

Journal of The American Institute of
ARCHITECTS



HENRY BACON

December, 1949

Public Relations, by Ralph Walker

Garnier's Paris Opera House

Democracy at the Local Level

Architectural Fees—I

Design Qua Non

Stones for Glass Houses

A. I. A. Gold Medalist for 1949

35c

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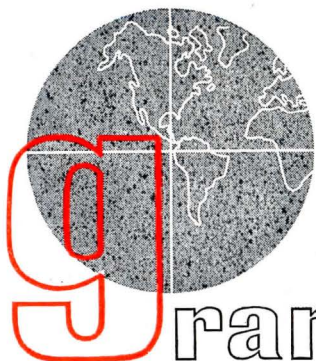
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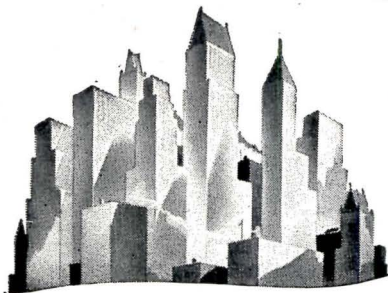
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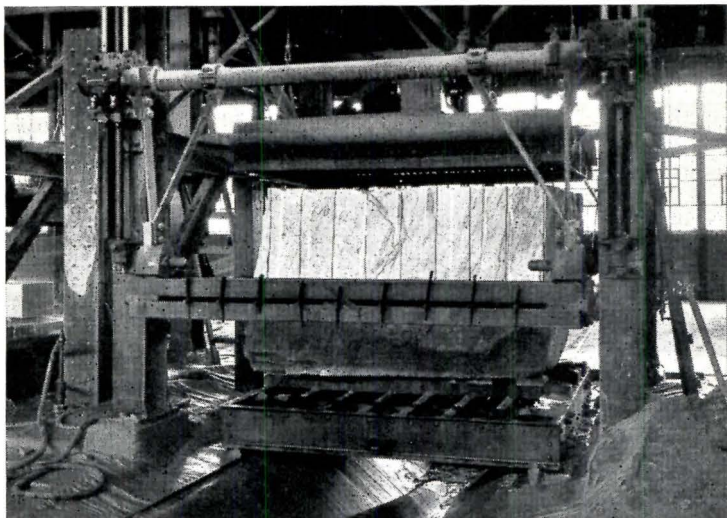
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Public Relations

By *Ralph Walker*, F.A.I.A.

Excerpts from an address before a meeting of members from the Great Lakes District, held September 29, 1949, in Indianapolis, Ind.

JUST WHAT POSITION do we seek in society? *Are we content to assume that we architects count for nothing either socially or creatively: Are we a lost profession? We live, politically, in a world of "doublethink" and scientifically in one, perhaps, of "straight doublethink."* We architects are the victims of the first because we state, as a profession, we work for humanity's sake, *but contrariwise* we have set up an "ideal" of the architect as an absolute creator—more inflexible than any god man as yet has imagined. The physicist also says that in the search for abstract "truth" he alone must be the judge; so evidently both of these professions should say, "To hell with humanity." Humanity must take whatever are the results of these abstract "truths." I have put that word "truth" in quotes because you will agree it has so many meanings. One idea of "truth" is what we architects may mean by "public re-

lations" and I assure you I am not being flip with semantics.

If I have any theme at all it might be summed up in these sentences—one I have used before:

Let us be positive about our own virtues: Others soon enough find our faults, nor hesitate to make us and the world aware of them.

And:

Numbers are not important in themselves. The strength of our profession will be in what we contribute to society and especially, in what society knows we have contributed.

I said once before that I believed every idea, every standard, should be taken out at least every five years and shaken to be rid of the moths of complacency and casual acceptance—the two major sins of a creative artist. Now, with no disrespect to anyone, that is just what I am doing. I am a newcomer and my broom is shining

bright and I am looking into every corner of The Institute—the new as well as the old—for cobwebs. I once knew an old Welsh woman who said: “Child, if we could only keep the ‘speeder-wobs’ out of our ideas!”

But I am sure that all of us expect in a new officer of The A.I.A. different results from those expected by an old Turkish comic philosopher, whose name and distinction I think to be the “*Hoja Nazir el Dinn*.” He, shortly after announcing his approaching wedding day, was seen by his neighbors turning everything in his house upside down, “Hoja,” they said, “why all this confusion?” and he replied, “I have heard that a new wife turns everything upside down and now, when she does, they will be back where they belong.”

When it comes to thinking of public relations, I wish I could say that the job was so well organized, was going along so well, that no further comment is necessary. Either because we are too new or, at the same time, that we are expecting too much from too little personal effort—a common failing of our time—the results are still somewhat nebulous when we think of the respect in which we are held in the regard of the *official public*.

And yet there is no question that the demand for the architect's services is increasing, and I find no reason why the architect should take a negative point of view as to the contribution we make to the welfare of the country in times of peace, or, for that matter, war. We may be very happy to think that it is incongruous to ever name a war an architect's war; but, nevertheless, though slow in gaining recognition, the contributions of the architect in the last war were great indeed. *We may not do all the building in the country, but we certainly influence the best.*

I do not believe that there are any new or magical ways to approach public esteem. In fact, for us, there are but three well-known levels of activities, and in which the goals and incentives are the same: In other words, through the actions and position of the individual practitioner, through planned activities by local chapters or state organizations, and finally on the national level. In all three, the goals and incentives are to achieve for ourselves a place of earned and marked distinction, in the regard, especially, of our individual communities, and thereby lead to a strong influence for the public good. We start off well, for of

course, the word "architect" is a word of great respect. God is even called the "Architect" of the Universe.

Now there are, of course, many ways these results may be accomplished, and, in time, no doubt we will attempt to use all the propaganda agencies which, in the modern world, seem so effective in selling Mennen's after-shave lotion, "so he-male in its aroma." Our problem, however, is to make them most responsive and of continuing value to us as a profession. *We must first know, and definitely, the audience to whom we wish to address our claims for esteem.* There is nothing more disappointing than being merely a seven-days' news wonder and then perhaps resurrected in some "Our Time" by a short reference.

It is reasonable to suppose that, were we to try all of them—press, radio, video—on a national level and at the same time, we would need a budget far greater than our own relatively small membership will support; *but I think we will all agree that this is not necessary for, after all, what we are selling, to put it bluntly, is always our own individual competence.*

It is impossible to build up an acknowledgment of national or

regional worth unless the majority of our profession, in their normal relations with their own intimate public, are both strong and efficient. Personally, I would prefer to add up in the public mind the work of the many capable men who are quietly and modestly doing honest work—who succeed by learning of their clients' needs and then earnestly try to accommodate them—than the momentary acclaim which the self-acknowledged genius is accorded in magazine and press. For while we of the profession may, without envy, acknowledge the gifts of genius, we must also painfully, even pedestrianly, accomplish the world's works.

And there is no reason why we should forget or permit our public to forget that the average family, here in America, lives in a house or an apartment which is the envy of all the world and that always the leadership toward this achievement has been through the design efforts of architects like yourselves.

The architectural profession, like the medical, needs the general practitioner with his day-by-day accomplishment as well as the brilliant surgeon—about whose special operations the world waits and wonders. No one wonders at the work the general M.D. does. I

would see our profession as well thought of on that level.

It would seem to me the first things that the architectural profession should establish, on the teaching level, as well as on that of professional practice, are the possible differences which exist between it and its related professions. To make a generalization, we might state the differences in this manner: The engineer deals with the resources of materials and their precise use; the landscape architect deals with the resources of botanical nature and their enjoyment; the architect, with the resources inherent in human desires and their enlargement and enhancement.

You and I could go on and establish the wide variations between the architects' necessary coordination of structural, mechanical and electrical services for the benefit of mankind, and the design of the services themselves. *But are we sure that the public, our client, also knows that when these services are brought together everywhere, no matter in whose office it is—architect, engineer, industrial designer—it is a man trained as an architect who actually does the coordinating?* For wherever human occupancy is of prime consideration, when it is not subor-

dated to the machine, we will find an architect somewhere in the woodpile.

One more thing about individual public relations, and to me, this is an important one: I believe it of vital necessity in our relations to the public that we maintain a position of adequate fees; that we do not seek work on a basis of a fee competition; that at all times we live up to the code of ethics in this respect. No hocus-pocus of words can change the fact that the public will not regard us as professional men if we are in price competition with one another. Here is one way the Chapter can be of great value, and that is in firmly establishing in the public mind the idea first that our services are worthy of reasonable compensation, and then what we believe to be a reasonable minimum. I believe the word profit should be taken out of all references to the compensation the architect receives above the cost of services. For when income taxes, business risks, are considered, the net amount earned by an architect is barely adequate. Generally there is merely a reasonable living but no assured future. *We still have to combat again and again the belief on the part of the public that*

the gross fee goes into the architect's pocket for his own use.

The local Chapter can do these things to help public relations:

One: Learn to know and invite influential people to address your meetings. Do not, ever, because of small numbers, belittle your influence. From the President of the United States down, every important man will confess a secret desire to direct a building enterprise and at the same time wish he were the architect. Invite the heads of other organizations—religious, business and professional—to your annual dinners, and be sure you have one good speaker on a live local subject and treat that speaker with respect by giving him an adequate reading lectern and lights. Invite the press and treat them as a friendly profession of great intelligence.

Two: In holding seminars, invite the press whenever there is something which is generally educational, and take a general view as to what is in general interest and not private to the organization. Seminars should be of two kinds: one, self-educational; the other directed toward the public. Remember seminars are not lectures. They are opportunities for intelligent cooperation.

Three: If there is any internal controversy within the chapter, do not invite the press. Allay rumors by telling it the truth and ask to have it off the record, especially if it hurts the organization. Name-calling, either within, and especially outside, all A.I.A. meetings should be tabu. Name-calling and cheap publicity of this kind are generally based on what Dostoevski, in "The Dispossessed," called the "right to dishonor." There is only one proper way to "take over" the running of any part of The Institute, and that is in a decent, forthright and honest way, i. e., through experience and hard work and personality. *Name-calling publicity is a sign of weakness.* If we wish to be critical, do so on the basis of ideas. Out of this type of discussion may come an improvement in understanding.

Four: Hold frequent exhibitions of the work of the Chapter. Award medals and mentions. Give out press releases why the awards were made. Invite the local art or building editor, if there is one, to be one of the judges, and then attempt to arrange a series of stories rather than one splurge. Never forget the women's page, and help to create interest in well-designed homes.

Five: If one of the Chapter members has done a real fine piece of work, acknowledge it and spring a party at the building in his honor, and again, invite as many bigwigs as will come; and be sure to let the client talk, and do not forget the designer. Do not be afraid to build up your fellow practitioners in public esteem. If you are good, it will be your turn next.

Six: Know especially the political leaders in your community. Strive to have an architect on the planning commission, on the zoning board of appeals—not just any architect but the best you can recommend—and back him up when necessary.

Seven: Have planning and community ideas of your own. Every city in the United States needs planning badly; but above all, they need design. Get together and work out programs for needed improvements. If you have gained the confidence and good will of the leaders in the community, they will listen with respect; but be sure the ideas are in themselves not too grandiose, and that with each idea there is indicated the progressive steps toward accomplishment and a clean and honest idea of what it will cost.

Eight: Do not be afraid to take

issue with public officials on projects proposed or neglected. First, however, endeavor to find the reasons in back of the proposals or the neglect; and definitely give both sides of the argument in any press release and be sure to keep the tone of that release sincere, factual, and eliminate all “smart-aleck” touches.

Nine: In everything the Chapter does publicly, be sure that the job is done thoroughly. A good, sound preparation in story, in exhibit, in dinner arrangements, always wins respect and generally wins success.

I stop here, lest I sound like Moses giving the Ten Commandments—except that, instead of proposing “thou shalt nots” I have hopefully suggested “thou shalls.” We are all together in an ardent desire to see our profession take an increasingly important place in our community life; and in this sense, I take exception to Frank Lloyd Wright when he says that “professionalism is parasitic—a body of men unable to do more than band together to protect themselves”—so I may still, after all, add a tenth.

Ten: I believe we need another kind of competence than just the technical kind. For, no matter how much we know about the science of architecture, no matter how

great we may think ourselves as artists, unless there is an underlying competence in philosophy as well, we will fail in making our work other than a series of fashions. In fact, since the profession of architecture has been general in the United States, we have had little else than a parade of fashions—largely because there was evolved no philosophy of a good life in a mass-production world. It is a part of the possible influence of the local chapters to undertake and seek results in making urban life more satisfactory and more beautiful than it now is. Nothing seems so forlorn as the statement that I have had given me time and again by architects, in talking of their towns. “Well,” they say, “*there is not much to be seen here.*” Isn’t it about time we set about, as chapters especially, developing something worth seeing?

In Washington, we have this kind of job to do, i. e., to argue against possible bureaucratic ukases which try to pack all of us in average compartments, because bureaucracy by its very nature tries to rule everything from a national center. A very fine job is being done by Ned Purves in gaining access for The A.I.A. to the *right people*—moreover, in having that

entree engendered in good will and respect. I know that on the several occasions when I have felt it necessary to meet with the President of the United States, Commissioner Egans, for example, and others, the doors have been opened with good will.

I have mentioned that we need a better preparation for discussion with Governmental agencies especially in regard to fees; but we also need your support and it is my purpose to see that you and ourselves appreciate that public relations in Washington spring from your grass roots.

We in Washington cannot be other than a coordinating agency—except where Federal policy is something in the making, and even there your knowledge of and friendship with local political authorities will pay in earnest reactions in Washington. The questions of national policy can be guided, and we shall make thoughtful attempts to create national ideas.

I said that at The Octagon we were a coordinating agency—except on matters of national policy—such as A.I.A. relations to, and the fees on, public works; Federal tax matters, and so forth; but from our grass roots, in which but lately

I have been grubbing around, there has been a strong feeling that more important news might generate from Washington and be sent out—in some miraculous form—to gather attention in the chapter localities. Further, that The A.I.A. might undertake a national advertising campaign in which, and I say this knowingly, some of the more wealthy chapters might participate. Now it is easy to outline methods and means and all the machinery for doing this; but the four most important things to be considered are: one—what subject matter should we develop; two—what audience should we seek; three—what media, out of the many, should be employed; and last—how much will such a campaign cost? And so far we have been given no ideas on these four.

Several chapters have employed booklets to place the qualities of the architect before the general public. At The Octagon we have received no data as to whether the chapters have thought the effort worthwhile or any better than the ten points I have enumerated in this talk and in which I have no pride—unless you may have tried to find out whether they would work, and they have.

We have been trying now for a

year to publish a booklet of suggestions concerning public relations, to serve both the individual and the chapter, and I assure you that it is difficult to discover other than time-worn subjects and methods, especially so on our income possibilities. Perhaps we should have someone at The Octagon who writes concerning architecture and so well that it might be syndicated. May I say that any flash of true brilliance would be welcomed. *One thing I am certain about is that we can do a better job of writing for public consumption*; but as Disraeli once said: "It is much easier to be critical than correct." It is my idea, however, that before the beginning of the new year, when our new schedule of dues becomes effective, we will have had developed a trial public relations program; but more important, a further enlargement of our educational needs.

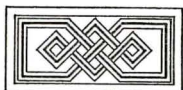
I am trying to say The A.I.A. is a two-way street: that we who supposedly direct your destinies can do so only if you give us: first—necessary backing of individual competence; second—well organized chapter and state-association programs which look toward creating friendly relations; and third—that you furnish sufficient information for us to meet with Govern-

mental agencies, and if necessary, political influence back home. For example, a strong flow of letters in favor of the Davis Bill which, if your influence is steady and strong enough, will act to our eventual advantage.

We must always present ourselves as a group of professional men activated not only by selfish interests but also to benefit the society in which we work.

Public relations are much more than mere blague. They are something which the soft voice of Laotse indicated in China some thousands of years ago:

“If you can bear issue and
nourish its growing,
If you can guide without claim
or strife,
If you can stay in the lead of
men without their knowing—
You are at the core of life.”



Fourteen years in the designing and building—
here's today's viewpoint of an eminent architect

Garnier's Paris Opera House

By *H. S. Goodhart-Rendel*, F.R.I.B.A.

Reprinted, by permission of author and publisher, from
The Architectural Review (London) for June 1949

I DO NOT KNOW when the term “architecture” was first misused, as it is often misused now, to signify building that is emotionally inexpressive. True, the dictionary definition of it is “the art or science of building,” and if architecture were to resign all claim to being a fine art I suppose it would need to do no more than make what was suitable and would stand up. But, whatever dictionaries may say, the word

architecture during most of its history has been taken to signify the art of evoking emotion by the same means as those proper to sculpture, by the creation and selection of significant forms. Forms that signify not physical desiderata such as convenience, cleanliness and cheapness, but spiritual desiderata—harmony, wonder, gaiety, awe. The memory of this potency clings to the word architecture, even when the potency is lost.

In all the fine arts except architecture we are now recognizing that stylization is a process more normal than natural imitation. Even in architecture we have become tired of the *tranches-de-vie* provided by the schools of Gropius and Le Corbusier, and are conventionalizing their elements into a very strict style indeed. The first stages of such a development must necessarily be unsatisfactory, since nakedly realistic material suits the purposes of expressive art as badly as Alice's flamingo mallets and hedgehog balls suited the purposes of croquet. What our later stages will be it is too early to predict.

The architect of the Paris Opera House, Charles Garnier, had no such embarrassments. In the France of his day there was a magnificent orchestra of architectural instruments, and a magnificent band of architectural players, always ready for the composer who could use their powers to evoke new beauty. There was also ready for him an audience of highly trained sensibility upon which none of his virtuosity and erudition would be wasted. When at the age of thirty-six he won his great opportunity by competition, he crossed the threshold of the fourteen years of ceaseless toil that

were to bring the building to perfection. Nor can those fourteen years have been too many. Every detail of the ornament, exuberant but subtle, that he has so wonderfully controlled is intimately his, as characteristic of him as the eager profile of his face.

In its plan and section the Opéra is one of the grand classics. The combination of the various compartments of the plan and their mutual relations are both perfect, and the external dramatization of stage, auditorium and foyer is famous and unequalled elsewhere. The staircase is particularly grandiose, perhaps in rivalry with the famous one in the theater at Bordeaux, and perhaps because of that rivalry novel and audacious in the extreme. In conceiving it I imagine Garnier to have reasoned somewhat as follows:

A staircase can be regarded either as the rising floor of a building or as a ladder between its storeys. If regarded as a rising floor (as it must be if *between* walls or around a solid newel) the architectural design of the building must rise with it, keeping pace with its march. If regarded as a ladder it must fly across the architectural design of the building, doing as little damage as pos-

sible on the way. Most open-well staircases (including that by friend Louis at Bordeaux) are compromises between the two principles; the architectural design of the *cage d'escalier* being complete as though no staircase were there, but adjusted so that in windows, doors, and cornices there are no undesirable collisions between the *cage* and its content. These adjustments are liable to be awkward, so why not make *cage* and staircase so independent of each other that none will be necessary? Only where openings in the walls have to be reached need the staircase touch the walls at all. And, to emphasize the staircase's independence, why should its flights not curve and twist as livelily as the living load it will carry?

If such reasoning is not unanswerable, the outcome of it in Garnier's hands is beyond cavil. The only criticism of the staircase that has ever occurred to me is that when not burdened with brilliantly dressed people it has a little the air of an empty frame. I do not think this criticism, even if justifiable, is adverse to it. It is intended to be burdened with brilliantly dressed people, and looks it.

The grand staircase was not the only means of dignified ascent that

Garnier had to provide; the Emperor had to be got up to his box by a way of his own. In arranging for this, special difficulties arose which can best be recounted in a free translation of the words of Guadet. "After the design had been settled," Guadet tells us, "an imperial command was received that carriage ramps must be provided, the crown having afforded its wearer no protection from asthma or from nervousness in lifts. The planning of these ramps in the limited space available proved extremely difficult. A rough plan was therefore made of the course proposed for them, and was taken to a flat expanse of sand where it was set out at full size. A four-horsed carriage was then made to drive at the walk, at the trot, and at the canter along the projected course of the ramps, an exact drawing being made afterwards of the marks thus made in the sand. In accordance with these marks the course was rectified and finally adjusted."

I quote this curious record to show that no pains were too great for Garnier to take, even in the comparatively simple decision of how best to turn the Emperor's carriage without turning it over. How to turn it and lift it simul-

taneously, with safety and dignity, was a problem of much greater delicacy, only to be solved by an extraordinarily nice and ingenious balancing of the slope that the rise demanded. This problem has been solved with such mastery that the curves of road and balustrades are delightful in their ease and beauty. The royal entrance to the Opéra is one of the most impressive pieces of bravura in the whole of architecture.



The particular glory of the whole building seems to me in its close union of architecture and sculpture, a union so complete that its every acanthus leaf and carved ovolo seem to belong to the same artistic category with the grand groups of figures on the façade. I have always been told that the most famous of these, Carpeaux's *La Danse*, was based upon Garnier's own sketches. Even without knowledge of this nothing could seem more probable.

To the youth of the generation that is passing (my generation, I sorrowfully admit) the sculptural complexity of Garnier's detail was a little hard to swallow. We were struggling out of *Art Nouveau* and *Louis Seize Moderne* toward what

we believed would be the large and noble simplicities of a new era. If we had thought of the phrase we should probably have spoken of Garnier's architecture as "frozen Meyerbeer." In short, like many young people before and since, we were ignorant little prigs. Knowing something of history, however, and of the arts allied to architecture, sculpture in particular, we generally knew a classic when we saw it, if only to make it the object of particular attack. But we knew it was no good attacking the Opéra. Our mood survives in the not-quite-so-young, perseveringly modern as always; they have to acknowledge that Garnier's work is "very well done," but they are inhibited from yielding to its sensuous attraction. This I believe to be an inhibition from which the next generation will be entirely free. Louis Napoléon and Eugénie have receded into history, but Charles Garnier who worked at their bidding has left what has survived them and will survive many historical personages yet. He has left a work of his most potent youth that still is young in its energy and allurements. He has left a work of supreme skill that skilful men must always hold in reverence.



Honors

PAUL G. BURT, of Fugard, Burt & Wilkinson, Chicago, has been appointed honorary consulting architect to Guy's Hospital, London, an institution whose first building dates from 1724.

WILLIAM EMERSON, F.A.I.A., of Cambridge, Massachusetts, has been awarded the American Unitarian Association's first annual award for "distinguished service to the cause of liberal education." The citation further noted Mr. Emerson's continual "ministry to human needs and the promotion of goodwill among men," and his "high

idealism and social skills, his liberality of mind and heart and hand."

JAMES C. MACKENZIE, F.A.I.A. has been appointed by the National Park Service as architect to design a group of buildings which will form a suitable setting for the Statue of Liberty on Bedloe's Island, New York Harbor.

CHARLES C. PLATT, of New York, former president of the Municipal Art Society, has been elected a director of the Citizens' Housing and Planning Council of New York.

News from the Educational Field

THE UNITED STATES OFFICE OF EDUCATION, in cooperation with the Department of State, announces the availability of fellowships to United States graduate students as provided under the Convention for the Promotion of Inter-American Cultural Relations.

Two graduate students are exchanged each year between the United States and each of the republics signatory to the Conven-

tion. The participating countries, other than the United States, are as follows: Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela. During the next academic year, the following countries probably will receive students from the United States: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the

Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela.

Graduate students in the United States should have the following qualifications before applying for these fellowships: United States citizenship, a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, the initiation or completion of some graduate study, a satisfactory knowledge of the language of the country to which the student wishes to go, good health, moral character, intellectual ability, and a suitable plan of study or a research topic which has been approved by the student's adviser or supervising professor. All other considerations being equal, students under 35 years of age and veterans will be given preference. Currently controversial research projects which would preclude the possibility of successful investigation should not be selected by the applicant.

Transportation to and from the receiving country is paid by the United States Government. The receiving government pays tuition and a monthly maintenance allowance. In some cases a small sum is allotted for books and incidental expenses. It may be necessary for the student to supplement his maintenance allowance from other sources to meet the cost of living expenses.

Students desirous of making application should write to the Division of International Educational Relations, American Republics Section, U. S. Office of Education,

Washington 25, D. C. As soon as a sufficient number of well-qualified candidates have made application, the United States Selection Committee will prepare panels made up of the names of five students for presentation to each currently participating government, which in turn will choose two from the five for one-year fellowships. It should be pointed out that several months are required before governments receiving panels are able to make selections. Applications must be received by the Office of Education not later than February 15, 1950.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, in its Department of Landscape Architecture of the Graduate School of Design, is offering a scholarship for the academic year 1950-51, carrying a stipend of \$600, the equivalent of the tuition for one year. Candidates must have received their Bachelor's degree, or equivalent, within the past three years; students who are candidates for the degree this June are also eligible. Further information may be had through inquiry to The Chairman, Department of Landscape Architecture, Robinson Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge 38, Mass.

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY in Rome offers a limited number of Fellowships for mature scholars and artists capable of doing independent work in classical studies,

architecture, landscape architecture, musical composition, painting, sculpture, and the history of art. Fellowships will be awarded on evidence of ability and achievement, and are open to citizens of the United States for one year beginning October 1, 1950, with a possibility of renewal. Research fellowships carry a stipend of \$2,500 a year and residence at the Academy. All other fellowships carry a stipend of \$1,250 a year, trans-

portation from New York to Rome and return, studio space, residence at the Academy, and an additional travel allowance. Applications and submissions of work, in the form prescribed, must be received at the Academy's New York office by February 1, 1950. Requests for details should be addressed to: Miss Mary T. Williams, Executive Secretary, American Academy in Rome, 101 Park Ave., New York 17, N. Y.

The West Virginia Meeting

UNDOUBTEDLY one of the most enjoyable regional meetings of 1949 was the West Virginia Chapter's gathering on November 4 and 5 at White Sulphur Springs. Cy Silling, chairman of the Chapter's Committee on Arrangements, had given the event almost as much enthusiastic preliminary fanfare as is expected of a political party convention in a presidential year. At first intended to be a meeting for chapter members and a few friends, the invitation list was expanded to include architects from neighboring states and finally embraced the whole Institute membership.

When the clan gathered in the sumptuous Greenbrier, originally and successively designed by Small, Smith & Reeb of Cleveland, taken over by the Government in the

war years for a convalescence center, bought back by the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, remodeled \$7 million worth by the architects, furnished and decorated \$2 million worth by Dorothy Draper, there were A.I.A. members, wives and daughters, present from most of the states from Florida to Washington.

On the first day Pietro Beluschi delighted the crowd with an illustrated talk on "Regional Design"; an inspection tour of the hotel was guided by Hostess Mrs. Wilson and addressed by Philip Small; those with and without voices gathered for a sing under the leadership of Bob Schmertz with his banjo; there was a Bingo party, a dance and so many cocktail parties that some were sure to

be missed. Those members who finally, at night, found Cy Silling's suite, ended the day with a session of Schmertz songs and Charlie Stott dialect stories that will long remain in the memory.

On the second day Serge Chermayeff made considerably more understandable the thoughts and aims of contemporary abstract painters; the ladies played bridge; Chapter Officers met and went through the motions of deep thought and advance planning; and President Walker closed the two-day meeting with an address upon "The Architect as a Modern," which readers of the JOURNAL will later have an opportunity to enjoy in type.

One of the favorites in the song sessions, in which the guests revealed unexpected verve and volume in the chorus, was the following composition by Bob Schmertz.

COME TO THE HILLS OF WEST VIRGINNY

(Tune—roughly, "Old Ninety-Seven")

1.

Down in Charleston, West Virginny
There's a guy who's a Houdinni
When it comes right down to organiz-
ing things.

His name it is Cy Silling
And he found us very willing
To spend our dough at old White
Sulphur Springs.

Chorus

So come to the hills of West Virginny,
There must be gold hid somewhere in
those hills;
For they're acting mighty frisky
On seven-dollar whiskey
Instead of drinking moonshine from
the stills.

2.

The boys in West Virginny
They got so gosh-darn skinny
From drinking all those different moun-
tain dew.
But some I will conjecture
Went and studied architecture
And joined the A.I.A. and put on
shoes.

Chorus

3.

We came to the Greenbrier
With a very strong desire
To see a masterpiece by Philip Small.
But along came Doty Draper
With some fabrics and wall paper
And the gosh-durn place don't look
the same at all!

Chorus

4.

When Mr. John L. Lewis
Decides to put it to us
And get his miners less work and more
pay,
He comes to the Greenbrier
To hotten up the fire,
The feudin' here's terrific so they say.

Last Chorus

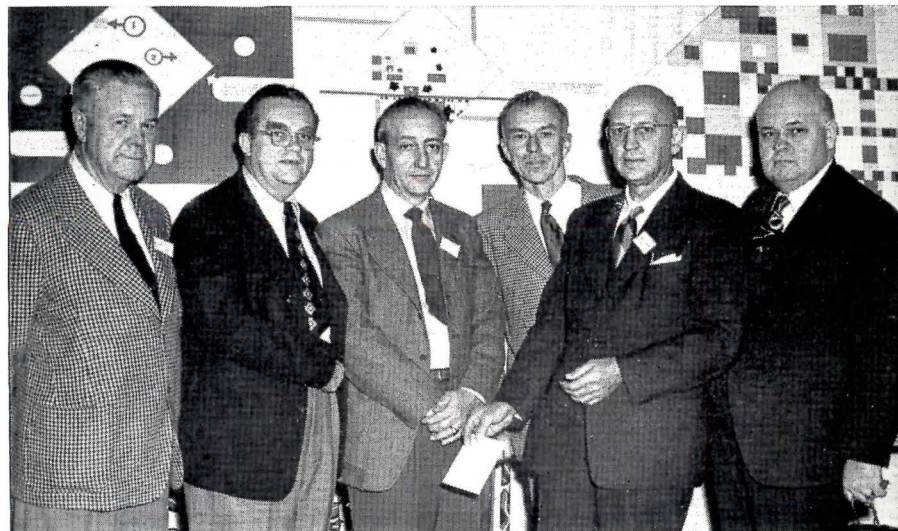
So come to the hills of West Virginny
The country of the Hatfields and Mc-
Coys,
For it seems that all that feudin'
To which I was alludin'
Just don't affect the West Virginny
boys!



Treasurer Cellarius, First Vice President Stanton, President Walker, Secretary Ditchy (Second Vice President Wischmeyer also attended)

VISITORS TO THE WEST VIRGINIA MEETING
WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, NOVEMBER 4, 5, 1949

Directors Schmidt, Black, Neal, Holden, Broad, Young





BRANSON VAN LEER GAMBER, F.A.I.A.
1893—1949

State Association Director of The Institute
April 25, 1945—December 31, 1948



Branson Van Leer Gamber, F.A.I.A.

1893 - 1949

BRANSON GAMBER came to Detroit at the close of the first World War. After separation from the armed forces, he had left his native Philadelphia where he had worked in Day & Klauder's office and came to the office of Albert Kahn. In those days of decided eclecticism, his Klauder-esque learning and leanings were clearly discernible in his work at Kahn's and later at Donaldson & Meier's.

His inexhaustible energies and enthusiasms soon had him involved in The Thumb Tack Club, and later in The Detroit Atelier, as well as in amateur dramatics and *in choral* work. He was the leading spirit, in fact the leader of the Detroit Atelier where many a present architect polished his then budding talents.

As the years rolled by, he became identified with Robert O. Derrick and eventually a member of the firm of Derrick & Gamber. Among some of the more important commissions of the firm were

the Detroit Federal Building, Ford Museum at Greenfield Village, River Terrace Apartments, Charles Goodwin Jennings Hospital, Detroit Garages, Inc., and many schools.

He served the Detroit Chapter of The Institute as its president as well as in many other official capacities and was always a very active member of some of its important committees. He was for five years chairman of the Architects' Civic Design Group for Metropolitan Detroit, and at the time of his death he was a member of the Architects' Advisory Committee to the Detroit City Plan Commission. His City had recognized his capacities by once making him a member of the Detroit City Plan Commission and later a member of the Detroit Housing Commission.

He was also a past president of the Michigan Society of Architects and here too his services were limitless. His broad interest in civic affairs brought him a lengthy

term of service on the Civic Affairs Committee of the Engineering Society of Detroit. It is safe to assume that his other affiliations, such as the Detroit Historical Society, Founders Society of the Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan Engineering Society and American Legion have in like manner profited by his ready and enthusiastic support. Whenever and wherever he represented his profession, he did so with credit and distinction.

Nationally, he was best known in his role of State Association Director of The Institute, a difficult and exacting assignment to which he devoted countless hours and which brought him as a reward the discernible successful culmination of his task, i. e., unification of the profession, and the friendship and admiration of architects from coast to coast. But his contributions to

the work of the Committee on Education and Committee on Architectural Competitions are also noteworthy, and more recently he had become a valued member of the National Architectural Accrediting Board.

Such is his monument, an astounding record of public service and devotion to common causes. The loss of his indefatigable energies, his stimulating and generous aid, his dispassionate appraisal and advice, his zeal for accomplishment, his sympathetic understanding and his capacity for friendship, constitute a grave loss indeed. Against this, his friends will cherish the memory of his inspiring example, the lilt of his song, the explosiveness of his humor, the warmth of his companionship.

CLAIR W. DITCHY

A.I.A. Gold Medalist for 1949

SIR PATRICK ABERCROMBIE, M.A., F.R.I.B.A., an internationally known British architect and town planner, is to be awarded the Gold Medal of The American Institute of Architects.

The Gold Medal, the highest honor The Institute can bestow,

will be presented at a ceremony following the annual dinner held in connection with the 82nd A.I.A. Convention in Washington, D.C., next May 10-13.

The award to Sir Patrick Abercrombie was made in recognition of his distinguished contribution to

the profession of architecture and regional planning. Sir Patrick, who is the sixth foreign architect to receive our Gold Medal since it was established in 1906, is an outstanding architect, town planner, writer and teacher.

By his teaching and the publication of numerous books on city and urban planning, Sir Patrick has exerted an influence far beyond the confines of the British Isles. His plans for replanning Dublin, Bath, and Greater London have been especially noteworthy for their understanding and development of human scale in relation to life in great cities.

Born Leslie Patrick Abercrombie in Ashley-upon-Mersey, he was professor of civic design for twenty years at Liverpool University, and for the past eleven years has been professor of town planning at the

Bartlett School of Architecture, University College, London. He was knighted on January 1, 1945, and was Royal Gold Medalist of 1946.

Sir Patrick Abercrombie has been honored by various organizations connected with architecture and planning. He has been a vice president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, president of the Town Planning Institute, a member of Royal Fine Art Commission, chairman of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, chairman of the Housing Centre, and president of the International Union of Architects.

Some of his publications are "Replanning the County of London," "Lidice," "Town and Country Planning," "A Plan for Plymouth," "A Plan for Bath," and many other notable books.



"I have noticed—as many others have done—that what is new does not remain so for very long, and that the modern of one day is the safe establishment of the next, sometimes even to the extent of appearing old-fashioned.

"At the same time I have noted that architects of personality, gifted, and sometimes, though not always, cultured, have in general achieved a quality which peers through the popular mask of their day, and infuses life into buildings of very varied styles and periods."

—HOWARD ROBERTSON, F.R.I.B.A.

JOURNAL OF THE A. I. A.

Architectural Fees

By *Herbert M. Tatum*

IN TWO PARTS—PART I

A paper read at a meeting of Chapter officials of the Gulf States District, Baton Rouge, La., Oct. 7, 1949.

MY DICTIONARY defines the word fee as "a compensation or payment for service rendered, especially professional service; a gratuity . . .", and gives several other definitions not here applicable. Under definition one it would seem logical to expect that the amount of compensation would be in direct proportion to the value of the service rendered. The long-used method of computing compensation does not take into consideration, basically, the value of the service rendered. Our compensation is based, as we all know, to a more or less extent on the cost to us of performing the service. Definition two, "A gratuity," expresses, I am afraid, the view of a large section of the public toward paying architects "for making blueprints." Neither of the dictionary definitions of fee is wholly applicable to this discussion. However, each is worth bearing in mind.

In remembering history it is generally clear to us that, prior to

the industrial revolution, architecture was paid for by the State or by the Church. The term "State" can be taken to include "Aristocracy." It can be assumed that the architect was well taken care of as an important citizen, at least if his works were well received. If his works were not well received he was equally well disposed of.

In the great romantic period of architecture preceding our time, say at the turn of the century, the architect of my impression was one of affluence, being well fed, and well endowed with the things of good living—a man generally of inherited wealth and rich family connections. I cannot picture him in a turmoil of debate as to whether architecture was a business or was a profession, or in constant negotiation with government officials over the correctness of a curve as a method for determining the fee.

Let us have no nostalgia for the past. Let us consider the present. We can become architects now, not through the subsidy of our talents

DECEMBER, 1949

in any form, or because by circumstance we can afford to be architects; nor can we actually become architects through the great apprentice system of the past. We can become architects only because we have spent five years in an accredited college and can pass a state examination involving many things more exacting than putting together an *analytique* based on the Classic Orders.

We commence the practice of architecture only after another period of office training, of duration dependent upon our own talents and varied abilities. Our training has been long, exacting and expensive. The practice we undertake is complex. It involves the use of, or incorporation in, the work of scientific and mechanical things which, at the end of the last period of romantic architecture, were not parts of buildings. We must cope also with factors of finance, land, economics and social sciences. We must accomplish our work at great speed, frequently working in large groups.

Thus, by costly effort we have placed ourselves in a position to be very important to the welfare of our society, a great enlightened capitalistic democracy. Should it

not follow that we should be adequately compensated therefor?

The practice of architecture is clearly professional regardless of much writing and debate to the contrary. It has elements of business in it. It has elements of contracting in it; elements of science and of art in it. We admit, freely, that in general it is now performed by groups of people under the leadership of the architect. In considering fees or compensation, let us think of these complex and conflicting factors inherent in our profession:

A. Professional: We are not in a profession analogous to that of doctors or of lawyers. Those important men undertake to serve people as a rule by their own individual talents. They do not always know in advance that their service will accomplish the desired end. At the beginning of their service, they and their clients are both uncertain of the costs and risks involved, and therefore, the ultimate charges therefor. They are both called upon of necessity to serve in good times and bad times. Doctors particularly, being humanitarians, and generally sole operators, are called upon to give generously of their talents. Perhaps lawyers do likewise. I be-

lieve that both of these professional men frequently and justifiably base their charges after the fact, to an extent, on the end results.

We, on the other hand, know in advance—or should know—the quality of service our talents and devotion can render and the chance of its ultimate success. We know, provided we have reasonably good business judgment and a reasonably good contract, that we can assure ourselves reasonably good compensation. We are certainly better off in this respect than are doctors and lawyers, and should realize it. We are also allowed to do a reasonable amount of solicitation, which I understand the other gentlemen are prohibited from doing.

B. Business: A business man generally deals in merchandise or its equivalent. He buys cheap and sells high. When competition pinches, he goes in for volume or quick turnover. He looks for a certain mythical percentage of sales as profits—let us say ten percent. He can compete freely by price cutting, advertising, unloading, and all of those methods. Architects have no merchandise of value to sell unless, again, it is what is commonly called “the blueprints.”

In a sense, however, we do buy the technical assistance of drafts-

men, consultants and associates. This assistance under our leadership, direction, guidance and selection, goes to the client. This raw material is expensive, scarce and human. Thinking in this coldly commercial and unglamorous manner, we must expect—if we are to stay in business—compensation in the order of 33 percent of sales, 50 percent of costs, 100 percent of technical salaries, or a total fee in the neighborhood of 300 percent of technical salaries. Be very careful in your explanation of this to a wily business man. He might not understand it.

C. Contracting: Contractors are in the enviable position of following certain directions given them. Their work consists in doing exactly, no more or no less, than the contract calls for. They can compete on a price basis, thank goodness! And, if directed well, can deliver the predetermined, specific results or service.

We know wherein we differ from contractors. We know why we can't compete on a price basis. We know that an architectural contract drawn up by an over-eager and ambitious City Attorney cannot possibly define the service we are to render or the end result to be accomplished. We know, too,

without comparing the merits of ourselves and fellow architects, that no two of us can deliver the same building at the same cost to the owner. But, by and large, as we do know, we must agree in advance to do certain things for the client for a certain amount of compensation.

D. Art: If we were artists in the pure sense of the word, we would no doubt receive compensation in direct ratio to public acceptance or reception of our work. That might for some of us be to our good, but I for one would personally hesitate to request a loan from the bank to finance a payroll in that type of agreement.

My point in this portion of the discussion is this: our vocation cannot be compensated on any of the bases of our neighbors' pursuits. We have our own problems to solve and must solve them in our own way. It is our own fault if they are not solved correctly and fairly to our clients and ourselves.

As a member of the Fees Committee of The Institute, I have attended two meetings in Washington. Our committee, with the Committee on Contracts, has worked out a much needed agreement form, using a multiple of the

cost of technical salaries as a basis of charges. It has also collected data and formulated recommendations in respect to the negotiated fee; it has attempted to circumvent further reduction in fees to be paid to us by the Governmental agencies.

There is an alarming tendency, it seems to me, for the architect in seeking Government work, to be willing to assume less and less responsibility, and subsequently, to receive less and less compensation. If we are to provide merely drafting services without responsibility our compensation naturally cannot be high. We seem only too willing to devise ways and means of relinquishing our potentiality of service. This tendency is, I think, a natural result of a defense mechanism brought about by allowing our clients, particularly the Governmental agency clients, to dictate the terms of our compensation in the well-known unilateral manner. Representatives of the Fees Committee met with representatives of the Public Housing Administration last summer. The P.H.A., we were warned in advance, proposed to reduce architects' fees 20 percent below a schedule contemplated in 1946, on the grounds that construction costs had advanced 80 percent to 90 percent since 1946 and had

greatly outpaced the costs of producing architectural services.

That was obviously a mistake and quite possibly a fabrication. In our district and other districts represented by members present, factual information from chapters and representative architects indicated the increase in architectural costs was higher proportionately than the increase in construction costs and the increase in fees. Our committee could do little good at this conference. It met with officials of the Public Housing Administration who refused to give credence to our statements. Fur-

thermore, these men made no effort to conceal their belief and knowledge that the fees proposed by them, but questioned by us, would be accepted by the architect at large and that work would proceed accordingly. It seems obvious to me that public housing will continue to become more and more stereotyped and dismal. Our approach is without a doubt, wrong. Perhaps the answer lies in a great public demand for better public work necessitating better architectural service.

(To be concluded in the January JOURNAL)

Calendar

December 9-10: Regional Meeting of the North Central States District, Minneapolis, Minn.

December 14-15: 30th Annual Convention of the National Warm Air Heating and Air Conditioning Association, Hotel Cleveland, Cleveland, Ohio.

January 9, 1950: Executive Committee of the Union Internationale des Architectes meets in Cairo, Egypt.

January 15: Closing date for the competition being held by the Timber Engineering Company for designs of an eight-family, garden-type apartment house.

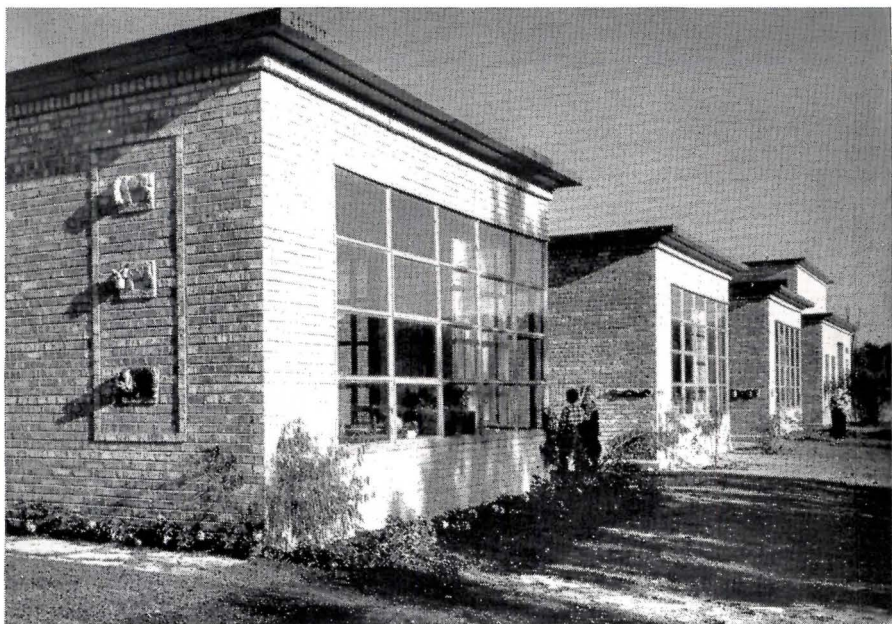
January 16-19: The First Plant Maintenance Show, in the Audi-

torium, Cleveland, Ohio, in connection with a four-day Conference on Plant Maintenance Methods.

January 21, 22: North American Conference on Church Architecture and the Church Architectural Guild, Neil House, Columbus, Ohio. Exhibit of Church Architecture, Arts and Crafts by Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture and manufacturers, Neil House, January 2 to 25.

January 23-27: Southwestern Air-Conditioning Exposition, State Fair Park, Dallas, Texas, in connection with the Annual Meeting of the American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers.

February 19-23: 6th Annual



SCULPTURE FOR CROW ISLAND SCHOOL, WINNETKA, ILL.

LILY SWANN SAARINEN, SCULPTOR

PERKINS, WHEELER & WILL, ARCHITECTS

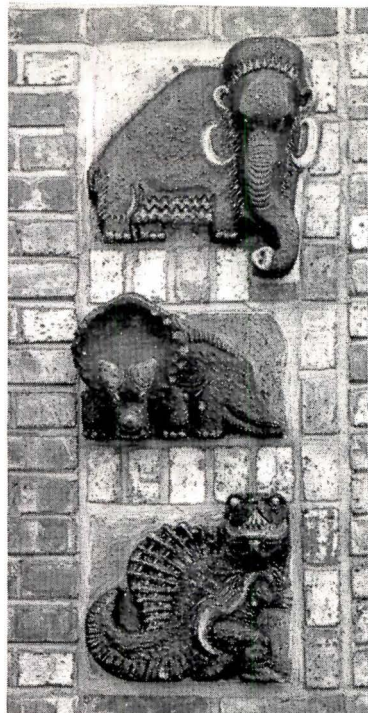
Baby Weasels



Journal
The AIA



Opossums



Prehistoric Animals

SCULPTURE FOR CROW ISLAND SCHOOL, WINNETKA, ILL.
LILY SWANN SAARINEN, SCULPTOR



Convention and Exposition of the National Association of Home Builders, Hotels Stevens and Congress, Chicago, Ill.

March 8-10: 36th Annual Convention of Michigan Society of Architects, Hotel Statler, Detroit, Mich.

March 28-31: National Plastics Exposition, Navy Pier, Chicago.

April 10-16: VII Pan-American Congress of Architects, Havana, Cuba.

May 10-13: Eighty-second Convention of The Institute, Washington, D. C.

June 7-10: Annual Conference of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Bristol, England.

A group of plain Joes get wrought up and decide to do something. They do!

Democracy at the Local Level

BILLY ROSE in his copyrighted newspaper column, "Pitching Horseshoes," for Sept. 7, mentioned the fact that Harpers were publishing a book called "Kentucky on the March." Billy thinks everybody and his Aunt Esmeralda ought to read it. Ralph Walker read it and agrees with Billy. Here's the story, which Billy Rose has given us permission to reprint:

It's a simple but somehow inspiring saga of how a group of plain Joes decided to make their state a better place in which to live—and then did it.

The author is Harry W. Schachter, bossman of a Louisville department store, and the story, as he told it to me in my office some months ago and as he now tells it in his book, goes something like this:

Six years ago, Harry got fed up with the bickerings and dickerings

of the politicians at the state capital and registered his protest at a joint conclave of labor, business and farm associations. After a lot of palaver, the end result was another of those "we-view-with-alarm" resolutions.

As the session was about to break up, a farmer sitting in the back of the room got to his feet. "You may not realize it," he said, "but the folks in this hall represent a lot of votes. Instead of passing resolutions, wouldn't it be a better idea to find out what's ailing our state and then go to work and see if we can't cure it? And when I say 'we,' I'm not referring to the legislators in Frankfort—I mean *us*, our friends, wives and kinfolk."

Well, what happened after that could only take place in a fairy tale or at a meeting of ordinary citizens of the United States. Before the conferees caught their breath and went home, the Committee for Kentucky had been

formed, and early the next morning it went to work.

When word got around the state that a lot of plain Joes had banded together and were going to by-pass the politicians, other organizations began to sign up; and before long, eighty-eight groups representing 450,000 citizens—about two-thirds of the voters in the state—were behind the new movement. And although Kentucky is a Jim Crow state, Negroes were invited to participate on the basis of full equality.

What did the committee do first? Well, being plain Joes instead of Joe McGeniuses, it called in a lot of knowledgeable fellows and asked them to put on paper the hundred and one things that were wrong with Kentucky. And the reports, when they came in a few months later, didn't make pretty reading.

To begin with, for fifty years Kentucky had been steadily going downhill. In 1940, it was either at or near the bottom of the forty-eight states in most of the things that make life worth living. It was forty-seventh in illiteracy and forty-sixth in deaths from tuberculosis, two-thirds of its schools didn't have safe drinking water, and some 42,000 farm homes didn't even have a privy. And as Mr. Schachter tells it, the committee could have saved on paper by just putting down what was good and adding, "The rest is bad."

Once the fact-finding was finished, the fact-distributing began. Financed by Joe and his

missus, and using newspapers, radio stations, lecturers and traveling exhibits, the committee brought the sorry saga to the attention of everybody old enough to think.

And from then on, plenty began to happen. Soon towns, villages and whistle stops had set up their own committees and, after several big state-wide get-togethers, the combined thinking of all the Joes was welded into one "People's Legislative Program."

"Mighty fine idea," said the politicians when it was presented to them, "but who's going to pay for it all?"

"That's easy," said the committee's chairman. "The people—through taxes. Whether you think so or not, our folks are more interested in living decently than in lowering the tax rate a few mills."

The legislators did a double-take, thought of the elections coming up, and then passed twenty-six of the thirty-eight planks in the program—at a hoist in the annual budget of \$13,000,000.

And that, in short, is how the Blue Grass State began to hoist itself by its own shoelaces. Of course, the job is a long way from being finished, but so much of a revolution has been accomplished in people's thinking that recently, when the mayor of a certain town announced he was going to cut the tax rate, a delegation of business men promptly visited him. "We want to protest this tax reduction," said the spokesman. "What we

need is more taxes, not less. How can we get our new power plant and our new recreation hall built if we don't shell out for them?"

At a recent town hall meeting in Henderson, a local committeeman named Jim Anderson presented a credo which is worth repeating:

"The Committee for the City and County of Henderson is more than an organization. It is a

faith—a faith in the ideology of democracy. It is a physical embodiment of the belief that men and women can assemble from different interests and occupations, from different racial stocks and religions, from different social and economic conditions, and, by subordinating special interest to general interests, can thereby achieve a richer, fuller community life than is otherwise obtainable."

Justifying Design regardless of
stability, function or public safety

Design Qua Non

By *J. Woolson Brooks*, F.A.I.A.

DONALD W. SOUTHGATE, in the October JOURNAL, pleads the case for Design as a necessary qualification toward licensing architects. His article is very interesting but the lawyer for a rejected applicant could probably demolish his argument. The following remarks are intended to further the case of Design.

Legislators in most states have served the public interest by requiring architects to meet certain standards of ability. Their measure of the architect's qualifications is confined to his concern for public health or public safety, wherein the legislators express the views of most critics of architecture today. A building, or a work of architecture

(which may be quite something else) need only be structurally sound, mechanically efficient, and functionally feasible to satisfy both the Law and the Prophets. The latter think to see in such a summation, esthetic qualities; they fail here, but one is thankful that they should be concerned about that currently neglected aspect. The former denies any validity to such immaterial considerations, staying close to easily codified items.

One might convince the legislators by proving design a function of public health—mental health, which is daily assuming increased importance—on the grounds that a world without beauty is a world of the dead or of the insane. Science

will soon tell us that an order of more subtle organization than science or engineering can give will be necessary to preserve sanity. One could argue that beauty is necessary to maintain commercial values, a dogma which has been accepted by so successful a profession as that of advertising.

But I choose to let design justify itself even in the rare instances when structure might be compromised, the heating inadequate, the ducts tortuous, and the function misleading. I hope to show that design is independent of those practical elements and is in itself one of the most essential adjuncts of civilization. Unfortunately, we are living in an age in which the meaning of civilization is misunderstood; or rather in which meaning is not understood. Man today could not well live without electricity, automobiles and synthetic chemicals. He can not live well with only those things, but he does not yet realize it. He has tried to strip life to its material essentials or luxuries, as the case may be, with increasing annual success since the dawn of the twentieth century; a success marked by the most stupendous toll of lives needlessly lost in history. Each year since 1901

the world has been a less attractive planet on which to live.

Architects have not been responsible for this deterioration, mainly because of their limited influence. Their fault has been both in the feebleness of their voice and in their indifference to using it in a constructive direction. They, like critics or the world at large, have been prone to consider their output as only material wealth. They cause their projects to be executed, using material and labor which, Mr. Truman's Fact-Finding Board, in appraising the steel situation, termed a commodity as soulless as the materials with which it works. I suppose that the same reasoning would hold that teachers are preparing superior cannon fodder for another war and that the function of preachers is to insure contentment among consumers respecting the status quo. Our whole outlook is utterly materialistic. Little wonder, then, that design, which is not—which is intellectual to a degree and is almost wholly spiritual—is seldom regarded as of importance to architecture.

Design is much more than the clothing which a structure wears (and do not be deluded by the claims of functionalists who praise architectural nakedness as avoid-

ance of the false modesty of period costume—they are merely rationalizing the skin-deep nature of their exteriors). Design is the quality which gives life to common substances such as wood or stone or metal, causing them to appeal to the intellect and soul of the beholder. A simple example would be a log or a crude chunk of stone carved into the likeness of a human being, whereby it acquires animation not conceivable in the raw material; or a pot of shapeless metal cast into a fabrication of abstract shape to function as a piece of hardware. The shape becomes so esthetically stimulating that function is forgotten in the emotional pleasure of viewing or feeling it.

Design can transmute an ordinary assembly of materials into an implement to stir men's souls, whether it be a church, a shopping center or a town square. Perhaps such a work might consist only of structural or functional elements; what makes it great has no necessary relation to structural logic or functional utility, but is wholly a matter of esthetic suitability. To qualify as architecture, all portions of the work must be satisfactory in themselves and coordinated with each other: structure, function, design. When this happy result occurs it is

most likely because of the beneficial control of design over the others, rather than the reverse. Logic and truth are desirable attributes of any structural system, provided they are selected with imagination from the vast body of those qualities available to the engineer. Chosen without regard to their effect on design, they are only passive.

A recent prize-winning solution to a national competition had, according to the Jury, "an exuberance not apparent at first glance." Granted that a piece of architecture should not be too obvious, and that it should have reserve qualities which would cause it to endure—but why shouldn't it kick every passerby in the teeth with inexorable architectural force as the Parthenon must have "wowed" the Greeks, and Hagia Sophia must have impressed its Byzantine worshippers?

The inhabitants of ancient Athens or Byzantium were not blessed because of their lack of automobiles, nor exclusively because of the great architecture surrounding them. The architecture was only one evidence of the spiritual life of those times, as the architecture of today shows our emphasis on materialism. Perhaps design alone cannot regenerate

mankind, but there is every reason for architects to give it a try, and for the world, including legislators, to look hopefully toward design. Our cities today are infinitely depressing: blighted areas, the monuments of yesterday's greed and stupidity; streets supersaturated

with motor cars belching nauseous fumes; ostentatious commercialism offending the eye at every focal spot. God knows, there is need for creating order out of this chaos, and the architect, using his only superior tool, design, is the one hope for this phase of civilization.

Our Pan-American Exhibit

ON FRIDAY EVENING, October 28, The Institute held a housewarming for friends from Washington and nearby in its Administration Building. President Walker, First Vice President Stanton and several of the Regional Directors were present to help represent The Institute as host.

It will be recalled that this building was built before World War II and that the State Department requisitioned it before it was ready for occupancy and has used it ever since. When the Inter-American Defense Council, a protégé of the State Department, vacated it September 15, the building for the first time became available for Institute use. The Octagon, which had been badly overloaded, particularly on the upper floors where the staff was also in a real fire hazard, was then released from its unnatural burden. At present The

Octagon, which is undergoing long-deferred repairs, is occupied by The Institute library and the staff of the JOURNAL and BULLETIN.

In connection with the housewarming ceremonies, sixty panels were hung as a sample from a much larger exhibit of 600 panels intended to be shown at the Seventh Congreso Panamericano de Arquitectos in Havana, Cuba. This comprehensive exhibit of contemporary architecture will be the United States' entry in the competition which is always a feature of the biennial meeting of this permanent professional organization. Exhibits are submitted by architects from each of the 21 Pan-American republics. Awards are given both to individual presentations and to entire exhibits from the participating countries.

The American Institute of

Architects organized the United States exhibit, but the panels are the work of the 138 individual offices which donated their work as a contribution to international professional relations. Mrs. Chloethiel Woodward Smith and Julian E. Berla, of The Institute's subcommittee, The Division of Pan-American Affairs, with the assistance of this committee's Executive Director, Miss Mary Mix, organized the display.

Following the initial showing in Cuba, the panels will be loaned to the Department of State for use in its world-wide education and information program. The Department of State is now assisting with the assembling and preparation of the exhibit.

The complete exhibit of 600 panels contains 32 categories of work including private residences, low-cost houses, apartments, hotels, universities, schools, museums, li-

braries, clinics, hospitals, medical institutions, office and commercial buildings, laboratories and industrial buildings, transportation buildings, churches, recreation buildings, public works, public buildings, monuments, civic centers, subdivisions and satellite towns, university student work, decoration, the architectural press, tourist accommodations, construction systems, and building materials and equipment.

Each of the 60 selected panels shown here is but one of a group of panels which fully explains a single job with additional plans, sections, details and photographs. The panels bear titles in Spanish for the Cuban showing. These will be translated into other languages when the State Department sends the exhibit to other countries. The panels are so designed that the titles now in Spanish can be easily removed and relettered in other languages as desired.

Wonder what a modernist's wife thinks of her modern house? Here's some of it

Stones for Glass Houses

IN the varied program of The Architectural League of New York, the subjects discussed range from the most technical aspects of

modern lighting, elevator service, air conditioning and so on, to far lighter phases of the architect's relations to society.

In a recent meeting, the wives of some of the active architects in contemporary work were invited to tell how they liked living in their modern houses. Apparently, not too much information resulted from the questions asked these ladies, but an enterprising writer for the *New York Times* succeeded later in prying loose some rather more personal opinions and experiences. Miss Roche's article appeared in the April 17 issue of the *New York Times* under the same title as above.

Generally speaking, the ladies liked their houses very much. They realized and appreciated the results of efficient planning. Mrs. Robert Allen Jacobs, whose husband is a partner of Ely Jacques Kahn, was rather more outspoken as to the details.

"A cellar is part of your cube," she explained. "So to save cubage you forego a cellar and substitute 'crawl space.' When your mansion is complete and you are forced to descend to this shallow so-called cellar, you get out your dungarees, an African helmet to protect your head from hitting the floor beams above, and, with a flashlight in hand, you crawl about in search of something you were foolish

enough to have placed there for lack of storage space in the allotted cube."

"Such as?" was asked.

"Oh, like the children's doll house, or the awnings, some left-over pipes we thought we might need some day, extra pots and pans for the kitchen, check vouchers—all those things you're not supposed to hang on to but usually do.

"Our kitchen is placed right beside our entrance door," Mrs. Jacobs went on, "so that we won't be disturbed on the living-room side of the house with deliveries and other goings and comings. It does all right. It also gives entering guests a fine opportunity to look in on the cook and find out what is going to be served in our modern coupé so that they can decide whether or not they want to stay for dinner.

"The kitchen is small and perfectly planned. Not an inch of waste floor space. No wall space, either—just windows, steel cabinets and doors. Since you can't screw a towel rack into enameled steel, we have to dry the dish towels in the adjoining bathroom."

The Jacobs have a combination living-dining room—an open plan arrangement which gives a fine feeling of space in a small house,

Mrs. Jacobs says. But she has never figured out where her three children are supposed to eat when she is planning a party or having guests for cocktails or television.

"Since there isn't any room in the compact kitchen, they are either forced to try to eat watching us make merry, or carry trays to their rooms and munch a little supper upstairs.

"Our house is bathed in sunlight since we have glass windows and glass doors wherever they could safely be installed. But when dear old Mr. Sun does not show himself, this surface is quite cold and even double glazing doesn't seem to do the trick."

Mrs. Morris Ketchum, whose husband designed many of New York's Fifth Avenue shops, com-

plains about her antiseptic, sanitary kitchen, saying, "Everything's out of sight and out of mind except three red apples and a bunch of grapes artistically collecting fruit flies on the windowsill."

Discussing her husband's interior design, Mrs. Ketchum declares, "We have a monklike cell for our bedroom. Nothing exposed to spoil its esthetic serenity. Even the hairbrush is stowed away in its very own niche. Sometimes I think architects forget we ladies were not all trained by the U. S. Army. Then, too, I can't read in bed or enjoy the luxury of being sick, because the no-headboard-no-footboard school doesn't tolerate comfort. I find the bed just right for cooling the feet on hot nights, though."



Architects Read and Write

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



IN SUPPORT OF GRANDPA

BY C. GODFREY POGGI, Elizabeth, N. J.

EVERY ONCE in a while, some one throws a bomb into the camp of the Granddad practitioner. This usually emanates from the camp of the long-haired contingent within the profession and from the hand of someone who has not yet learned what an architect really is.

This writer recalls one such person in particular, a graduate of one of the major schools of architecture, who being unable to do more than merely profile his full-size details, answered the builder's inquiry as to the nature of the construction by saying, "I don't know and I

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don't care. You're the builder."

This is the type of man who usually belittles the fellow who started his career at a time in the past when it was understood by all concerned that the architect is a master builder.

Fortunately for the public at large, the Constitution of these United States will not permit the enactment of laws governing the practice of a profession or other calling, which deny anyone the right to make a living; hence the allowable time period prior to the enactment of such restrictive laws which has enabled men within our calling to qualify without taking examination. These men have been dubbed, "Grandfather practitioners," and there have been many of them who have, over the years, shown remarkable talent in their creativeness and designing, also marked wisdom in the handling of their work in the field. It is possible that many have overworked the Five Orders, but in the main they have produced dignified buildings.

It is also possible that a small minority never did make the grade, but for every such failure this writer can name a like dud within the ranks of those who have passed State examinations, and especially within the field of the practical side of our profession—all of which proves that there is no substitute for practicality and experience.

The general public has a very high regard for the practical man in any line, and in the matter of

architectural practice no respect whatever for the man whose work on paper does not produce a proper result in the field, be the paper work ever so beautiful.

It is for this reason that the engineers have been able so largely to invade our field in general. State examinations and control have their place and in the long run should produce a higher type of architectural practice but, unfortunately, in them the matter of experience plays but a minor part. As for instance, three years in an architect's office after college graduation is entirely inadequate as a measure of experience. That period should be extended to ten years—five in the office and five in the field.

There are too many inexperienced architects extant today, and they are doing the profession little good; furthermore, there would not be such a dearth of draftsmen should the ten-year period prevail; and, by the same token, there would not be, as now, entirely too many glorified draftsmen blessed with licenses to practice who are learning the practical side of their job at public expense. This could be called a dishonorable situation.

It seems to this writer that we all could well quit looking down our noses at the other fellow and could better spend the time improving ourselves. This practice on the part of architects is nothing short of stupid, and puts us in a ridiculous light before the public, which public in the final analysis is our Boss.



The Editor's Asides

A SIGNIFICANT COURT DECISION was handed down recently by Federal Judge Holtzoff in a civil suit against the National Association of Real Estate Boards and the Washington Real Estate Board. On the basis of an agreement among members of the latter organization as to proper brokerage fees, it was held by the prosecution that the antitrust laws were being violated. The Court dismissed the case, pointing out that while price-fixing on commodities is illegal, there is a vast distinction between that and prescribing charges for personal service. Judge Holtzoff said that this activity has never been condemned as a violation of the antitrust laws. Moreover "the result of stabilization of charges and the consequent uniformity has generally been considered as being in the public interest.

"To contract for one's personal services is a fundamental right of every man," he said. "For men to combine to regulate the compensation to be charged by them for their own services is also entirely legal. While this right has been generally

recognized in respect to persons who toil for wages or salaries, no reason appears discernible why it is not equally applicable in principle to those persons who work for commissions."

AUGUSTE PERRET, the 75-year-old French architect who has been widely honored by his profession at home and abroad, visited this country a month or two ago for the first time. In his philosophy, "Construction is the mother language of the architect. The architect is a poet who thinks and speaks in construction."

TO OCTAGON dwellers, who have been seeing the disintegrated Aquia Creek stone of the base course replaced by what we hope is a more enduring material, some experiments at the National Bureau of Standards are of particular interest. The Bureau is building a wall faced with over 2000 specimens of stone originating in 47 states and 16 foreign countries. Many conclusions of the weathering test will not be reached for

many years; others will be had in a comparatively short time. Color photographs of the stones when first laid up in the wall will serve as a comparison for color fading. The possible effects of mortar will be comparable by reason of the fact that separate sections are being laid in a high-calcium lime mortar and portland-cement mortar respectively. Other effects to be studied are: the combining of one type of stone with another in close juxtaposition, waterproofing on the back and on the bed, percolation of water through open joints, dimensional stability, and durability. Dr. Thornton undoubtedly would have been glad in 1798, and we of The Octagon would be glad today, if such data had been available 150 years ago.

THE HONORABLE CLIFFORD DAVIS, in introducing H.R. 3224, struck a good blow in the cause of more equitable tax burdens for architects and other professional men whose income fluctuates widely with the calendar years. The Bill is based on the Silverson plan which was explained by Louis Justement to the Salt Lake City Convention and also in the January 1949 JOURNAL. The measure has many friends and apparently

few enemies, but many such bills die of inertia. A word of approval to your Congressman might help to keep it moving along to early passage.

NORBERT BROWN, of the F. W. Dodge Corporation, in an elaborately detailed analysis of the country's economic outlook for the next year, as compiled from the opinions of 108 leading economists, reaches this over-all conclusion: Further readjustment will characterize the American economy between now and the middle of next year, with a moderate rise to follow during the latter part of 1950.

THERE ARE AT LEAST two pairs of keen eyes among the JOURNAL's readers. William Stanley Parker, F.A.I.A., and John J. Klaber have caught the Editor in a stupid blunder and have given him a refresher course in mathematics. In the attention-catching line above the article "As the English See Our Building," we said that "English building is 55-80 percent less costly than ours." Our building is 55-80 percent more costly than theirs, which would make English building 35-44 percent less costly than ours. Mathematics never was our favorite discipline.

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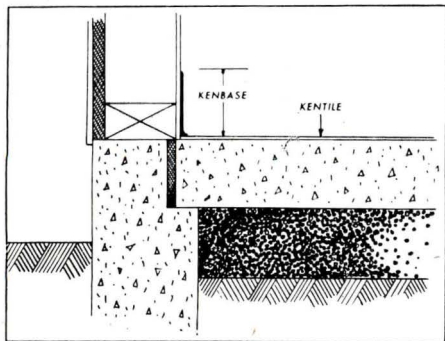
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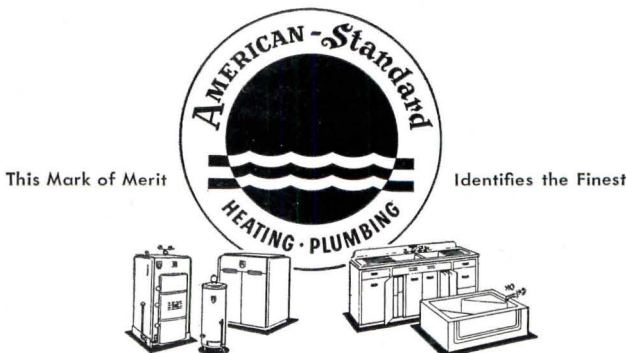
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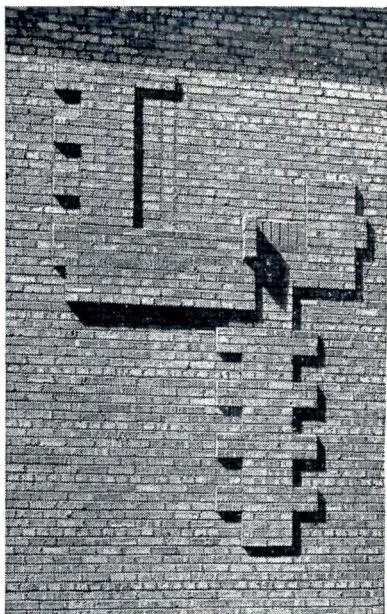
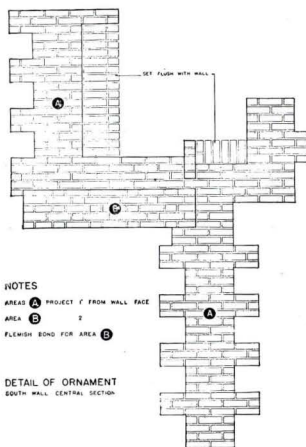
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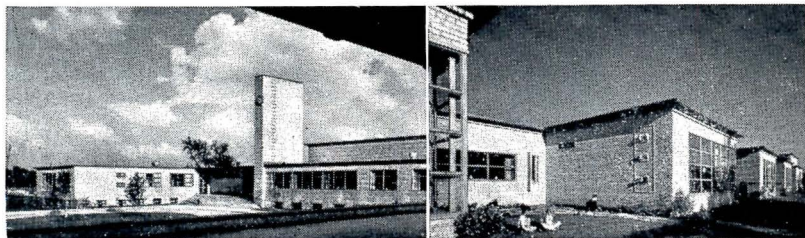
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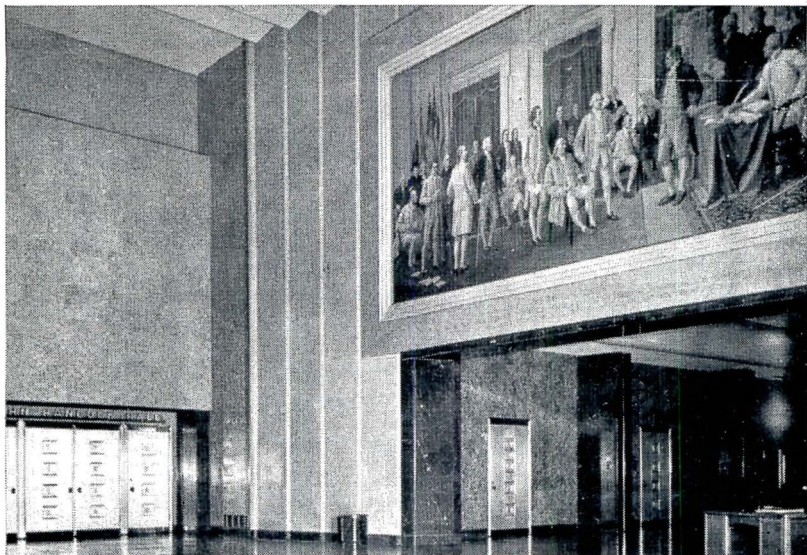


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