

Journal of The American Institute of
ARCHITECTS



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FEBRUARY, 1953

Design Behind the Iron Curtain

A Look at Our Defenses

The High Adventure of Mahogany Hunting

How to View the Out-of-Doors

The Architects' 1952 Trek Abroad

Reginald D. Johnson, F.A.I.A., 1882-1952

Books · Educational News · Calendar

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CONTENTS

A Look at Our Defenses 51 <i>By Kenneth E. Wischmeyer</i>	Reginald Davis Johnson, F.A.I.A. 1882-1952 81 <i>By Robert E. Alexander</i>
Design Behind the Iron Curtain . . . 54 <i>By Vernon DeMars</i>	Calendar 84
How to View the Out-of-Doors . . . 63 <i>By Edwin Bateman Morris</i>	The Institute's Headquarters Staff: Walter Andrews Taylor, A.I.A. 87 <i>By Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A.</i>
The High Adventure of Mahogany Hunting 65 <i>By George N. Lamb</i>	Books & Bulletins 88
The Architects' 1952 Trek Abroad—IV 69 <i>By George Bain Cummings, F.A.I.A.</i>	Scholarships and Fellowships . . . 90
Architect Minus Client 74	They Say: <i>Russell Lynes, C. P. Rodocanachi, Norris K. Smith, Howard M. Robertson, F.R.I.B.A., Leonard W. Doob, John R. Fugard</i> 91
News from the Educational Field . . 75	Panel-Door Design Competition . . 92
Architects Read and Write: Edgar Williams' Annoyance . . . 76 <i>By Denison B. Hull</i>	The Editor's Asides 93
Architecture Defined 77 <i>By George Peter Keleti</i>	ILLUSTRATIONS
Technical Competence and the Professional Man 78 <i>By C. E. Silling, F.A.I.A.</i>	Cover, octagonal spot: Water channel bed-stone, Kumatgi, near Bijapur, India. Redrawn from "Bijapur and its Architec- tural Remains," by Henry Cousens, Bombay, 1916.
"The Avery Library" 79 <i>By Charles Allan Baretzki</i>	Treptower Park, East Berlin, Germany 59, 60
Commodity, Firmness and Delight 80 <i>By "Hubertus Junius"</i>	Reginald Davis Johnson, F.A.I.A., 1882-1952 85
	Walter Andrews Taylor, A.I.A., Director, Department of Educa- tion and Research 86

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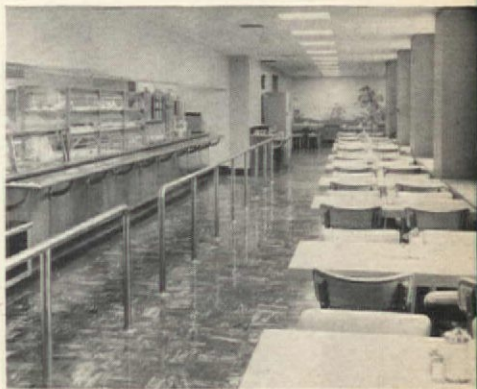
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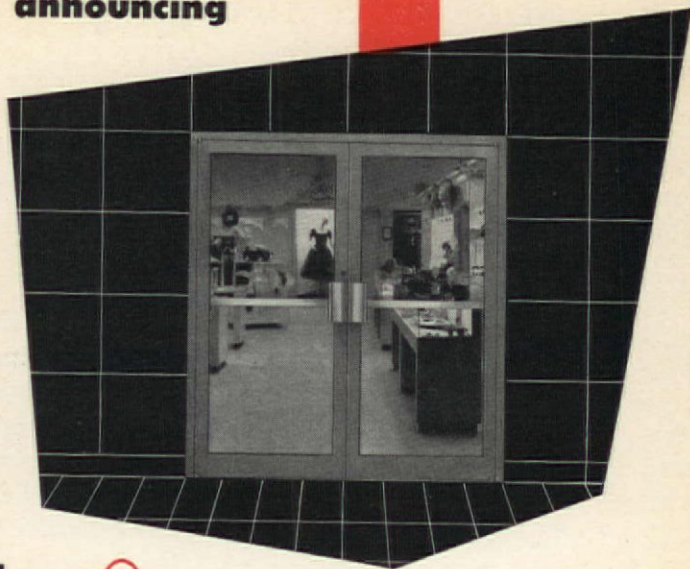
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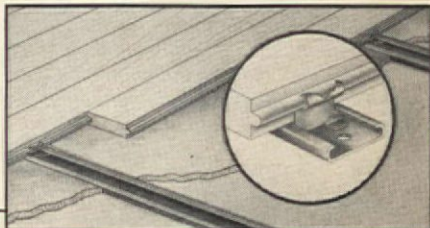
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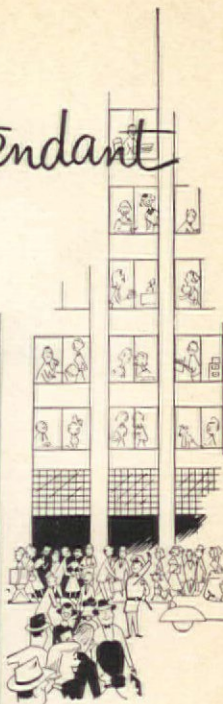




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In 17 of the last 20 years, Uncle Sam has followed Micawber's practice, not his advice. Our

national balance sheet has been, figuratively, "annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty-ought-six". Ahead of us as a nation, if we continue this irresponsible policy, is Micawber's dire predicament, "blossom blighted, leaf withered—forever floored".

There is no sane reason why the world's richest nation should continue to live the financial life of a profligate bankrupt. It is time now to set our house in order. The program called for is simple: (1) Eliminate waste and extravagance in government spending; (2) Balance the Federal budget; (3) Control the national debt and reduce taxes.

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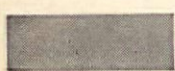
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A Look at Our Defenses

By *Kenneth E. Wischmeyer*

SINCE THE OUTBREAK of hostilities in Korea, in June of 1950, there has been a heated controversy in the press, on the radio, in the Congress, and among our citizenry as to the preparedness of our military forces, their adequacy of training and equipment, and their actual ability to safeguard America from foreign attack.

Admittedly the United States military forces, under pressure of the public, were demobilized too rapidly at the close of World War II, with much valuable equipment left behind in the rush to return to a peacetime status. Our national defense suffered accordingly, and it was only through repeated diplomatic coups and a show of strength by certain of our erstwhile allies that we were pointedly made aware of our lack of military preparedness. The Defense Department was not to blame, nor the Congress; it was the public who demanded military expenditure cuts with the resultant weakening of our military establishment.

Our economy was again, as in

1941, forced on a wartime basis under pressure of a "police action" in Korea, while the real threat became acutely evident, although hovering in the background. I am sure the American public today is fully aware that we lost the peace of World War II, and is conscious of the threat to our way of life. They will, therefore, no longer be lulled into a sense of false security by the United States' possession of the A-bomb.

With this kind of thinking in the back of my head, I was suddenly accorded the privilege of acting as representative of The American Institute of Architects at the 15th Joint Civilian Orientation Conference sponsored by the Defense Department from November 13th to the 22nd.

Our unit was composed of some seventy men representing a cross-section of professional and business groups in the country. We had been invited to attend this conference by the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Lovett, to see at first hand the status of our military defenses and

to be informed of current and future commitments affecting our economy. In this comprehensive process of indoctrination we came to realize that in the seven-year period since World War II there had been a tremendous increase in the costs of preparing for war.

Indoctrination began in the Pentagon where for two days we were briefed by Secretary Lovett; Deputy Secretary of Defense Foster; General of the Army, Omar Bradley; the Secretaries of Army, Navy, Air and their Chiefs or Deputy Chiefs of Staff; Assistants representing the State Department, Military Budget, Munitions Board, Foreign Military Assistance, Research and Development, Armed Forces Military Medical Policy, Manpower and Personnel, and Civilian Production and Military Requirements. Each speaker presented charts and maps to assist him, and willingly subjected himself to a question-and-answer period. These two days passed rapidly and reminded me of my "ninety-day wonder" indoctrination nine years ago in the Navy.

To facilitate transportation and billeting, conference members were divided into groups of eighteen men. Barely had we recovered from our intense exposure of the

Pentagon when we found ourselves in the red, white, blue and gold flights, bound for the Marine Base at Quantico, Virginia. The marines, in customary tradition, demonstrated by model devices amphibious landings and a live field-combat operation, complete with landing craft, air support and actual combat conditions simulating an amphibious assault. We inspected captured Russian military equipment from Korea and saw at first hand the training of Marine officers under field conditions.



Our next stop was Norfolk, Virginia, where we boarded one of our three largest aircraft carriers, the U. S. S. *Coral Sea*. Exercises were off the Virginia Capes in company of a battleship, destroyers and minor craft. We saw the operations of a Carrier Squadron with launchings, landings, night operations, strafing and bombing demonstrations, simulated sea rescues, submarine attacks, and made a complete inspection of this tremendous thousand-foot ship. Returning to Norfolk the following day, we inspected the Naval Base and toured the Amphibious School at Little Creek.

On scheduled departure we flew

to the Air Forces Proving Command at Eglin Field, Florida. There we saw, with several thousand military spectators, an Air Force fire power demonstration with all the latest planes and Air Force weapons. It was a dramatic spectacle long to be remembered.

The next tour was through the huge climatic hanger where temperatures from -65 to +190 can be simulated. The afternoon we were conducted through this unique building where it was -65 with snow on the ground; typical Florida weather prevailed on the outside. Inspection of Eglin Field included a static display of aircraft and equipment and concluded with the grand finale of a ride in a jet trainer, complete with a certificate indicating I am now Jet Jockey Wischmeyer.

The famous infantry school, Fort Benning (at Columbus, Georgia), was our next stop. For two days we viewed live demonstrations of all infantry weapons, including tanks and artillery, infantry tactics and a night fire-power display with tracer ammunition of an entrenched infantry company under assault. The visit was climaxed by observing airborne training, complete with airborne drop of troops and equipment.

After ten days of exciting demonstrations and intense informative indoctrination our next destination was home.

Everywhere during the entire trip we were greeted with warm hospitality and every courtesy by all officers and men, who provided us with excellent accommodations.

My impressions after the indoctrination could be summed up as follows:

1) Our enemies should not under any circumstances be underrated. To a point they are aggressive, well trained, efficiently equipped, and possess the scientific know-how and the raw materials of war.

2) The Defense Department is cognizant that everything done in the past has not been perfect, and a continuous soul-searching is in progress for the most efficient and economical solution to all problems.

3) The Defense Department likewise recognizes the importance of maintaining a sound civilian economy with the essential maintenance of a continual "reasonable" level of defense, fully aware that the enemy will call the time of conflict, and under these conditions our production lines for defense must be kept warm.

4) Under present threat of war we can no longer resort to our past policy of feast or famine in providing funds for defense, but must maintain a vitality of production and preparedness of arms and manpower.

5) The Defense Department currently is working under the handicap of constant mobilization and demobilization. Of 3,600,000 men under arms, one million each year leave, and one million each year are inducted into the armed forces. No other country in the world can afford such a procedure or such a luxury.

6) An aggressive research and development program, both under civilian and military auspices, is constantly seeking better and more efficient weapons of war and equipment for the arming and protection of our men. However, this same research and development spawns rapid obsolescence of existing weapons, making war and the pre-

paration for war a very costly operation.

7) Since the policy of unification was authorized under the Defense Act of 1947, there exists a better relationship between the services today, but there is still plenty of room for improvement at all levels. Teamwork, through unification, is the only solution to preserve a sound civilian economy. Otherwise the waste and overlapping of effort will sap our strength and make us vulnerable to attack.

As an individual my ten-day indoctrination was a privilege and an experience of a lifetime. My hope is that this short article in some measure may convey to you the message that the Defense Department is keenly conscious of our national defense requirements and is doing a thorough job in solving the many intricate problems confronting it.

Design Behind the Iron Curtain

By Vernon DeMars

The author, a professor in the University of California's School of Architecture, abroad in connection with the Ruhr miners' housing program, has a hasty visit into Berlin's east zone and writes of it to his friends, with photographs.

AS A CURIOUS WESTERNER it many at this stage of world affairs seemed wrong to leave Ger- without seeing Berlin and trying

FEBRUARY, 1953

to sense the atmosphere of its peculiar situation. Naturally I was most curious to see how things look just behind the Iron Curtain. We have all grown a little suspicious of propaganda—even our own—and eye-witness contact now and then adds a little confidence to our faith.

I flew in to Berlin from Duesseldorf on a Saturday morning—the flying time about two hours roughly. The first hour covers the length of the Ruhr, then past Hamm to Hannover and Braunschweig, where the ECA is building a small, but for Germany rather revolutionary, housing project: four bent slabs of stacked “maisonnettes.” I noticed familiar names like Hameln on the map, and from the air the towns seemed to have come right out of Mumford’s “Culture of Cities.” Shortly after, near Helmstedt, we crossed the border into the east zone with little difference to be observed from where I was sitting. The allied military train passes through the east zone with the windows blacked out. This was not so in the plane, but we were told we must pack up our cameras. For the most part the flat wheat lands of Prussia stretch in all directions, with irregular patches of woods left

standing to accent the landscape. At least four times I saw extensive maneuvering areas cut out of these woods. There seemed to be trenches, foxholes, shell holes, placements, etc. Perhaps these are to be seen throughout western Germany or the U. S. for all I know, or they may have been purposely located under the air corridor for whatever psychological effect they would have on people like myself.

Approaching Berlin from the west the extensive city looks quite normal and there remains enough of greenery and street trees in these sectors to cover the scars. As we came lower for the landing at Tempelhof, however, it could be seen that many large buildings had no roofs and that the windows were still empty holes. Broken places in what must have been continuous blocks of buildings proved that we had been there before!

The airdrome at Tempelhof is certainly one of the world’s most spectacular modern buildings. The great cantilevered shed into which the biggest planes can taxi is a most sensible and costly solution, but as this had been built for the thousand-year Reich, cost did not matter. In front of this great building complex is the monument to the

air lift—a segment of three arch ribs springing from the ground as though to form in fact the eastern abutment of a great concrete bridge. This, I must admit, was all explained to me, as I was unable to decipher the symbolism. This monument provides one horn of my dilemma which I will refer to later.

Through the courtesy of Professor Wedepohl of the Technische Hochschule in Berlin, I was met by a friend of his who drove me through much of the western sectors for a return look at the classic examples of modern housing—Siemensstadt, Zehlendorf, "Onkel Tom's Huette." Conclusion No. 1: The early international style of modern does not deteriorate with charm (not an original observation). Bartning's and Gropius' flats looked pretty terrible. This was mostly a matter of materials, the white plaster surface being either washed off or soiled with soot and metal stains. Bruno Taut's interesting experiments with strong color were washed out in a most untidy and not at all picturesque manner. Conclusion No. 2: Planting covers a multitude of sins and the *Siedlungen* where one could find the least to criticize were those where one could hardly see

the houses. However, one senses a vitality in much of this early work and some feeling that the first statement of certain new principles is often made with more strength and assurance than in the examples which follow. People were living in all of these and unquestionably in a more pleasant manner than in the otherwise typical Berlin mass-housing tenement.



I had heard differing reports concerning the eastern sector: 1) you could enter without any trouble or molestation; 2) it was dangerous for Americans to enter the eastern sector; 3) Germans went back and forth all the time; 4) it was dangerous for Germans from the western sector to enter the eastern sector. My architect hosts of the day before supported No. 4 by nervously approaching no closer than several blocks to the Brandenburg Gate where I could see that a large red flag had replaced the ruined triumphal chariot. I was, therefore, a little surprised to find that the American Forces Center made a daily sight-seeing tour through Berlin which included some two hours in the eastern sector. So, Sunday afternoon I set off, together with some

eighty American officers and service men, in three large buses. There was little question that the trip was being made by all for the same reason—to see what it was like on the other side. Knowing this apparently, the buses wasted no time in plunging directly for the border. This was announced by several signs, “ours” and “theirs.” Ours said: “You are now leaving the American sector of Berlin.” Theirs said: “You are now entering the Democratic Sector of Berlin.” I saw no guards from either side at this point.

I must admit to a certain uneasiness in the stomach as we crossed the line. It was evident I was sharing this sensation with others in the bus. We proceeded through several blocks of a working-class housing section which looked no different from the west side of the line, and entered the former Treptower Park where the Russians have built a cemetery for their men lost in the Battle of Berlin. Our guide, a young German who spoke quite passable G. I., explained that the buses would now stop; we would visit the cemetery built by the Germans with their own money as a part of reparations, and taking a year and a half to finish, working around the clock.

We could take pictures, said the guide, but not of anyone in uniform. As we got out of the bus a dozen or more young Russian officers were busy taking our pictures with assorted Leicas, etc., so rule No. 1 was quickly honored in the breach as everyone snapped away at the Russians. We then entered this park through a heavy archway which might be described as Russian Richardsonian, walked perhaps a half kilometer on a wide tree-bordered path and came to a broad mall set at right angles to the entry. Here a granite statue portrayed Mother Russia mourning for her sons. The mall led to a kind of gateway of two Russian flags made from the red marble floor of Hitler's Reichschancellery. The staffs appeared to spring from the ground at a low angle, pointing toward each other, and the flags hung in conventionalized folds (folds ten feet thick). Here two kneeling soldiers in bronze with bowed heads held their helmets and leaned on ready rifles.

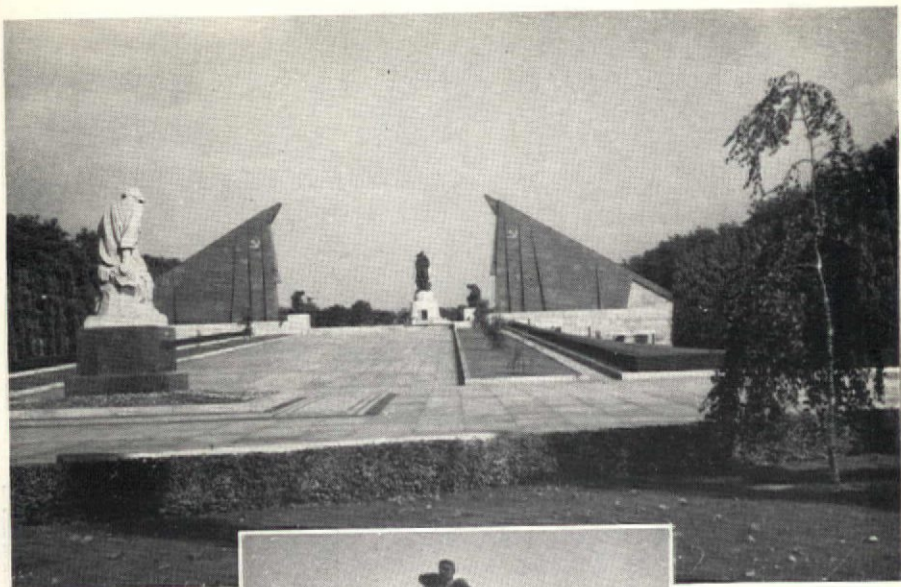
Past the flag portals in a vast formal sunken garden were the mass graves of the 2,600 Russians lost in the Battle of Berlin. Down each side were sculptured stone blocks like great rectangular sarcophagi and in the distance, termi-

nating the vista, was the heroic bronze statue of a Russian soldier, bareheaded, a child on his left arm clinging to his shoulder (Russia's future), and in his right a great sword cutting in two a swastika which he is trampling underfoot. In the immediate foreground from the vantage point of the flag portals was a large bronze wreath to honor the navy. It was complete with realistic flag, anchor, and a lighthouse.

How to assess the impact of all this?—There is little question that it was a moving and impressive thing. It was also consistently in the contemporary Russian manner, as one would expect. The three mourning figures, I think, give a clue to our differences. Mourning is not an emotion to be borne with quiet, sad stoicism. Mother Russia racks with sobs, clutches at her robe, her head bent low. You are a little embarrassed—we don't do that in public, and we don't freeze it into sculpture. I couldn't help feeling that it looked like Ivory-soap sculpture, or the work of a facile primitive, yet I am certain that primitive people never portray grief so literally. The two bronze soldiers were better, artistically, I think, but again their heads were bent too low. The emotion I think

became exaggerated just to that amount that propaganda exceeds straight exposition. The 50'-high soldier with the sword was the best of the things as sculpture and perhaps the symbolism in such a case is acceptable. The artistic standards, however, are almost exactly Victorian. The child might have been seen in the Crystal Palace, just rescued by a St. Bernard instead of by a Soviet soldier. Lastly, the sculptured blocks down each side supported bas-reliefs which violated all the unwritten tenets of what ought to be carved or modelled on a flat surface. They were paintings, with deep and strong perspective. Bramante perhaps did the same, and certainly the Renaissance was rife with symbolism and naturalism, but it seems at this distance to have always maintained the artistic detachment that lifted it from the level of greeting-card art or feed-store calendars. Of course, there it is: this was designed for the appreciator of greeting-card art and feed-store calendars—and to hell with the intellectuals. And as such it rings the bell. It is also as rich as a Czar could afford. Marble, bronze, granite, mozaic, crystal.

Later I looked again at the air-lift monument. The three concrete



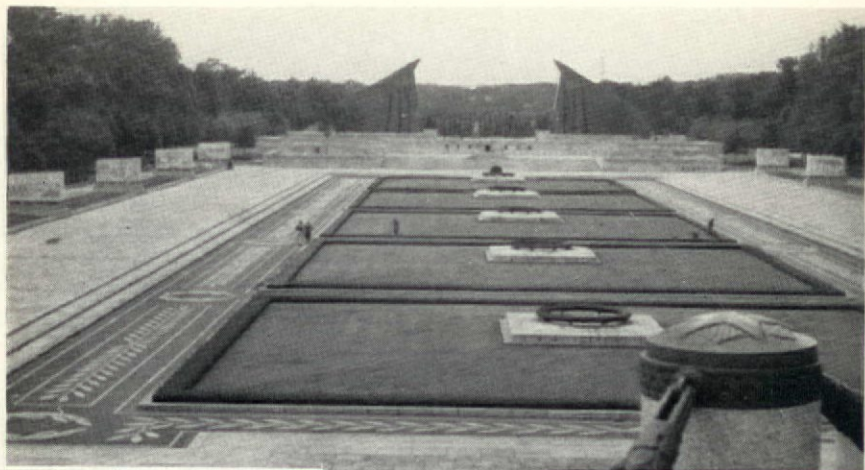
Representation of the flags are from the red marble floor of Hitler's Reichschancellery.



The bronze is of a Russian soldier, with a child on his left arm and in his right hand a sword cutting in two a swastika.

TREPTOWER PARK, EAST BERLIN, GERMANY

*Journal
The AIA*



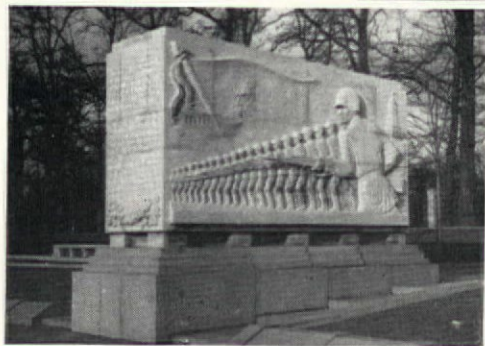
Honoring Russia's Navy with a bronze wreath

In a vast sunken garden are the mass graves of 2,600 Russians lost in the Battle of Berlin.



Entrance to the Park—
"Russian Richardsonian."

Treptower Park, East Berlin, Germany.



One of the blocks flanking the sunken garden.

ribs with the spatter coat of stucco, the names of the men who lost their lives almost imperceptibly carved in the rough stone abutment-base. It seemed a rather poor thing, and the symbolism difficult without a clue. Yet this was built from voluntary donations by the grateful people of Berlin; the designs were from a national competition. The other was forced out of or forced on beaten people, and perhaps no question as to the poetic justice of it. Of course, I don't think I'd trade. Yet I was forced to wonder where do we go from here as artists and men?

We left Treptower Park behind along with some forty or fifty Russian officers, also visiting the park (the only enlisted men we saw during the trip were the guards at another monument).

The buses plunged on and we began to see everywhere the familiar red banners strung across buildings with slogans in white. Some promoted the 5-year plan, most denounced the German treaty, or the Americans or both. One rubble-lined street had quite likely been destroyed in the furious street fighting as the Russians entered Berlin, and our guide claimed that this was the case. A large sign announced, however: "These workers' homes

were destroyed by the bombs of the American Assassins." Posters the height of a building showed the Russian bear (walking like a man incidentally) carrying a hod of bricks and helping the Germans rebuild Berlin. We were told that every East Berliner must contribute an hour a day to the reconstruction—cleaning bricks or whatever (they could buy off if they preferred). I couldn't help but feel that this was not unreasonable, as the job would appear otherwise never-ending. It depends, of course, upon whether it was done in a spirit of willing self-help, and such appeared not to be the case. The destruction, of course, was terrific. Block after block is nothing but rubble; only the streets are cleared. This goes for both sides of the line. Of the great buildings and hotels on Unter den Linden, some stand not too badly damaged, some are frightfully gutted, others are simply not there.

The Schloss near the Dom on the Museum Island was pulled down by the Russians to make their Red Square. They plan to tear down the Dom as well to enlarge the area for demonstrations. Here were remnants of some not too recent demonstration. A pair of badly weathered murals faced a

line of bleachers across the square. The far mural must have shown wheat and tractors being unloaded from Russia. This I merely assume, because the near mural showed workmen unloading great crates stamped "USA—Explosives." Another posted on Unter den Linden showed several lice and cockroaches chewing at a map of Korea. They had heads of Truman, Schuman, and others. A Russian boot was about to stamp them out. Underneath was the leitmotif, "Ami go home." This was also shouted at us rather half-heartedly at one intersection. For the most part what people we saw were non-committal and a little curious—about what you'd expect. There were few people about, however, when compared with the crowds we saw on re-entry into the western sector. We passed the recently completed Soviet Embassy in diluted classic—a really dull business, and drove on down Unter den Linden toward the Brandenburger Tor, turning off then, past the completely levelled Reichschancellery. At Potsdamerplatz the two little Greek temples that framed Mendelson's skyscraper are all but reduced to rubble. The state of the formerly handsome strip-windowed building is more

shocking somehow than ruined temples. The great shell holes, mottoes, billboards, and empty windows, partake of the decrepitude of a rusty ship or junked automobile rather than the nostalgia of crumbling architecture. Perhaps this signals its true modernity. On our side of the line at Potsdamerplatz and facing the Russian sector is a tall framework for news bulletins in the *New York Times* manner in flashing lights. It is entitled "Voice of the Free World." No doubt a good idea, and the Russians have attempted to erect all manner of structures on their side of the square to hide it from view. These have variously been blown down, we were told, and there is no obstruction at the moment.

The Tiergarten is a scene of utter desolation, with a backdrop of ruins. Another Russian monument stands by agreement in the Tiergarten in the western sector. Another heroic Russian soldier, a colonnade and, flanking all, two rubber-tired tanks raised on stone blocks. They do make fine solid and appropriate flanking masses. I was given to wonder, how long does the rubber last on monuments?

So back into western Berlin. Ruins here too, but the load of

propaganda lifted. What price hatred? one might almost ask. The East Berliner must grow weary of reading and hearing propaganda and hate at every turn. There must be another way.

For the rest, we headed down the Kurfuerstendamm past the cafés filled with people—and inequalities, I am sure—but it all looked very welcome.

I caught my return flight shortly after this. As you walk out to the waiting airplane—still under the

shelter of the great Tempelhof roof—they play “Auf Wiedersehen”—corny and sentimental, I suppose, but I was taken in completely. It made the whole thing unreal and this was the movie ending. I had, however, seen a few things with my own eyes that I had wondered about. Maybe they didn't prove anything at all. But out of it I managed to get a kind of feeling that I'll string along with our side for a hell of a long time yet.

How to View the Out-of-Doors

By Edwin Bateman Morris

THE MODERN HOUSE centers about the theorem of bringing in, as available, the great out-of-doors. Not basically a new idea, since it has always come in, blown in or dripped in; but the modern twist is to bring it in, and be comfortable.

This theorem has resulted in the picture window—two sheets of glass with an insulating vacuum between—which brings in the nice part of Nature and excludes the other. Thus the out-of-doors, with such qualifications as the realtor has worked into the scene, is ours. Its color and sheen comes

to us sitting in our soft chairs. Smoothness of grass, greenness of hedge, upstage position of Ranch House and Cape Cod, silvery glisten of corrugated containers, flash of red wing, flash of red laundry truck, sparkle of blue sky beyond television antennæ: all combine to bring Nature herself into the very room and, conversely, the very room out into Nature.

In areas where individuals live closely together on identical plots of ground, the out-of-doors is pleasantly synthetic. Soft gentle pink of dresses on line is as optically satisfying as that of the flowers

waving below. Blue handkerchiefs blend with blue of the spruces. Or are they handkerchiefs? Even if not, the charm is there, and the thought arises as to whether baby-blue underthings without persons within are intrinsically indelicate. A pleasant moot question!

Designers of houses, aware of dilution of pure Nature by other matters, have endeavored, not too logically, to compensate by making larger windows, running into gable and corner, and by placing them in all rooms. That is to say, they place them in all rooms except bathrooms, where they seem always to be omitted, doubtless because of interference with piping and plumbing fixtures.

This plus-four idea in windows is not essential, since the gracious out-of-doors enters anyway, with its blue sky, swaying trees, flitting birds. Blending always with these, no matter what window size, are the stirring picture compositions composed of breezeways, car-ports, window-walls, orange furniture, persons in shorts, roof overhangs, tricycles, objects at the curb for collection—the throbbing aspects of people against Nature's backdrop.

Lacking in broad scope is the statement of the cynic that a picture window is for the purpose of

watching a neighbor who, through his picture window, watches another neighbor who, through his picture window, watches a fourth looking out at a filling station.

Our fellow-humans are a part of Nature. We enter, through glass, into their lives. Open are curtains at their windows, open at ours. Even at bedrooms! Various open-covenant-openly-arrived-at street and sports costumes have to an extent abolished the former stuffy top-secret idea of boudoir and dressing-table, which, within reason, now become part of the great living out-of-doors.



Construction ingenuity has placed us, though under roof, in the open world. Thermostatically controlled, oil-heated, fluorescent-lighted, television-petted, we are still children of the Great Without, in a continuous synthetic open-air Sunday-school-picnic surrounding, seeing all, knowing all.

Available to us is the world of trees, clotheslines, hollyhocks, geraniums, diaper-service vehicles, blue sky, soft floating clouds, brush salesmen, women in early-morning hair-dos, boys with special-delivery letters pounding on the doors of families away visiting in-laws,

flowers sparkling with dew, children teetering on porch roofs reaching for tangled kites, skillful men tossing refuse containers to equally skillful performers on trucks, boys with charmed lives followed by cocker-spaniels with charmed lives dashing carefree between death-potential traffic—a world spread out for our relaxed entertainment.

How did we exist before the creation of the all-seeing picture window? What did we know, in our former termite-like days, of the daily changes in the blue vault of heaven, when it was ill-bred to look out of the window; or of the daily changes in the outer expanse of travelled concrete, tipped with

its border of lawnmower green? How did we know then which family was delivered a full pint of cream and real butter? Nature was a closed book. Often we did not even see the intrepid urchin creeping to retrieve his ball from our best flower bed.

Now we sit at our ease and the scene revolves before us. The difficulties, the interesting moments of passing discomfort and embarrassment of other dwellers go on as acts of a play put on for our regal diversion. A triumph indeed for those men who, as a result of patient research, put the thin vacuum between glass, and thus brought to our couch-side the sweet and beautiful world.

The High Adventure of Mahogany Hunting

By George N. Lamb

SECRETARY, MAHOGANY ASSOCIATION, INC.

IN AN AGE characterized by electronic calculators, jet-powered aircraft, mechanized farming, and assembly-line techniques, it is a little strange, and more than a little refreshing, to find an enterprise as primitive as is the fascinating business of mahogany hunting.

Indeed, it is highly doubtful if very many of the millions of tele-

vision-set owners ever pause to reflect on the high adventure behind the making of the handsome cabinets which adorn their living-rooms.

This probably is because it is difficult to conceive that a wood so modern and versatile as mahogany is brought into the American home only after a tremendous conflict be-

tween civilized man and nature in the raw. Mahogany hunting is a pursuit that has remained virtually unchanged since the conquistadores of Cortez and the mariners of Walter Raleigh felled the first of the forest monarchs four centuries ago.

Mahogany is not a scarce wood, as attested by the fact there is more of it available in the lumberyards of America in 1952 than there was in 1942, or 1932, or any other period. And this in spite of the greatly widened market for the wood in the field of furniture making, cabinetry, architectural trim, and even pattern making.

But it is certainly difficult of access.

Genuine mahogany is produced in commercial quantities only in the West Indies, in Central America, in northern Colombia and Venezuela, on the tributaries of the upper Amazon in Brazil and Peru, and in West Africa's Ivory Coast, Gold Coast, and Nigeria.

Whether in tropical America or in Africa, the work of logging is still about as robust an occupation as anyone could care to take on.

To begin with, there is no such thing as a mahogany forest. The mahogany hunter considers himself exceptionally fortunate if he finds a

stand averaging two trees to the acre. And before he makes even this rewarding discovery, he will have exercised almost unbelievable initiative and ingenuity.

He will have had to contend with difficult penetration of the jungle and the navigation of torrential tropical streams; with the need for adroit negotiation with local concessionaries, and on their part the necessity of shrewd barter with landowners, government agents and tribal chiefs, and with the experienced employment and management of native labor. Generation after generation, these problems must be met by the mahogany hunter.

At first, only the trees on the river banks were cut, and transportation was not a serious problem. These trees have long since gone, so the hunt for mahogany now is reduced to one long battle with the trackless tropical jungle.



After a preliminary survey in a given area has determined that there is a sufficient stand of timber to warrant the establishment of a camp, it is necessary to study carefully certain details: Do the trees grow within hauling distance of a navigable river? Does the charac-

ter of the terrain permit economical hauling? Are the banks of the river high enough to contain its waters during periods of flood? Is the distance down the river to the sea short enough for the completion of the log drive before the dry season empties the streams? These and many other problems must be analyzed before logging operations can begin.

With these questions answered in the affirmative, native crews are recruited, provisions bought, and a rustic camp carved out of the jungle.

Then everything is geared to have the logs ready for the floods which come between June and August and again during November and December.

First, main trails are cut, then branch trails are laid out to each tree. Before cutting can begin, the axmen rig up a cutting platform, fashioned from nearby saplings, tied together with tough jungle vines. This is necessary because mahogany trees have buttressed roots which extend up the trunk as much as ten or fifteen feet. The tree is cut above these buttresses.

Mounting this precarious scaffold, called in Central America, curiously enough, a "barbecue," the axman begins wielding his long-

handled ax. He is soon joined by a second axman, and the two of them will cut from eight to twelve hours, depending on the size of the tree, before it surrenders to their ringing blows.

Once the tree is felled, it must be hauled into the main trail, and thence to the bank of a dry creek. Up until fairly recently, this hauling was done by cattle in tropical America, and by manpower in Africa, where the tsetse fly makes the use of cattle impossible. Now most hauling is accomplished by trucks and tractors.

While on the creek bank, the logs are scaled and branded, and then left to await the coming of the floods.

When the floods finally arrive, everything else stops, and the drive is on day and night to get the logs to deep water before the streams dry out again.

The men know no limit to their working hours. Day and night are alike to them while the water lasts. Their efforts are Herculean, and at the same time, remarkably adroit. They maintain a foothold deep in the flood. They stand on logs and roll them in the torrent. They guide their canoes in and out amid the drive and shoot the

rapids by daylight, moonlight, or in the dark.

If the floods are too violent, streams overflow and the logs are lost in the jungle. If the floods recede too rapidly, the logs are stranded until the following year. Sometimes the flood is so violent that the rush of logs will break the booms at the river's mouth and be carried out to sea, where many are lost. Though every effort is made to salvage these valuable logs, the cost of doing so is often as great as the original logging cost.

The logs that safely reach the river's mouth are formed into rafts and floated down to the ocean. Trouble isn't over yet, however, as getting these rafts of logs over the bar and out a mile or more to the ocean steamer is a perilous operation. If the sea is at all rough, the waves break over the bar with such force as to break up the raft and scatter the logs out to sea and up and down the beach. The fact that these waters are shark-infested increases the danger. Even aboard the steamer, all danger is not past. More than one ship with a cargo of mahogany has not been able to weather a tropical hurricane.

Journey's end for the erstwhile sovereign of the forest is a saw-

mill somewhere in the United States. The weather-beaten log that is unloaded at the mill gives little indication of the beauty that lies within. When at last it is sawn into boards, or sliced into veneer, there remains not even a hint of the tree's own hundred-year struggle for survival, nor of the long and rugged battle finally won by the mahogany hunter.

What is perhaps most remarkable about this entire operation is that, despite the tremendous effort expended to produce mahogany, and the long distances which it must travel to the American market, it compares in cost very favorably with other fine cabinet woods grown right here in the United States. Because its large logs produce veneer and boards which are virtually free of defect, and are long and wide, it is often cheaper to use than many of our domestic hardwoods.

The almost endless variety of figure in the different logs, the outstanding structural characteristics of the wood, and the multiple new uses to which it is constantly being put, test to the utmost the skill of the mill men. There is still high adventure in the planning and manufacture of each log to obtain its maximum beauty and utility.

The Architects' 1952 Trek Abroad

IN FIVE PARTS—PART IV

By George Bain Cummings, F.A.I.A.

THESE FOLLOW four days of sightseeing and shopping in Rome, in which two events stand out and deserve the special comments that I shall make later. We go to the Fountain of the Trevi and cast in our coins so that, as tradition has it, we shall return some day. (Doubtless that is why I am back here now!) We go to the Pantheon, and hear *Ave Maria* played on the organ so that we may observe the acoustics of the chamber. This is one of those very thoughtful *extra* things that Miss Lelli does for us. We go to St. Peter's and are overwhelmed with the grandeur and perfection of this greatest of cathedrals. Dick Walker introduces us to some of the leading architects of Rome and we are shown the new railroad station that has been facetiously dubbed "the dinosaur" because of the suggestive shape of its roof section. We visit the very modern buildings of the F.A.O. (Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN). We hold a reception at the American Academy, for the Roman architects and their ladies, and enjoy meeting Director Roberts and

some of the Fellows. We spend a morning in the galleries of the Vatican, ending with the Sistine Chapel, and shed a tear in tribute to Michelangelo. We visit the Colosseum. We go to the Palatine hill and look down upon the Forum, finally descending to its floor and walking among the fragments of ancient glory. We visit the Senate House, only recently unearthed, and see the very marble floor which furnished the stage for some of the greatest dramas of history. And then, by way of relaxation and variety, we dine *al fresco* on the sidewalk before the Tre Scallata restaurant and are served marvellous spaghetti and everything else that one connects with such a dinner, in such a place, on such a night.

Now it is of something that happened the next morning that I want to speak especially. It was the high spot of our visit to Rome. Paul Gaudreau had brought with him letters of introduction that secured for him and the rest of us an audience with the Pope, and the appointment was made for Saturday morning, July 19. We pre-

sented ourselves at a bronze doorway opening into the Vatican from the great colonnade before St. Peter's, and were admitted to a long corridor with alternating ramps and stairs which, with many turnings, brought us finally to the Consistorial Hall, some 175 steps above the plaza below. The hall is a magnificently decorated Renaissance room some 400' long and 45' or 50' wide. At the far end is an elevated throne set against a rich drapery. An aisle is fenced off through the center, and the space on each side is subdivided into sections which are rapidly filling with standing people. We are met by ushers in black dress clothes and taken to the very front section on the left, which apparently has been set aside for Americans. We stand close to the railing that divides the audience from the papal party. On either side of us, against the wall, are raised platforms, like open boxes, and in one is a delegation from South America, while Spanish people occupy the other. Swiss guards and Palatine guards in their historical uniforms add brilliant color to the scene. The audience spaces fill rapidly until there are between 5,000 and 6,000 of us standing tightly packed, in sweltering heat. An usher, speaking into

a microphone at the side of the throne, asks attention and calls the roll of the delegations supposed to be present. Each group shouts answer to the call. At the last minute an American naval chaplain arrives with a group of his sailors, who are jammed in behind us. We note in the papal section in front of us many priests, nuns and dignitaries, including the official photographer, seated along the sides. As we wait expectantly, suddenly handclapping and cheering break out at the far end of the hall and a priest near the throne leaps up and cries "Viva Poppa," clapping loudly. As if he were a cheer leader the crowd echoes his shout, and we turn to see coming up the aisle, borne aloft by eight guards in glittering livery, the Holy Father. He is clad in white, with white skull cap, and graciously bows, waves and blesses on both sides of the aisle as he is slowly brought to the front. People cheer ecstatically and clap and shout, while the priest at the front of the room frequently repeats his cry "Viva Poppa!" The Pope is put down right in front of us and walks to the throne. He is of medium height, of rather spare figure, with fine hands and an intellectual head. The scalp is tightly drawn over the skull, the hair is

spare and grey over the temples, the eyes are serene and the expression kindly. He sits before us, the master of ceremonies hands him the list of those present, and then he who is the Holy Father to all the Catholics present addresses them, group by group, speaking easily into the twin microphones before him. He speaks in many languages. I recognize Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese. When he addresses "the English-speaking people" he notes particularly the presence of our sailors and quotes an old saying to the effect that "he who travels far learns much." He welcomes us, hopes that what we are seeing in foreign lands will please us, and blesses us, our dear ones, and any spiritual tokens in our possession. (Thus those carrying rosaries, etc., consider them as blest by the Pope.) His words to us are well chosen and spoken without appreciable accent. Evidently he is the accomplished linguist. After having thus spoken in their native language to each group, he calls to him a little Venezuelan girl, dressed in confirmation gown, whom he kisses and presents with a token. Then he rises and pronounces the benediction upon us, descends to the floor and makes his way to each one

within the throne enclosure, greeting them personally, shaking hands, permitting that his ring be kissed or his robe touched. As he passes in front of us many of our party are able to share his greeting, and the sailors are brought to the railing for that privilege. Finally, he resumes the chair in which he is borne slowly back down the aisle. People clutch at him, to touch his hand or his robe, cheering and clapping, until he has passed through the door and beyond the curtains which restrain us until he has returned to his apartment. Many women around us are weeping in the ecstasy of their experience. All of us feel the uplifting power of a great moral character and spiritual leader. From beginning to end we have stood nearly two hours, in crowding and heat, but it was good to be here!



Later that day we visited one of the ancient catacombs along the Appian Way, and the little church of Quo Vadis, commemorating the meeting of Peter, fleeing the persecution of Rome, with his risen Lord, of whom Peter inquired, "Quo vadis, Domine?" The Lord replied that he was entering Rome to be crucified again. When the

vision passed, Peter retraced his steps and returned to Rome, later to be put to death.

Then there was a period of shopping with Mother, and in the evening a carriage ride to the Forum, which is floodlighted, with a stop at the Colosseum and a few minutes within the dimness of its silent interior, imagining the cries of gladiators and the roaring of lions.

Sunday, our last day in Rome, was a day of rest and attempted escape from the intense heat. In late afternoon we were Miss Lelli's guests at her apartment, and were afforded an opportunity to see how a Roman family lives. Her home is on the top floor of a modern seven-story building. There are entrance hall, sitting-room, library, dining-room, Miss Lelli's office, two large bedrooms, baths, kitchen, pantry, two servants' rooms, and, in addition, two terraces for sitting out at opposite corners of the apartment. Her books are choice and comprise many American and English works, including current best-sellers. Her furnishings and family portraits bespeak the gentle breeding of which we were well aware. She has invited other friends and we meet several who are leaders in the newly formed Liberal Party of which much is hoped in Italian

politics. We are enriched by this experience, and by her guidance during our visit in Italy, and, in behalf of all our group, I present her with a purse to be applied toward the purchase of the thing she most desires, an electric refrigerator! Early the next morning we say good-bye to her and to Rome as we board our B.E.A. plane and fly off, over the island of Elba and the tip of Corsica and the blue Mediterranean to Nice—and now we are in France!



Nice suffered much damage during the war. The Germans, anticipating attack from the Allies based in Africa, destroyed the recreation pier that Barbara and I enjoyed in 1937, and other facilities that might be used in amphibious assault. They ripped up the rails in and around the railroad station and set them up on end in the streets to prevent the possible advance of tanks. So we noted some changes and some scars when our party arrived on July 21. But the Hotel Luxembourg and the second-floor balcony Barbara and I had shared, were there unscathed. This time I was housed in the more plush Ruhl Hotel, where our room on the fourth floor looked out upon

the beautiful azure sea with its capes extended on both sides. The famous Boulevard des Anglais, tree-lined and flower-decked, lay at our feet, and at night, when brilliantly lighted, presented almost as lovely a sight as the blue sea by day. Although the heat continued unremittingly, there was always some breeze from the sea. The cuisine was splendid and the service most courteous and attentive.

Our first evening was spent in riding to Monte Carlo by the lower Cornish Drive, visiting the Casino and returning by the Middle Cornish, gasping when the view of brilliantly lighted Nice and its curving strand burst unexpectedly upon us. Monte Carlo itself was somewhat disappointing. It is garish and theatrical, and seems very hollow and mocking in its attempted gaiety. I saw queer, haggard habitues playing intently and funlessly. I watched the croupiers rake in the counters like so many relentless octopi. One of our party played a while and came off \$70 the winner. I was glad somebody could break the clutch of the monster.

The next day saw us away by bus to visit the Matisse Chapel near Vence, sharply modern but very interesting. Then on to the

little walled town of St. Paul, clinging to the top of a hill that in olden times was a strong point against attack. Just outside its walls is the rarest of eating-places, Colombe d'Or—the Golden Dove. This old, old inn with exquisite wood and tile work has a shaded courtyard where tables were spread for our lunch—a delicious meal of local dishes. And around us white doves fluttered, causing much activity on the part of our photographers. After lunch we continued through the spectacular scenery of the Gorges du Loup, down on one side to the river and then up on switchbacks to the breath-taking height of the village of Gourdon, an old Saracenic stronghold. Finally we arrived at Grasse and were conducted through a perfume factory where millions of flower petals go into the making of tiny quantities of perfume essence. On the return we passed through Cannes, Dick Walker's home, stopping for refreshments on the terrace of the fashionable Hotel Carlton, favorite haunt of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

Before we left Nice we were pleasantly entertained by a group of local architects at a café whose proprietor and daughter had lived for several years in New York.

There was no language barrier when we talked with them. As souvenirs, our ladies were given bags of candied flower petals—actual flower blooms and petals coated with sugar. We left Nice the next morning with a good taste in our mouths, so to speak.

The ride to Paris by train was fourteen hours long, as to which you may draw your own conclusions! The engine that hauled us to Lyon was a coal burner, and there were plenty of tunnels en-route. But from Lyon into Paris the road is electrified. Moreover the air cleared, the humidity diminished and the temperature dropped after we left Lyon, and the weather of the last few days of our Trek was quite bearable.

There were interesting things to see from the car windows as we rode along the shore of the Medi-

terranean to Marseilles, through Avignon and Lyon and Dijon. And in one of the compartments a group of our men played poker, apparently to the point of exhaustion, for toward the end of the ride these six lay sprawled across the benches, fast asleep—of which photographic record was made! We arrived at the Gare de Lyon in Paris at 9:20 P.M. and soon were being driven along the rue de Rivoli onto the Champs Elysées. And then, as if by magic, the floodlights were turned on illuminating the Arc de Triomphe on the hill ahead of us! Thus welcomed, we rode up the famous avenue to the Avenue Georges Cinq and to the Prince de Galles, a fine modern hotel in which we were to spend the last few nights of our Trek.

(Next month, Paris, Versailles, the Chateau Country and home)

Architect Minus Client

From Town and Country Planning, London, by permission.

DOBBS: How can a new town make such a silly mistake as to produce the sort of dwellings people dislike? Don't they have architects?

MOBBS: Very good architects.

DOBBS: Well, then.

MOBBS: Good building is only possible when an intelligent client—a future user—cooperates closely with a good designer. A new town is a town that does not yet exist, to be occupied by people who are unknown and unknowing. Until

they come there is no real client. The client is represented for the time being by a corporation and officials who may or may not have had experience in this job of town development. The architect has more definite ideas than they have—a dangerous situation, since all his life the architect has been wanting to try out things and ordinary clients won't let him.

DOBBS: I see. Hence the Steven-age flats?

MOBBS: Dunno. I'm not making case studies. I'm stating basic principles of behavior. The client is the man to be satisfied. He must insist on his real wants, and be tactful enough to let the architect have his head on things he cares less about.

DOBBS: Isn't the answer for the architect to be directed by the sociologist or demographic expert?

MOBBS: Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

DOBBS: Then what? This new town business is hopeless.

MOBBS: No. The managements learn, and as soon as the first few hundreds of settlers come along the situation changes. The client has arrived: the architectural saturnalia is over. Crawley, for instance, started with the intention (based on patient research) to build 25 per cent of flats. They told me last week that, now thousands of people have come in and expressed their wants, the 25 per cent has gone down to 2 per cent.

DOBBS: Dear, oh dear. What a frightful waste of agricultural land.

MOBBS: You read the wrong papers. Stop worrying and have a drink.

DOBBS: What's this about New Towns to Die of Thirst in? . . .

News from the Educational Field

THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE of the Institute of Design and Construction, Brooklyn, announces the appointment of Jacob M. Gray as Director. Mr. Gray, a licensed professional engineer, has until recently been head of the De-

partment of Technical Drafting and Design of the Brooklyn Technical High School.

THE INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO DE MONTERREY announces its Fourth Annual Design Workshop

for students of architecture, to be held during the Instituto's 1953 summer session, "Escuela Verano," July 11 to August 22. In addition to the Workshop, students may enroll in related courses such as city planning, sculpture, painting, and the history of the architecture of Mexico. Excellent opportunity is also afforded for the study of the Spanish language and the history and sociology of Mexico. The Workshop and related courses are all conducted in English. Further information and catalogues may be obtained from Prof. Hugh L. McMath, School of Architecture, University of Texas, Austin, Texas.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE COLLEGE, School of Design, has appointed Eduardo F. Catalano as acting head of its Department of Architecture. A native of Argentina, Mr. Catalano was trained in his native country and at Harvard

and has taught recently at the Architectural Association school in London. Further appointments to the faculty are: Horacio Caminos as Visiting Associate Professor of Architecture; Lewis Clarke as Instructor in Landscape Architecture; Ray Howard as Instructor in Design; and Richard P. Leaman as Instructor in Architecture.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, in celebrating its six weeks' Festival of Contemporary Arts, from February 27 through April 12 this year, will lay special emphasis on television in connection with contemporary arts.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY announces the appointment of José Luis Sert as Professor of Architecture and Dean of the Graduate School of Design, effective September 1. Mr. Sert will succeed the retiring dean, Joseph Hudnut.



Architects Read and Write

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



EDGAR WILLIAMS' ANNOYANCE

BY DENISON B. HULL, Chicago, Ill.

IF Edgar I. Williams was mildly annoyed by my "Heads as Well as Hearts" in the November issue of the JOURNAL, I suspect it was

FEBRUARY, 1953

because of a congenital inability on my part to write in anything but "flat dull tones," rather than because of any real disagreement. Certainly I, for one, do not want to "go back to ecclesiastical high schools or French provincial houses," and equally I abhor the thought of universal strip windows and prophylactic residences.

But I wonder if the misunderstanding may not arise from appraising the revolutionary movement on the basis of the written word, rather than the executed work? Le Corbusier professed an architecture of sheer logic. So have many others. But "functionalism" (what a word!) is not the core of the revolutionary movement, and, in fact, logic has been thrown to

the winds. What we have witnessed is the overthrow of heartless scholarship by irrational romanticism—by romantics who have rationalized their worship of the machine age with the use of words like "functionalism" and "integration."

I, too, would like to see the timeless principles of balance, repose and nobility applied to our evolving art. But I do not think these principles are "irrational." Instead, they are to me examples of how an architect may use his head to implement the feelings of his heart.

Mr. Williams' tones are neither flat nor dull to me. More power to him—he's on the side of the angels. (My side!)

ARCHITECTURE DEFINED

By GEORGE PETER KELETI, Kansas City, Mo.

IN YOUR OCTOBER ISSUE I read the challenge: "Architecture is the Art of Building with strength, commodity and delight. Find me a better one (definition) if you can."



Strength and commodity are qualities of many buildings we would not classify as architecture. The greatest architecture of all times: Eric Gunnar Asplund's Stockholm crematory was not built with delight in mind. Architec-

ture and architectural expression are not limited to pleasure.

I would rather propose the definition: "Architecture is the organization of space with structural means," and see what this definition has to offer us.

If we would define architecture as organization of space, it would be synonymous with sculpture. It is the structural quality of architecture that distinguishes it from sculpture.

Organization of space as an act

of organization assumes a purpose. Consideration of purpose leads us to functionalism: both material and psychological. Psychological function, in other words esthetics, leads us to the problem of style.

The style of a building is first of all defined by the structural principles, followed by and thus made obvious by the design. Intersection of volumes, proportion of massing are factors making the structural space organization clear or confused. The structural system of a building should be selected while keeping in mind the possibilities of expressing its nature in the functionally required volume of the problem. The amount of repeti-

tion of the structural rhythm is essential in determining how architecture is to strive in the particular case to introduce into its space organization nonstructural elements. The coordination of the arts of architecture, sculpture and painting in a building is thus linked with the structural characteristics of the individual design.

The emotional pattern the experience of a building creates in us depends on the mode of thought we are in when we enter into the sight of the building. The pattern of the space organization will guide our feelings. Which way should we strive to develop the emotions of the spectators is a moral issue.

TECHNICAL COMPETENCE AND THE PROFESSIONAL MAN

BY C. E. SILLING, F.A.I.A., Charleston, W. Va.

I AM TOLD D. W. Winkelman, a past president of AGC, read a paper at the joint session of ASCE-AGC in Chicago on 3 September titled "Construction—A Growing Field for the Civil Engineer." I quote part of one paragraph: "It is largely the ability to handle executive, managerial and general business matters in addition to having technical competence that distinguishes the professional man from the technician or craftsman."

If, in the foregoing quotation, the words "technical competence"

could embrace in a broad sense the esthetic and cultural contribution of the architect, then I would commend the entire sentence to the attention of the practising architect as a statement that well measures the scope of what ought to be his community position.

Now that architects are beginning to be sensitive as to their competitive position, tend to embark on public relations programs, etc., to meet that problem, I think it would be significant to quote the

concluding sentence in Mr. Winkelman's paragraph: "Today, engineers are assuming these greater responsibilities."

I would like to see this latter

quotation richly deserved as an application to all practising architects. Therein lies the crux of our successful "public relations program."

"THE AVERY LIBRARY"

By CHARLES ALLAN BARETSKI, Newark, N. J.

INSTEAD of retraction, Mr. Van Derpool enlarged his libel. *Vero distinguere falsum*, consider these facts:

1. Repeatedly I urged the JOURNAL to conduct comparative bibliographical analyses of the "rival" works.

2. Although my rebuttal was submitted early last summer, none appeared until December, 1952.

3. The so-called "survey" for "another course" is my (second graduate degree's) Master's Project—the *article's immediate fore-runner*.

4. It contains the identical nine points and seven "objectives" which, in article form, he later repudiated.

5. It includes the so-called "tactless . . . comparison" (as does another Master's Project, "A Descriptive Study of Avery Architectural Library," by Wilson G. Duprey—to whom he *also* had given similar information).

6. The JOURNAL has documentary proof that Mr. Van Derpool

read and approved mine thus: "Thoughtful study . . . Good handling of a *special* assignment."

7. He officially recorded that my documentation was adequately demonstrated therein.

8. Contrary to his opinion, RIBA Library is *markedly* dissimilar in origin, history, organization, classification, administration, admittance and collections! In quoting me, he dropped the clincher—" . . . sociology."

9. If the critic is not responsible for the descriptive statement, concerning Avery's primacy, in Columbia University "Announcement of the School of Architecture" . . . (1952-53, p. 9), who else, then, is? Yet he paradoxically rejected my similar claim!

10. For *my* part of the parallel-quotation I gave the JOURNAL long ago *four* detailed source-citations. (112 in all) For parallelism-fallacies, read the following books by lawyers: Maurice Salzman's "Plagiarism" (Ch. XV, "Similarities Not Always Plagiarism," pp. 161-166); also Alexander Lindey's

"Plagiarism and Originality" (Ch. V, "Parallel-Hunting," pp. 51-61, especially what Lindey describes as its "vices," pp. 60-61).

11. *Legally, similarity is not sufficient to brand anyone as a plagiarist.*

12. Trying to reinforce his earlier, untenable allegation that I had plagiarized an *unpublished* manuscript, the critic inconsistently quoted a *published* source!

13. Mr. Van Derpool mentions "writings." Where are his *signed*, printed writings on Avery?

14. He misleadingly implies

that four "objectives" exist nowhere else but in his unpublished manuscript. With three others, however, they constitute the final paragraph of my Master's Project *which he approved!*

My reputation as a professional writer (Executive Director of The Writers' Society of New Jersey since 1947), lecturer and librarian has been most seriously injured by publication of the critic's false charges.

A retraction, upon Mr. Van Derpool's part, is thereby suggested.

COMMODITY, FIRMNESS AND DELIGHT

BY "HUBERTUS JUNIUS"

SEÑOR Raul J. Alvarez, Honorary Corresponding member of The American Institute of Architects, from the gracious city of Buenos Aires, has seen fit to challenge my definition of Architecture.

Of course, the good Señor does not understand that the pronouncements of elder statesmen are supposed to remain unchallenged. How else can we retain our profundity?

We, of course, erred in failing to recognize the need to include "economy" in our definition. This has happened time and time again in our practice, and we really

should have remembered to include it this time.

We must, however, defend our word "commodity"; archaic perhaps, but a good word in its day and quite as acceptable as "suitable" in this context.

But "beauty," Señor, I cannot accept "beauty." This word, like so many of the fair ladies who warrant its use, is an invitation to disputation, argument and controversy.

When we define we must be finite, and who can be quite finite about beauty? Beauty is but an opinion whose worth must be determined by the critical faculties of the observer, and these critical

faculties may be said to vary enormously from person to person, to which fact we no doubt owe a large percent of our growing population.

On the other hand, Senor, delight is an experience in which our critical faculties operate without the guiding judgment of the mind. The heart experiences a lift of

pleasure through the eyes. It requires no training and can be experienced by pundit or peon, and the delight of simple people seems so much the surer ticket to immortality than the ponderous ideas of beauty expressed by the accepted authorities, who more often than not marry really impossible-looking women.



Reginald Davis Johnson, F.A.I.A.

1882 - 1952

MOST ARCHITECTS over forty-five years of age today have passed through a major change in their architectural philosophy. Few changes have been as dramatic as that which transformed Reginald Johnson at the age of fifty-three, when he appeared to have reached the zenith of a distinguished career. Most important in social content, orientation, and action as a citizen, his change was unique among architects of my acquaintance.

We first met in the summer of 1932 when I was an "itinerant draftsman" seeking employment. He conducted a substantial practice even during the depths of the depression. His distinguished work had been accorded national recogni-

tion for years. Many architects in Los Angeles had worked in his office. Two outstanding leaders of the profession, Gordon Kaufmann and Roland Coate, had been in partnership with him. During an age of eclectic architecture in a region where monstrosities were the rule, he employed his superb taste and skillful critical judgment to produce lavish but restrained houses which raised the standard of residential architecture generally. He had served as President of the Southern California Chapter and had been elected a Fellow of The Institute.

After accepting the commission for the Santa Barbara Post Office, he announced his withdrawal from

general architectural practice in 1934. He had won all the honors to which most professional men aspire. He felt that this was the end of a satisfying professional life, but, in the end, he found a new beginning. He grew young.

His "withdrawal" gave him an opportunity to think, to look back and, more important, to look ahead. Early in 1935, he was suddenly reborn architecturally. His "conversion" occurred at about the same time as that of his good friend Sumner Spaulding, fellow alumnus of M.I.T., and this fact brought them close together. From this time on, I had the privilege of knowing both of them well. Both instances had a certain content of religious enthusiasm and ecstasy, yet they were different in orientation. Although they both for the first time admired the designs of Richard Neutra, for instance, Sumner's change was more abstract and was oriented directly toward objective order and design. Much more important in Reg's development was his association and long friendship with Clarence Stein, whose warm humanity and philosophy offered Reg a high purpose to suit his own stature. For the first time, Reg saw people in architecture, and

a subjective, universal social need for better homes. Humanity became his client.

Not content with the insipid role of a passive technician, he took an active part in the social, economic and political disputes of our explosive times. Somehow he found the truth, so foreign to his former experience, that architecture is intrinsically involved in these disputes. He became the exception among his contemporaries in his recognition and acceptance of an architect's responsibility as an active citizen. Somewhat timidly at first, he made acquaintance with representatives of organized labor and with minority groups, with neither of whom he had previously had social contact. He appeared to be entirely without class or race prejudice. As a conservative in the best sense, an advocate of conservation, he put his mind, his heart, and his resources to work for liberal causes. Without bitterness or iconoclastic destruction, he defied the very traditions of which he himself had been a part.

A comprehensive study of housing problems led him to the conclusion that a public housing program was the soundest immediate solution for the most neglected segment of the housing need. Not content

with reading, he personally investigated local conditions. He took others to see the slums. Although public speaking came hard to him, he spoke frequently in public with great dignity and integrity, unafraid of criticism. With steadfast conviction, he provided leadership and inspiration in the never-ending battle to clear slums and provide housing for people at the opposite end of the economic scale from his former clients. He took a significant part in establishing the first program of thirty-five hundred low-rent dwellings for Los Angeles, as well as in all subsequent political campaigns in the housing field. He was one of the founders of the Los Angeles Citizens' Housing Council and, during the last fifteen years of his life, was constantly an officer of local, state and national citizens' housing organizations. During this period, in association with other architects, he made notable contributions in the field of large-scale housing. He served as Chief Architect for Harbor Hills and as Coordinating Architect for Rancho San Pedro, both public housing projects in the Los Angeles area. He was active during the last few years as Consultant to the Housing Authority.

He was also Managing Archi-

tect for Baldwin Hills Village, a private rental project which won a Distinguished Honor Award in the 1946 Southern California Chapter competition of work completed during the previous ten years. This project, appraised by Lewis Mumford as one of four milestones in urban design, was selected by the Museum of Modern Art as one of forty-seven important architectural works completed in the twelve years prior to 1945 in the United States. He worked tirelessly with rare dedication, not only during the seven years from inception to completion of the project, but during succeeding years as a member of the Board of Trustees and as a tenant-citizen. He lived in the Village for a year in order that he might learn the tenants' problems and help the Villagers construct the social life of their new community. He helped organize the life of the Village itself. Initiation of a nursery school, square-dance group, lending library, and a tenant organization occupied his attention. He experienced at first hand the serene island he had helped to create in the chaos of the city, and took an active part in bringing it to life.

In the construction of his own home in 1947, he created a splendid

but simple example of contemporary design which seems to have captured the spirit and the soul of the man. Divorced in form from his past work, it shows the unerring taste and painstaking attention to detail characteristic of all his residences. With his own self as client, he had the freedom to be himself and experiment happily with his new concept of design.

Like other architects, Reginald

Johnson leaves part of his life in the buildings he designed. Their simple dignity and integrity are symbols of his own qualities as a man. Less perishable than buildings in his case, however, is the part of his existence he devoted, with telling effect, to the people and their struggle for better homes, which remains a subtle tribute to a man who found himself.

ROBERT E. ALEXANDER

Calendar

February 12-14: Annual meeting of the Church Architectural Guild of America with exhibition of recently completed church projects. Hotel Statler, Washington, D. C.

February 14-19: National Convention of American Association of School Administrators, Atlantic City, N. J.

March 4-6: Spring meeting of the A.I.A. Board of Directors, The Octagon, Washington, D. C.

March 23-April 4: York Course on Protection and Repair of Ancient Buildings. Details from Secretary, York Civic Trust, St. Anthony's Hall, Peaseholme Green, York, England.

April 9-11: Second Regional Conference, Western Mountain District, A.I.A., Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs, Colo.

April 23-25: Annual Assembly of Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Royal York Hotel, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

April 25-May 2: Historic Garden Week in Virginia.

April 27-May 8: British Industries Fair, London and Birmingham, England. Further information from British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y.

May 25-30: Eighth International Hospital Congress, Church House, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, England.

June 9-12: 4th National Store Modernization Building and Maintenance Show, Madison Square Garden, New York, N. Y.

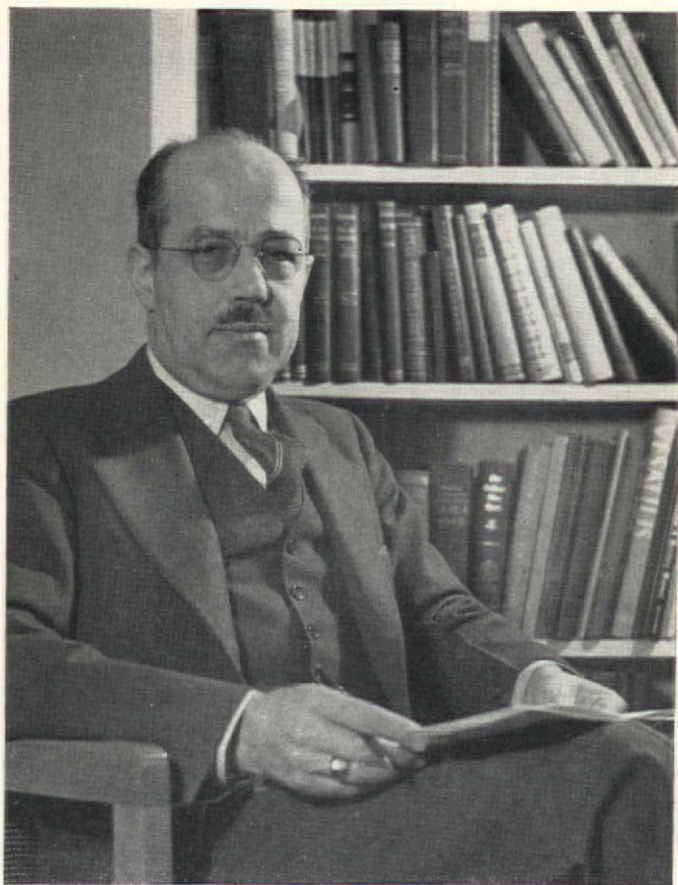
June 10-13: British Architects' Conference, Canterbury and Folkestone, with the South Eastern Society of Architects celebrating their Silver Jubilee. A.I.A. visitors welcome. Details from C. D. Spragg, R.I.B.A. Secretary, 66 Portland Place, London W. 1.

June 10-13: Annual meeting of the A.I.A. Board of Directors, Olympic Hotel, Seattle, Wash.

June 15-19: 85th Convention, A.I.A. Olympic Hotel, Seattle, Wash.



REGINALD DAVIS JOHNSON, F.A.I.A.
1882-1952



WALTER ANDREWS TAYLOR, A.I.A.
Director, Department of Education and Research
The American Institute of Architects
Photograph by Gretchen Van Tassel

The Institute's Headquarters Staff

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

In each of the last five issues there has appeared a brief biographical sketch and photograph of a staff member. This has been at the direction of The Board of Directors whose thought has been that our rapidly expanding membership is not sufficiently acquainted with our excellent headquarters organization and its efficient personnel—who does what, and why. The series will be continued until eleven members of the staff have been duly chronicled. We regret that we do not have the space to more fully cover the background and service of these people whose ministrations activate, preserve and promote the prestige and effectiveness of The Institute.

WALTER ANDREWS TAYLOR, A.I.A.

Director of Department of Education and Research

THE 1946 BOARD, seeking as Director of its newest department an experienced practitioner who would also be at home in the realms of industry, technology, and education, offered the position to a Syracuse faculty member who had a quarter century of unusually broad experience, professionally and geographically.

Before receiving Ohio State's architectural engineering degree, Walter Taylor had worked in structural, industrial and mechanical engineering, journalism, and had served as a volunteer in the Army Engineers. He pioneered in applied acoustics in numerous middle-western buildings. His architectural apprenticeship was with Charles Firestone, Canton; A. S. Nibecker, Los Angeles; Dick

Ware, Pasadena; and Hobart Upjohn, New York.

In 21 years' practice, as a principal, mostly in partnerships with J. V. W. Bergamini, China, G. E. Merrill, New York, and Office of Hobart Upjohn, he designed, or was consultant on, 500 projects in 25 states and 7 foreign countries, not counting the Texaco gas station or modular houses for Johns-Manville. With Upjohn he was properly brought up on the history of The Institute and its first president, grandfather Richard Upjohn.

Academic interests, stemming from a student instructorship, were intensified by language study in Peking and three years' residence and practice on the campus of Central China University.

After seven years' experience he

went to Columbia for another degree, after which he continued graduate studies in history and fine arts, and taught history at Columbia for eight years while practising downtown. Seven years' teaching at Syracuse included Army and civilian engineers.

A Langley Scholarship aided his part of the Syracuse postwar planning project, the report being recognized by Ohio State's graduate professional degree. By 1946 he had authored 25 published articles and designs including a chapter in Hamlin's "Forms & Functions."

Taylor brings to the Institute's expanding program vitality and enthusiasm tempered by sympathetic, realistic understanding of practitioners' and educators' problems.

The major program of the Department has been at the national

level, including development of the BULLETIN, national and regional seminars, staff coordination for 13 Institute Committees, the Survey Commission, the modular program and research projects.

He represents the profession in such varied capacities as membership on the Building Research Advisory Board (Academy of Sciences), the Commission on Worship and Arts (National Council of Churches) and other national groups. He was A.I.A. delegate to the International Building Research Congress, London, 1951.

With additional staff recently added to share Department responsibilities, he is now developing a Specification Service, extended research program, a chapter-training program and other services recommended by the Survey Commission.

Books & Bulletins

NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND ITS BUILDINGS. By A. H. Smith. 240 pp. 5½" x 8½". London: 1952: Oxford University Press. \$4.25

Although the Warden writes of the college that William of Wykeham founded in the 14th century, it is impossible to separate the college from the buildings. Excellent illus-

trations, particularly of the Warden's quarters.

SAFEGUARDING OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE. Compiled by Nelson R. Burr. 128 pp. 8" x 10¼". Washington: 1952: The Library of Congress (Available from Card Division). 85¢
An excellent bibliography cover-

ing measures of protection recently learned in connection with museums, libraries, works of art, and the like.

AMERIKANISCHE ARCHITEKTUR SEIT 1947. 140 pp. $7\frac{7}{8}$ " x $11\frac{1}{8}$ ". Stuttgart: 1951: Verlag Gerd Hatje. DM 28.

Illustrations and descriptive captions of the work shown abroad since 1950 under the auspices of The Institute and the State Department. Text in German.

EARLY ENGLISH CHURCHES IN AMERICA, 1607-1807. By Stephen P. Dorsey. 224 pp. $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11". New York: 1952: Oxford University Press. \$10.

The author, a member of the State Department and a churchman, tells, with his excellent illustrations, more of the historical facts than the architectural details. Most of the latter are revealed by the illustrations themselves.

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHURCH. An official publication of the Joint Commission on Architecture and the Allied Arts. 56 pp. 6" x $9\frac{1}{4}$ ". Greenwich, Conn: 1952: The Seabury Press. 65¢

A handbook for clergy and architects engaged in designing new buildings or alterations, with chapters by authorities including Waldron Faulkner, F.A.I.A., who writes on "Dimensional Requirements."

THE ART OF COMFORT. By William Edman Masee. 254 pp. $5\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8". New York: 1952: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc. \$2.75.

The author is concerned not at all with style, but rather with the elements that make for comfort in a dwelling. He emphasizes the fact that a comfortable place in which to live cannot be built without professional advice: "A man who builds a house without an architect is a fool."

SPEAKING OF LITURGICAL ARCHITECTURE. By H. A. Reinhold. 40 pp. $6\frac{3}{4}$ " x $9\frac{1}{2}$ ". Notre Dame: 1952: Liturgical Programs, University of Notre Dame. \$1.

An exposition of the fundamentals that should govern the planning of a Roman Catholic parish church, with diagrammatic illustrations, by the man who teaches liturgical architecture in summer sessions at Notre Dame University.

CHILDREN AND THE CITY. By Olga Adams. 28 pp. $10\frac{3}{4}$ " x $8\frac{1}{8}$ ". Chicago: 1952: Reginald R. Isaacs. \$1.

Bearing out the thesis that it is never too early to influence a child in architectural thinking. The book is sponsored by a number of Chicago's important organizations concerned with city planning.

ART AND THE NATURE OF ARCHITECTURE. By Bruce Allsopp. 136 pp. 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". London: 1952: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd. \$3.50.

A particularly stimulating work for those who are interested in the factors which make us like or dislike a building. The author, who lectures in architecture at King's College, University of Durham, contends that Sir Henry's dictum regarding "commodity, firmnesse and delight" is insufficient.

LEGAL GUIDE FOR CONTRACTORS, ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS. By I. Vernon Werbin. 388 pp. 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". New York: 1952: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. \$4.75.

A supplement to the author's previous book, "Legal Phases of Construction Contracts." Paralleling the findings in our own profession, the author emphasizes the fact that no amount of reading about these cases is a substitute for the engagement of a competent attorney.

ROBERT MOSES: BUILDER FOR DEMOCRACY. By Cleveland Rodgers. 384 pp. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". New York: 1952: Henry Holt & Co. \$6.

Probably it is as well that our recently elected Honorary Member does not write his autobiography. Instead Cleveland Rodgers, a

friend and a distinguished city planner, shows a keen discernment in choosing the interesting facts in the life of this man, who has never ceased to fight politicians, land-owners, "visionary reformers, do-gooders, reactionaries, pinks, punks, crackpots, and political evangels."

FIFTY MODERN CHURCHES. By R. J. McNally. 176 pp. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11". London: 1947: Incorporated Church Building Society. 13s. 9d (postpaid).

Indicative of official thinking and trends in the Church of England. The word "modern" is merely chronological.

MODERN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE. By Edward Maufe. 70 pp. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". London: 1948: Incorporated Church Building Society. 5s 6d.

Illustrations of 36 buildings in ten countries of continental Europe, with two from the U.S.A. "Modern" here is definitely stylistic.



Scholarships and Fellowships

BROOKLYN ARCHITECTS SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION sponsored its second annual dinner dance in November, adding approximately \$5,000 to its scholarship fund. The

Foundation is sponsored by the Brooklyn Chapter, A.I.A., and the Brooklyn Society of Architects.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS announces the 22nd annual consideration of candidates for the Kate Neal Kinley Memorial Fellowship,

yielding \$1,000 toward the expenses of advanced study of the fine arts in America or abroad. Further details from Dean Rexford Newcomb, Room 110, Architecture Building, University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.

They Say:

Russell Lynes

(In an article in the Yale Review, September, 1952)

Patronage of the arts is essentially an individual process, and one that does not call for the creation of a Pure Art and Aesthetic Administration to protect the public good. . . I don't buy what a committee tells me I want. When I buy a picture, I behave with all the imperious arrogance of a tyrant.

C. P. Rodocanachi

(In "Athens and the Greek Miracle")

But the Greeks, who are the world's greatest classics and, in fact, the source of the very notion of classicism, were saved from monotony and imitation (so prevalent with those who most admire them) by total ignorance of their own classicism. They were creators, not scholars. . . With the Greeks, tradition was not a hard lump to be taken or left as it was.

It was a large mold into which ever new and varying materials could be poured and shaped over and over again in the furnace of the most ardent souls that ever were.

Norris K. Smith

(In "Meaning in Modern Architecture," Magazine of Art, January 1953)

In the past, symmetry has generally had at least two meanings. Partly it has been used to give buildings a form analogous to that of the human body, which is itself symmetrical along a vertical or longitudinal axis. The usage has implied that man exemplifies in his own being and in his rational mind a principle of order and intelligibility that is of some high or universal significance. . . The more obvious meaning of symmetry, however, lies in its unequivocal assertion that the whole is more than the sum of the parts, and that whole-

ness requires that the parts be ordered and governed by an intelligible larger necessity that is independent of the parts themselves.

Howard M. Robertson, F.R.I.B.A.
PRESIDENT, ROYAL INSTITUTE OF
BRITISH ARCHITECTS
(*Proposing a vote of thanks at the
Architectural Association meeting,
London, October 29, 1952*)

I have heard many presidential addresses in this room, and in the old days before the war a self-respecting president would start by saying how embarrassed he was and how difficult was his task; and then after a little while he would get to a remark made by an old gentleman called Sir Henry Wootton. He would say something to the effect that "On well-building, there are three conditions: commodity, firmness and delight." Today I feel we are in the position of "Economy, dullness and Goodnight!"

Leonard W. Doob
(*In "Social Psychology," published
by Henry Holt & Co., 1952*)

Perhaps social psychology is too ambitious, and hence its problems are the ones that plague any jack-of-all-trades. . . Social psychology is like architecture which must draw upon the basic sciences of physics and chemistry for its principles as well as upon meteorologists, botanists, lawyers, city plan-

ners, building contractors, and sometimes even the clients themselves for relevant information.

John R. Fugard
(*In an address before the Gulf
States Regional Conference, Mont-
gomery, Ala., October 25, 1952*)

You see, I belong to the old school—who still believes that good architecture is like good music, it can only live, be appreciated and understood when it is well done.

Panel-Door Design Competition

SPONSORED by Ponderosa Pine Woodwork, an association of manufacturers, a competition is being held in which is sought a fresh approach in applying the principles of progressive design to panel-door construction.

The prizes total \$7,600, and there is a further possibility that competitors may have the designs purchased for mass production. Students are eligible to compete, as well as architects and professional designers. An official program may be had by writing to Competition Headquarters, Ponderosa Pine Woodwork, 2907 West Pico Boulevard, Los Angeles 6, Calif. The competition's closing date is April 27, 1953.

The Editor's Asides

A LOT OF FOLKS have said what was wrong with prefabricated housing, and what it had to do to be saved. Cornell University is having a try at the problem, under a contract with HHFA. Bigger volume, stronger sales organization, advertising and public-relations effort are prescribed. "It was, and still is, necessary to convince the public that a permanent house can be built through prefabrication. . . . The typical 'prefabricated buyer' is a skilled or semi-skilled worker with a young family. The percent of professional, managerial and self-employed workers among purchasers is especially low when compared with the percent of these groups among purchasers of conventional houses."

AMONG The Institute's most active committees is the Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings, which has for chairman and vice chairman respectively Earl Reed and Charles Peterson—two human power plants of high voltage. When this committee asks for a Preservation Officer in each chapter, such an appointment had better be made promptly and from the best qualifications, for the follow-

up may be a far more formidable demand—ask any of those who know Reed and Peterson.

COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG has been called some hard names in the quarter-century since Dr. Goodwin and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., shared a great vision and set about making it a reality. One of the most venomous shafts thrown at Williamsburg was that the project was a secret weapon for freezing architectural progress by glorifying the eighteenth-century forms. The quarter-million citizens who visit yearly the restoration know better. Here one gains the unique experience of stepping back into the days and place where the American dream of freedom and independence was taking form. As Kenneth Chorley says in his report of Colonial Williamsburg's first twenty-five years: "[Williamsburg] had been the capital city of the Virginia colony at the time when Virginia was a rich and powerful land whose borders then reached beyond the Mississippi. It was here that Thomas Jefferson studied law. It was here that George Mason introduced the Virginia Bill of Rights, model for the

Bill of Rights of our Constitution. It was here that a proud, vigorous, brilliant, courageous, and public-spirited society proclaimed the rights of man in words and deeds no American can ever forget.

"The Restoration is a reminder that one of the greatest faiths of all the ages of civilized man is the faith we know today as democracy. The physical measure of American achievement is merely an evidence of the tremendous forces that come into existence when men and women are free to think, to speak, to do."

The Rockefeller gifts of nearly fifty millions have made possible the great adventure in education; the widening vistas that open ahead bring the conviction that Colonial Williamsburg is a far bigger vision than has yet been realized.

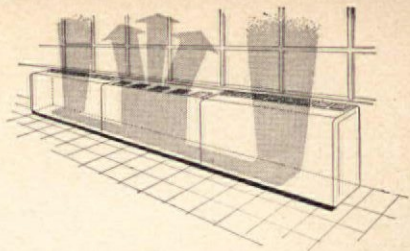
THE STATUS of a profession is dangled before the plumber by Los Angeles City College. A four-year course leads to a degree in plumbing engineering. Well, why not?

IF ANYONE STILL DOUBTS the potentials for profit and enjoyment that belong in the regional conference he would do well to attend one. Our recent visit to the deep

South, taking in the Gulf States Regional Conference at Montgomery, Ala., uncovered the traditional Southern hospitality and gracious living—and in breath-taking strength. But above the continuous pleasure of friendships renewed or in the making, there was apparent a real hunger for the sharing of technical information, experiences and stimulating thought. Whatever tempted outside, the meetings were started on schedule and there were few empty seats—a tribute, incidentally, to the efficiency of the men of the Alabama Society of Architects chapter and especially its program committee chairman, Clyde C. Pearson.

THE JOURNAL doesn't often make New Year's resolutions, but experience in 1952 has put unusual pressure upon us. After what we have had to read in contributed manuscripts we are moved to resolve that the next time we meet any expression dealing with "throwing out the baby with the bath water," we shall stop reading, fold up the manuscript and mail it back to the author with a note originally devised by the late Frank Crowninshield: "My dear Mr. Author: Oh my dear Mr. Author! Regretfully yours, the Editor."

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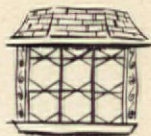
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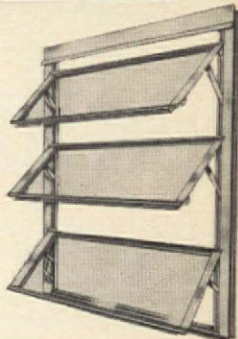
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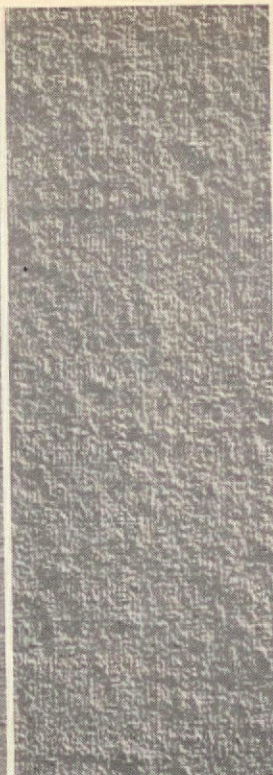
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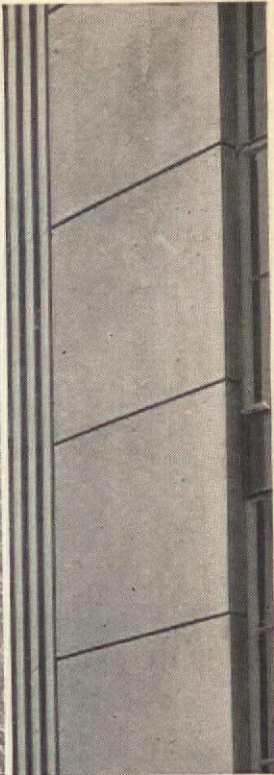
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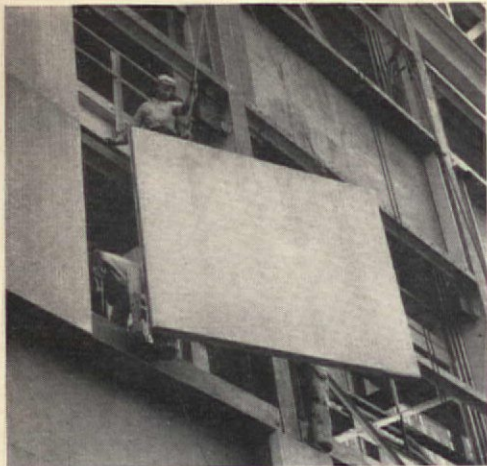
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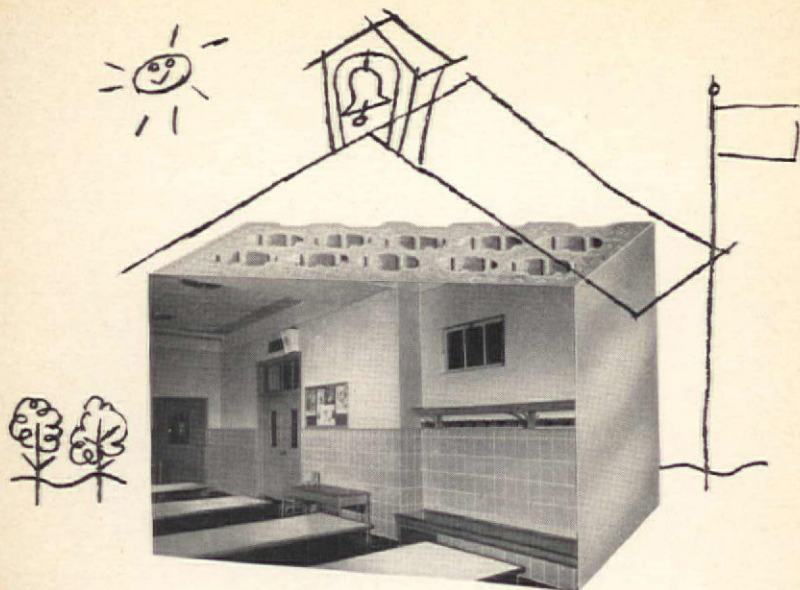
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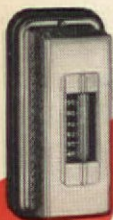
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