

MONTHLY ILLINOIS SOCIETY « OF ARCHITECTS » BULLETIN

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Meditations on the Boston Convention

If this writer had a ready and intelligent pen like Ye Editor of the Monthly Bulletin, he would be able to make all of you who did not attend the Boston convention in June quite sick with envy over those who did! Why attend a convention of the American Institute of Architects, you ask? Well, in Boston you met governors and bishops, deans and intelligentsia of the highest; and, best of all, you met those architects whose work you like—Maginnis and Klauder, Walker and Lescaze, Baum and La Beauce, Bergstrom and Fugard, Goldstein and Sullivan—why try to mention them all, men whom you admire and whom you could meet on common ground; and if you like the schools, there's Emerson of M. I. T., Meeks of Yale, Gropius of Harvard, Lorch of Michigan, Koyl of Pennsylvania, Province of Illinois, Lawrence of Oregon, Langford of Texas, and others—all of them eager to talk with you and to know you personally. Do you like golf, teas, lobster dinners, pop concerts, sailing, clam bakes, cocktail parties, bull sessions with brother architects? Ah! All these were to be had at the Boston convention, and more in between the real sessions of the convention.

But you are an architect. You like beautiful things—fine colonial examples, splendid murals, great paintings, inspiration, help for your future architecture! Have you seen the Harvard campus, the Boston State House, the fine old examples of Lexington, Concord, Salem, Marblehead, old examples like the Longfellow House in Cambridge, and the unusual Fenway Court? We who went to the convention saw them all, between sessions (or drinks). Are you too old, you who didn't go, or have you lost your savor? If you had a scholarship, you would go just to see such things as we saw in and around Boston.

But to get down to the real convention—the subjects taken up seriously were legion, but only a few will be mentioned here. Read the excellent synopsis of the convention given in the July number of "The Octagon."

State Societies

The special Committee on State Societies met under the leadership of our John Fugard. The subject under discussion mainly was the resolution of the Pennsylvania State Society suggesting a national association of state societies. The uselessness of a second national architectural society paralleling the Institute became evident. The need of more individual state organizations, however, which the Institute could encourage, was apparent. The necessity for revision of the standard form of Chapter by-laws pertaining to state associations and their affiliations with the Institute, in order to come closer to the needs of state associations, was discussed. All of these resulted in appropriate resolutions, recommending that the Committee on State Societies of the A. I. A. study these problems and take suitable action. (See pages 21 and 33, July 1937 Octagon).

Competitions

A strong appeal was again made on the convention floor that architectural competitions be recommended as a means

of distributing work to architects by the Government for public buildings. This was countered by Francis P. Sullivan, Chairman of the Committee on Public Works, who told of the increased cooperation of the Procurement Division of the Treasury Department with the Public Works Committee of the A. I. A. to secure qualified architects for government buildings. Williams, Klauder and Lescaze, also Flewelling of California, helped in securing an amendment to the resolution for pre-qualification of architects for Public Works, recommending that the Board of Directors investigate the possibility of a method for selecting architects by competition. (See pages 17 and 33, July 1937 Octagon).

Housing

The admirable and comprehensive report of the Committee on Housing by Walter R. McCornack, Chairman, should be studied in detail. Its suggestions, if carried out, would be far-reaching. In the main it refers to the trends in small house construction of ownership or rentable types, of large subdivision developments, privately or governmentally developed or encouraged. It suggests improvements in standards of design, construction, supervision, proper financing, land acquisition and land use policies. It recommends that attention be paid to the agency established under the Wagner-Steagall Bill; that local chapters influence action with regard to work contemplated to be done under the Wagner-Steagall Low-Rent Housing Act.

The report suggests that a committee of the Institute be appointed to study: 1. Large scale and community planning. 2. Construction statistics. 3. Development of facts regarding city operating costs in relation to tax income. 4. Taxes and subsidies. 5. The management and operating costs of housing minimum equipment. 6. Land acquisition. 7. Zoning. 8. Land use. 9. Cost of buildings. 10. Definition of Public Housing. 11. Amendment to the Housing Act. The report recommended that such a committee work in collaboration with other agencies and offer fullest cooperation to the National Housing Authority.

Further, the report called attention to present building conditions as to techniques of building, building codes, the use which might be made of the Bureau of Standards in studying basic requirements for building codes, the help which industry might give in developing better products for the housing field. It mentioned obstacles of a major kind to proper housing at a minimum cost, such as combinations in restraint of trade; rackets in the building trades; skilled labor shortage; juristechnical disputes; restricted experimentation in new types of construction or mechanical equipment; inadequate study of standardization and prefabrication; and excessive minimum standards for low-cost housing. (See pages 23-34-35, July 1937 Octagon). The report was followed by suitable resolutions covering the items above mentioned.

Education

The general history of architectural education was admirably presented by Everett Victor Meeks, Dean of the

School of Fine Arts, Yale University, in his subject, "Foreign Influences on Architectural Education in America." (See page 36, July Octagon). He was followed by Dr. Walter Gropius, the new Senior Critic at Harvard, in a most interesting talk on "Essentials of Creative Design." (See page 43, July Octagon).

Dr. Gropius based his thesis on the statements: "Architecture has come to terms with the Machine; . . . architectural education has to cope with two entirely different problems; the art of building deals with the science of technique only, that is to say, with materials and construction; the art of architecture deals, in addition to that, with the science of space. If the unity of both is our aim, the unity of the *whole* training should be our main concern . . ." The thesis is very interesting and should be read in detail. The writer feels that too much emphasis was placed on a standardized method of training, reliance on the machine, and regimentation. Art in architecture was mentioned as "spatial vision" and "studies to rediscover a grammar of design." Perhaps these are word pictures to represent more than they would seem to! Each one of us should read Dr. Gropius' speech and judge for himself.

Dean Emerson, who handled the evening discussions on education so ably, spoke of the great scholarships which are handled by the Institute, the most notable recently being the Langley Scholarships which will comprise about twelve (this year) scholarships given to draftsmen and architects for special studies or research.

Capitol Building, Washington

Perhaps the most spirited discussion of the Convention was in connection with the proposed alterations to the Capitol Building. (See pages 19-20-35, July Octagon). Francis P. Sullivan, Chairman of the Committee on the National Capitol, and Dr. Leicester B. Holland, Chairman of the Committee on the Preservation of Historic Buildings, became the principals in an interesting flood of oratory as to whether or not the A. I. A. should express an official opinion on the advisability of such alterations which the government is now proposing to make. Mr. Sullivan contended that the original architects of the Capitol never intended the building as it now stands. Dr. Holland insisted that the building is now historic in form and that any change other than of a repair or maintenance nature which would concern material or design would be arbitrary in character and, therefore, not warranted. Robert Kohn proposed, as a compromise, that it was the sense of the meeting that no valid reasons had been advanced which would indicate the advisability of the Government's proposed changes in the Capitol. (See page 35, July Octagon).

The Annual Dinner

What man attending the convention would willingly miss the annual dinner? With its fair ladies, its speeches, its installation of new officers, its presentation of medals and fellowships! In Boston the feature of the evening was a playlet showing the history of the A. I. A.—its formation eighty years ago, the convention of 1891 in Boston, and the third act of "today." Chicago was specially honored by a speech by our still youthful I. K. Pond, and by the presentation of fellowships to Hugh M. G. Garden and John Wellborn Root.

The 70th Convention next year will be in New Orleans. Can you visualize it? French Quarter, bouille-abaisse, old New Orleans, Natchez, color, wines, life! Can you miss it?

—William Jones Smith.

Oldest Christian Chapel Moved to Yale

The earliest Christian chapel ever discovered has been moved overseas from Syria and reconstructed in the Yale Gallery of Fine Arts.

The chapel is of extraordinary historic interest since it dates from the early part of the third century, when Christians worshipped secretly in Rome's catacombs and in such tiny, concealed rooms as this Syrian chapel. On the walls are paintings, showing how early Christians pictured such scenes as Christ healing the lame man at Capernaum, Peter attempting to walk on the water, and the three Marys at the tomb of Christ. A box-like affair is identified as an early baptismal font.

Yale archaeologists who unearthed the chapel in ruins of Dura-on-the-Euphrates, trace its history through several generations of use, ending with Dura's fall in the Persian siege of 256 A. D.

The chapel, they explain, was first merely a secluded room in the home of wealthy Christians, who must have offered it as a safe place for worship in time of Christian persecution.

A generation or two later, when the Christian sect had grown stronger and was more tolerated, the family moved out, leaving the large and elegant house to the Christian community. The archaeologists infer this from finding no trace of stove, cistern, or other household gear. At this time, the rooms were rearranged and walls of the tiny chapel were decorated with their many Biblical paintings.

Other rooms in the house were incongruously left adorned with pagan Bacchic friezes. This suggests to the archaeologists that taste had changed, or else that final siege of the city in 256 interrupted the renovation.

The chapel has been reconstructed under supervision of Herbert Gute, graduate of the Yale School of Fine Arts. Mr. Gute spent two years working in Dura before he undertook the project.

—*Science News Letter*

Salt Seasoning Method Improves Poor Lumber

Salt seasoning methods developed at the U. S. Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, Wis., promise to increase the nation's forest capital by converting species now considered weed trees to valued potential building and cabinet lumber.

The method is a simple one. The green wood is immersed in a bath of common house salt, baking soda, borax or one of several other solutions worked out by the laboratory, then air- or kiln-dried. Types of lumber that have defied all previously tried curing methods yield to the new technique.

Formerly it took a year or more to air-dry 6 by 12 inch Douglas fir to a moisture content of 15% at Madison, and during the drying, surface cracks penetrate to an average depth of 1¾ inches. By the new salt treatment method, timbers were dried to the same moisture content in 34 days, including eight days in the salt-treating tank and 26 days in a dry kiln. The cracks were confined to knots; otherwise the timbers were perfect.

Because wood dries from the inside out when chemically seasoned, it is impossible for it to surface-check or crack in drying. In ordinary seasoning, wood dries from the outside in, and often checks.

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Editor Monthly Bulletin

ARTHUR WOLTERS DORF, 520 NORTH MICHIGAN AVE., CHICAGO

The vision of a mansion in the Spanish manner with granite walls pierced by small windows on the street fronts and expansive windows giving onto the patio—the last remaining work in Chicago of Architect H. H. Richardson—as the permanent home of architects' organizations in Chicago, has dissolved. The deed to Glessner House has been surrendered to the J. J. Glessner Estate. Emery Stanford Hall sings the swan song on another page of this issue.

The May Architectural Forum answers Robert Trask Cox's criticism of that journal's serial publication of HABS drawings. Mr. Cox deplores "the wishy-washy back slapping" comment "that occurs in almost every case."

The editor of Forum says architectural criticism offers the professional journal its most vexing problem; that there is a lack of precedent "in libel law to indicate that courts will view criticism of architecture with the same liberality they extend to all other arts." The editor says further that material is drawn from the very men who may prove sensitive to criticism. And finally, the editor asks for a large expression of opinion on this point from subscribers.

The editor's answer raises doubt in the minds of older architects, familiar with American architectural journals through the past forty years, of the editor's familiarity with his field. Does he not know that The Architectural Review (Bates & Guild, Boston) carried monthly from two to four pages of critical comment of current work appearing in the architectural journals; that these evaluations appeared over a period of at least twelve years, written by the well-known C. Howard Walker?

The Architectural Record's most valued feature, beginning at its birth about 1891, was the monthly dissection by Montgomery Schuyler of some big but bad building in an American city under the caption "Architectural Aberrations." When Mr. Schuyler retired, Russell Sturgis, architect, critic, historian, served the Record with monthly analyses of quite new structures and his criticism, too, was not timid.

Architecture & Building (W. T. Comstock, N. Y.) carried architectural criticism by Barr Feree through a number of years.

The American Architect in the early 1920's once a month published critical comment by Egerton Swartwout, well-known New York architect, on current work.

The Journal of the A. I. A. until it expired ran monthly I. K. Pond's "Paper Boat," critical comment on new architecture.

But would the Harry Luce editors (Time, Fortune, Life, Architectural Forum) be permitted to produce an architectural journal of this type? No, it is not to be expected after viewing the noisy ballyhoo to which the Architectural Forum is addicted under the present ownership.

Competent, intelligent criticism is to be welcomed. The critic must be known and respected. Fair criticism is the life of progress. The architects want it. The public and the architects need it.

Hats off to the planners of San Francisco's '39 fair for poetic imagination and dramatic sense. Their site is a man-made island in the middle of San Francisco Bay, approached by bridge from Yerba Buena Island and by ferry. Oriental are the motifs in the western facades and here is the main front. Elephants play an important part in the decoration and there will be elephant towers.

These planners speak of the picture to be erected as the "Never Never Land." The wall of the western facade, one-half mile long, eighty feet high and two hundred feet deep, houses exhibit halls. There will be no windows. The effect is to be that of an ancient walled city connecting with inner courts. It is to be a Pageant of the Pacific. Among the features will be the Avenue of the Seven Seas, the Court of Hemispheres, the Theater of the Sky, the Pacific Pageant of Flowers, Flowers from Heaven Court, and the Port of the Trade Winds.

The New York fair has certain publicity advantages, although the Californian is never behind in singing the praises of his fair land. Remember the story of the Californian away from home, finding himself at a funeral service where he was called upon to say a few words in memory of the deceased? The Californian happened to be a stranger to the deceased, but did not let the opportunity pass of telling the mourners about the glories of California's climate.

After the fair the island will be used as a municipal airport.

Dr. Walter Gropius, in his address before the A. I. A. convention in Boston, devoted part of his speech to the "ideal architect." This man, according to the distinguished Doctor, first of all must have high human qualities. Because of his necessary contact with all sorts of people, he must contain within himself social qualities which alone can help him to be the mollifier of various temperaments among his collaborators. He must create an atmosphere prompted by human qualities, creative power and experience. Coordinating organizer, he starts out from social conceptions—conceptions applicable to the whole community.

Architecture is interpretative of life itself. Mother of all the arts, on architecture falls the fulfillment of two demands by man—the purpose or objective of a thing, and its expression or form. The development of a technical apparatus, such as a machine, results from the intellectual work of numerous engineers who, like links in a chain, superpose their efforts on the efforts of their predecessors. On the other hand, we impose demands on the expression, the form—and this is of a spiritual nature. This form, design, is not a product of the intellect; it is of human desire and inspiration.

Annual Meeting of the Illinois Society

Members and their ladies to the number of seventy attended the annual meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects on June 29 at the Architects' Club of Chicago. The punch, the appetizers, the fine dinner—all contributed to the spirit of comradery which prevailed throughout the evening. They were a happy family and the bright spring colors of the women's gowns were peculiarly fitting to the genial, joyous remarks of the speakers.

The President was more than pleased to see so many members from downstate present. A surprise guest was Charles Nothnagel who, way back in the 1880's, had worked in the office of Adler and Sullivan. Dankmar Adler believed in a state license law for architects and in 1886 the first draft of a bill for presentation to the legislature appeared. Not until 1897 was an architects' license law passed in Illinois and then only through the special efforts of Charles Nothnagel who had been elected to the legislature for this particular purpose. This was the first architects' license law enacted in the United States of America. Though no longer a resident of Illinois, Mr. Nothnagel holds license No. 1 in this state. He reminisced on this subject and his recollection and delivery were as vivid and fluent as if it had occurred yesterday.

President Jensen proceeded to introduce all the living "has been" presidents of the Society and he succeeded in getting most of them to the meeting. Secretary McEldowney read his minutes and then came reports of standing committees including the Legislative Committee, Paul Gerhardt, Jr., Chairman; Committee on State Code, Leo Pleins, Chairman; and Program Committee, Leo Weissenborn, Chairman. Mr. Weissenborn received a particular cheer for the successful programs he had arranged during the year.

Julius Huber was introduced as the only surviving charter member.

The President read a letter from George Maynard, telling of the number of young men, students in architectural schools, home for the vacation and seeking employment for experience during the summer. Mr. Maynard said he welcomed them to the Architects' Club and asked the cooperation of the Society in placing these young men in fitting offices. The President will develop a plan to aid.

President Jensen thought it fitting to call upon the past presidents, one after the other, for short talks. He began with I. K. Pond, the nestor of the profession in Chicago, and followed with Leon Stanhope, E. Stanford Hall, John R. Fugard, C. Herrick Hammond, Meyer Sturm, Arthur Woltersdorf, and Robert C. Ostergren. All were bright and elicited smiles and applause. The climax, however, was reached in Meyer Sturm and Robert Ostergren. Sturm read extracts from a letter of advice written him by his wife on his obligations to a society in which he was a past president. One was reminded of Benjamin Franklin's "Poor Richard's Almanac." Ostergren's strain, however, was very different. He told how the Plym Fellowship Jury of Award would meet to formulate its decision at the Swedish Club of Chicago over a good dinner, where Ostergren personally prepared the cucumber salad. He described dramatically how this salad must be dressed, the description of the cutting of the cucumber itself was a classic.

Eugene Fuhrer for the tellers reported the results of the election. The names of the new incumbents may be found at the head of page 3. New directors are John A. Holabird and Victor A. Matteson. The President read his annual address, printed in another column of this issue.

The regular business of the Society being disposed of, the President introduced the Rev. Charles H. Epstein of St. Henry's Rectory, Rogers Park, Chicago. The Reverend Father was very happy in his extemporaneous talk touching on his acquaintanceship with architects and many others of the human family. He said the idealism and poetry that was inherent in the subject of architecture must not be lost, even though the necessities of engineering knowledge should never be slighted. To dim the former in favor of the latter meant the passing of architecture, an art which perhaps better than any other reflected the culture and idealism of the ages.

Father Epstein harked back to the remarks by the "has been" presidents with much humor. He described then his visit to Chartres Cathedral where he had met another student of that noble fane—an Englishman, artist in stained glass. The two went from window to window and as their ecstasy grew their reverence increased. Lord Byron, though no saint, has written—according to Father

Epstein—the noblest tribute that any poet has ever offered to St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. He said the Bulletin should print it.

Address of the President

This meeting brings to a close the 40th year in the life of the Illinois Society of Architects. In this time the profession has experienced periods of prosperity and of depression. Today it can be recorded that there are signs on the horizon of increasing activity which cause a feeling of optimism, even though retarding elements such as social upheavals still mar the picture and give cause for doubt and uneasiness.

As opportunities for the architect increase, so do his difficulties and his problems. Among these are building costs, aggravated with taxes of different sorts, all tending to further increase such costs; competition from unprofessional sources carrying with it the task of the profession to enlighten the prospective building owners on what constitute professional services; changing taste because of the clash and battle of styles and, last but not least, the need for a progressive building code as well as other necessary legislation.

All this emphasizes the growing necessity of aggressive and intelligent action through "collective (not bargaining) action" through organization.

In the affairs of the Society, the membership has increased, the debt has been reduced, the Bulletin has been increasingly useful and effective and committees have, with some exceptions, been active. The following deserve special mention: Public Action, Victor A. Matteson, Chairman; Legislative, Paul Gerhardt, Jr., Chairman; Program, Leo J. Weissenborn, Chairman; a special committee on State Building Code, Leo Pleins, Chairman, acting under Paul Gerhardt's committee; Publicity and Membership, Herman Palmer.

Meetings of the board have been held regularly and have been well attended.

The financial secretary with his office staff have been as usual willing and agreeable.

The question of a new building code is ever with us. The Society has not lacked aggressiveness or tact in urging its passage. Until this matter was placed in the hands of a sub-committee of the Legislative Committee, John Davey gave much time and effort and is to be commended for it.

A special committee composed of Robert S. DeGolyer, Chairman, with John A. Armstrong and Frank Randall, representing respectively the Illinois Society, Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., and Western Society of Engineers, has cooperated with the City Council Sub-Committee handling this matter and it is hoped that early adoption may be brought about through their efforts together with those of other interests.

Efforts to develop a statewide building code will be continued and from many expressions recently received will have active support throughout the state.

The next meeting of the Society to be held outside of Chicago is now being developed. The success of the Springfield meeting in November 1936 is a stimulant for an effective method of extending the usefulness of the Society to members remote from Chicago.

Your President wishes to thank the officers, the board, and the committees for their consideration and assistance.

—Elmer C. Jensen, President.

Opposes Enactment of State Building Code

The Editor: I understand that for the present the proposed Illinois State Building Code is dead; at least its resurrection before the state legislature will not take place within a period of two years. Until then we may, perhaps, be spared the necessity of worrying about it and perhaps its proponents in the meantime will see the wisdom of forgetting it—for good.

About 85% of the members of the Illinois Society of Architects live in the metropolitan area of Chicago where local city codes prevail, such as they are. The majority of the remaining 15% of the I. S. A. members are located in the other principal cities of the state where building codes exist, or where they can be adopted if considered desirable. Why then should the I. S. A. concern itself with a state code? Can it be that some architects feel that a state code will help architects secure more jobs? Or are they deeply

concerned over the danger to the public in the construction of unsafe buildings which now so often occurs due to the lack of a state code? It would seem wise to let each community mind its own knitting, and surely the I. S. A. has quite a good sized job on its hands in trying to hasten the adoption of the new Chicago code without another one to bother with.

Familiarity through experience in building construction in states where state codes exist does not emphasize the wisdom of centralized authority in administration of building regulations, with inefficiency, delays, expense to taxpayer, builder, and architect, as well as the inconvenience due to inaccessibility of officers in charge of administration for adjustments, interpretations, etc. This, of course, would not affect a Chicago architect of a Chicago building, but if the building were in Cairo and approval had to be secured in Springfield, it might be different.

Let each community pass its own building code and handle its administration locally, and do away with centralized administration and authority.—*Victor A. Matteson.*

* * *

Leo J. Pleins, Chairman, I. S. A. Sub-Committee on State Building Code, will reply to Mr. Matteson in the October-November number of the Bulletin. Mr. Pleins' detention in a hospital prevented his answer reaching the editor before this issue went to press.

—*Editor.*

Alberti as an Architect

Alberti gained a vast reputation in his day because of his eminence in a great variety of fields. He is esteemed by many as the first of the universal personalities or supermen, whose genius lent a special luster to the Renaissance. In addition to winning renown as an athlete, a mathematician, a writer on the arts, a musician, and a painter, Alberti was acclaimed as an architect. However, a temperate modern judgment will not concede him a high place in this field. He permitted himself to be overwhelmed to such a degree by the accomplishments of antiquity that, in distinction from the more balanced Brunelleschi and Michelozzi, he tried to effect a complete breach with the medieval past.

The result may be seen in two contributions made at the order of his patrons, the Rucellai family. One is the facade of the Rucellai palace, in which he abandoned without qualification the medieval fortress conception and gave his frontispiece a classical articulation by means of rows of superimposed pilasters. His other fabric is the facade of Santa Maria Novella, where his particular problem was to complete the front elevation of a great Gothic house of worship. A weakness from which Florentine churches of all ages suffer is that their facades, if provided at all, were added as an afterthought. When Alberti was requested to supply the missing front for Santa Maria Novella, he drew a design that had no relation to the structure behind it. The pedants of the Renaissance, an innumerable tribe, have rapturously eulogized both the church and the palace facade of Alberti's devising. Whosoever conceives of architecture primarily as structure and demands that every structure be a unified composition, will find it difficult to give to Alberti any other rating than that of a clever draftsman. Since he indicates a trend in favor of unconditional surrender to antiquity, a trend which in the following generations completely gained the upper hand, he cannot be omitted from even the most compressed quatercento record of the art of architecture.—*Ferdinand Schevill in "History of Florence."*

N. C. A. R. B. Fees

National Council of Architectural Registration Boards' record fee has been raised from \$20 to \$25. Council record is necessary for transfer of registration from one state to another. National examination fee has been raised from \$5 to \$15. It is necessary to have Council record in order to take the national examination.

One fortress built by Crusaders in the twelfth century in Syria is so large that, within recent years, a village of about 500 people lived in it.

Annual Meeting of the Chicago Chapter

They met on June 15, a week later than the regular time to permit stragglers from the A. I. A. Convention at Boston, closing the evening of June 4, to be on hand. Members and their ladies attending numbered fifty and after the Secretary had read his minutes and the annual reports of standing committees, E. Stanford Hall was called upon to tell the story of Glessner House, vanished hope of the Chapter's future home. Mr. Hall's report appears in another column of this issue. President Merrill supplemented the Hall report with comment and reminiscence.

The nominating committee for officers to be elected for the Chapter year 1937-38 presented its nominations, whereupon it was moved and voted to have the Secretary cast the ballot of the Chapter electing all the new nominees, all of whom were the present incumbents. As members of the Executive Committee were added Robert DeGolyer and Thomas E. Tallmadge.

Mr. Merrill followed with the customary presidential address referring to Earl Reed's efficient service as chairman of the membership committee in bringing new and fine material to the Chapter. He spoke of the financial situation and the need for more money to carry on the many activities that the Chapter felt devolved upon it, and then called upon C. Herrick Hammond, Past President of the A. I. A., to present certificates of Fellowship to the two Chicago Chapter men honored with Fellowship at the Boston Convention. John Root and Hugh M. G. Garden are the new Fellows. Mr. Root being out of town, the presentation centered on Mr. Garden, who replied with a few fitting graceful words. John R. Fugard was introduced as the newly elected Regional Director of the A. I. A. for Wisconsin and Illinois.

The special program came next, which was an illustrated talk by Thomas E. Tallmadge on Guatemala, which he had visited with Joseph Ryerson during the past winter. The beautiful color photography of the movies taken by Joseph Ryerson met universal admiration. Mr. Tallmadge divides his interest in Guatemala in three parts—the country's architecture, its natural beauties with eighteen volcanoes, and its Indians—and in the end he said the Indians came first.

Disembarking at Puerto Barrios, they rode the most scenic railway in the world to Guatemala City. They visited and studied the ancient stelae at Quirigua, snooped around the old walls of Fort San Felipe, studied the Indians at Antigua, got impressions of costumes in Chichicastenango, admired the textiles in color and weave made by the natives, explored the City of Guatemala, visited the famous Swiss friar in a neighboring town, and photographed the beautiful Spanish colonial architecture as well as Tom Tallmadge and Joe Ryerson in Guatemalan costumes. Their antics in this dress amused the company greatly. The film which should have come first, came last. In it appeared a view of the harbor of Belize, British Honduras. The caption writer suggested that this place had better be given back to the Indians.

The President reminded the company that this was not all. In the reception hall above were to be shown moving pictures taken by Andy Anderson, a young member of the Chapter, of sites and scenes at the A. I. A. Convention in Boston, with its excursions. When the company was comfortably seated, Mr. Anderson began by showing pictures of the grave of John D. Rockefeller, smothered with flowers. From here he moved on to a parade ground somewhere where military cadets were being reviewed. Then on to Boston to the Convention, where well-known figures in the architectural world like Voorhees, Maginnis, Pond, Ripley, Nimmons, Dan Wade, La Beaume, Max Dunning, William Jones Smith and Mme. Gropius, and many others appeared. Old New England architecture was shown, the House of the Seven Gables and the Court House in Salem where Nathaniel Hawthorne labored; Cragie House, Cambridge, where Longfellow lived, Mrs. Jack Gardner's Museum in the Fenway, and some fine silhouettes.

As a lecturer Andy is naive, quite unconventional, and his pictures are good. The next reel he showed was the story of the airship Hindenburg and the Hindenburg disaster. Then followed a reel of David and Wally. Andy was willing to continue with pictures of the new British King and Queen, but after Wally the company's thoughts turned to home and mother.

Reflections on Rhythm

Much has been written about the attributes of organic and inorganic life—form, color, texture, mobility, inertia. Like the works of man in the various fields of the arts and crafts, so also have names been given to phases of his creative and imitative work such as proportion, significant form, organization and composition, to say nothing of the many *isms* applied to transitory phases of art expression. Little has been said about the all-embracing and primordial element—rhythm.

Rhythm is too little understood, too much misunderstood and too often misapplied in its true significance to all we see, hear, and feel in our daily lives. Rhythm does not exist in function or in form. It may be said to be the unifying influence that induces the vital and spiritual essence of organic design to disclose itself in an art work in architecture or in any production of the human spirit.

In our pallid wisdom we often speak of the rhythmic beauty of this or that work of man, and to illustrate and prove our point we apply linear geometrical forms of squares and triangles to facades of time-tested beauty, and when the bases and peaks of our applied forms touch characteristic points in the building, we joyfully declare, "There is the rhythm; look at it." The meeting points are, really, only happy circumstances for our theorists, after the facts, so to speak.

Rhythm is a deeper and a much more vital element of organic design and cannot be disclosed by any formula of lines. It comes into play at the very beginning of things. It was engaged in bringing into being the loveliest of all geometrical forms and it exercised its charm and compelling influence long before life, as we know it, appeared on our globe. Even before the influence of the colloids appeared in the crystalline age to change the face of the earth, and all on it, and in countless aeons made it what we see today. This wonderful form is the hexagon, a perfect organization in every sense of the word. Its beginning, at the dawn of the crystalline age, at the first steps in evolution, was ultramicroscopic and developed in one of its phases in the course of time into the majestic form of the three dimensional honeycomb, or more properly speaking, four dimensional.

Rhythm, during the flow of time, and throughout the universe, was exerting its plastic and creative influence just as it is today. But where are the open-eyed, the free, the imaginative to see this process and take heed of its power as their guiding influence? They number but few.

Rhythm does not exist by itself, but its extremely subjective power may be utilized to enhance the value of the creative powers normally flowing through man just as it has vitally influenced the flow of evolution and involution through the ages.

Much is heard about rhythm in music, as though in music only did it exist. Music, by and large, is based on rhythm, exactly as the great world about us; and in rhythm, as some may look at it, may be included harmony, counterpoint, and all the other word-symbols used that govern its various elements of construction. It is true that music may be so syncopated that all rhythm seems to disappear. Some enjoy this cacophony; some do not.

Rhythm is a subjective and modest influence, derided by some in the arts, especially in architecture. This may be seen in architectural work abroad but more especially in America and particularly in our day. Rhythm is easily played false with and led astray by the errant spirit of man, just as the ways of nature may be modified by him resulting in devastation. It is also assassinated in the broad sunlight of our streets, as witness the new entrance to a theater in Chicago, which shall not be named.

Of course, rhythm exists in its regal integrity, simplicity and grandeur in the out of doors and its true perception as a function of living things is from a station within the heart of man, insofar as it may be of service to him in his efforts to design integrally.

Some are clear eyed and create in natural ways. Some are dull eyed and deal in things eclectic, while some are purblind and deny the existence of such a clarifier as rhythm. That rhythm is the one and only unifying influence that will organize our undertakings in their various functions is most likely true. How deeply sunk is rhythm in the life of mankind may be noted in Havelock Ellis' great exposition "The Dance of Life."

A tree deploys rhythm in its perfection—any kind of a tree from a gigantic sequoia to a gnarled cypress begging permission to live on a sterile and rocky coast.

All races have varying degrees of receptivity to this principle of nature, just as their powers of communion differ in all aspects of their lives, in religion—with all its ecstasies of the dance and the drum, its altars, its immolations, its sacrifices—in music, literature, the arts and crafts, and gardening.

There are, it would appear, two kinds of rhythm—mobile and immobile. The finest works of man may be said to include both. Sullivan once said that "mobile serenity" was a fitting term to apply to organic architecture. Mobile serenity is also a fitting synonym for rhythm.

The work of the Greeks and Egyptians, considering the various forms they used, involved serenity alone. Many of the early Christian churches in the Near East and flowing into Greece are both mobile and serene in conception and much may be said of the inspiring grandeur of rhythm embodied in some of the buildings in India, Indo-China, China, Japan, and elsewhere in the Orient and of the ruins in Central America. Much may be said for the charm of the primitive Romanesque in its Mediterranean habitat.

Some French and English Gothic, in its pure form and when tintured with Romanesque, has much of the mobility and serenity of the oriental work. There stand such memorable landmarks as Le Mans, Amiens, Bourges, Sens, the brick fortress cathedral of Albi—to name a few of them in France. Some of the English cathedrals in their pastoral settings charm and enthrall. Various forms in various provinces—the people speaking. Local parish churches and simple dwelling places in most countries frequently exhibit the naive loveliness and grace that result when the unlettered and unsophisticated speak.

The bulk of the architecture of the so-called Renaissance falls into rhythmless category. St. Pauls in London and St. Peters in Rome have neither mobility nor serenity. The false serenity of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington is obvious. One cannot characterize a coma in architecture, a structure existing half way between life and death, in a manner suitable to its grandeur.

In the game of life, as far as rhythm is concerned, the writers of immortal poetry and prose hold about half the trump cards, a third is held by musicians and the rest by architects and by those who carve forms and paint wonders into being—a very arbitrary subdivision, to be sure.

The point to be observed is that architects have done so little work that merits the grand classification. Nothing in architecture save a pitifully few cases has even touched the high plane of the great poetry of the world. Take Keats' Ode on a Grecian Urn, finer than the urn itself most likely. It is of such transcendent beauty as to seem beyond human power. Many examples of a like nature might be sighted in the characteristic literatures of all races.

There is grand rhythm in the work of performers in the "big top," in the ballet, and on the running track. But with all its marvelous accomplishments considered, the flight of pigeons flying up Michigan Avenue in the teeth of a fierce northwester makes one forget all about the circus, the stage, and the field of sports. The former arts are acquired; the other is an organic part of life itself.

It should be obvious that rhythm has much to do with all architecture from cabin to palace, from wheelbarrow to aeroplane. Architecture with full rhythmic modulation is alive. With little rhythm it is commonplace. With no rhythm it is dead. There is no rhythm in a row of columns, as such, no matter how grand the system may be, or in a row of windows such as the great protagonists of our day glory in. There is no rhythmic value in mere repetition. Rhythm lies in the complete building organism and if there is no degree of rhythm manifest, there is no mobile serenity, no life.

Rhythm is psychic, illusive and withdrawn as are all spiritual elements. Nevertheless, it is at the left shoulder looking on and at the call of all serious-minded men and women and is ever ready to manifest itself as it has in the glories of recorded history.

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Chapter Surrenders Glessner House Deed

Report of the Joint Ways and Means Committee on Glessner House Project

It seems important that in making the final report of the Committee on Glessner House Property that the membership of the Chapter be furnished with a brief history of the project including the circumstances leading up to the final surrender of the Glessner House Property Deed to the heirs of the Glessner Estate.

Alfred Granger, then President of the Chicago Chapter, American Institute of Architects and a warm personal friend of John J. Glessner, first suggested to Mr. Glessner some time in 1924 the importance of preserving his residence at 1800 Prairie avenue as recognition of the important part in the development of American architecture contributed by the late H. H. Richardson.

Right here it is interesting to record that Mr. Granger and Mr. Glessner came from the same town—Zanesville, Ohio—and that during Mr. Granger's boyhood days his father and Mr. Glessner were warm personal friends. It is a further interesting fact to record that after Mr. Granger's graduation in architecture he was employed by the firm of H. H. Richardson in Boston.

Mr. and Mrs. Glessner had for many years been patrons of art in Chicago, particularly music, engraving and architecture. Mrs. Glessner being a practical engraver and maintaining her own studio on the top floor of the Glessner House. Mr. Glessner served for many years as an officer of the "Neighborhood Improvement Association," which centered around 18th and Prairie avenue and as such took great pride in the up-keep of the neighborhood. Naturally, it was a great disappointment to him to see the neighborhood run down and fall into disrepute. Still he lived on in the old house and kept the building and its surroundings in immaculate condition to the time of his death.

Naturally, Mr. Granger's suggestion appealed to him and fruited ultimately in the execution of a deed under date of December 1, 1924, to the Chicago Chapter, American Institute of Architects. This deed transmitted his property at 1800 Prairie avenue to the Chapter to be preserved as a commemoration of the work of the late H. H. Richardson and to be dedicated to the promotion of education in architecture and allied arts.

Mr. Glessner had been very much distressed by the encroachment into the neighborhood, to which he had devoted so much care, of objectionable occupancy. He was particularly distressed to learn of the possible leasing of the property across the street from his house (formerly belonging to his old friend Kimball), to be occupied as a house of unsavory reputation, and exercising his canny instinct inserted a clause in his Deed of Gift requiring that the Chapter take steps to insure the occupancy of the Kimball Property by unobjectionable tenancy.

On November 25, 1924, in anticipation of this deed, a joint agreement was entered into between the Illinois Society of Architects, the Architectural Sketch Club and the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A. for the joint control and operation of the Glessner Property. This agreement was only to become effective when the Chicago Chapter, as owner, took final possession of the property. In order to comply with the conditions of the Deed of Gift to the Chicago Chapter, the architects of Chicago found themselves confronted with the necessity of obtaining control of the Kimball property at 1801 Prairie avenue and to assure the maintenance of that control during the lifetime of Mr. and Mrs. Glessner. To this end President Granger of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., and Charles E. Fox, President of the Illinois Society of Architects, were instrumental in forming the Architects Realty Trust. This organization was composed of an Executive Committee consisting of seven members, enumerated as follows: Elected for 1 year: Edgar S. Belden, N. Max Dunning, John Holabird. Elected for 2 years: Samuel Insull, Jr., Herman L. Palmer. Elected for 3 years: Richard E. Schmidt, Addison E. Wells. A Board of Trustees to hold title to property which might be acquired: Alfred Granger, Charles E. Fox, Andrew Lanquist. Treasurer: F. E. Davidson.

This group entered into an agreement to purchase, remodel and furnish the Kimball property at 1801 Prairie avenue at a cost of approximately \$80,000. To finance this purchase they issued one hundred \$1,000 Realty Certificates to be sold at \$900 each and in

due course these certificates were sold to architects and friends of architecture—including material manufacturers, contractors, and others. These certificate holders, together with others not owners of Realty Certificates, were formed into "The Architects' Club of Chicago," with Charles E. Fox, President; Alfred Granger, 1st Vice-President; Andrew Lanquist, 2nd Vice-President; Pierre Blouke, Secretary; F. E. Davidson, Treasurer; and as Directors: Clarence Farrier, J. C. Llewellyn, Rudolph Nedved, George C. Nimmons, and Richard E. Schmidt. In the promotion of this organization, in addition to Alfred Granger and Charles Fox, Frank Davidson and Herman Palmer did yeoman service.

At the time the Realty Trust was organized the statement was freely made that the property acquired was fully worth the amount invested and was destined to increase in value so that those who invested in the Realty Trust could consider that in addition to assisting in promoting an important enterprise for stabilizing architectural organization in Chicago, they would be fully protected by the anticipated increasing value of the real estate purchased. It is needless to go further in explanation. All of this is a matter of history recorded in the Architects' Club of Chicago Bulletins of January and February, 1925. In the light of the present financial situation, the prophecies of these Bulletins constitute interesting reading. "The best laid plans of mice and men gang aft a-glee."

From the beginning it was understood that in order to maintain the educational program provided for in the Glessner Property Deed of Gift that it would be necessary for the Chapter as owner of the property to build up an endowment fund. To this end the By-Laws of the Chapter were amended to create a perpetual investment committee for the purpose of handling endowment funds and it was agreed that architects and friends of architectural education in Chicago would be urged to set aside sums in their wills for the purpose of building an educational investment fund. The suggestion for forming this committee came from one of the members of the Chapter and Society who stated that he had already set aside in his will a considerable sum for the benefit of the Chapter. Later this man married a young wife and when he died it was found that his former considerable estate had vanished. So far as the records go, there seems to have been no further move toward raising an endowment until in October, 1935 when the then President of the Chapter started active work in the direction of interesting members in making provision for endowment in their wills and in other ways contributing toward an endowment fund. It was very unfortunate that during the ten years interim from 1925 to 1935 active effort was not made toward the building up of an endowment fund.

Mr. Glessner passed to his reward in January, 1936, Mrs. Glessner having preceded him. Immediately by terms of deed, it became the duty of the Chicago Chapter to take over the Glessner property. By arrangement with Mr. Johnson, the Executor of the Glessner Estate, with the approval of Mr. Glessner's daughter and daughter-in-law, Mrs. Lee and Mrs. Glessner, the Estate agreed to hold and maintain the property until June 1, 1936 without prejudice to the Chapter's title. The Chapter and other societies interested appointed committees and proceeded at once in an attempt to work out a schedule of operation which would enable them to take over their property and inaugurate an educational and activity program which would be in accordance with the conditions imposed by Mr. Glessner in his Deed of Gift. All were agreed that no such program should be undertaken unless financed in such a manner as to be in accord with the best interests of the architectural profession in Chicago.

A joint meeting of the Boards of Directors of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., the Illinois Society of Architects, the Architects' Club of Chicago and the Chicago Architectural Club (formerly the Architectural Sketch Club) met and reviewed the situation and suggested the formation of a Fact Finding Committee to consist of the president of each organization together with one appointed representative, or in other words, to constitute a Committee of Eight. In due course such a Committee was formed with representation from the various societies, as follows: Illinois Society of Architects:

Elmer Jensen, Howard White. Architects' Club of Chicago: Wheeler Nicol, Murdo Ross. Chicago Architectural Club: Ralph Gross, Carl Mulig. Chicago Chapter, A. I. A.: John Holabird, Stanford Hall.

This Committee met and organized. The late Howard White was elected Chairman and various committees were formed to investigate the several phases of the problem in hand. One committee made a study of the property and the necessary remodeling to make it efficient for the uses designated. Another committee was instructed to look into the question of operating costs. A third committee was instructed to investigate the possibilities of disposal of the Kimball property, provided it was abandoned for the use of the architectural organizations.

Previously the Chicago Chapter of the Institute had appointed a Special Committee of which Mr. Parsons was chairman to study out a program and work out a budget which could utilize the building to the largest advantage from an educational standpoint. This committee had already reported that adequate facilities for the development of an architectural and art library, art gallery and an educational program for employed men would involve a minimum annual expenditure somewhere in the neighborhood of \$10,000 and would require an endowment to insure its adequate support of approximately \$150,000.

The Committee on Building found the property peculiarly well adapted to the carrying out of the educational set-up outlined. However, they found that in order to appropriately fit the building for its new purpose and provide adequate combination Meeting and Exhibition Hall, major alterations would be necessary, these to include—in addition to providing an Exhibition Hall, changes in the heating plant, decorations, furnishings, stairs, offices, etc. which would involve a remodeling expense of approximately \$25,000.

The whole set-up as outlined by the Fact Finding Committee seemed not impractical of consummation providing the professional and building interests in the City could be united as one in support of the project. There remained one obstacle—either the leasing or the disposal of the Kimball property on such a basis as would adequately protect the owners of the Realty Trust Certificates. Herein was discovered the principal obstruction that lay in the way of assuming the obligations incident to the Deed of Gift of the Glessner Property. The sales value of the Kimball property had shrunk from \$80,000 in 1925 to \$17,000 in 1936. While it was true that there was no legal obligation on the part of any of the four organizations to continue as tenants of the Kimball property, there was an insurmountable moral obligation that no member of the Committee felt could be abrogated. Still hoping that some way might be found to overcome this handicap, the Committee reported to a meeting of the joint Boards of Directors of the several organizations, obtaining an authorization for the expenditure of some money in case this was necessary to retain the title of the property and applied to the Glessner Estate for an extension of time for the development of their plans. The Glessner Estate was very gracious in granting this extension, including the assumption of the 1936 taxes. The Joint Committee of Eight was re-formed into a Ways and Means Committee.

Shortly after the formation of the new Committee, Howard White died and John Holabird became representative of the Illinois Society of Architects in his place. Mr. Parsons became representative of the Chicago Chapter in place of John Holabird. John Merrill, as President of the Chicago Chapter, became a member of the Committee and Stanford Hall was elected representative at large and made chairman of the newly formed Ways and Means Committee.

Various endowment resources were cultivated. A poll was taken of certificate holders to see if they would be willing to turn over the disposal of their property to the Trustees of the Realty Trust. This poll failed to develop a majority who were willing to surrender their interests to this extent and the obstacles developed seemed insurmountable. Finally the Committee was unanimous in recommending to their constituent organizations and through them to the Chicago Chapter as Title Holders, that under the circumstances as developed it was unwise for the profession to assume immediate possession of the Glessner Property.

The Glessner Estate was asked for extension of time for further attempt to elicit support to the project and in reply insisted on substantial evidence of ability to carry on or the immediate surrender of Title. After required previous notice, and on the recom-

mendation of its Executive Committee, the matter was finally submitted to the membership of the Chicago Chapter with detailed explanation of the situation. By action of the Chapter, its Executive Committee was authorized (if it still found it impractical to finance the project) to release without prejudice or further obligation all claim to the Glessner Property.

After having pursued further efforts to secure endowment, the Executive Committee of the Chapter has finally executed papers waiving its right under Deed of Gift to the Glessner Property at 1800 Prairie avenue, Chicago. The papers incident to this release specifically provided that the Glessner Estate release all claim of any sort whatsoever against the Chapter on account of default in taking over possession of the property, including claims for taxes, insurance, up-keep, or repairs. —*Emery Stanford Hall, Chairman Joint Ways and Means Committee*

(Continued from Page 6, Column 2)

A rational and imaginative configuration of functional spaces for diverse uses will lead toward their rhythmical embodiment in a building if the mental and psychical processes are alive and due heed is paid to the stimulus.

Rhythm cannot be controlled as we in our various vanities think it can. Rhythm controls our output if we are sufficiently sensitive to its approach and hear the still small voice. After all, we are not the creators, we are only the media through which the impulse operates. The psyche of the universe is in control and is ever at work creating, evolving, modifying, clarifying in its processes and leading toward that "one far-off divine event, to which the whole creation moves." If as Eddington, great scientist and philosopher of our day, declares—the universe is, in its last analysis, a mathematical concept, how grand the equation must be—how serene, how rhythmical.—*George G. Elmslie.*

Contributors to This Issue

William Jones Smith, F. A. I. A., of Childs and Smith, Architects, Chicago, is an active member of the Institute Committee on Education. He is a faithful attendant at the Institute's annual conventions.

George G. Elmslie, A. I. A., practices architecture in Chicago. He has to his credit some distinguished architectural designs. For twenty years Mr. Elmslie was assistant to the late Louis Henri Sullivan.

Emery Stanford Hall, F. A. I. A., I. S. A., is past-president of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A. and the Illinois Society of Architects. He is an examiner of architects for license in Illinois, secretary of N. C. A. R. B., and a tireless worker for the elevation of the architectural profession. His firm is Hall and Stromquist, Architects, Chicago.

Richard G. Schmid, Chicago architect, died June 6, age 74. Mr. Schmid, son of a Chicago architect, was born in Chicago, attended M. I. T., and served in the offices of H. H. Richardson and Shepley, Ruten & Coolidge, Boston. In 1890 he came back to Chicago, forming a partnership with Harris W. Huehl, with the firm name of Huehl and Schmid, Architects. On Mr. Huehl's death in 1919, the firm became R. G. Schmid & Company, changing in 1927 to Schmid & Ryan.

Mr. Schmid was a mason and his practice included many Masonic temples scattered throughout the country. His firm was architect for the Medinah Temple, Chicago. He was a member of the Illinois Society of Architects and Chicago Chapter, A. I. A.

Frank D. Chase, Chicago architect and engineer, died suddenly on July 23, age 60. Born in Riverside, Illinois, Mr. Chase received his education at Evanston Township High School and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was architect for Western Electric Company and later served in the same capacity for the Illinois Central Railroad. Since 1913 he had been president of Frank D. Chase, Inc., specializing in industrial plant production and construction.

Mr. Chase designed the plants of the St. Louis Star-Times, the Oklahoman, Oklahoma City, and the Milwaukee Journal Building. His Chicago projects include the 100 West Monroe Street Building, Starck Building, Chicago Memorial Hospital and the South Chicago Community Hospital. He was a former president of the Western Society of Engineers.