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Gleanings from the Chicago Building Congress

No attempt will be made to give a complete report of this Building Congress. Such a report would require a book of two hundred pages. What is attempted here is an outline of such parts as are of particular interest to the architect. The Congress met in the Stevens Hotel during the week of May 8-13, inclusive. Participants of the Congress were realtors, architects, engineers, building material manufacturers and dealers, building loan agencies, contractors, and representatives of labor. The purpose of the Congress is to make the entire community conscious of the necessity to revive building. It adopted the slogan: "We are celebrating the rebirth of the building industry in Chicago," which appeared on the printed matter and on banners. Very active in the arrangements for the Congress was the Producers Council, Inc., which merged its 16th annual meeting in the Congress.

The Chicago Building Congress dinner, called for May 9 in the Grand Ball Room of the Stevens Hotel, was participated in by more than nine hundred men. A spirit of camaraderie developed when attention was demanded by the falling of the gavel and Paul D. Angell, Secretary, Chicago Building Congress, rose to view under the spotlight.

The Dinner Meeting, May 9

Secretary Angell stated the purposes and aims of the Congress as given above and asked the wholehearted cooperation of all the interests represented. The Congress President, Elmer C. Jensen, Architect, was the next to claim attention. He presented the case of the Congress as conceiving its duty to arouse Chicago from its lethargy in not pushing actively the destruction of useless buildings or their rehabilitation, and pleaded for active cooperation of all interests to rebuild Chicago and its surrounding territory in a manner that would reflect credit upon the entire community and raise the housing standards so necessary for the less favored elements.

President Jensen then introduced Dr. Franklin Bliss Snyder, President-Elect of Northwestern University, whose particular subject was the gift to the University by Walter Murphy of an endowment of seven million dollars for the purpose of building a technological institute, where the student will alternate his semester at school with an apprenticeship in an industrial plant, so that the student will merge theoretical with practical knowledge. Four technical sciences will be taught: civil, electrical, mechanical, and chemical engineering. The architects for Mr. Murphy, working on the general block plan, are McKim, Mead & White of New York, while Holabird and Root, Chicago architects, will plan the individual units for the University. A bird's eye view of the completed structures will show an "H", with flanged ends on the two verticals of the "H", the distance from north to south about 600 feet.

Mr. Jensen next introduced Col. Willard T. Chevalier, formerly editor of "Engineering News Record" and now editor and publisher of "Business Week" for McGraw-Hill Co. The Colonel, with a background of vast experience, spoke forcefully, clearly, demonstrating a perfect grasp of economic conditions in this country at the moment. In his introduction he said the country needed the spending of one billion dollars by private capital. This would give confidence. He said, "The builders of the past built well, but we are now passing to an age of progressive and modern building. . . . Transportation of the last 150 years surpasses anything of the past 5000 years. . . . The buildings of twenty-five years ago are not adequate today. Our fixed plant facilities—home, factories, stores, etc.—are the largest single factor in the security of economic principles of building. . . . The construction industry is an outlet for genius and ingenuity. . . . Slum clearance should be treated as a public welfare. Blighted areas are the worst investment the city has." He summarized by stating six all-important problems to be solved: 1. Land tenure turned from a liability to an asset. 2. Obsolescence and amortization. 3. Housing, not house unloading through speculative building, must become a permanent industry. 4. Socialization. 5. Greater unity of industries. 6. Industrial statesmanship.

Charles Donagh Maginnis of Boston, President, American Institute of Architects, had come on from Boston to participate in this Congress. Architects have known him as a master of superb English, a wielder of penetrating shafts of sarcasm in his criticism, and one whose solutions make for a higher culture. He compared older European cities with those in America and generally the European ones had the advantage in that history had marked their progress and left interesting landmarks, while in America all was new and too much was rapidly constructed that soon went into decay. An exception to this, he pointed out, was Chicago's magnificent development of its lake front.

Louis H. Sullivan, continued Mr. Maginnis, was born in Boston, but made his mark in Chicago. Boston should be proud of him, though Boston knew the name of John L. Sullivan much better than it knew Louis H.

Mr. Maginnis dwelt again on the difference in attitude of the American citizen toward the big city and its aspects and his attitude toward his home surroundings. In the latter he took an intense pride; in the former he was lax. As an instance of this, he spoke of the railroad station being the gateway to the city, but what did the traveler see on passing through its gateway? The city grows up unplanned and unguided. Later the American realizes what an abortion has been created. Then comes a call for the townplanner to perform an operation. The neon sign, properly used after dark, was commended, but the neon sign kept burning through the day in all sorts of surroundings, was presented with bitter shafts. Had Chicago's mayor been present, Mr. Maginnis would have appealed to him to make use of the talent within its borders to make Chicago the most beautiful city in America.

Thomas S. Holden, godfather of the Chicago Building Congress, present at its birth last December when he made an extended address, spoke briefly. Mr. Holden is president of the New York Building Congress.

The Luncheon Meeting, May 10

The luncheon meeting was held in the Crystal Ballroom of the Blackstone Hotel and immediately after the repast, Russell G. Creviston, President, The Producers' Council, Inc., started the program. He announced a radio program under the auspices of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., every Saturday evening at 9 P.M., station WGN, led by Peter Mayo, subject: "So You Want To Build!", covering technical answers to problems confronting prospective home owners. Another radio program under the auspices of the Architects and Engineers Committee of Building Industry Week in the nature of a round table discussion was scheduled over WCFL on Sunday, May 14, at 12:15 P.M. on the subject: "Advantages in Engaging Architectural Services." Participants are John Root, Hubert Burnham, Edward A. Merrill, and Paul Gerhardt, Jr.

Mr. Maginnis, introduced by the Chicago Chapter President, read a paper addressed primarily to the Producers, since this meeting was an appeal particularly to the manufacturers of building mate-

rials and the architects who have to weld them into the structures they design. The paper went into the modern effort to reduce cost through mass production and standardization. Here are a few highlights from Mr. Maginnis' paper:

"We have been so accustomed to the idea that the Depression is pure tragedy that one is almost afraid to say a good word for it. If we were asked what kind of world we'd wish to see again, most of us would probably ask for the world of 1929, which I remember well. I was confident it shouldn't last. It was heedless and materialistic in the presence of an intoxicating prosperity that was naively regarded as the smiling symbol of national good health.

"But something extraordinary has happened which has carried great reforms to the public consciousness and finally to the leading place in the program of Government whether or not we think that is the place they logically belong. Architects and manufacturers alike find themselves now confronted by a mounting challenge to develop methods and materials and standards which will make for lower and lower costs of construction. We cannot continue to ignore the public rebelliousness at the present levels which are clearly interfering with the success of those social principles which we are patriotically bound to promote.

"It is an austere and scientific demand which has never before been presented in the present terms which compels us to the expedients of standardization and mass production. Architects cannot experiment with them at the expense of their clients and their own reputation. In an adequate functioning of Structural Service, the merits of these innovations could be critically analyzed with the view not only to authoritative pronouncements, but to their effective publication to the architects of the country. Much of this study could be made directly valuable to the Home Building Service which is now in development by the Joint-Committee of the Council and The Institute. The pressure of circumstances had laid a task upon us which was always worthy of the democratic intelligence, that of adopting sound construction and new standards of comfort and design to the humbler homes of America.

"I believe that the more general consciousness of the social value of architecture will enlarge the discriminating patronage. We have to remember that the problem of the low-cost house varies in different localities and the effort to meet it must encounter a correspondingly variable professional sentiment. It is inconceivable that the immense influence which is implied in such a body as this should be forced into an attitude of frustration that amounts to positive outrage and a violation of the national genius.

"A curious logic has been developing in the relationship of the Producers' Council and The Institute. It is particularly obvious today when architectural philosophy is making for such strange and startling purpose. The modern school of design derives its rationality directly from the new materials, so that manufacturers are now definitely involved in the general conspiracy to change the face of things. It is just as well that you be made aware of the gravity of this guilty responsibility. We have gone far with you in the dramatization of your discoveries, but none of us knows what lies ahead. What is clear is that you are making architecture a very lively and adventurous profession. We must seriously explore the possibilities of the new relationship.

"It is not too soon to give consideration to the practical ways by which these responsibilities may be most effectively met against the day when the world will have settled down again to the ways of sanity."

The company was deeply impressed and showed its appreciation by rising en masse and applauding at the conclusion of Mr. Maginnis' paper.

The President of the Western Society of Engineers introduced Col. Chevalier, who spoke extemporaneously. With great good humor the Colonel quoted the engineer as cogitating his structure with "Will it stand up?" and the architect replying, "Will anyone want it to stand up?" He said the architects' problem today in designing resolved itself largely into assembling standards and material rather than starting from scratch. Everyone today is working for lower costs, and the mass market means lower costs. He did concede that the efficient architect today was alive to construction possibilities and economies and thoroughly practical. Some of his views regarding dominance of Beaux Arts design may apply to New York architects, but it is questionable whether they apply to the larger body of practicing architects in America.

C. Herrick Hammond, speaking for the committee of cooperating groups, read his report on Home Building Service as applied to the low-cost house. His paper was long and considered the various trials and experiments that the Institute had sponsored in the last ten or fifteen years. The ideas advanced in this report are touched on in the report of the afternoon session immediately following the luncheon session. This afternoon report is written by Carl E. Heimbrodt, whose discussion of the same subject appeared in columns of the Bulletin in earlier issues. Mr. Heimbrodt's report follows herewith:

The Afternoon Meeting on the Small House

C. Herrick Hammond, Chairman of the Joint Committee, American Institute of Architects and Producers' Council, Inc., for the study of the small house problem, read the report the Committee tendered to the Directors of the A. I. A.

The Committee was composed of six architects and three Producers' Council members. The report indicated that the Committee had exhaustively considered the many angles involved in the small house problem and particularly the opinion of the architect in this field. It also indicated that a program was to be submitted in which the architects would provide the architectural elements of the general problem; the Producers' Council the publicity and advertising, all working conjunctively with the Federal Home Building Service, a division of or affiliated with the Federal Home Loan Bank. The Federal Agency, through its field staff, will provide the effort and energy to create small groups of architects banded together to carry out their portion of this job in their respective areas.

The prime element in this move is to educate the banker on the real value of architectural services in order that he be more generous in the amount of money he is willing to loan on the various projects submitted. Projects originating with the architect are superior to those of other origin.

The architect or designer is recognized as the best fitted for the creative portion of the work. There does not seem to be any quarrel on this point, as other elements of the building industry have frequently referred to the skill of architects in design.

The plan of disposing of this service was briefly outlined and is a portion of the program calling for further study in order to find that medium which will be most successful, the one that can sell the greatest number of units. Experience indicates that the architect by profession is not a good merchandiser. Business ascribes to the merchandiser the belief that the banker will be a merchandiser for anything. Is this far fetched?

The writer still believes that certain other agencies might be induced to cooperate in a program that would mean an energetic and forceful selling campaign to the small homes market, homes that are being built, the design of which does not come under Illinois State law. (If the law has been changed prior to or during the writing of this report, I am unaware of it.)

However, credit must be given for any program of construction that can be created in which all elements have signified a willingness to cooperate for the common good. Whether this plan is the answer to our troubles, remains to be seen. Its success must be judged by the number of units sold. Whether this plan can ultimately be put into effect, will, I believe, depend on the acceptance by the A. I. A. Convention assembled next September.

A recent radio program on this subject, particularly commendable, was participated in by Messrs. Buchroeder, Blackburn, and Keating.

Pressure for space for reports causes suspension of editorial comment from this issue of the Bulletin.

Condensation in Modern Buildings*

The conditions under which condensation might develop within walls or in attics of buildings and methods of protection or prevention should be understood by anyone interested in winter air conditioning, particularly for buildings north of the Ohio River. The question naturally arises as to why condensation should be more of a problem today than it used to be. The cause is the result of certain improvements intended to increase the comfort of the occupants and decrease operating expenses. Because of the tighter building construction, the normal relative humidity within a house so constructed will be higher than in houses less tightly constructed.

Our older types of homes usually were so constructed that the vapor was not retained and low humidities prevailed in cold weather. Where the construction is of a type that minimizes infiltration and resists vapor loss, the vapor pressure inside will be proportionately higher than in houses less tightly constructed.

To understand the phenomenon of condensation requires a knowledge of the physical laws that apply. Air that is completely saturated with water vapor is at its dewpoint temperature, and its relative humidity is 100%. Air not completely saturated with water vapor is above its dewpoint temperature and its relative humidity is less than 100%. Adding water vapor to unsaturated air without changing the temperature of the air will increase the relative humidity and raise the dewpoint temperature. Removing water vapor will have the opposite effects. Raising the temperature of air without changing the amount of water vapor in it will decrease its relative humidity. Lowering the temperature without changing the amount of water vapor will increase the relative humidity till the dewpoint temperature and saturation are reached. Further lowering the temperature will cause progressive condensation of water vapor from the air.

Vapor may pass through a material composed of a single thickness of homogeneous but permeable substance having one surface either above or below the dewpoint temperature of the atmosphere on the warm side and the other at a lower vapor pressure. Walls of conventional house construction are composed of a variety of materials varying in permeability.

TABLE 1. COMPARATIVE RESISTANCE OF VARIOUS MATERIALS TO VAPOR TRANSMISSION

Material	Loss in grains per sq. ft. per hr.
Foil surfaced reflective insulation (double faced)	0.061- 0.093
Roll roofing—smooth surface, 40 to 65 lbs. per roll, 108 sq. ft.	.093- .123
Asphalt impregnated and surface coated sheathing paper glossy surfaced—	
50 lb. 500 sq. ft. roll	.153- .555
35 lb. 500 sq. ft. roll	.123- 1.480
Duplex or laminated papers 30-30-30	.990- 1.850
Duplex or laminated papers 30-60-30	.370- .617
Duplex papers reinforced	.493- 1.480
Duplex papers coated with metal oxides	.370- .930
Insulation backup paper, treated	.617- 2.462
Gypsum lath with aluminum foil backing	.061- .277
Plaster—wood lath	7.90
Plaster—fiber board or gypsum lath	14.20 -14.80
Plaster—3 coats lead and oil	2.650- 2.770
Plaster—3 coats flat wall paint	3.080
Plaster-2 coats aluminum paint	.831
Slaters felt	3.700-18.50
Plywood—¼" Douglas fir, soy bean glue plain	3.080- 4.620
2 coats asphalt paint	.308
2 coats aluminum paint	.930
½" 5--ply Douglas fir	1.920- 1.975
¼" 3-ply Douglas fir, art. resin glue	3.080- 4.620
½" 5-ply Douglas fir, art. resin glue	1.975- 2.420
Insulating lath and sheathing—board type	18.50 -24.65
Insulating sheathing, surface coated 5/16" compressed fiber board	3.640
1" insulating cork blocks	4.440
½" and 1" blanket insulation between coated papers	1.380- 1.440
4" mineral wool—unprotected	20.950

General Recommendations

For all new houses, especially north of the Ohio River, it is recommended that a suitable vapor barrier be installed on the interior of all exposed walls and in the ceiling below the attic and that some form of attic ventilation also be provided. Further, that any sheathing paper used should be water resistant but permeable to vapor. The protection afforded will also prevent condensation that might otherwise develop during the construction period, particularly if the house is plastered during cold weather.

For existing houses having no vapor barriers, maintain humidities at such a point that condensation will not develop in walls and attics. Since conditions in walls cannot be readily determined, the attic, if tight and without ventilation, may be used for observation. To maintain higher humidities safely, some form of vapor barrier can be applied to the exposed walls and ceilings, such as two coats of aluminum paint. While not offering as much resistance as the more effective barriers, this method should mean that humidities of about 30% could be maintained in normal winter weather having short periods of zero weather.

—*L. V. Teesdale.*

**This article, condensed from a paper read before a Conference on Air Conditioning at the University of Illinois, March 8-9, 1939, carries further the discussion presented in the February-March 1938 I. S. A. Bulletin by the same author. Mr. Teesdale is Senior Engineer, Forest Products Laboratory, Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.*

The revolving stage will be the next novelty for store window displays, according to one prediction.

Clair Ditchy announces a regional meeting for all architects in Great Lakes and Illinois-Wisconsin Districts at Notre Dame University, South Bend, Ind., June 23-24. Speakers at the closing banquet will be President Maginnis, Rev. O'Hara, Dr. Mortimer Adler.

April and May Illinois Society Meetings

They met, dined and stayed for the program and discussion, to the number of seventy, on April 25 at the Architects Club of Chicago. It was the monthly meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects and the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A. was invited to participate. There being a full program, President Jensen dispensed with the reading of the minutes, made announcement of the forthcoming Producers Council meeting in Chicago, said something about a Building Congress Week in May, and without further delay introduced the speaker of the evening.

This was Dr. Hugh L. Dryden of the National Bureau of Standards, who had come especially from Washington, D. C. to address this meeting on "A New Approach to Technical Research on Building Materials and Structures." His address in the form of a paper was illustrated at various periods by lantern slides. Dr. Dryden is a physicist and engineer. His paper was long but was so filled with pertinent points affecting modern building construction and assemblage, that we shall attempt to give the high points here.

His purpose was to show the relation of a program of technical research to the general housing problem. In many discussions of this problem, technical aspects receive surprisingly little consideration, yet the housing problem cannot be solved except by technical research.

Origin of the Research Program. Often adequate information is unavailable and agencies turn to Forest Products Laboratory of the Department of Agriculture and the National Bureau of Standards of the Department of Commerce for assistance. There is a most pressing need for technical research on the house as a whole, rather than on individual materials of which the house is constructed.

The New Approach. Many of the engineering properties of the elements can be satisfactorily determined in the laboratory, such as strength and stiffness, thermal and sound insulation, fire resistance, and others, but there are a few where the durability of the element cannot be completely determined by a laboratory test.

Reports. The results of experimental work and surveys are published by the Government Printing Office in a new series of reports "Building Materials and Structures Reports," a list of which may be obtained from the National Bureau of Standards without charge. Deposit $5.00 with the Superintendent of Documents with the request that the reports be sent as issued. Each report costs from 10 to 15 cents, depending on its length.

Structural Properties. The Bureau desires to cooperate with industry to the fullest extent. Specimens for one or more structural elements of a house are solicited for inclusion in this program. The structural properties of 38 wall, 13 partition, 11 floor and 3 roof constructions, submitted by 26 sponsors, have been determined by standardized methods. The constructions represent numerous materials and combinations of materials.

Fire Resistance. Tests have largely been confined to partitions and floors for low-cost apartments.

Thermal Insulation. The purpose of these special studies is to provide data on the insulating value of individual materials which are now lacking or conflicting.

Moisture Condensation. The work contemplated is limited in view of the extensive work of the Forest Products Laboratory on this subject, as related primarily to wood construction.

Infiltration of Air. A report is in preparation.

Rain Penetration. The outstanding results are the verification of the importance of filling the vertical joints in masonry walls, of using mortars of good working properties, and of controlling the rate of absorption of the masonry units.

Heating Equipment. The object of the search is to determine what types of heating plants are most appropriate for various kinds of houses. Numerous radiators and convectors have now been tested. There is no one generally accepted method for rating heating boilers now in use. An attempt will be made to establish a test procedure.

Plumbing. Study of protection against back-siphonage has been made. The Bureau has followed with interest two attempts to provide complete prefabricated assemblies. The problem is not so much technical as economic and social.

Roofing Materials. A survey of the extent of use and weathering of roofing materials in southeastern states has been completed and published in BMS6. A similar survey has been made in the northeastern states and a report is being prepared. Much information has been assembled from cooperating government agencies and this will also be analyzed and published.

Floor Coverings. BMS14 describes measurements of resistance to abuse and of comfort value of various floor coverings. A second report on resistance to abrasive wear is in preparation.

Durability of Fiber Boards. There is little published information on how well the original properties are retained when in use. It is expected that accelerated aging tests can provide useful information.

Protection of Sheet Steel. It is not generally appreciated that the interior of walls and other inaccessible places in buildings may be subjected to severe corrosive conditions as a result of condensation of moisture from the atmosphere. Tests at the Bureau have demonstrated the severity of this type of corrosion on unprotected sheet steel and emphasized the need for surface protection. Accelerated tests of three types—salt spray, Weather-Ometer, and condensation-corrosion—are being used, as well as outdoor exposure. Important findings will be published in a few months.

Caulking Materials. The durability is often poor. While the initial cost of these materials is small, damage resulting from their failure may be very costly. One hundred and seventy-seven experimental compounds have been prepared and tested. A report on this work in preparation will contain formulae for satisfactory non-proprietary compounds.

Simplified Practice. The work on simplified practice covers cooperation with industry to eliminate superfluous sizes and varieties of building materials, thus avoiding waste.

Commercial Standards. A notable accomplishment was the revision of the commercial standards for Douglas Fir Plywood to include moisture resistance requirements, and the development of a commercial standard for solid hard wood wall paneling.

Other Projects. An investigation of the causes of the cracking of masonry walls in types of construction using concrete floor and roof slabs and on the performance of cement-water paints on masonry walls has been started.

Benefits of Technical Research. The substitution of performance standards for description of particular types of construction will accelerate the introduction of better and cheaper methods. Laboratory studies of failures demonstrate that many failures are due to improper application rather than to any inherent defect in the materials themselves. There are no perfect materials suitable for all applications.

The Problem of Cost. The cost of building homes for our people can and must be reduced, but a major reduction is not likely to be brought about by any single development or suddenly, certainly not by a mere decree as to cost or by wishful thinking. Technical research is the one tool which promises definite results in developing suitable materials of lower cost, in teaching more efficient use of materials, in pointing to ways of increasing the productivity of labor, and in providing a means of revaluing standards of performance, of space, and of equipment.

Whether it be medical care and legal advice, which have received much discussion, or architectural and engineering service, the situation is the same. If the service could be rendered to all who need it, there would be too few members of the profession. Hence the interest in "socialized medicine," "socialized architecture," etc., and in the possibilities of solving the problem by distributing the cost of the specialized services among a large number of persons.

While the completed house must embody the contributions of a great many professions, there is no one house or appliance, and no single agency in industry or government, which will solve the problem of low-cost housing. The cooperative effort of many groups is essential.

Dr. Dryden's presentation was followed by all with the most thoughtful attention. At the end of his address he had to leave to catch his train to Washington, amidst the applause of the company.

The next subject presented before the meeting was an amendment to the Illinois Architects' License Law. This was presented by Chairman of the Legislative Committee, Paul Gerhardt, Jr., who explained the proposed change from a minimum cost of a house requiring architectural services, according to the present law, of

$7500, to 16,000 cubic feet volume. The purpose was to have the membership write to their individual representatives in the state legislature, recommending the change.

Next Mr. Gerhardt explained a resolution to be presented to members through the mail and the Bulletin, reading:

"Moved that Article V of the By-Laws of the Illinois Society of Architects be amended to permit all architects legally registered and licensed in Illinois to be eligible for membership in the Society, and that notice of this intended amendment be posted and members given notice as required in the By-Laws." Voting on this amendment will occur at the next meeting of the Society.

Mr. Gerhardt then presented the subject of unification of all state architectural societies in Illinois, a subject that he had presented in the April-May issue of the I. S. A. Bulletin. After a few questions and limited discussion of this, the meeting passed on to the subject of unification of all architectural bodies in the various states under the sheltering arm of the national body, namely, the American Institute of Architects.

To present this subject adequately before the Society, Mr. Leigh Hunt of Milwaukee, President of the State Association of Wisconsin Architects, and State Association representative on the Board of Directors of the A. I. A., was present to address the meeting. He had traveled the country from East to West and North to South, visiting architectural bodies in thirty-two states and addressing sixteen architectural organizations. He reported that there are now eleven state societies affiliated with the A. I. A. of the twenty-two now in existence.

Mr. Hunt sketched rapidly the work of the A. I. A. through its nearly eighty years of existence, pointing out what the Institute had accomplished for the professional architect in the United States, for non-members as well as members of the Institute. It had worked for the advancement of the profession at large. Its achievements have been great. He said that every architect owed the Institute a debt of gratitude for the professional position that he was privileged to hold in America today. The Institute's influence with the Government is such that it is constantly consulted and invariably works for the profession at large. Every architectural organization should have some affiliation with the Institute and the speaker advised the Illinois Society, as he advised all other bodies that he had addressed, to take out such membership, thus achieving delegate representation and a voice in the management of Institute affairs. There are many minor questions yet to be solved. Amendments to the by-laws of the national body would be introduced to this end, but that would come gradually and would take time. In the meantime, affiliation would redound to the benefit of Society and Institute and strengthen the position of the professional architect throughout the land.

Mr. Hunt's presentation was a clear and forceful one. He was followed by Irving K. Pond, Past President, A. I. A., Past President of the Illinois Society of Architects, and Past President of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., who recommended strongly the Society's membership in the Institute to be followed by application and election of individual members of the Society to the national body.

Before adjournment, Mr. Pereira spoke forcefully in favor of putting teeth in the Architects' License Law of Illinois for a more satisfactory functioning and application of it throughout the state.

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The Society's May regular dinner-meeting was held May 23 at the Architects Club, for members only. Considerable business was on the program for discussion. There were the two nominating committees, one appointed by the President, the other elected by the members, to select candidates for officers to be elected for the ensuing year; amendments to the constitution and by-laws to facilitate state unification and unification with the A. I. A.; legislation before the Illinois Assembly, bearing on revision of the Architects' License Act; the adoption of a State Building Code; and the Society's attitude toward Illinois Technical Engineering Act. A detailed report of this meeting will be found in the August-September Bulletin.

May Chapter Meeting

Merged in the agenda of the Chicago Building Congress was the May 9 meeting of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A. Attendants met at 5:30 P. M., preceded by a cocktail hour. At 5:45 the meeting was called to order and at 6:45 adjourned to permit members and others to attend the building industry banquet of the Congress called for 7 o'clock in the Stevens Hotel, where all these meetings occurred.

At this Chapter meeting there were about twenty members. The guests of honor were Charles D. Maginnis, President, A. I. A., who had come from Boston to attend sessions of the Congress, and three members of the Wisconsin Chapter, A. I. A. — Richard Philipp, President, Alexander H. Bauer, Secretary, and Peter Brust. There were present two past presidents of the Institute — Irving K. Pond and C. Herrick Hammond.

President Roberts called the meeting to order and dispensed with all regular business, including the reading of the minutes. One wonders whether the minutes of any Chapter meeting have been read during the entire Chapter year. Attention was drawn to the request by Housing Chairman Walter McCornack to endorse the plan of procedure in USHA submitted by Administrator Strauss. President Roberts here injected reference to the Public Service Housing Corporation bill now before the Illinois legislature. It was determined by the meeting that the two matters must not be confused. Messrs. Hammond, Pond, Fugard, Holsman, and others spoke on the recommendation, which was voted.

Balloting for the eleven delegates to the September 1939 A. I. A. Convention in Washington proceeded. Before adjournment, the names of the successful candidates were announced.

Illinois Planning Conference

The sixth annual Illinois Planning Conference was held in Decatur, Illinois, May 9-10, 1939, under the sponsorship of the Illinois State Planning Commission and the Bureau of Community Planning of the University of Illinois, and in cooperation with the American Planning and Civic Association, the Illinois Municipal League, the Chicago Regional Planning Association, and the American Society of Planning Officials.

The first annual conference was held at the University in 1934. The Illinois State Planning Commission and other state agencies joined in the movement, and it has now become of statewide interest. The 1935 and 1936 conferences were also held at the University. In later years the Conferences were held in Springfield, in 1937, at the University in 1938, and this year in Decatur. The resources of the University have been available for these conferences and each year a number of the speakers have been men connected with the University. This year six members, each a specialist in his field, appeared on the program.

The general theme of the Conference this year was in the field of Municipal Planning and Zoning.

Morning session, May 9: Robert Kingery, Chairman, Illinois State Planning Commission, presided. The opening Address of Welcome was given by the Honorable Charles Lee, Mayor of Decatur. This was followed by an address on "Municipal Budgets for Capital Improvements," by Professor Lloyd Morey, Comptroller and Professor of Accountancy, University of Illinois, and Vice-Chairman, National Committee on Municipal Accounting, who stressed the importance of adequate and sound financing for all public improvements.

The closing address of the morning session was on "Zoning Practice in the Light of Recent Court Decisions," by Alexander H. Marshall, Village Attorney, Glencoe, Illinois, and Chairman, Legal Section, Illinois Municipal League. A lively discussion by the members in attendance on various phases of financing and zoning followed.

The luncheon session was a joint meeting with the Decatur Kiwanis Club. A fine inspirational address was given by Robert Kingery, Chairman of the Illinois State Planning Commission, on "Picturing Illinois in 1960."

The Tuesday afternoon session was presided over by Lawrence V. Sheridan, Regional Counselor, National Resources Committee. The first and principal address was given by Harland Bartholomew, Consultant, National Resources Committee, on "The Composition and the Use of a Comprehensive City Plan." Mr. Bartholomew, a nationally known authority on city planning, stressed the importance of an accurate survey and the preparation of a comprehensive master plan as the basis for the development of any project. Other speakers on various phases of planning, zoning ordinances, and proper lighting of highways followed.

The dinner session was at the Decatur Club — the Honorable John W. Kapp presiding. In the absence of Governor Horner, the Honorable John Stelle, Lieutenant Governor, was the guest of honor. A very interesting address on "Research and Community Development," by Dean Charles M. Thompson, College of Commerce and Business Administration, U. of I., closed this session.

The Wednesday morning session of the Conference was presided over by Dean Rexford Newcomb of the College of Fine and Applied

(Continued on Page 8, Column 2)

WASHINGTON PIE

or

The Public Buildings of Medicine Hat*

By Louis La Beaume

Somewhere out West, on the banks of the Platte,
Nestled the Village of Medicine Hat;
Dreaming a dream of a future heroic—
Biding its time with a fortitude stoic.

Slowly it grew, and as time wore away
Remembered that Rome wasn't built in a day.
Remembered—but why, for the matter of that
Shouldn't all roads lead to Medicine Hat?

Scant were the years since a wigwam or two
Had marked the last stand of the vanishing Sioux.
Here, where the buffalo wallowed and died,
The white men had come in their strength and their pride.

They tilled the soil and they bartered and sold,
And their wealth increased a hundred fold.
Others came and they built their shacks
In a straggling row—like lumber-jacks.

They kept on coming—more and more,
So Bill Jones started a General Store,
But the settlement tasted a sweeter boon,
When Doyle threw open the Shamrock Saloon.

In the little log schoolhouse down by the crick
Children wrestled with 'rithmetic;
Time wore on, as time will do—
And slowly but surely the village grew.

The bad man prospered less and less,
The railroad followed the Pony Express;
Church-bells rang in the clear pure air
From the belfry across the Village Square.

Main Street seemed on a Market Day,
Almost as crowded as old Broadway.
Medicine Hat was as gay as Hell
From the Opry House to the Grand Hotel.

Medicine Hat grew more elate,
Dreaming an ever higher fate,
Burned with ambition insatiate
To forge ahead at a rapider gait.

Medicine Hat just couldn't wait;
But schemed and struggled early and late;
Padded the Census and startled the State
With the mighty resolve to incorporate.

Great was the joy in Medicine Hat,
Red-fire burned on the banks of the Platte;
Red liquor flowed—and a shooting affray
Marked the end of a perfect day.

Think you that Medicine Hat was content
With the pride of municipal government?
Not on your life—Nay, Nay, Pauline,
Medicine Hat sheltered wits more keen.

Other towns were thriving too—
Roaring Bull, and Squatting Sioux;
Medicine Hat couldn't rest at her ease
And be passed in the race for fame by these.

So by an artifice (rather neat)
They made the town the countyseat.
Roaring Bull roared a horrible roar
While Squatting Sioux stood up and swore.

But Medicine Hat just settled back
And showed its heels to the snarling pack.
The jail was full—and the town was gay,
Medicine Hat was on its way.

One fine spring morning, Rufus Bunk
Blew into town with a haircloth trunk,
A copy of Blackstone under his arm
And a manner suave and full of charm.

The newcomer wore a long frock coat
And a serious air (like Joseph Choate).
From his dress and manner they quickly saw
That he'd come to stay and to practice law.

Old Judge Peters was holding court
In the afternoon when a loud report
Shattered the quiet and raised the hair
Of the drowsy jurors snoozing there.

Outside the tread of hurrying feet
Sounded along the sunny street;
Judge and Jury made a dive
To see if the victim was still alive.

The crowd converged at Doyle's saloon,
Forming a ring 'round Jim Muldoon,
Who brandished the pistol smoking-hot,
With which he'd fired the fatal shot.

Bunk elbowed his way through the gaping crowd
And flourished his card with a gesture proud.
Then whispered words of hope and cheer
Into the dazed assassin's ear.

All who attended the trial say
Bunk managed the case in a masterly way.
From his opening speech the jury saw
That Bunk had been reading the Unwritten Law.

He switched next day to Self-Defense,
And on the third his eloquence
Wrung crocodile tears from every eye,
As he rested his case on an Alibi.

Medicine Hat swelled up with pride;
Strong men sniffled, and women cried.
Jim was acquitted, and Bunk's renown
Spread like wildfire through the town.

By leaps and bounds his practice grew;
He was sought to defend and sought to sue.
But he cinched his fame at the Barbeque
With some touching remarks on the Gray and the Blue
(Lightened by chestnuts from Chauncey Depew).

Rufus Bunk was marked by Fate
From the time he began to articulate,
For a post important in the State,
In fact, he was born to legislate.

At the next election Rufus went
Up to the State House to represent
His adopted town—and truth to tell
He represented it very well.

It was thanks to Bunk's uncanny skill
That paragraph two in the Buildings Bill
Dug the cellar and built the wall
Of the center wing of the New Town Hall.

Paragraph eight went on to state
That the Mansard roof should be covered with slate.
Amendment three pertained to floors
And article seven to cuspidors.

Architects were asked to submit
Sample plans which they thought might fit.
The prize was won by Inigo Pratt,
The leading designer of Medicine Hat.

The New Town Hall was a sight to see—
A marvel of ingenuity.
Vagrant styles were allowed to roam
From the Doric Porch to the Gothic Dome.

Elizabethan minarets
Punctuated the parapets.
Gargoyles goggled with gruesome glee.
Inigo surely earned his fee!

But honor to him to whom honor is due—
Bunk it was that put the deal through.
And he pondered greater triumphs to come
For Medicine Hat was going some.

Gratitude, so the cynics say,
Is nothing more than the price we pay
For future favors—"a sporting chance."
In plainer terms "Just a little advance."

The town in one of its gratefullest moods
Saw that Bunk could deliver the goods.
So they sent him to Congress, confident that
He'd further the interests of Medicine Hat.

With Congressman Bunk in Washington
They were sure at last of a place in the Sun.
Rufus, however, with modest grace
Chose for himself a shady place.

His long frock coat and statesman's tie,
His beetling brow and his eagle eye,
On the banks of the Platte might be worthy of note,
But as Congressman Bunk he was only a vote.

Only a single vote, 'tis true—
But weird are the things a vote can do;
Sweet are the fruits a vote may bear
If tenderly treated and handled with care.

A glance at the record of Ayes and Noes
By a student of history plainly shows
That Bunk cast his vote with as sure an eye
As ever a trout-fisher cast a fly.

Senator Sorghum sleek and fat,
Watched the member from Medicine Hat,
Studied the records and saw that he
Was a fellow of perspicacity.

Senator Sorghum's smile was bland,
As he grasped the Medicine Hatter's hand.
They looked each other in the eye
And what they each saw there was—Pie.

Senator Sorghum and Congressman Bunk
Stared for a moment—and then they wunk.
A well-timed wink is a potent thing;
Medicine Hat was in the ring.

That Senator Sorghum's bill went through
Without any hitches was largely due
To the terms of an amiable joker whereby
Medicine Hat got its share of the Pie.

So this is the tale of that noble pile
Built in the Greco-Roman style,
Which rises out of the prairie flat—
The Post Office Building of Medicine Hat.

While they were bickering as to the site,
Real Estate values soared over night.
Bunk chose a tract on the narrow-gauge branch
Three miles this side of the Lone Star Ranch.

Grunting Steam Shovels and Creaking Cranes
Presently littered the fruitful plains,
And the Leisure Class of Medicine Hat
Bossed the job as they argued—and spat.

Corinthian Columns and half-tone views
Filled the front page of the "Alkali News".
Reams were written and songs were sung;
The one word "Bunk" was on every tongue.

The Sporting Editor wrote a piece
On Pericles and the glories of Greece,
And cleverly proved by comparative tables
The meagre extent of the Augean stables.

Little groups gathered to speculate
On what was meant by the Stylobate.
And Congressman Bunk was highly amused
As he thought of the style o' bait he had used.

The local mail had been handled of yore
In a cage at the back of Bill Jone's store.
But Bunk, recollecting the "Hotel de Ville,"
Had seized on the chance for a much bigger deal.

If the town was tickled, that worthy gent
Cared not a farthing how much was spent.
Frugal creatures might sneer and scoff,
As for Medicine Hat—the Lid was off.

Uncle Sam was the guy who paid
For the chaste and stately colonnade,
For the lapis lazuli corridors
And the tessellated marble floors.

Rich and profligate Uncle Sam
Was much too careless to give a d-n.
Year by year he had grown more lax
As he saw more nephews and nieces to tax.

The building was finished and dazzled the eye
Of the traveling man as the train sped by.
Rome in her glory could never boast
Such a splendiferous "Bureau des Postes."

Congressman Bunk is in office still,
Playing the game with his well-known skill.
Sorghum and Bunk work hand in glove,
Swapping and trading—but not for love.

Government contracts everywhere
Are controlled by the whims of this precious pair;
Theirs is the will we allow to prevail
Over Power-House, Customs House, Courthouse and Jail.

Both the cause and effect of Washington Pie
Are—first a sweet tooth, then an Aye for an Aye.
Senator Sorghum has learned to trust
Congressman Bunk to flavor the crust.

On the other hand, Rufus with exquisite taste,
Relies upon Sorghum to sweeten the paste.
And their personal records are apt to show
That Somebody, Somewhere, needs the dough.

Unbiased critics are wont to decry
Our national fondness for Washington Pie,
For we're prone to forget, in the heat of the quest,
Though it tickles the palate, it's hard to digest.

**"Washington Pie" was read by the author at the banquet closing the 1916 A. I. A. Convention in Minneapolis. It was first printed in the Proceedings of that Convention. In the issue of March 9, 1917 of Reedy's "Mirror", a literary journal published in St. Louis, Mo., these verses appeared with the title as here presented, except that Mr. LaBeaume used a nom de plume—Phelim O'Toole. Publication in the Bulletin is with the permission of the author.—Editor.*

Tiberius Arch Found in Vatican City

The only reference extant of a long lost triumphal arch of Tiberius, set up on the order of the Roman Senate in 16 A. D. to commemorate victories over German tribes, is in the writings of the historian Seutonius. In excavating for the tomb of Irtius in Vatican territory in Rome, the archaeologists came upon five sculptured panels, one of which carried a likeness of Emperor Tiberius as an old man. Seutonius says the Senate decided to erect this arch to commemorate victories over the German tribes by Tiberius' son Drusus, and the recovery of the Roman insignia lost at the battle of the Teutoburg Forest.

The location of this arch had been unknown. Pope Pius XII has instructed Professor Nicola Maggi to proceed with the excavations since these marble friezes are of outstanding importance to Roman archaeology.

Oslo's New Town Hall

Forty years ago Copenhagen built a new town hall that was of architectural moment. Fifteen years ago Stockholm did likewise, and in 1940 Oslo's town hall will complete the architectural triangle of Scandinavian modern outstanding town halls: Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo.

Architects in the United States are familiar with the Copenhagen and Stockholm buildings through presentation of these edifices in the architectural press and the architect's own travels. Oslo's new town hall, which has been building since 1933, is now under roof with its twin dominating towers. All three town halls are examples of modern brick architecture. The brick is red.

Like Stockholm, Oslo's building becomes a monumental magnet, where the life and activity of the nation's capital is attracted to the water's edge. It is from the water that most Norwegians draw their livelihood in one form or another. The city planning at this new town hall includes other fine buildings, parks, and broad streets, destined to make the spot the most important architectural group in the country. The structure will house, besides the many offices, a great dining room overlooking Oslo Fjord. The building will become a museum of Norwegian decorative art. Important murals will be painted by Alf Rolfsen, Henrik Sorensen, Per Krogh, and others. A great equestrian relief of Oslo's founder, Harold Hardrade, modeled by Anne Grimdalen, will decorate the west wall.

The architects of Oslo's pride, this new town hall, are Arnstein Arnberg and Magnus Poulson. They were awarded this work in the final architectural competition in 1920, a preliminary competition having been decided in 1916.

Jacob W. Hercules, architect, Pontiac and Peoria, died on November 25, 1938 at his home, age 68. In Pontiac, his birthplace, he attended the public schools, then took up carpentry, wood carving, cabinet work, and became a mill superintendent. His apprenticeship in architecture in Selma, Alabama, followed in Chicago by private studies under professional engineers and at the Art Institute, prepared him to pass the state architectural examination. He practiced independently in Pontiac, Rock Island, and Peoria. For a number of years he was a member of the Illinois Society of Architects.

■ ■

Carl F. Ringer, retired Milwaukee architect, died there on April 27, aged 88. Commercial construction had been his forte. He had served Milwaukee as chief building inspector and member of the Harbor Commission. Mr. Ringer was an honorary member of the Wisconsin Chapter, A. I. A.

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Frank L. Fry, Chicago architect, prominent in Masonic work, died on May 5 after a long illness, age 79. Mr. Fry was born in Iowa City and came to Chicago as a young man. For 57 years he practiced actively under his own name. Mr. Fry became a member of the Illinois Society of Architects in February 1906.

British and American Housing Compared

In the March 1939 issue of "Nation's Business," Joseph B. Mason, eastern editor of "American Builder," writes at length on the British house built wholesale by speculative builders, as compared with housing for people in the same brackets built in this country. His article is the result of a study made last summer while investigating European housing conditions.

He begins by saying that the British have made the housing clock tick. They built 3,250,000 homes from 1914 to 1936, and since then some 325,000 to 340,000 units a year. More than 80% of the new housing units provided in England in recent years have been built by private builders without subsidy. Private enterprise benefits greatly from the favorable basic conditions which the British Government established. Many of the largest builders are operating from 15 to 20 subdivisions in various suburbs of London as well as in nearby cities, and sell as high as 2,000 homes a year.

The great majority of houses are built in solid rows or consist of two- or four-family houses set on very small lots, as narrow as 22 feet wide. The average American gets a single-family house on a fair-sized plot — the minimum today being about 40 feet wide.

Comparing a typical London suburban house selling with lot for approximately $3,000 with one for the same class of purchaser on Long Island, the cost would be between $5,000 and $6,000. The American counterpart of the English house for $3,825 is $5,590. But there is a vast difference in the equipment and cost factors in the two houses.

Consider the following items in which, by American standards, British houses are deficient:

1. No central heat. Heat is provided by two or three fireplaces.
2. No hardwood floors or steps.
3. Interior plaster (only two coats) is applied directly to exterior brick walls.
4. Soil pipes and vents are universally carried on the outside of walls.
5. Kitchens are ridiculously inadequate, according to American housewives' standards. No refrigerator whatever is provided, not even space for one. Sinks are small (12 to 14 inches), with one small wooden drainboard about 10 by 24 inches. No counter or work areas, nor kitchen cabinets.
6. Hot water provided by hand-fired coal or coke-burning stove in kitchen.
7. No bedroom closets.
8. Electric wiring consists usually of one cord in center of room and one plug-in outlet at baseboard per room.
9. No shower stalls, no laundry tubs.
10. No basement, attic or garage.
11. Very small rooms—the average $3,000 British house has a living room of about 10 by 12 feet, a dining room 10 by 10 and a kitchen 6 by 7. The master bedroom will measure about 10 by 12, the second best bedroom 10 by 10, and the third bedroom only 7 by 7.

Foundation walls go down only two feet or less because there is no danger from heavy freezing. They have no weatherstripping, no storm windows, insulation and numerous other "cold weather" items.

Compare this with the new 1200-house project at Clairton, Pa., to provide quarters for Carnegie-Illinois steel workers. Here the lowest price house possible that could find buyers or renters among steel workers was desired. Adopting every modern method and device known to mass production, the builders finally got the price for five- and six-room houses down to $3,800 and $5,300. These houses have thermostat-controlled gas heat, copper fin concealed radiators, automatically heated water, porcelain-enamel steel kitchen cabinets and sinks, bathroom fixtures in colors, hardwood floors, insulation, asbestos-shingled side walls, ample electric outlets, colonial hardware and lighting fixtures.

In spite of the vast differences in labor costs, land costs and construction methods, the average American speculative house represents a greater value to the buyer. The $5,500 paid by an American worker is no greater an outlay in terms of income and purchasing power than the 600 Pounds paid for an inferior British house. The official union wage scale for the London area is 40 to 43 cents an hour for carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers, plumbers and other skilled workers. It is 30 cents an hour for helpers and laborers. The work week is 46 hours in summer and 44 hours in winter. The New York City official union scale is $1.75 an hour for carpenters, and $2 an hour for plasterers, plumbers and electricians. Carpenters work 35 hours a week, and plasterers, plumbers and electricians, 30 hours a week.

A small per cent only of single family construction in the United States operates under full union conditions. Even in the completely non-union areas, however, the hourly wage scale of building workers is more than double the official British scale. The British workers, on the other hand, have fairly steady employment throughout most of the year and are probably better paid in terms of annual income.

There is little doubt that the British long-term amortized loan at low interest rate requiring small down payment has been one of the principal contributing factors to the building boom. The recent sharp increases in home building here can be almost entirely credited to the liberal financing methods introduced by the Federal Housing Administration and now generally employed by all private lending agencies.

While the present building boom in England is more than 80% privately financed and operated, it should be noted that the British Government has done much to establish favorable conditions that make the present private operations possible. Its public housing and slum clearance have been handled in a way that has not frightened private operators out of business.

Subsidized housing must be priced low and must be definitely restricted to persons in the lowest income brackets who cannot be served by private builders.

O Mr. Farley, Listen!

The Editor: The Post Office Department intends to issue seven sets of postage stamps with portraits of famous American sculptors, poets, authors, musicians, scientists, inventors and educators. Architects at present are not listed for this honor. I have written to Postmaster General Farley, asking whether architects are to be ignored, or whether suggestions for names of architects worthy of this honor would be considered by him.

I think it would be fine if the profession would approve the idea and request this recognition for architects. The law, of course, prohibits portraits of living persons appearing on the postage stamps.

—Hugo H. Zimmermann.

A Request from Ricker Library

Ricker Library of Architecture, University of Illinois, Urbana, is eager to complete its files of the Bulletin of the Illinois Society of Architects. Their set is incomplete for the years 1916 to 1928. The librarian appeals for donations from architects who may have some of these issues, so that the Library may build up its sources of information on architecture and architects of this region.

(Continued from Page 5, Column 2)

Arts, U. of I. The general theme of all the addresses related to the industrial activities of the State and emphasized the necessity of a carefully studied plan for improving conditions. Subjects presented were: "Promoting Industrial Activities Throughout Illinois," by J. D. Myers; "What Illinois Should Do For Industry," by Anderson Pace; "Illinois Geology and Its Relation to Industry," a most interesting address, by M. M. Leighton, Chief, Illinois State Geological Survey; and "The Program of the National Resources Committee as Related to Municipal Development," by Lawrence V. Sheridan.

At the luncheon meeting, M. J. Fleming spoke on "Operation of State Motor Vehicle Act in City and County," stressing greater safety on our highways.

The closing session, in the afternoon, was presided over by Frank M. Lindsay, Illinois Chairman, American Planning and Civic Association. The outstanding address was by Dean J. C. Blair, College of Agriculture, U. of I., who spoke on "Progressive Improvements in Land Uses." He gave a comprehensive history of the improvements made in land uses in Illinois, and explained at length the valuable contributions to an increased knowledge of land uses, made possible through the long and continuous experiments carried on by the Department of Agriculture and related agencies at the University of Illinois, the results of which are available as a basis for planning purposes.

—Prof. Thomas E. O'Donnell, University of Illinois.