

"All Old Fools Were Young Fools Once"

The Address of Louis La Beaume of St. Louis, I.S.A.-F.A.I.A.,
at the 50th Annual Dinner & Meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects
in Chicago, June 24, 1947

When Mr. Smith invited me, several months ago, to join you in this anniversary, or memorial, meeting (whichever you choose to call it) I accepted his invitation without hesitation. But as time wore on, I began to get a little nervous. When an old grad thinks of going back to his 50th reunion, he must wonder both how his contemporaries will look to him, and how he will look to them. Moreover, he must wonder what they have in common to talk about.

So, when Mr. Smith prodded me for a more or less descriptive headline for my random remarks, I submitted several. He crossed out the "Vanity of the Vanguard" and "Carrying on with the Cantilever", saying he preferred the thought that "All Old Fools Were Young Fools Once". He said that the phrase is loose enough to cover almost everything, and provocative enough to pique your curiosity. Personally I do not regard it as provocative at all. It is a simple and banal statement of fact, easily susceptible of proof if proof be needed. But since this is Old Home Week I hope we may all relax and leave all thoughts of controversy and zeal for proof to the younger generation.

It seems only yesterday that America awakened to a consciousness of that strange, and once beautiful, Art called Architecture, after its long slumber in Victorian darkness. That period of aberration and originality had endured for about fifty years, and left its ghastly blight all over the land. It had sparked a revolt against tradition, against our early colonial and Georgian heritage, against what had then considered the timid scholarship of craven copyists. The chaste and simple mahogany of the 18th Century was relegated to the attic to make room for the carved and pinnacled three-decker keyboard and the plush covered sofa. Our grandfathers were hell bent on inventing something new not to be found in any of the books; something never seen before on land or sea. How well they succeeded as a matter of history.

To-day our grandsons are embarking on a similar venture. We may stand aside for a moment and bow our heads in respect for their courage. They proclaim, as youth has always proclaimed, that the past is Prologue. The Past! the Past! What do they really mean by this phrase? Do we mean Classicism, Mediaevalism, the Renaissance, the Victorian, the Gay Nineties, or would we broaden the term to include yesterday, or, to be more scrupulously

precise, even this morning? Yes indeed, the past is prologue and we all stand, as men have always stood, on the threshold of a new dawn. But it is a slippery threshold and the sky is obscured in mist. The mist will dissolve sooner or later and the sun will shine brightly again, repeating a sequence older than time. In the clear light of noonday our old fears will vanish, and we will make new resolutions and invent new battlecries. We will feel like pioneers looking out upon a vast new landscape.

But the battlecries and the slogans of to-day are apt to become the cliches of tomorrow, and it is the sad Fate of novelty to become quickly shopworn, tarnished, and outmoded. You, my contemporaries, realize this all too well, as you look back upon your brief attempts at pioneering.

Fifty years ago this Society was founded. Perhaps in revolt against the Institute, even then regarded as a sort of academic crustacean. Chicago itself was young and fuller of beans than Boston. Whatever tradition the lusty settlement may have boasted had gone up in smoke when Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicked over her lamp; whatever prologue there might have been was expunged. Even the fabulous White City on the Lake front, with its cardboard arches and plaster colonnades, had vanished as quickly as it had been created; vanished in dust.

The future beckoned to as eager a band of wild young asses as had ever been assembled anywhere. Louis Sullivan had drawn up a kind of Declaration of Independence, and the whole pack tingled with high resolution. They didn't all speak the same language or agree as to doctrine, but they all swore earnestly to be different. And they were different. As different as Lake Michigan is different from the Atlantic Ocean, though sometimes the architecture by the Lake seemed much more salty than that along the seaboard. They were different from each other, and, of course, young Frank Lloyd Wright was as different as only he could be. None of them were quite the same two days in succession. They tried everything; they mixed things up; they were quite original, if heterodoxy is a proper synonym for originality. In any event, they were very virile.

You have all heard the story about that new building rising on Michigan Avenue, which a proud Burgher pointed out to Wilton Lackaye, the actor. "Bet you can't guess what style it is", said the Lake dweller. Lackaye squinted, "Well", he said, "the first story is Greek, the second story is Roman, the

third story is Greco Roman, and I guess the fourth story is catch as catch can". Just when this historic conversation took place I'm not sure. It may have been before the World's Fair, or just after. There were a good many strutting young architects feeling their oats even then. We can all recall many great names: Burnham, of course, and Root, and Holabird, and Major Jenney, Schmidt, Pond, Woltersdorf, Maher, Howard Shaw, and, oh yes! S. S. Beeman. Beeman designed the Pullman Building and was so proud of it he asked Mr. Pullman to let it be named after him. But Mr. Pullman mildly suggested, "I paid for it". "Yes, I know", said Beeman, "but I designed it, and besides you have all the sleeping cars named after you anyway". "Well", said Mr. Pullman, "I realize how you feel. Since you're so proud of your work, and as I like it too, let's split the difference. Suppose we take the first half of my name and the last half of yours, and call it the Pullman Building."

Things began to move pretty fast, and soon, though there was a good deal of diversity in the work being produced, we, in outlying places like St. Louis, found ourselves referring to the new "Chicago School of Architecture". We looked upon our neighbors as pretty fresh, almost too fresh at times. Chicago came to be regarded as (if not the hub) at least the hub-bub of the universe. Its fame as the Windy City spread far and wide as Frank Lloyd Wright blew fresher and fresher the older he got. His Prairie House is now generally recognized as the precursor of the Bauhaus. While Wright was laying them flat, Burnham and Root built higher and higher, until, in the Monadnock Building, they went as far as they could go with masonry walls. Then presto! Major Jenney evolved, invented, or contrived, something called the skeleton steel frame, and the fat (from the packing houses) was in the fire. Henceforth the sky was to be the limit, and all America became a garden of sprouting asparagus stalks reaching up into the empyrean.

Sullivan brooded, and the dictum "Form follows Function" suddenly emerged. It was an intoxicating alliteration, and while others hesitated whether to emphasize the horizontal or the vertical, the Master decided to accentuate the positive, namely the pier.

Of course, many men had been influenced, either consciously or unconsciously, by this formula from time immemorial — the Greeks had a way, if not a word for it, as did the Monks of the middle ages. Even in Chicago some more or less functional planning had been going on.

But such is the power of epigram that the neat phrasing of Sullivan's discovery became a kind of theme song to be chanted again, and again, and again, in boresome iteration.

It is strange how certain phrases stick in the mind and impede the progress of thought. I recall a conversation with Bertram Goodhue years ago apropos of epigrams. Goodhue chuckled as he quoted this definition of a cynical friend of his, who, when challenged to define an epigram, replied, "An epi-

gram is a statement which is short, false, and conclusive". Sullivan's slogan conforms rather dangerously to this definition. It is short; it is, to many minds, conclusive. To call it false would be dogmatic and to set up one dogma against another. But to question, in all humility, its intrinsic value is the legitimate function of the sincere and inquiring mind.

Doubtless the form of the oyster befits its function, which is to slide past the esophagus without friction. Doubtless, also, the form of the rhinoceros is perfectly consistent with that beast's way of life. But somehow man, who may have evolved from forms equally awkward and equally functional, now feels a kind of perverse, and perhaps snobbish, antipathy to these earlier, though temporarily satisfactory, designs. He strives toward something somewhat more graceful albeit equally, or more perfectly, functional.

In this process of evolution certain hangovers occur. The Ape didn't shed its tail until long after he learned to stand upright. Well, the modern human Ape is just about as conservative as his original ancestor, and just about as original. Generations overlap and the break with the past is rarely as clean-cut as we iconoclasts think it should be.

No wonder then that the Chicago School was not immediately successful in the application of that other popular slogan "Progress without Precedent". Precedent was too firmly entrenched to be overthrown in a skirmish, or even to yield much before many, many battles. As the early social reformer feels himself continuously frustrated by the ingrained prejudices of his fellows and the reliance of the mass mind, to say nothing of the Legal mind on Precedent, so also the Pioneer or Reformer in the field of art finds himself blocked and dismayed. It takes time as well as genius to mould this stubborn old world to one's hearts desire.

True, we have come a long way in the past fifty years, and as we look back we see the road cluttered and encumbered with our brave, but sometimes ludicrous, experiments.

The first thirty of those fifty years were feverish, and not since the building of the Tower of Babel had there been such a confusion of tongues. Precedent seemed to be winning over Progress, and Sullivan and Wright seemed but voices crying in a wilderness of Italian Palaces, French Chateaus, and Tudor Gothic fabrications. As our fellow Americans became more and more familiar with the masterpieces of the old world they turned their snobbish backs on the striving innovators. L'Art Nouveau had died in its cradle and the Beaux Arts boys who had come back with a full line of cartouches, masks, blocky cornices, balconies, and bastard orders, fashionable in Paris because they were indeed original and new, soon found that they didn't satisfy our rapidly refining American taste. After all, what could be better than the Italian Renaissance at its best, or its later Georgian derivatives with proper plumbing, heating and wiring; or if the client

ferred, as he sometimes did, the Gothic of the le de France, or the mellow Tudor of Oxford and Cambridge? So the boys dropped the new stuff like hot potato and became Romantic or Classic according to the whim of the moment.

This might have been well enough so far as houses and Churches, Colleges and Libraries, and even Banks were concerned, but when it came to yscrappers, factories and purely workaday subjects, it was found increasingly difficult to solve these new problems in quite the old way. Yet we kept on trying, adapting, simplifying, contriving, and grafting.

About the time of World War I we began to hear the first rumblings of the Revolution. They didn't come out of Chicago or from the grass roots, though we had long been talking about, hoping for, and striving for a native American manner, if you disown the term style. They came from overseas just where the old styles had come from.

At the famous New York Armory Show in 1913 we were made suddenly aware that a strange metamorphosis was well under way in the European world of Art. We were shocked by the fearsome distortion of the co-called human form, by the grotesque ghastliness of the human face. We laughed hysterically in the mistaken belief that the only way to counter hysteria was by more hysteria. It was hard to believe our eyes, and soon we were told that we shouldn't try to.

"Life is real, Life is earnest", cried the sophistesses, and "Things are not what they seem".

The war quieted us down somewhat, led our minds away from the phantasmagoria of the New Art to that of the battlefields; but shortly after the Armistice things began to pop again. We began to hear about Fauvism, and Dadaism, and Cubism, and any other isms. The names of their exponents became as familiar to our intelligentia as the names of our baseball heroes to the proletariat. We were overwhelmed with propaganda, often couched in incomprehensible gibberish. We were ordered to get out of the way of Progress, and at least to keep our mouths shut if we couldn't cheer. Gradually we came to like the stuff, though, in our heart of hearts, we still thought much of it ugly and most of it unintelligible. But we wanted to be broad minded and recalled the words of Pope, "Vice is a monster of so deceptive a mien that to be hated needs but to be seen. Not seen too oft, familiar with its face, We first endure, then pity, then embrace." Humbled thus, and properly softened, we became easy prey for the architectural invasion soon to follow.

It is a strange phenomenon (perhaps only to be explained by later students of history) that a young and rich country like ours, full of vigorous parvenus who had been pillaging Europe of its artistic heritage, as Rome had pillaged Athens, should suddenly wake up to the realization that Europeans themselves despised their heritage and were sick to death of all their past. We had seen a few monarchies fall but hadn't dreamed that the very foundations

of our complacent faith were being undermined. Perhaps we are not yet quite willing to admit it, but I am afraid it is so. It may be that we have come to the end of an era and that all of our previous conceptions, (political, economic, aesthetic, and moral) are in process of violent revision.

In Russia, in Germany, in France, Holland and Scandinavia a new generation was, and is still, rising in rebellion, proclaiming its disgust and impatience with all previous authority and the culture of their fathers. Leaders sprang up everywhere in France, Austria and Germany as though at a pre-arranged signal, calling on youth to follow them into a brave new World of their own devising.

This was to be no halfhearted Revolution with a few voices like Sullivan and Wright crying in the wilderness. Oh no! its Leaders were dedicated in a holy cause, fanatically determined to upset the old apple cart no matter what the consequences might be. "We'll start from scratch", they cried, like Lenin. "The past is not only Prologue, its the Punk."

We are living in stirring times my friends, and there is more in this new Architecture than appears on the surface. I grant that this is an underestimate, for there is not much as yet to be seen on the surface. The big idea is that the surface doesn't count. It's the space back of it that is the meat, or rather, the air, in the cocoanut.

A new system of aesthetics is being proclaimed — a system based, it is said, on reason and pragmatic materialism. There is no room in this system for sentiment or emotion; for what used to be called beauty. "Time to stop dreaming and get down to brass tacks", cry the Apostles of the New Cult. Man is a Rational Being and every move he makes should be calculated in the cold, clear light of reason. His house is a Machine for Living, we are told. Yes, perhaps a machine for living for people who live for machines. The philosopher and the poet have been all but exterminated by the machine. The milk of human kindness is at a discount while lubricating oil is at a premium. Science is everything. The Laboratory has displaced the Temple and the Cathedral. From now on reason, only reason, must rule. This is a nice assumption, but is it "The Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth?" Can it be that the Heart also has its reasons, which Reason does not know?

Historians tell us that man, as we have known him, is about 600,000 years old, and this statement applies even to the "youngest undergraduate". Actually the child in the kindergarten is a very old man, and this old man, rational though he may believe himself, is a tissue of inherited or remembered instincts, expediences, prejudices, fears, faiths, customs, longings, superstitions, and religions. You have only to touch him on the quick (especially if he is wedded to the cult of modernism) to see his emotions flare up in anger, or to flatter him and make him purr like a kitten, or a Corbusier. No gentlemen! we are, in the words of Kipling, "Very

slightly changed from the semi-apes who ranged India's prehistoric clay". We are still, all of us, old fools together. Nor have we yet outgrown our ape-like propensities. For do we not see our smartest young men imitating not only Corbusier, and the German professors who have come over from an exhausted Europe, but imitating each other. Plagiarism and imitation go merrily on just as they did in the bad old days of eclecticism.

Only this very human operation is now confined to a much narrower field. The vocabulary of the New Architecture is still very meager; sheets of glass, blocks of glass, strip fenestration, pipe columns, overhanging eaves, with the use of the cantilever wherever possible. I said possible, not probable or inevitable.

But we must not be flippant. While Revolutions, by their very violence, destroy much that is good and worthy of survival, they do often leave a residuum of value. It behooves us, therefore, to take this Revolution seriously. It is fundamental, far reaching, and may shock the very fabric of our civilization to its foundations. The arguments behind it, if carried to their ultimate conclusion, must radically change our concepts of Church and State, as they are already changing our concepts of Education. Our professors in the gentler arts have abdicated and given over to the authority of their pupils. Science is indeed in the saddle. The humanities at the moment are in the discard.

Let us then count our blessings while we may. If we are honest we are bound to admit that a good deal of outworn debris has been cleared away. The new diagrams which pass for plans indicate, at the very least, that the human mind is still in travail. The diagrams which pass for elevations, though unusually stark and unnecessarily ascetic to lovers of the flesh, may, in time, be susceptible to some amelioration. And above all, the very flimsiness of the construction may turn out to be, if not a positive virtue, at least a promise in disguise, perhaps even an assurance of better things to come.

We are being constantly reminded that there is no virtue in Durability. On the contrary, Durability might be called the Eighth Deadly Sin. For anything that endures must eventually block the path of progress, and necessitate the use of dynamite and the bulldozer. At least so say the Bulldozers.

It is conceivable, of course, that the TNT inherent in this doctrine may obliterate all vestiges of man's past within another two or three generations, so that no record of his former struggles and accomplishments will survive. Unhampered thus by recollection of any kind, the race would be free to indulge its powers of imagination and invention in a vacuum of pristine innocence.

Further speculation may be futile. But we may at least amuse ourselves by wondering how long a period it will take for some Apostle of the new creed to smilingly pull out of his hat a rabbit very like a Doric Column, entasis and all, or even something not

unlike the Cape Cod Cottage which he professes now to despise. The books having been burned, I may well be justified in boasting of his own originality and pointing to his achievements as triumphs of rationalism.

Yes, it seems only yesterday that this Society was founded, and yet, what changes we have seen in the short span of fifty years. From Richardsonian Romanesque and Beaux Arts French we have run the gamut of all the styles; from the Tribune Tower and the Woolworth Building we have evolved Radio City and the United Nations Laboratory of Peace. We have come all the way from the Palace of Versailles to the Quonset Hut; we have witnessed the birth of the automobile, the radio, the airplane, the rocket and the atomic bomb. We have lived through two murderous wars, countless strikes, and world shaking depressions. We have a New Architecture, and a housing shortage unparalleled in the World's history.

Gentlemen, I offer a toast to Man, the only Rational being in an otherwise irrational World.

The Future in Radiant Heating

Your Committee on Radiant Panel Heating believes that the most important single problem presently facing this committee is the one involving standardization of design and application data for this type of work. It believes that no one person or group can make the necessary decisions which will be generally accepted but that it involves a co-operative effort on the part of all interested in Radiant Panel Heating, whether they be engineers for design, manufacturers of components or contractors for the installation.

—Peter B. Gordon, Com. Chairman, H. P. & A. C. A.

Boston, Mass. real estate commissioners have announced plans to seize 14 downtown buildings to provide offstreet parking for nearly 2,000 cars. The sites cleared will provide three integrated parking areas — one each for the business district, the financial section and the "wholesale" district of the city.

Nothing the Romans built in Gaul equals the Pont du Gard in boldness or beauty. To carry the 4 x 5 ft. brick conduit across the 1,000 ft. wide valley of the Gard River they erected three tiers of the most perfectly proportioned stone arches imaginable. The lower tier contains 6 arches of which the longest is 80 ft. while others vary from 51 to 63 ft. The second tier is of the same size and layout, while the top tier is made up of 36 arches of just under 16 ft. each. This top tier is 885 ft. long now and apparently was originally somewhat longer. A vehicle roadway, added in 1774 alongside the level of the first tier, has not marred the appearance of the structure. The conduit itself is lined with limestone deposits—a remnant of pre-water-treatment days.

—From Travel-diary of Engineer Waldo G. Bowman in July 17, En-R

"What gives meaning and nobility to life is the feeling that one's work is constructive and useful. The successful want recognition even more than extra money. They want to be considered important and necessary in the scheme of things. Those who tackle their jobs with low ideals don't get far and they don't keep their gains long."

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Editor Monthly Bulletin

ARTHUR WOLTERS DORF, 520 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

The Illinois Society of Architects has cause to be proud of its Fiftieth Anniversary meeting, held in Chicago on June 24. The report of this meeting appears elsewhere in this issue. The President touched upon the history of the Society — how and why it was created. The American Institute of Architects, our national body, has many members in the I. S. A. and a goodly sprinkling of these are F. A. I. S.

The effort of the national body to increase its membership and influence throughout the land is to be applauded, though when it comes to the national body taking over what has been built up through 50 years, and during that period of state society effort and influence and respect it has gained in the state legislature and municipal governments is cherished by the state society, that society feels that state rights is something.

When the A. I. A. decided to further organize its chapters to be the paramount influence in building control legislation in states, it virtually told the I. S. A. either to comply with the national plan or fade out of the picture. The I. S. A. with its efforts and achievements through 50 years could not agree with the national body and so the Board of Directors voted to withdraw from the affiliated membership in the A. I. A. which the state society had maintained for a number of years. The evidence is strong that in Illinois at least the state society in legislation yields a far greater influence in the interest of the public than does an association of chapters of the state now organized as The Architects Association of Illinois. It is interesting to note in this connection that C. Herrick Hammond of Chicago, F. A. I. S., President 1928-1930 and now presiding officer of The Architects Association of Illinois, was president of the I. S. A. in 1919 and is still a member of the Illinois Society.

Recently John O. Merrill, Director of Revision of the Chicago Building Code, submitted a tentative draft of the proposed new Code for analysis. This submission did not include mechanical engineering sections such as wiring, elevator installation and ventilating equipment, since further study of these was required before submission.

The submission is to a jury of consultants for practical test by applying the various standards to actual building plans. These consultants consist of 10 architects and structural and mechanical engineers, most of them from Chicago. Others are to be called later. The code will be reviewed by the National Bureau of Standards and by staff members of the Illinois Institute of Technology.

Mexican architecture, ancient, eclectic and modern, appears of decided interest to the American architect, to judge by the amount of space given it in the architectural press and in books appearing at the present time. The archeological findings of scientific societies digging in various spots in Mexico and Guatemala are reported, books have been written on the Spanish-Colonial architecture of Mexico, architectural journals report in detail on modern and modernistic efforts. The May-June '47 I. S. A. Bulletin reported new architectural finds of the La Venta people near Vera Cruz. The present issue reports 11 more Mayan temples discovered in Mexico's frontier region of Chiapas and the July '47 Architectural Record devotes 14 pages to an illustrated article on modern architecture in Mexico by Ann Binkley Horn. Elsewhere in this issue is a review of "The Story of Architecture In Mexico" by Trent E. Sanford, architect of Evanston, Illinois. Mr. Sanford, a practicing architect in our midst, has traveled much in Mexico and has made exhaustive studies of that country's buildings before and after the discovery of America.

L. E. Waddington of C. C. Conn, Ltd. Elkhart, Ind. presented before the recent New York meeting of the Acoustical Society of America "the slide-rule for music." He explained that musical data and the science of sound as related to music can be adapted to a slide-rule because they involve relationships which are the same for any key.

The Building Construction Employers' Association of Chicago requests all affiliates of the building industry to observe a 5 day, 40 hour work week beginning June 1, 1947. This is advocated in the interest of lower prices and stabilized employment.

Yellowstone became a U. S. National Park on March 1, 1872, more than 75 years ago; it is the grandfather of all national parks, the first to be established.

The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Illinois Society of Architects

On the evening of Tuesday, June 24, there met in the quarters of the Chicago Bar Association 213 men, including a sprinkling of fair women, to partake of the cocktails followed by dinner, and that followed by the Annual Meeting on the Fiftieth Birthday of the Society. Perhaps a dozen more men joined the company for the meeting after the dinner.

The spirit prevailing was most friendly and optimistic. The dinner was served in the large banquet room of the Bar Association, and while this was going on two beautiful maidens serenaded group after group of diners with songs accompanied by violin and modern accordion, an instrument played by each of the singers.

President G. Harold Smith, in opening the meeting extended a cordial welcome to all and hoped that the evening would find a place among their pleasant and important memories. He proceeded to tell something of the history of the Society. After the Columbian Exposition of 1893, when Chicago found itself harboring apartment buildings and others poorly designed and constructed with building ordinances ignored, the Illinois Chapter of the A. I. A., after discussion of this subject, failed to act and out of the Chapter membership was formed the Chicago Architects Business Association, whose duty it was to agitate for and influence the passage of building laws and ordinances in the interest of the safety and health of the public. It also urged the passage of an architects' license law. This came to pass and became the first architects' license law in the country.

It was not long before the Chicago Architects Business Association broadened its scope and became the Illinois Society of Architects. July, 1916, saw the first issue of the I. S. A. Bulletin. The President continued: "According to its constitution the Society was organized 'to cultivate a thorough knowledge of the scientific and administrative possibilities of the practice of the profession of architecture, to facilitate the interchange of ideas, encourage discussion of its problems, and to emphasize its obligations to society.'"

The President next introduced guests at the speakers table. They were Walter A. Daly, Assistant to John S. Clark, Assessor, Dean R. P. Hoelscher of the Department of Architecture, Navy Pier School of the University of Illinois, E. O. Holly of the Illinois Department of Registration and Education.

New members in attendance at this meeting were presented: Harry K. Bieg, Otto Monberg and T. Clifford Noonan, all of Chicago; also Rudolph Carl Sandberg of Rock Island, Illinois. President Smith then introduced Leon E. Stanhope, who, having joined the Society in February, 1897 and having served as Director and President, a respected and beloved man, was in years of membership the oldest living member.

The loss of members by death was next given by the President, while all in attendance stood in respectful silence: Jesse A. Barloga of Rock Island, Zachary T. Davis of Chicago, Archie H. Hubbard of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Arthur Jacobs of Chicago, Charles L. Morgan, born in Illinois and long a Chicago resident. Further losses by death were George C. Nimmons, Paul F. Olson and Moriz F. Strauch, all of Chicago, and William H. Schulzke of Moline.

Next followed the business meeting which the President made as short as possible. Secretary Koenigsberg was called on to read the minutes but before he could start a motion to omit this reading was passed. Then came reports of standing committees. The Membership Committee with Her-

man L. Palmer Chairman reported the membership at the moment numbering 361, and growing constantly. William Paul Fox, Chairman of the Registration Committee, reported his Committee's efforts in behalf of a state building code and other proposed legislation before the State Legislature and Chicago Common Council.

F. M. Bernham of the Public Action Committee reported that his Committee functioned principally upon complaint of members directing attention to the Illinois Architectural Act. During the fiscal year 4 violations, 2 in Chicago and 2 Down State were reported to the Department of Registration and Education. Up to now that body has taken no action. The old question of appropriations arises. The functions embraced by the Professional Engineering Act were again discussed. This report ended with the following paragraph:

"Attaining membership in this Society is truly a great honor. We should therefore impress the recipient with its high value and offer him something more than just a round of applause upon his induction."

Benjamin Franklin Olson, for the Program Committee commented on the subjects that had been discussed during the year, including building materials and construction methods; government controls, housing, finance and interior design; adult education. Mr. Olson thought that perhaps in the year to come entertainment of a somewhat lighter vein, such as music, monologues, demonstrations of painting and sketching and the like, might be introduced to lighten the heavy load.

The Publicity Committee, Arthur Woltersdorf, Chairman, was next called upon. Mr. Woltersdorf reported that his Committee efforts were centered largely on the I. S. A. Bulletin, whose articles were often copied by other publications, particularly in the architectural press of other states. He said further that the Bulletin, beyond going to all Society members, went to presidents and secretaries of all state societies, of all A. I. A. chapters, to a number of public libraries where the Bulletin is bound and kept for reference by any reader, to the Chicago Historical Society, the State Historical Society at Springfield and other such organizations having requested to be put on the mailing list.

Mr. H. L. Palmer, Financial Secretary, reported something over \$3,560 in the treasury. J. C. Orrell, Treasurer, reported more in detail on the finances.

With these reports concluded, the President paid his compliments to Secretary Palmer and his office staff for the careful preparation for this meeting. They had spent the better part of 2 months in preparation. Regarding Mr. Palmer himself, the President had an extra compliment expressed in the following words: "As for Mr. Palmer himself, no man in the Society more deserves our thanks. For the past fifty years he has labored for the good of the Society and the best interests of the architects of Illinois. His work for the Society all these years has been unselfish and untiring. It has been said that an institution is but the lengthened shadow of a man, and I believe I speak for all of you in paying this small tribute to that man."

The result of election of officers by letter ballot for the coming year was then given on behalf of the tellers by Alexander Levy. These names appear in this issue in the box at the head of Column 1 on the Editorial Page.

The President, having disposed of all the business, now presented the speaker of the evening, perhaps the best public speaker in the architectural profession of this country, Louis

LaBeaume of St. Louis, I. S. A. and F. A. I. A., with the following words: "The name and reputation of Louis LaBeaume are among the first things you learned in your profession. For the benefit of our guests I should like to tell a little about him. He has practiced architecture in St. Louis for almost forty-five years; before that he was assistant to E. L. Masqueray, chief of design of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, held in St. Louis. His public service includes ten years as president of the Board of Control of the City Art Museum and the past several years as secretary of the Plaza Commission, both of St. Louis. He is the author of 'Picturesque Architecture of Mexico,' of numerous articles on architecture and has contributed book reviews, verse and sketches to magazines. His contribution this evening is entitled 'All Old Fools Were Young Fools Once.' It is my pleasure and privilege to present to you, ladies and gentlemen, our fellow member and speaker, Mr. Louis LaBeaume."

Mr. LaBeaume's complete address appears on other pages in this issue. Mr. LaBeaume held his hearers in wrapt attention throughout. After the meeting the Bulletin Circulation Department and the Editor received letters signed by many in attendance, requesting that Mr. LaBeaume's paper be printed in toto in the Bulletin.

With a few graceful and appreciative words, the President thanked Mr. LaBeaume for his efforts and said that the speaker had exceeded the Society's fondest hopes and expectations. Then, with fitting words of thanks and appreciation to the attendance, the President adjourned the meeting at about 10:30 P. M.

Refresher Course for Architect's License Candidates

The Chicago Chapter, American Institute of Architects, will sponsor a Refresher Course in preparation for the State Architectural Examination.

A period of ten weeks will be devoted to Structural Engineering, presented by Mr. Frank J. Kornacher, Structural Engineer. Mr. Kornacher is a graduate of Armour Institute, 1926, and has practiced since that time. He now maintains his own office in addition to teaching graduate work in structural engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology. A two week period will follow covering Mechanical Engineering, presented by Mr. Harry Nachman, Mechanical Engineer, who practices as a consulting engineer and has been active in heating, ventilating, air conditioning, electrical and plumbing work for the past eleven years.

The remainder of the course will be made available to specifications, Office Procedure and Contract Documents.

Classes will be held each Tuesday and Thursday, beginning August 5, 1947, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., for a period of fourteen weeks. Through the co-operation of The Institute of Design, 632 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, space has been made available for these classes.

Classes will be limited to only thirty students, and the complete course will cost \$75.00. Make checks payable to the Chicago Chapter, American Institute of Architects.

For further information contact Edward L. Burch, Jr., 107 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Telephone Central 0309.

Associate members of The American Institute of Architects will receive the course for \$70.00. Associate membership application forms may be obtained upon request.

Charles H. Dornbusch, A.I.A., announces the opening of an office under that name for the practice of architecture at 16 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

Chicago Chapter A. I. A. Annual Meeting

To the Saddle and Cycle Club of Chicago for the Annual Meeting of the Chicago Chapter on June 10 came 90 including a few ladies. The invitation said "Cocktail Hour: 6 p.m. Dinner: 7 p.m. Dinner: \$3.00" The architects scattered themselves over the bar, the terrace adjoining the Lake and auxiliary rooms preceding dinner. The dim religious light in the dining hall made the diners dependent upon the candle lights on the table in order to be able to read anything. The speakers' table, however, on a podium, was spot-lighted. Finally, toward 8 o'clock, President Gerhardt rose to his full six feet four, welcomed the assembly and pronounced the individual introductions to new members who rose bowing. No minutes were read. Most of the evening was taken up with the reading of committee reports.

The first was the report of Philip Will, Jr. He was followed by Harford Field of the Legislative Committee. Mr. Field reported on their efforts in the matter of ordinance by the Chicago Common Council on on-site parking and followed this by the efforts on the Taft-Ellender-Wagner Bill before Congress. Then came Charles Dornbusch of the Committee on Education, who was followed by L. Morgan Yost of the Professional Relations Committee. After Yost came President Gerhardt with an explanation of reports and then followed Mark D. Kalischer on membership. Thomas Cook spoke on programs proposed for the future and N. J. Schlossman spoke on recommendations of a special committee on dues. W. Fred Dolke followed with the treasurer's report and he was followed by Charles D. Faulkner with a report from the secretary.

The company rose at the President's request in memory of William Schultze of Moline and Zachary Davis of Chicago, deceased.

William McCaughey proposed appealing to Governor Green to save and make a public monument of the old Market House at Galena, Illinois. Then came the President's statement of the disputed professional engineer's legal rights to design buildings as is the function of the architect and the structural engineer. After this Dolke discussed Bill 2801 then before the State Legislature.

Nathaniel Owings rose to announce the nominating committee's officers for the ensuing year. They are: For president, John S. Cromelin; first vice-president, L. Morgan Yost; second vice-president, Harford Field; secretary, Charles D. Faulkner; treasurer, W. Fred Dolke; director for the unexpired term of John S. Cromelin, Philip Will; and director for the 4 year term will be selected by the Executive Committee. The secretary was authorized by resolution from the floor to cast a ballot for the membership electing all the above to the stipulated offices for the ensuing year.

The Illinois-Wisconsin District of the National A. I. A. has been changed by the national board to include in addition Minnesota, and North and South Dakota, and will be known henceforth as the North Central States District. President Gerhardt, having steered the meeting successfully through the venting of many thousands of words, was now ready to turn the gavel over to the newly elected President Cromelin. Both speeches were short, pleasant and to the point.

The motion to adjourn followed at 10:15 P. M.

Arrangements are under way to hold the next statewide meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects in Chicago on October 11-12, 1947. The place of assembly is the newly conditioned Hotel La Salle. The Society will publish more detailed information with program later.

The Story of Architecture in Mexico

A Book by Trent Ellwood Sanford
Reviewed by Louis La Beaume

To follow Mr. Sanford's "Story of Architecture in Mexico" is a fascinating adventure. Many writers and travelers have recorded their impressions of the romance and riches of this neighboring land so near to us in hours but so far away in Time. Not many, however, have attempted to tell the whole story of its architecture, and few have succeeded in telling it so graphically, succinctly and intelligently. It is not a single story of continuous evolution, but it is divided into two quite separate and unrelated phases. One concerns the native civilizations which flourished and waned long before the white man appeared upon the scene. The other has to do with the Spanish occupation. The author's chapters treating the legendary and pre-Columbian phases, tell of the speculations and the conclusions of the archaeologist insofar as he has been able to envisage the ancient and splendid civilizations of the Toltecs, the Mayas, and the Aztecs as these civilizations succeeded each other over a period of more than fifteen hundred years.

The architecture created by these people was indigenous, having no kinship to that the Mediterranean basin or Western Europe. In grandeur of conception and scale, nobility of plan, and intricacy of embellishment, it was prodigious. "Not only were great stone buildings erected, but whole cities of such buildings. Cities designed with plazas that show an amazing sense of civic planning. They were deserted one after another. One civilization after another overcame the wilderness, and one civilization after another was overcome by the wilderness." Huge blocks of stone were transported, no one knows how, from distant quarries. They were set in place and carved with a sense of design and an elaboration rivalling that of Angkor Wat. All this without the use of metal tools.

In Teotihuacan, Xochicalco, Mitla, and Monte Alban great pyramids, plazas, and temples have been unearthed or rescued from the jungle. While these excite our wonder and awe, the civilizations to which they bear witness are now vanished as though they had never been.

Our own archeological heritage is meagre indeed by comparison with that of our sister republic. Our few mounds in the Mississippi Valley bear no such testimony to an advanced and highly sophisticated culture.

When Cortez arrived at the Court of Montezuma in 1519 he found a city rich, intelligently planned and embellished with all the accomplishment of a race not unfamiliar with astronomy, geometry, and the art of numbers. But the Aztec practiced a religion abhorrent to the Christian invader, and all vestiges of his civilization were promptly destroyed; and his treasures confiscated. What remains to-day of the older civilizations of the Toltecs and the Mayas remains only because it was engulfed in the protecting arms of the jungle.

The second phase of "The Story of Architecture in Mexico" begins with the Spanish Conquest. This is the story not of an indigenous architecture, but of an architecture transplanted from Spain and imposed upon the country by the Spanish conquerors and their enormous retinue of priests fired with zeal for the True Cross. But as the architecture of the first part of the story is the record of a virile, though fanatical, culture, so, also, is the architecture of the second part a record of devotion, pious or fanatical whichever you choose to call it, to a flaming religious ideal.

Everything that the Spaniard built during the three hundred years of his domination he built to the Glory of God. The conquistadore made of Mexico a new Spain in the image of the old Spain which he had left behind him, raising up towers and domes, convents and monasteries, churches, cathedrals, and shrines, with a fervor and zeal no less energetic and astounding than that of the earlier possessors of the land. Thousands of these witnesses to his energy and zeal remain to confront the traveler at every turn, and Mr. Sanford has devoted by far the greater part of his book to them. In the city of Cholula alone there were said to have been 365 churches; one for each day of the year. Thus the Colonial Architecture of Mexico was mainly ecclesiastical. However, the visitor will note many private palaces, large or small; and glimpse many a flower-filled patio hidden behind its archway or grille. The little white houses, roofed with tile, in village after village, will continually remind him of Old Spain; as will many features of the landscape. He will find the same variety in the architecture ranging from the austere to the exuberant; and he will be impressed by the use of gayly colored tile to cover the swelling domes, and sometimes even the whole facade of a church, or a palace. He will rejoice in the flame of the Bougainville vine against a stone or stucco wall; and the brilliance of the flowers and foliage. He will be amused by certain crudities of workmanship revealing the naivete of the native Indian workmen. He will be stunned by the elaboration of the retablos as they were designed and overloaded to impress and awe the conquered populace.

The Author traces the genesis of all this Architecture from the Romanesque and Gothic of Castile, through the Plateresque of Andalusia, the cold Classicism of Charles V and Philip II, to and through the writhing complexity of Churriguera and the Baroque, and, finally, to the more placid and benign, if less exciting, dignity of the 18th Century.

There is a tendency nowadays to shy away from the study of architectural genealogy, but as every branch of a family tree bears a vital relationship to the roots of that tree, so it is highly worth while to know something about the why and wherefore of an architectural style by some contemplation of its ancestry. Mr. Sanford diagrams the family tree of Mexican Colonial Architecture with skill and sympathetic understanding. He writes tersely, clearly, expressively, without a trace of pedantry, with a vividness and interest which will hold the attention of architect and lay reader alike. The really important part of The Story of Mexican Architecture ends with the achievement of the independence of Mexico in 1821. The author treats the century from then to now with an appropriate brevity.

The book closes with a chapter on modern trends. This chapter affords much food for thought, especially to those disciples of the vanguard whose creed implies that something may be made from nothing, and that mere functionalism is a *sine qua non* of architecture. Our Author holds a contrary view when he says, "Changes in architecture have been brought about by changing conditions and requirements, or new materials of construction, or sometimes by political or social dictatorships; * but no worth-while architecture has ever been the result of a sudden decision merely to do something "new" and different, for its own sake." And again,

in connection with the modern architecture of no other country has the word "functional" been more abused than that of Mexico. The stress put on "functionalism" as meaning a building necessarily stripped of all embellishment, or of attractive materials, and even studied proportions and massing, is, of course, a lot of nonsense." "Go ahead with your experiments", he continues, "but do not crowd them into the cities and destroy the wealth of an architectural background compared to which our own country is poor."

The book is enriched with many excellent photographs, a number of explanatory maps, a glossary of architectural terms, and a copious bibliography.

Anyone contemplating a visit to Mexico will find helpful and happy companionship in this volume. While some places like Oaxaca and Guanajuato may seem a little difficult of access, there is enough of interest within a short radius of Mexico City to richly reward the traveler.

And he will thank the author of this warm and human book at every step in his journey.

Eleven More Mayan Temples found in Mexico

On May 21, 1947, Carnegie Institute of Washington and United Fruit Co., sponsors of an archaeological expedition into a remote region of lower Mexico under the directorship of archaeologist Giles Greville Healey, announced the discovery of eleven Mayan temples. They were found at Bonampak in the frontier region of Chiapas, pronounced a Mayan stronghold.

The temples, believed to have been built between 495 and 720 A.D., were found well preserved, with richly painted frescoes still clear on the walls. They picture Mayan kings, priests and people, their musical instruments. Pigmentation in bright reds, yellows, ochres, greens and blues. Of the architecture, disposition and detail, this first report sayeth nothing.

Rejoinder to Hamilton's Statement on Air Terminal Design

The Editor: The statements contained in Mr. Hamilton's letter (John Wiley & Sons, Inc.) to the Bulletin editor, published in the last issue of the Bulletin, compel me to answer him for two reasons: (1) because he has misrepresented the facts, and (2) to inform readers of the status of present published material available on the subject of air terminals.

In Mr. Hamilton's letter, he stated "In this article (Jim Elmslie's *An Air Terminal Building*) the author stated that he could find nothing in the library 'but moth-eaten textbooks written before the advent of large scale air transportation'". Actually, the text read "Jim wandered around in the clouds for a few days until he finally decided to get to work. He searched the library for information and found nothing but moth-eaten textbooks written before the advent of large scale air transportation," etc. The situation in the story is a perfectly possible one and I must confess it has happened to me. It is obvious that Mr. Hamilton had distorted the facts.

Air terminal design is a dynamic subject at the present time. It should not be confused with *Airport* design, on which subject many excellent books have been written. I do not think I am an iconoclast when I say that little of value has been written in book form covering the subject of air terminals. The book "Airport Planning" by Froesch and Rokosch, published by Mr. Hamilton's firm deals for the most part with airport design and standards. It contains a compilation of industry studies by the Air Transport

Association's committee on Airport Development, of which Mr. Froesch is chairman. The ATA reports, available to architects, were referred to in my story.

The section of "Airport Planning" dealing with terminal design is very small and confusing. For instance, reference is made to a "Decentralized-Centralized" type of terminal design, which is ambiguous if not clear. This is not a criticism of the authors because very little definite information can be formulated in book form today. The concept of terminal planning is too fluid because of a lack of basic standards of design such as the railroads were forced to adopt in the early days of their planning. There are too many intangibles to stabilize design at this stage, and therefore, in my opinion, the best and latest information is obtainable in current papers, magazine articles, forums, industry meetings and not in books which become obsolete upon publication.

Mr. Hamilton's own advertising for this book admits this obsolescence when it states that material written on airports before the war is obsolete and uses this to sell his book, which at least has a later publication date. It will be some time yet before an authentic treatise on air terminal design may be written that will be comprehensive and of real value to the uninformed architect. This subject is still in the "esquisse" stage and much real study by architects must be done before the ideal terminal for the age of flight will emerge.

— A. F. Heino, Architect, United Air Lines

The Work of George G. Elmslie

The Editor: Of the three Chicago Chapter, A.I.A. members (George G. Elmslie, Carl A. Erikson, Howard L. Cheney) honored with fellowship at the recent A.I.A. convention at Grand Rapids, Michigan, it was to Mr. Elmslie that the A.I.A. gold medal awarded posthumously to Louis H. Sullivan in 1946, was assigned, and it is in possession of Mr. Elmslie as designated by The Institute.

In view of Mr. Elmslie's long and intimate association with Mr. Sullivan in architectural design, this act by The Institute is but fitting and proper.

Mention should be made of the later work where Elmslie practiced individually or with other partners. Capitol Building & Loan Building, Topeka, Kansas; Old Second National Bank Bldg. and Keystone Office Bldg., Aurora, Ill.; Congregational Church, Western Springs, Ill., individually. In association with Wm. L. Steel, Mr. Elmslie did the Court House at Sioux City, Ia. With Wm. G. Purcell he did Charles R. Crane Estate, Woods Hole, Mass.; Babson Service Group, Riverside, Ill.; Merchants Bank of Winona, Minn. and structures elsewhere.

—Howard L. Cheney

Historic Midwest Houses

The University of Minnesota Press will publish in early November of this year *Historic Midwest Houses*, a book by John Drury of Chicago. Mr. Drury in 1941, then a staff writer on the Chicago Daily News, produced the book *Old Chicago Houses* (University of Chicago Press). Assisted by a writing fellowship awarded him by the University of Minnesota Mr. Drury toured more than 10,000 miles through the Midwest seeking material for the forthcoming volume. Of it Drury says: "... each house is described in terms of the man or woman who made it famous".

The Auditorium Commission for Omaha, Neb. have approved appointment of Leo A. Daly Co., Omaha, as architect for a \$2,500,000 memorial auditorium planned for the city.

"Planning Man's Physical Environment"

The great distinction of today is that we ask that more classes of people be well served by our buildings; we demand for every building a degree of specialization hitherto unknown. It is presumptuous for any architect now to build a terminus, a hospital, a school, a merchandise mart, without sober consideration of the technical requirements; presumptuous for him to assume that he can define them a priori; presumptuous for him to think that he knows more about them than the technician who uses them.

So today the architect is designer at the end and not at the beginning. He must first of all be an interviewer, an objective recorder of needs, an understanding examiner of techniques. This process may well take longer than the final synthesis, the space arrangement, which is the design.

There is risk that modern architecture does not follow its own precepts. It is no more noble to preconceive a building with a cantilever, a spiral, or an exo-skeleton and then force everything to fit, than it is to preconceive it in the mold of St. Trophime. Flexibility as a fetish can lead to amorphism. It is childish to play with science and to talk of insolation, sound, light, in terms which a freshman-physicist would reject as untrue. These things are not emotions and pseudo-scientific treatment of them as emotions simply will not do. We shall be found out, and quickly.

We will do well, then, in this time of decision to ask ourselves whether we profess more than we practice. If we do not practice what we profess, all will be lost. It is time for critical self-scrutiny.

Do we really survey the technical need without prejudice; do we refrain from imposing our own clichés; do we avoid facile rationalization and the pseudo-scientific; are we prepared to bring humanism to the mechanism we have already prescribed with such authority? These are not rhetorical questions; only the thoughtless could answer with a chorused "yes."

This is the time for decision. The next few years will decide whether modern architecture is an important landmark in world history or an unimportant and transient style. Ours is the choice.

—From John E. Burchard's Statement
at Princeton Conference

Beg Your Pardon: On page 7 of the I.S.A. Bulletin for May-June, 1947 appears the caption "William R. Greenley's Statement Before Princeton Conference." It should have said, "W. Roger Greeley's Statement Before Princeton Conference." Mr. Greeley, F.A.I.A. is of the Boston firm of architects, Kilham, Hopkins & Greeley.

How to Meet Building Costs

The Labor Survey emphasizes again the rise in wages throughout the length and breath of the land. Space here does not permit of a long analysis of causes and effects of this wage movement. The relation, however, between wage rates and contractors prices is obvious and so important that every contractor knows the answer — unless higher efficiency can be obtained or labor saving methods can be devised the only way to meet increased wages is through higher prices. Higher prices again restrict sales and lessen volume. Today the contractor must strive, more than he ever did, to obtain the greatest possible efficiency on his job. The old motto — men, materials, tools and plans must meet at the same time on the job — is even more of a fundamental law of contracting today than ever before in our history. Loss of time through lack of coordinating management is paid for at higher rates and must be eliminated.

That is management's important job.

Another important job of management in the contracting field is to increase employees efficiency by exercising leadership. Americans can not be driven but the late war has demonstrated that they can be led and enthused to the point where wonders are accomplished. Perhaps we can not reach those same high levels of leadership but they furnish us a fine target at which we can aim.

The future of the construction industry is in the contractors' hands. The projects are planned and waiting. The buying public will take the plans off the shelf and translate them into actual going projects when it is convinced that it will get a good, or even a fair, buy from the industry. The contractor, through performance, must convince his public that he can give them such a bargain and that is today the real problem of management in the contracting industry.

—Editorial in June Official Bulletin of HPACNA

George C. Nimmons, retired prominent architect of Chicago, died in Chicago, June 17, aged 82. Mr. Nimmons was born in Wooster, Ohio, attended University of Wooster where he was awarded an A.B. degree. Then followed travel and architectural study in Europe. His office experience began with work with Burnham & Root, Chicago architects, in 1887. In 1898 in partnership with William K. Fellows the architectural firm of Nimmons & Fellows was formed and continued into 1910. In this period came their employment for planning the great plant on Chicago's West Side for Sears, Roebuck & Co. with branch houses in other cities of the country. 1910-1917 Nimmons practiced without partners; 1917-33 George C. Nimmons & Co.; 1933-45 Nimmons, Carr & Wright. Mr. Nimmons was made a fellow of the A.I.A. in 1910. He was a past president of the Chicago Chapter, A.I.A. and a member of the Illinois Society of Architects.

Charles Henry Prindeville, retired Chicago architect, died in his home in Evanston, Ill. June 16, aged 79. Mr. Prindeville was born in Chicago, his family having settled there in 1836. In architecture he was for years a partner of James J. Egan in the firm of Egan & Prindeville, Architects. Their conspicuous work was Catholic churches, schools and hospitals. Among these may be mentioned St. Pauls Cathedral in Pittsburgh, Pa. and Mercy Hospital in Chicago, Ill. Mr. Prindeville was an F.A.I.A. and a member of the Illinois Society of Architects from September, 1910 to December, 1933. He was a past president of the Chicago Chapter, A.I.A.

Joseph Vago, one of the design architects of the League of Nations Palace at Geneva, Switzerland, died June 11, at Salies de Bearn, age 71. He was also an author on architectural subjects.

Horatio T. Park, 80, Chicago architect retired since reaching the age of 70, died at his home May 3.

Jesse A. Barloga, prominent Rockford, Ill. architect, died in Rockford May 27, age 59. Born at Pecatonica, Ill., graduated in architecture at U. of Illinois in 1911, he next served in the office of Frank A. Carpenter, Rockford architect. In 1919 he established his own office for independent practice. In succeeding years he was architect of West High School, News Tower, both in Rockford; Ruth Hanna McCormick Simms country estate buildings near Byron, Ill.; residence of L. Harold Clark, Rockford, and many others. Mrs. Barloga (Viola Hodgson Barloga) widow surviving, is decorator and artist who collaborated with the deceased in interiors and furniture design. Mr. Barloga joined the Illinois Society of Architects in November, 1939.