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Forty - Third Annual Meeting

Illinois Society of Architects

To the Cliff Dwellers atop Orchestra Hall, Chicago, on June 25 came members and their ladies numbering sixty to the annual meeting of the I. S. A. The doors to the 100-foot long plant and flower-clad balcony looking eastward to the sea were open and the company drifted onto the balcony, with Grant Park spread at its feet, white-winged yachts in the quiet waters of the harbor, the breakwater with picturesque light towers, and beyond the blue of Lake Michigan to the horizon, meeting a soft summer sky. It was like a picture of the Bay of Naples as seen from Bertolini's.

Presently the Cliff Dwellers' famous silver bowl, filled with fragrant cocktails, took its place in the lounge. As the flame attracts the moth, so the bowl drew the visitors from the balcony to it. Conversation flowed and sociability reigned. Then the dinner, an excellent example of Cliff Dweller cuisine and bounty.

By way of introduction to the business meeting, Miss Jeanne Panot, an artist from the Cosmopolitan School of Music, presented two Chopin piano numbers with technical skill and understanding.

President Paul Gerhardt, Jr. welcomed the guests in his opening remarks which, though short, were cordial. He called upon Secretary Fairclough for the minutes of the 42nd annual meeting held a year ago in the rooms of the Chicago Real Estate Board. All present stood when the names of those lost by death during the year were read. They are: Honorary Members — Irving K. Pond, Francis J. Plym, Julius Huber, George L. Pfeiffer. Regular Members — Frank Kartowicz, Edgar M. Newman, Emery Stanford Hall, Howard G. Hodgkins, Harry I. Dalsey, Thomas Tallmadge, J. E. O. Pridmore, Emil Liska, Alfred Granger. Secretary Fairclough gave a resumé of the monthly meetings held during the Society year.

It was Victor Matteson's function to report on the work of the committees. He read briefed reports of the committees on membership, public action, materials and methods, building valuations, the small house, publicity, and a special committee whose duty it was to function with public authority in the matter of highway development.

From the report of the tellers who counted the ballots in the election for new officers, it was evident that the same staff of officers were returned for another year. One new director, William J. Ryan, was chosen. The newly-elected Board of Arbitration is printed in the box at the head of page 3 of this issue of the Bulletin.

President Gerhardt then gave a review of the architectural picture today. He referred to the efforts and aims of the profession as seen at the recent Louisville Convention. He referred to bills proposed — those that needed encouragement and others suppression — to come before the next state legislature.

To close the business meeting and prepare the company for the program of the evening, President Gerhardt called upon Miss Panot to play a second group. This time she presented three numbers, one by Debussy, one Brahms, and one Liszt — all rendered with a virtuosity and feeling that brought much applause.

The President extended a special welcome to a fellow member now resident in Washington — Tirrell Ferrenz; and to Herman Von Holst, once an active practitioner in Chicago but now a retired gentleman spending his days within the balmy breezes of Florida.

The program of the evening was, perhaps, an unusual one, given by a lady who, with her husband, had been absent from this country more than a quarter of a century. The President called upon Lawrence Perkins, architect, of Chicago, to introduce Mrs. Walter Burley Griffin, since Mr. Perkins and Mrs. Griffin are cousins. Mr. Perkins reminded his hearers that Mrs. Griffin, once Marion Mahony, a Chicago woman, had graduated in architecture at M. I. T., had married Walter Burley Griffin, an architect graduated from the University of Illinois, and through all their married life were partners in the practice of architecture and town planning. This practice began in Chicago and its suburbs. In 1913, after winning first prize in the competition for the federal capital of Australia, they moved there and Australia became their home until sometime in the 1920's. After that they were in many countries, but most of their work was in India, where Mr. Griffin was appointed planner and architect of the Lucknow Exposition of 1937. There Mr. Griffin died after an operation in February of that year.

The program announced that Mrs. Griffin would give an address on the subject of "Architecture in Australia," but she changed the subject and only talked momentarily on their efforts in Australia. She took her hearers to other parts of the world, particularly India, where she and her husband had functioned. Before showing many drawings and renderings which she had made of their work, she stated that town planning and architecture must go hand in hand; that one is too dependent upon the other to be carried on independently with success. With diagrams she then launched into the theory of fundamental forces and aspirations in architecture as explained through anthroposophy, a system of science, art, and philosophy, with religion, founded by the late Rudolf Steiner, where the material and spiritual blend. This reporter feels his incompetence to give a lucid report of anthroposophical philosophy as explained by Mrs. Griffin. She said, however, that occidental materialism had reached a state of collapse, as now demonstrated

in the struggles in Europe, and that the Orient had much to give the Occident in thought and belief. She said that the conflicting ideas of material and spirit must come together; the East must meet the West. We must understand that matter is real and spirit is real and if we accomplish this, we will have peace in the world.

In America she found an antipathy to beauty. Architecture, she said, must be concerned with the future, with meeting the necessities of the soul. The engineer, she held, is concerned only with the past.

Mrs. Griffin's drawings were many and beautiful. With an elevation of the library at Lucknow, which was built after designs of the Griffins, she explained the system of deflecting direct sun rays and lighting through reflected light. Insulation and air spaces were dwelt upon. The English pitched roof transplanted to India she found inappropriate and impractical. The flat roof, in general, fitted conditions of roofing and protection much better. A house with a flat roof, she said, need not be ugly.

The layout of the university grounds was shown and discussed. A student union at this university was shown, as was a house built from their designs at Benares. Stupas were explained, and in this connection she showed a Griffin design for a monument to King George VI in India, square in plan, and like a stepped pyramid in elevation, with approaches to the interior from the four corners. She showed her beautifully drawn decorative details of Indian ornament, pointing out that ornament is as necessary as plane surfaces in order to get emphasis in design.

Designs for the Lucknow exposition buildings covered another roll of drawings. In explaining these Mrs. Griffin touched on the construction of domed roofs, including parabolic curves carried out with bamboo and filled with a sort of mud for temporary buildings.

The question was asked whether all this effort was to be published, illustrated by Mrs. Griffin's splendid drawings. To this she replied that she sought publication, but adequate publication needed financial support, which she was still in search of.

The work of Mr. and Mrs. Griffin in connection with Canberra, the federal capital of Australia, is treated in another article in this issue.

Canberra's Birth Pains

Before 1912 Australia authorities decided to build a federal capital city for the island-continent. The site selected was a slightly rolling plain partly encircled by mountains and having a stream meandering across the plain. The site is one hundred miles from Melbourne and seventy-five miles inland.

The January, 1912 "Architectural Record" reported copies received of the official invitation to participate in a city planning competition for the proposed capital city of Australia. The invitation came from the Minister for Home Affairs for the Commonwealth of Australia at Melbourne and offered three prizes: the first, $8,750; second, $3,750; third, $2,500. Structures to be provided included the Parliament house, the residences of the governor general and prime minister, public offices of various government departments, courts of justice, places of public worship, national art gallery and library, university, technical college, city hall, general post office, museum, railway station, military barracks, hospitals, national theater, central power station, gas works, markets, stadium, parks, public gardens, etc. The competition to be international in every sense.

In the June, 1912 "Brickbuilder," Walter Burley Griffin of Chicago was announced as first prize winner for the best design for the capital city. His plan provided for a city of twenty-five square miles to be built upon a site which was then a wilderness. No name had yet been found for the city, which was to grow from virgin soil, that is, from scratch, as did Washington, D. C. An immediate population of 75,000 was provided for with ample provision for growth as gauged by the increasing population of other foreign capitals.

The plan aimed to cover all city needs, as stipulated in the competition program. The center was to include government buildings, municipal center, and a mercantile center. Five other centers were provided, three of which were to be agricultural, one manufacturing, and a suburban residence center. Residences built upon streets connecting the radial avenues were promised a quiet and secluded park-like atmosphere and never further removed from the main business thoroughfares more than four blocks. There was to be but one railroad entering the city.

In announcing Mr. Griffin as first prize winner, the October, 1912 "Architectural Record" stated that the first prize was $1750 in cash. It described the site more or less in detail and dwelt upon features of the first prize design.

In the "American Architect" for March 28, 1917 was presented a 3-page article by Richard F. Bach with the title "The Sad Story of Canberra." It begins by telling of reopening the Parliament House Competition in connection with Australia's new capital city, by now named Canberra, followed by almost immediate indefinite postponement of the competition due to Europe's war. The author says, "The architectural world was fully justified in its original assumption that Walter Burley Griffin's fine plan for Canberra would have to pass through a torment of manipulation and modification, not to mention malicious assault, before the Australian sun might shine upon the new federal capital of the English colony in full execution."

Mr. Bach says further, "There are many who believe even in this day of progress that community plans may be made in a general way and concocted over night; there are some who still believe that the city's future purposes must be permitted to unmake any prearranged plan to any desired extent — in short, that a city should be allowed to grow, as New York grew, from a confusion of more or less well regulated cow paths."

Petty obstructions were laid in the path of the Griffin plan, obstructions that Australians called "departmentalism." The total story "appears to be a gigantic piece of official incompetence, mismanagement and bungling." Over five and a quarter millions of dollars were spent on the site during the actual period of the competition in question. Bridges, roads, and buildings were built in defiance of any future developments to be determined by the character of the winning design for the "capital in the bush."

The winner was decided upon on May 14, 1912, after this vast sum had been expended on this construction, with full knowledge that this construction would probably have to be removed at an early date. The Federal Department of Home Affairs continued this policy of further expenditures on the site to the tune of two and a half million dollars more in the face of the competition, with a systematic campaign of belittling any accepted design.

This unregulated building was finally annulled by the Australian government, with Mr. Griffin appointed Federal Capital Director

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Chicagoans and others driving through Lincoln Park during the last six months have wondered and have often been confused by the many new winding roadways under construction in the south half mile of the park. The lake end has been shut off, except for the shore drive, for some time. The great unbroken lawn used for ball playing has been cut into seriously by these roads. One wondered whether the traffic engineer had not dominance over the landscape architect. Now since the great wide shore drives have been thrown open to the public, the whole plan becomes much more intelligible.

Traffic Engineer Otto K. Jelinek of the Chicago Park District explained in a recent number of "Engineering News-Record" that 40 per cent of all the traffic that enters and leaves the Chicago business district comes in over Lincoln Park shore drive. In the evening three-fourths of the traffic is moving north and less than one-fourth moves south. In the morning the volume direction is directly reversed. He says an eight-lane road would carry the traffic, six lanes for the heavy volume flow and two lanes for the light, if the division by curbs into two and six lanes could be shifted from side to side as the volume of traffic flow shifted. So there have been constructed in Lincoln Park two new four-lane access roads, providing traffic with six in and two out lanes, or two in and six out lanes, or four lanes each way. A novel feature is provided by roadway-dividing curbs that can be elevated or retracted by a hydraulic power system which is electrically actuated. Under-pavement slots for the elevating curbs and a 150-foot pavement width require special inlet, manhole and pipe system for road surface drainage. There is an ingenious control system. Three parallel elevating curbs aggregating over six and a half miles are being installed. In the upper surface of these elevating curbs occur electric lights at 8-foot intervals, protected by heavy glass lenses on the surface.

The Illinois Society of Architects' program committee is planning to procure Engineer Jelinek as a speaker for one of its monthly meetings in fall in order that the architects may learn more about this advanced system of traffic control.

One of the newest acoustical tricks in improving radio is the use of "skew" studios in which all the walls and ceiling are non-parallel, Dr. L. Grant Hector of the University of Buffalo reports. The slanting walls and ceiling are to prevent the formation of standing acoustical waves in the studio which may create an annoying fluttering noise in the background of the music or speech being picked up with the studio microphone.

This revives memories of an early classic in moving pictures, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," where lack of parallelism was accentuated in the scenic sets. Very interesting — very wierd. This featured the animated skeleton played by Conrad Veidt.

What do you think of ice — reinforced ice — as a structural material? Don't laugh — it's coming. In fact, it's here!

There was a demonstration of reinforced ice beams with loading up to 9½ tons on an ice block 30 feet span and 25″ x 25″ in cross-section at Yale University on June 28. Engineer Karl P. Billner of New York, Swedish born, is the inventor.

For temporary structures, Mr. Billner's scheme is very interesting. You may be using it before long for shoring. The ice block is preserved by means of pipes through which brine is kept flowing. At 18°F. fiber stress of 300 pounds to the square inch is developed. Loaded with 9½ tons, the deflection was but one-quarter inch on this 30 foot span.

Truly, we are living in a changing world.

The Bulletin of the Michigan Society of Architects reports the passing of the seventh and last of the famous Vanderbilt mansions in New York's Fifth Avenue. This is the fashionable brownstone dwelling purchased by the Astor Estate, on whose site will rise a commercial building.

The Michigan Bulletin neglects to state that there were two of these brownstone Vanderbilt mansions, each placed on a lot with 200-feet frontage on Fifth Avenue. They were designed by the late Charles B. Atwood, architect of the Fine Arts Building of the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Jackson Park, Chicago. This building, now rebuilt with permanent materials, is the Rosenwald Industrial Museum.

Herter Brothers, famous decorators of New York, were associated with Mr. Atwood, or vice versa, in the completion of the Vanderbilt mansions.

The Bulletin welcomes to the fold of architects' state society publications, the "Ohio Architect," official journal of the Architects Society of Ohio. Its initial issue was the April, 1940 number. The May number has appeared. It is a journal of twelve pages, with a front cover without text, and three pages of advertising. The paper features halftone portraits of the Society's officers and the May number carries pictures of Ohio men at a meeting in Cincinnati. The editor is Ralph C. Kempton.

Grading rules for timbers and lumber usually specify the maximum knots allowed. It is not always easy to trace the outline of the knot on the surface of the timber.

Six to seven per cent of wood used in the United States is chemically converted, practically all going into pulpwood.

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of Design and Construction. Then Griffin made a trip to America and Europe. When he returned, all his constructive work had been set at naught, his forces scattered, his supporters crushed, his plan all but discredited, and departmentalism was again in the ascendant.

But Mr. Griffin brought back with him an armory of new weapons. He had visited and been advised by the four appointed adjudicators for the proposed Federal Parliament House Competition, Louis H. Sullivan of Chicago, John J. Burnet of London, Victor Laloux of Paris, and Otto Wagner of Vienna. He had gathered many other opinions from important bodies of architects and engineers as well as from individuals of note. The pendulum swung once more in his direction. Nevertheless, he was refused the necessary professional assistance and Griffin assailed the Director General of Works, demanding to know the extent of the unnecessary improvements being made on the site of the future city. Griffin got no satisfaction here. The Director General of Works considered that design and construction should be independent of one another; that design can be laid down without reference to construction; that design, in his estimation, primarily concerned esthetics. Mr. Griffin maintained the reverse, i.e., that design is a consequence of constructive needs as well as functional needs and that only on the broad basis of both together can it be effectively handled.

The Minister of Home Affairs then faced about with Griffin, issuing instructions that the Federal Capital Director of Design be assisted in understanding "the purpose, extent, and policy of the engineering services being established" on the site, and by specifically ordering the Director General of Works to give "expeditious answers" when information was called for. Griffin at once demanded minute details covering all expenses of design, etc. in connection with the work under way.

Mr. Griffin's way now seemed clear after more than two years' skirmishing. Then came the World War "and the whirlpool of political confusion engulfed Canberra and its architect. After discordant forces had adjusted themselves, . . . the control was in other hands, and Canberra had been pigeonholed." The author continues his article with pointing a moral and adorning a tale.

"Who's Who" states that Griffin was in charge of work beginning 1913, was reappointed Director of Design and Construction in 1916, and declined to serve the Canberra Advisory Commission in 1921. In the latter year he assumed management of Greater Sydney Development Association for new harbor, suburbs, Castlecrag, etc.

The July, 1933 "Architectural Record" presented an article "Building the Capital City of Australia," by Malcolm J. Moir, architect of Australia. We quote his article in full:

"The Constitution of Australia provided that the Seat of Government should be established in its own territory, situated in the state of New South Wales and not less than one hundred miles from Sydney. An area of some twelve square miles in the northeast corner of the territory was chosen for the city proper, which was afterwards named Canberra; a roughly rectangular plain with a mean elevation of 1,900 feet above sea level.

"The jury of award for the competition for a city plan (1912) failed to agree so the Minister awarded the premiums in accordance with the majority recommendation; first, Walter Burley Griffin, Chicago; second, Eliel Saarinen, Helsingfors, Finland; third, D. Alf Agache, Paris. H. Van Buren Magonigle, New York, received special mention. The minority recommendation awarded A. C. Comey, Massachusetts, second premium.

"A board of departmental officers, including those in charge of the territory, stubbornly opposed the adoption of any of the premiated plans and developed one of its own that had little to recommend it that was not culled from the purchased designs. Only a public outcry against the extravagant administrative methods in force, culminating in the presentation of a petition against the adoption of the departmental plan, signed by one hundred and fifty Australian architects, called a halt, and Griffin was invited to Australia. Subsequently, despite opposition, Griffin was appointed, in 1913, Director of Design and Construction, and over a period of seven years he controlled much development. In 1920 he severed his connection with the city he had designed and entered private practice in Sydney. Government departments again took charge, and a foolish policy of erecting temporary buildings was entered into. A circumferential development has resulted in the growth of a scattered city.

"In 1924 a Federal Capital Commission was appointed, responsible only to the Minister for all phases of the city's growth and administration. This body carried out the first permanent buildings of a monumental nature and was just proving itself the ideal form of government when a new government abolished it. Departmental control was reverted to, four departments being associated. This unsuitable and unsympathetic form of administration continues today; and it is only because of the great curtailment of the building program that it has not permanently ruined the city's beauty."

In the August, 1937 "Architectural Record" appears a half page of three small illustrations. First, a bird's-eye view of this plain in the city, then a small view of the Parliament Building, and finally another small view of a city section with its rectangular and diagonal streets. The principal caption says, "The most deliberately planned of capital cities is Canberra, capital of Australia. On what was an absolutely barren plain, the city is under construction according to the plans of W. B. Griffin, Chicago architect, chosen in competition held in 1912. Changes in government control have somewhat altered the original plans and curtailment of the building program has retarded completion of the city."

This, then, is the story of the most ambitious town planning and building scheme in our lifetime. The reader may judge for himself of the outcome. In the later 1920's, Mr. Griffin wandered to other lands and did town planning and architectural work elsewhere, as stated in this number in the report of the annual meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects.

Art Institute Shows Auditorium Building

In Gallery G55, Art Institute of Chicago, there is now running and will continue to October 20, an exhibition marking the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Auditorium Building, with its great theater, hotel, office building, smaller halls, etc. The exhibition is the work of the Burnham Library of Architecture. On the site of the present Art Institute stood the Inter-State Exposition Building whose interior was metamorphosed by Adler and Sullivan, the architects for the Chicago Auditorium Building, into the Grand Opera Festival Hall in 1885.

The exhibition should be of particular interest to architects of Illinois in view of the world-wide reputation of the Auditorium Building. The drawings on view make clear the exhaustive studies the architects undertook in determining mechanical features, sight lines, stage equipment with hydraulic rams, lighting arrangements, elevators, etc. Nowhere is there an opera house whose acoustics surpass those of the Chicago Auditorium. A letter by Frank Lloyd Wright, who was draftsman in the Adler and Sullivan offices when the Auditorium was being developed, is on exhibition. It dwells at length on Dankmar Adler's complete grasp of the problem and his criticism as development progressed.

The exhibition begins with contemporary illustrations of the Inter-State Exposition Building. The next group relates to the men who designed, built, and financed the Auditorium. It dwells on Adler's work and on Sullivan's, not forgetting his system of ornament. The next group shows enlarged photographs of various sketches for the building. Then come sections and plans of the

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Annual Meeting of Chicago Chapter, A. I. A.

The dinner and meeting of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., on Tuesday, June 11, occurred at the Windermere East Hotel in 56th St., within a stone's throw of the Museum of Science and Industry in Jackson Park. Later in this report the reason for holding this meeting so far from the center of the city will become evident.

To the forty-two members who responded, it proved an evening of interest and enjoyment. The punch bowl flowed before the dinner, and during the dinner Chianti, both red and white, accompanied the well-cooked Italian dishes. At 7:45 President Roberts called the meeting to order, beginning with Secretary Senseney's minutes of the May meeting. There being no new business, the President called for committee reports, which were read and the longer ones briefed. They covered allied arts, membership, education, practice, public information, public relations and legislation, relations with the construction industry, atelier work, budget, Fellowship, housing, liaison, program, relations with real estate interests, small house, history, and publication of an annuary. Out of respect for their memory, the President and the whole company stood while the Secretary read the names of the members lost by death during the year.

Earl Reed took occasion to make a comparison between the programs presented at their monthly meetings of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A. and Illinois Society of Architects.

John Fugard said that in view of the times, applications for work by qualified architects should be made to the War Industries Board at Washington.

Nominations to fill the Chapter offices for the ensuing year had been made by a committee nominated at a previous meeting and their ticket mailed to all members. The President asked for further nominations from the floor. None was forthcoming. It was moved and carried unanimously that the proposed ticket be elected and that the Secretary cast a ballot. The new officers are: Jerrold Loebl, President; Nathaniel Owings, First Vice-President; Philip B. Maher, Second Vice-President; W. Lindsay Suter, Secretary; Lawrence Perkins, Treasurer; Elmer C. Roberts, Director for one year; Paul Schweikher, Director for four years.

Trent Elwood Sanford, a Chapter member, was introduced as an efficient staff member of the Museum of Science and Industry in Jackson Park, who formally invited the company to proceed immediately after the meeting to a special visit to the Museum. The Museum was on this occasion open only to the Chapter members. For about a year the central pavilion, in fact all of the Museum except the west wing, has been closed to the public by reason of interior building and the installation of new exhibits. Much of what the architects saw was a revelation. Few had any idea of the vastness, the comprehensiveness, of many of the exhibits, and the thoroughness with which the Museum has gone into the science of building in architecture. It is impressive to approach and to pass through the magnificent portal of this Atwood masterpiece, now restored in Indiana limestone and other permanent materials. It would, of course, surprise the late Atwood to see how the interior has been transformed from its original lines and classic ornament to the simpler wall surfaces and flat ceilings, to cylindrical columns without cap or base, to a dome without pendentives starting from a flat ceiling—all in good proportion, but with a modern lighting that aims to eliminate shadows, shadows that were so welcome, so much sought for by the designer in the classic manner.

The high naves, ceiled flat, have served the Museum directors for the display of airships that won glory in the earliest days of flying. At the end of another arm stands a beautiful model of the Parthenon, protected by glass, and mounted on a high pedestal so as to bring the model on a line with an adult's eye. As a background to this model there is a wall on which is painted in blue a map of the Acropolis with the world-famous monuments crowning the leveled top, the statue of Athena Promachos, the theaters Odeum and Dionysus built into the south face of the hill, the Propylaea at the west — all accurately located and beautifully drawn.

But all this just started the wanderings. It continued through hall after hall in the basement, where models of the Palmolive and Chicago Daily News buildings were housed; panels painted on the walls showing the development of various building products; a full-size section taken from the razed Home Insurance Building of 1886, showing its cast and wrought iron column and beam construction, its window mullions and lintels and brick housing; dioramas showing the development and decay of cities, their slums, and now examples of modern government housing; models of parks, showing highways and the solution of traffic problems, such as are now being carried out in Lincoln Park. There are small lecture rooms and larger ones, culminating in a large lecture-theater, equipped with stage and stage settings, wall and ceiling surfaces designed to provide ventilation and air conditioning, a complete color lighting installation and the most comfortable of upholstered seats.

It was in this theater that Director Fox, after the guided wanderings of the architects, welcomed them. With great good humor he asked for their criticism and suggestions. Among some of the visiting architects a private conversation was overheard that when next the A. I. A. holds a convention in Chicago, this Museum with its lecture halls and fine exhibits, located in a beautiful park, would be ideal for such a meeting.

At the Louisville A. I. A. Convention in May, Peter Brust of the Wisconsin Chapter was elected director for the Illinois-Wisconsin district. Mr. Brust is a prominent practitioner in Milwaukee. He joined the Institute in 1911 and was made a Fellow in 1923.

Mr. Brust was with Ferry and Clas, prominent architects of Milwaukee twenty-five and more years ago, as was Richard Philipp, with whom he formed a partnership. The firm of Brust and Philipp did much interesting work. They were architects for the Marshall and Ilsley Bank, Milwaukee. The firm now is Brust and Brust — father and son.

Charles W. Sanders of Boulder, Colo., a graduate in architecture at the University of Illinois in June, was awarded the $1000 Edward L. Ryerson Fellowship prize for his design of "a town hall in Massachusetts." Eligible candidates for the Ryerson Fellowship are undergraduates from Universities of Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Cincinnati, and from Ohio State, Iowa State, and Armour Institute. Of the fourteen Ryerson awards given during that number of years, eight have gone to students in the University of Illinois.

"There is an excellent word 'dramatist' which seems to fit the situation, but it is not applied until we are dead, and then we become dramatists as oxen, sheep and pigs are transfigured into beef, mutton and pork after their demise. You never hear of a novelwright, or a picture-wright, or a poem-wright; and why a playwright? When 'The Gondoliers' was commanded at Windsor by her late Majesty, the piece was described as 'by Sir Arthur Sullivan,' the librettist being too insignificant an insect to be worth mentioning on a programme which contained the name of the wig-maker in bold type! And I had to pay £87 10s. as my share of sending the piece down to Windsor, besides forfeiting my share of the night's profits at the Savoy!"

—Sir William S. Gilbert from "The Story of Gilbert and Sullivan" by Isaac Goldberg.

A German report says that Norwegian archaeologists, with German assistance, have resumed excavation of the grave sites of Viking kings near Oslo, where once the famous Oseberg ship grave was uncovered.

The Nebraska Capitol

(Reprinted with permission of the author)

Like one clear note of a trumpet, set against muted violins, is the Nebraska Capitol, shooting 400 feet into the air above the prairie. The surprise of it gets everybody — even poets like Carl Sandburg boggle at the task of expressing the emotions it inspires.

I have never seen anything to compare with it. Literally, no less than in figure, it stands alone. No litter of buildings and crowded streets surrounds it, and one sniffs in vain for the odor of corruption that rises from most public buildings. One is not surprised to learn that it was built slowly, with each part paid for before the next was commenced — that, like the state itself, no shadow of debt hangs over it.

Whole books have been written about this structure, and it is impertinent of me to add so much as a footnote. But nobody can see this symbol of American democracy without wanting to talk about it.

One sees the symbolry long before he sees the building itself. Before one glimpses the rooftops of Lincoln, one sees the golden-tipped spire of the Capitol. On it is the Thunderbird — bringer of water and most revered of Indian deities — so cunningly inlaid that it is visible only against a clouded sky.

I have never seen a building so completely expressive of those who built it. Stepping through the great doors, one passes from the workaday world into an atmosphere that is tangibly religious. The tourist takes off his hat and walks softly, aware that he is in a temple.

The fact is that, in Nebraska, democracy is still a religion. Not yet has it been dulled by cynicism. To the Nebraska farmer, the words chiseled over the entrance to his Capitol are something more than rhetoric: "The salvation of the state is watchfulness in the citizen."

The Capitol is a curious mixture of old and new, of artifice and aspiration. In stone and bronze, it is the voice of the prairie; yet it was designed by a New York architect, and most of its murals and mosaics were the work of Easterners.

The decoration is uncertain, now Greek, now Roman, shifting suddenly to Italian renaissance, or Indian. Yet, through it all, breaking out in the most unexpected places, is the cornstalk, the anvil and the sheaf of wheat.

The governor's office, for example, has been called the most beautiful room in the world. Beyond doubt it is a beautiful room; but its tile and marble and walnut wainscoting suggest a Lorenzo the Magnificent more than they do the sand hills or the valley of the Platte. Even here, however, Nebraska has left its mark. Above the Roman sconces, there is a hole in the splendid Cluny hangings over the window — a hole eaten by a Nebraska grasshopper!

All through the magnificent building one senses a feeling of uncertainty — a conflict between what Nebraska is and what it wants to be — or thinks it should want to be.

Carved on the corbels under the mantel of the governor's fireplace are buffalo heads and ears of corn. But in the words of the guidebook, the fireplace itself "has been antiqued to give it the effect of use."

Significant, the "antiquing" that one finds everywhere. It is Nebraska a little ashamed of its newness, furtively respectful of age, proudly looking forward but not above glances back to Europe and the Atlantic Coast.

That uncertainty was expressed by the young man who lectured to the tourists in the chamber of the Supreme Court. When he forgot himself, he was a Nebraska boy, talking like one, with the flat "A" and the rolling "R" of the prairie. But when he remembered he was a student of elocution, trying to imitate an Anglican bishop.

He made me think of the woman I met yesterday. Asked where she came from, she said that she came from Virginia, and, indeed, had a slight Southern accent to prove it. I learned later that she had been born in Wahoo, Neb., and had lived there until she married and went to live in New York. Her father had come to Nebraska from Virginia.

Some day, perhaps, people will be proud to have come from Nebraska.

—Howard Vincent O'Brien in The Chicago Daily News.

Editor's Note: It is regrettable that Mr. O'Brien failed to credit Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue as the architect-designer of this outstanding building, which ranks as one of the foremost architectural achievements of the first quarter of the 20th century. Mr. Goodhue was chosen for this work after two architectural competitions were held. The first competition was open to all architects of this country; the second competition was confined to the few whose designs were foremost in the first competition. Mr. Goodhue was winner of first place in both competitions.

Thomas R. Kimball, architect, of Omaha, was special advisor to the Nebraska state authorities. Mr. Kimball's care, forethought, and judgment brought together judges and produced a program that attracted many of the foremost practitioners to enter the competition. Irving K. Pond of Chicago was one of the judges. All three men — Goodhue, Kimball and Pond — are now dead.

Successful Subdivisions

Federal Housing Administration, Washington, D. C., has very recently published a twenty-eight page pamphlet entitled "Successful Subdivisions," Land Planning Bulletin No. 1. It discusses principles of planning for economy and protection against neighborhood blight.

This booklet should be in the hands of town planners and subdividers as well as architects. It announces on the inside cover page that home-owner appeal and stability of property values have been created by the following factors: layout of streets designed to fit topography and utilization of irregular areas, park strips separating building lots from traffic, local streets planned for local needs, street intersections which minimize traffic hazards, blocks and lots efficient as to size and shape, adequate building setback and house locations which have been planned in advance, shopping center with convenient off-street parking, convenient parks and playgrounds, effective grading and planting of grounds and streets, neighborhood in harmony with city plan, and zoning and protective covenants which safeguard future character of the neighborhood.

The publication is illustrated in half tone and many part plans showing the right and wrong way of subdividing according to the FHA. The booklet is for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., at ten cents per copy. Its official name and title is FHA Form No. 2094.

Both American and European architectural libraries suffer from dust, but there is one American atmospheric curse from which the European are largely free—overdry air, the result of the usual convected steam heating. This dryness is ruinous to books, particularly old books; it dries out paste, it eventually wrecks leather bindings. None of the European libraries studied had had much difficulty in this respect, and none used any kind of oil or cream to preserve the leather. All used leather extensively in new bindings. . . .

It will be interesting to find out what effect the advanced heating and ventilating of the new Royal Institute of British Architects building will have upon its books. In our American climate, with a terrific spread between maximum and minimum temperatures and extreme and sudden differences in humidity, the library heating problem is difficult. Certainly the usual method of steam or hot water heat applied through direct convection is extremely destructive to books. Complete air conditioning and the resultant controlled humidity, though relatively expensive, would be a tremendous advantage; it is possible also that panel heating with its direct radiation from walls or ceiling might be an even better answer.

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

When Hollywood wanted to show Robert Fulton's 1807 steamboat, the Clermont, they did not duplicate a pioneer engine but installed a hidden diesel tractor and made steam of compressed air and oil vapor and smoke from a hidden smudge pot.

Organic Life and Architecture

When we consider Organic Life, we are prone to think of it as having a corollary — Inorganic Life. It may be said, however, that modern science at the peak of its powers in analysis and synthesis has come to the conclusion that Inorganic Life, although it may appear to us to do so, does not really exist.

Scientists have gleaned the fundamentally simple theme running through the universe of atoms and their individual planetary systems of electrons. Beyond this conception as the primordial background of all we see, there is nothing until after countless millions of years of evolution from simple atoms to complex organisms when conscious life discloses itself. But that is the long tale of the infinite whose fiat created it all.

We have in our minds too, through fixed observation and deep study, that Life in all its grandeur flows, seemingly, ever onward and within its realm are countless variations in conformance to type, fascinating and marvellous mutations as related to environment and to permutations as related to forms. This is the universal organic process as we observe it in the great out of doors, and know it in our laboratories under the biological term morphology. It is important to remember this, as much of what is hereafter said relates to these natural laws.

Insofar as Organic Life is concerned there is, apart from spiritual endowment and an immortal soul, only a difference in kind between man and the trees of the forest or the grass on our prairies, between granite crags and medusae afloat in the ocean.

The term Organic defines coordinated and systematic Life of which we are an operating part. There is no escape for us much as we may wish, in our vanity, to consider ourselves as things apart, observers of the cosmic procession.

There is no way for man scientifically or philosophically to view the natural world and understand its processes, as a thing apart. To feel the world and touch it is to know it only in its crudest form. The other and vital way is for man to sublimate his consciousness in deep meditation and thus become part of the natural world. By doing so, in a completely subjective manner, he becomes part of this spiritual entity we call, for want of a better name, the Universe Around Us.

Within this conditioned frame of mind has arisen and arises today all truly creative work, work of a timeless and tideless character and inevitably Organic in nature because of this profound relationship acting in, and on, every mood of our creative lives. Thus, and only thus, came flowers of the spirit of man in the Arts. The breath of life comes into architecture, mural painting and sculpture as one integral art, and into music, literature, poetry and all work in the crafts by the human hand and its great and useful adjunct—the machine. Work of such nature will radiate its beneficent influence to generations unborn.

The art of building is in no wise essentially different from the existing principle underlying nature as it appears around us in all its grandeur. It is open to us for daily communion in its larger aspects as well as in its smaller. We may read these varied lessons of nature and if wise profit by them in our daily devoirs at the altar of its Creator.

Since plant life and animal life as well have been given the qualifying and vital prefix of Organic, may it not be essential and equally necessary that the outflow of man's spirit should partake of the same quality as is implied and understood by this word? There is nothing esoteric about this word symbol, it is simple and intimate and should be an element in all our creative thinking. In truth, the art of building is deeply concerned with this word as a definition of that which is alive. The various forms of organic life have structure related to function and form commensurate with their nature; so, indubitably should the art of building be too, and not as is now largely the case, inarticulate, lifeless, garish, monotonous and bedeviled out of all semblance to truth.

We cannot expect our static architectural forms, our walls, piers, lintels, arches, domes, cantilevers, etc. to do the work unaided, like isolated letters left to form words by themselves. They must be stimulated and animated to fresh interpretations, to vivid and eloquent expressions of themselves. That is where the creative mind of the architect comes in contact with realities in the rough and with his varied problems, large and small.

The germinal seed containing the solution of an architectural problem—or any product in the arts or crafts for that matter—lies not, primarily, in the architects mind, let him not be so vain as to think so. The solution lies in the subject matter of the problem itself in its varied and sometimes very specific nature. It transfers and discloses itself to the architect quite spontaneously whether he be responsive or not. The problem itself is quite helpless, eloquent though it be of its desire for fulfillment, and therein lies the tragedy of architecture in all the ages including our own. The problem doubtless hopes for the best and is invariably denied its true solution.

In the mind of the responsive architect the seed naturally and organically comes to full flower; in the non-responsive architect, without sense of the treasure at his disposal the germinal seed withers and disappears as one may see day by day in town and country.

It may thus be seen that the fundamental nature, in its germinal sense, of all architectural problems is alike, the function seeking form. There is no room for exceptions.

There is a universal law deeply concerned with the planting of seeds in fallow soil. If properly cultivated, they will grow. They will grow also as well in the mind of the true architect. If planted in barren soil, or barren mind, the seed will die. There is no genuine half way station between life and death. So is it with architecture.

When we think of Grecian, Roman, Gothic, Renaissance, or any of the other well known varieties of architecture as expressions of men and nations at work, we readily note the varying racial alien forms as they appear to our native eyes and usually discern through picturized familiarity with the types, where they belong and what civilization caused their being. With this thought in mind one may note the maladroit performances in America in the use and abuse of these ancient alien forms. Out of countless numbers, we may consider the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, the new Supreme Court building and most inexcusable of all, the Jefferson Memorial, and completely realize how out of place they are on our streets and in our parks. They bear no relation to our lives. They constitute no response to our natural creative impulses. To us they are dead.

When we come to realize in the depth of our Being that organic nature definitely and eloquently expresses itself with due regard to time and place, developing therefrom varied types in an infinite variety of forms, may we not, if our minds are fully receptive and clear of all undemocratic ideologies and alien isms, prefigure an architecture and its allied arts emerging from the mind of man on a basis of kinship with conditions which will be our own, emanations of our spirit? Indeed we may and if the work is designed on an organic basis it will be full of the natural radiance of the untrammeled human spirit; an Art without compromise, without abstractions, without meaningless veils or false architectural display obscuring vital realities, without that fatal so-called realism that is without one pulse beat of the human heart.

—George G. Elmslie

Results of fire penetration tests on full-sized, flush-type, wood doors of four designs show: unfilled hollow doors failed in about ten minutes while some solid doors lasted as long as forty-four minutes. Still longer resistance is possible by proper design and construction.

"The Octagon" — A Treasured Monument

Announcement at the Louisville American Institute of Architects' convention of the letting of contracts for building a two-story and basement administration building in Washington, D. C. on the lot fronting New York Avenue adjoining the original Octagon property, stimulates a revived interest in the history of the Octagon and its acquisition by the A. I. A.

Members of the Institute dating back to the first decade of this century are no doubt familiar with the story. But the younger men in the profession are less familiar and may be quite ignorant of this interesting story. So the Bulletin herewith presents a condensation.

The A. I. A. was organized and incorporated in New York State in 1857. It had no permanent home. In 1898 it resolved to maintain permanent headquarters in Washington, D. C. Through the efforts of Glenn Brown (secretary 1899-1913), the Octagon, a fine colonial town house with brick walls, was leased in 1899 when it became the Institute's headquarters.

It was bought in 1903 during the presidency of Charles F. McKim. The purchase price was $30,000 plus the money the Institute had expended on the property during the lease period. So the Octagon has remained headquarters from 1899 to the present time.

The building was built by Colonel John Taloe of Mount Airy, Virginia as his winter home. At first undecided whether to build in Philadelphia or Washington, President Washington helped the Colonel make his decision in favor of the national capital.

Dr. William Thornton, prize-winner in competition for the national Capitol, was architect of the Octagon. The structure was commenced in 1798 and finished in 1800. The Taloes lived in the Octagon from 1800-1855, when Mrs. Taloe died. The Colonel died in 1828. They had fifteen children.

The Octagon was noted for its entertainments. But particularly is it known as temporary White House after the British burnt the White House in September, 1814. Colonel Taloe sent a special courier to President Madison offering the Octagon as the presidential domicile. The Madisons moved in September 8, 1814, remaining more than a year.

On February 17, 1815 President Madison ratified the Treaty of Ghent in the Octagon, closing the war of 1812-14 with England. The second-story circular room today harbors the table on which President Madison ratified the Treaty of Ghent.

The business of the Institute having grown with the development of the country, it was felt by 1910 that more extensive quarters were needed. Two adjoining lots were purchased and Institute members discussed building administrative quarters on the adjoining lots. Many schemes were made. There was a plan by Glenn Brown considered in 1907; another by him in 1912; one by E. W. Donn, Jr., 1921; by Henry Bacon, 1922; by Howard Shaw, 1922; George Nimmons, 1924; Charles Platt, 1922; and one submitted by a committee in 1922.

The plan now to be carried out is the work of the late Dan Everett Waid and Dwight James Baum. The sketches and studies were turned into working drawings by the Baum assistants, under the direction of Otto R. Eggers. On completion of the new administration building, the Octagon will be cleared of all office paraphernalia and officers and become an historic monument open to the public.

Flat white paint reflects back 75% to 85% of the light thrown on it; a light blue reflects 40% to 55%; and dark brown 10% or less.

(Continued from Page 4, Column 2)

"floating foundation," plans and sections of the theater, a summary of data, fifteen construction drawings, a photograph of the exterior before the Elevated was built, various hotel interiors including dining rooms and banquet halls. Further photographs illustrate details of the theater interior, of the golden arch containing ventilating ducts that have been in service these fifty years, and some drawings of the organ. Recital halls are shown. One entire wall is devoted to Sullivan's phrase "Form follows Function."

J. Hardouin-Mansard — or Meyer Sturm!

The Editor: A few years ago the father and mother of Meyer Sturm were in Paris riding on a bus passing the Hotel des Invalides. Two men behind them were talking in English. One of the men asked the other, "What building is that?" "Oh, said the other, "don't you know? That is one of the finest hospitals in Paris and the architect was Meyer Sturm of Chicago."

Of course, Sturm Sr. was interested and turned to see who had spoken. It was a stranger to him, so he said, "I am interested in what you said just now. I am the father of Meyer Sturm."

The man who had spoken laughed and said, "I am Irving K. Pond and this is Howard Shaw."

It seems Pond had seen their names on the hotel register and had the clerk point them out. Whether he had followed them or just happened to find them on the bus, I was not told.

Meyer Sturm told me the above. If ever there is a book of anecdotes about Pond published, this should be included.

—*Edgar Ovet Blake, Architect.*

Scientists in Iceland are studying herring oil, which may prove useful as a drying oil in paints, also in soap making, and possibly for human food.

Modern warfare has not outgrown the use of wood. On the contrary, wood and its products find wide utility in every branch of the fighting services.

Sir Raymond Unwin, internationally-known English town planner and housing authority, died June 28 at the home of his daughter in Lyme, Connecticut, aged 76. Sir Raymond was well known in Chicago since before 1914 when he lectured on town planning before the City Club. He was a frequent visitor in Chicago during the 1930's — always with a message on town planning or housing and architecture. As recently as four months ago, he addressed the Chicago Building Congress at a luncheon in the Sherman House. At the time of his death he held a lectureship on town planning and housing at Columbia University.

Raymond Unwin was born in England, November 2, 1863. Educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, trained in engineering and architecture. He laid out Earswick in York, the First Garden City at Letchworth, Hamstead Garden Suburb, and others. Lecturer on town planning, Birmingham University, 1911-14; chief town planning inspector, Local Governing Board, 1914; during World War, Director of Housing Branch, Ministry of Munitions; after war, Chief Architect of Housing, Ministry of Health. He was a past president of the Town Planning Institute. He wrote these books: "Art of Building a Home," "Town Planning in Practice," "Nothing Gained by Overcrowding," and many pamphlets.

He was president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, 1931-33, and was knighted in 1932. In 1929 he was made an Honorary Corresponding Member of the A. I. A. He pronounced the building of skyscrapers as "sheer madness" and advocated decentralization of large cities. Satellite towns were his solution to drain off workers from the city who could do their jobs as well elsewhere.

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Ralph Modjeski, consulting bridge engineer in Chicago for more than forty years, died on June 26 in Los Angeles, Cal. He was 79 years old. His mother was the late Mme. Helena Modjeska, famed tragedienne.

Mr. Modjeski was one of the leading exponents of beauty with utility in engineering structures. He supervised the construction of the series of bascule bridges over the Chicago River and canals.

His most famous works include the Quebec cantilever, the Philadelphia-Camden suspension bridge and the San Francisco Bay Bridge. His early fame, however, was built on the construction of a series of notable simple span railroad bridges across the Mississippi, including the Thebes and Memphis bridges.

He was born in Krakow, Poland, and came to the United States in 1876. He became a citizen in 1883, using the masculine form of his mother's stage name.