

Jacob Riis and His Relation To Housing Reform

By Eugene Fuhrer, Past Secretary I.S.A.; A.I.A.

Any record of the history of housing for the under-privileged in our country must take pride in the pioneering achievements of Jacob A. Riis who created the great reforms in New York City's slum areas during 1800 and 1900 decades. His well known books *Battle With The Slums*, *How The Other Half Lives*, *Children Of The Poor*, and *A Ten Years War* did more to educate the general public than the writings of any other person. His active efforts resulted in the tearing down of numerous disease-infested tenements including the worst slums New York City ever saw.

As a background to this record of housing, history has clearly indicated that urban centers have had slums with it since time immemorial. Rome, under Augustus, had multi-storied slums; without air-shafts, cramped quarters, no sanitation, and inadequate materials. Vitruvius complained of the tightness of these tenements, the lack of enforcing height limits of 70 feet above grade, and the abnormal hastiness of construction.

The record of our own country shows that the evils of the slum, have been most prevalent on the island of Manhattan, the nerve center of New York City. Here the limited space compelled the erection of large tenements, which buildings were otherwise rare in American cities; the inrush during the last century of immigrants, many of whom were accustomed to low standards of living, created overcrowding; absence of regulations or supervisors permitted erection of bad dwellings while later deterioration and misuse by overcrowding created a situation which finally led Riis to bring about reforms of a character that laid a foundation for all later improvements in physical housing throughout the country.

Many years before the activities of Riis movements for housing reforms were attempted in that metropolis with varying degrees of success and with a small degree of failure.

As early as 1834 attention was called by the City Inspector of the Board of Health to the condition of tenements in a report on their high death rate; intemperance and the crowded and filthy state in which a great portion of our population lives apparently without being sensible of their situation. This was a time when the city had a population of 270,000 people.

In 1842, for the first time in the city's history legislation was urged to eliminate housing evils by the original pioneer of tenement house reform, Doctor John H. Griscom. He presented a comprehensive report on the condition of the poorer classes reviewing the extent of crowded and unsanitary

conditions, the number of families doubling up in tenement apartments, the densities per room and the number of cellar rooms inhabited. He indicated that the conditions were due to the sudden increase in population in 1817 and again in 1828 where immigrants were crowded into quarters unfit for beasts.

Then in 1853, a special committee appointed by the Association for Improving the condition of the Poor gave the first Tenement House Report. This disclosed that the main influence for the prevalence of bad conditions were; the overcrowding of tenements, the great density of population in slum areas; and the neglect of ventilation, a prevailing cause for ill health. It also urged that tenements be built on a more modern model.

The notorious example of tenement pointed out was "Gotham Court." This was a "packinghouse" tenement of the hopeless back to back type which meant that there was no ventilation and could be none. Originally it was built by a Quaker for the purpose of rescuing the very people of the slums from the evils of the tenement, yet within a few years it had become a nuisance, "which from its very magnitude is assumed to be irremovable and irremedial" (this building was finally torn down through the efforts of Riis in 1896!)

As a result in 1855 this same Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor founded an organization that constructed the first "Model Tenement" in order to solve the problem of providing commodious and well ventilated apartments supplied with the most modern conveniences at a price within the means of the poorer class, which if practicable would also defray the expense of repairs, insurance and capital investment."

It was a six story tenement on Mott Street running thru to Elizabeth Street and consisted of 87 apartments. Each apartment contained a living room (11 feet x 14 feet) and two bedrooms (each 8 feet by 7 feet). Kitchen utilities were in the living room. Water closets were in the yard. "Each bedroom is well ventilated having air flues from each to the roof." (The bedrooms therefore were entirely dark and no ventilation except from a flue 4 in. x 8 in. in size). On the upper floors of the building were two halls, set aside for lectures, concerts or other social work.

This building, intended by its founders to provide living accommodations for the working people of the city and a model for tenement design, within a few years degenerated into one of the worst tenements in the city. The worst part of the enterprise was the plan of the building itself. How this body

of men could have been so stupid as to copy identically the plan of notorious old "Gotham Court" is difficult to understand for that was the tenement which this organization held up to scorn in their report two years previous.

After a lapse of several years, Alfred T. White, philanthropist, developed two unusually well laid out tenements for Brooklyn, which seemingly have stood the test of time since their completion in 1879. A great part of their success was due to the large courtyards and play areas of the projects.

In this same year the Association for Improving the Conditions of the Poor called attention to the need of tenement house reform and offered prizes for the solution of a tenement house on a lot 25 by 100 feet in size. One hundred ninety architects competed from various parts of the United States, Canada and Great Britain. James A. Ware was awarded first prize for a layout which was deemed most meritorious. From this prize solution dates the introduction of the "double-decker dumbbell tenement," so called because of the outline of its plan. Again, through efforts though well meant, a tenement layout considered as a model in 1879, by 1900 became to be known as one of the worst types ever constructed.

The year 1880 brought Jacob A. Riis as a newspaper reporter into the slum areas of the tenement house districts. In frequenting these areas he gained an intimate knowledge of the varying conditions throughout the area. He soon urged the necessity of housing reform, and the betterment of conditions of life for the working people. He stressed the necessity of additional legislation and enforcement to eliminate filth, overcrowding, privies, inside unventilated rooms, dark public halls and back-to-back tenements; and to increase ventilation, light requirements, and courtyards. He especially desired that the authorities forbid the construction of multi-storied tenements on 25 foot lots.

He aroused public sentiment against the conditions of various slum areas, especially those of the notorious "Five Points" and "Mulberry Bend" and was fortunate in being able to see in his lifetime the conversion of such areas into parks and playgrounds. In addition a large number of the worst individual tenements were eradicated among them being the infamous "Gotham Court" and "Mott Street Barracks" previously mentioned. A great many other tenements were removed and remodelled so as to allow better ventilation and sanitary conveniences. His successful agitation for better schools and small parks in such districts brought definite results in the early 1900's.

He accomplished this great improvement in the tenement house laws by indicating the possibilities of such changes through an architectural competition sponsored by the Tenement House Commission in 1901, which gave birth to the thought to pose the problem of a "model tenement house." The variety of layouts clearly indicated great improvement over the previous "double-deckers." The competition was

based on a lot 50 feet wide. Now, all rooms have windows, private toilet rooms were within each apartment, stairways were fireproof, halls were properly ventilated by windows and all side courtyards were quite large in area. (From today's standard of minimum requirements, much might be desired in the way of conveniences and bed room dimensions, even in the prize designs.)

Riis interested R. Fulton Cutting in developing privately financed housing projects for the underprivileged on a large scale. The first venture was the six story Alfred C. Clark building containing 400 apartments. Then another project of 340 apartments, and again several more. These buildings have the improvements that Riis so consistently fought for, were well laid out both in the grouping of buildings and in the floor layout of the apartments. Financially they have been successfully paying up to 5% on the capital investment since their completion more than 40 years ago. They have been well maintained and have not retrogressed to slum areas with depressing conditions.

The fundamental principle maintained with regard to their tenants was, that charity that will not pay will not stay.

Interesting in the light of today's viewpoints on slum clearance projects, Riis believed that the tenant taken out of the slum district and placed in a new environment should receive no more than he pays for. While true that the project owner devoted thought, labor and capital in a very earnest effort to help the tenant, it was done principally so that the tenant could help himself. The tenant could permit the owner to offer him this advantage, but he would think better of himself and be a more self-reliant man and better citizen if he knew he was honestly paying for what he received.

Even in those days Riis thought that it might be necessary for a municipality to enter the field of housing as a competing landlord "but I would rather we as a community, learned first a little more of the art of governing ourselves without scandal. Political tenements might yet add a chapter to the story of our disgrace to make men weep."

In the light of such developments, as briefly mentioned, between the years 1834 and 1900, it can readily be seen that the requirements for public health continually changed and the minimum standards rose. It is the changing standards which give us the most trouble. Since the time of Jacob A. Riis we have changed and increased such standards. We may very well look at the physical results of his work and stamp it out of date just as he looked at the work of his predecessors. If the supply of housing today exceeded the demand there would still be housing reform; we would continue with the condemnation of existing accommodations and the effort to supply superior housing would go on. The quantity of housing may be solved; the changing of standards, or in other words, the quality of housing—has no finality.

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Editor Monthly Bulletin

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U. S. Senators Kilgore and Wagner are fathering Housing Research Bill S.2046 which calls for research regarding the development of materials, methods of manufacture and distribution which would lower costs, add improvements in the designing and construction of houses and recommendations for improved local zoning and building codes. The research office is intended to become a referee to claims of clays, glass, lumber, metals and all other building materials.

The August Architectural Record devotes four and one-quarter columns to a description of this Bill and the Editor, Kenneth K. Stowell devotes a page to the same subject, recommending approval of the Bill. Many Illinois architects will not agree with Editor Stowell's recommendation. The Bill creates, if not a new federal bureau, at least a new office. We have in this country many testing laboratories, both federal, state and private. There is the Bureau of Standards in the Department of Commerce; the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin, in the Department of Agriculture; there are the U. S. Treasury Specifications; the testing laboratories of our many State Universities; the laboratory of the National Board of Underwriters; private testing institutions like the R. M. Hunt Company and all the alphabetical federal agencies and more

that Editor Stowell mentions. Is this research office going to make plans and tell the public this is the plan for you to carry out and save so many dollars by using our plan. Such an action would be usurpation of the private architect's function. To have a typical plan sent out from Washington to be carried out in sections of the country whose climate and topography are varied would hardly promise success.

The country has reached a stage when the taxpayer looks for the disbanding of federal bureaus and agencies rather than their multiplication. In this connection we are reminded of the words of M. W. Torkelson, able director of the Wisconsin State Planning Board where he says "unless your proposed project is considered so necessary or desirable that you are willing to construct it some day, sometime, alone and unaided, then the project should not be decided upon."

Economically this country has become what it is through private initiative and enterprise and so it should be kept. The wise John Stuart Mill said, "the absorption of all the principal ability of the country into the governing bureaucracy is fatal, sooner or later, to the mental activity and progressiveness of the body itself."

An exhibition in September at Chicago's Union League Club showed new uses of wood made possible through modern science. Not only is wood valuable in architecture and furniture, it transcends these in entering the chemical laboratory. Here are produced black mastic from sawdust; added strength through impregnation; wood made edible or potable through hydrolysis as evidenced by a wood "steak" for sale in Swedish restaurants.

The exhibit was assembled by American Forest Products Industries.

A.I.A. President Ashton on August 3 addressed a letter to all Institute members stating that The Institute Board of Directors, after endorsement now urges the application of "A S A Project A62 for The Coordination of Dimensions of Building Materials and Equipment." This American Standards Association project is sponsored by The American Institute of Architects and The Producers' Council.

In closing President Ashton says: "It deserves your immediate and serious consideration not only in your own interest but as a service to our profession as a whole, the construction industry, of which we are a part, and our clients, the building public."

"I have sometimes asked myself whether the two facts that we have mediocre art, and excellent history of art, can be connected? Is our art peradventure poor because we have stolen into Paradise to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge? Or are we tempted to forage, because we find local apples somewhat insipid? These are questions I should be embarrassed to answer." — A. Kingsley Porter in "Beyond Architecture"

Illinois Society September Meeting

The first regular monthly meeting in the Society year was held in the quarters of the Chicago Bar Association, preceded by the usual dinner on September 26. The new President, G. Harold Smith presided. 30 members attended. President Smith had Secretary Harris read the minutes of the June meeting which were approved. Correspondence of interest to the membership was read before the meeting.

The first communication read was from L. Morgan Yost referring to a proposed exhibition by the Architectural Exhibition League. A communication from the Association of Commerce came next, inviting the architects to attend a series of talks, arranged by the Association, with speakers from the OPA. Then came a letter from the National Safety Council inviting participation in a congress to be held in the near future. Benjamin Franklin Olson reported on progress with the A.S.A. project A-62 for modular planning. Mr. Olson had received a recent letter from President Ashton of the A.I.A. on this subject. William P. Fox reported a conference he had attended with the General Contractors Association. The Association's worries seem to be matters of bidding requests, alternates, contract forms and like subjects. Mr. Fox stated that no criticism was filed against the Illinois contract documents or A.I.A. documents, but numerous others were severely criticized, if not condemned.

Secretary Harris read a long letter written by Coordinator Spaulding, recently appointed by Mayor Kelly to formulate a new procedure for obtaining building permits. The letter was long, the coordinator's plan involved and discouraging to seekers for building permits. An applicant must first get a registered street number in the map department for his property, next the determination whether the frontage requests are required, successively to the building department, zoning officials, plumbing, sewer, ventilation and heating, water department, public works and more. Your alderman becomes a more important figure than in the past, before the permit is issued. The latter produced sad smiles from the hearers, but there are more requirements not stated here. Some of the members felt heart-failure threatening before they could start their jobs, while the more vigorous felt they would have one leg in the grave before the building was under way. J. C. O'Rell, on the staff of the Board of Education Architect, stated experiences in requesting permits for various projects. Some of these projects had been granted, while others remained for the dim distant future's granting. A member advanced the suggestion that the applicant for permit be accompanied by a lawyer versed in constitutional law, through his world tour of the city hall, with the hope of condensing the tour to normality.

President Smith appointed Messrs. Fox, Olsen and Harris a committee to wait on Coordinator Spaulding in the interest of simplification and timesaving.

A new member, Mr. Durant of Wisconsin was introduced.

Earl H. Reed, one time head of the school of architecture of Armour Tech was the speaker of the evening. His subject was Architectural Monuments in War Torn Europe, in connection with which he showed 100 slides of architectural monuments in the path of war. Mr. Reed preceded his remarks by stating that he had no news regarding the fate of these monuments beyond what appeared in the newspapers and magazines. He invited comments from the listeners to be injected accompanying the pictures. The pictures began with London, showing Trafalgar Square, Buckingham Palace, Whitehall, Horse Guards, Law Courts, St. Pauls. Of cathedrals he showed Ely, Lincoln and Canterbury. Now crossing to Normandy came Bayeux Cathedral, the Tapestries of Queen Mathilda; to Caen showing Abbaye aux Hommes, Abbaye aux Dames, St. Pierre with its lovely tower; Lisieux' very fine cathedral and half-timber domestic work; Cathedrals of Chartres, Rouen, Amiens, Rheims, Versailles, and many pictures of public buildings in Paris. Going to southern France, St. Trophime at Arles and Marseilles cathedral; to Strasbourg and its fine cathedral and then to Aachen. At Aachen stands the cathedral erected by Charlemagne. The town is also the birth place of an I.S.A. member, A. H. Schreiber, who had much to contribute on this picture. He was familiar with every nook and cranny of the cathedral and spoke interestingly. German cities were shown next and then to Russia. President Smith, between the first and second world wars spent sometime in Russia professionally and here he spoke when St. Basil at Moscow was shown, telling of the many chapels, small in area, circular or polygonal in plan, each crowned high above with an onion dome. In Sicily Mr.

Reed showed Monreale with its marvelous mosaics. A tour north through Italy ended the illustrated address.

With liberal applause from the audience for the speaker the President thanked Mr. Reed for his interesting and instructive presentation.

Illinois Professional Engineering Act Unconstitutional

The Illinois Supreme Court in an opinion given in Springfield, September 19 unanimously declared unconstitutional the 1941 State Law that attempted to regulate the practice of professional engineering. The decree states:

"No one can determine from reading the act the activities to which it is directed. The determination of those activities must await the opinion of ministerial officers to whom it is delegated by the act. No one can determine whether he comes within the act by reading the act itself. No one can determine from the act the necessary requirements to entitle him to an examination or to obtain from the committee its opinion that he has satisfactorily met all the requirements of the act. The provision that he must meet all the requirements of the act is meaningless because there are no requirements set out in the act. Until the committee acts no one may know what those requirements are. This is clearly a delegation of legislative power to ministerial officers in violation of section 2 of article II and section 1 of article IV of the constitution. The law cannot rest in the opinion of ministerial officers."

In conclusion the Court declared: "This conclusion, as to the validity of the sections of the act referred to, necessarily renders the entire act invalid. The decree of the circuit court of Sangamon county permanently enjoining the expenditure of funds for the administration of the act was clearly right, and that decree is affirmed."

Hospital Competitions

The Modern Hospital Publishing Company, 919 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, announces two architectural competitions of the type not leading to the erection of a definite structure. Prizes in each competition: \$1,000, \$750, \$500 and three honorable mentions, each \$100. The Competitions closing date is December 1, 1944. They have the approval of the A.I.A. Competitions' Committee. Architectural Advisor is Carl A. Erikson, Chicago. There are 7 judges. Of these two are doctors, one a hospital consultant, three architects and one professor of architecture consultant. The architects are Charles Butler, New York; Nathaniel A. Owings, Chicago; Henry R. Shepley, Boston. The Professorial Consultant is Mies van der Rohe of the Illinois Institute of Technology.

"Arts and Architecture" Competition

The magazine, Arts and Architecture, announces its second annual competition for a house for the average American family composed of man, wife and one or two children. The competition is sponsored by United States Plywood Corporation. It is open to all architects, engineers, designers, technicians and students. Prizes total \$2,500 with the first prize of \$1,250. The closing date is December 20, 1944.

The sponsors suggest a \$5,000 to \$6,000 house at prewar cost. Complete information can be obtained by addressing Mr. Spaulding, care of "Arts and Architecture," 3305 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles 5, California.

Chicago Chapter September Meeting

In opening the new Chapter year with the September meeting, Monday, September 11 was chosen rather than the regular second Tuesday of the month which, this year, fell on September 12. The meeting place was the Tavern Club on 333 North Michigan Avenue and the dinner was good; attended.

The program was a discussion of housing, private as opposed to public housing. The two special speakers were Miss Elizabeth Wood, Executive Secretary, Chicago Housing Authority and Mr. Lowell Baker, Administrative Secretary, National Association of Real Estate Boards.

A week and a half before the meeting the Chapter office had mailed a return postal card to all members asking a vote on three questions, all bearing on public and private housing. A report of this vote was made at the meeting.

President Alfred Shaw opened the meeting by announcing that the reading of minutes would be dispensed with unless objection to this was voiced. No objections were heard. He next spoke on the proposed seminar on postwar architecture to be conducted by Mies Van der Rohe. Other matters were touched on concisely and then the President introduced Miss Wood. Miss Wood of Chicago Housing Authority is very favorably known to many Chicago architects. She is a fluent, rapid, convincing speaker, making it at times hard for the reporter to go along. Miss Wood is a believer in private housing wherever possible and resort to public housing only as a last resort. She spoke of the quantitative factor of 10,000 families of \$1,000 income or less per year, and then took up the anthropological factor. She said the trend was shown by the garbage can and by juvenile statistics. She also reflected views held by Mrs. Roseman of New York and her group.

Mr. Baker came next. As a real estate man he does not favor public housing where it can be avoided. He says there is no premium on subsidized housing. Where a subsidy is wanted its finances should be in the form used by the farm loan bank in its help to the agriculturists. One third of the population he stated was for public housing. Poverty was a national social problem and local agencies were competent to handle it. So he opposed subsidized housing as generally understood.

The President now threw the question to the membership for open discussion. Miss Wood thought private enterprise might be the answer for the poverty stricken. Mr. Baker conceded some form of subsidy was necessary, say a sixty to sixty-five year mortgage to pay off the obligation. Henry K. Holsman chivalrously started his talk with a compliment to Miss Wood. Mr. Holsman as architect has been identified through many years with private and publicly subsidized housing. Ernest Grunsfeld thought many American families were unready for home ownership and Mr. Baker replied that real estate men promote home ownership. Grunsfeld, Miss Wood and B. Leo Steif had something to say on this point. Baker would lease private property, Steif was of the opinion that private enterprise produced a better housing job than public and Nathaniel Owings wanted to know where private enterprise had attempted to compete with public housing. Mr. Kreuger, a real estate man spoke next, after which Holsman got the floor to tell of his interviews with an Englishman's experiences in his home country with public and private housing. Then came Mr. Jarvis, who was followed by Charles Morgan. Mr. Morgan has been away from Chicago for some years, having lived and practiced in Bogota, capital of Columbia, after which he returned and was instructor in architecture at Kansas University in Lawrence. President Shaw then declared the meeting adjourned.

Committees and their Chairmen appointed for the year 1944-45 are as follows: Allied Arts, John W. Root; Budget, Samuel A. Marx; Fees, Samuel A. Marx; Civic Design, Hubert Burnham; Education & Registration, Jerrold Loeb; Fellowship, C. Herrick Hammond; Membership, Pierre Clouke; Practice of Architecture, George W. Carr; Public Information, Nathaniel Owings; Public Relations & Legisla-

tion, J. Howard Raftery; History, Arthur Woltersdorf.

Chicago Chapter A.I.A., U of C., Ill. Tech To Hold Seminar

Mies Van der Rohe, under sponsorship of the three captioned organizations, has arranged for a course of lectures in Fullerton Hall, Art Institute, Chicago, on Tuesday afternoons, repeated the same evening for professionals. The fee for the twelve lectures is \$3.50.

Here is a tentative list of subjects with speakers:

- Oct. 3—"The Planful Act: The Possibility and Limits of Collective Rationality"—Frank Knight.
- Oct. 10—"Freedom and Order"—Mortimer Adler.
- Oct. 17—"The Earliest Cities"—Henri Frankfort.
- Oct. 24—"The Medieval City"—Meyer Schapiro.
- Oct. 31—"Building and the History of Western Civilization"—John U. Nef
- Nov. 7—"Design to Fit the Human Spirit: The Evolution of City Plans"—Caldwell and Hilberseimer.
- Nov. 14—"In Search of Political Forms for the Modern Metropolis"—Charles E. Merriam.
- Nov. 21—"The Art and Science of Planning"—Joseph Hudnut.
- Nov. 28—"Fiscal Reconstruction of the Metropolis" (either Harold Smith, Adolph Burley, or Cathers, in the order named.)
- Dec. 5—"The Emerging Social Form of the City"—Dr. Louis Wirth.
- Dec. 12—"Experiments in Urban Reconstruction"—Walter Blucher.
- Dec. 19—"The Future of the City: Its Possibilities and Limitations"—Robert M. Hutchins, President, University of Chicago.

In March 1944, 19 A.I.A. members were advanced to Fellowship, of whom two are Illinois men, Alfred Shaw and Ernest A. Grunsfeld, both of Chicago.

President Franklyn B. Snyder, Northwestern University, Chicago, announced recently that the Peter L. Simpson memorial fellowship in the field of research in the technological institute has been endowed with \$20,000 by the National Engineering Co. of Chicago. Bruce L. Simpson is president of the company.

President Snyder said part of the Simpson endowment would be used to make a study of mental ability tests and vocational aptitude tests at various colleges and army camps. He will also make recommendations for tests he believes usable at the college's technological institute.

Talmadge Hughes, Chairman of the A.I.A. Committee on Public Information, addressed his fellow architects by letter on June 23. The burden of his song was the booklet printed by Edwards and Company and gratuitously distributed, entitled "Start Right with an Architect." The purpose of this booklet, of course, is to create jobs for the individual architects, in other words "selling" the architect. Mr. Hughes is quite enthusiastic over the results, that is, the distribution results. He tells of 20,000 requests for "How to Plan Your New Home," a booklet printed by Edwards and Company of Norfolk, Connecticut, for the same purpose. These 20,000 requests were received from readers of *Time* and the *American Home*. Says Mr. Hughes, "a large percentage of them will probably heed the urge to start right with an architect."

It is all very interesting, Mr. Hughes, but what counts is final results! If you could establish the number of architect's clients obtained from the 20,000 requesting one of these books, you would be achieving something in statistics that could be of real value to the architect.

Oil Capital of the World

Tulsa in Oklahoma is often referred to as the "oil capital of the world." This designation for Tulsa is denied by Texans who claim this distinction for Houston in Texas. To clinch the argument for Texas, R. G. Schneider, an architect and engineer, proposes the erection of a "petroleum tower" in Houston, twice the height of the Empire State Building in New York City, or 2,500 feet tall. Mr. Schneider has laid his plan before Mayor Otis Massey of Houston, arguing that such a building, housing an oil museum and a sightseeing post atop the 2,500 foot structure would establish Houston as the oil capital of the world.

Mr. Schneider contends that the "petroleum tower" would give Houston an edge over Tulsa in such a claim and that the \$30,000,000 cost of the building could pay for itself by charging admission to the museum and tower.

We have heard that the tall building of Tulane University built within the last ten years in New Orleans has settled more than a foot and we are further advised that the Monument of San Jacinto outside Houston, erected in 1941 or 2 has settled appreciably. Should Engineer Schneider's project become reality, it is to be hoped that his studies of the soil in Houston will be so thorough and the "petroleum tower" foundation so carefully planned, that settlement of Houston's pride may be avoided.

A Correction: By mistake the Aug.-Sept. 1944 I.S.A. Bulletin credited the San Jacinto Battle Monument to Architect Carlton Adams of San Antonio. The architect of this monument was A. C. Finn of Houston, Texas.

Union Square Park

Union Square Park in San Francisco has been the site for many years of the Admiral Dewey Monument, a great column surmounted by an eagle, the whole arranged with formal planting.

In recent years the business section surrounding the Square, fearing the effect of decentralization on business, succeeded in having the city build a great underground three story garage under Union Square Park, with driveway approaches from each of the four surrounding streets. In 1942 the Square was one deep hole. Today it is a handsome park square with terraced surfaces, the highest surface again harboring the Admiral Dewey Monument. Diagonal walks from the sidewalk at the street intersections lead from terrace to terrace. The business section has held its own because 1,700 cars may be parked in the subterranean garage. The garage, at the same time is a shelter for 40,000 citizens in case of an air raid. The building operation cost \$1,500,000, financed in part by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The garage has a staff of 100 workers, more than 80 of whom are women at the present time.

Domestic War Building About Ended

Writing in the current issue of "Constructor," the A. G. C. monthly magazine, Lieut. General Brehon Somervell, commander of the army service forces reports that although U. S. military construction will continue overseas as long as the war lasts, the domestic program aggregating 11 billion dollars is practically ended. General Somervell says that during the interval between June, 1940 and D-day, the war department constructed 19,000 projects, including camps, hospitals, depots, assembly plants, manufacturing facilities, schools, air bases, ports, fortifications, highways, bridges and railroads.

Troop housing alone was large enough to serve the combined population of Boston, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, San Francisco, New Orleans, Baltimore, and Washington, he asserted. About one-fifth of the war department building was defense construction with contracts placed before Pearl Harbor.

—Construction

Architects Learn From Doctors and Psychologists

"One of the truths we have learned from the group doctors and psychologists who correspond in their field the International Style architects, is that the individual emotional balance is dependent to some extent on his sense of participation in a continuous and rational society. Architecture is one of the prime methods by which this feeling for synthesis is expressed and kept alive. It has a story to tell of man's feeling for his past, of the realities of his present and of his hopes for the future. The architect tells this story by means of techniques, and, almost, in spite of himself. The Internationalists tell us that the past is non-existent (too much to bear), the present mechanically productive, and the future, of which they permit us a glimpse, one in which biological standardization has become complete. One feels that having suffered one of the world's most devastating collapses their capacity and desire for the realm of feeling have been exhausted. Therefore they have over-developed their technical side. In reality, the resolution of these two spheres, techniques and emotion, is the architect's task." — Robert Woods Kennedy in August "Pencil Points."

The Villard Palazzo

Electus D. Litchfield, F.A.I.A., addressed a letter on June 25 to Olin Downes, Music Editor of the New York Times, on the preservation and future use of the Henry Villard Pallazzo, built in New York City in 1885 after plans by McKim, Mead and White. This building "group constitutes perhaps the most distinguished architectural monument of the period—certainly of residential architecture here in New York. It is, and has been, an architectural asset of the city. It is in a sense a monument to the men of an age of giants in railroads and finance."

In recent years the structure was known as the Fahnstock house, where Charles A. Platt as architect did some remodeling, without in any way injuring the original. The property has been sold and the purchaser is said to contemplate converting the structure into an office building. Mr. Litchfield deplores the thought of converting this monument with the necessary violent changes, to such a use. He suggests that the building be made the home of a great music library for the city of New York, providing space for chamber concerts, for composers and students who would profit by the study of records of the past.

Editor Downes replies that the New York Public Library houses its music records in cramped quarters at a lending branch at 58th street and the overflow in the Central Library at 42nd and Fifth Avenue. Mr. Downes pleads for favorable consideration of Mr. Litchfield's suggestion and points to the music room donated to the Congressional Library at Washington by Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge in 1935. He says that gift is invaluable, and adds "in Washington, certainly, this acquisition has played an extraordinary part in the development of the entire music life of the capital."

In 1454, Pope Nicholas V issued a letter of indulgence in behalf of the kingdom of Cyprus. Later the same year in Mainz, Germany, a craftsman, whose identity is in doubt, reproduced the letter on vellum using movable, cast-metal type. Today, this 31-line papal indulgence—copies of which are still in existence—is accepted by most authorities as the earliest authenticated product of the art of printing.

Historians have verified that the type used to print the pope's letter was cast from lead. This is not in itself surprising since lead was familiar as well as plentiful in the Middle Ages and was used for a wide variety of purposes. The really noteworthy fact is that in 1444, nearly a half-millennium later, type is still cast from lead; or more precisely, from metal in which lead is the chief constituent. The simple truth is that in the long history of printing, nothing else has been found so perfectly adapted to type-making requirements. Lead and its alloys alone possess all of the four characteristics indispensable in type metal: low melting point, good casting qualities, a readily controlled hardness, and low cost.

Post-War Cities

The National Association of Real Estate Boards has issued a proposal advanced for discussion entitled "Post-War Cities." The burden of the argument in the essay is that light is destroying American cities, that every decaying structure is just as truly a block-buster as a 4,000 lb. bomb mumbled from the belly of a four engine bomber. Our cities must be rebuilt and the authors propose a plan.

Disintegration must be overcome by private enterprise. We have created deserted villages in our cities. In the last twelve years the federal government has taken a strong interest in what is happening and has sponsored various programs which has tended to alleviate the situation. None of these things have been very successful. Through private enterprise we have created our towns and cities. In dealing with blight the tendency in recent years has been for government, first municipal and then federal, to get into this job. Private enterprise wants to retain its private ownership position it must devise means by which to deal with disintegrating neighborhoods.

It is estimated that there is anywhere from 45 to 60 million dollars worth of building to be done. When blight kills one section of the city, the taxes go up for the rest of that city. Local Community Development Authorities should resort to good current use, lands where structures have reached the point of steady deterioration. Private enterprise, undaid and alone, without a source of broad financial aid could not hope to purchase the large areas that will be necessary for a successful operation. The new developments will all be undertaken by private business, but the localities will set the stage so that private business can purchase land in workable units and can develop it privately for private use.

The federal government must act along parallel lines to provide additional tools for the job. It could build on the present Home Loan Bank System. It should make constant effort to secure the lowest possible rate for the housing of the lowest income groups and the extension of housing mortgages to 33 years.

No Real Estate Board believes in public housing as it is now operating. We should see to it that state housing laws should be enacted that would provide decent standards of safety and health for all housing in the state, to be enforced by local government.

The above touches in a general way what government should do in order to clear the war for private enterprise. Briefly stated the following actions seem essential:

- a) Provide for definite relief from the heavy tax burden on real estate and building enterprise now constituting a "shelter sales tax" equivalent to an income tax of 20% a year.
- b) Provide incentive for demolition of old buildings.
- c) Create planning commissions with broad original powers to establish land uses and city patterns extending over the entire metropolitan community.
- d) Create local development authorities with power to assemble blighted and slum lands and after they have been replanned dispose of the cleared land to private enterprise for rebuilding.
- e) Provide for a federal agency which will consolidate present federal functions having to do with home ownership, mortgage financing and community development. By consolidation and coordination, such agency could better assist and stimulate local community development.
- f) Provide for federal interest-free loans over long periods to be used for buying the land in our communities to be redeveloped.
- g) Provide for the housing of the needy and take care of housing emergencies arising from time to time that local government cannot undertake alone.

"The present activities of federal and local governments having to do with housing and with public housing are too restricted in scope, too reformist in character. What is needed is a broad program that will look upon community development and redevelopment as the objective, so that we may obtain better housing conditions and living conditions for all. Government aid in such a program is not government interference with business. It will be government cooperation and help for business."

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- Field, Harford**, Lieut. U.S.N.R., Room 3029 Navy Dept., Bureau of Yards & Docks, Adv. Base & Land-Lease Div., 2010 - 38th St., S. E., Washington, D. C.
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*Indicates Civilian Address

Cellulose and lignin—components of wood—are two of our most versatile servants of physics and chemistry. Almost anything from hangars to hosiery can be made out of wood.

The Wisconsin Chapter, A.I.A. is one of the organizations assisting Mayor John L. Bohn of Milwaukee in formulating a revised building code for that city.

Terrazzo Floor Maintenance

Because they are easy to mop, or even scrub, the water cleaning process is more commonly used on terrazzo than on any other type of floor, frequently being a daily routine. Counting labor costs, daily mopping is probably the most expensive way of maintaining terrazzo or any other type of floor.

Unlike linoleum, rubber, asphalt and some other types, water is not necessarily injurious to terrazzo, provided strong cleaning agents are not used. Anything of an acid nature is, of course, ruinous to the marble chips in the floor. In fact acid dissolves marble. Alkaline solutions penetrate the small pores in the marble chips and when dry, crystallize and exert pressure which causes the marble to spall. This develops "dusting" or "blooming," a condition which can become not only very annoying but expensive.

Although it is an expensive and none too satisfactory method, if you feel you must scrub or mop your terrazzo and that you must use a cleaning agent, use a good, neutral soap or a cleaner such as "Cleaner A" of the U. S. Treasury Specifications. This will in no way injure the floor and will do a satisfactory job of cleaning.

However, the more economical and more satisfactory way to maintain a terrazzo floor is with a good grade of water wax, preferably one with a high solid content. Such a wax, made from No. 1 Yellow Carnauba Wax, well emulsified and containing not less than 17% solids, will give your floor a protective coating which is not slippery and which will, at the same time, eliminate the need of daily mopping. Such a wax product is that covered by the U. S. Treasury Specifications for "Finish Material." It is self-leveling and dries in twenty to thirty minutes with a high gloss.

A floor made tacky to keep it from being slippery is worse than an untreated floor. The tacky film not only attracts and holds the dirt pressed into it, but it is almost impossible, sometimes, to remove it. Sealers are very difficult to remove when the floor is to be done over.

Before the war special terrazzo sealers made of chlorinated rubber were becoming popular. Their chief virtue, however, was their "water whiteness" which did not "yellow." Ordinary varnish or lacquer sealers turn "yellowish" after a time and to many this is objectionable on a light terrazzo floor. The rubber sealers are out, of course, for the duration, but unless some substantial improvements can be made in their formulation, little is to be gained by their ultimate availability.

Certainly nothing makes a terrazzo floor look better than a good waxing, and nothing renders it easier to clean and keep clean. Neither does wax "yellow" the floor and it is easy to remove when the occasion requires. It is easy to use and worn places are easily repaired without showing overlaps. In the first place, a well made water wax, properly applied, will be neither tacky nor slippery. In the second place, the heavier the wax film the safer it is. This is contrary to the old theory that too much wax makes a floor slippery. But it is scientifically true.

Buy your material from a manufacturer large enough to have laboratory control, large enough to buy the best raw materials in the present difficult markets, and well enough established to have a reputation to protect.

—Hillas Lane in "Floorcraft."

The Bill of Rights, as generally conceived, seems to include the right to drop used chewing gum anywhere, the right to deface the walls of washrooms, the right to disturb others by loud chatter in the theatre, the right to occupy a busy telephone booth as long as one pleases, the right to preempt extra seats while others are standing, the right to muscle into the front end of a queue, and the right to block the view of 300 people during an exciting play.

Details of the integrated four-year program of humanistic-social studies now being followed at Carnegie Institute of Technology were given by G. U. Cleeton. Over 20 percent of the assigned student time is being devoted to the non-technological subjects at that school.

Old Cornerstone—Illinois Capitol, Springfield

The veil of mystery which enshrouded for years the identity and location of the cornerstone of Springfield State House was lifted a little in July 1944 and the daily press the State on July 18 and 19 brought stories that were interesting and perhaps imaginative to a degree. To obtain an authoritative statement on the question, the Bulletin appealed to the State Architect's office (Division of Architecture and Engineering, State of Illinois) and their statement follows herein:

"The stone is 8'10½" long, 4' wide, and 3' high. On the front face is a sunken panel with the inscription divided into three parts. In the center appears the following:

JOHN C. COCHRANE,
ARCHITECT and SUPERINTENDENT
W. D. CLARK, ASS'T. SUPERINTENDENT

At the right appears the following: STATE OFFICERS—Richard J. Oglesby, Gov'r., William Bross, Lieut. Gov'r., Sharon Tyndale, Sec. State, Orlin H. Miner, Auditor, George W. Smith, Treasurer, Robert G. Ingersoll, Atty. Gen., Newton Bateman, Supt. Pub. Inst'n.

At the left appears the following: COMMISSIONERS—Jacob Brown, President, John W. Smith, James C. Robinson, James H. Beveridge, Philip Wadsworth, William L. Harnh, William T. Vandever, J. C. Webber, Sec'y.

The cornerstone was discovered July 16th, 1944, under the north steps to the east portico when workmen were wrecking these steps in connection with the new brick and stone plaza which is being installed in front of the east portico. No one seems to know where the stone was originally located. It was too high and large in plan to have been located where the new cornerstone is now located. The present "cornerstone" is not a cornerstone at all, but fits into the face of the wall near the corner and does not have an inscription. No one is certain that it is a cornerstone, but because it is slightly different in design and has a circular top the belief is that it contains some sort of box or cornerstone contents.

My own theory is, and I have done no research to substantiate it, that the stone which was recently discovered was probably located somewhere on the east face of the east wing and when the porticoes were remodeled by Architect W. W. Boyington, in 1885, it was covered by this new portico and it was decided that it was not of sufficient interest to incorporate it in the building or perhaps it was not deemed appropriate because of the appearance of Robert G. Ingersoll's name, yet it was thought important enough not to destroy. As a result it was placed in the unexcavated place under the portico steps.

The box had been removed previous to its discovery.

We plan to set it on a low pedestal near the corner and cover it with a sheet metal cap and mark it later with an explanatory bronze tablet."

Joseph F. Booten, Chief of Design

—For the story of the building of the present capitol see I.S.A. Bulletin for December '43-January '44. Editor.

William David Mann, architect of Highland Park, Chicago suburb, died there August 25 after a year's illness, aged 74 years. He studied civil engineering at Purdue University. His architectural practice extended over forty years. In that time he was architect of hundreds of homes, some of which are conspicuous for their importance. Estates at Aurora, Illinois and Battle Creek, Michigan belong to his most recent work. He had been architect on work for Western United Gas & Electric Company and Public Service Company.

John M. Hoskins, oldest architect in Chicago, died July 31 in Glen Ellyn, a suburb of Chicago, age 94. Mr. Hoskins was born in Sarnia, Ontario, Canada and came to Chicago in 1889 where he set up in the practice of architecture. He is best remembered for a plan to connect all Chicago parks with forest preserves in the county, by wide one way boulevards, surrounded with garden areas. He was the oldest living member of the Chicago Chapter A.I.A.