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Color, Yes—but Architecture?

A Century of Progress

In expositions, international or of lesser scope, architecture has generally played a stellar part. At A Century of Progress the architects must be content with a role outside of the spotlight for the wielders of the spotlights have themselves jumped down from their inconspicuous places back of the flies and taken the center of the stage where they bask in the full glory of their own glamorous creation of light and color.

The night effects of color and radiance are successful, beautiful and new. Whoever sees the Fair at night will never forget it, for nothing in his experience will have prepared him for a picture so thrilling and so beautiful.

Whoever has approached one of our stereotyped smaller cities at night, particularly if it be located upon a river or lake where the reflection of its lights is multiplied on water, has received an impression of beauty, size and importance that is rarely borne out in the sober light of day. Gas stations, bridges, streets and buildings are brilliantly indicated in starry strings of light varying in sizes and colors against the blackness of the night which mercifully conceals a multitude of tawdry and commonplace details.

There is, truly, a glamour to the night which fades in the light of day.

In the building of the Fair, the principle was adopted that no lighting elements should be directly visible—all must be enclosed in translucent covering or reflected from illuminated surfaces such as walls, ceilings, cornices, etc.

The result is highly satisfactory, restful to tired eyes and colorful.

A natural outcome of this arrangement has been the generous use of gas-filled tube lighting concealed behind various forms of reflecting troughs and casting their soft colored brilliance upon the surfaces designed to reflect it.

No spot-lights, tube lights or other form of lighting is seen in the raw. All are indirect and consequently restful. Large surfaces are lighted in this manner as well as small and the varying colors, the prodigal quantity of light used with ingenious and frequently splendid effect, create a spectacle which is unquestionably new and not to be forgotten by one who has seen it.

To see the exhibits, visit the Fair by day and to see the spectacle, whether of light or architecture, visit it by night for in this case as in the case of the stereotyped cities, night casts its glamour.

In the use of color on the exteriors of the Fair buildings a more qualified verdict is necessary.

When an architect designs a building, he creates masses, rhythms, lines and textures which together proclaim his design. It follows, obviously enough, that the color treatment should supplement the lines and rhythms so established in his design.

By a policy as far reaching as that which governed the lighting of the Fair, the painting of the buildings was taken out of the hands of its architects and entrusted to a Director of Color.

This, of course, has resulted in a harmony that could not have been possible with the employment of a different palette by each architect but its effect has been in one important sense a disaster. For the Director of Color has seen the Fair only as a color design and not as an architectural one. Thus many buildings have been literally broken to bits by the way the different masses of color have been allocated. A case in point is the Hall of Science of which Mr. Paul Cret is the architect. One of the largest, it is also the one building of the Fair that has well balanced, rhythmical mass and good scale. Until it was finally painted in its present violent colors, its proportions and arrangement were clearly evident and agreeable. But the hand of the color man has smashed it into several parts until its magnitude and, indeed, its entire architectural meaning is destroyed.

Its neighbor, the General Exhibits Building, which never had much to recommend it as an architectural composition is greatly improved by its color treatment, probably because the many small parts of which it is composed have been enriched by the color while in the case of the Hall of Science, its really broad and generous scheme has been obliterated by separating its different parts in color treatment and giving an effect of a number of small buildings. A photograph of this building taken a month before the opening and one taken afterwards makes this sufficiently clear.

The States Building with its restless outline is less important for while "in the white" it had little coherence, it has no more now in its highly colored finished state.

The Electrical Building which has for its main plan a sweeping convex arc open on its front toward the lagoon has an architectural fault in composition that is repeated in its color treatment. The sweeping curve of the plan is excellent and promised to be a fine composition but the sweep of the curve has been broken into seven too equal parts and this has been repeated in the color treatment. Inasmuch as these breaks are arbitrary and could as well have been omitted in favor of a single repeating motif that would bring out the full significance of the arc, they are to be regretted.

Of sculpture the Fair is practically barren; but not quite, for on the Electrical Building are some huge surfaces developed in low relief of which the less said the better. The building would have been better without them except for an unintentional touch of sculptural humor which appears on the two pylons of the water front of the building. On these are two male figures which evidently illustrate the folly of picking up a live wire.

The Social Science Building has some sculptural decoration on its north front that can be endured if not admired and a large relief on its western front, or on the western front of the Electrical Building which adjoins it, that cannot be endured at all. Together these reliefs have been described by an eminent sculptor as "dirty work."

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The Hall of Science is more fortunate in possessing on its north approach a single colossal figure by John Storrs, representing I know not what, but vigorous and clean in design. It is surrounded by a niche of vertical fluted surfaces, the entire niche being painted a prodigious deep blue against which the pure white of the statue stands out with such startling sharpness that it resembles those familiar paper portraits that are called silhouettes and with the same amount of modelling.

Here the Director of Color has seriously marred the sculpture where it is good. Where it is not so good, as on the Electrical and Social Science Buildings, he has failed to obliterate it as he so mercifully did on the front of the Administration Building.

Of the latter and the Travel and Transport Building, it can only be said that they have no architectural charm of mass or composition. They are of proportions essentially ugly and no amount of color decoration could possibly save them.

The Travel and Transport Building is certainly better than it was in its earlier state but that faint praise is all that I can give to the efforts of the color man in this case.

There are many other buildings, some large and others smaller and of less importance and of these latter several have considerable charm and deserve a more detailed review than is possible in this short appraisal.

A word is necessary as to the general quality of the exterior color scheme. The colors used range from pure white through the strongest blues, to lemon-yellow, sienna and red, both light and dark, with a liberal use of black.

In general no delicate or half-way tones are employed and consequently delicacy or subtlety of effect has been ignored.

The gorgeous and soul-filling quality of magnificent color is not quite achieved but the total effect of color is gay and arresting and that is as it should be in a Fair which is designed to catch and hold the attention much as a billboard does and not by its architectural interest.

On the inside of the buildings the effects are generally excellent. Here artificial lighting only is used (there are no exterior windows), again with indirect application, and many of the booths and exhibits are fine indeed with very few that are not so.

Of course, color is always a matter of individual choice and my principal criticism of the general color scheme is that it is tropical and out of key with the cool greyness of the Chicago climate, which is northern.

The Mediterranean blue of sky and water for which this palette of color would be admirably suited is not to be found in Lake Michigan and Northern Illinois.

A palette of lighter and higher colors, employing more light blues and greens could have been used without loss of vividness and in better harmony with our pale blue or white skies and the cool green of Lake Michigan.

The colors used, dark red, bright red, the strongest blues and black (too much black) with lemon yellow and some large areas of strong dark yellow are too "hot" to please me.

But perhaps I am one of those who prefer blue to red.

Of the significance of the Fair as an exhibition of a "Century of Progress," it is not my purpose to speak except to say that it is crammed with interest for the serious as well as the more frivolous and no one should miss it be h seeking instruction or merely entertainment.

The night effects of color and light alone make an out standing spectacle which brings me back to the point started from.

In theatrical parlance the show should be billed abou as follows:

"A CENTURY OF PROGRESS"
The World's Greatest Spectacle,
Featuring WILLIAM LIGHTMAN
Assisted by JAMES COLORBOY,

and a distinguished company of guards, landscapers, ticket takers and architects.

—Hugh M. G. Garden.

Terrazzo Esplanade At A Century of Progress

Thanks are due from Chicago to the National Terrazzo & Mosaic Association for their exhibit of the terrazzo esplanade with water basins leading to the Planetarium This is the Association's exhibit at A Century of Progress and will remain permanently as a gift to Chicago. The architect is Ernest A. Grunsfeld, Jr., who was architect of the Planetarium.

There are twelve shallow water basins of terrazzo buil on a 14-inch thick reinforced concrete base, each pane representing one of the calendar months of the year. The design and color scheme of these terrazzo surfaces is the work of the Chicago artists John Norton and Tom Lea.

The January panel represents a giant snowflake February represents dour skies and barren, snow-covered trees. March shows the sun with her extended rays breaking through to relinquish the cold grip of winter. April is characterized by huge rain drops falling from lightning lashed clouds. May graduates into brighter colors present ing the first crocus of the season bursting into bloom. June July, August and September respectively depict elements of nature in gay colors which, by their increasing or diminishing warmth and tone, give you the true feeling of those beauteous months. October portrays a cluster of ripened grapes ready for the harvest. November pictures the advent of fall and early winter with its falling leaves and more sombre colors; and finally December, with its snow clad Christmas tree and cold winter tones completes the colorful cycle of the months.

In the terrazzo mosaic esplanade of A Century of Progress there is at least this permanent, colorful feature which Chicagoans and visitors to the city in after years may view as a reminder of the Fair of 1933.

Switzerland and Greece haven't anything to quarrel about. Switzerland has Alps, tunnels, edelweiss and yodels Greece has the Parthenon, ancient history and Sam Insull. Neither will ever attack the other. Both are contented. What could be sweeter? I wish other countries were like that.

—Bruno Lessing in Herald & Examiner.

Discussion has been active at the recent national conentions of producers and builders held in Chicago of a ode which is required of trade organizations by the Trade ecovery Act recently enacted by Congress. Submission f the proposed code to the executive authorities for critiism and approval is required before such a document may e put into effect. This is the New Deal.

The building industry's code will, of course, bear on mployment of labor, pay, working hours and a host of ther items affecting directly the cost and conduct of buildng operations.

While the act makes no reference to the architect, it ehooves him to be a party to this deliberation. The archiect's advice is valuable to the employer of building labor ince it is the architect, when considering a project with n owner, who should know conditions and probable cost f bringing the project to completion.

The American Institute of Architects being a national ody, should have a committee to sit in with the builders' ommittee and their conclusions should be reported romptly to the architectural world in The Octagon.

Millar of the Housing Letter reports, "The trend is oward selling the complete house, thus cutting down the raditional difficulties and complications of home-building." Ie fortifies this wisdom by quoting a lumberman who exlained his absence from his luncheon club for several nonths with the reply, "Hell, have you ever built a house?" ll of which is nonsense.

The sub-divider, the real estater, is the one who wants eady made houses and lots. That's where he makes his noney. He fosters the Andrew Jackson idea that any man an do a job as well as another. The small house buying ublic is yet too ignorant, generally, of the function and raining of the architect to know that their best chance or a well built home to suit their needs and pocket-book s with the architect direct. As for the aforesaid lumberman—maybe he's the type that trusts no one or he is camping on the architect's trail making changes constantly.

In any case the sympathy is with the architect.

The Bulletin recommends the reading of Prof. Walsh's paper on small house design and building reproduced in this issue. That mass production in a factory of limited house types, sold through sales agents like automobiles, is an impractical proposition is shown by U. S. Steel Company trade research on "Use of Steel in Residence Construction." This research proves that the American public does not want standardized houses. Such houses gain a hearing on the ground of lower cost. Yet models built in the Century of Progress cost more rather than less than the individually built house specially designed for the owner.

Imagine a half dozen small house types cluttering up the landscape from Atlantic to Pacific. What kind of people would want that and what a civilization!

The steel house or any other rigid type standardized is the manufacturers' money-making dream, not the public's wish.

From Stockholm's Town Hall Architect

Gold Medalist of the A. I. A.

"Your letter of April 24 with the Century of Progress cards has given me great pleasure and I thank you most sincerely. I regret the depression which you vividly describe and which seems in the U. S. A., as here, to have steadily grown worse from year to year. I understand quite well that it must be felt harder by you because your efforts have always been more ambitious. You say, as if it were a citation from the Bible, 'factories and mills are shut down and architects' establishments are disappearing like autumn leaves.'

"I think with you that it is a very good thing that the Congress has handed President Roosevelt autocratic powers in many directions and I believe, for Sweden as for the U. S. A., recovery within this year. With courage and devotion we will clear it.

"We send from here just now in a few days a model in wood of the Stockholm Town Hall with some surroundings to the Chicago Exposition as central figure in the Swedish pavillion. It has cost nearly 10.000 Swedish crowns. I think that will give Chicago and the architects more pleasure than if I had come personally.

"My best wishes and certainly we will have the pleasure of meeting again!"

Very sincerely yours,

Ragnar Ostberg.

The Folkwang Museum in Essen is "the most beautiful museum in the world," in the opinion of Dr. Paul Josephs Sachs, professor of fine arts at Harvard University. Dr. Sachs, who is also vice-president of the American Association of Museums and associate director of the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard, as well as a member of various other art associations, gave this verdict after a thorough inspection of this museum, which is one of the most modern in Germany. He was impressed not only by its wealth of works by leading artists, but also by the fact that, varying from the typical art gallery, variously tinted walls furnish a carefully studied background for different classes of works. Professor Sachs, who takes back to America a large number of photographs of the Folkwang Museum's treasures, will lecture in America on German museums.

A well known architect states that his office has four million dollars in construction work on the books ready to proceed, says the B. C. E. A. Monthly Bulletin. Hurrah! Page Well Known Architect. Let's have a look at him.

There's Nothing in the Factory Mass Production House, says H. Vandervoort Walsh, Professor of Architecture, Columbia University

(Reprinted from "Real Estate")

It is difficult to believe that some one individual can come forward from the crowd of technical men and invent a new and radically different type of house, built by such improved processes that all our accumulated knowledge will be scrapped. Yet in the past few years there have been plenty of candidates for this exalted position. In each case, the investor seemed to be spurred on by ambition to find the one solution to make a house cheaper than any other, and thereby capture the market for American homes and become very rich in the process. The picture is very alluring, that of being the originator of the model house that everybody wants to buy. What an industry it would be if it came about for some one city and group of individuals! What a calamity it would be to those architects, builders, carpenters, masons, electricians who are scattered throughout the land, and who after all are a substantial type of citizen in any community.

The point of view taken by those seeking to revolutionize home building methods for their own private gain and in hopes of getting control of the entire market or of getting up a great and powerful industry, has been first to criticise our present methods of building. They have in many cases persuaded the public that the customary ways of building are entirely obsolete and far behind the times.

Don't forget that American builders, manufacturers of building materials, and architects have advanced the science of building in the past 50 years to a degree equal to all the progress made during the previous 4000 years, and it is ridiculous to think that any one man or any small group is going to provide us with the one and only solution of the modern house that will be head and shoulders above that which can now be constructed today by the materials already on the market.

Very often in print we read statements about the backwardness of our methods of building. For instance, we are laying bricks in the same old way they did in Egypt 4000 years ago. Even such exaggerated statements as this are to be heard, that houses are built with the same old materials in the same old way, and that what we need is to completely revolutionize home building methods and turn out houses from factories with all the efficiency of mass production methods developed in other industries.

All of which arguments sound reasonable to the public that is not informed of the facts. And what are they?

First: There have been hundreds, even thousands, of plans drawn up on paper for building standardized houses at lower cost, but none to date has been commercially successful. None has been able to compete with houses built by common and tested means of construction, no matter how efficient.

Second: The houses built by the tried and tested methods are essentially factory-built and standardized houses. Continual changes have been made in making materials to develop products that required less and less fitting and cutting at the site. The size and weight of standardized units have been studied for transportation and easy handling. The principles of pre-fabricating the house have been applied just as far as practical operations would permit, and thus little room has been left for the success of the various so-called factory built houses. This procedure is continuing and improvements are to be noted at the time.

Now when I refer to the modern house, I have in mind one planned to satisfy the living requirements of our day and one constructed of materials which are modern. Manufacturers have been, for selfish reasons, perhaps, keen to improve the materials and equipment offered to them by the home-builder; some skeptics may sneer at this statement of mine, but I know that it can be justified when a broad view of the whole situation is taken over a period of years. Within the last 25 years great technical advances have been made in the study of the chemistry and the physical properties of materials of construction. Much of this study has greatly improved the products and the knowledge of their application. Building material trade associations have done much to assemble information about their products and educate the industry in its use. We have as a result, in our homes today, better lumber, better flooring, better concrete and plaster, better heating plants and plumbing equipment and many other things.

We have also a better group of builders, architects and laborers to erect these houses than we did only a few years ago, when, due to the great boom, every Tom, Dick and Harry went into the building industry.

So with better technical skill and better work from labor, the building of the home today by tested methods cannot be held up to the same criticism and ridicule that it received during the boom period. As the success of the modern house depends upon the skill of those responsible for its design and assembly, we can see that improvements like this are important. We need intelligent leaders to bring out the great possibilities in home building, for manufacturers have been so active in widening the choice of their standardized products that more ability than ever before is needed in selecting the parts to make a harmonious and attractive home.

In the thousands of years man has been building on this earth, he has discovered certain practical facts about construction that time can never change, because they are part and parcel of the universe in which we live. The fact that we still use wood, bricks, stones, tiles, and other old materials in building houses today is not evidence of the backwardness of the building industry, but that these materials give results that no new substitutes have been able to show.

Woods are cut to standard units, or built into doors and windows, shaped into floor boards, or glued together into panels by processes that in every sense of the word are modern and scientific. Machine-made bricks today are not the same old stuff that our ancestors used. The technology of paint has increased the life and beauty of these covering materials. Knowledge in the use of metal alloys has gone ahead in leaps and bounds.

Growing out of the experience of the older trades, we have a continual stream of new materials which are being tried out by these trades.

Americans are always interested in some new wrinkle in building or equipping a home. It is this progressive spirit that has encouraged and supported a constant improvement in mechanical equipment such as heating, plumbing and electric work. But changes are made only step by step and are built upon experience gained from actual use.

Thus, when we build the modern house and equip it we are only being very sensible in employing methods and

naterials that have been shown improvements, slowly and onsistently. Too radical and novel changes are in most ases full of troubles yet to be found and there are not nany home owners who can afford to find them. We do ot scrap our homes every two or three years for a new nodel. Most of them are expected to last for 30 years r more. We have many models, hundreds of years old, t which we look with more pride than we do at some of he latest designs. Building and buying a house is not the ame thing as getting a new car or a new suit of clothes. For most people the building of a house is the biggest thing hey do in a lifetime and it is only natural that they should e cautious about untried and untested new materials and nethods of construction.

I have noticed that many proposals for new ways of uilding are based more upon an almost fanatic desire for owering the costs of houses than upon basic knowledge f the problems involved. For example, I have had subnitted to me over many years, hundreds of new ways to uild exterior walls of houses. The inventors have invariably claimed that their new wall construction would cut own the cost of the house by one-third or one-half. Yet ractically in every case, they have not observed that the otal cost of the exterior walls is only about 8% to 10% f the total cost of the house. Thus, no matter how much he cost of the exterior wall was reduced, it could not posibly reduce the cost of the whole house as much as onehird or one-half.

So, too, many of the claims of low cost by designers f houses to be turned out by mass production methods are nodified by the statement that such low costs are not ossible until production gets under way, and where is the reat market that will maintain it? Then the answers are ar from convincing. I have yet to see any estimate of a otential market, ready for exploitation.

In the meantime, the cost of the house built by ordinary methods has decreased so much that from a cost ingle there is little to attract the home owner to sink his noney into an untried, new type. I have been building nouses, using modern, tested materials and equipment for is low as 12 and 15 cents per cubic foot, and these have been specially designed for site and owner's needs. I have used local masons, carpenters, laborers and mechanics and selected and bought stock materials from the nearby dealers. Such houses, I am sure, show a lower cost than that promised by the inventors of the factory-built house. The nouses which I have built for such low costs are not myths but facts, whereas the costs of some of the promised innovations are still estimates on paper.

What I have done, others can do if they follow similar approaches to the problem. Thus I maintain that low cost nouses can be built by tested methods now available and that critics of the building industry who claim that the efficient and inexpensive house cannot come out of the old and tried methods of construction are not informed of the facts. What we need today is to put more effort into using and developing what we have in the way of materials and equipment. Manufacturers offer builders and architects a wide range of standardized units, in fact almost too wide a range, from which to select. By using good taste, good sense and good management, efficient, beautiful and low-cost houses can be built from these materials, proved by use. And now is the time to begin. We have a surplus of many goods, but we have a deplorable lack of comfortable and well-built modern homes.

Interim Report (In Part) On Small House Problem

By the A. I. A. Committee on Small Houses

March 9, 1933.

7. If the Board approve this joint effort for the development of a new method of procedure, we recommend that the Institute request the Small House Service Bureau to cease the preparation, advertising, sale and promotion of Stock Plans in literature of any form and withdraw from circulation all publications and literature advertising the sale of Stock Plans. We recommend that the Bureau function for the present as doing public information work only on the value of the individual architect's services and the publicizing of good architecture in small house design and in other fields.

8. We recommend that the Institute appoint Regional Committees, the members representing each Chapter in their district, to study their localities as relating to the small house problem and report back as to the feasibility of such promotional work at as early a date as possible to the Institute Committee. The Institute Committee is then to analyze these findings and file their next recommendations with the Directors of the Institute.

9. The Committee unanimously recommends that the Institute should set up now *a permanent central Committee* to set this machinery in motion, using the existing machinery of the Small House Service Bureau, and to devote itself to the furtherance of the improvement of small house architecture, the result to be achieved by country-wide dissemination of data such as preliminary studies, the furnishing of lantern slides, lecturers and technical data distinct from working documents. We believe that such a Committee if supported by the profession in every district could work out a scheme of financing its operations locally and nationally possibly through a fee paid by architects who receive commissions as a result of the publicity and information service carried on.

—*Dwight James Baum,* Acting Chairman.
—*The Octagon.*

Health Center For Lille, France

On a wall in a booth marked "Respiration" across the public corridor from the exhibit of the Chicago Health Department in the Hall of Science, Century of Progress, hangs a large stretcher on which are shown five great photos of a model and a general plan of Paul Nelson's design for a Health Center made for and purchased by the authorities of Lille, France. It is of interest to architects in Chicago, particularly since Paul Nelson is a Chicagoan, son of Nicholas Nelson (W. P. Nelson Company), who after graduating from Princeton and serving his country as an aviator in the War, returned to France to study architecture, graduating from the Beaux Arts. In 1929 he designed the sets for Gloria Swanson's picture "What A Widow."

The Mayo Brothers Clinic had interested Paul Nelson for some time and on his visits home he made a thorough study of this and other health centers. Returning to France, he devoted a year and a half, assisted by a corps of draftsmen, to the development of this Lille project, encouraged by the distinguished Professor Lampert. In December 1932 Lille purchased Nelson's architectural project now shown at the Fair and in January 1933 the municipality bought the necessary additions to the property to round out the complete complex required for the scheme. The estimated cost of the buildings is $15,000,000.

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Among the features incorporated may be mentioned: (A) Terminus station covered by Administration Building. (B) Medical Center, including hospital of 1700 beds, School of Medicine, Out- and In-Patient Treatment. (C) Theater and Congress Hall. (E) Church. (F) Nurses Home and School, 650 rooms. (G) Home for the Pensioned, 200 apartments. (H) Hospital for Aged Incurables and Convalescents, 2900 beds. (I) Servants' Quarters, 450 beds, and central stores. (J) Assistant Director's home. (L) Mortuary service. (M) Bakery, laundry, up-keep department, heating and electrical plant.

It is noted there is integral air conditioning, hermetic and insulating exterior walls of interchangeable opaque or translucid panels. There is provision for a 200 car garage. Surely a magnificent project and if Lille carries this out she will be setting the pace for all health centers of the world.

Cooling—Heating—Its Cost

The absence of new building and the limited repairs to old buildings during the past four years has created a need for modernization of hundreds of buildings in Chicago and vicinity. The mechanical equipment in many of these buildings needs replacement or extensive repairs.

This is particularly true of refrigeration which generally was installed without consideration for the correct engineering application necessary for good performance. A survey of existing refrigeration systems shows clearly that most of them have been poorly made. The result is failure to meet the hot weather demands, and excessive expense to the owner. Few of the buildings contain any facilities for humidification or room cooling.

Hundreds of present refrigeration systems are now in such condition that substantial savings to the building owner can be accomplished by replacement with the modern central plant which supplies refrigeration at a cost lower than any other type. The savings accomplished can be applied to further modernization by installing humidification and room cooling equipment now available in practical types which can be applied, without duct work, to one or more rooms as desired. This type fits any steam or hot water system and is used the year around. In winter it heats, humidifies, admits fresh air, filters and provides air motion. In summer it cools, dehumidifies and provides air motion.

While each installation is an individual engineering problem of fitting the equipment to the work it must perform, costs can be approximated for average conditions as follows.

Refrigeration will average $100 per apartment with a four cubic foot net cabinet; $145 with a six cubic foot all porcelain cabinet and $250 with a ten to twelve cubic foot all porcelain cabinet. Operating costs will average from 50c to $1 per apartment per month depending upon the cabinet size. Room cooling and humidification of the type described will cost approximately as follows: One 3500 cubic foot room—$800; two rooms—$1300; three rooms—$1800. The operating costs during the summer cooling period may range from 50c to $1.25 per day for one to three rooms. For use during the heating period the operating cost is negligible, only a few cents per week.

It is certain that buildings so equipped will be popular with tenants and profitable to the owners. It will enable the present buildings to compete more favorably with new buildings that will be erected in the future.

—Deane E. Perham, Director Refrigeration Standards, Chicago Master Steam Fitters' Association.

Joint I. S. A. and Chapter Meeting

May meetings of the Illinois Society of Architects and Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., were merged and a joint meeting attended by about 150 men was held in the Architects' Club on May 9. The appearance in the bookshops the day before of an architectural guidebook of Chicago "Chicago Welcomes You," (Kroch) by Alfred Granger with an introduction by Rufus Dawes, was announced. Honor was shown Irving K. Pond, nestor of the architectural profession in Chicago, by all rising in concert in congratulation to Mr. Pond on his seventy-sixth birthday.

The subject of the formal program was the small house as demonstrated by examples in A Century of Progress. The first speaker, R. T. Miller, sang the praises of the Masonite House, beginning with the vision by the manufacturer of Masonite, of the wonders that might be achieved by an explosion in the fibres of waste wood found in saw mills. Miller dramatically led his hearers from the conception to the visualized Masonite house at the Fair.

Howard T. Fischer, a young architect, designer of a one story steel house for Ruth Page in a northshore suburb, father of General Houses, Inc., read a paper on the aims of General Houses, Inc. Humor was not in the speaker's thought, though it hovered at times in the minds of the hearers. Among the aims of General Houses, Inc. are the designing, erecting, and financing services. Their model is the automobile industry. Dealers will be licensed throughout the land who will sell various models of General Houses as exhibited on the lot or where have you; the dealer will take the contract to erect any of the stock models shown; the dealer will have all repair parts in stock, but the fabricator designs, erects, and finances.

H. L. Waugh, once structural engineer in the employ of Albert Kahn, appeared here as chief engineer of Stran-Steel Corporation, who have "flexibility" emblazoned on their shield for the steel house. He wanted it understood that his concern did not design houses. They presented only adaptable modern material, a steel substitute for wood joists and wood studding, which when incorporated in the building would cost not more than 5% to 10% more than wood. The system is one where two sheets of steel bent into channel shape with a curve in the web create an "I" section into whose joints nails may be driven. Erection is by carpenters rather than iron setters, that is, with the kind permission of the iron setters' union, and the most formidable tool necessary for such erection, according to Mr. Waugh, is the hacksaw. Further claims: earthquake safe, fire resisting, higher loan value. Salesmanship of this system is to be advanced by having its example at the Fair dolled up—decorating it is called—by "Good Housekeeping" magazine.

And now came Chapple—Bennett Chapple, vice-president of American Rolling Mills. Mr. Chapple is round, enjoys good digestion, and is in consequence happy. Suffering architects who have not attended a vaudeville show for a long time were compensated by the entertainment furnished by the genial Chapple. First he made clear he was no engineer and pictured vividly the grab for the handbook indulged in by the engineer—his reasoning "when the angle of confluence meets the angle of influence"—when first the sheet steel house was proposed. The loading test, however, convinced these manufacturers and their enginers, and Chapple's company reduced the gauge each time they built a house, from 16 to 18 and now 20 gauge, reducing the cost of the house, thus making it possible to stamp out more for public consumption and scatter his type of

el house through the land like autumn leaves. His pping eloquence harked back to the well-worn triumver-: food, clothes, and shelter, which gave Herman Matz ich satisfaction. The metal house at Solon, outside of veland, was cited, where the sheets had a colored enamel ing set in white metal strips. To climax the entire, Mr. apple announced that the American Rolling Mills Com-ny's house at the Fair would be decorated by the "Ladies me Journal."

Next came Professor H. Vandervoort Walsh, School Architecture, Columbia University. He had come to icago to speak before the National Conference on the newal of Home Building called at the Congress Hotel. e Professor spoke on the general architect not incor-rated who has no pre-fabricated house to offer but de-ns in any suitable material that the local market affords, ely in the best interests of the individual client and ates for him, as proved by experience, a house satisfying th practically and aesthetically, for from 12c to 14c per bic foot. And where, asks Walsh, in all these pre-bricated houses are you offered anything that can com-re with that price? He closed with the statement that body has yet met the required conditions in pre-fabricated uses.

One wondered how the program committee overlooked ving a representative of the reinforced brick house built the Fair speak in presenting the symposium. This re-rter will wager a good cigar that visitors to the Century Progress will vote overwhelmingly in favor of the brick use with its 6¾-inch thick reinforced brick floors brought a perfect level with a polishing machine, its brick stair-ys, reinforced brick shelves and canopies, 2-inch thick inforced brick partitions as stiff as the outside walls. This use has architectural quality. Can this be claimed for e synthetic houses of fibre board, steel sheets, and what ve you? America may have been on wheels but the use as a home anchored to the ground with an appear-ce of solidity, still holds fast in the minds of human ings.

Construction Industry Dinner

The Construction Industry Dinner arranged by the oducers Council, Inc. and participated in by the Chicago hapter, A. I. A., the Illinois Society of Architects, the rchitects Club of Chicago, the Association of Arts and dustries, and the Construction League of the United ates, brought together about 125 people in the Crystal allroom of the Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, on June 26. fter a good dinner, Chairman George F. Fairbrass, retiring esident of the Producers Council Club of Chicago, called e meeting to order and then introduced Eugene H. Klaber, ewly elected president of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A. ith a few graceful and fitting words Mr. Klaber took s seat.

Mr. Fairbrass then explained the subject of the forum "Building Construction and the New Deal," and with is introduced Robert D. Kohn, past president of the . I. A. and president of the Construction League of the nited States, as the toastmaster. He in turn presented rnest J. Russell, president of the A. I. A., who explained at it was up to the architects to work out a survey for e New Deal, even though the architect as such did not me within the purview of the Trade Recovery Act. He peated the oft heard statement that the building industry ounders, that it must act as a unit.

F. W. Morse, president, the Producers Council, Inc., came next. His written paper dwelt upon unwise planning and unsound investment. And then came A. C. Tozzer, president, the Associated General Contractors of America, who made clear that the Federal administration expected the contractors to form a code under the New Deal under the advice and criticism of the Administration. The last speaker was Donald Deskey, representing the composite views of the membership of the Association of Arts and Industries. This young man rambled, saying many things that had been repeated often; the stock arguments for modern design in contra-distinction to modernistic and, of course, to traditional or historic design were again paraded, including some architectural history that every school boy in his second year of architectural schooling is perfectly familiar with. "Experimental is the art of today," said he. "Modern style will be the means of industrial recovery."

In reviewing all the speech making, it must be said that the toastmaster's, Mr. Kohn's, fluent remarks were by far the best and most interesting. He had something new to contribute in that he is much in contact with the new Federal Administration in Washington, knows their aims and ambitions in the matter of relief and rehabilitation. His little speeches accompanying the introduction of other speakers were alive, interesting, and very informative.

Illinois Society of Architects June Meeting

The Society's annual meeting on June 29 brought forth interesting and vital subjects by the speakers. After the dinner Stanley Parker, well known Boston architect, catching the spirit of the company, sang two exhilarating solos with original words. Tellers announced that the administration ticket had won every office in the letter ballot election.

The President then introduced Architect Parker who spoke on bidding practice among general contractors for building work. The general practice in vogue today where 50% to 70% of the work included is furnished by the sub-contractors, the general contractor collecting these sub-bids, juggling them and adding his own work, then making a general cut throughout because of the competition he is entering, was denounced and shown untenable. Untenable in that the quality of the work executed under this system suffers, the successful contractor starting on a practice of chiselling among his subs immediately the contract is awarded. The speaker called the system a Gilbert and Sullivan farce. He pleaded for a system of contracting where all sub-bids are submitted to the owner and his architect for consideration, the bidder to be selected on a basis of cost, with profit, of the work to be performed with his own employees, plus a fixed fee on the cost of all sub-bids selected by the architect and owner. The methods of most general contractors, he said, are in disrepute today.

Professor Robert Jones, now of the University of Minnesota, Department of Architecture, was introduced. Likewise Mr. Charles Miller, once a practicing architect in Chicago but now assistant to the director of Scranton Correspondence School, was presented to the company. He stated his institution gave many men technical instruction in architecture to prepare them to pass the state board examinations. He made clear that the instruction did not fit candidates for practice without practical experience and training in architects' offices.

And now A. R. Gardener, Executive Vice-President, Federal Home Loan Bank of Evanston, was introduced who spoke on operations of the Home Loan Bank system.

(Continued on page 8, column 1)

Mr. Gardener said the United States had launched two major financing projects to one of which his institution belonged, an institution that was purely a refinancing plan that gave money only to major institutions. These members were composed of building and loan associations, mutual savings banks, and insurance companies.

The territory of his bank includes Wisconsin and Illinois. In Wisconsin there are five mutual savings banks; in Illinois none. He deplored the scarcity of building and loan associations in the Chicago territory as well as the absence of mutual savings banks. No loans had been made for new construction. The purpose of the institution, the speaker said, is to prime the pump to get money in circulation. The Evanston bank has $15,000,000 of Government money to educate the institutions that get the money how to use it properly for the purpose intended. He said the trouble had been that banks rather than building and loan associations and mutual savings banks had made such loans. Danville has more mortgage money out than Cook County. These Home Loan Banks give money at 5% on ten year loans. This new bank lays down standards of ethics and practice. The Evanston bank is doing a business now of $60,000 a day. Its loans are limited to homes housing from one to three families. This limitation, however, is liberally interpreted.

Once engineer for Holabird and Root in the building of the Stevens Hotel, more recently engineer in the construction of the Bahai Temple, Wilmette, and now engineer with widened functions and duties for the West Park Board of Chicago, Benjamin Shapiro told a sad story of the administration of the West Parks in the past which most of his hearers had read about in the daily press. The story is one that is repeated periodically in the political administration of cities and states all too often in this land of ours. Mr. Shapiro pleaded for the active and penetrating interest of technical men such as his audience was composed of.

National Association For Better Housing

"National Association for Better Housing" is now being organized in Chicago. Objectives of the organization, as tentatively agreed upon by the continuation committee, are as follows:

1. To foster residential development in accordance with comprehensive neighborhood, community, city, or regional plans designed to preserve home-like surroundings and to stabilize values.
2. To promote the use of good design, sound materials, and improved construction methods in all residential building.
3. To aid in the development of less costly and cumbersome financing procedure.
4. To assist owners of residential property and homes in equalizing the unfair burden of taxation.
5. To support practical methods of rehabilitating blighted districts and obsolete structure.
6. To aid legislation and public movements which will promote home ownership and good building.
7. To conduct research on problems of land utilization, housing, and home ownership.
8. To act as a clearing house for the collection of information and news from industries, trades, and others interested in housing and home building and disseminate the same to its members and to the public.
9. To conduct such cooperative enterprises among the members of the association as may be in accordance with these objects.

San Francisco Acts

Sponsored by a number of organizations, and headed by the Mayor of San Francisco, an intensive campaign is to be undertaken to acquaint the owners of existing buildings in that city with the possibilities of remodelling and renovating such buildings in order to increase their value and income-producing abilities.

Charles F. Maury, chairman of the Section's committee for this purpose, has made a great number of enlargements of photographs of residences, flats, and apartment houses in a selected area of the city. Some thirty-three local architects have already signified their willingness to make studies for the remodeling of these buildings. At an early date it is planned to hold an exhibition of these "before-and-after" photographs and accompanying sketches. Other organizations will cooperate in a drive to induce owners to undertake the work in order to stimulate activity in the building industry and the realty market.—*Bulletin of the Northern Section, State Association of California Architects.*

Legal Questions and Answers

Question: I had a one story building built and the contract provides that the walls shall be strong enough to support another story; but this is not the case. The architect issued his certificate and they tell me that settles it. Is that true?

Answer: An architect's certificate is not conclusive as to warrantees, because a warranty is in the nature of a supplemental agreement not that the work will be completed according to certain plans and specifications but that after it is so completed certain results will be obtained. Blake, Sec. 55.

Question: I went to an architect to consult him about building, and he gave the story to the newspapers. The owner of the lot that I planned on buying jumped the price on me so I had to abandon my plans. Can I sue the architect?

Answer: After the Eastland disaster people ran around the morgues to find their deceased relatives. A young lady found her lost uncle and ordered a magnificent funeral for him. Then she took a last look and his mouth opened and she saw by a gold tooth that it was not her uncle. As the mortician covered him up he said: "You d—— fool, if you had kept your mouth shut you'd a got a decent burial." Let this be a moral to architects, but they need not fear a suit, because in the absence of an agreement to keep silent they are not liable for disclosures although this rule has been questioned. Haven vs. Donahue, 43 Pac. 962.

—*George F. Anderson "Real Estate."*

The summer nights in Norway are dim watergreen translucent twilights. Everything seems to be happening under water like a page out of Pelleas and Melisande. The birds never stop cheeping and chirping and twittering in the liquid trees.

On such nights to be gliding in a small boat through Hardangerfjord is to taste eternity. There is no water in the world like that water. It is Arthurian water, dark as the mysteries of time and timelessness, glassed and enchanted between the hawk-dark promontories: a trance of water through which at any moment that magical hand clothed in white samite might emerge brandishing in lion-colored circles of lightning a blue sword shot with the moon.

—*Joseph Auslander.*