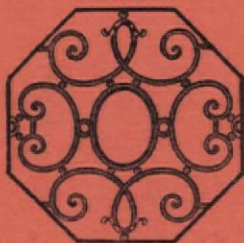


Journal of The American Institute of  
**ARCHITECTS**



WROUGHT-IRON RAILING  
FRANCE

APRIL, 1953

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The Challenge of Industrial Architecture

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Bachelor of Architecture, 1911

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Where the Rainbow Never Fades

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Taste

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Necrology

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It's Odd, But Is It Art?

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Public Housing for Low Operating Cost

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35c

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

# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

WITH THE AIM OF AMPLIFYING  
AS THROUGH A MICROPHONE  
THE VOICE OF THE PROFESSION

APRIL, 1953

VOL. XIX, No. 4



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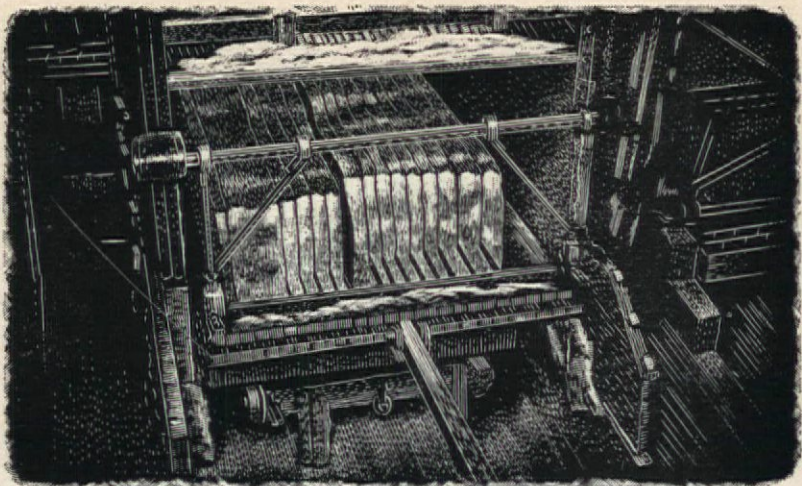
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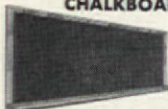
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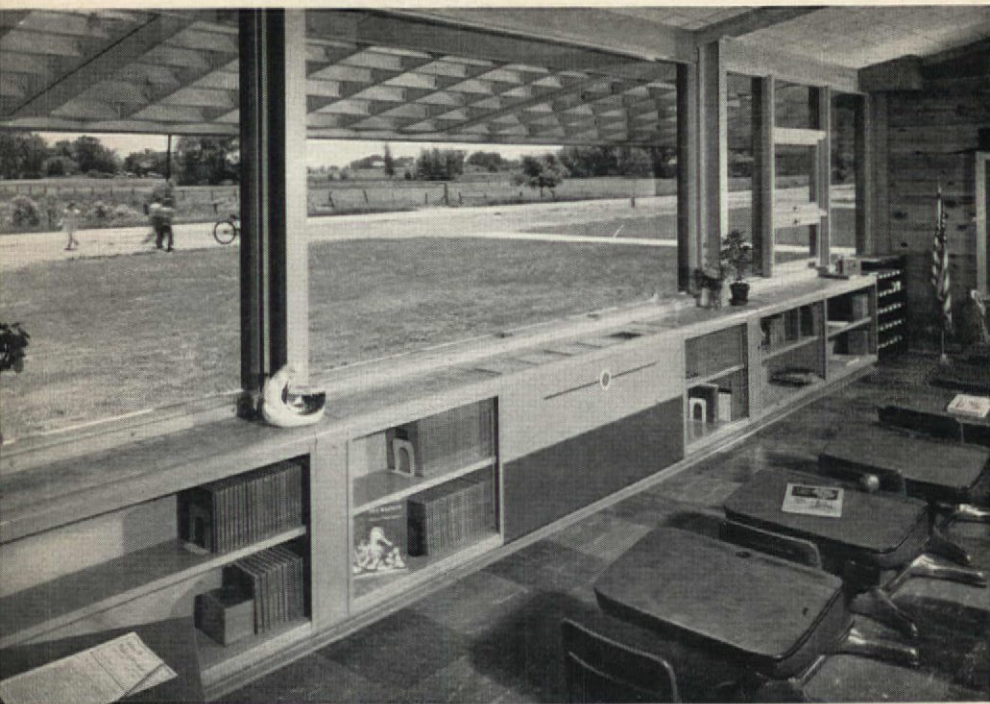
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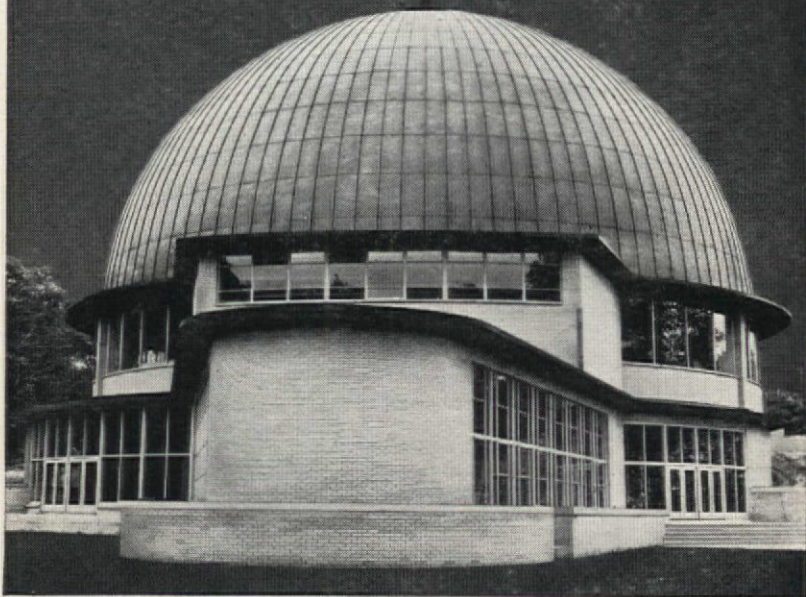
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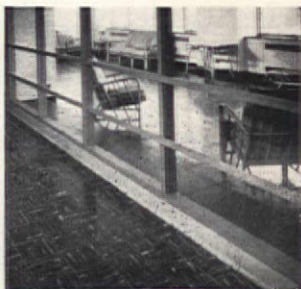
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## TASTE

By *Gordon Allen, F.A.I.A.*

The French have taste in all they do,  
Which we are quite without;  
For Nature, that to them gave goût  
To us gave only gout.

Lord Erskine

IN A RECENT ARTICLE Mr. Harold Nicholson, speaking of changes in what Dr. Johnson called "the wild vicissitudes of taste," confesses to having admired at the turn of the century various works of art at which he shudders today. He says taste . . . "to me seems as volatile and undependable as the fashion in clothes. Men and women of serious artistic interests and knowledge would, when I was very young, stick plates and fans upon their walls, arrange forests of pampas grass behind their horrid little screens, and clutter up their tables with photographs accompanied by Sicilian peasant carts, or Meissen figurines, or porpoises in Copenhagen ware. Then followed the epoch of what Mr. Betjeman, with some acerbity, has dubbed 'Ghastly good taste' . . . The silk Louis XV screens were replaced by

huge high Coromandel; T'ang horses replaced the monkey orchestras upon the chimneypiece; the lampshades were no longer flounced with pink or violet silk but were constructed of stiff black cardboard diversified by Chinese or Persian decorations. The Axminster carpets were succeeded by calm pile in cream or gray or black. Everybody was convinced that the dark ages had been banished and that the new age of taste and enlightenment had dawned. For some fifteen years this mode persisted; thereafter there came a revival of early Victorianism, and the more advanced or less superstitious would even disport themselves with peacock fans. All that has remained from these wild vicissitudes is the belief that there is such a thing as convenience and inconvenience, comfort and discomfort, the dustable and the undustable. The rest is as transient as the bustle or the Piccadilly collar."

As you drive around New England you see in almost every vil-

lage and town a few handsome homesteads dating anywhere from 1700 to 1850, comfortable, inviting, solid, usually still shaded by big spreading maples or elms. Large or small, they are invariably well-proportioned, simple, unspoiled by "shed" dormers, picture windows or other excrescences, because as originally planned they satisfy, with a few interior changes, the requirements of modern living. Big square rooms, each with its fireplace, well-designed and well-distributed windows, often running almost to the floor, opening sometimes on shady piazzas ("peasers," as Copley called them) and occasionally containing real treasures in the furniture, paintings and china of earlier times. In a few towns, in Massachusetts and Connecticut particularly, the whole main street of the village still maintains its old quality of width and shade, white houses with black blinds, looking much as they must have looked before the Civil War. Of course, in the early times the kitchen had a big fireplace and brick oven where all the cooking was done, including breadbaking. There was no bathroom, and the toilet facilities were in common with those all over the world—"open plumbing openly arrived at"—sometimes in the back-

yard at a short distance from the house, sometimes in the ell connected with it.



In the eighteen sixties and seventies a new type appeared. People had got tired of what they considered the tiresome plainness of the earlier houses, and passed into a stage of more romantic picturesque design, with corner towers, colored stair-windows, ornamental piazzas with elaborate, sometimes very amusing jigsaw ornament, "Hamburg edging" on gables and eaves, and windows of two or four panes of plate glass. By then the kitchen had been modernized by bricking up the fireplace and oven (often by tearing down the entire big chimney and substituting one or two little ones) and putting in a coal-burning range with stove-lids 24 inches from the floor but with the oven at eye level and often a useful plate-warmer over the stove. Hot and cold water was brought to the big soapstone sink, and often to a laundry tub, unless a laundry with a big brick washboiler had been established in the cellar. The bathroom (usually one) was fitted with a narrow deep tin tub, enclosed in varnished beaded sheathing, and since tin-plated copper is



a better conductor of heat than porcelain or enamelled iron, deliciously warm to the shoulder blades. This was sometimes replaced later by a six-foot enamelled iron tub on claw feet, which was considered much more modern and elegant. The watercloset evolved from a square object, sheathed like the tub, and with a square cover, to a more up-to-date pattern with a high tank and a chain pull, always getting slightly out of order. These houses, usually somewhat wasteful of space, though requiring more service than is always possible in these days, are still delightfully comfortable, but we now agree that this was a Bad Period, and we speak scornfully of the Bad Taste of those who built in that now unfashionable style.

But it is a ticklish business trying to determine what is Good Taste and what is Bad Taste. In an essay on "Le Goût," Voltaire wrote: "Taste may be ruined by a nation; this misfortune usually comes to pass after epochs of perfection. Artists [architects], afraid of being labelled as imitators, seek out new roads; they stray further and further . . . There is some merit in their efforts, but it is obscured by their faults. The public,

which adores novelty, runs after them, then becomes bored and pursues others who try methods of pleasing newer still. They get further and further away from nature—and taste is lost. We are then surrounded by novelties, each superseding the last; the public no longer knows where it is, and longs in vain for the good old times, gone forever—a treasure guarded by a few rare spirits, far removed from the crowd."

Certainly one would think it could be assumed that in the seventeenth century the diarist John Evelyn would be an exemplar of Good Taste, if anyone was; and who in the eighteenth was better qualified than Horace Walpole to be *arbiter elegantiarum*? Yet Evelyn considered the great thirteenth-century cathedrals of France barbarous and quite beneath contempt, and the fantastic architecture of Strawberry Hill is a living monument to Walpole's taste. What is the answer? Were the builders in America endowed with good taste until 1860 and immediately deprived of it then, or is it for some other reason that their work suddenly changed for the worse? I think the obvious answer is that until then they were following the great tradition of their

fathers and grandfathers, whose methods, established since Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren, were the only ones they knew. When they started out in a new style, they naturally had to feel their way at first.



By 1890 a new strictly American style of domestic architecture (and domestic architecture is what I am talking about) was beginning to take shape. It can still be seen in some of the long, low houses in Newport, Bar Harbor, Lenox and on the "Main Line" outside Philadelphia—charming big extravagant houses with long ridges, wide piazzas, portes-cochère and rough stone or often shingle walls. William Ralph Emerson, McKim, Wilson Eyre, Peabody and others were all doing the same sort of thing, but in 1893 the whole trend was given the *coup de grace* by the Great White City of the World's Fair in Chicago, and from then on everyone had to have a Colonial, Tudor, Italian farmhouse, French manoir, or whatever. Design became "eclectic"—you chose what type you preferred, depending usually on what country your wife had visited and fallen in love with last. Our architects lent them-

selves with enthusiasm to this movement, and did their job superbly—they really knew what a Spanish patio or a Norman tourelle should be, and with their increasingly thorough training, in our own schools and particularly in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, were more and better equipped every year to do what had been done before—often doing it better. The eastern and middle-western states became studded with well-designed country houses, and city houses, too, but all requiring from two to forty servants to be kept up properly, or indeed to be habitable at all. Now, as we all know, the bigger ones are either cut up into smaller units, occupied by convents or schools, sitting empty waiting to be turned over to the National Trust or some other preservation society, or to be torn down.

Then Le Corbusier started the ball rolling by designing his *Machine for Living*. "Functionalism" became the byword among the more forward-looking architects, and an entirely new style, or rather several new styles, were gradually developed, at first following Sullivan's maxim of "Form follows function," later soft-peddalling that as newer and newer forms and functions were born, often as a re-

sult of new materials—plastics, new uses for aluminum and glass, and changes in the way modern man lived (or was persuaded to live). In smaller houses, life was made much easier and simpler for the Little Woman, who with enough modern equipment (and sometimes enough canned goods) could whip up a meal for the Tired Business Man with comparative ease, and still have time for the Canasta Club until the end of the working day, when the chrome-trimmed home bar came into play. The better-designed houses, mostly in California, were lavishly copied all over the country, and soon there arose a rash of "ranch houses" gradually encroaching on the field of "Cape cottages," usually built not for individual owners, but by speculators for sale, singly or in groups. At first the "modernistic," "moderne," or "international" designs embodied flat roofs, glass walls to let the outdoors in, or high ribbon windows to keep it out. Partitions were made movable or omitted altogether, and the housewife could sit in one spot watching TV and still be able to hear the telephone, watch the baby, and smell the onion soup without moving.

The best of these houses, not usually found on a suburban street

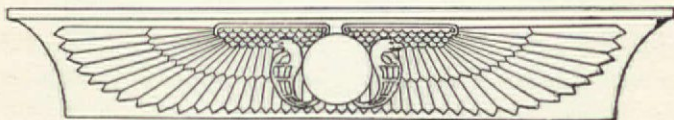
but in the rolling California scene or perhaps on the Arizona plain, were good solutions of the problem and at the same time easy to look at, but the majority disappointed and enraged more conservative tastes. Often the functional aspects turned out not to function, as in a house I saw in Vermont where the glass wall of the living-room remained completely and uncompromisingly frosted from Thanksgiving Day to Washington's Birthday, letting in some light but totally obscuring the magnificent view. Those who had air conditioning were annoyed when it didn't work (like French plumbing or elevators, every so often) and some regretted the accumulation of snow on their flat roofs, with consequent leaks which always came where the most expensive wallpaper had been put on. But in general those with "moderne" houses liked them, though a few objected to some of their features.

The accessories to this expression of modern design, strange to say, instead of serving the convenience of the house owner more and more, became less and less practical, or functional. In the kitchen everything was "streamlined"—the high oven disappeared from gas or electric ranges, so that in order to baste

the turkey you had to squat painfully or lie on your stomach on the floor. The plate-warmer vanished completely. The combined hot-and-cold faucet, swivelled, in the kitchen sink used to point at an angle, so that by increasing or decreasing the flow you could wash the sink or fill a saucepan anywhere in the sink. Now, to the great annoyance of the housewife, they were made absolutely vertical, so that unless a glass was placed exactly beneath the faucet it could not be filled. In the bathroom tubs were designed not for comfort but for easy mass production, with no sloping backs, so that the luxury of reclining in hot water was a thing of the past. Also, the new tubs were built so low that they were almost impossible to clean without stepping inside them. And the wash-bowls—from the generous slabs of Vermont marble with a big oval bowl in the middle and plenty of room for soap-dish, brushes, razor or what not—became more and more like glorified slop-sinks, with rectangular bowls and little or no shelf room.

Lighting had progressed in all these years from bayberry, paraffin, or wax candles through whale-oil and kerosene lamps, gas (including Welsbach burners) and incandescent electric lamps, to the most horrible invention of all—the fluorescent tube, giving forth a flickering glare guaranteed to ruin your eyes in one painful year or less. Any oculist employed by industrial groups may be willing to tell you how many patients he has from those department stores which have adopted this form of lighting, who suffer from eye-strain, or worse.

In spite of our modern inventiveness, we Americans have been called the most conservative nation on earth. At any rate, the proportion of modernistic to old-fashioned house types now being built is very small indeed, though possibly rising. Are we entering on another period of Bad Taste? In another fifty years will people consider the tendencies of this period of departure from tradition as a temporary fit of insanity, or shall we have adopted it as a typical expression of the designers of A. D. 2000?



## Bachelor of Architecture, 1911

By *Wells Bennett, F.A.I.A.*

DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

FOR MORE THAN EIGHTY YEARS students have faced up to curriculums at architectural schools. They have been lectured, questioned, and judged by professors and groups of professors and practitioners. Whether we arrange architectural education better today can perhaps be determined after a look backward, if only to 1907. It was the age of Theodore Roosevelt. Oklahoma had just become a State and the New York Subway had opened for traffic two years before; ninety-one million people were eking out with one hundred and forty thousand automobiles.

The high-school graduate of those days had fortified himself with English, German, algebra, plane and solid geometry, and physics. There was American history, sometimes supplemented by English and ancient history. All this range of human knowledge had been put to the student with a direct frontal approach. There was no nonsense about arts and crafts, problems of democracy, or

our foreign neighbors. The physics was strictly Newtonian. There were no Easter trips to Washington, D. C., no high-school band trips to California.

With this sound, if somewhat colorless, background the freshman class of 1911 presented itself for induction into architecture. One of these freshmen, whose father was a contractor, had seen an architect. All came from honest, God-fearing families; their fathers were business men, farmers, school teachers. Here, clearly was industry and intelligence; sterling worth. The first semester was for the most part an admirable orientation period. With English, French, trigonometry, and descriptive geometry the little band was wafted almost unwittingly from the sheltered harbor of high school into the open sea of college life. It was all suitably difficult but disturbing only in the sense that one's first cigar is more of an inward adjustment than the first cigarette; it was all tobacco. In this first

semester, there was also a course entitled *Elements of Architecture*. Here the students collectively and individually found themselves vis-a-vis with the real thing—with *Architecture*.

The class, twenty-five souls, fell loosely into two classifications. About half were openly artistic. Each individual of this type had for a year or more fancied himself as the author of beautiful buildings—the Flatiron Building, for instance, or, for the up-state freshmen, the Carnegie Library at Auburn. They had seen pictures of buildings in the better magazines. There had been the dream-like Temple of Music at the Pan American Exposition at Buffalo, the Festival Hall at the Louisiana Purchase Fair in St. Louis.

The other half of the class, more matter of fact, readily agreed that buildings should be handsome and imposing. Mainly, however, they thought how Marshall Field's was used as an emporium, and how the Grand Central Depot not only got you off and on trains, but provided restaurant, checkroom, toilets and everything. They thought longest on buildings as the product of the practice of architecture, a fine profession for them as soon as they could get at it. These hardier

ones pictured architectural education not only as a step to this end, but as a leap from high school over the more work-a-day occupations of carpentry and contracting to the gentlemanly status of a professional man. Theirs, in a word, was the sound attitude of a potential American architect.

In the *Elements of Architecture* course there was a skirmish of some weeks' duration with an illustrated vocabulary—Abacus to Z-beam to be mastered in about that order. The student was required to know these forms whether as virile strength or feminine delicacy, and to be able to prove "Why and when is a cyma recta a cyma reversa? When and to what extent is a torus an astragal?" Student versions of this type of problem, more subtle if less delicate, will occur to old and unregenerate practitioners. It was all a new language and was taken rather happily in that spirit. The full impact of the mother art was felt only with the posing by the professor of the major problem of the course. The statement was bald and blunt: "Design a Wall." This would have been on a Monday in November after the Columbia game, a bleak day.

Ominously different from descriptive geometry or the ovolo, The Wall proved to be a pure abstraction, a concept at once academic and occult. Referred to by the professor with all the confidence of one speaking of such realities as cabbage or Shetland ponies, "You men know what a wall is," it was for the bewildered student only the off-white blank sheet of his University Drawing Pad. In principle, The Wall seemed to rest on the ground and, near the top of the paper, to have a cornice, though there would be no roof. Presently there was introduced the notion of a Section. This was reassuring, but a third dimension, length, remained in doubt, its only possible reality being the plate's side border lines, drawn before the student could have had any remotest thought of their potential. How could the student know that in the fullness of time there would emerge, as by photogenesis, the concept of The Door? But this eventually occurred, and as a satellite there appeared The Window. One of these academic openings, for purposes of identification, was set with panes, the other with panels, a rather more subtle esthetic touch since it involved more lines. The

window was not transparent, the door was always closed. It might be that one could have looked out from that window but the student never knew; he was strictly on the outside. He never saw beyond The Wall, the sheet of paper that was PROBLEM IV, with a carefully lettered title.



In the sophomore year when one could know one's tormentors who had now become juniors—William Howard Taft having now become President—it was possible to meet a junior who had worked for McKim, Mead & White, of course without pecuniary compensation. Immensely heartened by this glimpse of reality in a new world, the student could bear to face another hurdle, the study of the architecture of the remote past. The class was soon among The Monuments. Here there was no shock. The aptness of the repeated allusions to The Monuments was warmly appreciated. This was a demanding study, like French verbs. One did or did not know the names and dates. It was surprising to learn that the history of architecture began so long ago, and that what happened in Thebes or Knossos could have any bearing on

building today. In the Taft administration Egypt was solid as the birthplace of architecture, though the professor's reference to its character as suitable to prison and cemetery buildings left the class little stirred. As civilizations rose and fell before the advance of the column and the arch, one began to sense the guiding hand of authority, the sheltering weight of precedent. One was *in*. One was safe.

With medieval architecture there was some backing and filling on the part of the professor. Vezelay and Durham, it seemed, were a bit uncouth, mainly useful as pointing to something better—Rheims and Amiens. It choked him a little, too, that the classical orders had had to give place to anything so romantic as the Sainte Chapelle. The artistic students loved the Gothic, but it was with obvious relief that the professor hastily passed over St. Maclou and the Chapel of Henry VII to make room for the Renaissance in Florence. Here the student had to give a full accounting; item by item he learned architecture as it had been done. He now saw daylight as to his professional ancestry, and it slowly became clear that The Monuments were for him the store-

house, as inexhaustible as the stones of the Colosseum had been for later builders. From this climactic point the artists of the little group came under the rule of taste. The builder sort of person took taste in his stride; it would not hamper his progress. When this point was reached the staff could relax. Now no junior could prefer Bernini to Bramante. When examinations came no one spoke up for Biedermeier, or Gustav Eiffel.

If one stopped to think about architectural history there was mystery in its cloudy fadeout, its time of troubles from the sixteenth century and its descent into the abyss with the nineteenth century. Only Charles Garnier shone unaccountably through the gloom. The professor's dictum that taste had never sunk so low as after the Civil War was received with appropriate shudders.

After The Wall there lay other tests. The semi-official "stretch," a sort of hazing device required of the freshman student that, with a water-soaked sheet of heavy drawing paper edged on one side with LePage's glue, he effect a drum-tight mount on his drafting-board. Those who became most proficient found immediate popularity with the upper classmen for whom they



were expected to provide the numerous stretches of double-elephant Whatman paper needed for junior and senior design projects.



Early in the long study of architectural history—the first sophomore semester—a concurrent course in *The Orders of Architecture* thoroughly explored Vignola's columns and their fitments in a series of plates. These diagrams provided a superior background for the casting and rendering of shades and shadows. The Rendering was an enterprise carried out in Chinese ink washes on the taut surface of the stretch. It was a shrewdly calculated illusion. This instrument of architectural virtuosity was a sort of rosetta stone by which the ways of the architect could be understood by the layman, someday the client. It seemed to be the position of the faculty that when an Order was well rendered there came to life everything from the Cymatium to the Boston Public Library. Here, not a philosophy but an esoteric technique was eventually demanded of the student. Could he poché a plan, lay a graded wash; in fact, lay a superimposed series of them, put in entourage?

In Design everyone stoutly faced his first esquisse, the first of three years of esquisses and esquisse-esquisses. This device for suggesting inspiration without commitment was soon learned, as was the whole process of the design problem, esquisse-playful interlude—charette. It made men of the gangling boys: they became astute, resourceful, and imaginative. No longer could a professor catch one of our heroes off guard. Even forthright condemnation of a student's parti could be parried by retorts tailored to the particular critic. The adjustment of the student to the jury became ever more subtle.

Now in the senior year the essential dichotomy within the survivors of the 1911 class came sharply into focus. The artists became marked men, applauded and be-medalled by the juries. The more pedestrian, building-minded characters were baffled by all this, countering feebly that design was hocus-pocus in direct ratio to its success with the jury. The Philistines were, however, quite effectively brought to time by their own logic. They could not deny that the more intriguing the pattern of the design, the greater the brilliance of its presentation, the more likely its

building. For these matter-of-fact minds rendering remained an irritant. In scorn mixed with reluctant admiration they would watch the best student, or his critic, as the case might be, patiently yet adroitly lay the sky wash in Chinese ink, the planes of the building in Chinese ink or muted water color, all requiring some days and nights of effort—laying on, scrubbing out and redoing. In the final hour before the deadline this number-one student would crown all with an overpowering foreground of great trees, stupendous rocks and waterfalls, and in the lower right hand corner, a nosegay of life-sized geraniums.

In the course of his curriculum, the student was asked to figure footings, reinforcing them liberally with railroad rails in grid pattern. Truss diagrams tended to ramble off the paper, but their vagaries were taken in good part. Rivet diagrams for columns and girders were frankly a bore since in their patterns one's imagination was considerably restricted. The relation between these structural diagrams and calculations and the concurrent design project, A Summer Palace for an American Ambassador at Poonah, escaped most of the class.

Generally speaking, the student came to the school to ask a question that seemed to him pretty simple. How could he become an architect? He had seen buildings in process of construction, each exciting in its forest of scaffolding. Other shiny and generally impressive examples stood as the finished product. The architect seemed to have brought all this to pass. How could he, Claude Whipton, acquire this competence. How?

It early appeared that he had been terribly naïve. The *what* of architecture was more important than the *how*. And here was the substance into which he was slowly but persistently indoctrinated. The Wall, The Orders, The Rendering, The Grand Plan gradually became convictions, a way of life. Like the playing fields of Eton, these precepts, no doubt, made men as well as architects. Perhaps they were courage at Chateau-Thierry, and comfort after Versailles. They may well have sustained Pete Devoe after he returned to the family farm during the great depression.

Fifteen years later commissions were flowing in on such of the class as were in practice—ten of the once questing twenty-five. Only

three of them could render effectively; six were designing the jobs. Every one, including one college professor and Pete Devoe down Herkimer way on his farm, could still do The Wall blindfolded. This, one must understand, would

include the stone coursing and jointing, an appropriately moulded base and well-scaled cap with wash on top. The cap would include a drip. Even if the Class of 1911 had not fully learned the answer to its question *how*, it did know *what*.



## Honors

LE CORBUSIER is to receive this year's Royal Gold Medal from the R.I.B.A. This award follows very closely the action of the French in making Le Corbusier a Commander of the Legion of Honor for the Unité d'Habitation at Marseilles.

ROBERT S. HUTCHINS, F.A.I.A., has been appointed to a three-year term as architect member of New York City's Art Commission, succeeding Alfred Easton Poor, F.A.I.A.

MAXWELL A. CANTOR, Brooklyn Chapter, A.I.A., has been given

the Sidney L. Strauss Memorial Award of the New York Society of Architects, as the architect who did most for the profession in New York State last year, particularly for his activity in legislative matters.

WELLS I. BENNETT, F.A.I.A., Dean of the College of Architecture and Design, University of Michigan, has been reappointed by Governor Williams of Michigan to a 7-year term as a member of the Board of Registration for Architects, Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors.

## Birch Burdette Long Memorial Prize

THE Birch Burdette Long Memorial Prize of \$200, honoring the achievements of that master of architectural illustration, will

be awarded again this year, in accordance with the decisions of a jury consisting of Max Abramovitz, F.A.I.A., Arthur Guptill,

Robert S. Hutchins, F.A.I.A., Francis Keally, F.A.I.A., and Chester B. Price, Chairman. The Architectural League of New York, 115 East 40th Street, New York 16, N. Y., will receive examples of the work of architectural illustra-

tors and renderers in time for an exhibition to be held by The League May 25 through June 5. Conditions and further details may be had from the Committee for Scholarships and Special Awards at The League.

## The Challenge of Industrial Architecture

*By Minoru Yamasaki*

A paper read at the Ann Arbor Conference, November 6-7, 1952, gathered together by the University of Michigan to discuss "The Design of Industrial Plants."

WHEN DEAN BENNETT called and suggested that I speak at this Conference, my immediate response was, "Dean, you have the wrong man. I certainly do not profess to be an expert on industrial plants." But since, after some hesitation, he insisted—to be polite I am sure—you are now stuck with me for the next ten or fifteen minutes.

Being a non-expert, I shall attempt to give my beliefs as related to industrial buildings as a student.

Taking the part of a student reminds me of an incident which happened to me on a visit some time ago to Mies' Farnsworth house. I noticed a car outside of the fence which had an Illinois Tech sticker on it, so I assumed that there were some Mies students

there. When I climbed the fence and went down to the house, sure enough there were a group of young people taking photographs. So I proceeded to take pictures also. Shortly, a very tall young man came over and asked, "Are you an architectural student?" I rather hesitatingly replied, "Well, I'm an architect."

At this the young man drew himself up to his full height and, looking down his nose at me in a very disapproving manner, said, "When I get to be an architect I shall always consider myself a student."

With that I crawled under the Mies house.

The basic premise I'd like to set forth is that in the exciting discovery of the new technical

methods and materials of our architecture today, we as architects are often guilty of neglecting the fundamental reason for the being of architecture. That fundamental reason, I think, has been admirably stated by that eminent group of architects, the CIAM—the International Congress for Modern Architecture. They have defined their aims as follows:

“To work for the creation of a physical environment that will satisfy man’s emotional and material needs and stimulate his spiritual growth.”

In our excitement about modern architecture and its many interesting and diverse directions; and also in our great and justifiable concern about the high cost of buildings, I am afraid that we often forget that very live and sensitive people are housed in the structures we build.



It is in the field of industrial buildings, in my opinion, that this neglect is most manifest. Our office buildings and schools are rapidly becoming wonderful places in which to be. Who would not like to work in Skidmore’s Lever Brothers Building in New York (despite the fact that its interior

was decorated by an industrial designer)?

In school planning, administrators and architects have made far-reaching advances in making school buildings warm and pleasant places to live. What a contrast with those hallowed stone and marble tombs which formed the background of so many of our childhoods!

In housing almost everyone, politician, realtor, medical man and architect—and most of all the consumer—is vividly conscious of the need for better housing. As a result, we can point to tremendous improvements in housing, both in density standards and in the design of home buildings.

In industrial architecture there, however, appears no comparable hue and cry for better places for industrial workers to work. No plants where the dignity of the individual worker is the prime consideration in the planning. Here the machine is king; man a minion, to be accommodated as inexpensively as possible.

Some years ago the architectural magazines of this country eulogized what they termed the great new architecture of the United States—that of the industrial plant. Undoubtedly, there was, and is, much

to praise in the direct and economical use of material, the simplicity of structure, the tremendously vast and interesting new forms.

Recently, however, I had occasion to spend some time in one of those plants. Frankly, I was appalled. The size, the noise, the grime and the fumes were almost unbearable. If the impression was such for me, who spent but a few hours a week there, imagine what it must have been for the thousands who poured in and out of that plant in three shifts every day. Mechanization, with the infinite good it has brought our society, has still many attendant evils which must be overcome.

Somehow I cannot believe that buildings which are designed with such apparent disregard of the human within can be classed as great architecture.



Now how can we as architects help to improve this situation, granted we are only one cog in the entire process?

Supposedly, we are planners, the purveyors of ideas, and in ideas there must be leadership. Any ideas that we may have to promote the welfare of the individual, to increase his sense of freedom and

importance, and to give him a better life could not fall on deaf ears. For that is the basis of our American process and the antithesis of any totalitarianism.

I believe that, guided by this fundamental belief in humanity, we can contribute in all our fields of endeavor: in the field of city planning, in over-all plant planning and in the innumerable details of the industrial building.

Again not being an expert, I cannot dwell very long on the details of industrial plants.

Resilient floors to solace our feet, acoustic treatment to comfort our ears, proper ventilation and cleanliness are without doubt being incorporated in a few of our new plants.

But this kind of thinking is by no means universal. During my recent years of working with one of the large industrial architects of Detroit, I found that the attitude prevalent in both client and architect was to provide only the absolutely essential amenities, enough to bring about a relatively high efficiency and to prevent a large turnover of employees.

It seems that we, as architects, are so often overwhelmed by the technical aspects of plant design and our principles stampeded and

compromised by the threat of high costs. Could it not be that if we, instead, upheld the tenet of high regard for the occupant of our structures, that industry's all important goals of efficiency and small turnover would take care of themselves? For, unquestionably, the efficiency of the individual is very much tied up with his happiness.

In other words, we have an invisible non-participating client, the factory worker, much as when we design schools, our children are the invisible clients. Should we not have a deep feeling of responsibility for his comfort and happiness, as we do for our children?

I believe also that if architect and owner are truly concerned with the livability of the buildings they are planning, with careful study such livability can be accomplished within the limits of a reasonable budget. For example, in a recent study of multi-story apartment buildings, our office believed that outdoor space and laundry areas on upper floors near the dwelling unit would make multi-story living much more desirable. With this goal in mind, plus a great deal of study, we found that we could achieve such an end, with less square feet per apartment in-

cluding the outdoor and laundry spaces, than in the conventional apartment.

It is the old idea of stating the problem. If the program for the problem includes a strong desire to make the building more livable for those within, then without question a real solution will be attained. But if the program or the will of the architect states only a desire to create space as cheaply and as technically simple as possible, then the element of livability will obviously be neglected.

To me there is no economy in this. For with this kind of thinking, we can only build empty shells—slums—whether they are the places we work or the places we live.

With most of us spending more time at work than we do in our homes, should we not expand our efforts for better living to the places where we work?

To me economy in architecture is the well-considered design of buildings within which society can work toward the well-being of its individuals as efficiently as possible.

In the over-all planning of buildings, or the arriving at a *parti*, so to speak, a reanalysis of our present rut of covering as much space as

possible under one roof is, I believe, in order.

The industrial building of which I spoke a moment ago, had 27 acres under one roof. If this were one vast assembly line perhaps it would have been more justified. But it was not, it was a whole series of individual machine shops, in which were made the various parts of the vehicle which was being assembled in one corner of the building. My immediate thought was, how much more pleasant would it have been to have built a series of small individual buildings connected by covered passages and having lawns and trees between.

The advantages are apparent: There would be much less noise and confusion; the outlook would be infinitely better. What a relief it would be to be able to look up from your machine and see the sun shining on the grass and trees outside. The feeling of being a part of our bright and beautiful world and of not being exiled to dark mines in the center of our industrial buildings would, I am sure, immeasurably enhance the feeling of dignity among our workers.

Ventilation could be much improved. Gasoline lift-trucks could be confined to the connecting pass-

age, obviating most of the gasoline fumes; more operating windows closer at hand would provide a greater amount of fresh air.

And last but not least, those buildings would be much more in human scale. In our great factories, the size, the scale of the operations themselves are so tremendous, so overpowering, that it completely dwarfs the human being. Reducing the scale of the buildings by division into a series of smaller buildings might well help to restore that sense of belonging which we so well know in our better homes and schools.

Once I heard a member of a panel on architectural design spend much time discoursing on the architectural scale of flagpoles and the details of buildings—mostly on flagpoles. I also remember the many courses which we took in school in which the architectural scale of classic details was thoroughly discussed. How unimportant this seems now in a time where we recklessly build buildings so vast that they affect the feeling of importance and security in everyone who uses them.

Now such a proposal to build divided plants would most surely encounter the argument that it would not be economically sound.



Well, let's look at the small independent plant or manufacturing shop in the suburb or country town. Surely, most of them are on a sound economical basis and still they operate in small buildings on separate plots of ground. Let's combine a number of these smaller shops, and we have a large plant with a more livable architectural framework. If the small shop can be operated on a sound economical basis, it should also be possible for the large one.

I realize that I have just given you an oversimplified analogy, but perhaps the oversimplification does prove that dividing up the industrial plant may not be as ridiculous economically as it may at first appear.

If study proves it financially reasonable, the contribution to society by owner and architect, by erecting such buildings, would be very real and the millenium for the factory worker would be much nearer at hand.



Finally, in the field of city planning, I believe that as architects our contribution to industrial planning can be very substantial. In the years ahead, it is inevitable

that we extend our efforts toward a more orderly decentralization and toward the planning of new towns. You all know that Britain is well ahead of us in this respect, with their Town and Country Planning Acts.

Such planning should take into account much more seriously than it does today, the location and size of industrial plants. We must cure ourselves of such afflictions as the concentration of large plants within our cities. The attendant evils of wasted hours of commuting time, expensive highways and expressways must be minimized.

Our best source of relief will come with thoughtful decentralization of industry—with planned industrial areas as part of well conceived new towns. We have made great advances planning-wise in many of our communities, particularly with respect to size and location of schools. But the size and location of our industrial plants has not been related to individual or community needs, much less become a part of an overall plan. That plan should relate home to factory much as we relate school to home today.

With real effort by all, perhaps someday our children may grow

up to gain the ideal of lovely places to work within walking distance of lovely places to live. Then we will

have put the machine in its proper perspective, and we will have taken command of mechanization.

An Easterner looks towards  
the northwest and the 85th  
Annual Convention at Seattle

## Where the Rainbow Never Fades

*By E. James Gambaro*

AT THE CLOSE OF THE 84th Convention of The Institute held last year in New York City, Waldo B. Christenson of Seattle, speaking on behalf of the chapters of the Pacific Northwest, extended a friendly invitation to all members and friends of The Institute to visit them. As the annual convention draws near we would like to recall in part what he said:

"We, the A.I.A. Chapters of the Pacific Northwest, are honored to be your hosts and cordially invite you to come to Seattle in the 'Evergreen Empire,' the gateway to Alaska and the Orient. Seattle is the largest city in the world which is only 100 years old.

"We wish to share our glorious, 'air-conditioned' Pacific Northwest with you, and again suggest that you relax, June 16-19, 1953, in Seattle. It is later than you think!"

Those taking advantage of this

invitation will have an unusual and ideal opportunity of combining convention activities, which of course includes meeting friends both old and new, with a restful and pleasant vacation for the entire family. No matter what you are looking for, it's here—mountain scenery, fishing streams and lakes, pounding surf, lumber camps, Indian villages, fjords, big cities, little towns, the Old World or the New. No other part of America offers such diversity as this favorite vacationland.

This section of our country is the Twelfth Regional District of The Institute's twelve districts. Known as the Northwest District, A.I.A., it is comprised of the States of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and the Territory of Alaska. This will be the first time an Institute convention has been held here and it will be presided

APRIL, 1953



SEATTLE AND MT. RAINIER

© 1948 by Roger Dudley

*Photograph by Roger Dudley*

SEATTLE AND PART OF ITS WATERFRONT



*Journal  
The AIA*



A CLOSE-UP OF MT. RAINIER

*Photograph by Forde & Carter*

*Photograph by United Air Lines*

CRATER LAKE, OREGON



*Journal  
The AIA*



*Photograph by Ackroyd  
Photography, Inc.*

PORTLAND, OREGON WITH  
MT. HOOD IN THE  
BACKGROUND



Floats lined up in the  
Stadium before the start  
of the Rose Festival  
Parade, which this year  
will be on June 12

*Photograph by Photo-Art  
Commercial Studios*

*Journal  
The AIA*



*Photograph by United Air Lines*

SUN VALLEY, IDAHO  
FOOTHILLS OF THE SAWTOOTH MOUNTAINS IN THE BACKGROUND

GRINNELL GLACIER IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MONTANA  
MT. GOULD AT THE LEFT



*Journal  
The AIA*

over by The Institute's first president from the northwest region—Glenn Stanton, of Portland, Oregon, who will be completing his second term in office.

Last year our meetings and activities were held among towering skyscrapers, hot crowded streets and thoroughfares. In startling contrast, the coming convention, on the opposite coast, will be held among lofty mountain ranges towered over by Mount Rainier, a short distance from the heart of Seattle, a city of unusual individual character and surrounded by inspiring natural beauty.

During the course of a recent informal luncheon gathering, one member of the group remarked that "Seattle is too remote from the center of population to be a convention city." This observation, in our day of rapid and comfortable transportation of all kinds, was amazing. It is  $11\frac{1}{4}$  hours by air from my home town of New York City to either of Seattle's two large airports. Or, if you prefer traveling by train, there are four major railroads with terminals here, operating fast streamlined trains many times daily. Travel time is approximately 63 hours from the east coast. It was suggested that our skeptical friend arrange for some

other means of transportation—the covered wagon train or the clipper ship around Cape Horn!

Fortunately, we had among us as guests two Seattleites who have been residents there for many years and know this vast mountain area quite well. One, an architect, had worked on plans for the Spokane County Building for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition back in 1908 with the firm of Preusse & Zittle of Spokane. The other, a civil engineer, general contractor, colonel, U. S. Army Engineer Corps Reserve (Ret.), arrived in Seattle as a tenderfoot about 1906. As a contractor, he had helped to remove some of the obstructing hills, laid sewers, built highways, bridges and a number of buildings, including several at the University of Washington (former site of the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition).

From their store of knowledge and general information they began to tell us about the development and wonders of the Great Pacific Northwest. It was a story told with moving enthusiasm and as it unfolded, the walls receded into distant horizons of mountain ranges, the streets became rivers meandering through green valleys,

the skyscrapers changed to citadels of granite and snow standing guard over verdant forests, colorful fields and busy cities.

Here are parts of their combined accounts, taken from my notes and as I recall them . . .

To us, the magnificent expansion of the Pacific Northwest is symbolized in the spectacular growth of its softwood trees into forests of immense and enduring grandeur. The sound and rapid growth of our cities is based on more than abstract economic terms; their progress has startling human dimensions.

As you follow our region's history and progress, and see the results with your own eyes, you will sense that progress here had run out of patience. It could not stand the slow plodding ox-team pace of the country's pioneering past. When progress carried northwest, it moved with jet propulsion. For a while boom towns—and we lived in some of them—moved forward as though on wheels, telescoping progress into almost an overnight process.

The early settlers braved the Great Divide to build a mountain empire. The Rockies were a challenge to be overcome, and today, as you gaze in awe at the majesty of

these vast ranges, you see no barriers—only beauty. The old trails are smoother now and easy to get to. They lead to pleasant and friendly places where everyday cares fade into the summer sunlight.

We believe we have a recipe here for enjoyment unlimited. By combining your convention trip with a planned vacation, and using your Seattle hotel as your base, you can take various one-day trips from there, either by car or bus.

During the summer, the evenings are light until late, giving one a long day for leisurely enjoyment of this mountain country. There are numerous circle-trip possibilities which will give you a wide variety of breath-taking scenery without having to retrace your steps. A superb one-day trip, two hours by car from Seattle, is to Mount Rainier National Park, Surrounded by hundreds of different species of wild flowers blooming beside summer snow fields, Mount Rainier is the fourth highest peak in continental United States (14,408 ft.). Its great height dwarfs the Cascade Range on the east and the other neighboring mountains, although these peaks and mountain ranges themselves average 6,000 to 8,000 feet in alti-



tude. New York's Empire State Building is a mere 1,250 feet!

Another trip should include a visit to the over fascinating Columbia River Valley and the Grand Coulee Dam, the largest man-made structure in the world. Last May, water from this dam, located in eastern Washington, began to flow into 1,029,000 acres of the Columbia Basin, the first step in a giant agricultural "state" larger than Rhode Island!



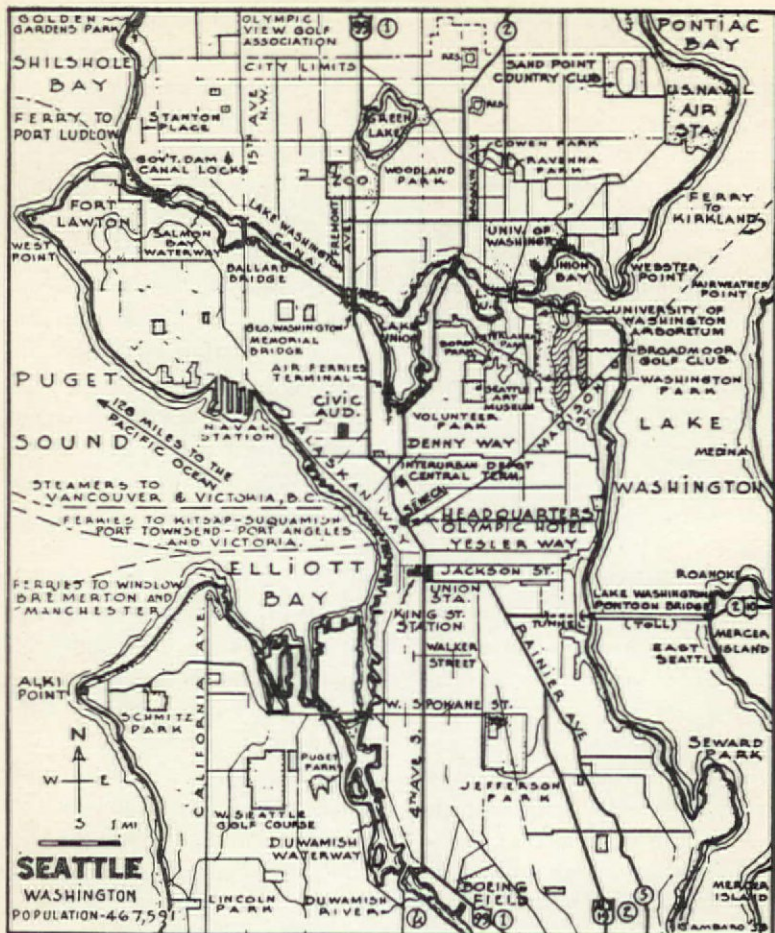
Of course, your Convention Committee will prepare a program of various activities and tours. If you are planning to start your trip before Convention time and remain afterwards to complete your vacation here, perhaps you would like to arrange for hotel headquarters in some of the cities along the way. Interesting one-day trips can be taken from such cities as Boise, Cœur d'Alene, Pocatello, (Idaho); Anaconda, Butte, Helena, (Montana); Coos Bay, Eugene, Portland, Salem, (Oregon); Bellingham, Olympia, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver, (Washington), naming just a few. The hotel-headquarters arrangement will eliminate the concern of searching for a place to sleep at night and possibly hav-

ing to stop much earlier than otherwise would be necessary in order to find good ones, since some of the rural areas do not yet abound in good auto courts.

You will find the entire countryside along the way a scenic wonderland of snow-capped mountains, Alpine meadows, flower-filled valleys, sapphire lakes, giant trees and a Pacific coastline with breathtaking views.

Most of the annual colorful flower festivals will be over by the end of May. However, if you come by way of Portland, Oregon, you might arrange to stop over for the 45th Annual Rose Festival, June 10-14, just before the start of your Convention. During this period Portland becomes a city of roses and flower gardens—the "Kingdom of Rosaria" ruled by a Queen and Princesses. Highlights include the City's Annual Rose Show and Parade and the Golden Ski Race on Mount Hood which takes place on June 14. Portland is only fifty minutes by air and four hours by train from Seattle.

For many years there has been a spirit of friendliness and cooperation between the architects on both sides of our invisible northern border. So when we speak of the architects of the Pacific Northwest



• 85<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION • SEATTLE •  
 JUNE 15 - 19 • 1953 •



# THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

CHAPTERS OF THE NORTHWEST DISTRICT  
 IDAHO — MONTANA — OREGON — SOUTHWESTERN  
 OREGON — SPOKANE — WASHINGTON STATE • • • •  
 TERRITORY OF ALASKA ASSIGNED TO THE WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER.

APRIL, 1953

we always like to include our colleagues of British Columbia and Alberta. Picturesque Victoria, B. C., is the temperate capital of Canada's westernmost province. It is famed for its flower gardens and atmosphere of Old World charm. A ferry runs between this city and Seattle—travel time is about six hours each way. From Victoria one can take a boat tour through the Norwegian-like fjords of Washington State's San Juan Islands, thence to Vancouver, B. C., and from there back to Seattle.

Not Washington State alone, but all the other states forming a part of this large A.I.A. Regional District have their share of interesting cities and natural beauty. All are easily accessible over fine highways and by rail and air. Idaho has its famed Sun Valley and the mystically named Craters of the Moon; Montana, its Glacier National Park bordering Alberta, Canada, and located on the Continental Divide which runs through the middle of the state; Oregon has vast National Forests, Crater Lake, and the perpetually snow-clad Mount Hood, overlooking the City of Portland; and the Territory of Alaska beckons those "prospectors" in search of further

adventures and scenic beauty. America's Main Street reaches these places across the miles from all directions.

For years adventurers, prospectors, immigrants and homesteaders by the thousands followed the trails here. They came to look—and what they saw was good, so good that only a few went back home. Now, over half a century later, a second surge of growth is taking place in this fast-developing area. Perhaps you, too, may be planning only to look—but you may, like the many others, want to remain to enjoy our last continental frontier and work towards its continuing growth.



As Seattle is your convention city we would like to tell you something about it. We shall not delve too deeply into the formal history of our idealistic pioneers who founded this city. Seattle celebrated its Centennial last year, so only one hundred and one years have passed since the time when the first small band of settlers dug clams along the beach and built their cabins on Alki Point.

These pioneers came to the Oregon Territory from Illinois, over the Oregon Trail, in a covered-

wagon train. While the main group rested in Portland, Oregon, David Denny and John N. Low proceeded northward by land to Olympia, where they embarked on Puget Sound with Leander Terry and Captain Robert C. Fay on the latter's boat. On September 28, 1851 they sailed into Elliott Bay.

Within two months, on November 13, the other members of the party, five families consisting of twelve adults and an equal number of children, arrived from Portland on the schooner *Exact*. The group named the point on which they settled "New York," probably in the hope that some day the settlement would become the metropolis of the West. Later, perhaps with a touch of humor, they added the word, Alki, Chinook jargon for "soon" or "by and by," and it is this latter name which clings to the Point where the pioneers first settled. Alki is also the motto of Washington State.

When the cabins were finished and the families established in their new homes, the settlement made its initial venture into what was destined to become one of its major industries, lumbering. The difficulty of getting the load of lumber aboard ship in the open water convinced the settlers that better

facilities for water transport were needed, and that sandy Alki Point was not suitable for the loading and unloading of ships. After sounding the water at various places, a claim was staked in February, 1852, to the present site of the city and they named the new settlement Seattle after the friendly Chief Sealth of the Duwamish Indians.

Henry Yesler from Portland was given a tract of land along the south side of the new town, and with the assistance of volunteer labor, built there the first steam sawmill on Puget Sound. To get his timber to the mill, Yesler built what was called a "Skid Road" (built of logs laid crosswise and greased) through the town. This street today is known as Yesler Way and is located nine blocks south of the Olympic Hotel (1924; George B. Post & Sons, Architects), your Convention headquarters.

Seattle lies along Elliott Bay on the east shore of Puget Sound 128 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Built on a series of hills, with intervening lowlands, it extends between Puget Sound and Lake Washington which are joined by two canals and Lake Union. It is a city of steep

descents and sudden turns, with streets that fall away inevitably to the waterside, lined with docks, moored with ships of every description and from world-wide ports. Today Seattle looks not only towards the sea but also to the air for its future, bright with expansion plans.

The city is impressively beautiful on a clear day, when the Olympics, with their serrated, snow-covered ridges can be seen to the west, and the Cascades, blue-green in the distance, are visible in the east, and in the southwest, majestic Mount Rainier looms above the other peaks of the range. At night, too, the city is beautiful, with its lights reflected in the waters, and even in the gloominess of rainy weather, when the waters of the bay are ruffled by the winds and dull gossamer curtains are swaying and shifting across the sky, the city does not lose its attraction. This land-locked harbor was the beginning of Seattle and to this day the city derives much of its character from the wharves and its varied peoples.

About forty-five years ago, Seattle, confident of its future, took steps to extend its business district, cramped by the surrounding hills. The method of sluicing employed

in Alaskan mining to remove hills caught the imagination of engineers and real-estate promoters. Workmen began to wash away Jackson Street and Dearborn Street hills and part of Denny Hill which now forms a part of the city center. The loosened earth was used to fill fourteen hundred acres of tideflats, making it available for factory sites. The venture was so successful that within the next thirty years approximately 42,000,000 cubic yards of earth was shifted.

During the late nineteenth century, disastrous fires swept the wooden business sections of several cities, and in rebuilding these wood was replaced by brick, stone and new-fangled cast-iron facades. A mixture of any and all styles commonly appeared: Gothic, Renaissance, Byzantine, Romanesque and Georgian. Many of these early buildings were designed by easterners—H. H. Richardson, Ralph Adams Cram, John Galen Howard, McKim, Mead & White, Jardine, Kent & Jardine, John Mead Howells and many others.

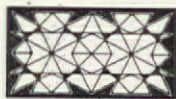
Going outside of this region for talent has not been necessary for a good many years and perhaps may never be done again. There is to-

day a wealth of well-trained, experienced and talented architects doing excellent work.

This region has six fine schools of architecture, of which two are accredited by the NAAB—the University of Oregon at Eugene, and the University of Washington in Seattle.

All we can add now is that a friendly welcome awaits all of you who come to this realm where the

rainbow never fades; where the stars are spread out before you like islands that slumber in the ocean; where breath-taking natural beauty passes constantly before your eyes and will stay in your presence for years to come! We know the Queen City, together with your colleagues and friends throughout the Pacific Northwest, will await your arrival with warm anticipation.



## It's Odd, But Is It Art?

It is sad, these youngsters say to me  
Our work you cannot understand;  
We paint the soul, the mood, the  
thought,

And you can only paint the man.

And yet in all my varied painting,  
I sought men worthy of my paint  
And tried to show in form and  
color  
Both the sinner and the saint.

And this I did by shade and  
shadow,  
Cast of eye and turn of cheek,  
And by a fleck of crimson madder  
Tell the angry from the meek.  
And after years of constant striving  
Others saw the things I sought

Beneath the likeness of my sub-  
ject—

Saw his soul, his mood, his  
thought.

I studied hard and let my soul  
Grow up without a prodding  
finger,

In hope that all might understand  
And I would not need to linger  
Beside my canvass, talking, talk-  
ing,

Explaining theories and conclu-  
sions,

While the Devil whispers gently,  
Is it Art, or just delusions?

“HUBERTUS JUNIUS”

# Designing Public Housing for Low Operating Cost

By *Robert W. McLaughlin*, F.A.I.A.

An address before the Annual Conference of the National Association of Housing Officials, October 14-17, 1952, in Buffalo, N. Y.

WE DESIGN FOR TWO CLIENTS in every public housing project—the person who is going to live there, and the man who is going to operate the project. This second client, who will have to live with rather than in the project, deserves our very best thought and service. Indeed, unless we serve him well, he will be unable to render full service to the tenant. Failing him, we fail both clients.

What can we do to design for low operating costs? I can only touch on a few examples in the tremendous area of decisions to be made in the design of every housing project. First, there is the basic decision to be made as to type of dwelling—whether, for example, we shall use row houses, walk-ups, or elevator apartments. One of the most tiresome discussions now being publicized is that between low-rise and high-rise dwellings. Anyone really interested in the quality of housing must admit the desirability of low, spread-out buildings with easy access to the

ground—better living is just simply there. But other factors come into play—land costs, construction costs, and of course maintenance costs. From the point of view of maintenance costs the comparison is not an easy one. In two-story buildings, some operating and maintenance costs can be put on the tenant, with varying degrees of success. Individual heating units can be simpler than central systems. Responsibility for grounds can sometimes be allocated to tenants. There are no public halls, and public lighting is at a minimum, etc., etc. On the other hand, roof areas, gutters, leaders, chimneys, flashings and many other high-maintenance items are far greater in extent, and there is invariably a greater network of driveways and walks to be maintained and cleared of snow. No general answer can be given to the problem. I only mention it as one that must be evaluated, not only from the point of view of land usage and initial cost, but from the point of

view of maintenance. The answers are not easy ones—we have to evaluate and weigh dissimilar factors. It is a little like having to judge apples and cauliflower for the same prize in a garden show. But evaluate we must—and we need to develop better techniques for evaluation—the ultimate common denominator being the fractions of a cent per month which make up the maintenance factor in rental charges.

Well, the dwelling type is determined and then we arrive at the multitude of decisions that make up the contract documents. In the field of design proper—aside from material selection—there are so many decisions to be made that should be based on careful study and wide experience, and too often aren't.



The question of flat roofs versus pitched roofs is one charged with too much emotional content now. For a hundred years most multi-family housing in our biggest cities was successfully built with flat roofs. Then we got blanket insulation and got into trouble. We then tried to apply, to flat roofs, ventilating experience based on attic spaces, and got into more

trouble. So we were advised to abandon flat roofs in non-fireproof construction, which of course isn't the answer. The answer lies in a real research program based on experience—heaven knows there is plenty of experience but it's scattered and not available in one place as source data.

The trouble with most publicly financed research is that it has to be too careful in its conclusions to be useful. The Bureau of Standards reports, containing much important data, need to be incorporated in a program that doesn't fear lobby pressures for using trade names in unfavorable conclusions. I would like to see a central research and information service available to housing authorities. It might be financed with a small fraction of a percent of the bond issue for each project, in return for which the authority would receive confidential reports of a general sort and of such specific nature as it might request, from a cooperative-financed research agency. After all, a housing authority is a corporate entity usually investing millions of dollars in long-term projects, the success or failure of which is greatly affected by maintenance costs, and there is no reason why it should not be able to buy proper



information on which to base its investment. The return would be enormous.

Finally, I would like to mention, somewhat at random, a couple of the sort of items that we try to keep on every maintenance check list. In site planning, we all know that large simple areas of grass are much easier to maintain than many little cut-up areas. The cost of cutting and maintaining grass is proportional to linear feet of edge, not square feet. Fencing for grass areas and Keep-Off signs should be ready the moment the grass is planted and should be included in construction contracts. Tenants' habits are far easier to control before bad habits are formed. Where we want a permanent and effective psychological barrier, we are using second-hand painted two-inch pipe set about two feet above ground, embedded in concrete about eighteen inches below grade, and strung with number nine wire. A good physical barrier, instead of the usual chain-link fence is wooden post and rail fencing about four feet high. It costs about a dollar a foot installed, and if white locust posts and chestnut rails are used it will last many, many years. To keep the kids off the rails we plant a rampant climbing rose, such as

Paul's Scarlet, about six feet on centers. These cost less than three dollars each, planted. So, for under a dollar and a half a foot, we have durable, attractive, effective fencing at half the cost of the usual steel project fencing. We are finding that it is wise to set fencing just inside the edge of black-top walks and in drying yard areas rather than in the grass. It makes grass cutting along edges possible with a power mower and avoids the necessity for hand trimming.



Now let's jump over from a site example to an instance of designing for low maintenance in the building proper. Public halls are, of course, a major maintenance problem, for here people seem to unload all their pent-up resentments at the expense of the building. Either glazed walls or rough walls seem to be most effective against marking—nothing in between. And the color of walls should be a dull one. We compensate by making ceilings and soffits of stairs just as bright and colorful as possible—the bright color is where it can't be defaced. Public-stair entrance doors present an object of scratching and marking up second only to the interiors of telephone booths. One day while

I was telephoning in Grand Central Station in New York I noticed a booth interior of pebbled stainless steel which showed not a scratch or pencil mark. Since then we have been laminating pebbled stainless steel to flush entrance doors, and binding the edges with extruded aluminum. They defy sabotage. The steel product is called Rigidized metal and it is made in Buffalo.

These are only two of the areas where good design should be thoroughly studied for low maintenance. There are so many other areas and problems where I have opinions based on twenty-two years of designing and building housing—and on almost thirty thousand dwelling units that have gone through our office. I have opinions, but in so many places I wish I really knew or that I could ask someone who really knows. For example, I would like really to *know* the answer to the question of alu-

minum versus steel for windows; of the double-hung versus the casement sash. I have opinions but I don't *know* the answer, and I believe the answer is knowable. It will take some real concentrated testing and study of experience—all without benefit of sales chatter and pressure.

We have ourselves operated a small but active research laboratory for housing studies at Bedford Village, outside New York, since 1940, and have an inkling of what can be done, and I hope to continue research in the physical aspects of housing at Princeton. But the industry is a tremendous one, the risks of experimenting on actual projects are great, and the day must come when we as a profession, and our clients the housing authorities, will have access to information and data now understandably obscured by promotional paraphernalia, or emasculated by governmental caution. I hope we can work jointly towards that end.

## A Summer School Abroad

THE BUREAU OF UNIVERSITY TRAVEL, a non-profit educational institution of some 60 years' standing, announces a number of educational tours for 1953. One of these

is a traveling seminar to see and study the monasteries and cathedrals in Romanesque France. It will be led by Dr. Kenneth J. Conant, Professor of Architecture

at Harvard, sailing June 24 from New York. Details of this and the following tours may be had from the Bureau of University Travel, Newton, Mass.

The European Seminar, visiting Scotland, England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Scandinavia, and Austria, with extensions to Germany, Belgium, Holland, Greece and Egypt.

The Coronation Tour, seeing rural England by motor car and coronation week in London; extension tour to the Channel Islands, Normandy, Brittany, Paris.

Mexico and South America, two comprehensive tours in collaboration with the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America. Under the direction of Hubert Herring, author and lecturer.

## Books & Bulletins

ROOTS OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE. Edited by Lewis Mumford. 462 pp. 6" x 9". New York: 1952: Reinhold Publishing Corp. \$7.

In editing this assembly of essays reaching back to Horatio Greenough, John Burroughs, Montgomery Schuyler, Louis Sullivan, and many others, Lewis Mumford has given us, in his own contribution, and in concentrated form, a picture of how our architecture of today came to be what it is.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE RENOVATION OF THE EXECUTIVE MANSION. Compiled, under direction of the Commission, by Edwin Bateman Morris. 124 pp. 8½" x 11". Washington: 1952: U. S. Government Printing Office. \$2.50.

A comprehensive report on the extensive rebuilding of the White House, with photographs, drawings and full-color illustrations. Being a Government report, it is available at a surprisingly low price.

82 DISTINCTIVE HOUSES FROM ARCHITECTURAL RECORD. 448 pp. 8½" x 11½". New York: 1952: F. W. Dodge Corp. \$8.

A selection of houses originally published in *Architectural Record*, representing regional variations and size variations in contemporary work. Excellent photographs, plans, and some details.

PAINTING TREES AND LANDSCAPES IN WATERCOLOR. By Ted Kautzky. 120 pp. 7" x 10". New York: 1952: Reinhold Publishing Corp. \$9.95.

Another of Ted Kautzky's stimulating guides, which are almost

as good as personal lessons under the master himself.

**MEXICO'S MODERN ARCHITECTURE.** By I. E. Myers, in cooperation with the National Institute of Fine Arts of Mexico. 264 pp. 8¼" x 10¼". New York: 1952: Architectural Book Publishing Co., Inc. \$12.

An excellent collection of photographs, with plans, illustrating the march of architectural progress found below the border. There are included some photographs and plans of the extraordinary University City.

**OUR WORLD FROM THE AIR.** By E. A. Gutkind. 258 pp. 10¾" x 11½". New York: 1952: Doubleday & Co., Inc. \$7.50.

As Lewis Mumford points out in his introduction to this remarkable work, here for the first time is a book that enables us, in studying city planning, topography, sociology, transportation, and many other activities of mankind, to rise above the earth and look down in a vastly enlarged perspective. The author's selection of over 400 aerial photographs reflects

the fact that he is at once a town planner, sociologist, and geographer.

**ARCHITECTURAL GRAPHICS.** By C. Leslie Martin. 224 pp. 8½" x 11⅛". New York: 1952: The Macmillan Company. \$4.

A textbook by the Associate Professor of Architectural Design in the University of Cincinnati. It covers graphic representation for the student up through perspective and shades and shadows.



### Society of Architectural Historians Award

THE SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS has presented its 1953 award, for the outstanding contribution to architectural history by an American author, to Vincent J. Scully, Jr., and Mrs. Antoinette F. Downing for their book "The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island," published by Harvard University Press. It was briefly reviewed in the December 1952 JOURNAL.

## Scholarships and Fellowships Awarded

WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY announces the grant of the 18th annual Schweinfurth Travel Award to Charles E. Rimer, of Punxsutawney, Pa. Mr. Rimer will attend the summer session at

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the American Art School at Fontainebleau. Alternates for the award this year were Milan Srnka, of East Cleveland, Ohio, and Edward L. Reimel, of Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.

AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME announces the award of Rome Prize Fellowships in architecture for the year beginning October 1, 1953, to Robert L. Myers, of

Winston Salem, N. C., and Warren A. Peterson, Jamestown, N. Y. Mr. Myers holds a Master of Architecture degree from Harvard University and is now connected with The Architects Collaborative. Mr. Peterson is a graduate student at Yale University. The jury: William Platt, F.A.I.A., Chairman, Pietro Belluschi, F.A.I.A., Walker O. Cain, Alfred Easton Poor, F.A.I.A., and Hugh Stubbins, Jr.



## Architects Read and Write

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



### I CHOSE TO BUILD PEOPLE

BY FATHER EVERETT R. HARMAN, Salt Lake City, Utah

Correcting some details of a paragraph in the *Memo* for September 15, 1952, and telling some of his schoolmates (who include President Stanton and many who are now Fellows) why he changed his field from building to people

IT was after the first war, before entering M. I. T., that the confusion in the world started me thinking that the greatest design problem today is to build people, who will not destroy each other. Architects and engineers may be able to build skyscrapers, span the oceans and explore the moon, but someone is needed to design a pattern that all men will live by without destroying each other, the great works of civilization and every basis of all human culture.

At one time I wanted to develop at Catholic University in Washington, D. C.; a great art and architectural center of culture and education for the guidance and service of the Clergy, so that they would know how to use qualified professional assistance in solving their building problems. With this in mind and with a half dozen professional friends, we organized the Liturgical Arts Society in New York City, consisting primarily of architects, artists and clergy and

which now publishes the *Liturgical Arts Quarterly*. But circumstances beyond my control prevented my continuing this task. I regained my health in California and re-evaluated my original idea.

The emphasis had to be on people. Though the profession was willing enough to cooperate, the clergy were not ready to listen to my ideas. But at least, the task of arousing interest had been started and has grown considerably since then.

My chief difficulty was in not having esthetic principles, other than an authoritarian approach, with which to promote my ideas, though I knew from my training in design that such principles exist. As a result, instead of being ordained upon the completion of my theological studies, I began graduate work in esthetics. Though my advanced study of philosophy gave me a better understanding of beauty and the principles of design underlying it, I was not satisfied until I pursued my search into the field of modern psychology, where excellent work in experimental esthetics was being done.

Because art is expression—and expresses personality, I made a thorough study of personality and its disorders and maladjustments. During the depression, in my guidance work, I learned that per-

sonality disorders were at the root of the illness of half of the hospitalized persons in the nation; of many unhappy and broken homes, and frustrated lives that lacked proper channels of self-expression. In my personnel work in big war industries that followed, I found that personality disorders contributed much to the strife between management and labor. In world affairs I was sure that industrial maladjustments were the cause behind the enemies of our American way of life. But there was not much that I could do about it.

A few years ago, a former classmate from seminary days, now a bishop, encouraged me to review my theology and to be ordained. This I did at the old mission at Santa Barbara, which caused California Council staffer, Dorothy Shopwin, to think that I had joined the Franciscans. Though I found at the old mission community life that approached Utopia, my future was already committed to the Bishop of Salt Lake City. I left the Mission with feelings similar to those experienced last when our class at Technology broke up at graduation and scattered throughout the nation.

The other correction refers to my membership in the A. I. A. I did not relinquish my membership in The Institute, because I still enjoy the fellowship of architect

friends. Somehow it gives me the feeling that I am still a builder, though a builder of people, of broken lives and homes, instead of the buildings that I had originally been trained to design.

Some day I still hope to find time to write my philosophy of design that has become a philosophy of life—of building lives and society,

according to the objective principles of design that we learned in college and that fit so well into the philosophy of Christian living.

Somehow, I will always feel that I am first and last a builder by nature, as well as by training and present occupation, and it will always be a pleasure for me to renew contact with architect friends.

## Calendar

*April 8-10:* Second Regional Conference, Western Mountain District, A.I.A., Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs, Colo.

*April 18-May 10:* Exhibition of "Contemporary Swiss Architecture," assembled by Alfred Roth, Texas Fine Arts Association, Austin, Tex.

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

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

*April 27-May 8:* British Industries Fair, London and Birmingham, England.

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

*May 28:* All entries for the A.I.A. National Honor Awards must be shipped on or before this date to be eligible for an award.

*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.

*July 11-August 24:* Creative Art Workshop and conducted field tour for the study of art treasures of France and Italy, under the direction of Andre Racz. Information from Margit Pinter, c/o British-American Tours, 542 Fifth Ave., New York 36, N. Y.

*September 21-27:* 3rd U.I.A. Congress, Lisbon, Portugal. Details obtainable from Union Internationale des Architectes, 15 Quai Malaquais, Paris.

*September 29-October 2:* National Electrical Industries Show, 69th Regiment Armory, New York, N. Y.

*October 4-25:* Exhibition of "Contemporary Swiss Architecture," assembled by Alfred Roth, Addison Gal-

lery of American Art, Andover, Mass.

October 6-9: International Church-  
mans Exposition, Chicago Coliseum,  
Chicago, Ill.

October 14-17: Convention of the  
California Council of Architects,  
Coronado Hotel, Coronado, San Diego,  
Calif.



## Necrology

According to notices received at The Octagon  
between December 10, 1952 and March 15, 1953

- AYRES, LESLIE F.  
Indianapolis, Ind.
- BLAIR, WALTER D., F.A.I.A.  
New York, N. Y.
- BOINEST, RICHARD LEROY  
Anniston, Ala.
- BRANHAM, ROBERT WINGFIELD  
Atlanta, Ga.
- BROWN, CLIFFORD C.  
Dayton, Ohio
- CHRISTENSEN, WILLIAM OLE  
Dallas, Tex.
- COLLINS, SAMUEL J.  
Staunton, Va.
- DE LA HAYE, ELIAS FRANCIS, JR.  
Daytona Beach, Fla.
- EAGEN, JAMES HAROLD  
Pittsburgh, Pa.
- EDMUNDS, JAMES R., JR., F.A.I.A.  
Baltimore, Md.
- ERNST, ELMORE GEORGE  
Stockton, Calif.
- FRANKLIN, GEORGE BENJAMIN  
Kansas City, Mo.
- GAYLORD, JOSEPH HOWARD  
Ft. Worth, Tex.
- HARVEY, GEORGE VICTOR  
Englewood, N. J.
- HAYES, WILLIAM H.  
New York, N. Y.
- HOLDERNESS, CLAUD C.  
Carlsbad, N. M.
- HUESMANN, LOUIS BERNARD  
Rutherford, N. J.
- HUNT, F. ALBERT  
Rye, N. Y.
- KAMPER, LOUIS  
Detroit, Mich.
- KELLY, JOSEPH R.  
Los Angeles, Calif.
- KRIMMEL, EDMUND  
Philadelphia, Pa.
- LEE, WALTER H.  
Cincinnati, Ohio
- MACMILLIN, EDWARD MILTON  
Cleveland, Ohio
- MCCARTY, J. E.  
Columbus, Ohio
- PARKINSON, ALBERT EDWARD  
LaCrosse, Wis.
- SAFFORD, NOEL ROSS  
Green Bay, Wis.
- SCHILLING, EDWARD A.  
Detroit, Mich.
- SOUTHGATE, DONALD W.  
Nashville, Tenn. -
- SUTHERLAND, SAMUEL JOSEPH  
Milwaukee, Wis.
- WHEELER, CARNALL  
Ft. Smith, Ark.
- WOLFE, LAWRENCE, F.A.I.A.  
Pittsburgh, Pa.
- ZINK, JOHN J.  
Baltimore, Md.

APRIL, 1953



## The Editor's Asides

THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ENTERTAINED by S. N. Behrman's account of the life of Sir Joseph Duveen will be interested in knowing that Fifth Avenue, New York, is losing the monumental structure that Sir Joseph built to house and display the art treasures that were his stock in trade. In 1910 Duveen commissioned René Sargent of Paris to base his design on one of the terminal pavilions of Jacques Ange Gabriel's French Ministry of Marine, on the edge of the Place de la Concorde. Horace Trumbauer was the collaborating architect on this side of the water. This gem of the eclectic period gives way to a 15-story office building.

OUR HAT IS OFF to the editors of *Line* magazine for the success of their first issue for 1953—the work of architectural students for their fellows throughout the schools. The Institute extended very modest help with funds a year or two ago, but the magazine's most pressing problem at present, as with any young publication, is a financial one. To help bridge the gap between publishing expense and circulation revenue, the editors have asked me to say that they

are offering patron subscriptions at \$10. The subscriber in this class would receive all issues of *Line* published this year, and his name would be enrolled in a special list of patrons to be published beginning with the forthcoming issue. The address: Line Magazine, Inc., 178 Stanton St., New York 2, N. Y.

THOSE WHO READ C. M. Deasy's account of the Southern California Chapter's experience with TV (March 1953 *JOURNAL*) will be interested in hearing that a second 26-weeks program started Feb. 19 at 8 PM—Thursday evenings at 8-8:30 PM instead of Sunday evenings at 6-6:30 PM as last year. We suspect that the encore is largely due to the experience-developed skill of Deasy himself as master of ceremonies. Here's hoping the professionals do not entice him away from his amateur standing.

LAST SUMMER, Regional Director John Richards and Mrs. Richards visited France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway. The trip was unusual in that the main search was in rented cars for out-of-the-ordinary

sights, restaurants, shops, and architectural game for a trigger-happy color camera. Mr. Richards had a log of the trip run off on a duplicating machine; it gives routes, hotels, car-renting sources, architects to look up, sights worth seeing, places to shop for leather, silver, and what-not. To anyone contemplating a trip abroad these notes may be of some help, and Mr. Richards will be glad to supply a copy. His address will be found on the third cover among the officers and directors.

WALLACE HARRISON, F.A.I.A., has been the recipient of bouquets and brickbats in plenty for the United Nations Headquarters, but the words of Trygve Lie, who as Secretary General can be regarded as the client, must have closed the account with a weighty item on the credit side: "I don't think I have ever made a happier appointment."

THE WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER presents a picture of a dancing acrobat juggling an astounding number of glittering balls. In the face of the 85th Convention in Seattle, it is said that one cannot distinguish between a list of members forming the Convention Steering Committee and a

complete roster of the Chapter membership. Knowing Waldo Christenson, the chairman, I am not surprised to find subcommittees reporting 950 hotel rooms now reserved . . . an all-day logging-camp tour planned for June 15 . . . a tour to Mt. Rainier, one around the city, one touring the Sound and another, Lake Washington . . . exhibits of Northwest arts and crafts . . . special housing and entertainment for visiting students . . . the inevitable cocktail party or two . . . a lounge for the ladies and one for teen-agers, with all sorts of excursions therefrom . . . and a cabaret-type dinner dance for all and sundry. But all the above is only a beginning in this vast enterprise.

PAUL GERHARDT, JR., Chicago City Architect, designed the Bridewell House of Correction on the campus scheme—with mere chain-link fencing instead of a high masonry wall. It reminds me of a remark made by the late Alfred Hopkins, who designed several prisons that looked more like universities: "If we keep this sort of thing up, the gangster of tomorrow will have to enter the name of his son at birth, as is done in some of our exclusive prep schools."

# *“Something is rotten in the state of design...”*

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Nevertheless, another article in the April issue reports, the state of modern design has never been healthier. “The Next America will be the age of great architecture,” it says. “Already visible in the work of John Yeon is the great art of tomorrow's architecture. Enriched and functional, with beauty and vitality, it leads the way to a golden age in American life.” And 10 pages are devoted to Mr. Yeon's latest phase in one of his rare and recent houses in Oregon, with a thoroughly illustrated discussion of his significance today.

We consider the April issue of **HOUSE BEAUTIFUL** the most important in our 57-year history. We urge you to read it.

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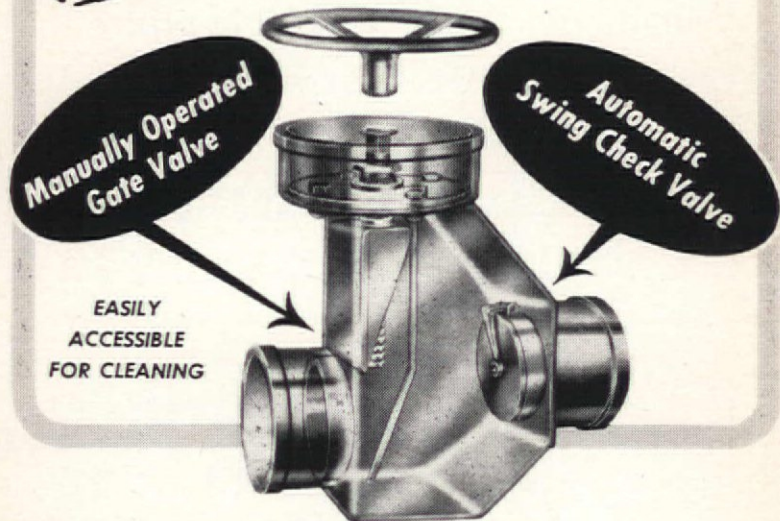
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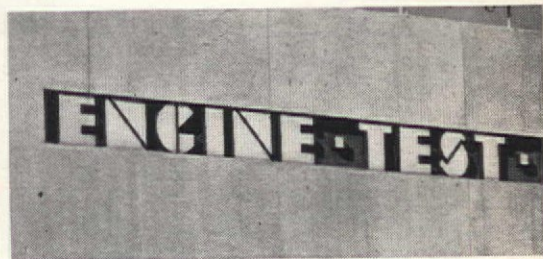
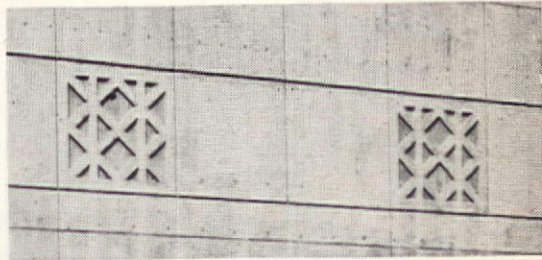
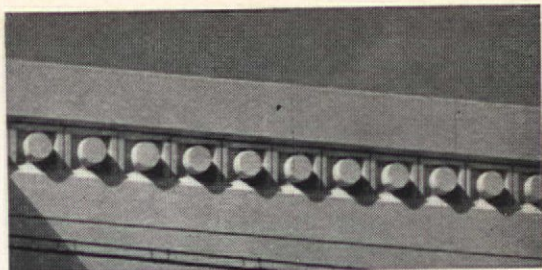
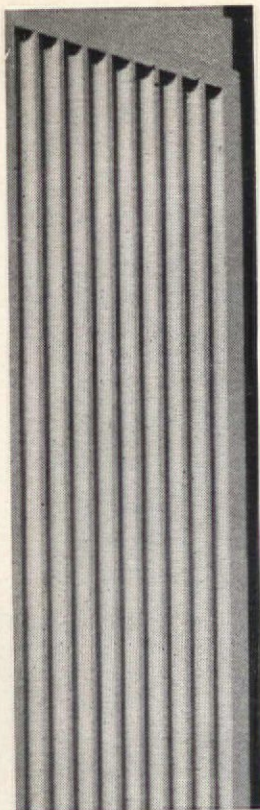
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
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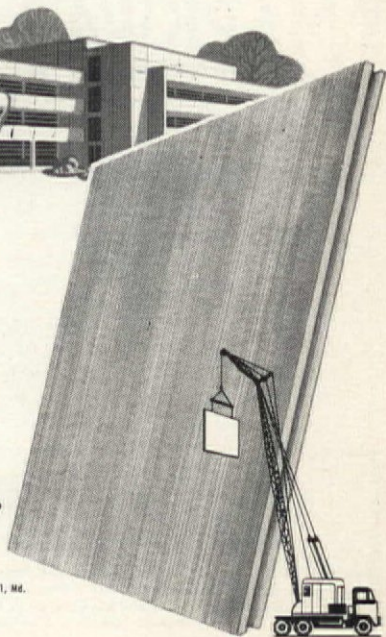
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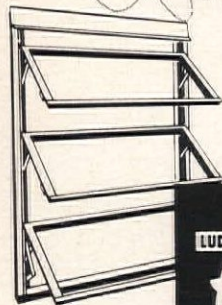
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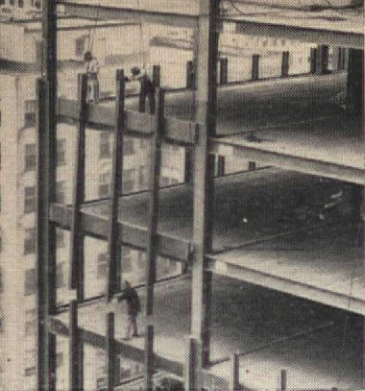
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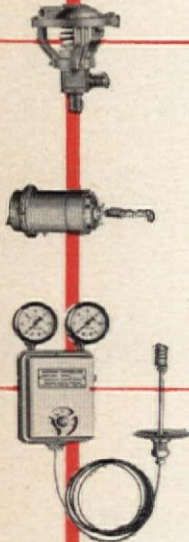


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