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Thoughts on the Decay and Revival of American Cities

There is no doubt that something is wrong with the American city as a generality, and with Chicago specifically, that the industrious and alert attitude of past years has dissolved into apathy and stagnation and that with it have gone industrial expansion and business activity. No promotional blurb, however garnished, can circumvent this fact. Neither will the panegyrics of the city as it exists or the faint promise of patchwork in terms of lower taxes, apartment housing, street improvement, and revised zoning have any other effect than to aggravate an already overworked and critical situation.

It is no longer a question of growth of a city, least of all its reestablishment as a great city among great cities. It is a question here of establishing, perhaps for the first time in its history, the justification for the very existence of the city—to discover, if possible, what it is that makes valid and necessary a city life, what the advantages are, and how to produce and preserve them.

Restoration of the city cannot be accomplished by fostering a confidence in its future, the only basis for which is a pleasant skyline and lake front, and the dubious promises of improvement by manipulation of the incidental economic techniques of land value, taxation, interest rates, and so on.

The present stagnation of the American city may be taken as a symptom of the threatened disintegration. Decentralization of industry is an established fact and the movement of city residence to farm and country is increasing.

If reconstruction is contemplated in the face of this exodus, then it would appear worth while to discover, if possible, some reason responsible for it. It may be of assistance in this respect to review briefly the American scene as it has contributed up to the present to the development and growth of the city.

The history of the American city was, until the end of the nineteenth century, essentially that of the frontier—a succession of frontiers. And it was fortunate, as far as productive activity and its effect on national morale was concerned, that whenever one section became overcrowded and economic pressure became too great, that new sections, new frontiers, remained to provide an outlet for productive energy—an opportunity to acquire the necessities of life—even wealth.

The primary purpose of the frontier city was to provide a bulwark against the uncertainties of frontier life through community organization, and a marketing center for the pioneer. Actual resources and the ability to exploit them seemed illimitable, and as each frontier community was established, it attracted to it the operative, the manager, the promoter, the investor. Subsequently, invention and improved technique in manufacturing, instead of creating a new leisure adapted to living-need, speeded up production, invited exploitation and increased the demand for greater profit. Haste became a national characteristic. Concentration in the city was desirable on the part of industry for increased production and accelerated expansion. It was desirable on the part of the city because it furnished jobs and produced income. Whatever its benefits, the industrial revolution, co-factor of industrial and territorial expansion converted to acquisitive purpose only, has brought about a concentration of city life so congested and overcrowded, so overdeveloped and cluttered with economic and political paraphernalia that today it stultifies the existence of the city it created and along with it the life of its inhabitants. Avarice is wholly responsible for the resultant physical ugliness.

Nowhere throughout the hasty process of frontier development

and industrial expansion does there appear any evidence worthy of note that the means to life, the opportunity for each individual to enjoy the bare necessities of health—recreation, food, and shelter—and the security of a job to assure these necessities, has ever been considered.

The rapid development of transportation of all kinds and the spread and availability of electric power soon released industry from its dependence upon the city. Finding decentralization an aid to wider distribution of product and cheaper in the construction and maintenance of plant, industry is showing every tendency to desert the expensive and confining borders of the city. Some indication of this tendency is to be observed in Chicago and its environs. And it is doubtful—if desirable—if lower tax rates or other inducements taken separately or collectively can stop this exodus.

The city, and Chicago is no exception, has failed and continues to fail to provide and to assure security to the great mass of workers upon whom it depends for existence. And until it can provide that security it will not attain validity and may anticipate continued disintegration.

Whatever validity city life may have lies in securing to its inhabitants the means to life. Its primary advantage is the ability to secure this means of life to each individual through the concerted effort of community activity and organization. Promotion of a plan directed toward its attainment must take for granted the rejection of all existing impediments to this end.

Such a plan will envision the development of contiguous but not encroaching industrial areas, commercial and management centers and peripheral zones of residence readily accessible to the industrial areas and the commercial centers by well-planned radiating arteries of transportation. Airlines, railroads and city traction within the city will be made accessible to each element—and so planned as to remove hazards to city life. Parks, recreational areas and boulevards will replace blighted areas and will be accessories to, not escapes from, residential zones, providing opportunity for community gatherings and recreational activities. Libraries, schools and churches will be contiguous upon and a part of these areas.

Realization of the value of the plan will depend upon the perspicacity and perseverance of those who undertake it. It is not, certainly, the task of any one individual or group of individuals. It calls for the coordination and cooperation of each and every citizen and each and every commercial, industrial, and political interest. Business men and professional men alike must contribute to its realization.

There is no doubt that a plan of sufficient range and foresightedness to provide an ever increasing and ultimate security must, at the same time, anticipate and adapt itself to the difficulties and delays, and the great expenditure of time, energy and money requisite to its ultimate attainment. In the process, however, it will provide the immediate action required by the so-called practical minded.

The structure and development of land is architectural. Its conception and realization are the architect's domain. Parks and playgrounds, boulevards and highways, power service and sewage disposal are as much a part of architecture as the buildings they serve. It will be through the integration and articulation of these to living need in the form of living architecture that the city may gain validity for its existence.

In a plan for the realization of living-need and its security, the architect's position is obvious. Its requirements must be his qualifica-

tions. To this work, he, more than any other, can and must bring creative power, derived from experience in the intellectual and spiritual qualities of living form—and the ability to express that form in a living architecture—thus his place in the restoration of the city—in validation of its right to exist.

—Paul Schweikher

Mid-West Architects Meet at South Bend

To Clair Ditchy of Detroit, Regional Director, A. I. A., Great Lakes District, goes the credit for conceiving and putting through the Mid-West Architectural Conference held June 23-24 at South Bend, Indiana, in the University of Notre Dame. Participants invited were all architects from Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and Michigan. Registration showed that eighty-eight architects responded and twenty-six others, including producers and wives. The tone of the conference was serious and much of value was said during the sessions.

At the morning session on Friday, June 23, Father Hugh O'Donnell, Vice-President of Notre Dame, extended cordial welcome in the absence of President Father O'Hara, now in South America.

John R. Fugard, Regional Director, A. I. A., for Illinois-Wisconsin District, said there were 1500 registered architects in his district. He spoke of government influences providing construction work through its agencies, but looked to private enterprise, now woefully lacking in initiative, to again enter the construction field before architects could come into their own. He found the profession in recent years had changed in attitude and in methods of business. The profession, he said, needed more than anything else at this time a good, strong national leadership. There is a tendency for architects of America, he continued, to safeguard their profession from the inroads of foreign propaganda, governmental bureaucracy, union labor domination, and unlawful combinations of building material interests.

Mr. Ditchy replied, making reference to the Committee on State Organization, which after sounding the profession throughout the land had gone on record favoring one national architectural organization—the A. I. A. He stressed the necessity of close cooperation between the Octagon and state societies as well as chapters. The conference he was addressing was a logical sequence of these developments and he hoped this conference would lead to the organization of the Great Lakes Regional Association. He quoted from A. I. A. by-laws on Regional Districts and their organization.

The Friday afternoon session was a symposium on housing and city planning. Walter R. McCornack, now Dean, Department of Architecture, M. I. T., presided. The principal address was by Dr. Robert W. Kelso, President, Citizens Housing and Planning Council of Detroit. Dr. Kelso's theme was the social need for better housing. He started out by saying that home ownership is a myth. "Home ownership is declining rapidly toward the vanishing point; and the lower cost housing in the future is housing for tenancy only and needs to be thought of in its construction, its financing, and its maintenance on a rent-house basis." The Doctor then elaborated on the evils of the slum and insisted that positive coordinating action by the people of the United States is required to bring anything like order out of the existing housing chaos.

Dean McCornack followed with the best brief on what should be done about housing.

On Friday evening, Thomas E. Tallmadge of Chicago, delivered his interesting and instructive lecture on the restoration at Williamsburg. Chicago architects are familiar with this fine address, Mr. Tallmadge having given it in Chicago before architectural bodies.

The Saturday morning session started with a paper by Edward D. Pierre, President, Indiana Chapter, A. I. A. He said America's hope for social and economic advancement lies in continuous improvement in its living conditions. The present need is for vision, responsibility, and cooperation based on loyalty and understanding.

The paper written by Alfred Shaw, Chairman, A. I. A. Committee on Membership, was read by Arthur K. Hyde in Mr. Shaw's absence. Talmage C. Hughes, Secretary, Detroit Chapter, A. I. A., spoke on publicizing the architect and paid his compliments to William Orr Ludlow, Chairman, Institute Committee on Public Information.

Leigh Hunt, State Association Representative on the Board of Directors, A. I. A., for unification, spoke forcefully for that cause. Much of what he said was a repetition of what he told chapters and state societies on his travels throughout the country.

Saturday evening occurred the banquet with Roger Allen as toastmaster. Father Hugh O'Donnell spoke on nobility of action and asked: "Is the profession fulfilling its commission of leading the building industry? Is the profession emphasizing the factors that go to make up its soul?"

The Producers' Council was represented among the speakers by James W. Follin.

Charles D. Maginnis, President, A. I. A., closed the speech-making with a fine address. Naturally, he was the principal speaker. He ended his address with:

"It has been stated of my own profession by a critic of consequence that architects are not sufficiently sympathetic with the economic phases of the modern design. That is, to this extent at least, inaccurate—that we have brought the most stark and scientific principles to the solution of the slum problem and the small house.

"The architect, if that be his job, can be as passionate in the pursuit of triumphant economics as he is known to be in the essays of his imagination. It is to be noted that his professional relation to the housing projects exceptionally encouraged his search for new materials and more up-to-date methods, an enterprise in which he has found himself in many communities in discouraging conflict with conservative building laws."

A Call to Colors

The Illinois Society of Architects is rightfully recognized as the leading architectural association of the Middle West. The present administration of the Society is most desirous of truly representing all the architects within the State, and this can only be done by gaining into membership a large number of architects who are reaping some of the benefits of our efforts without contributing a share of moral or financial support. Our professional organization should be as beneficial and as influential to its members as are the associations of other prominent professions. This can only be attained by having virtually every architect registered in this State as a member.

As a result of a recent change in the by-laws of the Society, a large number of architects not previously eligible, may now join. Every architect licensed to practice architecture in the State of Illinois is eligible to membership in the Society. There, no doubt, are numerous architects who are not aware of this amendment and who would be interested in becoming members.

The Illinois Society of Architects rarely requests anything (but dues) from its members. However, at this time we are asking your cooperation in advising those architects who are not members, the advantages of becoming a member of the Illinois Society of Architects, both to themselves directly, and indirectly, through the advantages to the profession as a whole. Assist us in enrolling these men into the Society.

This is not to be considered a membership drive, but rather an effort to unify and consolidate the architectural profession of the State. Your support of this movement will react to your advantage. The added benefits from this unification will be measured by the support given to this movement by present members.

—Paul Gerhardt, Jr., President
Illinois Society of Architects

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Editor Monthly Bulletin

ARTHUR WOLTERS DORF, 520 NORTH MICHIGAN AVE., CHICAGO

At the annual meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects held June 27, the result of letter ballot voting by the entire membership on affiliation of the Society with The American Institute of Architects was announced. The ratio of votes was five in favor to one opposed to affiliation.

The Institute by-laws require the affirmative votes of Chicago and Central Illinois Chapters' membership before the A. I. A. directors consummate the affiliation.

The Chicago Chapter sent letter ballots to all members entitled to vote. Of those voting, the majority voted for affiliation. The number voting in proportion to the membership was small, showing an apathy uncomplimentary to I. S. A. members.

The Bulletin is not advised what action, if any, was taken by the Central Illinois Chapter. That membership is small and meetings occur quarterly.

When it is considered that the Illinois Society is the oldest and strongest of all state societies of architects in this country; that at its birth forty-two years ago, A. I. A. members were the Society's leaders in furthering the Illinois Architects License Law; that throughout its history A. I. A. men have been prominent among its officers and directors; that 40% of its membership today are A. I. A. members with a goodly number honored with Fellowships; that John R. Fugard, Chairman, Institute Committee on State Organization and Regional Director for Illinois-Wisconsin District, is a past president of the I. S. A.; that the Institute is desirous of the I. S. A. affiliation—all this, and still the Chicago Chapter has not sufficient interest to register a representative vote.

Perhaps the young men administering the Chicago Chapter's affairs are not as familiar with Institute aims and ambitions as they might be.

Acceleration in the number and speed of automobiles adds another problem, and a difficult one, to the work of the town planner. This is brought home to the observer at the General Motors' exhibition in the New York World's Fair when observing the "Futurama." It shows a view down the street in the City of the Future where pedestrians are on the sidewalk, confined between show windows of the building and a parapet wall. This parapet wall encloses a

well hole, broken at street intersections by crossing sidewalks. The observer sees automobile traffic at the level below.

There exists a thirteen year old institution of learning known as the Bureau of Street Traffic Research, now a part of Yale University. Its function is to train a new kind of professional man who is a scientific expert in the needs of a nation on wheels. This expert, we assume, will become a consultant of the town planner. There are now about five hundred of these traffic engineers at work and all but fifty are employed by the Federal and state governments.

The traffic engineer is one of the marks of the fourth stage of auto transport history, according to Maxwell Halsey, Director of the Bureau for Street Traffic Research. The traffic engineer does not concern himself with the structure of the road itself. He is concerned with traffic signals, road markers, and warning signs. Clover-leaf intersections are typical of his work. Control of parking is his special problem. When it is remembered that 10,723 automobile accidents occurred in 1918, 27,996 in 1928, and 38,000 in 1937, the importance of the traffic engineer is evident.

Mr. Halsey states that 70% of the traffic engineer's time is given over to problems of mechanical control; 10% to designing new roads, traffic oneway zones, and major street systems; 5% to traffic surveys, accident records, administration and the economics of the automobile; the remaining 15% is devoted to problems of legislation enforcement and public education.

Mr. Halsey thinks a candidate for the profession of traffic engineering should have an engineering degree before taking up specialized traffic control.

Dr. Siegfried Giedion, Swiss Professor who gave the Norton lectures in 1939 at Harvard's School of Architecture, spoke before an audience at Maholy-Nagy's Chicago School of Design on June 29 on the work of the once much discussed group of young architects calling themselves "The Chicago School." This group was active here in the last decade of the eighteenth and first of the nineteenth centuries.

Dr. Giedion's talk with lantern slides cannot be said to have been convincing to architects. In the audience were a few men who had been active in "The Chicago School" movement.

In an early issue, the Bulletin will present an article on The Chicago School, written by an architect who was a leader of the band.

WPA workers in the Writers' Project have unearthed the fact that in the 1850's and 1860's packers in the Union Stockyards, Chicago, housed their hogs on the roofs of their slaughter houses and fed them there until ready for the knife. Swelldom in a penthouse thus appears to be evolved from the porker's habitation on the roof.

If the Fair is more than a circus, that is because certain laboratory demonstrations and certain industrial processes make very spectacular shows. And if those offered at the New York World's Fair do not actually demonstrate what the world of tomorrow will be like or solve all the difficulties inherent in the job of getting the kind of world we want, they do give a tremendous demonstration of the triumphs of mere technique.

—Joseph Wood Krutch

May and June Illinois Society Meetings

The May 23 dinner-meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects had for its program only Society business, was confined to members only, and was attended by twenty-four. With President Jensen in the chair, things moved rapidly, beginning with the reading of minutes, the introduction of J. C. McWhorter, a new member, a few pleasantries as exemplified by a couple of stories, when—settling down to seriousness—the President stated that the architect was losing business partly through lack of aggressiveness; that such aggressiveness could best be served, and with proper dignity, through an architects' organization speaking for the whole body.

An amendment to Section I, Article 5, of the By-Laws was passed, changing the wording so that not alone principals with Illinois license practicing architecture in Illinois were eligible to membership, but their assistants holding state licenses could likewise be members of the Society.

Paul Gerhardt, Jr. touched on unification of architectural bodies in Illinois, but soon passed to the larger question of affiliation or unification with the A. I. A. Leigh Hunt of Wisconsin, representing the A. I. A. Board of Directors on this question, was again present at this meeting. While he now practices architecture in Wisconsin, Chicago is his old home and he is welcomed at these meetings as if he were the long lost Charlie Ross. This question of unification with the A. I. A. has occupied much time in Board of Directors' meetings and the time had come for the Society to act. Mr. Hunt made an impassioned appeal that the Illinois Society, the oldest and strongest of all state societies, the society that all the younger sisters throughout the land look to for advice and experience, should no longer remain without affiliation with the Institute. It was most desirable, he thought, to have the Illinois Society registered as an affiliated A. I. A. member before the coming September convention.

Objections that a state society entering the A. I. A., having but one delegate for every two hundred members, while the Institute Chapters have much stronger representation, were argued down by Mr. Hunt with the assurance that changes in Institute by-laws were inevitable, but that they could not be made before the societies had actually become Institute members; that by-law changes would take time; that perhaps, according to Mr. Fugard, five years would elapse before all wrinkles in by-laws could be satisfactorily ironed out. In the meantime, the growth and power of the Institute, a national spokesman for all architects, depended largely upon the cooperation and affiliation of state societies.

It was moved and voted to circulate with the letter ballot for officers for 1939-40, going out to all members, the resolution to join the Institute and ask for an aye or nay vote from every member through the mail. The result will be announced at the June or annual meeting of the Society.

John Fugard, an A. I. A. director, spoke on the need of the profession for national representation, citing an Institute membership at present of 2800, to 10,000 practitioners throughout the land. He recited the workings of FHA, HOLC, USHA, and other alphabetical bureaus, and told how the Institute had influenced these bureaus in favor of architects' service. He hopes that by September, twenty-four of the state organizations will have taken out A. I. A. membership.

William Fox, a Society director of many years standing and a doubter of the advantage to the Society of A. I. A. affiliation, expressed his belief that the kingdom and the power and the glory must rest in the state society and not be delegated to a distant organization like the A. I. A. or any other national body. He believed in states rights and objected to national interference. He recognized that the Institute had accomplished much for the practitioner in its eighty years of life, but he held to his principle of states rights. He was willing to have the Society try a membership in the Institute for a year, and if not satisfied to withdraw after that year.

Two nominating committees were created for the nominating of officers for the ensuing year. The President appointed one committee and the meeting voted the other.

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Seventy members and guests assembled on June 27 at the Chicago Real Estate Board rooms for the annual meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects. The members were honored by the presence of about eight ladies, wives and friends of members. There was the get-together cocktail, followed by dinner and then came the presi-

dent's annual address. President Jensen summed up the efforts of the Society through the activities of various committees, pointing out where these had struck the gong and where others had not reached the goal.

Secretary Fairclough read his annual report, reviewing the program and attendance at each of the year's meetings, and said something about the Board of Directors' meetings.

Victor Matteson reported as chairman of the Committee on Committee Reports. There were nine of these reports reviewed. The Legislative Committee had presented certain amendments to the Architectural Registration Act: (1). Requirement of five years experience to qualify for examination for registration without college education, or three years for those having graduated from an accredited architectural school. (2). A provision for restoring certificate of registration after expiration. (3). Revision of Section 13 to provide for stricter enforcement of the Act. (4). Provision for raising the annual renewal fee to \$3.00. (5). A new section requiring annual publication of the list of registered architects. This Legislative Committee did valuable work in opposing certain bills and in cooperating with the State Building Code Committee.

The Unification Committee recommends unification of Illinois architects by their becoming a State Association member of the A. I. A. The Public Action Committee reports relatively few complaints of violations of the Illinois Architectural Act and these few were too poorly supported by evidence to warrant legal action. Other committee reports reviewed were the Sub-Committee on State Building Code, Entertainment Committee, State Art Committee, Committee on Publicity, Committee on Credentials, Committee on Building Valuations, and Committee on Membership. The last committee reports thirteen deaths, four resignations, five new members, one re-instatement, one honorary member, a total of 345 active and 5 honorary members.

An amendment to the constitution and by-laws was introduced and carried, creating an emeritus membership.

The Treasurer's report read by Ralph Llewellyn showed a balance of \$1337.00 in the treasury at the end of the Society year.

President Jensen introduced C. Herrick Hammond, past-president of the A. I. A., as the first speaker on the program. He spoke on the necessity of cooperation with other organizations, such as the Association of Commerce. He spoke of the development of Chicago's metropolitan area and of the architects being responsible for orderly growth and development. He saw coming "a reflowering of culture" and in the reconstruction period now opening, he pointed out where the architect must function or fail in his duty.

Paul Schweikher, one of Chicago's younger architect practitioners, a thoughtful, able, young man, who has a talent for putting his thoughts in impressive words, read a paper on the growth and deterioration of cities with particular reference to Chicago. He sketched the development and growth and tendencies of American communities and, while his mood was pessimistic, the paper was freighted with thoughts deserving of much consideration.

Paul D. Angell, a member of the Chicago Real Estate Board, Secretary of the Chicago Building Congress, is a speaker familiar to Society members since he addressed a meeting of the I. S. A. earlier in the year. Mr. Angell has a strong voice. He likes to reflect on ancient history and parade his knowledge of it. On this occasion he recited the social status of Egypt under the Pharaohs; that the architects looked to the Pharaohs and others in high places for their jobs, and that today the architect looked to serve the whole community, rather than a rich client. Very confused reasoning this. The architect still seeks the rich client as he has in every age, and it is only through necessity that the architect without clients is forced to become a promoter and occasionally a part-owner in a building project. No, Mr. Angell, the architect is happy to have wealthy clients, whether they be corporations or private capitalists or responsible and sound promoters. In his introduction Mr. Angell said he spoke as a layman. As always in Mr. Angell's addresses, he told of the development from an agricultural to an industrial community, and took exception to one of Mr. Schweikher's deductions regarding closer contiguity in city life. Mr. Angell closed his peroration with a quotation from Edwin Markham.

Frederick V. Murphy, Dean of the School of Architecture of the Catholic University, Washington, D. C., born in or near Chicago and a guest of the Society, was called upon to speak. He reminisced of the Chicago of the World's Columbian Exposition. He called it an

optimistic Chicago then and discovered a change in the Chicago of today. The achievements of the architect of the 1880's and 1890's were not to be disparaged and even today there is a personality pervading the city and its workers which is different from the spirit of Washington, D. C., where the greater projects planned for the nation have an impersonality which is foreign to the work of individual cities like Chicago.

Alex V. Capraro reported for the tellers on the balloting for officers for the ensuing year. The new officers are: Paul Gerhardt, Jr., President; Arthur Woltersdorf, 1st Vice-President; Ralph Harris, 2nd Vice-President; Ralph C. Llewellyn, Treasurer; Stanley Fairclough, Secretary. For new Directors and members of the Board of Arbitration, see box at the head of page 3.

The letter ballot on affiliation of the Society with the A. I. A. showed a ratio of five to one in favor of affiliation.

Arthur Woltersdorf, speaking for the Board of Directors, presented to Retiring President Jensen an engrossed and illuminated resolution, drawn by the Board of Directors and speaking for the entire membership, voicing the Society's appreciation of Mr. Jensen's successes and untiring efforts during the past five years as President of the Illinois Society of Architects. Paul Gerhardt, Jr., as the newly elected President, was handed the gavel and in a few graceful remarks accepted the duties entrusted to him by the membership.

I. S. A. Directors' July Meeting

Leaving downtown Chicago in chartered busses at 3:30 P. M. on Tuesday, September 19, members of the Society will travel to Racine, Wisconsin to inspect Johnson Wax Company's new office building. Dinner served in Racine. Chartered busses will return attendants to Chicago. Detailed notice later to all members.

The Board of Directors of the Illinois Society of Architects at their July 11 meeting fixed upon October 14 at Rockford, Illinois for the statewide 1939 meeting. Further details will be found in the October-November issue of the Bulletin.

It was resolved that Society members two years and more in arrears with their dues and failing to respond financially to the Financial Secretary's appeals, shall be dropped from membership, their names expunged from the Bulletin mailing list, their accounts put in the hands of a lawyer for collection, and a list of the names so dropped published in a future issue of the Bulletin.

Annual Meeting of the Chicago Chapter

They fled into the country and came to rest at a glen near a lake thirty-five miles northwest of Chicago. It was mid-afternoon. Having their golf sticks with them, they pushed the pellet over the links and after a while retired to the club house. The place was Lake Zurich Golf Club. Later other men joined them and after a cocktail the party, numbering forty-two, sat down to seven o'clock dinner.

It was June 13 and the annual meeting of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A. Through with the dinner and wine, President Roberts pronounced the meeting open and prizes were distributed to the golfers of the afternoon. Minutes of the previous meeting were read, a novelty in Chicago Chapter meetings. Messrs. Jerrold Loebel, W. J. Smith, and E. S. Hall reported for the committees of which each was chairman. A moment of silent standing followed in memory of those who had died during the year.

The radio programs given over WGN weekly, under the auspices of Peter Mayo, were commended, and the desire by the radio station for more evidence of public interest before arranging for further time, was announced.

Alfred Shaw reported the plan to hold architectural exhibitions in connection with the Museum of Science and Industry through collaboration with Director Fox of the Museum. Last winter's architects' ball at the Drake was reviewed. Jerrold Loebel reported on arrangements for an architectural atelier. In the absence of Chairman Sorgatz, Carl Heimbrodt reported on the small house problem.

John Fugard reported on reorganization of architects' societies and chapters, also on cooperation with the Chicago Plan Commission, and on bills sponsored by painters and plasterers before the State Legislature at Springfield. Paul Gerhardt, Jr. reported on Illinois Architects License Law amendments. Leonard Wayman, the winner

of the 1939-40 Plym Traveling Fellowship was introduced and applauded. Thomas E. Tallmadge reported on the doings of the Allied Arts Committee. John Fugard requested a rousing affirmative vote by the Chicago and Central Illinois Chapters in favor of the affiliation of the Illinois Society of Architects with the A. I. A. He then spoke of the International Congress of Architects to be held in Washington in September, coincident with the A. I. A. convention.

Before calling upon the nominating committee for candidates to fill the offices during the ensuing year, the President spoke with appreciation of the services rendered by retiring Secretary Heimbrodt. Mr. Heimbrodt has held this office and carried on its arduous labors for nine years and feels he is deserving of a rest.

Nominees to clothe the Chapter offices for the next year are: Elmer Roberts, President; Jerrold Loebel, First Vice-President; Nathaniel Owings, Second Vice-President; George Senseney, Secretary; Lawrence Perkins, Treasurer; Alfred Shaw, Chairman, Executive Committee.

There was no opposition ticket. The Secretary, after a unanimous vote, was instructed to cast a ballot for the Chapter.

Fifteenth International Congress of Architects

The Secretary of State, the Honorable Cordell Hull, has issued an invitation to all architects from foreign countries and this country, including their wives, to attend the Fifteenth International Congress of Architects in Washington, D. C., September 24-30, 1939. P. Vischer is President du Comité Permanent International des Architectes. The Seventy-First Convention of the American Institute of Architects will meet simultaneously with the Congress in Washington.

Eminent foreign speakers have been specially invited to deal with professional subjects of international interest. A varied scheme of social entertainment has been arranged with events which will give ample opportunity to meet the distinguished visitors under circumstances which will be favored by the courtesies of Government. A trip to Williamsburg by boat is included in the plans, and the Congress will be followed immediately by a general exodus to New York where a special celebration is being arranged for Architects' Day at the World's Fair.

President Roosevelt has approved the appointment of the following persons as delegates on the part of the United States to attend the Congress: Charles D. Maginnis, President, A. I. A.; Louis A. Simon, Washington, D. C.; Edwin Bergstrom, Los Angeles, Cal.; Harvey Wiley Corbett, New York, N. Y.; Richmond H. Shreve, New York, N. Y.; Stephen F. Voorhees, New York, N. Y.; Charles C. Zantinger, Philadelphia, Pa.

Five themes are given in the Government pamphlet as subjects for discussion: 1. Planning and development of rural districts. 2. The relation between population density and built-up area. 3. Contemporary architecture compared to the architecture of the past. 4. Consequence of the participation by Government, whether Federal or local, and/or by private enterprise, in the preparation of plans and the carrying out of building operations. 5. Should public authority be clothed with power to reject plans as artistically unsatisfactory rather than as at present for purely technical reasons only?

On Wednesday, September 27, the United States Government will tender a banquet in honor of the official delegates to which all other participants will be admitted on payment of the customary fee.

The closing of the formal activities of the Congress occurs on September 28. That evening delegates and others will journey down the Potomac to Old Point Comfort and next morning visit historic Jamestown and Yorktown on their way to Williamsburg, Va., to see the restoration of this early colonial capital.

September 30 provides a visit to Greenbelt, a Department of Agriculture model town near Washington.

Metered air conditioning is a new development. The tenant pays for the cold water used each month, according to his meter record.

A new plastic compound cheaper than anything on the market has been developed from the agricultural waste product of sugar cane known as bagasse.

A Once Famous Competition, Now Forgotten

The most considerable building event that followed the Chicago Fire, even exceeding the new Palmer House, was the reconstruction of the City Hall and the County Building, generally known as the Court House. The dignified old Greek Revival building in its remodelled form by Van Osdel, had gone down in irretrievable ruin in the holocaust. Its successor was to be chosen by a competition and Otto Matz, as it will be brought forth, won the competition for the new building, but—he did not build it. Otto Matz died in 1919 on his ninetieth birthday and his son, Herman Matz, so well known to the architects, possesses his father's scrapbooks. One of these is devoted to the "great competition," as it was generally called. Perhaps a short account of this huge building operation, gleaned from Otto's scrapbook, would be more valuable as a prelude than a postlude. As for the accounts of the competition itself, Mr. Matz neither dated nor identified his newspaper clippings, but the one describing the sequence of events and on which I am leaning identifies itself as of November or December 1879, and its type is that of the "Tribune."

Three days after the Fire (Oct. 11 and 12, 1871), the City Council—after arranging for temporary quarters—directed the Board of Public Works to confer with the Board of Supervisors (who directed County affairs) in regard to the erection jointly of a permanent building in the old location. Eleven days later a windfall dropped into the lap of the bereaved city. This was the action of the State Legislature which authorized the payment of \$3,000,000 in full of the claim the City had against the State for the Canal improvements. The condition of the gift was that the City should restore the burned bridges and should use the remainder for its share of a new court house. In February 1872, the Legislature passed a bill authorizing the County Board to issue bonds for \$1,500,000 which must build a jail on the north side and with the remainder build the County's share of the court house.

Matz, at this early stage, made a design for a joint building which was accepted, but this action was deemed hasty and almost immediately rescinded. In July 1872 the building committees of the City and the County offered jointly a prize of \$5,000 for the best plan, \$2,000 for the second best, and \$1,000 for the third best for a "Municipal Building" and "City Hall." On August 5 the City and County became parties to a contract that in the proposed new building the exterior design should be uniform; each party should light and heat its own half; that the expense of the grounds should be equally divided; and that the County should occupy the east half and the City the west half of the old court house square.

In July 1873 the joint building committee awarded, as a result of the competition, the first prize to Otto H. Matz, the second to Henry L. Gay, and third to Thomas Tilley. This report the City Council accepted with the proviso, however, that this acceptance did not bind them to employ the winner! The County Board refused to accept the decision of the "jury" and selected the design of Tilley and after many meetings and much argument, the Council also changed its mind and acquiesced in the appointment of Tilley.

Next came the question of the compensation to be paid the architects and that ticklish problem precipitated "another series of rows" which, while it established the fee at three per cent, seems also to have disposed of the erstwhile fortunate Tilley. The County Board thereupon completely ignoring the competition, appointed their own architect, J. J. Egan, and the perverse City resurrected Tilley whose motto apparently was "down but never out." His triumph was short. "Tilley was squeezed out at last and for the past four years has been haunting street corners and places of public resort pouring the story of his grievances into the ears of sympathetic victims of his oratory," says the Tribune writer. "He has now pending a suit for some fabulous amount for damages and expects a judgment on the day of Judgment." Our sympathy is decidedly with Tilley.

Whence he came and where he went I have not been able to discover. He is mentioned apparently only in connection with the designs for the Court House but there, it must be admitted, he is mentioned a great deal. After a few more shufflings of the architects, in which the names of Edward Burling and Theodore Karls appear and disappear as associates of Egan, and in which incidentally the fee was reduced to two per cent, the County Board swore by the

nine gods that the work should be begun at once without any further reference to the City authorities. On August 27 (1875) a spadeful of earth was dug out in the presence of a number of City and County officials "who thereupon adjourned to Clem Periolat's 'Bean Club,' where a goodly portion of them got drunk in honor of the occasion."

"Farmer" Harms was awarded the contract for piling, William S. McNeil & Son the cutstone, P. J. Sexton the contract for masonry. In the controversy of limestone versus granite (spelt granit in those days), a compromise was reached in which limestone for the exterior walls (Lamont for County, Bedford for City) was used and granite for the columns, pilasters and entrances. Egan, the architect, furnished duplicate drawings and stone details of the facades to the City, but apparently the plan and interior of the Municipal half was worked out by S. D. Cleveland. As built, therefore, the exteriors of the City and County Buildings were identical, but the interior varied considerably, the Municipal side being more lavishly ornamented. The entire building was ready for occupancy at the beginning of 1885 and the cost was in excess of four million dollars.

The Court House as a spectacle was a noble pile. The high ceilings, the small window openings and the long corridors made for discomfort and inconvenience, hence its short life—only twenty years—but the exterior was a tour de force. For several years as a draughtsman in D. H. Burnham's office, I walked along LaSalle Street twice a day between the old Northwestern railway station and the Rookery Building. Never was I tired of gazing at the mouldering grandeur of that mighty pile. In the morning its barbarisms were evident enough, but against the evening sky all was forgiven in the rearing silhouette and the cavernous shadows that made the building an incarnation of a Piranesi etching.

It was far better than any of the competition designs and better than any of its Parvenue contemporaries of the seventies when it was conceived. However, it was old fashioned and out-dated by the time it was finished. Jenney's big windows, Richardson's Romanesque Revival, and Burnham's planning had revolutionized big architecture by 1885; and steel construction was just around the corner.

Is it too late to say something about the competition? The accounts of this famous contest, as revealed by Otto Matz's scrapbook, are not only amusing and interesting but most valuable in their revelation of contemporary taste, both of the architect and the critic. For the newspapers it was a Roman holiday and because very properly the reporters were not allowed at the deliberations of the jury, the aldermen, the county commissioners, the competitors, and the rival reporters, one of whom crawled down a chimney and thereby executed a scoop, were all thrown to the lions. However, the drawings themselves gave them pause; civic pride, ignorance of architecture and the grandiose conceptions of the architects filled them all with a healthy respect and brought forth to the otherwise caustic comments paeons of extravagant praise.

There is no program of the competition available, but we know three prizes were offered: a first, which was \$5000, second \$2000, third \$1000. There was no architectural adviser and, as we know, no guarantee that the winner would get the job; and we also know that he did not! Fifty designs were submitted. After many meetings, the joint committee of the Common Council and the County Commissioner reduced the number to eighteen, together with their noms de plume, as follows:

"Semper Resurgens"—Rankin and Quensey; "Venetian"—Cochrane and Miller; "Utility"—Rufus Rose; "Marmion"—C. H. Murdock; "Eureka"—Tilley, Longhurst and Co.; "Legibus et Populis"—no name; "Let Merit Win"—L. C. Welsh; "Justitia"—Otto H. Matz; "Star"—York and Ross; "Avante"—Armstrong and Egan; "Aut Caesar aut Nihil"—Henry Lord Gay; "Fitness and Economy"—Burling and Adler; George H. Edbrook; "Chicago's Pride"—Theodore Karls; "Urbs in Horto"—Wheelock and Thomas; "Old Hundred"—S. P. Randall; "Metropolis of the West"—Bangley of Bloomington; "In Hoc Signo Vincas"—Dixon and Hamilton.

Otto Matz, in that priceless diary of his, reproduces contemporary wood cuts of the winning designs and some of the "also rans." Almost everyone of them is pretty badly judged by the fashions of today, and probably none was very good by the best standard of 1873. But they eloquently reflect the opinion of what constituted

monumental architecture sixty-six years ago in Chicago. Whatever insults the papers could heap upon the City and County boards or the temporary Art Gallery in the Kentucky Building, where the drawings were exhibited "cold as the bottled airs of winter can make it," they withheld them from the designs themselves which they regarded with admiration and awe. We note in all of them the extreme elaboration reflecting the prevailing opinion of the profession and the laity that only by the multiplication of architectural motives and decoration could monumental elegance be acquired. It is evident that faced with a problem unprecedented in scope and purpose, each competitor hied himself at once to any documents he could find which reproduced the contemporary monumental architecture of Europe.

Take, for instance, "Justitia," the winning design by Otto Matz. Its four stories are completely incased with pavilioned facades of round arched windows and superimposed columns or pilasters. Its roof is a high mansard with great square domes on the corner and center pavillions. A domed and columned tower equally rich rises from the Washington Street facade. A reviewer writes of it as "a handsome design—a combination of forms from the various periods of the Renaissance with a general adherence to the pavillion of the New Louvre, the Hotel de Ville of Paris, and the Maison de Commerce of Lyons." The "Times" reporter says "among the distinguishing features of the several designs are the French roofs which are treated in a variety of ways from the beautiful to the botched."

The second prize, "Aut Caesar Aut Nihil," by Henry Lord Gay was perhaps the most original and was dominated by a tower in the shape of a gigantic Corinthian column, referred to throughout by the critics as the "Shot Tower." The plan was praised by the critics. The third prize was the famous effort by Thomas Tilley. The building is in the form of a Greek cross set diagonally on the square, surmounted by a monstrous dome. It is a mass of reentrant angles and interfering projections and confused detail. One respects the courage of the jury, but is at a loss to account for their decision.

Boyington's design, which—in a curious communication to the press he either repudiated or transferred the credit to his associate, Murdock—is very reminiscent of the Reichstag in Berlin, with a huge central tower in a quite different architectural manner. Probably his own. One of the best designs, in my opinion, was that submitted by W. L. B. Jenney. It is Venetian Gothic style as interpreted in England in Mid-Victorian days by Street or Ruskin. It is reminiscent of the Town Hall in Manchester, as the critics were smart enough to discover. It had two towers, one in the center of the Washington Street facade, and the other of different design on Randolph. The building was simple, however, well-proportioned and interesting. The design that shows, as might be expected, the most native genius is by Edward Burling, submitted by Burling and Adler. The City Hall as built owes it a great deal. The roof was flat for the most part. It was entered approximately on the ground level and it was obviously well lighted as it eschewed the great porticoes and cavernous arches, irresistible temptations to most of the competitors. Its principle feature was two towers, one small, one great, on opposite sides. Each of these is a powerful and original composition.

A curious side light is the fight, though a very refined one, we may be sure, that Alderman Mahlon O. Ogden, member of the jury, put up for "the design of the Boston architect, Sturgis." Sturgis' design was not even among the first eighteen, nor can I find it illustrated. I have a feeling, though, that Alderman Ogden may have had excellent reasons. One commentary makes this enlightening observation: "Childe Harold is a Gothic building, very handsome in itself, but as Gothic architecture is not understood here and only attempted by one or two architects, it is fair to suppose it came from Boston. It is almost ecclesiastical in its treatment, nothing having been modified to suit the modern taste for secular structures. It is really unmeaning in its quaintness to us Chicagoans."

Otto Matz, sound philosopher as well as an excellent architect, took his \$5000 and his family and went on a grand tour of Europe.

—Thomas E. Tallmadge.

This article is from the manuscript of Mr. Tallmadge's book "Chicago Architecture." The book is yet to be published. The article appears in the Bulletin with permission of the author.—Editor.

Leonardo da Vinci's mechanical inventions, of which he left sketches, included printing presses, an oil press, screw-cutting lathe, and pile driver with automatic release.

The 71st A. I. A. Convention, Washington, D. C.

The American Institute of Architects invites all architects of America to attend its annual convention in Washington, D. C. on September 25, 26, 27, and 28, 1939. On page 5 of this issue of the Bulletin details of the 15th International Congress of Architects, held in Washington at the time of the Institute Convention, are given. The tentative program of the A. I. A. Convention follows here.

Monday, September 25

- 9 A. M. to 6 P. M. Registration. Mayflower Hotel.
- 10:00 A. M. Convention opens. President Maginnis' Address; Treasurer Edwin Bergstrom's Report; Report of Board of Directors.
- 12:00 Noon. Opening session of the 15th International Congress of Architects at the Departmental Auditorium. All Institute Convention attendants cordially invited to the opening session of the Congress.
- 1:00 P. M. Willard Hotel. Get-together luncheon—the Congress and the Convention.
- 2:30 P. M. Mayflower Hotel. Reports of the A. I. A. Board continued.
- 5:00 P. M. Reception of the Congress and Convention by the A. I. A. President at the Mayflower Hotel.
- 9:30 P. M. Official Governmental reception of Congress and Convention. Music by U. S. Navy Band.

Tuesday, September 26

- 9:30 A. M. Congress session in Great Hall of the Departmental Auditorium. Discussion of Themes I and II. No morning A. I. A. session.
- 12:30 P. M. Informal luncheon at the Willard Hotel.
- 2:30 P. M. Mayflower Hotel. Report of the Committee on Federal Public Works. Reports of the Committee on Housing and Credentials Committee. Nomination of officers and directors.
- 9:00 P. M. Mayflower Hotel. Report of the Committee on Education.

Wednesday, September 27

- 9:30 A. M. Session of the Congress in Departmental Auditorium. Discussion of Theme III. No Convention session scheduled.
- 1:00 P. M. Mayflower Hotel. Joint meeting and luncheon with the Producers' Council.
- 2:00 P. M. Mayflower Hotel. Report of the Committee on Membership. Polls open. Report of the Committee on State Organization.
- 5:00 P. M. Proposed revision of Institute documents.
- 7:00 P. M. Polls close.
- 8:00 P. M. Banquet of the Congress and the Convention. Formal dress.

Thursday, September 28

- 10:00 A. M. Mayflower Hotel. Report of the Committee on Architectural Competitions. Action on the Board's report. Unfinished business.
- 12:30 P. M. Luncheon at the Willard Hotel. The Congress and the Convention.
- 2:30 P. M. Mayflower Hotel. Unfinished business. Report of the Committee on Resolutions. New business. Announcement of elections and honors. Installation of officers and directors.
- 3:45 P. M. Adjournment of the Convention at Departmental Auditorium.
- 4:30 P. M. Closing session of the Congress.
- 6:00 P. M. Departure for Williamsburg by boat. Dinner on boat.

Archaeologists in Salonica are rebuilding the famous fifth century church of St. Demetrius which was badly gutted by fire in the World War period.

A hedge of lavender orchids, with as many as a thousand in bloom on some days, can be seen at a botanic station in Balboa, Canal Zone.

Post Office Competition, Region No. 7

The second project of a series of Regional Architectural Competitions for Federal building designs under the Procurement Division of the Treasury Department is announced. The proposed building is a post office, court house and custom house for the City of Evansville, Indiana—estimated cost \$600,000. The competition is open to registered architects in Region No. 7 (Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan).

The author of the winning design will receive \$6000 and will be paid an additional \$6000 in his capacity as consultant during the preparation of working drawings and specifications to be prepared under the direction of the Public Buildings Branch of the Procurement Division.

Copies of the program are available after June 21, 1939. Applicants for the program must apply by letter or telegram addressed as follows: "Director of Procurement, Procurement Division, Treasury Department, Washington, D. C." Applications by letter should have the envelope conspicuously marked with the words "Architectural Competition." With the letter of application there must be a photographic copy of the applicant's certificate of registration or a statement from a qualified state officer attesting to the applicant's registration status. Applications by telegram must state that copy of certificate or evidence of qualification has been mailed.

Pergamon

The Germans have been interested in Pergamon since 1873, when a German civil engineer found a piece of sculptured frieze during some road digging. That find led to excavation of the magnificent altar of Zeus, a six years' task. In twenty years more, the altar was reconstructed in all its grandeur in its own museum in Berlin. It is known as the largest monument of Greek sculpture in existence.

Pergamon's shrine to Aesculapius was an entire sanatorium layout of buildings outside the city. Here the archaeologists have most recently explored the basement of the healing temple—the sanatorium proper. In the sacred precinct, the patients dreamed, hoping to be visited in sleep by the healing touch of the divinity.

The sacred fountain of the shrine has been located. It is near the center of the campus. The fountain came to light when the explorers traced a tunnel which led out from the basement of the healing temple. They found that this was a subway route for patients to the spring.

At this health resort, as at other Aesculapian centers, the world's early health seekers blended faith treatment with the most matter of fact physical therapy. They took sun baths, mud baths, drank the waters, exercised as directed, and diverted their minds with music and plays in the theater.

There were about two hundred temples of Aesculapius and three of them were elaborated into sanatoria, famed through the Mediterranean world. All three have been investigated archaeologically: Pergamon by Germans; Epidaurus by Greeks; the shrine on the Island of Cos by Italians.

—*Science News Letter.*

Unlicensed Architect's Contract Not Enforceable

An architect entered into a contract to prepare plans and specifications and superintend the construction of an apartment house to cost between \$30,000 and \$40,000. He represented himself to be an architect and capable of undertaking all such services, and signed all the plans and specifications as architect. Although his compensation was to be 10% of the total cost of the building, when the plans and specifications had been drawn and his supervision of the work finished, the owner refused to pay him anything in addition to a small amount that he had already advanced, having learned in the meantime that the architect was not duly licensed under the state law. The architect started suit against the owner for the balance claimed as due him.

The architect claimed that the building had been accepted upon its completion as being planned and constructed with a reasonable degree of skill and substantially free from defects, and that therefore the owner should be compelled to pay the balance of fees in accordance with the contract.

The Court, however, refused to listen to the architect's argument when it learned that he was not duly licensed and held that

even acceptance of the building by the owner would not render the contract legal, and permit recovery of his fees. In so deciding the court said: "The state statutes do not in express terms make the mere rendering of architectural services by one not holding a license certificate illegal, nor do they in express terms make a contract for such services by one not holding a license certificate unlawful and unenforceable, but the language of the act manifestly expresses the legislative intent that it shall be unlawful for one not holding a license certificate to assume the professional title of architect and as such, enter into a contract to render architectural services. This is what this architect did with reference to the construction of the building. We think there is no escape from the conclusion that the contract for architectural services in this case was illegal and void and wholly unenforceable, leaving the architect and the owner without legal right of recovery thereon."

—*Stanwood v. Wise*, 132 Wash. 295
232 Pac. 309, 42 A.L.R. 219

Housing In Holland

It was told at a meeting of the Metropolitan Housing Council of Chicago on April 14. The teller—very tall and spare—was Jan Bommer of Amsterdam, Executive Director of the Federation of Public Utility Housing Societies of the Netherlands. He spoke an excellent English and his listeners were reminded that for forty years Holland had done big things in public housing. It has now 1000 cooperative building societies supplying low rental homes to many thousands of Dutch families. This is accomplished without tax exemption. Add to this the stipulation that at the end of fifty years each housing project becomes the property of the municipality in which it is built.

Mr. Bommer's Federation is in reality a national association of tenants' cooperative housing organizations. These organizations have the power of eminent domain, in other words, the right to acquire building sites through condemnation. This applies to small communities. In large ones the land is either leased or bought from the municipalities.

Holland has warred vigorously against bad housing and it has had unusual results. Substandard homes have been demolished by the ten thousands. Listeners were amazed to learn that in 1899 25% of all dwellings in Holland contained only one room. By 1930 this proportion had dropped to 4%.

Architectural Libraries

Architectural libraries have a specialized job to do in the world. What they contain is chosen to furnish inspiration to the designer, to guide and assist the layman, to enrich the historian of art, and to give the technician the material he needs. With such a task, the architectural library must possess works of many different kinds and materials of many different sizes and types. It is bound also to be used by many different types of readers. All of these things will affect its administration, its personnel, and its methods. Moreover, architecture touches life in so many ways that an architectural library is often called on to serve the ordinary cultivated layman, and must be organized to direct him and give him the information and the illustrative matter which he seeks.

—*From "Some European Architectural Libraries" by Talbot Hamlin.*

"Legal Problems in the Housing Field" by Horace Russell and Leon H. Keyserling, Housing Monogram No. 2, is issued by Government Printing Office, price 25 cents.

Jean Baptiste Rohm, retired Chicago architect, died at his home in Chicago on June 10, aged 84. Mr. Rohm was born in Cologne, Germany and came to the U. S. in 1884. He established an architectural practice in Chicago in 1893. His son, William, later associated with him, died in 1931. They had a practice in residential architecture. Mr. Rohm was architect of the Mormon Temple in northwest Chicago. Rohm and Son for over twenty years were architects for National Tea Co., designing the various types of structure required by that concern. The great National Tea Co. warehouse in Crosby Street is Rohm and Son's largest work. J. B. Rohm retired in 1932. He had been a member of the Illinois Society of Architects.