 1948: The Architectural Press. 30s.

With planning control now a government policy in England, Wales and Scotland, the work of local authorities will approach a new measure of uniformity. Here is a somewhat loosely assembled collection of data for these engaged in town planning and its related problems in the British Isles.

#### PLANNING THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

By the American Public Health Association Committee on the Hygiene of Housing. 90 pp. 7¾" x 10½". Chicago: 1948: Public Administration Service, Publications Division. \$2.50.

With a foreword by Dr. C.-E. A. Winslow and the work of a committee on Environmental Standards, of which Frederick J. Adams is chairman, the authorita-

tive nature of this monograph is attested. It is a formulation of principles and standards by which our number-one problem of housing may be attacked. This is the first in a series of three, the second to deal with occupancy criteria, and the third with construction and equipment.

THE REGENCY STYLE. By Donald Pilcher. 120 pp. 6" x 9". New York: 1948: B. T. Batsford Ltd. \$4.50.

A competent modern evaluation of the style in the English architectural tradition, by a former assistant editor of *The Architectural Review*, now a practising architect and lecturer in Johannesburg, South Africa. Into his objective study Mr. Pilcher brings the thoughts and theories of those mainly responsible for formulating the style—J. B. Papworth, James Malton, J. C. Loudon, Humphrey Repton, Sidney Smirke, Sir John Soane among others.

## The Editor's Asides

THERE HAS BEEN, still is and will be for a long time, a lot of talk in the profession about our public relations. Charles S. Peete, vice-president of the Tennessee Chapter's Memphis Division, proposes to do something about it. He thinks architects are discredited in the eyes of the public for three

chief reasons: 1—"selling-out" to the general contractor by accepting jobs from him at a nominal fee which he has established in the mind of the owner as a necessary evil; 2—not staying with a job until the bitter end, through blood, sweat and tears, to the complete satisfaction of the owner; and 3—

exhibiting a lack of knowledge of building costs and a lack of appreciation of the necessity of spending the clients' limited money most effectively. That is the Tennessee viewpoint; any others, while we are at it?



ONE OF EVERY EIGHT citizens was admitted to a hospital during 1947, according to the American Hospital Association. The cost to the hospital rose from \$9.39 to \$11.09, of which \$9.71 was what the patient paid, leaving a daily deficit of \$1.39 per patient to be made up through voluntary gifts. In ten years hospital admissions have increased almost 100%, but the patient now seeks hospitalization earlier and is discharged in less time.



EDWARD C. COLE, of Yale's Department of Drama, points out that theatrical production has changed greatly in the last twenty years, that very little has been published about these changes, and that on the rare occasions when an architect gets a theater to design he has a very difficult time finding out just what are modern requirements. Professor Cole adds the observation that New York City, traditional theater center

of the country, is the one area in which the number of plays produced annually is shrinking, while in other areas the summer theater, college and high school productions are expanding. New York's newest theater is about twenty years old; those for professional play productions outside of New York are twenty to fifty years old. Theaters in schools and colleges are for the most part multi-purpose makeshifts. So there you are. Looks like a hard road for the playwright, also for those of us who still enjoy seeing a good play well produced.



THE FIELD SECRETARY reports what seems to be a fairly widespread haziness in members' minds as to what a Regional Director is, and how he got that way. Perhaps part of the explanation of the haziness lies in the fact that the membership has doubled within a few years, and many new members are not informed as to the democratic basis of Institute organization. Occasionally one hears a member ask, "How did our Regional Director come to be appointed?—he lives two thousand miles away from us."

In the first place, "appointed" is not the word; a Regional Di-

rector is *elected* by the Convention, and his nomination for office originates in his own Regional District and through his own constituency. Each chapter in a District, if it will, nominates a candidate for a Regional Directorship about to become vacant. This nomination, together with the nominations of other chapters in that same district are printed on what is in effect a primary ballot, to be voted upon by every member in good standing in that District. The nominee in this primary is then offered to the Convention (with opportunity also for last-minute nominations from the floor) for election to a three-year term.

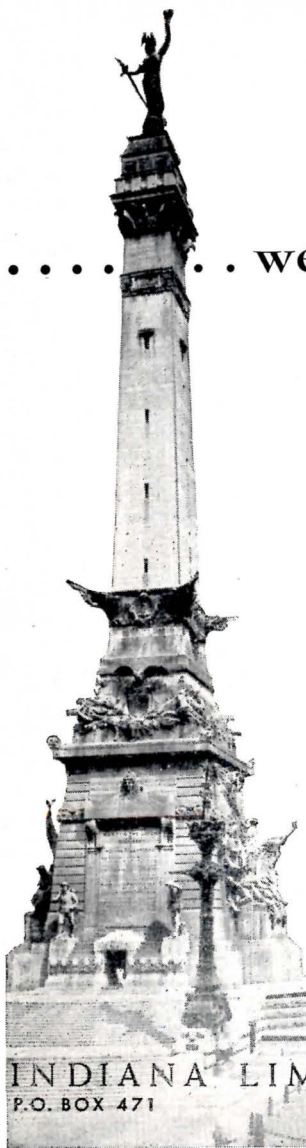
It is true that an elected Regional Director may be a stranger to part of his constituency; there are but ten Regional Districts embracing 92 chapters. When architects are thinly spread, the District is sure to be large geographically, but, like Congressional Districts, they are based on population—architect population in The Institute's case. Of course this population changes, and redistricting becomes necessary from time to time. If anyone thinks that a better scheme would be to have a representative from each *chapter* on The Board of Directors,

the unwieldiness and expense of having a Board of 96 Directors—92 Directors plus the Officers—immediately becomes apparent.

Institute policies are made, then, by regional representatives, each entrusted with the responsibility of contributing the thoughts and wishes of his constituency and formulating action that will be most acceptable to all. If you as a member think that Institute policy should be something other than it is, tell your Regional Director; he is your voice in a completely democratic organization.



ON ANOTHER PAGE I have tried to express in the circumscribed form of a book review the profound significance of Eliel Saarinen's latest book, "Search for Form." Reviewing such a book, with the hope of even a measurable effect upon the readers of book reviews, is an effort foreordained to failure. A man like Saarinen puts the thought and trained observation of a lifetime between book covers, and one tries to evaluate it in a few lines of type. It is much like an attempt to summarize the Bible in a pamphlet. All I can say is: Read it. You will rarely spend your time to better advantage.



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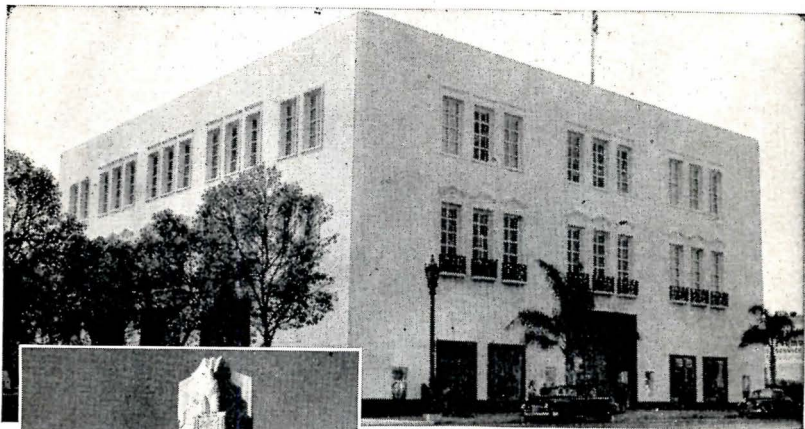
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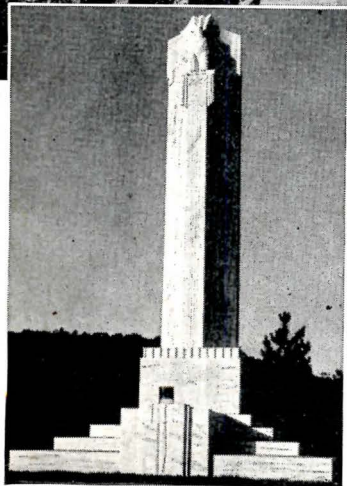
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Imperial Danby Exterior Marble. Timothy L. Pfeuger,  
Architect.



I. B. M. War Memorial, Endicott, New York.  
Imperial Danby Marble

*A*TTRACTIVE and appropriate architectural design in commercial and industrial structures is one of the greatest contributions by our architects of today. An outstanding example is the I. Magnin and Company Store of Beverly Hills.

How naturally and gracefully such taste may lead to group action in building appropriate and lasting memorials is demonstrated by the International Business Machines War Memorial at Endicott, New York. The idea was conceived and the whole project financed and executed by the employees in memory of their associates who died in World War II.

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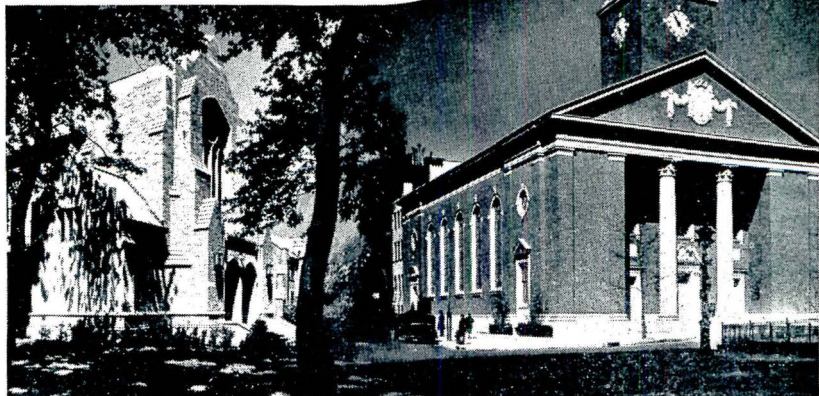




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