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## What of Architecture?

By LOUIS LA BEAUME, F. A. I. A.

SO much has been written during the past few years, and so much will undoubtedly be written during the next few, concerning the dire plight of civilization, so-called, that anyone, with even a modicum of humility, must apologize for contributing to the torrent of words in which we are being smothered.

It is, perhaps, only human to consider any interruption of our placid way of life, or any change in the existing order, as something in the nature of a crisis. Life, however, is only a series of crises, birth being the first and death being the last, and perhaps the mildest. Always we are in tension, and always we move from change to change. Some of these changes are almost imperceptible; others seem uncomfortably violent. With reasonable health and strength, however, we manage to survive most of them, up to the last great moment of dissolution.

But baffled by the inscrutability of events, we are often apt to lose our courage and question the high purpose of the struggle. Just now the morale of millions seems to be at a pretty low ebb. Dazed and flabbergasted by the tumble we have taken since the summer of 1929, we wail and wonder if the world, or at least our world, is coming to an end.

Architects are a peculiarly sensitive group, else they would not be worthy of the name. Are they more or less courageous than their fellow men? I wonder. They have been wont to flatter themselves a little, but they are a class apart, seeing more clearly than most, the vision of an ordered world of beauty. In a sense, I think they are a class apart; in a sense they are prophets. But the prime requisite of a true prophet is never to lose faith. Architects have not always, I regret to say, been worthy of that test.

Just after the end of the war (if it has ended) there was a good deal of shuddering throughout the architectural profession, more in fact, than during the fighting years. A good many people were haunted by the phantasm that architecture, as a profession, was doomed to be engulfed by other professions, or by groups composed of engineers, contractors, realtors, bankers or even jerry-builders. Were these fears well founded? Some of us never thought so, for despite the blatant and gaudy coloring of certain lusty blooms, the violet was found to possess an integrity all its own. It can scarcely be denied that in spite of the dire predictions of 1919, as to the fate of the violet (the architect), the intervening years have seen him grow in power, prestige and accomplishment. The ten years following the war witnessed an era of building on a scale never perhaps equalled in the history of the world, and the architect has his fair share in this orgy. Either because of his real or suspected ability, he was called upon to play a leading part in the drama of expansion. So, from the material point of view, at least, he prospered. Whether or not his moral growth kept pace is perhaps a moot question.

Now, however, the shock of his sudden fall from power unnerves him, and he begins quite humanly to philosophise and to toss off moral platitudes. "When the devil is sick, the devil a saint would be; when the devil is well, the devil a saint is he."

In all of our technical journals, much space is being given over to discussions as to what the architect may do, or ought to do, to lead Israel out of the wilderness. He is being urged to make some important contribution to the solution of our economic dilemma, and he is being tempted to grapple with problems which baffle our most expert states-

manship. As a citizen, of course, the architect is under a distinct obligation to contribute all he can toward the evolution of a better, fairer state; as an architect, his obligation is now, as always, to contribute all he can to a better and fairer architecture.

All this talk of surveys and tabulations of our bulding needs, city planning, municipal improvements and housing is well enough, and some of these surveys are certainly within the purview of the profession of architecture, and should, no doubt, be undertaken largely under architectural leadership, but God knows, there is scarcely a community of any size in the country which has not surfeited itself with surveys these past thirty years. That our American cities need making over almost from stem to stern is undeniable, and that we, as architects, are competent to do the making is undeniable also. There is scarcely a Chapter in the Institute which, if it set its composite mind to the task, could not develop the most Utopian, and ultimately practical, plans for the architectural regeneration of our cities. The nub of the difficulty in the realization of these plans lies, however, in the very structure of our government, and in the perfectly understandable inertia of our citizenship.

In European cities, huge, municipal projects—recreational, residential and official—have been consummated since the war. Vast housing projects in Germany, Austria, Holland and Belgium excite our admiration. How do these less prosperous countries do these things, and why? Many of them are municipally financed, though some undoubtedly by private syndicates or cooperative groups of workers. The social vision, whatever the economic soundness of these enterprises may be, can only excite our admiration. Our failure to do equally well must only contribute to our chagrin. What then can be done at the moment, to make America a happier place for architects, no less than for all the elements of the building industry, and for our citizenship at large?

On every hand we hear the statement that the country is overbuilt. No more factories, no more office buildings, no more apartment houses are needed, or will be needed in the near future. If this is so, it would seem that any revival of the building industry, entailing the necessary services of the architectural profession, must come from a program of building of a non-revenue producing nature. Under this heading we naturally think of all sorts of institutional buildings—colleges, schools,

hospitals, sanitariums, municipal, state and federal structures. The present Federal Building Program is insignificant in volume, and the present state of the Federal Treasury might seem to discourage further large expenditures, but many sound economists hold that great, public building programs by the federal, state and municipal governments, as well as increased institutional programs, will more than repay for themselves in the relief of unemployment and the stimulation of business activity.

The profounder question as to what may be done to avert the recurrence of the debacle which is distressing us, still remains to be answered. It is not primarily an architectural question, although architects who have lent themselves to unsound schemes of financing, who have been seduced by the national mania for bigness, who have sold themselves as mercenaries to unscrupulous or unwise promoters, have their share of blame to answer for in the present depression.

We hear much today of a closer coordination between all of the elements in the building industry—realtors, bankers, contractors, etc. Surely, as architects, we must work in close cooperation with these elements, but we should never lose sight of the fact that our main function is that of architect. If we are to survive, we must hold this function pure. An architect is a man who, above all others, is equipped by training, to plan and design buildings for the use and enjoyment of his fellow men. He must remain an artist and cannot become a promoter, a realtor or a financier without tarnishing the only qualities which he uniquely possesses as separating him from other men. Need we despair? I think not. The dreams we have been dreaming will all gradually come true, if they are dreams worth the realization. Right now, we are wallowing in the trough, but presently we shall roll up to the crest, even though the crest be not quite mountain high, as it seemed to be some years ago.

In the "Life of Charles Bulfinch," there is an anecdote from which I have always taken some comfort. A friend asked Mr. Bulfinch one day if he expected his son to follow in his footsteps and become an architect. "No, indeed," said Mr. Bulfinch. "Why not?" asked the friend. "Well," replied Mr. Bulfinch, "I have built most of the important buildings that seemed to be necessary, and I don't think that there will be anything much for him to do."



## What of Architects?

By ROBERT D. KOHN, F. A. I. A.

*Editor's Note:—In reply to a request from a Chapter officer for a Presidential message to his Chapter, President Kohn answered as follows. The title was added by the Editor.*

YOU have asked me to send your Chapter a sort of presidential message, and incidentally to suggest subjects that your Chapter could take up and discuss during the coming season. I wish that I might send you a cheerful reply, to say to you that all is well with this, the best of worlds, and that we can devote ourselves to our Art, now and forever hereafter, unhampered by mere material considerations—but alas, the truth is other.

It is a commonplace to say that we are going through a critical period in which the whole world is involved. We know only too well that we cannot consider the situation of our profession apart from that of all the other groups since that would result only in near-sighted conclusions as inconsequential as those of the far-famed "tailors of Tooley Street." But can we not consider our problems in so broad a way as to bring the results in line with the search for a planned economy which is being urged today on the world at large. While such studies are difficult and the causes and cures for our economic troubles are apparently remote, yet it seems to me to very worth while to devote a certain amount of time to such considerations none the less.

Perhaps we can find guidance among the economists, both political and social, despite the fact that there are as many different theories among them as there are men. My own interest is in those few philosophers among them who have given thought to the possibilities of a planned production for use. We probably all agree that there are invaluable talents going to waste in our profession; excellent artists who never get a fair chance to show what they can do. The question is are we to continue to depend on mere chance for an opportunity to practice our art. Is it to continue to be a hit-and-miss proposition? Or can the subject of necessary building construction be studied as will be the production of goods and chattels? How would we go about determining such production which is for real need as against what has been, a production solely dependent on salesmanship and hoped-for profits? To my mind this will be the test of the value of our thinking in our emergency, namely: whether we consider the present as a depression, a slump from normal and wait for a resumption, or attack it as a period for fundamental reconstruction.

So much for my philosophy about which everyone else may differ. Now to report on more practical matters. The Institute has under way certain things which have some bearing on the present situation. The most obvious of these is the question of

Public Works. Under the leadership of Mr. La Beume real progress has been made in the last few months. There have been some unfortunate (or fortunate?) differences of opinion on certain questions of fact between the committee and the government. Unofficial critics of the government have said unkind things and evoked rather sharp retorts. But it is a fact that the employment of outside architects by the Federal Government is more widespread than ever before and the appointments are not confined to the eastern part of the country nor to a particular group of architects. But it appears that the Treasury Department considers the engagement of (over a hundred) outside architects as merely an emergency measure to be abandoned as soon as we get back to normal. In accordance with the Institute's policy that such employment is essential for the permanent improvement of government architecture it is our task to avert this threatened setback. This would be a fitting subject for discussion at Chapter meetings throughout the country.

It is generally said that there is only one field in which we are not overbuilt, that of residence building. This is said to be the only form of construction that offers a reasonable economic field for construction work this coming year. Can we do anything to advance low-cost home building? Can architects join with real estate men, builders and bankers to promote projects of group housing? Perhaps architects still think too much in terms of a house as a unit instead of considering the group as a unit properly planned in relationship to each other and to future development. The press has urged this as the field for emergency action in the building industry; that over 98% of the people of the United States have an income of less than \$5,000, and that a very large percentage of the dwellings in which these people live are antiquated and inferior. We know that we have to meet the problem of secondary financing, that is to say the providing of funds to meet the differences between the first mortgages and let us say 90% of actual cost. Can we help create local or national emergency funds for this purpose as was done some years ago to finance the rebuilding of certain cyclone destroyed areas of the middle West?

The Institute has encouraged a move towards the unification of the profession. This, too, needs the help of local groups. It seems agreed that we are going to propose some scheme to bring every practising architect in the United States into relation with the Institute. In the case of Califor-

nia, where there is a state society which includes every registered architect, it will be easy to give such state societies representation at our convention. Ought we to try to work a similar scheme in other states where there is no such group? You will remember that the California association takes in every registered architect (unless he declines to allow his name to be used) whether he pays dues or not. Actually they find a very large majority pay the small dues and only three or four out of a thousand have declined to permit themselves to be listed as members. When California goes to the State Legislature on any matter interesting the profession, they can properly say that they represent the entire profession of the state, less four. Every architect in the state knows what the Association is doing. If we work out the right kind of a plan (and we need your help for that) we will be in touch with every architect in the United States—in a few years' time—through his state association and he will know first-hand what the Institute is doing and why.

Considered as a factor in reconstruction, probably the fourth field of importance in the Institute's present work is its effort to get such cooperation between the major groups of the building industry as to make an effective working unit of the industry as a whole. With the approval of other groups, the Committee on Industrial Relations of the Institute invited eighteen national associations to send delegates to a conference of the building industry held at The Octagon in Washington, September 23 and 24, (each organization invited sent representatives and they formed the Construction League of the United States as reported upon in the September number of THE OCTAGON). We did not propose creating a super-organization of the building industry. We hoped that all elements concerned in building design and construction would agree to participate in periodic conferences at which the officers of every national group will learn from every other group what the organization is doing in its own field, which is of value to the industry as a whole. Some Chapters of the Institute have started to do this in their own localities through local building congresses. This kind of cooperative effort will unquestionably help every element participating. It helps most of all any group which takes the leadership because of the value of its suggestions and the progressive nature of its projects.

At a time like this we must be looking out for those more sorely tried than we are. Among these are the Juniors, the younger men just entering the profession. What of the thousand men who have been graduated from the architectural schools in the last two years, and thus thrown on an exceptionally unkind world? I hope that every Chapter of the Institute will hold at least one meeting this winter to which it invites every young architect it can get hold of. If we do no more than make these young-

sters feel that there is a spirit of fellowship between us (and incidentally we sit down to dinner with them) we will have cheered up a lot of young men who need cheering up worse than we do.

And then, there are the thousands of draftsmen who are out of work. We will all have to take hold again this winter and try to help take care of some of these of our own group who are suffering most. Perhaps something is to be learned from the report of the emergency employment plan for architectural draftsmen carried on last winter by the New York Chapter. While only a limited number of men could be put to work in New York (in the Small House Service Bureau) because of limited funds, those in charge of that work are convinced that it did more than employ the unemployed and turn out a few house designs. The men thus employed actually learned a lot about small house design in the course of their work. And the volunteers who guided the work and those who gave the money were doubly rewarded. Probably there are other communities which can adopt some such scheme if they find themselves up against the same serious situation.

These are the larger problems of the winter as I see them. But there are matters of current technical interest which we can use to keep our members interested in meetings in this period when they have time to study such problems. At the New England Regional Conference in July the architects visited the many important new buildings in the neighborhood of Hartford and New Haven and then held an "architectural clinic" on these buildings behind closed doors; for members only! It developed into the most exhilarating lot of criticism of architectural design that has been heard for many a moon. Why should not architects frankly discuss designs of current buildings between themselves, not as questions of personal taste but as logical analyses? The Boston Chapter reports that it is to hold a series of "architectural clinics" this winter on other kinds of topics. One of them I know is to be on the subject of leaky walls. I would like to hear that myself. I need it. And then there is no reason why, just because we are hard up, we need to forget aesthetics entirely. Every Chapter could have a wonderful time with evenings devoted to a discussion of modernism in architecture, and to the logical uses of the new materials and methods that are available.

This has grown into rather a lengthy answer to a very brief request. But there are a hundred other matters which I might have written about, so you really get off easily. There are so many things that interest our profession normally that in a time of stress like this they expand literally into the thousands. At least so it seems to me from the number that our brought to my attention in the course of each week! This is, therefore, both an explanation and an apology. I hope it may be of some help to you in steering your course for the winter.

## The Clinical Study of Architecture\*

By GEORGE H. GRAY, A. I. A.

ON one or two occasions when the Connecticut Chapter met for the inspection of recent buildings, Charles D. Maginnis, former Director of the New England Division of the Institute, was with it and joined in the discussion which followed. A copy of his last report to the Board of Directors recently came into my hands, and I was struck with his comments on our "Clinic," as he termed it. In correspondence with William Stanley Parker, President of the Boston Chapter, I found him using the same term—a term so well endorsed must be right, so it was officially adopted.

The idea is not new, but has been growing in the Connecticut Chapter until it has become an established procedure and an essential part of our bi-monthly meetings; and I think I may say the most vital and interesting part of the meetings,—the chief attraction.

That you may enter into the spirit of this idea, and possibly find something of interest for your own chapters, let me expand somewhat on the idea.

When feasible we arrange to have the architect of the building or a representative of his organization explain the requirements and anything unusual in general design and in construction. We are fortunate in having in our membership, Mr. Theodore Crane, Professor of Building Construction in the Sheffield School of Engineering, and the Yale School of Architecture, and Mr. S. R. McCandless, an honor graduate of the Harvard School of Architecture and professor of stage lighting in the School of Drama of Yale University, both of whom throw light on the technical aspects of building. There is a free exchange of views and experiences as the inspection progresses, and again when we assemble for the formal meeting.

We are this year arranging in advance a program for the entire year, so that we may cover the various fields of architectural interest. For example, at our regular bi-monthly meeting to be held in August, under the guidance of Mr. Vitale, we plan to spend the day in the eastern part of the state, visiting various types of landscape developments, intimately related to the siting and setting of residence and other buildings—designs originating not only in his office, but in the offices of other well known landscape architects.

This clinical method of study takes the architect out of his own organization and out of his own shell; from the drafting room atmosphere of tracing paper, soft pencils and soft erasers (and the hard as well)

into the atmosphere of building materials, building methods and buildings completed and in use. The ultimate results of our work, by which we must be judged, are not our designs as represented by drawings or by models, but the buildings in use.

McKim once said to one of the Rome fellows, as he was going abroad, "The American student needs to study building rather than buildings." So we are studying the materials and processes of building. We endeavor to make at least two visits to each building, one while in the advanced stages of construction, just before the plaster is on, so that we can see the general construction and all of its technical devices; the other after it is completed and occupied, when we can see its functioning and when we can ply the occupant with questions.

There is a wider application for this method. It is invaluable in helping the young student to design buildings in terms of materials, in brick and stone, steel and glass; rather than in terms of lines and shades and shadows on a plain surface of paper; or even in terms of a miniature model, of necessity too small to be of any use for the study of materials and details. The vocabulary of most of our students is a collection of historic motives and details. His familiarity with historic masterpieces may cover a wide range of buildings, but acquired mostly through photographs or other illustrations so small as to carry with them no adequate knowledge of the character of the materials. Hence, his vocabulary is superficial and hopelessly incompleting, the "material" of young designers (and many of the older designers also) is not the material of the building, but the "materiel" and technique of the drafting room. The well-laid foundation of training in analysis of program, logical arrangement of space, and the eye trained to good proportion cannot suffice to bridge the chasm between the studio and the completed building—the goal of architecture.

Be it said for McKim and his associates that however freely they may have used the vocabulary of the historical past, they knew their materials, and always designed in terms of *the* materials to be used. Out of this developed their unsurpassed faculty of choosing materials in proper scale,—the small brick with close joints in the New York Harvard Club, and the huge blocks of coarse travertine in the lobby of the Pennsylvania Railroad Station. Scattered about over the country we can find others who design knowingly in terms of materials.

The observant, thinking and independent young architect of our day, fresh from school, with his vocabulary limited to motives out of the historic past finds this chasm between him and the modern building, with modern uses, modern materials and modern methods of construction, and has a strong ten-

\*The substance of a talk before the Third Regional Conference of the New England Division. An important part of the Conference was visiting recently completed buildings in Hartford and New Haven.

dency to chuck the past into the discard and proceed along new and fresh lines. He does not do so, however, with any increased knowledge of materials, but follows the alluring lead of freshness and, unfortunately, of novelty. Lacking a knowledge of materials, his work in the new style, while fresh and novel, is as superficial as was the work of the old type and as unenduring. It is no contribution whatsoever to the progress of architecture. That is the rule; but there are, of course, exceptions.

When to thorough training in the best tradition of design is added knowledge of materials and some of the inspiration of genius, then we find buildings which will endure. Is it too much to demand of

the designers, or at least of each generation of designers, that their buildings shall constitute a contribution to the progress of architectural design? Rather is not that the test of whether or not we are headed in the right direction?

The address of Eliel Saarinen before the San Antonio Convention is in point here. The system of study at Cranbrook, which he outlines, has much in common with our "clinical" methods. While he goes much more into detail, I am delighted to find that his admirable analysis leads him to conclusions fundamentally similar. There is encouragement in even this much unanimity in this realm of apparent chaos.

## The Architect and the School Board

By JOHN J. DONOVAN, A. I. A.

*Extracts from an Address to the Convention of the Public Schools Business Officials' Association, at Fresno, California.*

**F**UNDAMENTALLY, the relationship between architect and client is similar to that which generally prevails between an attorney and his client and that of a physician and his patient. In every respect, save one, the interdependency, the principles of confidence, integrity, ethics and mutual respect are precisely the same. The one exception lies in the methods of approach or contact. With the lawyer and the physician the client and the patient seek the professional assistance, while in most cases, circumstances and custom ordain that the architect seek the client and make known to him that it would please him to serve such client. This isn't always the case, but it is true in most cases concerning public work and especially school work, so we may take it for granted that it is the basis to proceed on in following the presentation of this discussion.

You can readily see that the architect is immediately placed in what might be regarded as somewhat an unfavorable position to begin with and physically the first contact is quite the reverse to that between the attorney and his client and the doctor and his patient. This is probably responsible for more misunderstanding and failures in accomplishments than perhaps anything else in the relations of the architect and his work. The architect is compelled to sell himself and his services. That places the owner in the position of a buyer and all buyers sense the impulse to dictate terms and conditions. Bargaining follows, to be succeeded by doubt, misunderstandings and frictions and then perhaps by failure to accomplish anything like satisfactory results ultimately.

Then, only by dint of strength of character, by confidence in self, by capability, by thorough understanding of the problem, by thoroughness in execu-

tion, by zeal in ardor and by many other commendable attributes, can the architect emerge from the first disadvantage in which he is placed. As a consequence, the successful architect in school work must know his problem and its many attendant phases. Otherwise, he is forever bewildered and only serving as a follower of his client instead of properly assuming the lead.

Now, whether he is worth six per cent or ten per cent depends entirely upon the man and his capability to follow through. You and I know that a cheap professional man is usually worth less than his hire, no matter how low that may be; and we also know that those who try to engage professionals at low rates wake up to the fact that they have deceived themselves unwisely. You may say to me, "But we have had the services of men who have accepted low rates and have received excellent results." That may be true, but it was only due to the conscientiousness of the man and due too to the fact that advantage was taken of him and perhaps his circumstances at the time.

America has glorified its schools. It has poured boundless wealth into the problem in order that it may arrive at the highest pinnacle of achievement and it continuously pours more so that those who follow may have a fair chance of knowing the truth and that they may be equipped to be useful to themselves and to society. These fundamentals are the foundations of patriotism and love of country. So why should you strive to cramp your fellow worker and why should he be handicapped by cut fees in his effort to research and produce and create in order that humanity may participate in and enjoy the blessings of the mind of man.



## Ethics and Free Sketches

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PRACTICE OF THE DETROIT CHAPTER

**T**HE Principles of Practice of The American Institute of Architects, like those of any other profession, are a set of self-imposed rules of conduct devised to protect the best interests of the public with whom the profession is involved and thus to indirectly increase the prestige of the profession with that public to which it must look for its livelihood. They are the rules of conduct found from long experience to serve the best interests of the architect and of his client or prospective client and must not be regarded as restrictive, but rather as an aid to practice.

### *Standards of the Professions*

Your Committee feels that the situation in regard to ethical practice in the architectural profession is as good or better than in most other professions. This is not necessarily a statement to be proud of because all the professions have serious difficulties to face and there is evidence in architecture of ample room for improvement. The medical profession finds it necessary to keep up a constant fight to maintain their standards and the legal profession is today feeling the loss of public confidence due to unethical practice on the part of some of their members. The public also suffers because it is deprived of the services of the really able practitioner through loss of confidence in the whole profession brought on by the actions of some of its members.

### *Maintenance of Confidence*

The present economic depression brings with it a situation in our profession where members will be faced with strong temptation to act contrary to the Principles of Practice in the hope of immediate personal advantages. The Committee feels that in times like these it is doubly important to uphold the standards of the profession and retain and build up the confidence of the public—our future client. Let us not make the mistake that a few corporations and financial institutions have demonstrated in various sections of the country—that expediency justifies any action, regardless of how unethical or even illegal such action might be. Witness the enormous loss of faith on the part of the public in these cases and the consequent disastrous results to business.

### *Business in Architecture*

Your Committee believes that the best interests of the architectural profession, and of its individual members, can be served best by strict adherence to the Principles of Practice as laid down by The American Institute of Architects.

We have heard much in the last year or two of the cry that architecture is really a business instead of a profession; or if it isn't it should be. We take the contrary view, and hold that architecture's very existence depends on its practice being more purely professional. We do not mean to imply that its professional practice should not be conducted in the most business-like manner. On the contrary, it is of utmost importance that it be so conducted. We feel, however, that there has been much loose thinking and considerable loose talk about putting architecture on a business basis, and that this has tended to hurt the profession rather than help it. That the profession in the past has been criticized for being unbusiness-like is an urgent argument for more business-like conduct of our professional practice and not an argument for making of architecture a pure business. Remove from architecture its purely professional basis and it loses at once its greatest power for service. We fail to see where business in general has set any high ideal of service and we feel that architecture can do better than to pattern its methods after those of business.

### *Necessity of Cooperation*

The need for maintenance of our high standards is again apparent when we consider that unless architects measure up to what is being claimed for them our whole plan of public information concerning the profession breaks down.

The Committee can do little without the wholehearted cooperation of the members of the Chapter. We feel that we have had the cooperation of a majority, and we ask now for the active support of the entire membership.

### *An Illustration*

We have attempted from time to time to point out the good common sense of ethical practice—how it actually pays in dollars and cents. In one case of submission of free sketches in a "scramble" competition which we investigated this year, it was brought out that one competitor had expended the sum of \$750.00, not counting his own time, in preparation of his entry—and what were his chances of securing the commission? We venture to say that not one in three hundred and seventy-five. By the law of probability this means that to be reasonably sure of securing one such commission he would have to enter three hundred and seventy-five such "scrambles." Even with as low an average cost as \$100.00 for each entry he would be required to expend \$37,500.00 to secure one job. Rather a high sales cost. Actually the chances are incapable of calculation because it has been shown time and time

again that merit and ability hardly enter into the question. This man's action wasn't even good gambling. By the laws of probability his chances of winning were too small to warrant the expenditure, and if he continues playing such a game he is bound to lose his roll and probably his shirt also.

#### *Faithfulness to Standards*

To clear up this "scramble" competition evil by which the profession loses so much prestige we must have consistent action on the part of members. We need hardly point out the effect on a building committee about to select an architect in this manner, despite the advice of the Chapter to the contrary, when they find Chapter members elbowing their way in, each with a set of free sketches. It has, however, been abundantly proved all over the country that with consistent action on the part of Chapter members, building committees are quick to grasp the inadvisability of this method of selection from their own point of view.

#### *Investigation and Record*

The Committee has in the past year endeavored to follow up and investigate every reported violation of the Principles of Practice and sincerely hopes that this policy will be continued. It has endeavored

to correct conditions, first by education and persuasion of the individuals involved. It does not relish, but stands ready to use more drastic means where the situation requires. The Committee has established and will seek to perpetuate a permanent file, wherein will be preserved the records of all investigations of irregular conduct, together with the findings of the Committee. In cases where investigation shows conclusively that complaint or rumor of unprofessional conduct was unfounded or based on misunderstanding the records will not be preserved in this file.

#### *Conclusion*

In conclusion we wish to emphasize the value of mutual confidence on the part of all members in each other. This can only be brought about by every member playing the game fair and square and above board. If we have faith in what the Institute stands for and what it is doing for the profession then let us all play the game in the manner that the Institute prescribes—in short, in a thoroughly sportsmanlike manner.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON PRACTICE, DETROIT CHAPTER,  
Clair W. Ditchy, Member, and  
Henry F. Stanton, *Chairman*.

## With the Chapters

#### **Brooklyn Chapter—October Meeting**

The Chapter's regular dinner meeting was held at the Crescent Athletic Club on Monday, Oct. 26, 1931.

The Student Affiliate Committee reported that owing to the depression, there were but four students ready and able to do their share toward the support of the Atelier and it was voted temporarily to abandon this activity and renew it next season or when the student interest is again increased.

The Chapter made an appropriation for the unemployed and sent an appeal to all of its members to assist to their limit.

Paul Wunderlich gave a very interesting talk on the latest phases of heating, ventilating and air conditioning.

#### **Chicago Chapter—November Meeting**

The program of the next meeting of the Chicago Chapter is indicative of the interest in Chapter affairs by Chicago architects. Before this issue of THE OCTAGON is in the hands of the members, the meeting, scheduled for November 10, will have been held. The program follows:

#### **Speakers:**

Clarence W. Farrier, President, Chicago Chapter—Introductory remarks.

Howard L. Cheney, Past-President, Chicago Chapter—Presentation of the Gold Medal of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., to Ernest A. Grunsfeld, Jr., for the design of The Adler Planetarium.

Max Adler, Donor of the Planetarium to the City of Chicago—General remarks.

R. J. McLaren, First Vice-President of the Architects' Club of Chicago—Welcome to Alfred Granger, President of the Architects' Club of Chicago, from the Architects' Club and the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A.

Alfred Granger, President of the Architects' Club of Chicago—"Whither Architecture in Europe and America?"

*Exhibition:* There will be an exhibition of a selected group of drawings and sketches of the Lake Forest Foundation for Architecture and Landscape Architecture—Summer of 1931.

#### **Detroit Chapter—Annual Meeting**

Branson V. Gamber, President of the Chapter, explained his plan to omit the customary address by the retiring president. Believing that it would be more desirable he had asked each committee chairman to prepare a written report of the activities of his committee; thus the entire work of the past year would be reviewed. He expressed his regret that

the By-laws prevented the re-election of Frank Eurich, Jr., to the Board of Directors and publicly thanked Mr. Eurich for his able assistance during the past years.

President Gamber then read the slate for the election which had been presented by the Nominating Committee at the previous meeting:

President, Branson V. Gamber; Vice-President, C. William Palmer; Secretary, Arthur K. Hyde; Treasurer, Aloys F. Herman; Director (3-year term), William C. Weston.

Mr. Malcomson moved, Mr. Sukert seconded, that the By-laws be suspended and the secretary be instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for the slate as presented. Carried.

President Gamber thanked the members of the Chapter for their loyal support during the past year and their expression of confidence in the administration indicated by the re-election.

President Gamber gave a brief address as presiding officer of the incoming administration. He quoted from Robert D. Kohn, President of the Institute, who said in substance that the architect should not only be concerned with the practice of architecture, but should also lend his assistance to the solution of all community problems. President Gamber announced that his policy for the Detroit Chapter was to try and make it serve the community in every field in which it could give assistance.

Mr. Ditchy suggested the Chapter discuss the plans for Unification of the Profession as presented in the report of the National Committee on that matter, pointing out that such discussion would be of benefit to Mr. Sukert who is a member of the committee and would make it possible for Mr. Sukert to present the ideas of the Chapter to the next meeting of the committee.

Mr. Sukert suggested that the Chapter endorse the plan for a league of the construction industry of national scope as presented by President Robert D. Kohn in an article in the September issue of *THE OCTAGON*. President Gamber instructed the secretary to write a letter to President Kohn on this subject.

#### Madison Chapter—Notes

The copies of the minutes of the Chapter meetings received at The Octagon indicate that the heat of last summer, as well as the attraction of the hills, lakes and seashores, diminished little, if any, the interest and frequency of the meetings of the Madison Chapter. Regular monthly meetings were held throughout the entire summer.

The Chapter, with the interest of the profession in mind, has been successful in having a representation from the Chapter appointed on the State Architectural Licensing Board, which Board was created under a law recently enacted by the Legislature of that state (Wisconsin).

The Industrial Commission, which had the responsibility of selecting the members of this Board, selected John J. Flad, an Associate of the Chapter. Mr. Flad had the Chapter's unanimous endorsement.

The Secretary was directed, at the October meeting, to write a letter to the Industrial Commission, expressing the Chapter's appreciation of this appointment.

#### Minnesota Chapter—September Meeting

Louis Boynton Bersback, Vice-President of the Chapter, called the meeting to order at 7:30 P. M. September 17, after a good dinner at the Andrews Hotel, Minneapolis, where twenty-three members had gathered for the first fall meeting.

The Secretary read a letter from Member A. B. Dunham to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards in Chicago, relative to his application for registration to practice architecture in the State of Iowa. Mr. Dunham explained his stand and experiences in trying to get his license. Also read a letter from Emery Stanford Hall, Secretary-Treasurer of the N. C. R. B. in answer to Mr. Dunham's letter. It was moved that the Secretary write the Iowa Chapter asking their recommendation to the Iowa Board of Examiners that Mr. Dunham's application have favorable action.

The matter of the magazine, *Good Housekeeping*, having printed an article a few months back, indicating a certain house design could be erected for \$14,000.00, which was decidedly misleading, was discussed. Letters and telegrams from the magazine indicate they will correct the error in a subsequent issue.

In view of the fact that the General Electric Company of Schenectady, N. Y., proposed the erection of a new warehouse at Minneapolis, a letter was written to them suggesting that a local architect be selected to handle the work. At this time no answer has been received. It was voted that the matter be referred to the committee on work outside of Minneapolis.

The Unification Program as suggested by The American Institute of Architects was presented by Mr. Dorr, indicating the Institute's desire to form allied organizations headed up by the national organization. After considerable discussion it was voted to approve this program in principle.

#### Northern California Chapter—September Meeting

As a forerunner of the talks to follow during the evening, Henry H. Gutterston, President of the Chapter, spoke of the many matters which are before the Directors.

Mr. Garren spoke of the publication of the "Architecture and Building Weekly" as sponsored by the Chapter, and of the necessity of support from the architects in furnishing illustrative material in order to maintain its standard and make the publication a success.

Mr. Stringham outlined the plans of the Exhibit Committee for the biennial exhibit to be held in the summer of 1932, and for a preliminary exhibit to be held in November, 1931.

Albert J. Evers, Chairman of the Legislative Committee, reported upon legislative matters with which the committee had dealt during the past year.

As chairman of the joint committee to coordinate the activities of the Association and the Chapter, he also submitted a report, recommending various distribution of functions so that the efforts of the two organizations would not be overlapping. This report was approved by the Association. Mr. Guttererson announced that it had been approved in principle by the Directors of the Chapter and would later be submitted to the Chapter for action, subject to the approval of the Institute.

Harris C. Allen told of the formation of the Building Congress of California, and of its adoption by the California State Chamber of Commerce, as one of its major activities. Through this sponsorship, outstanding results are expected to follow.

The failure of architects, as a group, to establish themselves as leaders in a great art, was forcefully dwelt upon by Frederick H. Meyer.

It was his opinion that the recent development of State Associations, being inclusive of all architects in such areas, betokened a coming change. By this means, it would be possible when affiliated with and under the leadership of the Institute as a national body, to present a united force, capable of placing architecture on a much higher plane than in the past.

The motion was made and carried, that a letter be sent to Robert Orr, President of the State Association, stating the action of the Chapter in support of this program, and conveying its appreciation of his effort toward unification.

George W. Kelham spoke upon "Cooperation within the Profession." Credit was extended to the California architects for being the first to put forward the idea of a state-wide organization.

The older members of the profession were urged to continue in the harness and back up the younger men who are carrying the bulk of the load in organization work. Building Congresses and Craftsmanship awards were featured as important means towards bringing the whole broad field of the building industry into the picture.

In conclusion, it was stated that it could not be by individual effort but only when bonded together for success and encouragement, and the advance-

ment of the profession, that the architects might expect attainment of this aim.

#### Philadelphia Chapter—October Meeting

The splendid work of the Programs and Meetings Committee of the Philadelphia Chapter under the Chairmanship of Albert Kelsey, can well be judged by the following program of the meeting held on October 20 at the Warwick Hotel:

Address by Mr. Walter H. Thomas.

Subject: "Review of City Planning of the Philadelphia Region."

Address by Mr. John P. B. Sinkler.

Subject: "Philadelphia Zoning."

Joint Dinner Meeting with the Producers' Council after the Chapter Meeting, at 6:45 p. m.

Address by Mr. E. J. Russell, of St. Louis, First Vice-President of The American Institute of Architects.

Subject: "The American Institute of Architects, Its Activities and Purpose."

Illustrated talkie on the "Co-ordination of Light and Architecture."

Mr. Thomas and Mr. Sinkler made interesting and valuable talks on Planning and Zoning.

#### South Texas Chapter—Exhibition

The Committee on Public Information of the Chapter reports as follows:

The South Texas Chapter is sponsoring an exhibition showing work of its members at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts during the month of November. During the time of this exhibit, the Chapter Committee on Public Information is planning a program which will include a series of articles in each of the local newspapers and magazines, and in connection with the exhibit it is planned that a list of literature which we may consider fitting shall be exhibited together with information as to where copies of the items exhibited may be obtained. The Department of Commerce, through the local Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, is cooperating and we plan to exhibit several publications, such as "How to Judge a House."

We feel that the measure of fitness for the purposes of this exhibit of literature should be (a), its value in the cultivation of taste; (b), its value in stimulating the reader's desire to build; (c), its value in persuading the reader to employ an architect; (d), it should be made up of small publications that the people will be likely to procure and read, and (e), the material exhibited should be from authoritative sources.



## Items of Interest

### Competition for the "New Premises of the Royal Institute of British Architects."

This competition is apparently limited (?) to the members of the R. I. B. A., and its Allied Associations. The Royal Institute has recently published a pamphlet giving the replies of the assessors to the one hundred and thirty-three questions asked by competitors. American architects may be interested in one of these and its answer.

*Question:* That the necessity for rehousing the R. I. B. A. in a new building worthy of its significance, upon a site so conspicuous as that acquired for the purpose, should coincide with a period of acute architectural confusion is a matter representing unusual difficulties, and one calling for clearer guidance than is afforded by the printed instructions to competitors or by the names of the gentlemen who will assess the merits of their efforts.

The inference from those instructions as they stand is that the proposed building should accord in some measure with its near neighbor, the B. B. C. Station, and if this be desired a clear statement of the fact would obviate the waste of endeavors on other lines.

On the other hand, if the promoters feel that a future generation may be unable to appreciate some of our recent buildings, acclaimed as masterpieces at the present time, and that the vogue for reproducing short length of American skyscrapers is but representative of a phase through which we are passing on our way to discovery of the appropriate architectural expression in stone faced steel structures too high to solicit traditional treatment and too low to admit of their successful handling as plain masses of masonry holed for windows, a hint to this effect is needed.

It would, moreover, be helpful to competitors if some pronouncement were made as to the advisability of incorporating into their designs ornamentations and features of the type known as modernist, in view of the very conflicting opinions of eminent architects concerning the merits of these novel adornments.

*Answer:* This is a problem for which the competitor must find his solution in accordance with his own architectural convictions. Clear thinking, and a strict sense of fitness for purpose will do much to clear away "the acute architectural confusion" of which the competitor complains.

### Better Furnished Homes

To provide the American homemaker who has only a few hundred dollars to spend on the furnishing and decoration of her home with the advice of the highest quality of decorative talent, such as at present is available only to the high-income groups, is one of the purposes of a committee of experts

which is now preparing recommendations for the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, which Conference meets in Washington December 2 to 5, 1931.

The committee on Home Furnishing and Decoration appointed by President Hoover is headed by Miss Ruth Lyle Sparks, President of the Decorator's Club of New York City, and its membership includes other nationally known decorators and leaders in the fields of home economics and home furnishing.

In spite of the tremendous progress made in interior decoration in the United States during the last twenty-five years, the committee feels that there is a serious lack of accessible information on sound principles of design and decoration. It finds that there is as yet no organized art of interior decoration comparable, for example, to the organized art of architecture, and that such expert knowledge as has been developed is at the command only of the wealthy. In the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership the committee sees an opportunity to pave the way for the removal of the obstacles that stand in the way of a higher standard of taste and comfort in the furnishing of the great mass of American homes.

### A Competition—American Olympiad

A competition of works by living architects belonging to the nations which have been invited to the games of the Xth Olympiad will be held at Los Angeles. In conjunction with this competition there will be an exhibition of Art, to be held at the Los Angeles County Museum, from July 30th to August 14th, 1932.

Competitors may submit the following works for competition and exhibition—(a) drawings on a scale of at least 1:200 for buildings, and at least 1:500 for grounds. Drawings in detail on a larger scale may be added, (b) water color paintings, (c) perspective drawings, (d) casts, (e) photographs of works which have been executed.

Works must have been executed during the course of the IXth Olympiad, that is, since January 1, 1928, and must not have been exhibited at the games of the IXth Olympiad at Amsterdam.

Only architectural designs will be admitted having as their object the practice of sport such as stadia, sports grounds, playing grounds, covered-in courts, club buildings, boat houses, gymnasias, swimming schools, etc., and which answer to high artistic requirements.

The following prizes will be awarded: (1) Olympic silver-gilt medal with diploma, (2) Olympic silver medal with diploma, (3) Olympic bronze medal with diploma.

These awards will be made for, (a) the best three designs for town planning and (b) the best three architectural designs.

More definite information regarding the rules and regulations covering this competition may be obtained from the Secretary, American Olympic Committee, Woolworth Building, 233 Broadway, New York City.

#### Architects' Emergency Committee

A committee organized in New York City to furnish emergency relief, as far as possible, to the unemployed architects and draftsmen in need, is doing excellent work and may well be considered as setting a pace for similar committees in other large cities and elsewhere where similar conditions exist. Following is a paragraph from the minutes of the October meeting of this Committee:

"Mr. Warren Matthews outlined a plan to give shelter to a number of draftsmen who are in a position to accept. In brief, the plan would provide shelter in country houses and estates for the winter, and perhaps some compensation, depending upon the individual arrangements made, in return for desired repairs to be made on the property during such period of occupancy."

Julian Clarence Levi, 105 W. Fortieth Street, New York City is Chairman of this Committee.

#### The Ohio Registration Board

By the appointment of the individuals who are to comprise the Architects' Registration Board, Ohio at last will begin to designate according to law, those who are entitled to be registered as architects.

While the entire membership of the Registration Board may not be well known in a National way, yet no one can say that they are not as fine a group of hard working men, as may be assembled anywhere in the land. Certainly they are all friends of our National figure, Fred Garber, who by virtue of his office as Regional Director, will undoubtedly lend them invaluable counsel, because of his broad experience, and intense interest in A. I. A. work.

It is a noteworthy fact that all members of the Board are affiliated with some Chapter, which in so far as Ohio is concerned, recognized the value of the A. I. A.

With business in the condition it is at this moment, there is an unusually excellent opportunity for the Registration Board to plan a very comprehensive program of activity which will materially help to stabilize matters in the construction field.

Nothing should be left undone on the part of the Board to take the necessary steps to get immediately into action, in order that the best interests of all may best be served.—*Weekly Bulletin for Architects of Ohio.*

#### Personality and Profits

The Michigan Society of Architects held its first regular meeting of the fall season on Tuesday evening, October 1.

The dinner, which was held at the Scarab Club, was followed by a talk from Professor Wilson T. Orr, memory expert. Alvin E. Harley, chairman of the program committee, introduced the speaker as a man who is an expert, even in his own home town.

"Professor Orr has trained the memories of men in every walk of life—except architects," said Mr. Harley. "Architects generally want to forget," he continued.

The professor, who graduated in medicine and served his internship later, spent nine years in studying the history of religion, as many years studying our educational system and numerous other subjects. He is a most widely read man and has the unusual memory that absorbs and retains the significant facts.

He has finally settled upon sales promotion as his vocation with memory training as an avocation.

"I have spoken to many groups throughout the land," said Mr. Orr, "but whether it be a convention of caterers in Buffalo or of tailors in Pittsburgh, I find that their interests are largely the same, chiefly how to get more business, to make more money."

While Professor Orr took for his subject "Personality and Profits," he touched on many related subjects. In the discussion which followed great interest was shown by questions from the audience.

"Salesmanship is the habit of getting your own way," said the Professor, indicating the part played by personality, adding that the best analysts have determined that the proper expenditure of the business dollar allows 46 cents for sales and distribution.

Of our present educational system Professor Orr believes much improvement could be made. He quoted a current article in which the writer said: "Education can polish a pebble or dull a diamond."

This he understood to mean that the average student could acquire a little polish and the brilliant one could actually be dulled. "No less an authority than Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler has stated," he said, "that we are learning more and more about less and less."

Mr. Kamper asked of the speaker why, in his opinion, God in selecting his Twelve Apostles (salesmen) he had chosen them from the lower classes. The answer lies in the fact, believes Mr. Orr, that these men possessed a simple faith. "They believe in God," he said, "while we study God. These men were best suited as mediums through which God delivered his message, just as an artist is sometimes able to create something more beautiful than he has ever seen."

Professor Orr was given a vote of thanks for his interesting talk and Mr. Harley was congratulated

on arranging the program.—*Weekly Bulletin, Michigan Society of Architects.*

#### Building Stone Exhibits

The United States National Museum has an exhibit of building and ornamental stones assembled and arranged by the late Dr. George P. Merrill, of that Institution. This exhibit is very complete, containing upward of twenty-six hundred specimens and covering practically all types of structural and monumental stones, representative of all leading quarries in the United States and the important foreign ones. The materials are grouped alphabetically under each type of stone, the arrangement being with regard to states and counties.

This collection is exhibited in eighteen large upright cases and in addition to these cases there are a number of polished slabs attached to the wall.

This exhibition occupies one-half of a large exhibition hall on the second floor of the New National Museum, in Washington. The building is open to the public on week days from 9 A. M. to 4:30 P. M., and on Sundays from 1:30 P. M. to 4:30 P. M.

#### Registration of Architects in Ontario

The newly enacted Ontario registration act for Architects reads in part as follows:

11—(1) Every person who, not being registered as an Architect under this Part, or who having been so registered and whose registration has been cancelled or is under suspension who applies to himself the term Architect alone or in combination with any other term, or who holds himself out as an Architect shall be guilty of an offense, and shall incur a penalty not exceeding \$100 for a first offense and upon conviction for a subsequent offense a penalty of not less than \$300 and not more than \$500, or imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months or both.

(2) Nothing herein contained shall be deemed to prevent anyone using the term "Landscape Architect."

12. Every Architect who wilfully makes any false certificate in respect of any work done, or the value or condition of any work or building, besides being liable in damages for any injury thereby suffered, shall incur a penalty not exceeding \$100.

Section 21 of the Act provides, in part, as follows:

(e) Every applicant must be domiciled in the Province of Ontario, and

(f) Must be a British subject, or have taken the Oath of Allegiance and declared his intention of becoming a British subject.

#### Competition—Appomattox Monument

An Act of Congress, approved June 18, 1930, provides:

"That for the purpose of commemorating the termination of the War between the States which was brought about by the surrender of the army under General Robert E. Lee to Lieutenant General U. S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, in the State of Virginia, on April 9, 1865, and for the further purpose of honoring those who engaged in this tremendous conflict, the Secretary of War is authorized and directed to acquire at the scene of said surrender approximately one acre of land, free of cost to the United States, at the above named place, fence the parcel of land so acquired or demarcate its limits, and erect a monument thereon."

An Act of February 23, 1931, reads, in part, as follows:

"For every expenditure for or incident to the work of securing a design and the preparation of plans and estimate of cost for a monument at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, \* \* \* \$2,500: Provided, That the plan and design of such monument shall be subject to the approval of the National Commission of Fine Arts."

In accordance with the terms of the above Acts, The Quartermaster General, under authority of the Secretary of War, invites architects of standing and reputation who are citizens of the United States to submit designs for this monument and a landscape treatment of the proposed site. All those intending to compete should make application for the program and accompanying drawings to The Quartermaster General, Munitions Building, Washington, D. C.

The designs in this competition must be submitted to the Office of the Quartermaster General, Munitions Building, Washington, D. C., not later than 12:00 o'clock, noon, on Thursday, January 7, 1932.

The Jury of Award will consist of three members, to be appointed by The Quartermaster General from a list of architects, not in the Government Service, and members of The American Institute of Architects.

This competition has been approved by the Standing Committee on Competitions of the Institute, Egerton Swartwout, Chairman.



## Applications for Membership

November 16, 1931.

*Notice to Members of the Institute:*

The names of the following applicants may come before the Board of Directors or its Executive Committee for action on their admission to the Institute, and, if elected, the applicants will be assigned to the Chapters indicated:

*Colorado Chapter* - - - - - ALAN BERNEY FISHER  
*Columbus Chapter* - - - - - EDWARD F. BABBITT  
*Connecticut Chapter* - - - - - THOMAS RAYMOND BALL  
*New York Chapter* - - - - - FREDERICK M. GODWIN, C. FREDERICK HOUSTON  
*North Carolina Chapter* - - - - - ERIC GOODYEAR FLANNAGAN, ANTHONY LORD  
*Philadelphia Chapter* - - - - - ALFRED V. DU PONT  
*St. Louis Chapter* - - - - - CARL N. ATKINSON

You are invited, as directed by the By-laws, to send privileged communications before December 16, 1931, on the eligibility of the candidates for the information and guidance of the members of the Board of Directors in their final ballot. No applicant will be finally passed upon should any Chapter request, within the thirty-day period, an extension of time for purpose of investigation.

FRANK C. BALDWIN, *Secretary.*



