THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL

RURAL ENGLAND NUMBER

Architects in the Countryside

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Sense and Sentiment

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I: THE BIRTH OF A MOVEMENT

TWENTY-ONE days from Friday next it will be exactly two years since the inaugural meeting of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England was held in the big gallery of the R.I.B.A. It takes just about two years for news of this unsensational sort to leak out among the general public. People are now actually aware that a movement to protect rural amenities exists. The extent of this awareness may, perhaps, best be measured from some little distance. During a month's travel abroad the English newspapers read alongside a variety of Continental and American sheets seemed to ring with a continual clamour in this cause. It was difficult to find a page anywhere without some letter, whether argumentative or merely indignant, some report of a local meeting or of a speech by one of the half-dozen champions whose energies are poured into the arduous work of propaganda without murmur or intermission. The C.P.R.E. deserves our congratulations and our thanks; the first part of its work is done. It has diagnosed the ill which is attacking our countryside, and its warnings are heard and repeated in all parts of the country. It now only remains to effect a cure.

That a great deal of curative work will follow during the next decade there would be no doubt whatsoever were it not for one small difficulty which one hopes will soon be overcome. Tell a man that the C.P.R.E. cannot carry on its work without adequate funds, and he will nod as at a truth too obvious to be stated. But tell him that such funds are not available in anything like a proper amount, and he will stare at you in amazement. You do not find people firmly convinced that the London hospitals are supported by the State, or by a committee of millionaires, or by some sort of Old Patients' Club. But no one seems to regard the C.P.R.E. as a body in need of maintenance by voluntary effort. In some mysterious way a notion appears to have become current that, on the contrary, it is supplied with an ample revenue by its constituent bodies, or by the Ministry of Health, or by Lord Crawford, or Providence, or the R.A.C., or goodness knows whom. Perhaps the C.P.R.E. is in some measure to blame for the public ignorance on this point. According to its printed circulars there are two classes of membership: that of the affiliated societies and that which is open to individual associate members. Both pay an annual subscription of one guinea. The right conclusion for any reader of these pages should be that, as he or she cannot properly be called an affiliated society, it would be an excellent thing to become an I.A.M. instead. Whereupon it might perhaps be expedient to suggest to the Council a clearer if not a simpler form of nomenclature. How many Frothblowers would Sir Alfred Fripp have collected if he had offered to label them Individual Associate Members of the Council for the Effusion of Froth? People will be readier to join up when they can be told in a word what their joining amounts to, and readier to pay up when they can see without reading through eight columns of names that the only considerable sums derived from the bodies whose representatives make up the Council are the £100 from the R.I.B.A. (helpful as ever) and the Automobile Association's fifty guineas. Apart from a few tenners and odd guineas coming in from the other bodies, the money which the C.P.R.E. needs for its existence has to be drawn from its I.A.M.'s—that is to say, reader, from you and me. Moreover, those of us who belong to constituent bodies are under a clear obligation to justify our adherence by subscribing.

This view shows a curious mixture of roofing materials. The house on the left is covered with shiny purple slates and vermilion hip and ridge tiles. Beside the stone-roofed house on the right is a gabled outbuilding whose grey asbestos roof is harmless in general colouring.

2: OUR HAPPY SAVAGES

In one of Mr. John Buchan's romances an ex-Attorney-General on a Highland fishing holiday is presented to the reader

> carefully dressed for the part in a pair of Wattie Lithgow's old trousers much too short for him, a waistcoat and jacket which belonged to Sime the butler, and which had been made about the year 1890, and a vulgar flannel shirt borrowed from Shapp. He was innocent of a collar, he had not shaved for two days, and as he had forgotten to have his hair cut before leaving London, his locks were of disreputable length. Last, he had a shocking old hat of Sir Archie's from which the lining had long since gone.

In other words, the hero of the tale was carefully and elaborately going savage. The war appears considerably to have increased the number of people to whom a holiday of this kind provides the only genuine relaxation from the petty worries of city life. Like Walpole, who found his happiness in trying to produce architectural detail which would be more Gothic than real Gothic had ever managed to be, these twentieth-century Romantics seek their escape from reality by simulating a degree of squalor and slovenliness undreamt-of by even the most verminous of *bona fide* riffraff. This is not the place for a general discussion of an ailment well known to morbid psychology, but it is surely useful to fix our attention for a moment on the deepest and most unfailing among the sources of rural defilement we are today trying to quell. For if we are to put our finger on the one single factor which lies at the centre of the evil, it is this hankering after the noble state of savagery that we shall have to pick out from the rest.

Of course, it is much more exciting to turn savage if you are an ex-Attorney-General with a practice worth forty thousand a year, and carry underneath your disguise (though not too completely hidden for beautiful young ladies to glimpse it at appropriate moments) " one of those squat little gold shields which are the badge of athletic prowess at a famous school." It is more exciting, and also more innocuous from our present point of view. Successful lawyers and politicians fortunately do not carry into their holiday architecture the ideas so strikingly exemplified in their holiday attire. Sporting Cabinet Ministers, no matter how efficiently dilapidated in their persons, often inhabit most exquisite houses built at the height of artistic civilization in this country and kept spick and span as a man-of-war from cellar to attic. When they build, they build in as orderly a manner and with as solid a substance as their means will allow. It is the less fortunate millions following them who " rough it " in their architecture as well as in their clothes. We hear a great deal today (and shall hear in these pages) about the indignity of so-called " substitute materials " in the countryside. It is not when they are used as a substitute for stone and bricks and tiles that these materials become obnoxious, but when they are used as a substitute for canvas. A good half (and the worse half) of the people who are squatting over some of the most lovely landscapes of England do not want houses, but tents. The disused railway-carriage or tramcar is a truer solution of their " programme " than the flimsiest creosoted bungalow built up from the ground. It is idle to talk architecture here. It would be much more to the point to establish those rudiments of nomadic etiquette that are *de rigueur* with all genuine savages. Will nobody try to educate these people—a witty writer in the *Times* has called them " the mushroom people "—in the elementary decencies of a vagrant life? In such matters as hats and trousers, shaving and coiffure, a little licence is not so intolerable. But the job of keeping alive for twenty-four hours on a circumscribed piece of land involves a hundred acts each one of which is liable at any moment to become a public—nay, a national—nuisance.

3: THE ARCHITECT AS MISSIONARY

A great deal of our noxious building, however, is really intended as building; is put up, that is to say, to serve a purpose comparatively enduring, and to serve it in all its complications as only a fully-developed building can. And here we want architecture; nothing except genuine architecture can help us out of our difficulty. But if our rural architecture has to eschew the savage and the casual, it is almost equally important that it should not proclaim itself the work of what

In this triple ribbon road, rail and dwellings are brought together with the most unpleasant results to each. The householders would be happier without the two tracks at their doors, and the motorists could do without the houses.

Mr. Massingham calls "conquering aliens." The admirable pamphlet produced by the Gloucestershire Rural Preservation Committee has some good things to say on this point:

> The arrangement of planning of a house is the most important consideration of all, for the plan dictates the form or appearance of a building. Few people when they think to build know their requirements in accommodation or room-space; the general tendency is to ape the manor-house type and to call for a multiplicity of rooms.
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> The keynote of a good plan is a leaving out of all but essentials; not over-building requirements, but doing what has to be done with a generous spirit. Our beautiful local types are an outcome of this generosity of plan. Over-elaboration of planning there was none; simplicity held throughout.

It may be that the work an architect does outside his practice will one day become as important to the Rural England movement as that into which he enters on his clients' behalf.

English public life is renowned throughout the world for the unparalleled amount of voluntary labour that is given to it by men and women of all classes and occupations; the architect has his share of this unpaid work, first and foremost among which is the co-operation with others in some form of public control of design.

The failure of local authorities to use the means at present at their disposal (and in some directions these are ample) to protect the appearance of the country-side is another of the baffling problems before us. Read what Professor Patrick Abercrombie says about them in his epilogue to that brilliant and effective denunication, *England and the Octopus*:

> Comparatively few of them grasp in any way the powers for rural preservation which the word "amenity" in the Town Planning Act implies. How frequently when an ingenuous questioner asks, "Can't you stop this?" the reply is: "No, we have no powers"—"under the by-laws" being murmured *sotto voce*, as a sort of "over the left." The questioner then writes to the paper demanding new legislation: the powers are there all the time!

Mr. Chamberlain's Rural Workers (Housing) Act is another of the many measures enacted after years of preparatory labour whose usefulness has been impaired by the apathy or antagonism of the local Councils on whom their working depends. The intention of the Rural Workers Act is, one would think, clear enough to anyone; how, then, is one to explain scenes such as the following?:

> Mr. A.: I have known the house thirty years, and it has always been an old house.
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> Mr. B.: This opens up a large question. We shall have many similar applications.
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> The Chairman: It is happening all over the country.
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> The Rev. C.: It was * * * last time.
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> Mr. D.: Was not the idea of the Act to repair cottages that would not otherwise be occupied?
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> The Chairman: The objection I have is doing up cottages for landlords who can well afford to pay themselves.
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> Mr. B.: These landlords have drawn rent for years for the farm and cottages, and when they get out of repair they want other people to pay.

Perhaps it needs to be explained that the occasion for these illuminating remarks was not a meeting of a Parliamentary Committee discussing a draft Bill, but a meeting of a Rural District Council applying the provisions of an Act to which the country had given its assent.

To the legal education of local authorities (which no one save the architect seems at all likely to undertake) must be added some sort of elementary education in architectural taste and good sense. A little of this would go a long way. One suggestion, which reaches me from a provincial builder of very wide experience, at any rate leaves nothing to chance:

> I would suggest that an intense advertising scheme be carried out among Urban and Rural District Councils and Boards of Guardians. That where councils are proposing to carry out housing schemes, each councillor should be supplied with illustrated literature pointing out the fact that it is quite as economical to build beautiful houses as it is to build ugly ones; by this means you will be causing discussion among a body of prominent and very often influential men and so reach the individual who might be persuaded to consult a *bona fide* architect instead of the layman.

4: THE LANDOWNER'S CRY

There are men still left in the country who control many acres of land and whose power of ownership, no matter how weakened, remains more direct and more immediate than the new powers of regulative law. Do landowners generally know the extent of the influence they are able to wield in these matters? Admittedly their difficulties at the present moment

are great and sometimes even annihilating. My friend, General Archibald Stirling, whose brother is prime mover in the organized preservation work in Scotland, has written me a letter from which I must print this excerpt:

> Since the war rates and taxes together have killed expenditure on the equipment of agriculture, and it would be very difficult to point out anything done since 1914 which is at once suitable for its purpose, good of its kind, and not hopelessly uneconomic. On the other hand, it will be easy to point out a great deal which transgresses all three of these canons.
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> Most of us have been reduced to doing as little as possible. The main fact in Scotland is that instead of building solid stone walls 1 ft. 6 in. to 2 ft. thick, we have come to regard two bricks and an air-space as the standard.
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> And then flimsy substitutes still cost twice as much as real buildings used to cost in those far-off days, when the margin left by rates and taxes was many times larger than it is now.

Again, " the nation should realize," Lord Montagu of Beaulieu writes me, " what has been done and is being done by the efforts of the average landowner in this country, in the direction of preserving the beauty of the countryside, and Parliament should understand that if the present penal system of taxation continues, there will be increasing disfigurement of rural areas, and eventually the old charm of this country will disappear." Clearly, to exterminate the old type of landowner is about the best way of hastening the process of vulgarization.

But the landowner's helplessness need not be exaggerated. All of us in this movement are contending with difficulties which at times must seem almost insurmountable, and his are no worse than most others. Even when it becomes necessary for the owner to part with his land there are methods (described elsewhere in this issue) whereby he may keep future developments within the bounds of reason and decency. " I am afraid," writes Colonel G. R. Lane-Fox, whose admirable work on his West Riding estates is well known, in a letter that is typical of many I have received, " that most of the ugliness which is increasing throughout the country is due to the impoverishment of landowners, leading to the breaking up of estates *over which their control can therefore no longer be exercised* in the interests of what is beautiful." The sentence I have italicized makes an assumption which fortunately is not in accordance with the facts. Such control can be exercised, and the exercise of it should surely be the first study of every man whose wealth is vested not in gramophone shares or newspaper debentures, but in " the earth with its fair fruits and innocent creatures," the precious acres of England. And it should be yet another of the architect's duties to see that no landowner of his acquaintance remains ignorant of his right to decide even how others shall deal with the land he is forced to sell them. But there remains, God be thanked, a sense of responsibility among landowners which forbids them to part with their land except under the direst pressure.

Alas, there is no quick turnover possible in good rural architecture. To enter the field of rural building with the idea of getting rich quickly is to ally oneself with all the forces of vulgarity and destruction, and whoever cannot wait quietly for a good result had much better try his luck in another market. Rural England is no place for him.

CHRISTIAN BARMAN

The Riddle of Ugliness

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A Human Countryside

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Overwork and the Cure

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THE only poem ever written by Mr. Arnold Bennett (or, perhaps I ought to say, the only poem he has ever printed) expounded the proposition, if I remember it rightly, that the town is as much a work of Nature as the country, that there is no inherent distinction between the dwellings of men and the dwellings of badgers, beavers or birds. There is this much truth in the argument, that animals, though we are usually too sentimental to admit it, can desecrate a countryside just as much as human beings. A wood fouled by starlings is, on the whole, an even more disgusting sight than a wood fouled by Bank Holiday trippers. The jerrybuilt bird's nest is not unknown, and a very untidy object it looks when one comes across it in the hedgerow. The rabbit is liable to choose the site for his warren with as little sense of the landscape as a speculative builder developing a new suburb.

But man, proud man, has unfortunately powers of creating ugliness which are unrivalled among the lower animals, and, still more unfortunately, pressing stimulants to that creation. The bird's nest is among the leaves, the rabbit's burrow is underground. Moreover, the rabbit and the bird are very strictly confined to local materials. The human builder puts up his house where any eye must see it, and, if motives of taste or economy suggest to him the importation of granite or slate or whatever into a limestone country, the means of importation are at his disposal.

Now let us remember, first of all, that the countryside which we accuse modern humanity of spoiling is very largely a human creation. We have cut it up into fields, grown hedges to divide it, drained it or irrigated it, planted trees in rows or in woods of more or less regular shape. There are few, if any, parts of England where it is possible to look round and see for any distance, as it were, a blank sheet of paper which man has not covered with his writing. There seems, on the face of it, to be no particular reason why his buildings should ever strike us as more of an offence against Nature than his hedges or his plantations. The answer to this curious riddle is to be found not in anything specially evil in the heart of man, but in the haste with which he has been compelled to live and work during the last hundred years or so.

We often speak of the Dominions and America as " new countries," but, if the phrase be used in any accurate sense, the whole territory governed by Western civilization is almost equally new. It can best be compared with a book which a man has spent many years in writing and which then, under the influence of new ideas, a new conception of style, and, let us add, a pressing need for money, he has rewritten in a few months. The industrial revolution poured a new population into England as surely as if it had been a vast fleet of emigrant ships, and it had somehow

"*Since the war England has resumed, from the point of view of our astronomical spectator, the mining-camp aspect.*" [*The photograph is an aerial view of Peacehaven.*]

to provide itself with accommodation, precisely as it had to in America.

Building done all in a burst is never very gracious to begin with. Most of us are disagreeably affected by novelty, and all of us by the processes of construction. Augustus boasted that he found Rome built of brick and left it built of marble, but probably a good many of his contemporaries thought of his achievements as today we think of Kingsway. It is difficult to tell now what the quiet, sensitive man of the time thought about the Tudor building period; they may have seemed to him what many country residences erected by millionaire financiers seem to us. Campden House is now a couple of pavilions, a few fragments, a field with banks and trenches showing that it once bore a great building and a legend. But when it was in course of erection, the more cultured of the inhabitants doubtless referred to Sir Baptist Hicks as " another of these damned vulgar city merchants, who think their money gives them the right to ruin the countryside."

There is, however, a great difference between a burst of building suddenly made possible by new wealth and leisure, and one made necessary because a new population has to have roofs over its head. It is the latter from which we have been, and still are, suffering. If we are feeling it acutely now, it is partly because it has been going on long enough for us to see the results in some kind of perspective and partly because we have had the last wave of it in a concentrated form. A remote celestial observer to whom the last hundred years passed as though they were only a few weeks would have seen England during that time as we can see one of the early mining towns in America or South Africa. The people were suddenly there and they had to have houses for themselves—public buildings and what not—as rapidly as possible. This mining-camp urgency, however, began to slacken from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards until the war and its consequences came to dam up the stream and to convert once more into a turbulent flood what bade fair to become a reasonably placid river.

Since then England has resumed, from the point of view of our astronomical spectator, the mining-camp aspect. It is not too much to say that we have gone on the assumption that anything in the way of shelter is better than nothing, and that even a notice-board promising shelter in the future is better than an empty field. The adventurer among the resultant " towns " is irresistibly reminded of Martin Chuzzlewit's feelings when he could not find " the wharves, the market-place, the public buildings " of New Eden. Not long ago, riding in what seemed for a long way to be a very empty and peaceful part of the South Downs, I turned between two patches of gorse and found myself in " Phyllis Avenue." This thoroughfare had for buildings one bungalow, with attendant sheds, which, though it could not have been more than a year or two old, was already indescribably shabby. It has the mysteriously invariable accompaniment of such erections—a goat, some runner ducks, and a heap of empty tins. We broke into a gallop so as to be out of such surroundings—and then my companion halted me with lifted hand. " We oughtn't to gallop here," she said. " It's irreverent ! " Following the direction of

her finger, I saw a notice-board with the words: "Site of proposed church."

These absurdities are the product of a reality. Many "development schemes" are shams, but the needs which enable them to exist are genuine enough. Homeville, on the South Coast, just like New Eden, on the Mississippi, is a convincing, if painful, sign of a new population which must have somewhere to live. And, where there is urgency of this sort, the claims of beauty and propriety are likely to be passed over, if, indeed, they are ever heard.

Beauty and propriety in building have been but rarely in the world's history the result of conscious effort. Public buildings and rich men's palaces have at one time and another impelled architects to work as artists superior to difficulties. But the Cotswold builders used stone for their walls because it was handy, and gabled their upper windows and made their roofs very steep to allow the snow to slide easily off them. But they had leisure to attend to these necessities in a natural and unconscious way. The necessity of the modern builder is a house that shall be both cheaply and rapidly put together, and, in face of this, the question whether the snowfall is heavier in one district than in another is of minor importance. The question whether the materials and style accommodate themselves to their surroundings is obviously of less importance still.

So far I may seem to have preached only a gospel of despair. But I do not mean to do so, nor do I think that there is any need to do so. It is, however, imperative that we should know where we stand and what our difficulties are. No purpose is served by supposing that this age is mysteriously more negligent and tasteless than any other, simply because its buildings are bad. No one ever deliberately willed a bad building, but most builders at all times have got through the job as easily as they could and have been guided by the degree and the sort of pressure put upon them. So far as the public building or the rich man's palace is concerned, the architect's individual genius, if he has any, will see him through. But it is a different matter when he comes to providing houses for the mass of mankind.

The mass of mankind cannot have everything it wants, and the architect must let himself be guided by what it wants most. At one time it may most want certain comforts and facilities, at another cheapness and rapidity. Cheapness and rapidity are what we now demand. The reasons for this are inherent in our present phase of culture, and we must recognize their force before we attempt to devise any modification of their effect.

We shall cure ourselves only when we realize that by concentrating on these two qualities we are bringing others into existence which we cannot comfortably live with. A rash of new houses on one hillside may be no worse æsthetically than the rabbit's warren on another; but we have certain æsthetic standards which the rabbit is without, and, sooner or later, these, however lax they may be, will be outraged by the incongruity of our dwellings and their surroundings. There is many a bird's nest as ramshackle as a suburban villa, but the bird has not engaged itself to pay large sums of money to a building society over a long period for a house which grows steadily less and less fitted for its purpose.

In small domestic architecture the most we can hope for is congruity and durability, and the second of these is conducive to the first. Houses are improved outside as well as inside by being lived in, and it is instructive to watch how even the crudest standardized products of the speculative builder gradually assume, as their occupants work upon them, each an individual appearance which seems to assimilate it to the earth on which it stands. After all, next to a house of originally beautiful design, the best is a house which has been altered and enlarged at different periods, according to the needs and desires of its occupants. But this cannot be done unless the original structure is strong and adaptable. Therefore durability is an essential factor in houses which are to make themselves eventually, if not at first, harmonious parts of the countryside.

What has happened is that under the pressure of certain urgent necessities we have lost sight of these considerations, or, at any rate, have been obliged to put them out of mind. We have been rather like a man who overworks himself for a certain period, although what he does is done at the expense of his health, although the results are unpleasant and recovery will be arduous, because it will demand especial efforts from an inevitably weakened will. We are beginning our recovery now, but the effects of it are not likely to be seen for some time.

EDWARD SHANKS

"The Industrial Revolution poured a new population into England . . . and it had somehow to provide itself with accommodation, precisely as it had to in America." [*A view on Long Island, New York.*]

The Work Goes Forward

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in England

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THE Council for the Preservation of Rural England is now approaching the second year of its existence, but in that short time it has been very active in trying to arouse the artistic consciousness of the nation to the peril in which many a beautiful district and many a delightful landscape are being placed by thoughtless and ignorant vulgarity. But though the general indifference is deplorable there are a rapidly increasing number of people who do care for these things and who insist upon the creation of some system of control. The C.P.R.E. is doing magnificent work and loses no opportunity in pressing home the issue. But it has an uphill task before it and needs the support, both moral and financial, of every one who loves the countryside, and of architects in particular, for they can, in their work, very largely help forward this movement.

The objects of the Council are: to organize concerted action; to secure the protection of rural scenery and of the amenities of country towns and villages from disfigurement or injury; to act, either directly or through its members, as a centre for furnishing or procuring advice and information upon any matters affecting the protection of such amenities; and to arouse, form, and educate public opinion in order to ensure the promotion of these objects. During the past year the Council have issued pamphlets on the repair of old cottages under the Housing Act; on town planning in its relation to the protection of scenery; on the reservation of agricultural land and grouped building development; and on the improvement and control of the designs and materials of rural buildings; and in a short time it will issue a general memorandum on regional and town planning.

Individuals, no doubt, however anxious to avert the danger to rural beauty, naturally feel rather helpless in face of so vast a problem. For though every one deplores what is going on, yet they are unable to prevent it. Co-ordinated control is the only possible remedy, and we shall not get that until public opinion demands it. It suffers from the neglect that befalls all affairs which are everybody's business, and it is only when public opinion is strong enough that legislation will follow.

It is unnecessary to detail the grievances of which we all complain. The thoughtless and irregular building development along our new main roads; the ugly and obtrusive advertisements and ill-designed road-signs jarring on the rural character of the surrounding scenery; the unsightly petrol pumping-stations and the motor garages placed generally in the most beautiful spots or at the entrances to our towns and villages, all tend to mar the beauty of the countryside. In order to improve the design of buildings, the Council have organized all over the country advisory panels, consisting of architects, surveyors, landowners, representatives of local authorities, and qualified builders, and it is much to be hoped that the help of these panels will be more and more freely enlisted. There are other aspects of the question upon which the Council is bringing its influence to bear. Ribbon building, unsightly petrol stations in rural spots, hideous and obstructive advertisement hoardings, indiscriminate and unnecessary tree-felling, the dumping of rubbish on village greens and in streams, and the leaving of debris and litter in public places and streets. Local authorities and private individuals are everywhere awakening to the need for protective action.

The Council have taken an active part in dealing with the petrol pumping-stations, and through the efforts of the County Councils Association, one of its constituent bodies, a clause has been incorporated in the Petroleum (Consolidation) Act, 1928, which will enable county councils and municipal boroughs to—*a*: regulate the appearance of petroleum filling-stations; and *b*: prohibit the establishment of petroleum filling-stations in any part of their area to which their by-laws apply. "Provisions may be contained in the by-laws regulating position, design, size, colour, and screening of petroleum filling-stations, or of any parts thereof."

With regard to the control of advertisements, powers are already possessed by local authorities to deal with this matter by means of by-laws; but, unfortunately, they are not put into active practice, and although all but nine counties in England and Wales have taken up their powers under the Advertisements Regulation Act, the state of the country is sufficient evidence to prove that these powers are not in any way enforced.

Unfortunately, new houses, cottages, and other buildings badly designed, of unsuitable materials, out of harmony with their environment, are springing up in every direction, especially in the neighbourhood of our towns and cities. Bungalows of inconceivable vulgarity are often placed amidst the lovely scenery in such positions that they absolutely ruin the property. There is no need for the countryside to lose that individuality which is the life of England, for today every locality has the power to regulate the development around it, and local opinion can insist that this be properly done. And it is for the purpose of arousing public opinion to see that the powers of local bodies are enforced that the Council for the Preservation of Rural England has been formed.

E. GUY DAWBER

in Scotland

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THE Association for the Preservation of Rural Scotland was founded in July 1927 with a constitution and objects following in general those of the C.P.R.E.

The problem of rural preservation in Scotland is somewhat different from that in England, where conditions are relatively uniform. There are, in a sense, really three Scotlands, each with its own peculiar geographical and social characteristics.

First, in the north and west are the great mountain masses of the Highlands, with a deeply-indented seaboard and a complex system of lochs and rapid rivers which make communications difficult. The sparse population, still to some extent Gaelic-speaking, is mainly engaged in fishing, sheep-raising or primitive agriculture; but the old traditions are being profoundly modified by the advent of sporting

tenants, motor traffic, and, in certain limited districts, by hydro-electric schemes. Reafforestation is making progress and will in time greatly change the character of the scenery. The sporting interests, which operate over vast continuous areas, have so far tended to prevent building, and particularly "ribbon" development, along the beautiful loch sides. Improved road transport conditions may, however, bring about a change in this connection, especially in the neighbourhood of the through roads which are now being reconstructed with the help of the Ministry of Transport.

A problem of a different kind arises in such a case as that of Glencoe, a natural sanctuary where noble scenery and tragic memories combine to make a profound appeal. Here, in place of the old road which is in subtle harmony with the landscape, the Ministry of Transport are promoting a scheme which they regard as a triumph of engineering, with bridges, cuttings, and uniform gradients to make the new road capable of carrying the heaviest class of traffic. The Ministry have promised to replace, or to face, the stark concrete of their original scheme with stone—but even so, the whole character of this unique glen will be changed by the advent of high-speed traffic.

The second division of Scotland, that of modern industry, which is much more concentrated than in England, is located mainly over the coal-bearing strata, which lie in the broad valley between the Firths of Forth and Clyde. The country here is relatively level, with many towns and villages now closely linked by rail, tram, and bus. The greater part of the population of Scotland is grouped in this area. It is of mixed character, including Irish and even foreign elements, and housing conditions are in many cases deplorable. Settlements have grown without any control, as pits or engineering works were opened up, with disastrous results both for agriculture and amenity, and all the streams are heavily polluted. In certain districts vast piles of refuse, particularly those resulting from the shale oil industry of West Lothian, almost assume the appearance of volcanic cones, especially when burning slag is being tipped. The problem of reconstruction in this area is one of very great difficulty, but a start has recently been made with a regional planning scheme for the Clyde valley.

There remains to be considered the agricultural area of the Lowlands, which may be taken as extending down the east coast from Aberdeen and then covering the greater part of Southern Scotland outside of the industrial area. On the lower agricultural lands, with their old market towns, there has grown up a highly-efficient system of cultivation, dairying and stock-raising. These conditions appear to be well stabilized, the whole countryside has an orderly and well-tended appearance, and it carries a sturdy and typically Scottish population.

The Association is faced with problems of great diversity, and the situation is rendered more difficult because there has been as yet little or no progress with town and regional planning. In special cases, such as that of Glencoe, public opinion becomes quickly aroused, but on general questions it appears that educational work has to be started from the beginning. The greatest hope lies in the movement for regional planning provided that this can be extended to cover rural areas. Standardized houses are being erected everywhere according to stock patterns, which owe little or nothing to Scottish tradition. The Association may be able to help in this connection by the collection and publication of photographs showing typical examples of old Scottish dwellings. Under regional planning schemes, properly constituted, it may be possible to find means of giving guidance, if not of controlling design in all cases, whether of Government or private schemes, where scenery of admitted beauty is endangered.

F. C. MEARS

in Wales

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THE movement for the establishment of the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales (C.P.R.W.), of which I have the honour to be president, was initiated at a meeting held at Holyhead in August last year, during Eisteddfod week, under the auspices of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, when a resolution was unanimously passed in favour of the formation of a society having as its principal object the safeguarding of the rural and coastal districts of Wales from exploitation by commercial and kindred undertakings, and from its disfigurement by ill-judged schemes of "development." This meeting was followed early in the present year by a conference in London of leading Welshmen interested in the subject, at which a representative committee was appointed with full power to take such steps as were necessary to give effect to the resolution, with the result that the Council was finally constituted at a further conference convened in May last, which was addressed by Lord Crawford, president of the C.P.R.E., Lord Treowen, and other influential persons.

Very full consideration was given to the question as to whether a separate organization should be set up for Wales, or whether Welsh interests should be entrusted to a committee of the C.P.R.E. appointed for the purpose, but it was felt that an independent body, working nevertheless in close conjunction with the English Council, would not only be more likely to enlist the active support of the Welsh community in general, but also be in a better position to deal advantageously with certain problems peculiar to Wales.

Since then close attention has been given by a sub-committee of the Council to questions of organization, finance, and other problems which need solution before the Council can be in a position to take up its work in earnest. Much time has inevitably been occupied in dealing with these preliminaries, but the sub-committee has already made inquiry into two matters which are of considerable importance as affecting certain Welsh "beauty spots," namely, the condition of the summit of Snowdon, and the somewhat blatant advertisements which, in its opinion, mar the appearance of the countryside in some districts.

The objects which the C.P.R.W. has in view are closely akin to those of the councils for England and Scotland, and may be briefly summarized as follows :

1: To use every reasonable endeavour to protect the amenities of the rural and coastal districts of Wales from disfigurement or injury, by enlisting public sympathy in a campaign (*inter alia*) against *a*: the erection of buildings, advertisement hoardings, and other "constructions" which are out of harmony with their surroundings; *b*: the destruction of ancient houses, historical sites, old bridges, or picturesque trees; *c*: the scattering of litter; and *d*: the closing up of public rights-of-way, and in connection therewith to secure the adoption and enforcement by the local authorities of such powers as are or may be conferred upon them by statute.

2: To act as a centre for giving advice and information upon such matters, from whatever quarter it may be sought.

The Council does not seek to interfere with any reasonable schemes of rural development, nor has it any wish to adopt an attitude of resistance (which would be both foolish and futile) to those social and economic changes affecting our countryside, of which there is evidence on every hand. Its chief aim is to safeguard our rural amenities by the judicious regulation of such developments as are taking place, in a spirit of friendly co-operation with those concerned, and to rouse public opinion to the necessity for action if the beauties of our countryside are to be preserved to ourselves, and to those who will come after us.

With this end in view the Council appeals for the support, both moral and financial, of all "men of good will," and of the important profession whose interests this JOURNAL serves, in particular. Thanks to the generosity of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, and to that of several other friends of the movement, the funds at the disposal of the Council have sufficed to cover preliminary expenses, but it is obvious that its work cannot be effectively carried out unless it is in possession of an assured annual income. It therefore appeals for contributions from all who wish to see some reasonable check imposed upon those activities which tend to impair the natural beauties of mountain, lake, and sea coast, which are not only the pride and the glory of the Welsh countryside, but also a valuable national asset.

BOSTON

in The Free State

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THE problem of the preservation of rural amenities is different in the Free State from that existing in England. There has been so little building development during the fifty years before the war—the period when England was feverishly doing her worst—that the Irish countryside remains virtually unspoilt. It is true that one or two English firms send over and erect strangely vile enamelled notices and that the English jerrybuilder's taste has here and there intruded itself, but the Irish countryside remains, on the whole, unspoilt. How long it will remain so is a serious question since our unfamiliarity with the atrocities that permeate England make us an easy prey to the ravages of up-to-date vulgarity. It is, therefore, of urgent importance that town planning and the preservation of amenities should be taken seriously in hand by the Government and local authorities, and that the Irish public should realize the danger of inaction. The immense strides that have recently been made in what one might call "responsible" housing in England have had their effect in Ireland where the latest housing work of the kind need fear no comparisons.

The absence of official control over amenities was well exemplified recently when a narrow stretch of a quarter of a mile of coast road between Dalkey and Kiliney was in danger of being built over. This road is within nine miles of Dublin, with rocky hills rising sheer, commanding a magnificent stretch of sea and mountain. The setting of eucalyptus groves and exotic gardens makes it as fine as anything that can be seen on the Riviera. When this stretch came up for sale we proceeded on the only possible lines—lines familiar in England. A few public-spirited people appealed for subscriptions; with the generous co-operation of the owner, the public responded, and the land in question will in future be public property. This is creditable to all parties concerned, but the preservation of such amenities as these should never be conditional upon public-spirited owners nor have to rely upon public subscriptions to save them from the bungalow and the garage.

We have seen that the Irish village has not yet suffered materially from the blight that has settled upon England, but, on the other hand, its architectural pretensions are almost nil. Little in a typical Irish village can compare with the villages of the Cotswolds, East Anglia, or Sussex. The beauty of the Irish village lies mainly in the trim dignity of white or coloured wash and thatch, or stone and rough slating, combining with a wonderful beauty of atmosphere and surroundings. Contrary to widespread belief these villages are as a rule clean and tidy, but they almost all contain crumbling ruins of cottages where mud (or should we say *pisé de terre*?) walls stand for decades unprotected with the core exposed to the weather. This presents a peculiarly Irish problem, and steps will have to be taken to abolish these rather picturesque ruins. Where they are built of stone, sooner or later, no doubt, the stones will find their way into walls or new houses; but too often these ruins belong to absentee landlords who hardly know of their existence, but whose ownership is nevertheless respected. As regards the mud walls—if the owners do not pull them down nobody else will. Ruined cottages present a dilapidated appearance, and local authorities should be given power to compel their removal—or, perhaps, to exact rates on them in full!

But while the typical Irish village presents little in the way of serious architecture it is otherwise with the small town. Throughout the country we find public buildings, such as court-houses, built of granite with clean-cut mouldings, and showing an obvious descent from Gandon's Custom House in Dublin, while in large private houses we often see an even more remarkable and peculiarly Italian strain. It is always doubtful as to how far legislation presents the best means of instilling respect for architecture; a sound civic sense, and the citizen's pride in a great possession provide more valuable safeguards than any legislation. But for the formation of such a civic sense we must turn to the executive who alone can see that civics are not overlooked in the educational curriculum.

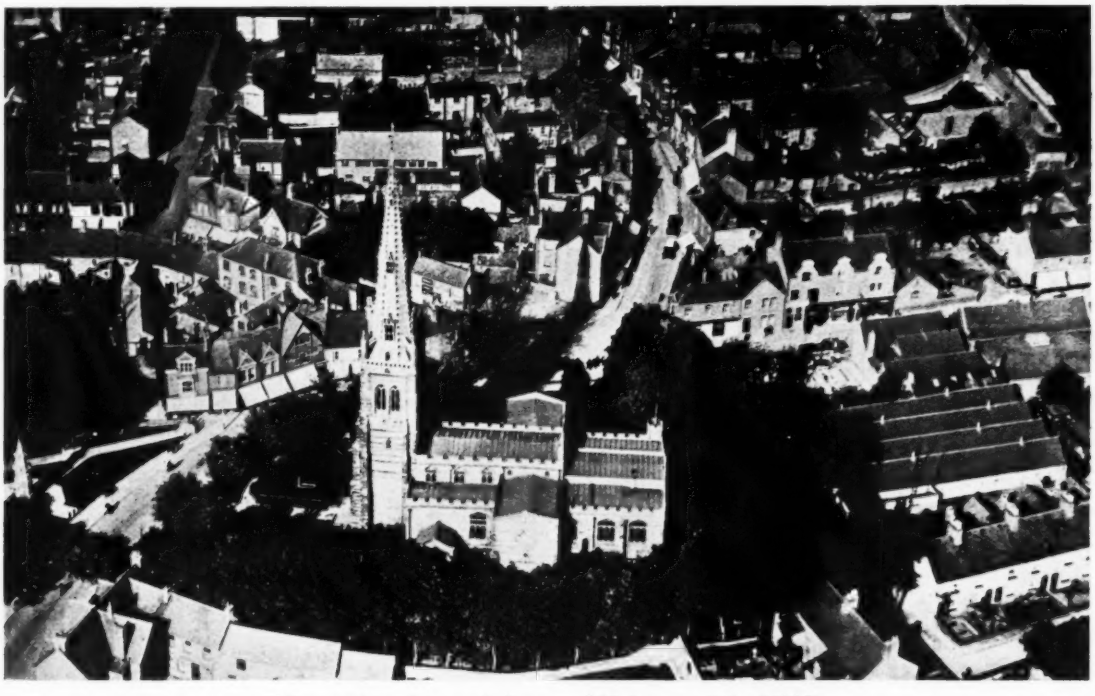
MANNING ROBERTSON

The Face of England

★ Our First Civilization ★ The Landscape Mechanized ★

THE face of England has been moulded by the social changes of English history; every wrinkle, every fold, almost her expression, as the human spirit and sometimes even the human face divine, by the vicissitudes of its experience of life. For æons after the last retreat of the glaciers England, as we know her, remained in her wild babyhood—forest, desert, and the bare summits of the higher hills, while palæolithic man made no impression whatever upon her features. But with the coming of the megalith-builders England received her first transformation at the hand of man. It is a remarkable tribute to the first civilization that laid the foundation-stones of the English nation that it left English country actually more beautiful than it found her. On the chalk downs, the granite moors, the open heaths and limestone uplands, the large gestures of Iberian and Armenoid after him positively refashioned the contours of the hills into their earthworks, tombs, and agricultural terraces. They added a new dignity to Nature without departing from the harmonious graces of her downland, and so permanently kneaded them into continuity with human history. The literalism of their religious beliefs caused them to select for the shrines of their dead lords those sites which demanded the greatest stretch of landscape, with the consequence that we ourselves in a civilization which has dealt less scrupulously with the qualities of English scenery cannot secure an uninterrupted view of down, heath or hill-top occupied by the men of the megaliths without the eye being arrested by their labours in earth or stone.

Not only do these monuments take hold of and dominate the scene below them, but themselves catch in smaller compass the rhythmic curves and folds into which so serenely flow the lines of the downs. What would Stonehenge be without Salisbury Plain, and even more pertinently what would Salisbury Plain be without Stonehenge? All the visible landscape from Stonehenge belongs to the ancient Temple of the Sun as the circumference to the hub of a wheel. A long barrow on the downs is a toy down in itself, while the great pyramidal hill of Silbury, near Avebury, has become Nature's but for a certain stamp of apartness in its form. Nor would it be true to say that these monuments, adding fuller lines to Nature, have gathered beauty because they are half as old as time. The centuries, whose procession has passed over them, have altered them little more than have the winds. Where they were once white they are now green—that is all.



"It was the twisty, curly lanes and highways of the Middle Ages which made England more truly and variously herself; they, like the prehistoric greenways, established the winding corner that so exactly tallies with English country beauty."

The Celts, Romans, and Saxons introduced much less significant changes in our landscape than the national vanity of our textbooks will admit. The Celts had very little to say for themselves except Arms and the Man; both for burial and ceremony they mainly used the monuments they found here, while they undertook no fresh adventures into the forested plains. The Roman settlements were an exploitation rather than colonization, and the poor relics of their handiwork in comparison with that of the megalith-builders reveal their anxiety to get what they could out of the land rather than to enrich it. Many of their military roads were but a straightening out of the megalithic trackways, and here Nature had more work to do in softening their rigidity. Nor can straight roads, as the modern motor road so vilely demonstrates, ever become familiar with English landscape. It was the twisty, curly

lanes and highways of the Middle Ages which made England more truly and variously herself. They, like the prehistoric greenways before them, established the principle of the winding corner that so exactly tallies with the shy, evanescent revelations of English country beauty. The share of the Saxons in maturing the configuration of the land has been grossly exaggerated through the political partisanship of Freeman and Froude. The Saxons were lowlanders who made small clearings by the sides of streams; but whether for weal or woe of landscape beauty, their small islanded homesteads can have made little more impression upon the length and breadth of English swamp and forest than the rubber settlement in the Amazonian jungle today. Possibly their strip system of cultivation caused parts of the valleys to look like the striated vineyard patches in the southern plains of France. There is no comparison between these horizontal ribbons and the generous corn platforms of the megalith-builders.

The age of the tower and the keep was followed by that of the monastery and the cathedral. The first period accentuated that appearance of concentrating upon specific points of land which was characteristic of megalithic England, while the second dotted the wild with rich gardens. The cathedrals gathered townships about them, and the abbey and the monastery set the style for the English country house with its park, lake, and spinney abutting on the wilderness. The landscape gardening movement in the eighteenth century greatly artificialized the process. Such changes as the drainage of the fens, the clearance of the forest, the demarcation of common lands, the growth of cultivation extending ultimately (as in Cobbett's time) even to the tops of the downs, and the establishment of the yeomanry, proceeded in a continuous development from the Middle Ages onwards without being seriously or for long periods interrupted by the wars of the nobility, the Black Death, or the tragedies of social oppression, which make our history only less bloody than its complementary prototypes. The face of England was changing, but so slowly that only great leaps of time would have marked the closer and closer intermingling of the eternal rhythm of Nature with the works of man.

A precipitous and revolutionary change was, however, dumped upon England by the enclosing of the common land in the nineteenth century. But the irregularity of the freehold system, both in time and in extent, is not so well recognized. Hurstbourne in the Hampshire highlands, for instance, was for long years the King's land. From him it passed to the Tarrant Monastery in Dorset, and was then acquired by a family who leased it to a current profiteer. He it was who began extensive enclosures of a country whose varieties of ownership had hitherto been followed by no remoulding of its essential outlines. It might be asked why English country means principally hedges enclosing meadow land and French country still retains its open boundless plains, though the process of the seizure of the common lands was the same in both. The answer is that the enclosures in England were inaugurated by rich men on a large scale, whereas the French Revolution consolidated the peasantry in the possession of their land. The enclosures bore far more heavily upon the richer yeomanry of England than upon the peasant proprietors of France.

Up to the industrial revolution, man's relations with Nature in effect were those of a co-operative partnership in a mutual interchange not perhaps of goodwill on either side, but certainly of benefits. Even the wanton expropriation of the enclosure system did no harm to Mother Earth, only her labouring sons. But with the coming of the Railway Age, followed in furious sequence by the Motor and the Bungaloid Age of today, these bonds of communication were abruptly broken, and Englishmen began to impose themselves on the English countryside in the spirit of conquering aliens. The beginnings of the decline of agriculture corresponded with the pimpling of the north with industrial cities. Thistle and factory together combined to invade agricultural England in precisely the same way as Puritanism and promiscuity have made an alliance of opposites to destroy the conception of romantic love. The great wave of industrial development is already spending its force in the north and has begun to roll its sooty waters south, as industrialized towns like Reading and Oxford clearly warn us.

Other multifarious consequences of man's industrial mood of conquest over Nature have manifested themselves in all directions. The mongrel suburb has destroyed the particularity of division between town and country, in which each, living side by side, was true to itself. The oak, the beech, the lime, and the elm, which shared their individualities between human tradition and natural nobility, are being replaced by the monotony of disciplined conifers, as standardized as the commercial mentality which has ordained them. The harsh lines of the quarry obliterate the green rollers of the downs. The motor road, inhuman, unnatural, and altogether relentless, drives like a ram through the countryside with as much regard for its forms and design as a hot poker drawn over a carpet. Its great scars across the face of England lead us towards what Professor G. M. Trevelyan calls "the mechanized landscape of the future." The old roads, often buttressed with primrosed banks, and so truly modelled to the country qualities on either side of them, give way to these great tar tracks with their concrete borders, rows of equidistant trees, metal-vomit of petrol stations, and bellowing advertisements. The builder riots through the land like a skin disease, spilling scarlet hutments all over Salisbury Plain, making fungus pleasure-towns sprout over the turf solitudes of the downs, putting up red brick in the stone countries. The old woods are grubbed up—Harewood Forest, the scene of W. H. Hudson's romance, *Dead Man's Plack*, disappeared during the war—and the starveling wire fence evolves in the march of civilization from the hedge with all its prodigalities of life, colour, form, and line. It is a melancholy and ironic reflection that the wide distribution for the first time in history of a real love for the country should correspond with a period in which enlightened bodies like the National Trust have to wrest inches of untouched England from the devouring grasp of Progress.

H. J. MASSINGHAM

"Iberian and Armenoid . . . added a new dignity to Nature without departing from the harmonious graces of her downland." Illustration from Mr. Massingham's Downland Man [*Jonathan Cape*].

Colour Vignettes
on a Rural Ride

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The Master Colour of England

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RIDING away from Avebury, which is the old metropolis of Britain, towards the Cotswolds, and looking round at the near pastures and the downs now growing less, beyond them, I saw that the master colour of England was not green so much as grey, a greenish grey. This was plainly so on the downs, which had never been under the plough; but the wind, which was then blowing pretty hard, made it clear on the grass lands also, as it turned up the soffits of the leaves and showed the grass stems. It is not a cold colour, for it is very friendly to other colours beside it, to red especially, and to brown; to blue when that comparatively rare colour appears; and even to yellow, although the ordinary grey and yellow are difficult to match with one another, as I found in putting my grey nag to my yellow trap. This green grey is prettiest in the South and South Midlands, but I have found it looking well in other localities; it is always there, but not always noticeable. In the Cotswolds, for instance, there is a fair amount of land under the plough; also, lying just below the tilth, the old brown stone becomes frequently exposed on the sides of hills. There appears an amount of oxide of iron in this and the subsoil, so that the fields, the quarries, and the houses are all one colour. A long street of one of their bigger villages looked to me like one of the furrows in the arable, with shards turned up on end to make gables, walls, towers, and chimneys. The result went well with the bossy woods on their hills, and the large undulations of the ground.

I descended from Chipping Campden into Warwickshire by the Stratford Road. It was like coming from a ploughed field into a thicket beneath dense leafage and along thick avenues of oaks.

All these wooded counties, as Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, and parts of Kent and Berkshire, showed very vivid colouring in their native architecture, and I warrant it was partly the need for direction and distinctness to a man threading his way through them. The following story, for the truth of which my informant vouched, was told me about a brewer and an architect of this neighbourhood.

The latter had built a public-house in the half-timber style of the country, but, with an eye too sensible of refinement in colour and of the atmospheric tones of Mr. Whistler, had left plaster and oak in the naked state to weather. The brewer, outraged at what he first thought was neglect to complete the work, after hearing the æsthetic side of the question, explained to the architect the common sense of colour. He said that, of course, his sober and regular customers would find the "Beecham Arms" anywhere or anyhow; but the others, straying down from the emptied pots of the "Red Lion," needed tar and whitewash to guide them to his house. A merely grey building would appear to their half-drowned eyes to be only a ghost of a pub, or to be an old grey mare with two heads, or Mother Hubbard's blankets on the line.

Indeed, I think the brewer was right. In the country there is much sensible heraldry remaining, though it alters to suit new things without any submission to the Heralds' College.

When I reached the marches of Wales, the stone used for farm buildings was quarried as near as might be, and it was apt to be indistinguishable from the rocks and hillsides. The custom was to whitewash it, and so not only keep out the weather, but give a clear signal against the landscape. In Wales itself the same thing occurred, and made it easy for a drover taking sheep to a new owner, or for a cowman taking a heifer, to spot the white farm, his objective, lying under the lee of a mountain.

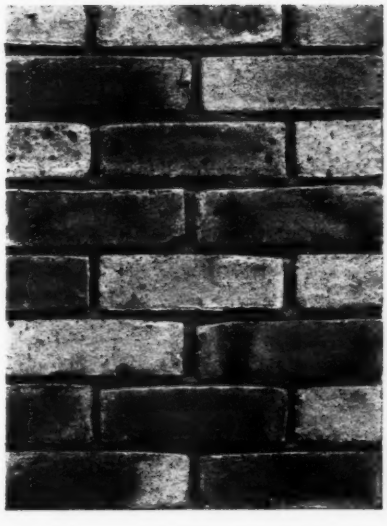
Some of the slates used in Wales were too thin to keep out cold or heat; however, I owned they looked best in their native places, and this seems an adequate reason for keeping them there.

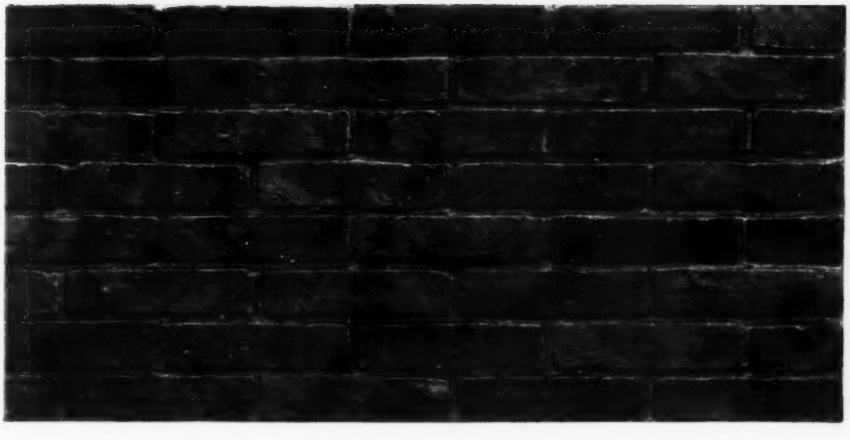
At one time English builders threatened to use them to the exclusion of tiles. It was almost unbelievable how muddy they made the English landscape appear; probably they were too near in colour to the green-grey which I have called the master colour of England. A live eye is not the colour of the same eye dead. In Wales, as in other hilly districts, the stone was so difficult to transport that any reasonably shaped stones were taken for walls; they built the old churches so, and their harsh brown tints are deepened in effect by the shadows of broken arrises; I saw one lighted up in the afterglow of the day, holding a candle to the rough sublimity of the mountains. The rivers and stumpy oaks along the valleys made these pleasantly green.

"All these wooded counties, as parts of Kent and Berkshire, showed very vivid colouring in their native architecture." A Kentish farm of brick and clapboard painted white, with plain red tile roof.

SILVER-GREY FACING BRICKS. ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BRICKS IN ENGLAND, AND TRUE MATE OF THE SOUTH COUNTRY RED BRICK.

LEFT, OAK BARK. A LIGHT BRICK BURNT IN THE EAST RIDING, GIVING A GREYISH RED WITH THE EAST COAST PANTILES. RIGHT, SUSSEX STOCKS. VARYING IN COLOUR FROM GREY AND BROWN TO PURPLE.





FLARED RED BRICKS, OF COARSE TEXTURE, USEFUL FOR CHIMNEY STACKS ON STONE HOUSES IN SUSSEX.

I returned across Shropshire into the Midland Plain and soon came to buildings of that singular red stone which is found at Runcorn and Penkridge. It must be described by way of simile; for the church at the latter place might be made of rose petals, twisted into buttresses, traceried windows and parapets, yet still keeping their infiltration of light.

On leaving this district for Derbyshire, it was noticeable how buildings and landscape became colder looking and less elegant. As the mountains of the Pennine Range began to lift out of the flat Trent pastures, and the horizon was more broken, the villages and farms became duller. The colour seemed thick and heavy and to clog the brush of the wind which swept over me from the east, and this notwithstanding that there was much greenish grey on the hills.

I perceived later that white was very helpful in cleaning up the grey and giving it what the painters call quality. But this made it a different grey from that of the South country. The black in the industrial villages gave the same effect of cleaning their smoky grey, by contrast.

It was when riding through these to North Lancashire that I noticed a curious thing. The Accrington brick never seemed warm to look at, although it was red.

When considering either the large rural parts of Britain or those which were spotted with factory towns and villages, I had often to remind myself that a hundred years ago the colours were different. Then there were few factories or mines and many of those worked by horse power; and, secondly, a far greater area was under the plough. The landscape of Constable's day was far browner in the winter and more golden in the late summer and autumn than today, and the whole effect was incomparably richer and, in my opinion, more healthy looking. However, we still have much of the old complexion of things, and native colours will stand fast in the old buildings as well as in the soil. It seems an act of piety to try to retain them, and I was very pleased to note some intelligent brickmakers of Lancashire had experimented with dragged faces and "teapot" shades to that end.

The brown sandstone, stained with rust and sometimes with lime, looked coarse but true to type along the Pennine Range; it was not till I reached the Westmorland fells that I came again to anything refined in colour and style. The slate roofs of that county, especially when weathered, are a beautiful grey-green, almost like the neglected silver of some old manor house when verdigris has been allowed

Right Materials

THE illustrations published on pages 666 to 671 of small houses built in the traditional manner of local materials, in various counties, fairly represent types, one or other of which may still be found in any county. The class of dwelling which is now being built for similar occupants is not satisfactory. Many of the old cottages illustrated are built with materials which it is not now practicable to use, either because of the initial costs or on account of the costs of upkeep. Of the former, stone-slate roofs are an instance, and of the latter, straw thatch is an obvious example. Stone walling also is rapidly being superseded by brick. If the brick is of suitable colour it might take its place in a stone country without being offensive, but, unfortunately, brick of garish colour is often seen, and when this is capped with an equally garish roof-covering, the result appals even the dullest taste. Brick—that is good-coloured brick—red plain tiles, and, in their districts, red pantiles, still hold their own fairly well. Where brick is a bad colour, it may be rendered or whitewashed, while where rural district bylaws permit, white-painted clapboarding on studding (plastered inside) makes a warm and cheap walling.

THE present tendency is to substitute patent roof-coverings or purple Welsh slates for tiles because they require roof timbers of smaller scantlings, and fewer in number; so materially reducing costs. It would be idle to condemn all such substitutes; moreover, they have come, they are being used, and they cannot be ignored. It should be possible, however, to guide manufacturers in the direction of producing such things as asbestos tiles of more pleasing colours and forms, if not also of better texture. Instead of the dreadful pink tiles, which were once the only alternative of equally unpleasing grey ones, there are now on the market flat tiles of "russet" colour and asbestos pantiles of the same colouring, which are distinctly better. Recognizing, in all probability, the drawbacks of these large, thin tiles, another tile has been put upon the market which produces the effect of a roof covered with small fish-scale tiles; but it seems as though the colourist had not been consulted when these were designed, for they are a magenta red, and when associated with orange-red ridges and hips, as can be seen, produce results which are unsatisfactory. The production of these tiles suggests that manufacturers recognize that large, thin tiles are not pleasing, and a cursory examination of the illustrations of old roofs shows that much of their beauty lies in the thickness of the slates and tiles. On the other hand, the smaller the unit, the thinner it may be.

to stay in the gravings. The descent to Carlisle was memorable for meeting the pink stone from Dumfries-shire, holding a colour which carries on towards Glasgow.

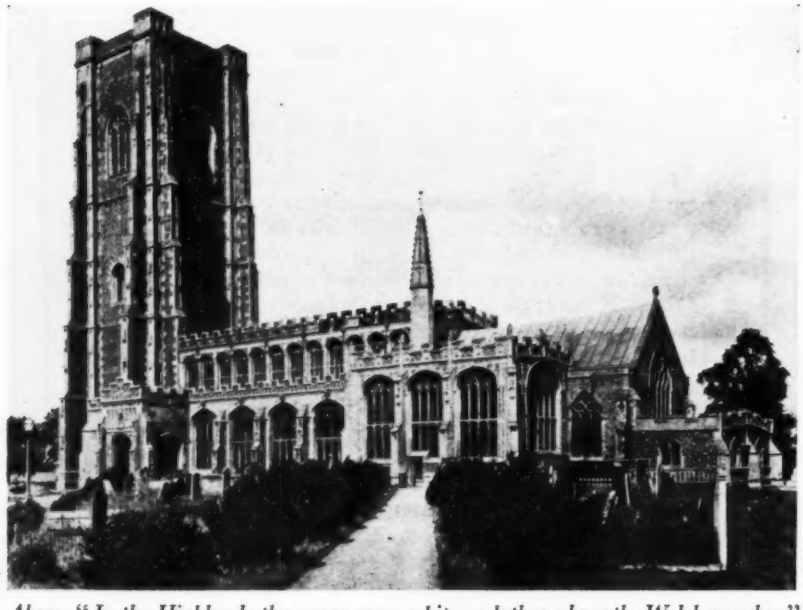
I confess the Scottish villages looked too lean of beauty to be worth an old song. If beauty is a garment, then these seemed indecently clad. Their colour was just drab; their lack of flower-yards left them unrelieved; they looked unreal or, at least, unmade to me. But a Scotsman told me that English villages seemed to him just coloured for a play acting, not very respectable, with their gaudy flowers. A Scotsman always thinks there is something wild and undomesticated about a flower.

In the Highlands there was more whitewash than along the Welsh marches, and to preserve the bases of the buildings against the extreme wet, they were tarred, and also the margins round the doors and windows. The gloomy grandeur of the scenery, its purple magnificence in autumn, received a definition of the enormous scale of the mountains and lochs from this sharp colouring of the houses. Round Edinburgh, as was fitting, I found some good colour in manses and farms; clean grey walls and darker roofs; Craigleith stone is the foundation for this tradition of honest, unimaginative shaping of houses. R. L. Stevenson has drawn these solitary habitations with a firm line:

> A naked house, a naked moor,
> A shivering pool before the door,
> . . . . . .
> Such is the house that I live in
> Bleak without and bare within.

As I rode away from Edinburgh a very nice colour met my eye; one which I was to have all my journey down the East Coast, and which, being a roof colour, dominates the others—I mean the pure red of pantiles. The satisfaction it gave came, I believe, from its relation to the East Coast atmosphere, which is fairly dry and changes little. Out at sea, the fishermen told me, the greyish red streak of roofs reached them over the grey sea which seemed perpetually to be trying to rise and drown it. In the East Riding there was a pale red brick they made which charmed the eye when used with these pantiles; but farther down, in East Anglia, they used flints for many of the walls. The old Suffolk church was a composition of grey, made up of stone, flints, glass, and lead on the roof, and when wet with a shower reflected as much of the parish as lay around. The folk here seemed very honest, and this county reminded me of a Spaniard who told me England was the colour of glass with the liquid transparency of water. Behind this sea-belt of grey and green I rode as far as the great stone district of Rutland and Northants, where, as in the Cotswolds, a man can almost dig up his house on the site. The colour seemed the sunniest of all English stones, and Stamford in the twilight is a town of homogeneous masses, one lovely colour over each and all; it looked as warm as a rickyard of sweet-smelling haystacks. This was a great contrast to Essex work, where I felt in a painter's frame of mind; plaster, bricks, tiles, flints, weather boarding, white paint; here was a generous palette and the tradition of elegant painting; for the effect of a long street was like that of a picture where the eye could drain gaiety to its satisfaction.

After crossing the Thames I was shown, in a new house of considerable size, a coloured and modelled map of the owner's estate, the map being built into the chimney breast of his hall. He seemed delighted with the idea, which was his architect's, and was never tired of admiring it, both because it ministered to his pride and because he really loved his land, and to the colour which brought it to his



Above, "In the Highlands there was more whitewash than along the Welsh marches." The stone walls of this house are coloured pale yellow. Below, "The old Suffolk church was a composition of grey, made up of stone, flints, glass, and lead on the roof; and when wet with a shower reflected as much of the parish as lay around."

mind. He said he could tell whether his land were in health from the colour —a just observation, for I remembered a great-uncle of mine living at Rushall Manor in the Pewsey Vale, with so lazy a body that he could not drag it from bed for a fortnight at a time, would survey his land from his window sill and determine by the colour of arable or of crops, and by the gloss and sheen on the beasts, what was necessary to be done on the farm, and so instruct his bailiff.

In Kent the builder's difficulty was to reconcile the cold, brown ragstone with the warm brown roof tiles and red vertical tiling; oak timber work and white plaster were used to help the scheme with excellent results. The clean and simple lines of the traditional dwellings fitted well into the orchards. From the east corner of Sussex as far as Devonshire stretches a heavy, rich soil, with the downs making their grey-green excursions into it. I noticed a depth and weight in the colouring and a decided blueness in the shadows above any other part. The grass was a solid green impasto; a wooded hill, it being then autumn, looked like a large plum cake mixed with a heavy hand. The Sussex farmhouse and barns and skillings, simple in shape, large in composition, covered grandly with stone tiles, and attached to the soil by its strong brown colour—this was the district's monument. The lighter colour of Dorset stone was more charming at Abbotsbury, and looked more pathetic at Corfe, but neither was so racy of the soil.

In Devon and Cornwall I found a pretty example of quality in craftsmanship; the greenish grey of their slate hanging combined with the thin lines of the slate to be very refined, and contrasted strongly with the rusticity of cob walls, random granite, and thatch. It seemed better to avoid the North Devon coast and to take the road through the avenues of high Somersetshire Towers back towards Avebury. I concluded that in the matter of colour the circuit round Bath, Reading, Swindon, and Salisbury, holding notably the Bath and Chilmark stones and the Reading and Basing brick beds, was the most engaging of all. The people seemed more aware of colour; the most unlikely—an old farmer, compact of shrewdness and the idolatry of farthings —swore to me the Almighty had done no handsomer thing than a cock pheasant strutting in a meadow. The men, whom Cockneys have called "chawbacons," have decorated their cottages with red roses and filled their flower-yards with pink peonies or yellow dahlias. Their possessions have been small and it has long been the rule to have them vividly marked, for it helps in the separateness of hens and other property with legs or wheels. The sweep should have a black pony, the kicking hunter a ribbon to his tail, the covered ewe a patch of red paint, one farmer's wagon blue wheels, and another's a red body. They have never loved the common silver landscape between autumn and spring, except as a foil to brighter colours; and they have hated a view because the vantage point for it is uncommonly draughty. Their choice has been to live in a valley facing the north or east side, or in some "bottom" of the downs where their village has

> Gazed like water from a well
> At the grey soaring citadel
> Of pearl wall and pinnacle,

but where the men would rather contemplate litters of Berkshire black and yellow pigs at closest view, and themselves beget brilliantly blue-eyed sons and daughters. This country, then, I found so rich in variety and distinctions that I studied each village for its own personality. There was Broughton Gifford, built of Corsham

Above, a seventeenth-century cottage group in Northumberland. The walls are roughly coursed rubble, and the roof is of stone slates laid in diminishing courses. Below, "In Devon and Cornwall . . . the greenish grey of their slate . . . contrasted strongly with the rusticity of cob walls, random granite, and thatch."

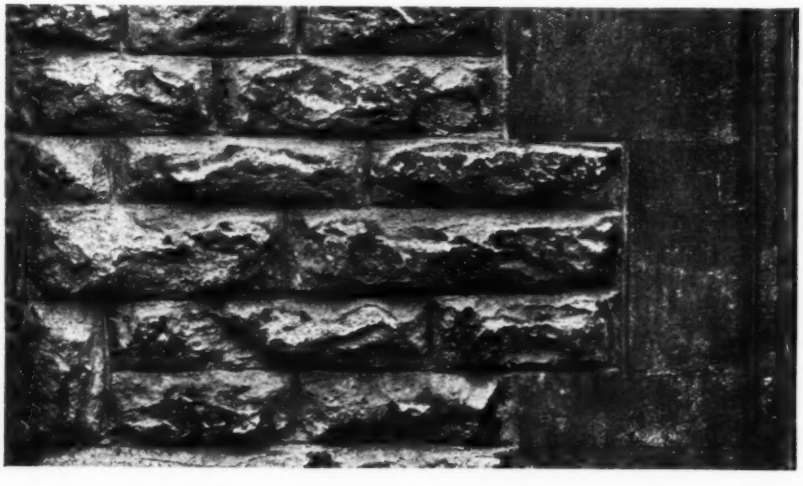
A piece of quite passable coursed rubble walling. It has been spoiled by brutal cut and by shuck joints in cement: the worst possible kind of pointing.

oolite, which looked very stately disposed round its common, and with the cream-coloured stone showing between the elms; Rood Ashton on the border of the Bath country, with the white bestiary of enormous gargoyles round the church, and a small house in the street which is one of the best compositions in colour I had seen—it had a cream stone base, oak framing filled in with scarlet bricks, and a warm brown roof, and was built in the late Gothic time; and there was Old Basing, built of Tudor bricks as red as roses, from the ruins of Basing House; and I had much satisfaction in finding the master colour of England, that greenish grey, running up into the stone buildings round Salisbury which are built of Chilmark limestone. Of all I had seen, these were the most homelike.

Not only the health of crops and beasts was apparent from their colour, but of architecture also. There was the "great Wen," as Cobbett called London, seen to be spreading its ugliness farther, blistering fields and woods with a raw red; also many little crowds of houses were noticed badly grouped for pleasing colour. The single house or bungalow was also often an eyesore, but those which had been erected for a few years were being covered with creepers and surrounded with bushes. I thought the crowds of houses the most impious in destroying the native colours. I was told to expect a fresh kind of crowd very soon, built in the style of the new architecture. From what I gathered, the effect would be similar to a picture our vicar's son at Lydiard Malaprop executed, of the Mothers' Meeting Outing painted in the nude; he called it "Peace."

P. M. STRATTON

Above, wide shuck joints which remain smooth and do not weather. Below, a piece of particularly unpleasant stone walling. There is a good deal of labour in this: four sides of each stone are roughly worked, the joints being rather narrow. It should be noted how the hard joint and "dragged" face of the window jamb emphasizes the roughness of the stone.



Building

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Why Prices

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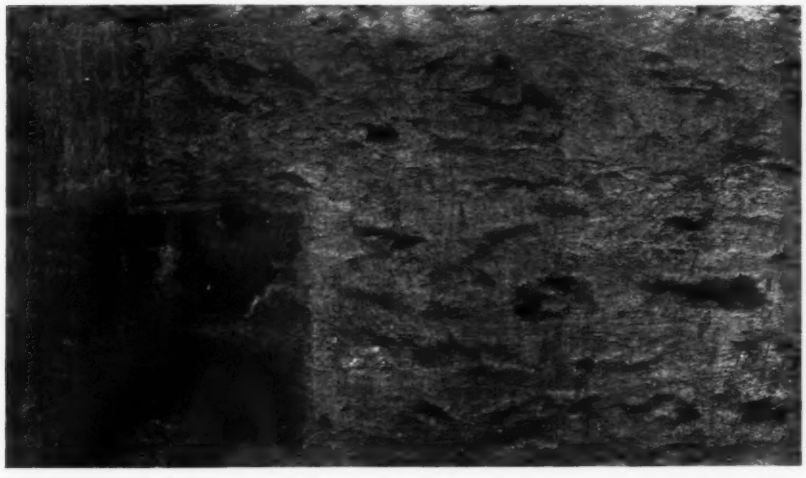
WHY is it that in countries where stone can be got easily and cheaply there is such a growing tendency to use brick for small houses and cottages? I shall be told at once—cost. But ought it to cost so much more? Good rubble building stone can be bought at many quarries in the Cotswold country, for instance, at 4s. per load—about a cubic yard. The material is much cheaper than brick, which costs about 20s. per cubic yard at the works The extra cost is not in the material itself, but comes under the head of:—



Slurried rubble walling: A beautiful weatherproof wall, quick to do, with a first-rate texture. The stone (quoins excepted) is used just as it comes from the quarry.

Above, coursed rubble walling. Each stone is roughly squared and there is a good deal of axeing on the face. The joints in this example are rather hard. Below, rubble laid with wide mortar joints well flushed up and "bagged off." This is a cheap and beautiful form of walling which never looks raw when new and yet mellows well with age; the mortar will attract lichens and mosses as much as the stone.

in Stone

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Keep High

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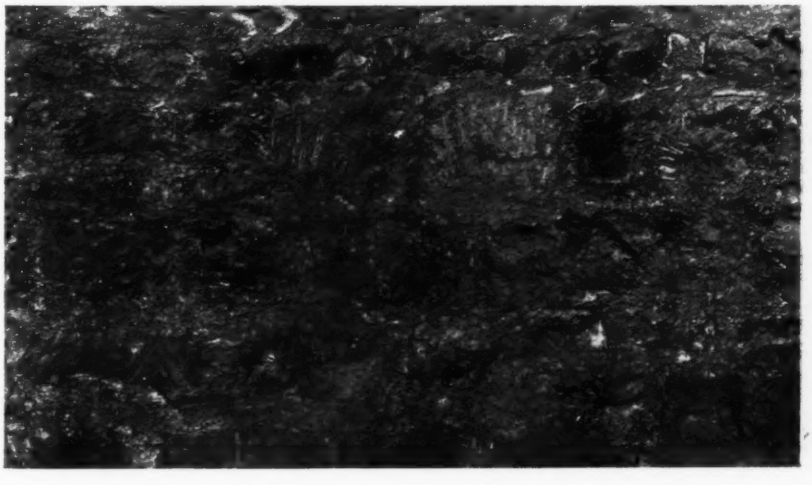
1: Transport

Assuming that the brickyard and the quarry are the same distance from the site, the cost of transport is double as much in the case of stone, as walls must be 18 in. or 16 in. at least, instead of 9 in. or 11 in. cavity with brick. As, however, the quarry is frequently very much nearer than the brickworks, this item is not so costly as it sounds. I can point to numerous cases where brick has been hauled eight miles or more and used instead of good stone obtainable within two miles, and downhill at that.

2: Labour

This is the item which so often kills the use of stone. Firstly, a brick being a mechanically-made object of a standard size is easier and quicker to lay. It must be admitted that even in country districts the younger men who can do either stone walling or brickwork often prefer the latter. In or around towns it is very difficult to get good wallers. But there are still a great many men who take a pride in good stone walling, and to such men "a house" means a stone house—other buildings are "hovels" by comparison. And this is as it should be in a stone country. Also some builders who get an inquiry for a stone house treat it as they would an inquiry for an oak staircase. "Here's a man with money to burn," and the price goes up accordingly. But the principal labour item is that put into the working of the stone itself. There are three rough categories of stone walling: 1: Ashlar. Stone worked to a fair face with a chisel and laid with joints about $\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide. This means working five faces, and its great cost rules it out in humble buildings. 2: Chopped stone. This is dressed with an axe, each stone being squared and laid with joints about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide. Although much less in cost than ashlar, it is still much higher than brickwork. 3: Rubble walling. This is the most suitable type for simple work, and it can be built for very little if any more than brick *if* the stone is used as nearly as possible as it comes from the quarry. It must, of course, be good, flat stuff, and as straight as possible. Only projecting angles should be knocked off with an axe, no attempt being made to dress the stone. Laid with wide



joints of 1 in. or even more of good lime mortar it makes a very beautiful wall. The joints should be well flushed up and rubbed off with a bag or with the side of the trowel, or it may be slurried with freshly-mixed lime mortar about as thick as cream applied with a brush. This, I think, makes the best wall of all. It is a pity that one so seldom sees it done (see illustrations). The question of pointing is most important and surprisingly neglected. The difference between a real wall and a collection of stones is great. The other points where costs are higher with stone are: 1: the extra cost of mortar; 2: the extra cost of raising so much more material; 3: the extra time taken in building, involving a longer use of plant. None of these is very formidable. Against this must be set the greater comfort of a stone house in hot or cold weather.

GORDON RUSSELL

Above, a reinforced concrete lintel set in rubble walling. Texture is given to the concrete by pouring it into formwork of specially woven osier hurdles.

Regional Building

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Coxcomb and Ship's Prow

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Good Materials of Today

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WHEN real roads were non-existent and railways not invented, builders were perforce restricted to the use of local material, which automatically solved the assimilation question. Local material may be good or bad—or perhaps it is more proper to say may be subject to few or many limitations in use—but it is always local, differing in some measure from the material of any other district, and its use, with the limitations which experience quickly taught when it was handled solely and of necessity, soon built up a local character of form and colour. The example familiar to everyone is, of course, the Cotswolds, but equally racy of the soil are the cob and thatch of Devon, chalk and flint of Wiltshire, and flint, brick, and reed of Norfolk. Each possesses local character strongly marked. There are no walls which twist and wind in such sinuous lines as the Devon cob walls, nor any in which all suggestion of angularity has been so completely eliminated; and Devon thatch, while preserving a general smoothness of surface which surpasses all other thatch, also rises and falls with the walls and sweeps over dormers or inequalities with a suavity all its own—the suavity in fact of the gracious south-western landscape. Similarly, other counties than Wiltshire use chalk and flint, but the Wiltshire use of it is an unstudied pattern which may be likened to a patchwork quilt and resembles no other, while Wiltshire thatch (still a living art) has a large simplicity and general roundness which again is highly individual.

The curious fact here enters that although there are still a few districts, chiefly the more remote parts of Wales and Cornwall, where primitive local materials are still freely used in every-day building, and where using such the actual cost of the work does not differ markedly from work of similar class carried out with "imported" material in other parts of the country, yet as soon as "foreign" material becomes available the old-time methods are quickly dropped, or if maintained or revived are at once found more costly than they were hitherto. As a case in point, I know two small coast towns on opposite sides of the country, where, within the last fifty years, houses (and cheap apartment houses) were commonly built of stone which was, and still could be, easily got from the seashore. Now a machine-made brick is wholly used, yet houses are not proportionally cheaper, while if stone-work once so common is desired it must be paid for on a luxury basis.

We are accustomed in these days to bring everything on to an economic basis, but evidently there are other reasons as well as pure economics tending to the extinction of the highly specialized local building practice or folk-architecture of country districts, and an attempt to appraise such possible causes and possibly to suggest means by which landowners might arrest them may be worth making.

THATCHING

The thatcher's is now the only individualist craft remaining. It has never been reduced to rules, and nowhere is it possible to visit a shop and buy a set of thatcher's tools—each makes his own according to his own idea and experience. The amount of variety in the thatching practice of different districts is enormous and most fascinating to observe between the perky "coxcomb" hip finial of west Somerset and the solid "ship's prow" gable apex of north-west Essex (the names are my own), or the rounded ridging of Wiltshire and the pinked overlay "roving" of Norfolk.

Reasons for the gradual supersession of thatch as a roofing material are easy to find. Neglecting such obvious ones as danger of fire and short life, other causes are: 1: the reduction of labour on farms by the use of Dutch beams in lieu of thatched ricks with the incidental consequence that the thatcher now finds himself only fitfully employed, and there are then no new entries to the trade; 2: the use of mechanical reapers and thrashers, so bruising the straw as to make it unfit for use, and necessitating special arrangements if thatchers' straw is required; and 3: the laborious nature of the work itself which appeals little to the modern spirit.

Though the estate thatcher tends to die out, however, the contractor thatcher has appeared ready to send Norfolk

reed and Norfolk layers to the ends of the earth. Norfolk reed is, of course, really reed; in the West Country straw which is fit material for thatchers is called reed—creating some confusion. Norfolk reed is stiffer, stronger, and more bird-resistant than even the best straw—it permits of being driven home and packed very tight so as to present only ends to the industrious sparrow—and though the Achilles heel lies in its ridging which must unfortunately still be of straw or rush, good reed thatch undoubtedly has a life nearly double that of thrashed straw, and a new ridging and general comb down is not a serious matter at twenty-year intervals. Many estates contain marshy tracts upon which reeds even now grow in desultory fashion, and for the maintenance of thatch on old buildings now so covered, and for possible future needs, it might be worth while to encourage their growth. There is a market for them if in quantity worth harvesting.

COB

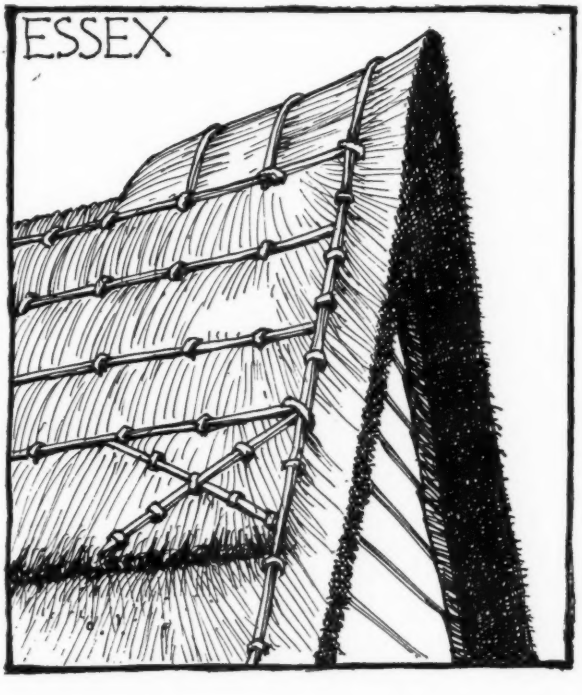
It is unlikely that the use of this material can be maintained or revived, notwithstanding the comfort of thick cob walls, which are very resistant to extremes of heat or cold and do not suffer from internal condensation. Cob is a messy business—the workers get mixed up to the knees and splashed up to the eyes; it is also a slow business, and this is before all a speedy age. The substitution of *pisé de terre*, which is a dry as opposed to a wet process, but necessitates stout shuttering, was strongly urged after the war, but early enthusiasm outran the possibilities of the process which depends more than any other on exact suitability of material actually on the site. In chalk districts, where pulverized chalk naturally occurs, very good walling can be made with this aggregate, used damp with a low proportion of cement (no water added), lightly rammed into shuttering, and it would be an interesting experiment for a downland owner to build suitably simple cottages in this material. No thick-walled methods of building lend themselves to complex modern plans.

RUBBLE

Rubble ranges from the thin shelly beds of Peterborough rag-stone (now used principally as bottoming material for roads) to the huge blocks of granite rock from which Cornwall still occasionally contrives to build. Excluding most of East Anglia, there are few English districts which fail to yield stone which at one time formed the mass material for its lesser buildings. Most of the old quarries have, however, either been worked out or abandoned at the stage when for safety of working a large amount of unremunerative overburden would have to be removed to continue stone-getting, but some still continue to be worked for road metal or for such modern crazes as crazy paving—one of the remunerative sidelines of stone production. It seems patently absurd that in face of all the bitter complaint as to cost of transport, material actually on or near rural sites could not be more commonly made use of for ordinary walling. There are three possible reasons for this apparent neglect to take advantage of the opportunity to build good buildings: 1: More thought and contrivance is needed in the planning and construction of a stone cottage, and a greater simplification than modern complicated needs make easy. It is not the complex, but the seemingly simple thing which evidences good design. 2: More mortar is needed for rubble walling than for brickwork, and this now has to be mortar—often old rubble walls would be jointed with loam. 3: Again, more time is expended. It does seem, however, that owners of large estates might give more thought to the exploitation for their own uses of the natural material which those estates would yield. Stone-getting would provide healthy employment for old men and young boys (assuming men in their prime to be occupied in agriculture or building); the landowner would not have to pay himself a royalty; where there is limestone there is lime and stone-dust or sand; and it might well prove on trial that the pleasure and enjoyment of organizing the extraction of good building material from the earth and its fashioning into beautiful and useful forms would be found at least equal to that of organizing a succession of shoots. It would certainly be more fruitful and less costly. Make a sport of it.

SLATES

The red roof fallacy is probably responsible for the neglect of many one-time active sources of roofing



slates. People are so blind to the obvious, under the enslavement of an accepted idea, that I have met many who simply cannot see that a slate roof can possess beauty—and this in the face of the lovely Ireborough slate roofs of Somerset, or the (alas! growing few) Swithland slates of Leicestershire. As evidence of the current outlook it is no uncommon thing to find coloured picture cards or posters deliberately transpose roof colours in old places from the lovely grey and yellow harmonies of old rough slate to the favoured red. As the wholly admirable *Housing Manual* recently issued by the Ministry of Health truly says: "In rural cottages the roofs figure most prominently in the landscape picture; the choice of a suitable covering for the roofs is therefore one of the most important considerations"; and again: "If cost or any other reason should prevent the adoption of certain prevailing local roofing materials, such as stone slabs, green slates, or thatch, that is no reason why the hardest of red tiles should be chosen to disfigure a Gloucestershire village."

BRICK AND TILE

The number of estates which now run brick and tile works must be very few—indeed the number of small independent brick and tile works generally must be much reduced. This may be regretted, but it is feared inevitable. The type of clamp burnt stock which such works once produced is now again in favour, and I can say from experience that for considerable works in remote situations it may yet pay to make bricks on the site—as was long ago the general custom; but for fitful employment the trouble and cost of running puts the private brickworks out of court. For the horrid bricks and tiles which are constantly seen used in estate work, I hazard the guess that the estate clerk of works type of person is largely responsible. With no desire at all to attack this solid and conscientious class, it is not overstating to say that his library commonly consists of a very out-of-date building construction book or two, and a few of the awful manuals on cottages and estate buildings which issued in such number in the 1870's—hence the hard, harsh, and true-to-shape standards which are his ideal. The fact that both experience and research have proved that the ideals are practically wrong as well as æsthetically abhorrent should lead to improvement in the near future.

"NEW" MATERIALS

We have now to accept and use as intelligently as we may the "new" materials for which no precedent exists in old work, and it is always more dangerous to introduce these amid rural or ancient surroundings than in urban or suburban localities. That it is not necessarily fatal to any charm which may exist I can prove by example. The old part of Lyme Regis was favoured by neglect until the early years of this century, and until a few years ago had not suffered any intrusion in the colour unity of its sea-front, which remained a beautiful harmony of greys, browns, and golden, produced by stone, old slate (Cornish and stone) thatch, buffwash, and unobtrusive grey brick. Simultaneously it was invaded by two new buildings—one an expensive brick and sham half-timber structure with tiled roof, metal casements, and lead glazing; the other a timber creosoted weatherboard, sash-windowed, and asbestos-slate roofed house. The architects of both are entirely unknown by me even by name, but I take off my hat to the designer of the asbestos-roofed house who has contrived a building which, despite its "cheap" and poor-sounding materials, does no harm whatever to the front and suits the colour tone to perfection. The more pretentious and costly building is, on the other hand, an outrage, and seen from the old harbour end (the Cobb), afflicts the vision in much the same fashion as a strident trombone discord would hurt the ear if introduced out of time in a soft orchestral passage for strings and wood-wind. With this preface I propose to run over the most common of the "new" materials, with a few remarks on their use and abuse.

CONCRETE

Concrete as a walling material can, of course, be given an overcoat, and when so treated it is not necessarily distinguishable from other materials similarly covered. A concrete cottage roughly plastered, without special effort to get a dead true face and distempered white or cream, can take its place quite well among cob or plastered neighbours. This presents no special difficulty. The unfortunate fancy that masonry design in big rock-faced blocks is a suitable technique for a concrete cottage has resulted in much ugliness. The jointing of a block-built cottage with even-sized units does not want accentuating but suppressing, if any sense of scale is to remain, and if naked blocks are to be used a relatively harmless effect can be attained by casting with a natural face and jointing with a flush joint in a similar colour to the blocks—the joints will then still be sufficiently apparent, but not obtrusive.

MACHINE-MADE BRICK

Though brick is as old as history, machine-made pressed brick is in effect a new material. This also can be covered with plaster or roughcast, but that may not be necessary—in which case, where cost is supremely important, it is wasteful. A coat of white- or buff-wash is a cheap and effective way of modifying the colour of unsympathetic materials, but unfortunately the most unpleasant-looking bricks quite usually fail to hold distemper, and the last state then is almost worse than the first. Furthermore the harsh

The Garden City of Bungledom

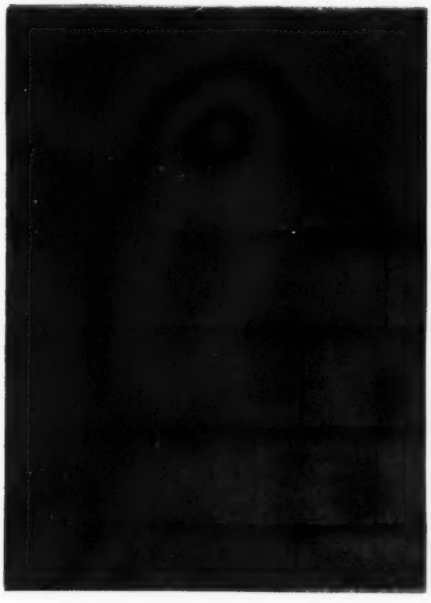
With apologies
to Mr. W. B. Yeates

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Bungledom,
And a small "Haven" build there of concrete reinforced;
Pink tiling will I buy me, for a very moderate sum,
With a trade-mark on each sheet endorsed.

And I shall have some noise there, for noise comes blaring loud,
Honking from the horns of the motors, in shattering tirade,
There midnight's loud with sharrys, *and noon with picnic crowd,*
And evening full of jazz relayed.

I will arise and go where, through jerry-builded walls,
I'll hear my neighbours winding responsive gramophones,
The sound of tea-bells clanging in narrow entrance halls,
And the dour self-starters' groans.

BARBARA EUPHAN TODD



ABOVE, LEFT, BROSELEY REDS. A FINE MELLOW TONE WHERE BRIGHT COLOUR IS DESIRED. RIGHT, BROSELEY BRINDLES. THE BRINDLES OF SHROPSHIRE, EXCELLENT IN COLOUR. BELOW, A RED TILE AND A DARK-STAINED TILE, SUITABLE FOR ROOFING ABOVE RED BRICK WALLS, AND ROUGH CAST OR CEMENT RENDERING.

and angular contours of the jointing of such bricks as Fletton are little softened by a coat or two of whitewash. I have found that a first coat of super-cement slurry, brushed on to Fletton brickwork unpointed, results in a surface resembling stock walling and will adhere tenaciously, while a coat of distemper which will fail to remain long on the bare bricks will last well on the super-cement skin.

INTERLOCKING TILES

Many very offensively shaped and coloured tiles are used—often unfortunately in substitution for thatch on old cottages. For a few shillings per 1,000 extra, the same makers would supply duncoloured tiles which can be used quite unobtrusively in the most precious surroundings—they have, in fact, very much the colour of old thatch. Several groups of modern cottages built round about Porlock Weir in which every economy consistent with soundness and inoffensiveness has evidently been practised, afford admirable examples of what can be done without extravagance. They are simple, straightforward, and modern, using scratched plaster finish on brick or concrete walls, standard metal casements, and duncoloured double-roll Roman tiles, and they hurt nobody. Near by are other examples which shout across five miles of country.

ASBESTOS TILES

Asbestos-cement is the worst offender of all the "new" materials. In the common diagonal form and shrimp-pink colour, it always looks poor and shoddy. Yet it is possible to roof buildings with asbestos-cement without offence. The house at Lyme Regis, before referred to, has straight-cover slates with clipped corners, in the natural grey-green of the material, which look quite harmless—the absence of the restless diagonal lines and cardboard look of the tile corners, and slight suggestion of texture given by the clipped angles of the grey slates helps wonderfully. In surroundings where red roofs are appropriate and on roofs able to stand their bold scale, Bell's Poilite pantiles in rustic red make a roof of which no one need feel ashamed.

EDWIN GUNN

Short-Term Building

★

One-horse Shay and Twenty-Year House

★

A REVOLUTION is with us, swift and devastating. It began before the war, it grew rapidly during the war years and has made giant strides since. Its cause was the determination of what we used to call, and still must call until somebody invents a more suitable name, the lower and the lower-middle classes, to get a larger share than they had had before of the joys of life, to have better food, better dress, more comfortable housing, more amusements, more leisure, and, of course, better pay. These are excellent things; they have been largely attained, and the country is a better place to live in than it was for the two classes mentioned. But side by side with the growth of Socialistic ideas—rather out of favour at present—has grown up an intense individualism or selfishness, whose chief instruments are the motor-car and the small house, while the most manifest and deplorable result is the destruction of the beauty of our land. It is with the small house that we are most concerned here, but the former is so tightly bound up with it that it cannot be left out of account.

Jaures once exclaimed: "What! do you think you can have a revolution without smashing things?" And we are having the smash with a vengeance! In a single year the number of those slain by motor-car and motor-cycle on our roads outnumber the total of the victims by guillotine, noyade, and otherwise during the whole period of the Terror in the French Revolution, which event Carlyle declared to be "one of the frightfullest things ever born of time." It is not only the dead and wounded on our roads that mark the progress of the new revolution, not only that our nerves are shattered, our houses disintegrated slowly or rapidly by vibration, and our pockets emptied by demands for new, straighter, and wider roads, for new and bigger bridges, but our country's beauty is sacrificed, old and dear landmarks are disappearing, and our once quiet and peaceful spots are to be found only by "following the party with the concertina."

The housing requirements of the nation were so great and pressing that we must accept some destruction of our country's beauty as inevitable. It may be easy to criticize the housing schemes of this or that public body, but many of them have shown an earnest desire to preserve the amenities of their localities and, on the whole, the damage done has not been greater than could be helped. The action of the Government—local and imperial—in this matter may be justified. The trouble does not lie there; it lies with the speculative builder and the private owner. Of the ruthlessness of the private owner nothing need be said; it is too manifest, and he is not more to blame than the landowner who sold him the land for his operations.

In the matter of building, more especially in country districts, each man seems to be a law unto himself. He sees a site which he likes and there he builds, thinking only of himself and

The estate cottages and stabling at Thoreston Hall, near Bamburgh, Northumberland. By Mauchlen and Weightman.

careless as to whether his new house will be an offence to others' eyes and ruin a charming prospect. The speculative builder is an even greater sinner, for he works on greater lines and his houses are generally badly built and worse designed. He is responsible for most of the "ribbon" development along our new roads, the despair of borough and county surveyors and sanitary authorities. He, too, is responsible for the horrid "bungaloid" growth on beauty spots and along our shores. It is the private owner who is responsible for the ruin of our lovely old villages by the incongruity of the new buildings with their ancient surroundings. One does not need to be an architect to be shocked by a visit to some old village, with its grey, old church, its pargeted or weatherboarded old cottages, its little green with the big tree around which the elder villagers used to group and the children to play until the car chased them off. He may find now some new but indifferently constructed cottages, a vulgar little shop or two, a garage with its row of gaudily-painted petrol pumps and its plaster of advertisements. And these horrors could have been avoided so easily at an insignificant expense with ultimate economy, perhaps even an immediate saving, by employing a competent architect.

Many of the small houses so unskilfully dotted over our land are so flimsily built as to remind one of the frankly temporary structures made for exhibitions. The excuse for them is said to be economic, that in a few years dwellings built today will be out of date and incapable of adaptation to the needs of, say, twenty years hence. Therefore it is unwise to spend money on an enduring structure; it were better to pull down and rebuild than try to adapt. It is worth while to examine this astonishing thesis which assumes so much and ignores so much. The sort of building which alone would justify the assumption is one which would retain its complete efficiency up to the last day of its twenty years' term and then go suddenly to bits like the "wonderful one-horse shay." Such a house would be a curiosity as interesting to watch as the explosive blooming of the Chinese moonflower. During the war the problem of building to last only a few years exercised the authorities and was found to be insoluble in the main. There was found to be a limit, easily reached, beyond which strength could not be reduced.

It seems incredible that any gulls can be found to listen to the voice of the charmer who says, in effect, "This is the ultra-modern house built to last twenty years and then fall down." Who on earth would buy or care to live in such houses during the last perilous years of their existence? Yet it seems that the gulls do come flocking around. Fortunately this strange doctrine did not appeal to the L.C.C. before they started their satellite towns at Becontree, Downham, and elsewhere. In those places the houses, while not calculated perhaps to last as long as the Pyramids, are well built of good material, and the eye is pleased by careful grouping and proportions. Those who uphold the twenty-year thesis neither understand human nature nor are they good economists. Even a house calculated to last only twenty years would require keeping up during that period. People would not consent to live in a ruinous house during the last years of its existence simply to justify a doctrine. They would insist on decency, comfort, and health. And the worse a house is built the more

Above, the Foord Almshouses at Rochester, seen from the Crescent garden. By E. Guy Dawber. Below, the courtyard at Leladene, Dorking. By Heaton Comyn.

keeping up it would want; the extra annual expenditure on repairs and maintenance would more than cancel the extra capital spent on a well-built house.

Small houses of a certain class are built by local authorities from architects' designs and under careful supervision from some £400 each. This low price has been made possible by years of study and trial and keen competitive tendering. It would puzzle architect and surveyor to reduce this amount by even £10. To reduce it by, say, 10 per cent. would mean the sacrifice of essentials, the use of inferior materials, and would end in the production of something which might look like a house, but would possess neither stability nor habitable qualities. The limit of reduction is reached remarkably quickly, and the difference in cost between good and bad building is remarkably small. Undoubtedly some experienced speculating builders do build more cheaply, for obvious reasons, than public bodies, but even the best—and good ones are not lacking—do not build quite so well, while the great and dubious saving some of them claim can be effected only by giving the public the twenty-years' term house. The fact that an excuse has to be found for them shows that the supply is no longer so short of the demand as it used to be when anything in the nature of a dwelling was snapped up eagerly by many who bought in haste and are now repenting at leisure.

A Spanish writer has called England a gentlemanly land, and to a Spaniard that expression means much. It connotes moderation, restraint, and delicacy, and these are the qualities of our landscapes. We have no towering snow-clad mountains, no roaring torrential rivers, no wide prairies, no great wastes or darkling forests; but we have gentle wooded hills, streams winding slowly through the meadows or rippling over shallows, sheep-nibbled downs and shady woods with immemorial trees. This delicacy is easily wounded and, Heaven knows, it has been wounded enough already! The revolutionary Leviathan is pushing its way forward blindly without guidance and without control. The Government does little or nothing; the only hope lies in so arousing public opinion as to render impossible the further spoliation of the noble heritage of beauty bequeathed to us by Nature and our forefathers—a heritage which we should hold sacredly in trust for those who follow us.

J. E. DROWER

Find the Architect

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The Layman's Scorn

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Who is to blame?

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AS one of the surviving members of the committee of the two pre-War Cheap Cottage Exhibitions at Letchworth (Time, I hope, has dealt firmly with some of the atrocities on which we hesitated to perform infanticide!); as a man who, in Edwardian days, fathered a publication "In Search of a £150 Cottage" (such a thing was once a possibility); as a rural householder who has had the honour in more than one county of feeing architects on his own account; as a countryman who has been exalted to membership of a County Regional Planning Committee; and as a Rural District Councillor who has a distant official acquaintance with members of the architectural profession:

I may, perhaps, be expected to have views of some sort. Really, my only claim to notice among other rural district councillors is that I have seen and talked with an architect, and, further, that I know where I could find an architect if I wanted one!

Lots of my colleagues up and down the country—there are in all about six hundred rural district councillors, and few councils can have escaped some responsibility for building—have never, I am sure, seen an architect, and they would have the foggiest notion of how to set about getting one if they needed one.

Most of them are certain they do not need one. They will be quite easy if they end their days without ever meeting one. I have heard a rural district councillor—need I tell you, not one of my immediate colleagues?—say he didn't "think much of archytecs." He was an honest man. He said what he felt and what many of his fellow rural district councillors from Cornwall to Cumberland feel too. Some other rural district councillors would merely take the view—if they spoke their minds—that, in ordinary workaday life, architects are one of the unaccountable luxuries of the rich, and the wise man will keep out of their way just as he tries to keep out of the way of lawyers.

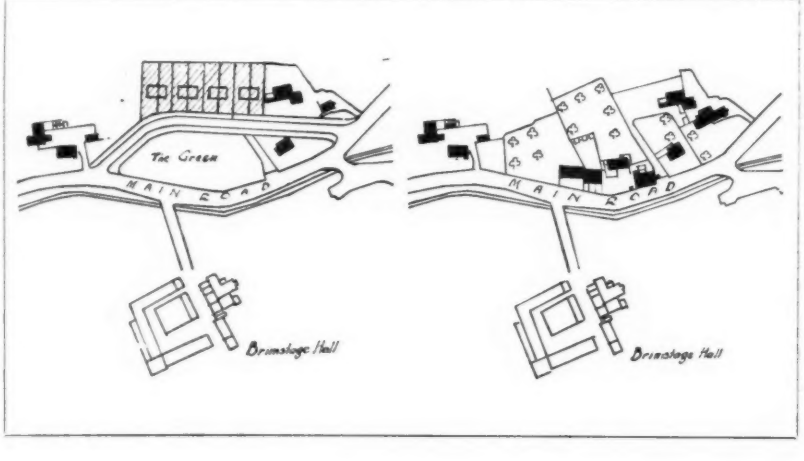
Now, it is no use pretending that the architectural world is in no way to blame for my rural district council world's unappreciative view of it. Every one of us is responsible for the degree to which people feel uncomfortable about him.

To begin with, the architect who has worked in a rural district has too often allowed himself to be sweated. Many rural district councillors and their friends, no doubt, believed that he was overpaid. But he wasn't paid enough to give the constant attention to the job he ought to have given to it and would have liked to give to it; and so there were flaws in some practical details in the work or in connection with the work on which critics would fasten who knew nothing whatever about architecture, but knew when wood was warped and concrete had dirt in it. Or, perhaps, the architect we had our eye on was young, flamboyant and dainty, and a bit expensive (as we have all been in our time). The first thing, then, clearly, is that architects should be properly paid, and that there should be limits to young architects learning their jobs, as the young dentists and young midwives learn theirs, at the expense of the public. It was not, however, a young architect, but a middle-aged one to whom I once gave £40 to go away. No doubt he was a competent man in his own

Two Generations

On the left-hand page overleaf are shown several cottages built by the late Viscount Leverhulme, before the war, on his Thornton Hough estate, near Birkenhead. On the right-hand page are shown two examples of recent work done by the present Viscount. The two sets of illustrations are convincing proof of how our sense of country things is daily coming into closer touch with reality. The legacy of the Romantic Movement is rapidly becoming less conspicuous.

Above, a pair of cottages in Raby Village, built before the war, when a new road was constructed to avoid two dangerous corners. The cottages are for agricultural workers employed on Lord Leverhulme's farms in the village. Below, specimens of a scheme comprising eight semi-detached cottages. Originally there stood on this site four small cottages near the main road; two were decayed thatch cottages, two others had slated roofs. A new road was constructed some distance back from the main road, and the four new pairs of cottages were built to face the open space that was made. The left-hand plan shows the layout of the site as it was before the alteration; the right-hand plan shows the present arrangement.



line. I had evidently got him on the wrong job.

It cannot be denied that in various parts of the countryside there are queerish buildings for which men whom country people took to be architects have been responsible. How is the average rural district councillor to tell t'other from which, sound men from pretenders? If he goes to an architect at all he will (because he believes that all professional men are unconscionable in their charges) probably go to the man who will be "cheapest." But suppose the councillor is persuaded to try Conduit Street? He enters with "I want, sir, to build a house in Oxfordshire. Will you kindly give me the name of a suitable architect?" What, exactly, will the R.I.B.A.'s reply be? Will it there and then meet the earnest inquirer's difficulty?

If anyone has read so far he will probably drop me when I say that our district councillor is building cottages, much to my satisfaction, with the aid of the sanitary inspector and that a neighbouring district council is doing the same! And they are not bad cottages either. Not one, but two distinguished architects (FF.R.I.B.A. both) who have been into our wilds have told me that our cottages are "all right," that "they will do very well."

Yes, sir, I make no mystery about how we made our cottages. We made them by looking at a lot of published plans, taking—yes, taking, just as you take your way through our fields or take our mushrooms or blackberries—what seemed good to us, and then, eschewing all curlywurliness, going ahead with decent proportions, the right tiles, steel casements, and generous yellow wash. There are better cottages in the country than ours, but there are many

thousands worse; and in every parish in which we build, our cottages get a bit better.

Of course, I was not against our having an architect. I should have liked one. I spoke up for having one. But it was no use. I got our first lot of building through only by putting my hand in my pocket and a neighbour's pocket for the lead. To have lightened the scheme by getting rid of the outlay of land, and then to have weighted it again with architect's fees would have been crazy. I have seldom been so much surprised as when the scheme was adopted. I was heartily glad that it was adopted—knowing that it was to provide cottages for families whose cottages had been "reported against"

Above, a pair of new cottages on the Leverhulme estates specially designed for the position at the junction of two roads. They each contain an entrance porch, a large kitchen and living-room, three bedrooms as well as bathroom and scullery. Below, a house facing Raby Mere, a well-known holiday resort. The tenant is a smallholder who carries on the business of caterer for the visitors to Raby Mere. Many years ago the centre portion only was the residence; the portion at the right-hand side was an old building which was modernized and improved so as to be used as an extension to the house. The new wing to the left was added four years ago. The roof was originally straw-thatched, and when it required renewing the old roof was removed and the opportunity taken to increase the size of the walls to give more air space and height in the bedrooms. It was re-roofed with Norfolk reeds.

—even though it was made a condition that the chairman of the R.D.C. and I should act as honorary clerks of works!

Need I tell you that our problem was to provide five-roomed cottages, tolerably sound and reasonably well-looking, at prices which would make possible a rent within the means of farm-workers (the average wage of ordinary farm-workers throughout England is 31s. 8d.). That humanitarian economic and social aim we have had to fulfil as best we could without architects, although, of course, as it was architects' brains we stole from, we did have the help of architects at second-hand.

And now about regional planning. Do you realize how far away we are from regional planning, although we live in one of the prettiest and most interesting counties in England, in no little danger of losing a great deal of its beauty and interest? The Urban District Council which sits at the same market town as our Rural District Council has passed a resolution that it does not want to have anything to do with regional planning, and won't send delegates to any county committee on the subject! If you saw some cottages that have been put up lately under the U.D.C.'s auspices you would not be surprised. But there it is. One of these days, as I have been at four or five county town regional planning committees without making a report, I shall open the subject to my own R.D.C. But I shall walk softly, or when I ask for a committee I shall assuredly get for an answer, No.

Realize that on our R.D.C. we are new even to standing orders, and that we have no by-laws. Yet as an instrument for pushing forward housing I don't know that we do not compare favourably with the County Council. If we had had the administration of the recent Housing of Rural Workers Act we should certainly have had some old cottages reconditioned by now. The common sense of our R.D.C. welcomed the provisions for putting old cottages to rights instead of using them as road material, welcomed getting better housing at such a moderate outlay as would not impose too high a rent. Yes, we could have done that job. We might even have had an architect.

The truth of the matter is that there is any amount of gumption in our R.D.C. We only want gentle handling and patient leading. We are not above learning. See how we have taken to the new standing orders. But to Whitehall, which has no notions of writing a circular that we can listen to with interest, and to architects, who have an odd lingo and odd ways of their own, we need reconciling.

That we can be reconciled I am sure. But it takes two sides to make friends. You have to do your bit.

J. W. ROBERTSON-SCOTT

Parliament and Whitehall

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What They Can Do and What They Cannot Do

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The Power of the Schoolroom

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IF you say in the House of Commons that the beauty of England is a priceless heritage you will win a measure of applause. If you also assert, as Mr. Baldwin did at Winchester the other day, that nothing could be more disastrous and wicked than to waste or destroy that beauty, there may be further murmurs of approval. But when you go on to summon the aid of the law in order to safeguard that beauty by checking and punishing its despoilers, your difficulties begin. What Parliament has done is as nothing to what Parliament could do if the public conscience were really awakened.

It may be said that Parliament uses, or might use, two methods of encouraging the beautifier of England and curbing the despoiler. There is the method direct, that is to say, by legislation immediately aimed to encourage or to curb, and there is the method by delegation.

THE METHOD DIRECT

Steal your neighbour's apples and the law, as expressed in an Act of Parliament and carried out by the police, comes directly and sharply upon you.

But so strong is the sense of individualism—shall not a man do what he likes with his own?—and so varied are local conditions as applied to amenities, that you may go scot-free when you do far more injury to that neighbour and a whole community by some hideous erection.

The method direct as applied to the salving of England's beauty has hitherto proved to be too difficult of application and is, indeed, so slightly used as to be almost negligible in any record of things done.

Should you be a reformer of a sanguine temperament you may believe that much more should and ought to be done by this method direct.

Litter of the worst possible type embellishing the approach to a famous West Country town. It is idle to press public authorities to deal with the paper bag nuisance while they continue to tolerate permanent litter such as that here shown.

TAXATION AND BEAUTIFICATION

The Chancellor of the Exchequer might, for instance, allow lower death duties or other taxation in the case of a landowner who keeps up the character of his cottages and property generally or preserves his park for public enjoyment instead of taking profit from its exploitation by the speculative builder. Parliament imposes lighter taxation upon classes of motor vehicles which do not damage the roadway abnormally; it might similarly exact reduced house duties for any erection which enhances the attractiveness of a locality. In each case the reduced scale of tax could be made dependent upon a certificate from the local authority whose appropriate committee would be able to claim the assistance of the authoritative and expert advisory panels which are now being set up in all parts of England and Wales by the Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

It would be a useful test of the extent to which public opinion is now conscious of the perils threatening the beauty of England if proposals of this character were brought before Parliament. We recall, however, with uneasiness, that even Mr. Chamberlain, progressive Minister as he is, shrank from a suggestion made to him at the time of the passing of the latest housing Acts that the grant of a State subsidy for a new house or a reconditioned cottage should be made dependent upon the submission of the plans to some such body as one of the aforesaid advisory panels. He would contemplate no coercion, only persuasion, the kind of persuasion which is applied in the *Housing Manual on the Design, Construction and Repair of Dwellings*, now issued by the Ministry of Health, price 9d. net.

THE METHOD OF DELEGATION

The second method is the method of delegation subject to an ever-increasing supervision from the departments in Whitehall.

For good or for ill, and by reason of the variety and complexity of our local life, we have, by stages long-drawn-out, handed over the administration of local affairs to bodies elected by the ratepayers—corporations, county councils, borough, urban and district councils, and even parish councils. To them, in varying degrees, Parliament has delegated the management of matters, such

as housing, town planning, public health, and the like, which most closely affect the quality of our local life. In the main it may be said that the work of Parliament is done when it passes general enactments and sets limits within which local authorities may administer local affairs. The enactments have increased enormously in recent years, for we are in an era of ever-expanding "social service" and "uplift." The citizen must be regulated for the benefit of himself and his children and the community generally, and the taxes and the rates must be marshalled to make him do his duty.

POWERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

The marshalling is left to the local authorities, and the best that the member of Parliament can do on the floor of the House of Commons is to use the hour of question time each day to worry an unwilling Minister into worrying any tardy local authority. He generally refuses to do so. It is their job; let them do it, and if they hesitate let the ratepayers say their say.

Here, then, is the main part of the position in essence. The cause of reform has been entrusted to the popularly-elected representatives of the ratepayers. They have been given by Parliament considerable powers to abate if not remove "outrages" which offend taste and injure the natural beauty of England. They can, for instance, take steps to encourage the preservation of the artistic cottage, the open space, and the good viewpoint over the countryside. They can control unsightly petrol pumps and hoardings; they can deal with the litter nuisance, and they can take other ameliorative and preventive measures. Moreover, if their powers are inadequate, they can seek larger powers and, within reason, obtain them. The trouble hitherto has too often been, not that local authorities are powerless, but that they are inert and fail to use the powers they have. They are, after all, the servants of the public, and enough of the public has not, so far, made enough fuss.

The moral is clear, and it is a moral which must run all through any survey of Parliamentary and municipal action in the sphere we are considering—*educate your public*. Of the means of education I shall speak before I close this article.

THE LOCAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEES

When we come to consider in detail the character of the legislation which is brought under the method of delegation, we realize the importance of the Local Legislation Committees of both Houses of Parliament. These five or six members of Parliament sit aloof in upstairs rooms and judge each municipal body as it comes forward with full forensic aid to demand powers of regulation beyond the provisions of the general law. Here is a fruitful field for legislative experiment to suit local needs and local desires, and as gatekeepers the Local Legislation Committees show what one of their legal luminaries has called approvingly "an attachment to principle and a feeling for uniformity."

Thus it is that when we speak of what Parliament has done we think of the Local Legislation Committee of which, in the Commons, Sir Thomas Robinson, M.P., a Lancastrian business man, is the shrewd and zealous chairman; and we think especially of the now historic Bath Clause.

THE BATH CLAUSE

The Bath Corporation came before the Committee and pleaded to be given exceptional powers because Bath was an exceptional city. By what Mr. Guy Dawber has called its well-ordered building and town planning even on a restricted scale, it set itself in olden days to show what civic pride could do. Now (that is to say in 1925) it came to Parliament for power to make the people in Bath behave themselves with a reasonable degree of propriety. It sought the right to reject builders' plans which failed to conform to the Bath standard from the artistic point of view.

Two examples of the wrong sort of petrol station. The upper illustration was taken at one of the most beautiful points on the London-Oxford main road. The pumps and outbuildings command a famous view. Below, an improvised portmanteau service station in the West of England.

It was a bold step forward. It went farther than any of the precedents, and as a member of the Local Legislation Committee of the House of Commons I can testify that the faces of Committeemen grow serious when any departure from precedent is proposed, for precedent is our Parliamentary food. It is, in the classic phrase, from precedent to precedent that we move slowly down through the ages, and without precedent we hesitate and ponder deeply. Happily, the hesitation and pondering in 1925 gave us in the end this beginning of a new civic charter of preservation.

There had previously been a ripening of feeling against debasement in building development. In its evidence before the Departmental Committee on Building Bylaws in 1918, the R.I.B.A. favoured power to stop a building which was an "outrage," but it was against vesting such power in a local authority. The Ministry of Health also told the Local Legislation Committee that it would be "a serious matter" to give a local authority power to enforce "the artistic point of view." Nevertheless, the Committee went ahead.

Clauses in previous Acts had limited the municipal control to elevations on to a street, e.g. Chesterfield and Hastings. The departure made in the case of Bath was to extend the control to the elevation of buildings anywhere in the city. It was argued that whereas in "a flat place or a place like Hastings the only thing that really matters is the elevation on the street," it is vital to a pleasure and health resort like Bath, which dwells among the hills and lives, so to speak, on its outlook, that "the whole beauty of the place should not be destroyed by the erection of some ugly building behind the street." A bacon-curing factory, for instance, in the heart of Bath!

Two illustrations which prove that pumps need not be thrust forward so as to form the most conspicuous part of the view. Above, a garage in a well-known seaside resort. Below, one on the Bath Road: the pumps alone are placed inside, the white globes being supported on brackets.

THE NEW CHARTER

In the end the Clause (128) as framed by the Committee and passed by Parliament gave the Corporation power to appoint a standing advisory committee for the city of whom one is to be an F.R.I.B.A. and one an F.S.I., nominated in each case by the president of the institute concerned, and the third a J.P. to be nominated by the Council but not himself a member of the Council, and it was made the business of this advisory committee, when called in, to act for the Corporation in approving or disapproving "any matter referred to them" by the Corporation.

Now follows the all-important provision relating to elevations:

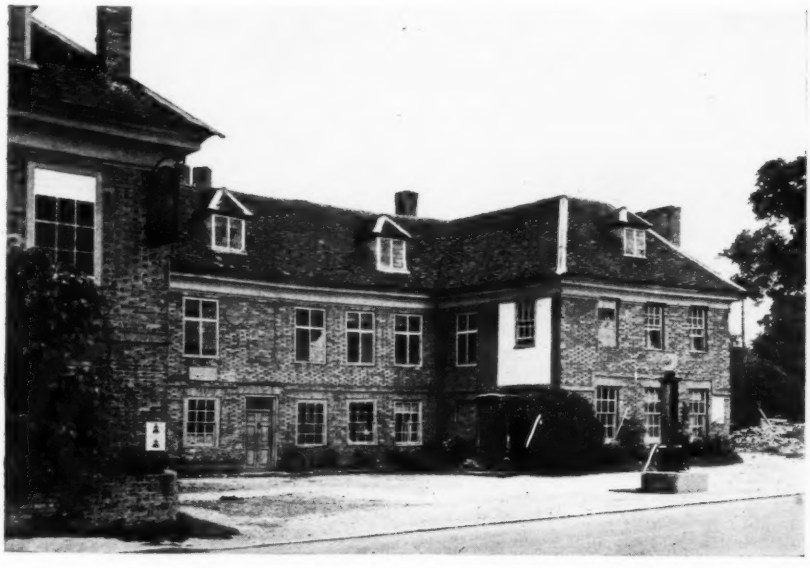
> If they (the Corporation) shall consider that, having regard to the general character of the buildings in the city or of the buildings proposed therein to be erected or of the building upon or to which the addition is to be constructed or reconstructed, the building or addition or chimney to which the elevations relate would seriously disfigure the city whether by reason of the height of the building or addition or chimney or its design or the materials proposed to be used in its construction, they shall refer the question of the approval of the elevations to the advisory committee for their decision thereon and the reference shall be accompanied by a statement of the grounds on which the proposed building or addition or chimney is considered to be objectionable.

And when any such elevations have been disapproved it becomes unlawful under penalty to make the erection to which they relate.

THE CLAUSE IN OPERATION

In answer to my inquiries I have received the following note from one in Bath who speaks with authority:

> You will find, I think, that the Bath Clause operates in the following way: An architect or builder deposits plans with the Surveying Committee of the Bath Corporation for approval under the Bylaws, and now presumably under the Amenities Clause. The Surveying Committee consider those plans, and have power to reject, if in their view the elevations or materials which it is proposed to be used are unsuitable, and if they do reject notice is then given to the architect or builder depositing, and they then have the opportunity of appealing against the decision of the Committee and asking that their case might be considered



There is nothing intrinsically ugly about the majority of petrol pumps in use today, and the results of a careful arrangement are here clearly demonstrated. Above, a single pump well placed on a pedestal in front of a roadside inn. Below, a composition in Cheltenham.

by the Advisory Tribunal. If they do appeal and it goes to the Advisory Tribunal the decision of that body has to be accepted by the depositors of the plans and by the Corporation. This Advisory Tribunal has been appointed for twelve months, *but up to the present it has not even met.*

In my view there are two great weaknesses in the Bath Clause—firstly, that the Tribunal can only function upon appeal, instead of all plans deposited being submitted to the Tribunal for its opinion before going to the Surveying Committee; secondly, that it does not apply, as far as I can read in the Clause, to anything which the Corporation themselves might desire to do. This would be a great danger in some places where the department concerned with the erection of public buildings is inefficiently staffed; and although I do not for a moment suggest that Bath at present is in that position, it might quite easily happen with a change of personnel, and I consider that any undertakings projected by a Corporation should be subject to the same supervision by the Advisory Tribunal as those submitted by private individuals, as I cannot conceive a Committee sitting upon its own proposals rejecting them so as to give the Tribunal an opportunity of considering them.

I believe the Bath Clause, amended and strengthened in the two directions I have named, would be a very great power for good in any district, but without supervision, I am afraid—as is evidenced by no case having come before the Advisory Tribunal in over twelve months—it is of little use.

The Bath Clause may, of course, be, and has in fact been, asked for by other municipalities, but the new charter is, in the opinion of the Local Legislation Committee and the Ministry of Health, only suited to towns of a special character which, so to say, live on their amenities. Other municipal bodies may secure practically the same powers, on a more restricted scale, by bringing the areas immediately concerned under town-planning schemes. The Town Planning Act places the local authority in a position to insist that land shall not be developed save with some regard to civic standards, and the constraining powers conferred in regard to zones which are town-planned include the powers specially given to Bath under the Bath Clause.

If we inquire how far use has so far been made not only of the Bath Clause, but also of the similar provision in town-planning schemes, we have to answer—little or none. But the Bath Act was only passed in 1925 and we move with great deliberation in such matters in England. At least the powers are there, and it is for public opinion to make itself felt with the local authorities.

THE VILLAGE COTTAGE

I pass to the latest Housing Act, the Housing (Rural Workers) Act of 1926, in which for the first time there is a Parliamentary recognition of the sense of amenity as applied to housing, though in this case it applies only to old houses. The Act provides owners with a subsidy for the reconditioning of cottages and other buildings which are suited for workers earning no more than agricultural labourers' earnings, that is to say, who are accustomed to pay a rental of about 3s. per week; and it is enacted that the subsidy may be refused to any applicant owner in the case of "a house or building to which any artistic, historic, architectural, or artistic interest attaches," when it is considered that "the proposed works would destroy or diminish that interest." Regarding this important departure in legislation, useful and stimulating paragraphs occur in the circular (756) issued by the Ministry of Health. Local authorities are there reminded that "if the work of reconditioning is carried out with reasonable skill and care very much may be done to preserve and perpetuate the styles of cottage architecture which have come down to us from former times; while on the contrary, if repairs and conditions are carried out without regard to the stability of the material and treatment, or so as to involve the destruction of the proportion and beauty of the design, much damage might result." Hence the possible usefulness of the "timely and tactful

suggestion of some voluntary advisory committee or panel." The author of the manual does not mention, but probably had in mind, the Advisory Panels of the C.P.R.E.

Here we have a departmental sequel to the prayer of the Prime Minister, who, in a recent appeal for the preservation of ancient cottages, said: "Nothing is more characteristic of England's countryside than the cottage homes which, for century upon century, have sheltered her sturdy sons of toil. . . . Ought we not to be proud of them, to protect them, to do everything in our power to save them from decay?"

But here again we have to lament the fact that so far the local authorities have made small use of their opportunity. In some cases the hesitation has arisen from fear of increased rates. It is a feeble excuse. The substantial Treasury grant and the contribution of the house-owner make the burden on the rates almost negligible when spread over the whole county.

POLITICAL PREJUDICE

A more obstinate barrier to the working of the Act has been ancient political prejudice. Applications for subsidy have been refused by County Councils on a large scale on the ground, avowed or unavowed, that landowners should not be given the money of the taxpayer and ratepayer to help them do their duty in providing fit cottage property upon their estates. The answer to that is twofold. The conditions of the subsidy are such that the landlord is most poorly recompensed for his own share of the outlay—so poorly indeed as to account in part for his reluctance to bring his cottages under the subsidy. He can find far more profitable use for his money by investment in Government Stock. The second answer is that, as the Minister of Health has explained, the local authority under the Act must provide housing for agricultural workers and their like at rents which they can pay—housing which is not to be secured in the absence of the subsidy.

The Act runs until October 1, 1931, and there is, therefore, time to make amends. But more than once the Minister of Health has said, in answer to questions in the House of Commons, that if the local authorities and especially County Councils continue to show inertia in this matter, other means may have to be taken to carry out the will of Parliament and provide proper housing for rural workers as it has been so effectively provided for those who earn larger wages in the towns.

INEFFECTIVE BYLAWS

In another direction amending legislation may be called for. It may, one hopes, be regarded as a sign of the times that at the gathering in Guildhall, London, last June, of the National Conference of Rural District Councils of England and Wales, the following resolution was unanimously passed: *That, having regard to the unsatisfactory character of domestic buildings being erected in the country, the Minister of Health be requested to take steps to invest Rural District Councils with fuller powers to control and prevent the erection of unsuitable domestic buildings than is at present permitted by the existing model bylaws.*

One Councillor at the Conference spoke of the ramshackle buildings with which beautiful country districts are being bespattered. The whole countryside, he said, will be disfigured and become a disgrace if steps are not taken. Another Councillor said the Ministry had abolished some of the old restrictive bylaws. "Councils must have again bylaws in rural districts to see that reasonably good houses are built instead of awful tumbledown huts. These cannot be stopped under the present bylaws which the Department have given us."

ADVERTISEMENT HOARDINGS

There are, of course, other aspects of this campaign for the salving of the beauty of England. We think, for instance, of disfigurement by advertisement hoardings. The demand is made for wider powers for local authorities, but under the existing law County Councils and the like have considerable powers of control if they will exercise them. Where the Advertisements Regulation Act of 1907 and the amending Act of 1925 have been adopted the local authority has acquired power to prohibit the erection or (in some cases) order the removal of disfiguring hoardings, and may even institute a prosecution in which are involved both the person setting up the hoarding and the owner or occupier of the land who permits its establishment. In many instances these Acts are inoperative because the powers conferred by them are discretionary. It is only in deference to a vigorous and sustained public outcry that the responsible authority will bestir itself, and the ultimate issue is often in doubt even in cases where an infringement of the Acts is outside debate.

In other words, the "may" of the Act to be effective should have read "shall."

THE PETROL PUMP

Much the same may have to be said of the petrol pump disfigurement. Under Clause 5 of the Petroleum (Amendment) Act, County and Borough Councils are empowered to make bylaws for regulating the appearance, colour, and design, or prohibiting the establishment, of petrol-filling stations—"for the purpose of preserving the amenities of any rural scenery or place of beauty or historic interest for the enjoyment of the public." The committee set up under the chairmanship of Sir Lionel Earle, of the Commission of Works, may secure reform in this matter of petrol pumps. Those of us who were concerned in the preservation of Stonehenge recall the invaluable help he gave in bringing that movement to a successful issue.

LITTER

All agree to denounce the nuisance and disgrace of litter. Here again local authorities have been empowered to make bylaws to punish offenders who leave litter on the roadsides or dedicated public grounds. The trouble is that so many local authorities do not adopt these powers and do not use them effectively when adopted. Last year the London County Council brought 500 of the worst cases to the police courts, and in ninety-eight cases fines were imposed of 5s., 10s., or 20s., while other offenders were discharged with a caution. In a recent week the work of litter clearance in Victoria Park, in the East End, cost the County Council as much as £75. In the words of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee of the Council: "The Council do not lack the necessary powers so far as their part in dealing with the nuisance is concerned. What is wanted is a reform in the habits of the people." The beautiful slopes of Ken Wood and Parliament Hill Fields are more often than not befouled by litter of all kinds, and those in authority seem to have given up their duty as a hopeless task.

EDUCATE, EDUCATE, EDUCATE

This brings us back to the moral of it all. *The public must be educated.*

But how? Women's institutes may do much in rural districts. So may Rural Community Councils where they exist. But the most fruitful field for propaganda is the schoolroom. The teaching of neatness should be a part of the curriculum of every school, and if the lantern slide be called in aid what could be better than the set of contrasts between beauty and ugliness which are presented in Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis's book on *England and the Octopus*? Even the upper classes of our secondary and public schools would find stimulus in the *Devil's Dictionary* with which he clinches his argument for an end to the uglification of England.

PERCY HURD

A hoarding at Shalford, near Guildford, now demolished through the pressure brought by the Scapa Society, which has done much valuable work of this nature.

The Inevitable Advertisement

★

Sows' Ears and Silk Purses

★

A Plea for Reason

★

THERE are those fanatics to whom the word "advertisement" comes as the breath of corruption; they shudder at its very mention and hold up their hands in horror; and, if they feel it to be necessary in their own circle to comment upon the vileness of this putrescence, they are almost certain to couple it with their other *bête noir*, "mass production." It is not surprising, perhaps, that this should be so, since each is to some extent a result of the other, and the two are not dissociable; what is surprising is to find so great a spasm of reason amongst people who seem in other directions to be deplorably lacking in it. Here a paradox arises from the fact that, whereas it is possible to adduce plausible, if meretricious, evidence to prove the case against advertising, no such thing is possible in the case of mass production, and so the man who condemns the latter out of hand must not complain if his views on the former be ignored.

The purpose of this article is not to justify the existence of advertising, but merely to discuss it in so far as it relates to rural England and the preservation of its amenities; but it is desirable to state definitely that there is nothing in advertising which is *inherently* bad, nothing which, if it offend our delicacy, cannot be corrected; those decades which, with the rise of industrialism, developed advertisement into a social and commercial power have much to answer for; they dissociated decent thought from industry and set a sequence of regrettably low standards, from which we are now happily beginning to emerge. Before the war vulgarity and ineptitude were the hall-marks of advertisement, and the importunity of the advertiser is only now on the wane. It is difficult to state exactly when advertisement became a scourge, but it is perfectly certain that for centuries before that time men had definitely set themselves to attract attention to their wares for the identical reason; and the evidences of this commercial acumen (in the forms of tavern and other signs) are today revered by artists and coveted by Americans and other collectors.

The scope of the word "advertise" (as given by the dictionary) is exceedingly wide; it embraces such terms as "notify," "warn," "inform," "make generally known," and may therefore be taken to include every conceivable type of notice which is anywhere to be seen; and it is in this superlatively wide sense that we must regard it.

There are, then, various classes of announcements, and they may be divided, somewhat arbitrarily, thus:

1: Those which are essential, or at least desirable, to the social system. In this class appear signposts, warnings of road dangers, and so forth.

2: Those which are not particularly desirable but are often essential, such as Post Office signs, notices of disease or licences, and warnings by Government departments.

The signpost at Teddington Hands cross-roads, Gloucestershire. An interesting example of "preservation"—but why not iron instead of timber, and well-designed iron at that? Notice also the decorated barn across the road.

3: Those which are neither essential nor very desirable—" advertisements " in fact—and these fall naturally into categories of " temporary " (such as notices of " Land for Sale " or " Road Under Repair ") and " permanent " (such as hoardings, inn and village signs, petrol pumps, and the like).

From every member of each one of these groups the public is justified in demanding the attribute of Decency; and it is exactly at this point that the trouble starts. The bill-poster who has spent a profitable week plastering, say, the Stonehenge district, with atrocious advertisements on worse hoardings, will on Sunday join with the hotel proprietor in the neighbourhood (whose hotel has dribbled placards at quarter-mile intervals for three miles down all the roads leading to the town), and together they will indulge their fury over the filling station on the outskirts of the town—a filling station, in all likelihood, which has been tolerably well designed, whose pumps and tanks are well arranged to give an appearance of orderliness and dignity which remove most of their sting, and which is at least placed in such a way as not to become a slur on a district where no other buildings are—a filling station far less offensive than the hoardings of the bill-poster or the boards of mine host.

This Decency, which the public has a right to demand, is an intricate conglomeration of a multitude of small details, and in each type of sign or notice some of these will be present, some absent. In the matter of a signpost, for instance, the question of discreet placing hardly arises, there being almost certainly one, and only one, *right* position for the sign; but in the case of a land agent's board there may be two hundred possible positions for it, and the careful choice lies in selecting that site whence the notice shall have the least detrimental effect upon the landscape as well as the best value as a declaration; and, of course, in both cases the questions of form, proportion and lettering (possibly, also, of colour), are important. But although the component factors of Decency vary according to the nature and purpose of the advertisement, there are a certain number which must be present in *every* type, and if only they generally were, the case against advertisements in the country would be largely removed—and, with it, many of the advertisements!

The bill-poster's mathematical ingenuity is exemplified by his success in covering, with irregularity, every square inch of this hoarding which screens the view shown above.

First of these canons comes that of tact in placing notices. In all cases there must be a perception of the most fitting position for a sign and an adroitness in designing it to play its proper part as an entity at that point. In case I should be misunderstood I hasten to point out, once for all, that the application of any or all of these canons to problems in general would automatically veto the presence of notices at probably three-quarters of the places at which their establishment were contemplated; and the poster hoarding, for one, would very seldom find its

A hoarding of the type designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield for the British Poster Advertising Association. Its balance and rhythm and the formality of its treatment make it comparable with the patterns used by the Empire Marketing Board. This hoarding, so far from desecrating the landscape, definitely improves it by screening a plot of waste land, so that only the trees are visible.

A well-designed notice near Old Man's Gate, on the Banbury Road. Having the lettering embossed makes for legibility.

Left, the standard pattern of Automobile Association village sign. Right, East Grinstead's own effort. A comparison is interesting in the light of Poe's remarks which are quoted in this article ; while the one sign is over-legible the other errs in having too small lettering. The Automobile Association, which is doing much for the preservation of the countryside, might well consider questions of shape of sign, colour, and lettering.

" The Cross Hands," Old Sodbury. The inscription reads : " Caius Marius Imperator. 102 B.C. Concordia Militu."

way past the tram terminus, or at least beyond the street lamps. On the other hand, since notices have to be tolerated, even in the country, on certain occasions and for various reasons, the county councils might do worse than consider the possibilities of screening refuse heaps, sites of demolished buildings, and so forth, behind discreet, well-designed hoardings of a proper height for their respective neighbourhoods; and from these, of course, the normal erysipelas of detestable bills would be stringently banned. Even as things are today, there are hoardings of the better sorts, over which some care has been taken, which conceal much that nobody wants to see; and it is for every one to clear his mind of prejudice, look behind the hoarding and then decide whether perhaps the posters are not preferable.

The second canon of Decency is that which demands that a notice shall be just as big and no bigger, just as glaring and no more glaring, than its purpose demands; on this point there are likely to be broken heads as well as hearts before pure reason steps in. By way of modifying the arrangement it were well that everybody who has an announcement to make through the eyes of the public should read Poe's story of *The Purloined Letter*. In it the author dissertates at some length upon the fact that " the over-largely lettered signs and placards of the street escape observation by dint of being excessively obvious," and goes on to point out that this " physical oversight is precisely analogous with the moral inapprehension by which the intellect suffers to pass unnoticed those considerations which are too obtrusively and too palpably self-evident." A few moments' consideration of this statement will show it to be one of pure fact—a truism, if not a platitude; and the better of the modern advertisement specialists are acting on their realization of this fact with great effect and greater sparing of the public's nervous system and toleration.

Finally, we come to the third canon, which really embraces the other two, in that, if they are properly studied, this last is largely attained—Dignity.

The milestone at Esher, Surrey. The general design, which is admirably suited to its purpose, is supplemented by the high quality and legibility of the lettering. In this case the letters are incised.

The obelisk at the junction of the Oxford and Aylesbury Roads. Three sides are inscribed : " From the County Town, Miles xv," " From the City, Miles xxx," " From the University, Miles xxii."

A view of Epsom Downs.

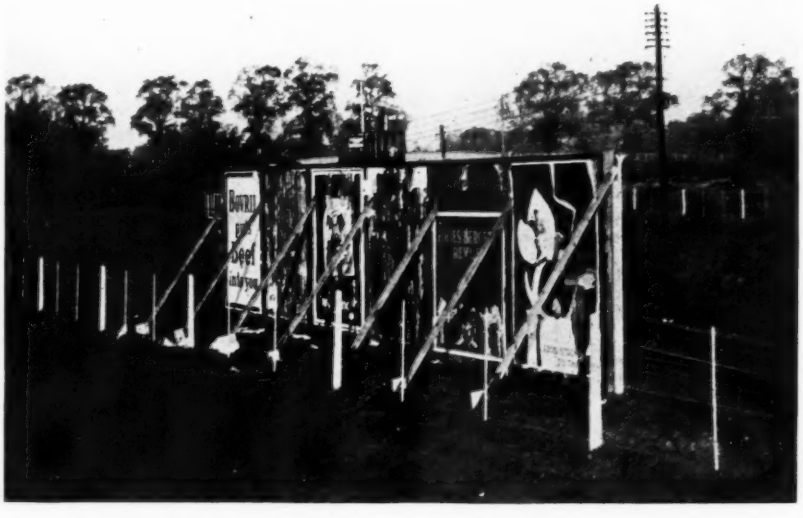
Dignity is the grace which introduces and disposes the questions of form and proportion, of colour, good lettering and orderliness, of morality of thought and inoffensiveness of presentation. These are points which, in Georgian times, were observed; there are few survivals, from that age, of the advertiser's art, which do not take full account of them; perhaps the increased facilities of the present age are allowing mankind full scope to display his beastliness, and, as soon as our enthusiasm over our new toy of potentiality has waned a little, we may come soberly back to self-criticism and throw away all that is not of the best; but at present, when we find something good (as in the case of the signpost at Teddington Hands, which is illustrated on page 689), we " preserve " it, so that it cannot possibly be seen, with an abominable paling, and punctuate our atrocity by sticking posters (whose quality can only be aggravated by their arrangement) on the walls of the barn across the road, to the lasting glory of the twentieth century. Then we sit back and blithely criticize petrol pumps!

This question of promiscuous bill-posting is one which should receive, at once, the attention of every county and district council. Wherever one turns, in certain parts of the country, the barns and farm buildings are plastered with notices; sometimes they are well and properly arranged, which suggests the patronage of an orderly bill-posting firm, and probably means that the farmer is receiving a fixed rental per foot run; sometimes, as in the Teddington case, they are not arranged at all, so that nobody scores except, perhaps (and it is a moot point), the bill-poster.

There is one " industrial disease " from which no enthusiast is immune, and that is the susceptibility to consider everything in the light of its effect upon one's own daily life. The architect sees nothing but what he must subconsciously analyse its design; the surgeon mentally trepans the skulls of all his friends; the advertiser sees all broad, flat surfaces as ideal " advertising media," and fair game, so that the " Stick no Bills " notice, which should never be necessary, is often obscured by the very bills which it prohibits. The reputable bill-posting firm, encouraged by the British Poster Advertising Association, is doing much for the betterment of bill-posting; although this fact does not receive the recognition which it deserves. But so long as the individual advertiser and the small, jobbing, provincial bill-poster are allowed to plaster their announcements on every wall indiscriminately, the public's back will be up against all advertising. And I throw out this suggestion, free, gratis, and for whatever it may be worth, to the British Poster Advertising Association—that its members should combine to take their solemn oath *never* to make use of bridges, walls, fences, nor indeed anything except a hoarding specially and appropriately erected for the purpose, for the display of advertisements. There is no doubt that greater offence is given to the public eye by the present promiscuous poster display on bridges, and so forth, than in any other way; if this grievance were removed the countryside would automatically be relieved of a nuisance, and the prestige of the advertiser would be enhanced.

Under the Advertisements Regulation Acts of 1907 and 1925, power is given to county councils and certain other local authorities to pass by-laws prohibiting the exhibition of advertisements in such a way as to injure a view or a district. Under the guidance of the Scapa Society much admirable work has been done in the way of eliminating unsightly hoardings by persuading councils to adopt this by-law, and thereafter drawing their attention to particular blemishes. So far so good. But the more highly principled bill-posting firms are by this time scratched raw with persistent criticism (deserved or undeserved), and may easily come to resent interference even though they know it to be to a good end. It is with these firms that Scapa must keep in touch, and gradually become an advisory society to which the bill-posters will come seeking advice and co-operation, rather than one which causes them spasmodic discomfort. As soon as this state has been achieved the smaller and less public-spirited firms (out-countenanced) will join in, and even into governmental notices will Decency creep.

M. L. ANDERSON



Not infrequently after a hoarding has been erected the owner is forbidden by the local authority to make use of it; as the work of demolition is bound to cost money the hoarding remains, with the result illustrated above. In this particular instance, however, the Scapa Society has achieved the removal of the hoarding with the advertisements.

The Greatest Problem of All

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What is Æsthetic Control?

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Committees: Lay and Professional

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[*The problem of the æsthetic control of architecture is such an important one that it seemed desirable to give our readers some information concerning the attitude which prominent members of the profession adopt towards this topical question. Those of us who travel about the country can scarcely fail to be aware that the architectural profession, whether justly or unjustly, is now coming in for a good deal of hostile criticism. The fact that architects are often blamed for the sins of the speculative builder should not make them ignore the dangers which lie in the present situation: if architects are unjustly accused, they must not be content with the fate of martyrs but should stir themselves to re-establish the art of building in public esteem.*

Outside the ranks of the profession the opinion seems to be hardening in favour of some kind of æsthetic control. The very words excite horror in the minds of some, but it should be remembered that the kind of control most generally demanded is not to be directed to improving or questioning the standard of design achieved by highly qualified practitioners, but would rather represent an attempt to save both our towns and our countryside from the worst kind of architectural atrocity which is now being inflicted upon them. The hope is sometimes expressed that architects might themselves take the lead in the admirable work of saving town and country from "spoliation." In order, therefore, to ascertain to what extent members of our profession wish to assume powers or responsibilities in this respect, we have circularized a questionary which was intended to elicit opinions on all the principal aspects of "æsthetic control."

Architects have responded generously to our appeal for their comment upon the matters referred to in the questionary. Although we have space to print only a small percentage of their contributions to the discussion, it is hoped that the selections given here sufficiently represent the various points of view which were expressed.

The terms of the questionary were as follows:

1: *Do you consider it practicable to achieve an æsthetic control of building by committees dominated by architects, or is it preferable, in order to prevent the latter from incurring the odium of criticizing their own confrères, to institute lay committees who would attempt to exercise a useful guidance over architecture?*

2: *In the event of such lay committees operating, would it, in your opinion, be possible to formulate canons of criticism so firmly grounded in reason and justice that they would command assent, not only among the members of the tribunal, but among the architects or builders who would appear before it?*

3: *As the spoliation of the countryside is partly due to the juxtaposition of houses, which, though well designed in themselves, are yet out of harmony with one another, can you suggest a method of collaboration between architects whereby they might secure a certain degree of conformity in respect of materials, style and character in houses which are destined to be built in the same locality?*

4: *Inasmuch as the worst architectural atrocities are committed by speculators and others who erect houses without obtaining professional advice, what steps would you propose to bring this fact more forcibly to public notice in order that the practice of amateur meddling with the art of building might be discouraged?*

The following replies are representative of the views expressed by our readers.—ED., A. J.]

The Case for Architectural Control

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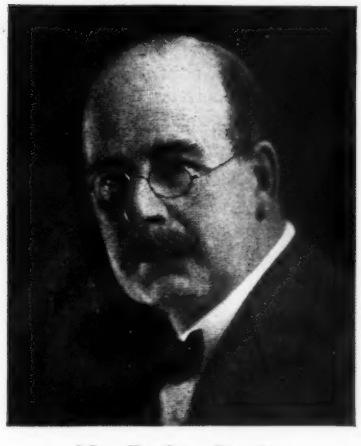
FROM MR. J. A. GOTCH

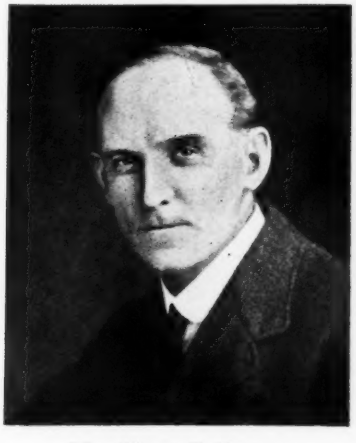
I do not think it practicable to achieve an æsthetic *control* of building by committees of any kind. The difficulties would be endless, the resentment deep and abiding. The task of the committees would be most thankless. In country districts especially it would not be practicable to establish committees that would command confidence, although it might be possible in large towns. If such committees ever did come into being, they should be composed largely of intelligent and cultured laymen with an infusion of architects. Their functions should be advisory, not compulsory.

In my view, the elimination of ugly buildings will gradually follow an improvement in public taste, and this can only be the growth of time. Such an improvement is already dimly visible, but to rush things and try to compel people to acquire that indefinable quality, good taste, under



Mr. E. Guy Dawber.

Mr. C. H. B. Quennell.



Mr. Hastwell Grayson.

penalties (even the penalty of having their plans rejected or delayed) would be both vexatious and futile.

The suggestion made in connection with the Registration Bill, and one which would have gone far to solve the difficulty, namely, that a local authority should pass no plan that was not submitted by a qualified architect, was rejected as being impracticable and too great an infringement of liberty.

FROM MR. H. T. B. ARMAND

To prevent amateur meddling—

1: Local civic societies should be formed to mould public opinion.

2: A panel of local architects should be formed to give general advice. This could be done without charge in the early stages. Eventually the panel might be a consulting committee of the civic society and the cost of clerical work could be borne by the society.

3: A panel of local architects should be formed who would act for speculating builders and small estates at a fixed schedule of fees. In effect this would mean that the panel would appoint one of its members for each job to do the actual designing, but the general control would remain with the panel.

FROM MR. F. J. FORSTER

All architects should belong to their local society and meet together on friendly terms.

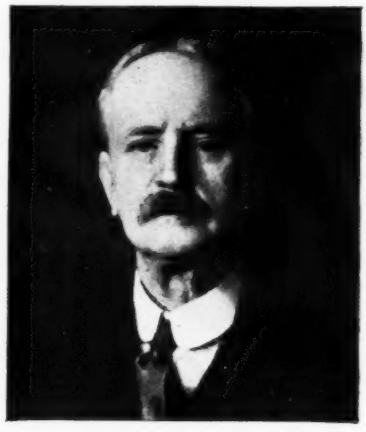
Two or more of them might employ the same local builder and the same materials.

The local society of architects should co-operate with landowners, public men and the local Press in putting forward a higher standard of design and building.

FROM MR. JOHN COCKER

If a committee is to be effective it must be backed by authority—I suggest the local or county council—otherwise, in a great many instances it would be totally ignored, and this matter is, in my opinion, quite as important as the widening of roads and other matters now dealt with by that authority. Very few qualified, or, shall I say, trained architects would feel odium over this control, because their designs would probably not be criticized, as a general rule, owing to their compliance with the broad canons laid down. A wise control would strengthen architects' hands in dealing with their clients. The committee might deal also with trees, open spaces, woodlands and roadsides.

Above, Mr. J. Alfred Gotch.
Below, Professor Beresford Pite.



FROM MR. C. COWLES-VOYSEY

Regional committees or regional autocrats should be instituted (as at Hampstead, Letchworth and Welwyn) to urge or force a uniformity, and it would be their business to make individual architects agree on certain broad lines.

FROM MR. MANNING ROBERTSON

Such committees should be composed of an equal number of architects and laymen with a layman in the chair. Laymen alone would not possess the requisite technical knowledge, and the definite domination of architects should be avoided if such committees are to enjoy the full confidence of the public. The question of architects criticizing their own confrères would not arise under such an arrangement, not only because there would exist a lay majority, but because the committees would exist for the purpose of "exercising useful guidance over architecture" and not of criticizing anything that was past remedy. The R.I.B.A. and its members might help materially, not only by widening a general propaganda, but by attempting to force the introduction of town planning, civics, and architecture into the schools.

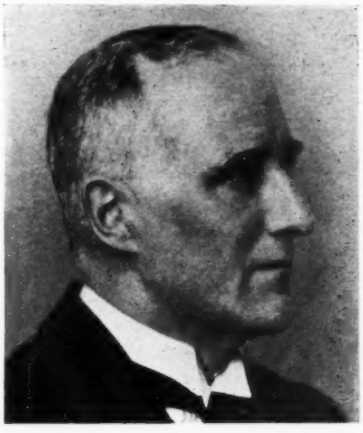
FROM MR. R. J. ANGEL

Lay committees are futile on matters of art. A properly organized committee of architects of different schools of design might be capable of doing some good; but the committee must be composed of men of standing and repute and be under the control of the R.I.B.A. and the allied societies. Offences could be dealt with as breaches of professional conduct.

FROM MR. BASIL OLIVER

The formulation of canons of criticism on the lines of the earlier ideals of the Ministry of Health with regard to housing schemes would be a useful basis to work on, and would be advantageous in eliminating unessentials and

"The painted barge-boards and commanding chimney caps surmounting a rough-cast wall, the work of the architect of a generation ago. . . ."



Above, Mr. C. McArthur Butler. Below, Mr. Charles Cowles-Voysey.

stressing good planning, good proportion, and the use of appropriate building materials. It seems that in the cause (? curse) of cheapness "quack" materials have to be tolerated as a substitute for the real thing, but there is no reason why the needlessly bright and hideous colours of those that are visible should not be controlled. Even where there might be a number of architects, and only architects, of varying merit, working together in one locality, only an independent outside committee could hope for any success in controlling them. Obviously they could not control themselves. The English characteristic of independence was exemplified in the building of Kingsway and in all but the Quadrant of Regent Street. Registration used to be the great hope for curing the ills of amateur meddling, but the power of the speculators being still strong enough to prevent this I would give to the architect-dominated committees as full autocratic powers as are now given to borough district surveyors, but this would mean legislation. Where no architects are employed the worst horrors could be nipped in the bud by the committees.

FROM MR. J. R. LEATHART

A professional committee, by all means, provided that the members thereof are selected upon their architectural reputation, and not upon mere seniority or social influence.

The question of criticism by confrères should mean no odium; reasoned and constructive criticism is only taken exception to by the confirmed egoist.

In any case, save us from the layman!

Rather a road of good houses differing in character than a road filled with bad ones of a standardized type.

FROM PROFESSOR C. H. REILLY

Æsthetic control by a panel or committee dominated by architects is quite practicable if the architects are sufficiently broad-minded in their outlook and not in competition for the same class of work themselves. They must be senior men who at the same time have preserved their youth. I do not believe today in lay committees for general purposes even with architects on them. Such committees, however, may work well for special purposes. With another architect I have lately been sitting on one to choose architects for new churches, but then the lay members—a bishop and several canons—were expert in one aspect of the question.

I am all for specified local materials. They should be obligatory. Style however, cannot be specified today.

We have nothing corresponding to the Palladian tradition which eighteenth-century ground-landlords expected from their architects. If the advisory architects are men of both sense and sensibility they will be able to settle each case on its merits as it arises.

FROM MR. FRANK GRANGER

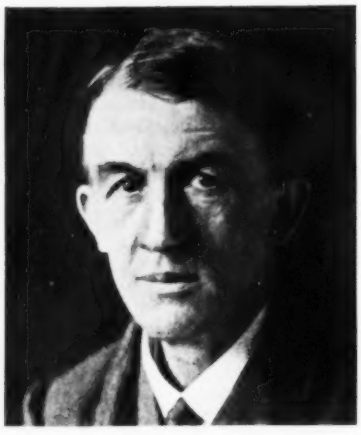
It is possible to formulate canons of criticism. The first I would suggest is, that the traditional methods of building in the locality should be respected. In the second place, the limits of variation in the designs of cottages should be strictly observed. The size of the windows needs careful adjustment. A local village has been disfigured by a row of new small houses in which large and disproportionate casements are rendered exceedingly objectionable by the incompetent design of the containing woodwork. In the third place, the architectural effect should be sought by the harmonious proportion of material and the economy of ornament.

FROM MR. RALPH KNOTT

I think committees dominated by architects can do a good deal. Of course, they have no power to enforce their views, but, failing this, *suggestion* (tactfully put) would help. I am a member of such a committee. There are several other architects with me, and I think we have done some good work.

The only way I can see of discouraging amateur meddling with the art of building is by letting it be known that a committee exists which will advise and help the speculator gratuitously. It might, I think, happen that the speculator could then see that his

. . . says Mr. Nathaniel Lloyd, "are faithfully reflected in the speculative builder's work of our own day, with which we are so dissatisfied."



Left, Sir Herbert Baker. Right, Mr. Howard Robertson.

interests would be better served by employing professional advice.

FROM PROFESSOR A. E. RICHARDSON

The speculators and amateurs putting their drawings before a committee should be advised to obtain the advice of an architect before the committee could recommend the plans being deposited with the local rural council. In the ordinary way plans have to be passed by the urban or rural district council, in order to conform with the by-laws. The Architectural Advisory Committee would see the plans first, thereby imposing a check on haphazard development.

FROM MR. E. STANLEY HALL

Educate the layman to discriminate between good and bad building and to recognize that what is erected in any village or town affects every inhabitant for better or worse.

FROM MR. F. E. BENNETT

Amateur meddling in the art of building might be discouraged by:

1: Awarding certificates of honourable mention to *owners* of new buildings. Say annually, or one in each street.

2: Popularizing architecture.

Agitate for architecture to be taught in ordinary day schools.

FROM MR. W. HARDING THOMPSON

No definite canons of criticism could at once be formulated; and to begin with, an advisory committee would be wise to confine its suggestions to such things as:

a: Colour of roof covering and walls.

b: Kind of roof material.

c: Scale with reference with adjacent existing buildings.

d: Elimination of "exotic" features.

FROM MR. T. BUTLER WILSON

I consider it practicable to exercise æsthetic control over building by mixed committees composed of architects and laymen, both to be nominated by the council of the Architectural Society operating in the particular district.

FROM MISS HILDA MASON

It might be practicable (if the local council could be persuaded) to form a committee, which should, I think, consist of one or more architects (chosen by themselves to represent them), one or more members of the council, and possibly one or more residents of the district who would be willing to serve on the committee. The committee to report to the council, either in person or in writing.

I consider that the architects would not be likely to incur any odium by criticizing their confrères.

FROM MR. W. H. JACK

A lay committee composed of, say, six men of taste and *common sense* in each county would do much good. An immense amount of good could be done by personal contact with the "spoilers" and reasonable recommendation by the lay committee.

I should say the architects of any one county could be able to agree on a policy which would meet the difficulty of collaboration in materials, style, and character of buildings.

The proceedings of the lay committee should be open to the public on occasion, and their work fully reported in the local Press in every district. The co-operation of all newspapers and newspaper editors should be invited.

FROM MR. E. G. WILLCOCKS

The meddling of amateurs in the art of building can best be prevented by:

a: Articles in the Press written more with a view to the preservation of the beauty of the countryside than to the employment of architects. The articles should contain illustrations of the worst kind of rural development and of satisfactory examples of modern domestic architecture of approximately the same value as the unsatisfactory type. As provincial architects have seldom the time to write such articles, it is suggested that the R.I.B.A. might have a series of suitable articles prepared for loan to the allied societies who could, with little trouble, arrange for their insertion in local papers. Also could it not be arranged for some of the big daily papers to run a campaign on the same lines?

b: By means of interesting illustrated public lectures on modern architecture, In this case again it is often difficult for provincial architects to find time to prepare such lectures and get together the necessary slides. If, however, the R.I.B.A. would have a series of such lectures prepared which could be loaned to the allied societies it could probably be arranged for a number of such lectures to be given in the provinces.

c: Unobtrusive advertising of the profession generally, not of individual members, as is done by the Stock Exchange on behalf of its members.

FROM MR. J. ARTHUR SMITH

The best way of discouraging amateur meddling with the art of building would be by public lectures with photographic lantern slides showing the work of architects and amateurs side by side and in comparison. (Of course, without disclosure of authorship.) Such are contemplated in Hampshire.

FROM MR. J. MALCOLM DOSSOR

Committees dominated by architects are quite practicable provided that the selected architects are men of repute with practical experience of property and estate development, in which case I do not think that their fair criticism would be resented by their confrères. I do not, however, think that such committees need necessarily be confined to architects, probably carefully chosen representatives of the landed gentry and building trades would add to the efficiency of the committees.

The speculator usually supplies the class of building most in demand, and the demand can only be altered by the weight of public opinion. In my opinion, much might be done in our elementary and secondary schools to create a better judgment, and I again think that the R.I.B.A. and its allied societies might render considerable assistance by co-operating with our educational authorities to this end.

FROM MR. F. E. WAPSHOTT

Such committees would be successful if their formation was by an architect (or architects) of high analytical and critical skill—assisted by cultured persons outside the profession, and also

the assistance of a good legal mind employed to express and clarify the intentions of those who would formulate the canons of criticism.

No scheme can, in my opinion, *enforce* really good and vital architecture, but it can certainly prevent every distinct transgression of known rules of good design.

FROM MR. OWEN FLEMING

I think the "atrocities" are, in fact, committed by a very small number of people in each locality. These make a business of this kind of thing, and spread their baneful influence over the entire district. If a really influential local "Committee of Practice" were in existence, and architects and builders had to appear before it, I fancy even the worst offenders would soon show subservience if they knew that the committee had real power of reproval. A voluntary committee that had no power would probably be ridiculed and its advice caricatured and ignored.

FROM MR. E. PENFOLD

All the badly designed houses in Surrey are the work of small builders who tout purchasers of land or building estates, etc. This can only be prevented by pressure from a central society of master builders, the better class builders generally who speculate go to architects.

FROM MR. H. E. BOX

In each local government area, I am of opinion that: *a* a suitable and qualified architect be appointed to advise and criticize on all plans submitted; and: *b* in large areas a panel or committee of architects to serve in the same way. To bring these points (e.g. meddling by amateurs and speculators) to the public notice I suggest first, making the study of architecture a part of the education of adults by instituting lectures, and by forcible articles in the lay Press.

This will, of course, take many years to mature and its effect be fully felt.

FROM MR. HENRY ELWIG

A lay committee is preferable to one composed mainly of architects, with, perhaps, retired architects or those not in practice immediately, say, in the locality.

FROM MR. LEONARD BARNISH

Undoubtedly local committees to guide or control all building should be formed everywhere. The committees should be small and mostly composed of laymen.

The chairman of each committee should be a member of some regional council.

FROM MR. PAUL PHIPPS

The ordinary cottage-house builder only wants to put up what he considers a satisfactory cottage or house with the least expenditure of money, and he would be extremely grateful for anything that will assist him to do so. The greatest help that any committee could give him would be to show him practical examples of what can be done with sound planning and design and the right use of proper materials in any given locality. If the committees could issue a certain number of designs and specifications for different types of cottages and houses suitable to each particular district which could be bought by any would-be builder for a reasonable sum, this would probably have a far-reaching effect.

FROM MR. E. GUY DAWBER

It is a very difficult question and the suggested remedy might only make things worse than at present unless exercised with extreme care. It is not so much the work of one's confrères that is wrong, but that done by the speculative builder and the amateur, and these are most difficult to control, as, at present, local authorities have no jurisdiction over designs or materials.

It would be advisable in any committee of control to have lay members as well as architects, though in every case the latter should be in the majority.

There would be no objection to these committees criticizing the work of their confrères, and if a strong and representative one were appointed in each district it would eventually tend to raise the general standard of design—if architects submitting their drawings knew they would be criticized and unfavourably commented upon if badly and unsuitably designed.

Any hard and fast so-called "canons of criticism" would be fatal to the success of the scheme, and any committee must have a perfectly free hand.

With regard to conformity in respect of materials, style, and character of the houses to be built, this is more a matter of "town planning," and if there were some authority or committee of control who could say that in certain areas only brick or stone houses, for example, should be built, it would go far to solve the trouble. It is the juxtaposition, as stated above, of buildings

Plain Words

to Officials

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A large landowner in the south of England, who is also a Rural District Councillor, writes to the Editor as follows:

RURAL district councils have local knowledge which is of use in the execution of the many duties which have been laid upon them by Parliament, but they have certain limitations which in at least one direction have had deplorable results—results which will long survive the councillors and perhaps the councils. Under the Addison scheme the Ministry of Health had powers to control the design of subsidy houses, but under the Chamberlain and Wheatley Acts this control ceased to exist. Æsthetic considerations do not generally appeal to such a body as the ordinary rural district council, which usually consists of a squire, a parson or two, some small shopkeepers, and a working majority of farmers. In technical matters a council is very likely to rely on its surveyor or architect, and as the salary is small the qualifications of the architect are not often high.

The rural district council with whose housing activities I am familiar is responsible for a large area of considerable beauty and comparative prosperity in these days of agricultural depression. Housing conditions were unsatisfactory and the council built a certain number of houses under the Addison scheme. Nothing substantial was done to reduce the shortage of houses, and when the council began to build under the later Housing Acts it was clear that a considerable effort would have to be made.

The council accordingly appointed a new surveyor to deal with roads and also to act as architect for the

[CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE]

good in themselves, but of different materials and character, that is so destructive of any repose or harmony in the countryside.

It was the similarity of type—of whatever material buildings were erected in — in former times, that gave such a sense of homogeneity and pleasure. Whether, in these days of cheap transport of materials to districts and areas where they are out of harmony with their environment, any way of checking it can be adopted is most improbable. No legislation would ever be passed to prevent anyone building more or less as he wishes on his own property.

It is only the formation of a volume of public opinion that will eventually make for better work and induce people to see the ultimate effect of poor and meretricious building in the destruction of the beauty of our country.

The discouragement of amateur meddling can only be done through the Press, public opinion, and the increasing knowledge on the part of the general public that bad building does not pay—from a commercial as well as an æsthetic point of view.

FROM MR. WALTER H. GODFREY

Lay committees are preferable to professional control. Committees of this sort are generally composed of men of leisure. They should consult such professional opinion as they require. The gradual reconversion of the countryside to better methods will be more easily accomplished through laymen having to consider the question involved themselves. Dictation is always liable to defeat its object.

A really useful committee might do much by bringing people together—otherwise such an object can be attained only by some control, that is, the opportunity of a consulting architect who would be responsible for the general layout and development of a district.

[CONTINUED FROM THE PREVIOUS PAGE]

purpose of houses to be built by them under the recent Act. He may have been a good surveyor, but he had little technical qualifications and fewer gifts as an architect, and his designs and practice have been deplorable.

For the sake of variety houses in a group of a dozen were roofed alternately with slates and tiles, and where possible ugly and meaningless ornamentation was introduced. The countryside has been covered with a series of monuments to his incapacity which will testify against him, if not till the Last Day, at any rate until most of the sober and sensible eighteenth-century cottages of brick with thatch roofs have long fallen into decay.

He and his predecessor, under the Addison scheme, sinned no less against the light in practical matters, and the council has been involved in unnecessarily heavy expenditure on road making for their housing schemes. Loquacious and plausible, with a parade of technical knowledge, such an official can lead a council down any path—the blind leading the blind—and rural England, a beautiful, but unresisting victim, will, for two centuries, bear the marks of these outrages.

The C.P.R.E. does what it can, but in many country districts there is little organized public opinion in these matters, and local authorities in the last three or four years have been guilty of as many crimes as were ever perpetrated by speculative builders.

The Ministry of Health recently published an admirable manual on housing, but it seems unlikely that an ordinary rural district council will make much use of it. Water may be brought to such people, but they will not drink. A few enlightened councils and a few landlords may build good cottages, but no body constituted as is the average rural district council will ever exercise wise control.

A county council might prove to be a better authority for this purpose, but in my view one thing alone can arrest the disfigurement of the country which is proceeding at a rate increasing every day as motor traffic and better roads spread round every city and little market town the eruption of bungalows and villas. It is the control of the *design* of all houses in respect of which a subsidy is granted by a panel of local architects, or possibly, in a modified form, by the Ministry of Health.

What do the readers of THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL *think of this denunciation? Is it fair? Is the case here given typical? Are any official surveyors as incompetent, are any rural district councils as blind, as those here described? Compare these observations with those of other contributors. The Editor will be glad to have the views of country readers on both sides of the case.*

FROM MR. HOWARD ROBERTSON

Greater Press activities, publication of good designs, etc., provide the best means of influencing the public in this direction.

FROM SIR HERBERT BAKER

I think the public would never tolerate and, therefore, would not be influenced by autocratic committees composed of architects alone. The public would only accept the opinion of lay committees, however much they might be internally dominated by the opinions and the will of architects.

I think, as in all activities of life, one's feeling is against formulating canons of criticism as the spirit of art will always reach beyond dogmas and canons. There are no two cases alike and all have to be treated on their merits, but ideas and criticism put into the form of suggestions for guidance would, I think, have more influence. I think much might be done by committees forming small groups o local moots amongst architects and laymen for discussing such problems in a friendly way. In my experience groups and informal discussions to which anyone interested or with special knowledge should be invited, effect much more than formal business committees. It is the exchange of ideas and interests which you want to promote.

I think the real if slow process of the ultimate achievement of our ideals must be through the education of public opinion. For this I think a very important line of advance is that which Mr. Tapper mentioned in his speech at the

R.I.B.A. dinner, that in all schools the ideal of education in art should not be so much technical training, but rather to teach the enjoyment of beauty in all its forms. In other words, instead of schools turning out few successes and many failures as artists, they would send all their students into the world as potential patrons of art, even to a minute degree, the sum of which, however, might some day be immense and lead to the attainment of an ideal.

FROM MR. T. CECIL HOWITT

Statutory powers for local authorities to have general control over the question of design as well as points of construction are long overdue, and this appears the only solution.

More sympathetic consideration of the use of the best local building materials would be a tremendous help, also a closer study by architects of the planning and methods of economical building employed by the speculator. By this means it is possible for an architect to produce buildings as economically as the ordinary contractor.

FROM MR. A. S. G. BUTLER

I consider it best to institute small lay committees with their own consulting architect rather loosely attached. The operations of the committees should be advisory and persuasive—never dictatorial—and appear to be learned in architecture with the help of their chosen consulting architect, whose views should not be thrust forward except as the expression of the committee's hopes for a certain course of action. The architect must be strictly behind the scenes and exercise the greatest tact. He must also be able to appear, if necessary, and expound lucidly (probably to a hostile audience) the necessity for a certain treatment of proposed buildings.

I suggest education, friendly pressure, and continuous and very wise comments in the lay Press. Rather than give county councils, etc., æsthetic powers, increase their respect for and trust in the guidance of architects. You cannot force good taste on people, but you can screw up the profession to a higher level of conscientiousness, both by education and approval of good work by the headquarters of the profession.

Above, Professor C. H. Reilly.
Below, Mr. Basil Oliver.

Above, Mr. E. Stanley Hall.
Below, Sir Reginald Blomfield.

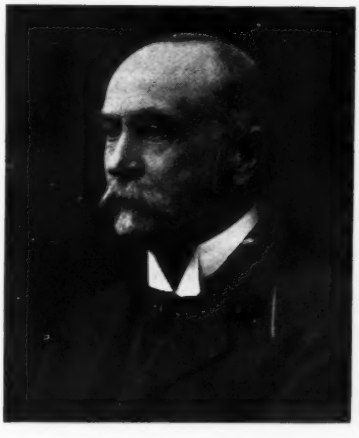
FROM MR. A. TRYSTAN EDWARDS

1: I believe that lay committees are preferable, architects, or whoever else may prove themselves competent, may supply such lay committees with canons of judgment, but the actual administration of the æsthetic code should be in the hands of laymen.

2: Yes. For instance, the principle of good manners in architecture is keenly appreciated and commands immediate assent by all. An æsthetic code based upon this principle would not be difficult to administer and would result in the elimination of the more offensive forms of irregularity by which architecture is at present afflicted. Certain elementary principles of composition are also capable of being expounded and could be added to the code. All "rules" of architecture should, of course, be barred, but a principle is different from a rule.

3: Yes. It should be a point of professional etiquette that architects designing buildings in the same neighbourhood should communicate with one another in order to discuss the possibility of securing harmony between such buildings. When once this convention is established the civic authorities will make an enormous stride forward.

4: That architects, in addition to shouldering the burden of their own sins, should also be blamed by an ignorant public for the sins of the speculative builder seems monstrously unjust. Architects should take steps to secure that every one of their buildings in course of erection should bear a conspicuous sign declaring it to be the work of a chartered architect, and the completed building should be suitably inscribed by the architect's name. The public will soon learn to look for these signs and inscriptions.



FROM SIR REGINALD BLOMFIELD

Your four questions are really all one subject and must be answered together.

In regard to advisory committees, probably the best arrangement is what we have in the Fine Art Commission—a layman for chairman, but a predominance of technicians among the members. It is for architects to advise laymen, not vice versa, and infinite harm is done by the well-meaning efforts of amateurs when it comes to actual work. I doubt the possibility of laying down any hard and fast rules, and as for general principles these ought to be a matter of general education, and of an awakened conscience in these matters. The efforts now being made by various societies to preserve our countryside, and some decency in our towns, have my full sympathy, but

The whole part of this roof, old as well as new, is covered with interlocking tiles whose colour harmonizes very adequately with that of the stone.

I am not very sanguine that much progress will be made till our educationists turn their attention to the question of æsthetic values. Until there is a general public sense of the necessity of beauty in a reasonable life, we shall continue to be dominated by "strict business."

FROM MR. T. F. MACLENNAN

Control of this sort is achieved in Edinburgh through the Edinburgh Order Confirmation Act 1926 (Streets, Buildings and Sewers) Section 44.

Briefly, the Dean of Guild Court has power to require alterations on, or modifications of, a design if the latter is considered out of keeping with the neighbouring buildings, and also may refuse to allow the undue repetition of a design.

The petitioner may appeal to the Corporation who will remit the matter to a standing Advisory Committee, consisting of one member nominated by the Secretary for Scotland, one member nominated by the Royal Scottish Academy, one member nominated by the Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, one member nominated by the Corporation (but not an official thereof). The probability is that the R.S.A. would appoint an architect from their membership.

With regard to amateur meddling with the art of building, the public are being educated on this matter. A vastly larger proportion of the houses of the people have been designed by architects since the war than at any other period I have any knowledge of.

FROM MR. EDWARD C. TASKER

Any kind of committee which would have for its object the curtailment of vandalism in this country is desirable.

I think perhaps the most practicable solution of this problem would be the institution of subcommittees of the local councils, to deal with this question of vandalism, both in our buildings, their relation one to the other, and the question of public advertisements, etc., such subcommittees to be composed of laymen who are admittedly unable to criticize architecture or the arts generally. They might, however, act as juries, having heard the expression of opinion given by men qualified to give them. Such qualified opinion could be that of, say, three architects or three artists who are on a roster. The producer of a design under consideration need not be confronted with the qualified advisers, but could state his case separately to the lay committee, and should be given the opportunity to reply to the criticisms of his confrères before any decision was arrived at. In this way little odium would be incurred, especially if condemnation of a design were only possible given complete unanimity on the part of the advisers and the lay committee.

FROM MR. ARTHUR G. LYNHAM

Having examined during the last few years many of the plans submitted for approval to a rural district council whose area impinges upon two large towns, and in which great development has taken place, I am forced to the conclusion that only a definite control of design operating through the local authority or a tribunal with similar powers can be effective.

It occurs to me to suggest that the plans committee could have three co-opted architect members appointed by the local architectural association.

The architect members would examine all plans, and any criticisms or instructions for amendment would be sent out as the committee's findings or requirements.

FROM MR. H. C. W. STRICKLAND

I am of opinion that the solution lies in the appointment of regional architects, who will have all the necessary powers to approve, amend or reject designs. Their duties need not clash with those of the local surveyors, who would still remain responsible for the administration of the local building by-laws, etc.

FROM MR. STANLEY HONOUR

Canons of criticism could be drawn up by a central panel elected from representatives of the district panels, meeting in conference annually; this central panel to be advised by the Art Standing Committee of the R.I.B.A. if required. These canons would command assent throughout the country if the district councils could be given powers by the Ministry of Health to disapprove, if necessary, plans and designs on æsthetic as well as structural grounds.

I would propose that a diploma or award of some kind be offered in each district annually, such award to be decided by the afore-mentioned panel, and to be given for the best-designed house erected in that current year. I have in mind something similar to the R.I.B.A. Street Architecture Medal.

In some localities awards are given for beautiful gardens, then why not an award to the building owner of a beautiful house? There would be nothing unprofessional in the advertisement it would give to the designer, and would educate the public in a practical manner in matters architectural.

FROM MR. A. R. POWYS

There should certainly be committees with architects on them to give advice to the R.D.C.s who want their advice. They should be brought into being. I think they would be used. But if not, on the chance that they may be.

I think we should preserve the old materials, style and character of buildings because they are good works of craftsmanship—the goodness and finish being recognized because the quality of the work is so well related to the needs of each case. Some finer, some less so, but all, or nearly all, good because of their same relationship to life as it was when these works were done. If we can relate our new work to life in the same sort of way, it is likely that it will be as seemly beside the work of any period as is the brick-built Georgian farm in a village that, until that king reigned, saw no walls except those made from chalk and flint.

I cannot suggest a method of collaboration. Most of us in various ways work towards better architecture. That at

Arlington Row, Bibury, the famous row of cottages whose safety is now assured. The unifying effect of the broad, rough-textured roof is particularly noteworthy.

least can continue to be so, both by word and deed. Perhaps we want more knowledge of life and less of architecture. It might be better if we were a little more "Jacks of all Trades" and a little more amateurs in architecture, forgetting the ways of the past.

I should never discourage the amateur. Why should we do so? That is not the way. We architects must prove to the amateur that we are worth our fees.

FROM MR. B. THIRTLE

Something might be done on the lines of the Street Architecture Medal in, say, "Cottage Architecture" awards in each district for simple inexpensive and well-designed cottages, and the winning designs each year published and hung permanently in public halls throughout the country. The technical journals have helped very much, but they are not read by the lay people to any great extent. The lay mind must be brought to see that design can be hand in hand with economy.

FROM MR. C. H. B. QUENNELL

I felt that the speculating builder would appear sooner or later, and here he is being pushed out from the wings. Shall we give him a clap, because as a whipping boy he has been very useful and as a craftsman he has given the people just what they wanted, and a standard of quality like their own?

FROM MR. H. S. GOODHART-RENDEL

I do not call the average speculator who is a builder an amateur. He is generally more skilled than the architect in providing what the public wants to buy. I also think it quite useless to try to stop people bent on designing their own houses from doing so. If it be true that houses built without architects are uglier on the average than houses built with architects (which I am not sure about), the only way of lessening ugliness is for architects to persuade the public to want better things, and to teach the speculative builders and the amateur what these people will then find it profitable to learn.

FROM MR. HASTWELL GRAYSON

A joint committee of the Liverpool and Manchester Architectural Societies has been endeavouring to formulate a satisfactory scheme for panels of architects getting in touch with speculative builders. The more deeply the problem is explored, the more manifest become the difficulties. The committee is still hopeful. On the other hand, there is growing evidence that prospective purchasers of speculative property are getting more critical.

FROM MR. G. REGINALD FARROW

A committee might certainly be formed to advise particularly in questions of design, but it could not do so in justice to the architectural profession without making the usual professional charges.

There would then arise the question of what should be done with the fees.

Also there would be the danger that some of the public might use the committee for purposes of obtaining advice so that they could dispense with the services of an architect.

FROM PROFESSOR BERESFORD PITE

I do not think the suggestion of committees is practicable for the purpose of controlling the æsthetics of building.

Ultimately economical and practical considerations govern building in rural areas.

Æsthetic results—like judgments—had better be left to time.

FROM MR. OSWALD P. MILNE

Everything possible should be done to foster and arouse a sense of pride in each community in the beauties and amenities of their own town or village, so that they will rise up and slay any aggressor who attempts to desecrate the scenery.

This may be a painfully slow process; but there is hope in such announcements as I see in the *Times* that the village institutes are going to join in a campaign of protest against buildings that make the eyes sore.

To obtain conformity in colour, materials, etc., the best plan is that followed in Amsterdam where, I understand, there is an official called the "Æsthetic Director," who has to be the guide and counsellor in all matters concerning the appearance of streets and buildings and with whom lies the eventual "Yea" or "Nay" as to the elevation. He happens to be a tactful and wide-seeing gentleman and so the result has been fairly successful. It, however, requires a socialistic regime to be as bureaucratic and dictatorial as that!

Architects could at the moment do more valuable work by getting elected to local bodies and using every possible influence for good through them than by forming committees.

[*A perusal of these quotations will doubtless convince the reader that the questionary has extracted valuable expressions of opinion which should have an important effect upon architectural policy. For a profession, if it is to flourish in a world inclined in some respects to be hostile to it, must possess a* policy *upon every question which concerns its well-being. It is not here contended that such policies can be determined by the simple process of counting noses, yet those of us who accept the general implications of democracy cannot ignore the fact that if, out of a representative list of* 150 *architects, as many as* 102, *or over* 66 *per cent., are in favour of some sort of æsthetic control over architecture, we are justified in arriving at a certain conclusion; for we have here unquestionable proof that control is now in the realm of practical politics, and while its advocates may have many differences of opinion among themselves, they at least know that they are not leading a forlorn hope. The subject must now be pursued patiently but without bitterness, and the advocates of the measure will naturally welcome all the criticisms which its opponents may direct against it.*

One valuable point was made over and over again in the answers to the questionary, namely, that æsthetic control cannot be expected to operate with smoothness until architects have learnt to philosophize, more vigorously than they have hitherto done, upon the basic principles of their art.—ED., A. J.]

Rural Planning

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The Main Road Problem

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Value of Regional Schemes

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TOWN planning—what an odd name to apply to the system by which the amenities of the countryside may be preserved! But, indeed, the whole history of government in England is like that, growing constantly in precedent and practice, here a little and there a little, so that the powers which were first given to enable a growing town to seize the land of its country neighbours are now forged into a weapon to save what is left of the country from the too active efflorescence of the town.

Indeed, these powers are still closely associated in most minds with factory zones and by-law streets. Few rural district councils, except those which are rapidly undergoing development for houses or factories, or are on the way from London to the sea, have availed themselves of the power to prepare town-planning schemes. Not unnaturally they do not want the bother and expense. The main problem in country places is that of main roads; and that is taken off the shoulders of the rural districts by the county councils.

Now the process of widening of town-planning powers has gone fast, but it has not yet reached the stage of making county councils into town-planning authorities. When that is done and the name is changed to something implying the control of rural development as well as urban, progress may well be rapid, as county councils are bodies which respond pretty readily to the lead of the central administration, and may do so still more if funds which are at present drawn from the rates on agricultural land is replaced by block grants from headquarters. Meanwhile "Regional Planning" affords a compromise and a scheme of co-operation, for, though a regional committee is composed strictly of representatives of the full town-planning authorities, the advisory nature of the scheme makes it possible to co-opt on to the committee representatives of the county council, and also other bodies (rural community councils and the like) that would not otherwise come in at all, and whose help and imagination are invaluable.

Given a sensible and imaginative committee, and a good surveyor working for them, the regional scheme may be a very valuable instrument. Granted that it is only advisory; yet in many regions the smaller districts employ the surveyor to make their separate schemes as well; so they get good schemes for little trouble or money. Excellent illustrations of this process are both East and West Kent.

CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT

Under a "town" planning scheme so formed, development is controlled

Above, one of the chief approaches to the ancient and beautiful town of Cambridge: the Shelford Road. Its all-over-the-placeness makes it the accepted gibe of the advocates of town planning. As a matter of fact, it is a wide curving road and much may yet be done by planting. Below, farther along the same road: the entrance to the park-like village of Trumpington. Note, left, A.A. patrol, and then the toll-house; right, the worst type of house for a village, and, in the gap, the planting of advertisements. Such advertisements are for the future regulated under by-laws in Cambridgeshire.

A pleasant country house at Grantchester, which harmonizes well with the general character of the village.

in various ways. 1: Land is zoned as permanent open space, whether public, in parks, recreation grounds, etc., or private, in which the owner continues to enjoy the use of the land, but may not build upon it and so cannot be taxed for building values; 2: the placing of buildings in relation to roads can be regulated, and group development fostered, as against the ribbon development most of us agree in condemning; 3: trees and footpaths can be protected (or destroyed); 4: under clauses like the now famous "Bath Clause" control may be exercised over the elevations of all buildings in the area.

It must be remembered that although these powers exist, local authorities, and especially the poorer ones, will be very chary of exercising them. Town planning of any sort is regarded as rank interference with the liberties of the farmer; scheduling as open space under the new rating proposals, even of permanent agricultural belts, means loss of possible rates, not to speak of compensation; and as for the control of the elevations of buildings, the ordinary councillor simply does not see any reason for making building any more bothersome than it is, in all conscience, at present.

COMPENSATION AND CO-OPERATION

Great towns can afford to give compensation when they schedule land; in the ordinary way in the country districts compensation is out of the question, except for small pieces of land, or land which, as swamp or precipice, can have no building value. The most that can normally be expected is that owners may be persuaded to consent to the scheduling of private open spaces or agricultural land, partly for sentiment, partly for fame, partly for the increased value of the surrounding land, partly to save an increase in death duties. Sometimes the persuading will be the other way. Owners wishing to consecrate open spaces will persuade councils to town-plan and so sanction the sacrifice.

This co-operation will be largely helped by voluntary country and county organizations which have at heart the continuance of country places as such, and by well-informed and well-intentioned individuals. Both the Oxford and Cambridge preservation bodies hope to do something of this, and the C.P.R.E. is doing invaluable work in the Thames valley on the same lines.

For the greater part of the British countryside the control of development by a town-planning scheme is in no way different from that employed by the private owner of discernment. The reservation of open spaces, the planting of woods and coverts in the past, was for the sake of the recreations of hunting and shooting; today it is for the recreations of camping and walking; protecting birds to shoot them later gives way without any break to protecting birds, to watch or photograph them later. The watcher in a bird sanctuary plays Providence to his tern or wryneck in just the same way as the keeper to his pheasants.

CONTROL OF DESIGN

The idea of harmonizing the design of new buildings to the picturesqueness of a gentleman's "Place" was, perhaps, first consciously insisted upon in the middle of the eighteenth century, when the reddest of red brick was being used for country villas by the retired merchants of the country towns. Many charming little cottages were designed in sober and harmonious colouring for the new needs of the villages. "The control of design" in estate development is no new idea. It has been forgotten because the break-up of estates today is so sudden; the need for money (for death duties or other ends) so pressing, that practically no conditions are demanded; or at most an estate developer compliments himself highly if he secures a green margin to the road and an adequately set-back building line. In some places, indeed, public opinion already operates so far as the materials of building are concerned; a builder in a picturesque part of Surrey informed me that no builder would dare to build with anything but the multicoloured bricks and tiles of those parts; but the designs of his villas had no other merits. There are many individual cases of estates or even whole towns in which a strict supervision of design is exercised in the interest of the general appearance of the place. This is as a private measure of precaution; but now it can be and is beginning to be applied as a definite part of town-planning schemes.

The difficulties, of course, which beset the controllers of the designs in their new powers and responsibilities are very heavy. Their position is new and usually precarious. The private builder has of late indulged in such a riot of liberty or licence that it is hard to realize that the control of design in the development of an estate was as normal and complete a few years ago in any private estate as it is in Welwyn today. The personnel, indeed, is changed; for the owner of taste is substituted the committee; but in the composition of the regular committee under the Bath Clause, an architect, a surveyor, and another man of sense is not too greatly different from the old time when the owner was in the place of the latter and consulted with his agent or his architect, or left the matter in their hands.

Today the builder rejoices in his liberty, and the land agent, selling the land freehold (instead of leasing it, as in the old days), is often unable to insist on what he would like. The commonest standard of merit is the minimum price. It would, I think, help matters if committees were set up either under the town-planning scheme or under the C.P.R.E., or local bodies, which *could be consulted if owners so desired.* So, by being employed first in a voluntary way, they might gradually obtain the confidence of the public, and eventually the old order would be restored. In the same way the Oxford Preservation Trust has

obtained architectural advice, or arranged for its architectural adviser to have an influence in the design of important buildings, and the Cambridge Preservation Society has been consulted by the municipality on important matters.

VILLAGE SOCIETIES

The oldest village organization survives as the parish council, in whose keeping are the greens and footpaths, parish pumps, stocks, and what not, and the honour and privileges of the village generally. The chairman of the parish council is nearly always a person to be reckoned with. The members are elected triennially at a public meeting seldom widely attended. In the last five years all sorts of organizations have sprung up in the villages—women's institutes, British Legions, and clubs and committees of all sorts. Another body, on a widely representative basis, has come into being lately in many villages, not to supersede the parish council, that guardian of individual rights, but rather to co-ordinate the organizations and do works for the common good. This is the village community council, and this seems to be the best body to build and control village halls, under the trusteeship of its parent body, the National Council of Social Service, as explained in an article in this JOURNAL on October 27, 1926. It can, incidentally, be very helpful in village planning and improvement, though, of course, it has no legal powers. On the same model, of a representative from all the active organizations, official and unofficial, in the county, is the rural community council—a body with a permanent secretary and an office. These rural community councils vary, of course, in different counties, according to the interests of their most active members, but are everywhere doing very valuable work. They organize lectures extensively in the villages, run woodwork centres and craftsmen's societies, drama schools, and many other things, and in some counties are doing very useful propaganda in favour of rural planning and preservation.

In Cambridgeshire, for instance, the R.C.C. is making a preservation survey of the whole county, and as there was no local body of architects, the R.C.C. worked with the C.P.R.E. to arrange an architects' panel, which is now functioning. The county rural community councils, again, are linked by the National Council of Social Service, made up on the same lines of representatives of official and voluntary organizations.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTES

Of all the new village societies the most active, and the most comprehensive, both of persons and interests, are the women's institutes. These bodies aim, not at a preservation of the past, but at fostering a real active life in the villages. To their ideals it is vitally important to maintain country life independent of the towns; and so to them the ideals of rural planning and preservation are dear; and both the women's institutes and the schools encourage the study of village history. Perhaps we may look forward to the establishment, at least in the bigger villages, of the village college. Here, in one building, will be assembled all the organized education and enjoyment of the village; its sponsors hope to make it the villager's second home, from the cradle to the grave, and here certainly will be housed the village museum, library, and records.

PRESERVATION OF SPACES

The next bodies to be considered are those formed definitely for the preservation of certain spaces of ground, by actual purchase or control. Chief among these is, of course, the National Trust, a body into whose safe hands more and more of the real beauty spots of England are passing. Far too few, however, for the process is a costly one. Similar reserves of land are being obtained by some of the big city councils, and by local societies or committees, such as the Oxford Preservation Trust, Ltd., and the Cambridge Perservation Society. Sanctuaries for birds or other wild life are in the hands of the National Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and similar societies, some national, many local. Where a society is not incorporated under the Board of Trade, the land can be held for it by four trustees. The chief watch-dogs are the Scapa Society, always active to prevent the spoliation of the country places, and the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society, and for old buildings, the "Anti-Scrape." National monuments are at present only a limited number, and they are mostly earthworks and bridges. but they are efficiently protected, and several beauty spots containing buildings are in the good keeping of H.M. Office of Works. There are also the local antiquarian societies and museums

A row of cottages on which the beauty of a village depends. Their security ought to be guaranteed. The thatched cottages are seventeenth century. The tiled cottages are later than 1806, and show how the tradition survived, but . . .

with their invaluable stores of local knowledge and local records.

The C.P.R.E. stands as a liaison between these bodies and the officials, interpreting to the town-planning authorities the urgent cries of the country lovers, enlisting the support of the local people to the official schemes.

One word of caution here. The C.P.R.E. was received in the Press and in the country effusively and noisily; it must work for the most part unobtrusively and quietly. Precipitancy of its supporters would be its greatest stumbling-block. The scheme it is evolving for local panels of architects begins very quietly and humbly with local bodies, technically qualified to help here an anxious owner, there a conscientious council, not with the control of design, but with the proper reconditioning of cottages for use. These panels, like all other C.P.R.E. schemes, must win their way by plain and quiet usefulness. To proclaim them as ready-made instruments for the control of design is to strangle them at birth. When they are established—and, indeed, their very establishment is a slow and uncertain process—when they have won their spurs through real usefulness, then more will be asked of them and their advice will be sought willingly.

ONE MAN'S MEAT ANOTHER MAN'S POISON

How hard it is that one man's meat seems inevitably another man's poison! How swift is the rural ride of the modern Cobbett, who on his week-end trip may include half England in his purview and Wales as well! The smooth road that brings the admirer to his beauty spot and takes him easily away again, tempts him to remain for the night and makes easy the bringing of unsuitable buildings—and a little of the townsman's easily-won wealth flows into the farmer's horny palm. Contrariwise, the soft, grey, rainy weather makes trees grow up in the new garden, and some day the showy bungalows will to some extent be veiled and screened by a leafy mist.

Will such a kindly screen ever interpose round the glaring villadom of France? Corbusier has made the planes and cubes of the southern French painters the idiom of a modern architecture of simple shapes in varied planes of hard light and dark shade, and whether we follow him or not we may feel that his simple light-reflecting shapes would make a better home than the spiky high-pitched roofs of many a war-devastated town.

In Sweden the land is so vast that the coloured wood houses in the traditional shapes are to a visitor like flowers scattered through the forest. Here, too, the municipalities own the greater part of the land, and so have the first word in development. Similarly in the Ruhr district, where a great regional planning authority was set up towards the end of the war to direct the development of new mining areas, no less than 37 per cent. of the area is scheduled as open space. Besides the open spaces owned by towns, Germany has immense afforested areas, and, of course, both there and in England this will produce a new and more delightful type of "industrial zone." The growing of timber may, indeed, often conflict with the preservation of beauties, as the old landscape gardeners knew; and the East Anglian naturalists are crying for the preservation of some at least of their "Breckland." But the alternative on many a sandy heath seems to be uncontrolled "squatting" or inferior versions of Peacehaven, and rightly treated there can scarcely be any more delectable place than a glade in a wood.

The idea of large "Reserves" of wild country comes from America; and if it is to America that we naturally turn for the worst examples of advertisement hoardings, the amenities of a road, it is there, too, that we find the most complete realization of the value of park scenery as an adjunct to a town or arterial road. A very pleasant and successful parking of a roadside was described in this JOURNAL not long ago. The holdings on either side of the road were irregular in shape and distance, so all along the road, instead of a strip of constant depth, the land was bought up to the next existing boundary, and so was made a park of varying depth and character which gave always that impression of unlimited countryside which was the ideal of Capability Brown. The amenity value of the open space is realized and worked out financially by pooling of amenity values on a grand scale in some American cities, in the same way that some English landowners are attempting to do now. If tradition is to be strong as our guide, let us take courage and example from the great landowners of the English eighteenth century; if modernism is to be our faith, let us throw over the licence of Georgian villadom and have a comely and well-regulated State.

H. C. HUGHES

. . . the backs of the same cottages show how much should be done if these cottages are to be preserved as real homes. This work could be done with the help of Government subsidy under the Housing (Rural Workers) Act.

Landowners and Architects

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The Sale of Land for Building

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IT is beginning to be widely realized that if active steps are not taken to protect and preserve the beauties of the country, many of its most picturesque and interesting features will be permanently vulgarized and disfigured, while everywhere what would otherwise be a pleasing aspect is being made hideous by the building of ill-placed, ill-designed, unsightly houses and other erections.

There are many things which may disfigure the countryside, its towns and its villages, but perhaps the most noticeable and the most aggressive are the innumerable small houses which are springing up in all directions regardless of any consideration other than that of providing cheap dwellings.

These circumstances impose upon landowners the necessity for increased vigilance in safeguarding their estates and, so far as they legally can, the public against the promiscuous erection of such buildings; they have a duty to the public as well as to their own successors in the preservation of the amenities of the neighbourhood in which their property is situated.

Many landowners are fully alive to these responsibilities and to the necessity of making the conditions on which they sell their land such as will render random and ill-considered building impossible.

Some are owners of large building estates which are carefully planned and laid out.

Others there are who do not always realize the importance of regulating the sale of land so as to prevent the promiscuous erection of unsightly buildings, or of ribbon development.

And lastly there are the few whose only care is that their building plots shall fetch the highest price.

Assuming, however, the good will of the landowner, there are again some who are unaware of the conditions which they can and should impose upon purchasers; and it is proposed in this article to suggest to owners of land certain conditions which they would be well advised to adopt.

There is nothing to prevent an owner from imposing whatever reasonable conditions he chooses for the protection of his own estate and of those to whom he sells or leases land.

First, however, it will be well for him to make up his mind on what parts of his estate he is prepared to allow building development at all, and then he must decide what classes of building he will permit in certain areas. He will do well to adhere somewhat rigidly to these arrangements, for he will find that people come to him under the impression that they can have almost any plot of land which takes their fancy, and if he gives in to them he will be constantly worried to sell land contrary to his better judgment. Moreover, his property will be depreciated in value, the pick of the sites will be snapped up first, and as at a later date their value would probably have increased, this is not a good policy.

In arranging with a would-be purchaser the latter should be told that the matter must be the subject of a formal contract, containing conditions on which the land will be sold, as a preliminary to the preparation of a conveyance, and this, of course, is a matter for the solicitor, who, however, must be properly instructed by the owner or his agent.

The conditions should include the following:—

1: No building or erection of any kind should be placed nearer the road frontage than, say, 30, 35 or 40 ft. therefrom (in accordance with the distance decided upon for the building line). The word " erection " is of importance and would cover such objectionable things as petrol pumps.

2: The front of the house or houses must be on this building line and parallel to it, unless otherwise agreed.

3: Before the commencement of any building operations, the plans, elevations, and a brief specification of the materials proposed to be used for the walls, roof, fences, etc., should be submitted to the owner or his agent for approval; and the owner may require samples of the materials to be submitted to him or to his agent.

4: The owner should reserve the right to require the plans and specification to be submitted to a qualified architect for revision at the purchaser's expense, and to disallow the use of any materials which in the architect's or his own opinion are of an objectionable quality or colour.

5: There should be imposed a minimum limit of cost of houses to be built on particular sites, and no more than one house or two as the case may be should be permitted on one plot.

6: Provision should be made that the house is not to be used for any other purpose than a private dwelling-house, or, in the case of an area being intended for commercial use, the conditions must be drawn up so as to include similar suitable restrictions, confining the use of the land to the purpose for which it is sold. In any case it should be a condition that no part of the premises shall be used for any purpose which may cause a nuisance, damage, or annoyance to the owner or his tenants, or which may tend to depreciate the value of the estate or any part thereof for, say, residential purposes.

7: No advertisements of any kind should be permitted; no wireless pole should be placed in front of the building line, and no temporary buildings should be permitted without special permission.

8: There may have to be conditions as to the keeping in repair of that part of the road on which the plot abuts, or as to contributing to the cost thereof.

9: The purchaser to pay the cost of the conveyance.

Having sold land on these several conditions or such of them as may have been decided upon, there remains the question as to their enforcement, for there are those who, having signed such a contract, will proceed to disregard it, and they may plead ignorance or lack of funds as an excuse, or may appeal to the tender feelings of the vendor.

If such people cannot be brought to see what is right and reasonable, the law as a last resort must be had recourse to.

There are, however, other difficulties which often arise. The purchaser may submit designs which are obviously undesirable, or the vendor may not have the requisite architectural knowledge to enable him to be sure that the proposed buildings will be satisfactory. Clearly, then, he needs the advice of an architect, and one of good taste, a gift not possessed by every one of that calling.

There is no reason why the vendor should incur the expense of employing an architect to design the purchaser's building; hence the provision in No. 4.

Then there is the purchaser's point of view. If he is proposing to build a small house or commercial building, he very often does not see why he should incur the expense of an architect. He thinks this is a needless expense and one only for the wealthy, and an expense which he can escape with no risk to himself. There are many, indeed, who have a holy horror of employing an architect, thinking that they would be incurring an expense without limit. Many, too, are under the impression—

an entirely wrong one—that architects' designs must be more expensive than those of unqualified men.

In many cases a builder's draughtsman or some other unqualified person is employed to make a design which a builder can carry out. Or the innocent man who proposes to build himself a house may fall into the hands of the builder who pretends also to be an architect.

A flagrant instance of this has lately come to my notice, resulting in all sorts of trouble and very great additional expense, culminating in the collapse of the bathroom through the dining-room ceiling, some time after the builder had been paid and had got clear of responsibility.

Here there is a very real difficulty, a solution of which is urgently required.

Many thousands of small houses and other buildings are erected without the advice of an architect, and this is one of the principal causes of the disfigurement of the country by ill-placed and ill-designed buildings which we all deplore and resent. Is it not to the architects themselves that we must look for the most practical help in solving the problem?

If architects are willing to prepare a design and a short general specification for a comparatively small fee, while not undertaking to do anything further in regard to supervising the work, or to revise such designs as may have been already prepared, a step in the right direction will have been taken.

It may be that members of the profession do endeavour in this way to meet the difficulty; but if that is so, it is not generally known, and it would seem that architects must be losing a great deal of work which they might secure.

I do not for one moment suggest that the scale fees are unreasonable—they are not—but they do, I fear, have a deterrent effect upon the man of limited means who desires to build a small house or a cottage, or even a small shop.

I understand that the Royal Institute of British Architects has lately come forward in an endeavour to meet such difficulties arising under the Housing of Rural Workers Act, and that panels of architects have been formed and are now available under the scheme in different parts of the country.

I am told, too, that there is a prospect of some such system as this being extended; and if this is so and it became widely known and generally adopted, it would surely result in great general benefit:

a: To those who desire to build small houses or business premises, in that they would be able, without incurring serious expense, to secure the advice of a professional architect;

b: To the landowner who would be able to ensure the erection of properly designed houses, etc., on his estate;

c: To the architectural profession in that they would secure fees which, though small, they would otherwise not obtain at all;

d: To the general public who would, in some measure at any rate, be saved the pain and annoyance of seeing the country disfigured by ill-designed buildings.

There is no reason why certain spots should not be made beautiful, rather than otherwise, by the formation of colonies of well-arranged and well-designed small houses and bungalows.

There are many estates on which there is a good deal of building, and often the agent is expected to design new cottages, farm buildings, etc. In many cases he may be fairly successful, but it is not his job to be an architect.

Both owners and their agents would undoubtedly welcome such arrangements as are above indicated.

No charge of unreasonableness could be preferred against a landowner in compelling a purchaser to employ an architect if there were definite fees published for which limited services could be obtained.

May we venture to hope that landowners will see their way to make it a general practice to sell land only on some such conditions as are here proposed? Thus they would be taking the most effective means in their power, and it is a great power, to support and give effect to the principles so ardently advocated by the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, now exciting such widespread interest throughout the country.

MAYO

In Rural Practice

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The Architect's Responsibilities

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Views of the Profession

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THE problem of saving the rural districts from further violation by unpleasant building is of first importance today. Despite the activities of many different bodies in London and the Provinces, progress has been slow, and in consequence the architect is frequently blamed. With the object of ascertaining the views not only of leading architects, but also of those rural architects who are chiefly concerned with work in the country, a

The houses in this newly-built village in Scotland are grouped on three sides of a village green. Across the green stand the hall and smithy here shown.

questionnaire was sent by the Editor of THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL to several hundred members of the profession. The thoroughness with which the questions have been answered is a splendid testimony to the willingness of individual architects throughout the country to help in every possible way. An attempt is here made to combine an unbiased analysis of the arguments advanced with such constructive measures as are suggested by the correspondence.

The article, "Find the Architect," which appears on another page of this issue, should help to clear the air; and, as it is written by a Rural District Councillor who has the interests of the countryside at heart, and who, moreover, has had a great deal of experience of rural building, it should carry much weight. Many of the correspondents do not agree with him so far as fees are concerned, but the main issue is clear—that the rural architect in the past has been too well content to hide his light under a bushel, and it would appear that he has frequently remained unemployed because his existence is either forgotten or neglected. In country districts he must be prepared to sink some of his professional prejudices, and to accept a small fee for work which would not otherwise come his way. Several writers state that it has long been their practice to *give* their services to poor people, and that they consider the professional code so much out of touch with reality in this direction that its infraction is a necessity and its modification a pressing need.

Many feel that fees are the crux of the whole problem in small buildings, whether they be rural or urban. In the country, perhaps, they are more important than in the town, for in the town financial matters are communal rather than individual. For works costing under £2,000 it must be admitted that even the sliding scale now in operation can give but a miserable livelihood to architects who get but small works, and these singly. Brutal as the statement may seem, it would appear that ultimate good would emerge if for this small work only the fittest survived. With a class of design in which efficiency is of greater importance, perhaps, than in any other, the more skilled would prosper while the geese would be saved from the starvation pittance which must inevitably follow. A large number of rural architects press for the abolition of existing standards of fees for the design of small houses. Mr. Leonard Barnish, whose reply is typical of many others, says: "Architects should be free to offer their services to the committees. I feel that the R.I.B.A. scale of charges for housing is responsible in a very large measure for the position architects now hold in relation to housing. Far too many have held aloof, and not tackled the problem." On the same subject Mr. J. H. Sayner writes: "I feel very strongly . . . that the restrictions imposed upon members as to scale of fees, advertising, etc., must be eased up if we are to stand a reasonable chance of securing even a portion of the work now being done either by builders or unqualified so-called architects and estate agents. In my opinion the leading members of the profession, who practise either in London or in large provincial centres, do not fully appreciate the difficulties of the rank and file, who are faced with the keen, unfair competition of unqualified men, and whose chances of influencing public opinion, or making a decent living as the result of this competition, are very slender." Mr. J. E. Henderson quotes his own experience: "I have been asked several times lately by working - class would - be clients how much extra an architect - designed house would cost more than an ordinary speculative one. This inquiry is difficult to answer, but it indicates a desire for something better than the ordinary class of house so widely advertised. In cases of this nature I—and I think most architects would act in a similar manner—agreed for a small fee to prepare the plans and to put the applicant in the hands of a suitable builder. I also advise without charge any small owner who cannot afford to pay for professional services for the sake of the amenities of the district."

One understands that the R.I.B.A. is considering this matter at the present time, and that for rural work at least the proposal for reduced fees may be favourably considered. For certain classes of work the full fee is out of the question, the most obvious example being furnished by the labourer's cottage, where the economic rent is out of all proportion to the wage earned. The result has been the institution of various kinds of subsidy, either by the local body or by the Government; the former entailing, in some cases, that the rates bear as much as 40 per cent. of the true rent. Local authorities are naturally loth further

Coming Together

Most small buildings in rural and semi-urban districts are produced by builders (chiefly small builders) without the aid of architects, and, as things are, it does not seem probable that architects will be consulted more in the future than they have been hitherto. The builder may employ an architect to make plans and scanty working drawings, but more frequently he takes published plans and adapts them himself, incorporating any detail which may have struck his fancy or which he picks out of a builders' merchant's catalogue as likely to attract a prospective client—they are "selling points." The fact is that the architect's and the builder's outlooks are entirely different. The architect's point of view is design-making; the builder's point of view is cost reduction and the provision of selling factors. The architect does not carry his considerations of cost so far as the builder, who cons design and specification to see where he can cut costs by a few shillings here and a few pounds there, until the total saving effected upon such small items amounts to a substantial sum. It is seldom that the architect has to take thought of selling factors; but the builder introduces what may be called "unnecessaries" to attract and to fit the tastes of prospective customers. One seldom sees a job where money has not been wasted through bad taste or ignorance which could have been expended infinitely better under the direction of a competent architect. It would appear, therefore, that:

1: If rural England is to be saved, the architect and the small builder must come together.

2: That it would be to their mutual interest so to come together, for each lacks what the other can supply and what the public cannot spare.

3: If the need is admitted, then the machinery can be found to arrange such co-operation.

NATHANIEL LLOYD

A group of Houses in Edgars Court, Welwyn Garden City. By Louis de Soissons and A. W. Kenyon.

to increase this burden by the inclusion of architects' fees. Yet it is obviously undesirable that the standard should fall short of the good cottages which were often built before the war—cottages which, on account of the lower cost of building (and lower cost of fees) reached a high level both in internal arrangement and in external character. If an increase in the output of post-war hideousness is to be avoided, it is imperative that a means of reconciling these two apparently conflicting interests be devised, and the panel system would seem to be the only remedy. Five years ago the writer was informed by senior architects that neither panels nor lower fees would gain support; but the policy of the professional bodies has changed since then, and it seems possible that the scheme may be afforded a fair trial. One panel, at least, that of Cambridgeshire, is already in operation, and a pleasant augury for the future may be seen in the fact that one of its first commissions was a request by a rural district council that an attempt be made to improve the council's standard rural cottage.

The Cambridgeshire panel was the result of pioneer work undertaken by the Rural Community Council, and on the advice of the C.P.R.E. it undertook its own formation, the central body not having formulated a scheme at that time. The architect members were elected by the architects of the county, and though there was some opposition at first from county architects who feared that their practices might suffer, this was withdrawn when it was made clear that voluntary services would be offered only for work on which an architect would not otherwise be employed. Lay members were nominated by the rural councils, and this scheme has given rise to no adverse criticism.

The C.P.R.E. could afford much help by drawing up a statement of desirable qualifications for the guidance of those whose concern it is to elect the panels, and, as knowledge of local conditions coupled with experience of small work are first essentials, seniority would not appear to be an infallible indication of suitability.

PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSY

Members of panels will, no doubt, receive a certain amount of publicity on account of their activities, and this is sometimes held to constitute advertisement which gives an unfair advantage. The reply to this argument is that unselfish public service is the best advertisement which can be given to the profession as a whole, and the need for voluntary work is so pressing that only the most self-centred can oppose it. If all the architects of each district are given powers to nominate candidates and to take part in their election, there should be no grounds for complaint, and the existence of an advisory statement as suggested above would render easy the task of selection. It seems desirable that elections should take place at intervals, so that members who had rendered little aid could be replaced, and that attendance at meetings below a minimum figure should result in automatic displacement, unless sufficient reason were given. It is unquestionable that the re-election of efficient members would be to the good, for continued service and familiarity with the problems involved should lead to greater efficiency. If these precautions were observed, the usual farce (so common in elected bodies) of the inclusion of persons of prominence, whose other activities precluded regular attendance, would be avoided. In order to ensure the attendance of a full quota of architects, it might be advisable to have one or two reserves who could attend in the unavoidable absence of one of the regular members.

ADVERTISEMENT

The foregoing scheme produces one solution to the problem of fees; but another equally vexed question is brought up by many correspondents. Many rural architects believe that advertisements would herald the emergence from darkness; but it is pointed out that the *dignity* of the profession must be preserved if this is undertaken. To quote Mr. Max Beerbohm (who did not, by the way, take part in the correspondence): "If the mountain had come to Mahomet, it would, we may be sure, have come slowly, that the prophet should have time to realize the grandeur of the miracle." When introducing the subject of advertisement the correspondents on the whole hasten to point out that individual advertisement is not intended. "Not, of course," says Mr. Harold Conolly, "that I mean the unedifying spectacle of two architects advertising side by side in the local weekly paper, each trying to outdo the other." Mr. Frederic Towndrow's answer to the question is "corporate advertising. Not individual advertising, mind you, for that only allows the flourishing architect to take half a column whilst the small practitioner would not be able to afford half an inch. . . . Thousands have only a rudimentary idea of what an architect does, and look upon him with something of that suspicion which one has for Irish cabmen and the horse-drawn cab that lacks a taximeter. One does not speak of money; the affair is all so gentlemanly; but at the end of the journey it will be a case of 'I leave it to you, sir,' which is all so disquieting." Among other valuable suggestions for increasing the public knowledge of architects, Mr. Towndrow writes: "Once every three years there should be a great architectural exhibition in London on the lines of that recently held in New York"; and for rural districts "the R.I.B.A. in arrangement with local societies should hold exhibitions of architects' work. These should be made as cheerful and as attractive as possible, and should be well advertised beforehand." Mr. D. W. Moore writes: "The architect is the most silent and least advertising of all the professional men. Good form can become an obsession. There is no valid reason to be advanced against

the architect doing what he can to bring his art before a general public, who, speaking generally, is ignorant of both him and his work. . . . He should follow the practice of his fellow-architects abroad, and affix a stone with his name and date—modestly graved—and set at the corner of the buildings he designs. This would bring him within the intimate recognition of those who inhabit the buildings and their friends." An exception to these views on the more general forms of advertisement is a cry from the heart of an old-established practitioner, Mr. A. P. Miller: "Let the public know your business and your capabilities, and you will begin to realize that the public have been starved as to the work of the profession. . . . You cannot stop at home and do business. . . . I have never advertised or sought work, and I know the heart-rending waiting, and would wish to see its avoidance by others in the future. There can be no doubt that a large proportion of the profession advertises in one way or another, and it is well known that press agents are employed by a few of the most successful. The outlay here involved is unfortunately, perhaps, so great that it would necessitate an expenditure greater than the total income of most of the smaller fry, and juniors have to be content with appearance in the pages of the popular "Home" journals. The publication of their plans and photographs of elevations in these pages brings good in its train, for it makes the public acquainted with new work in a palatable form. Unfortunately, here, too, one finds much that would be better omitted, and the petty articles which are frequently written under an architect's signature can only serve to reduce the architect's esteem in the eyes of the public which scans these pages. Presumably, where bread and butter is concerned, "Art is art; but one must live!"

CO-OPERATION

The architect, it would appear, must not consider it beneath his dignity to co-operate with the local builder, whose methods are frequently traditional rather than modern. By co-operation nothing more drastic is meant than willingness to accept his methods rather than to attempt to induce the undertaking of newer methods of construction for which the local man has neither the necessary plant nor the habit of mind which make it possible to take kindly to new things. In time, no doubt, these local men, good craftsmen as they often are, will disappear before the competition and organization of larger firms. In the meantime they can often undertake small work which larger firms do not consider worth while—work for which the local men are usually well fitted by

Spearing the Octopus

★

A Valiant Defender

★

We know well enough that decent, God-fearing, God-damning Englishmen live very contentedly in the pink asbestos bungalows.

★

You may ravish and defile the most divine landscape in the world, and your children (being your children) will rise up and call you progressive.

★

Truly it's an ill bird that fouls its own nest, and not merely ill, but perverted, if it rejoices in the fouling.

★

To do nothing but revile those who spoil the country with their nauseous little buildings, or merely to laugh darkly at their pathetic failure to achieve an imagined rusticity, is beautifully easy.

★

Most people, we must remember, are neither with us nor against us, merely from lack of imagination or lack of thought or observation, and their indifference and inertia we must try to overcome by educative propaganda.

★

No good can come of architects who sky themselves like Nelson on his isolating pedestal, or try to keep Madame Architecture mewed up in the drawing-room like the "Godly Matron" of the Victorians.

★

Our favourite colour is, of course, that strange and lugubrious plummy-purply-red that reminds one of dried blood.

★

We English have a snobbish belief that "Cheap and Nasty" represents cause and effect, and we have done our best to substantiate the heresy by only making good things in such small quantities that they are too expensive for general use.

★

From a landscape point of view at least, God is an excellent forester and makes very few mistakes.

★

The planting of an avenue is the most gracious work to which a good citizen can turn his hand.

From *England and the Octopus*. Bles, 5s. net.

This curved stable-block at Aden, Aberdeenshire, so utterly unknown, though so well worth knowing, is particularly suggestive as a centre for community activities in a modern housing scheme.

virtue of their training in the procedure peculiar to their districts. Particularly where stone is used, may the architect lend a sympathetic ear to the councils of his builder, assuming, of course, that he has already investigated his competence to carry out the work.

DIRECT LABOUR

The question of direct labour is hardly raised, for, though in some places and under special conditions the result has been satisfactory, it must be admitted that in rural work the more usual procedure is cheaper, more reliable, and fraught with less responsibility for all concerned. The difficulties of organization, transport, and the purchase of small quantities of material render even the smallest job a full-time undertaking for the architect if he is to give adequate supervision. The question of responsibility is of paramount importance in all rural work and, where quantities are not involved and the specification is necessarily of the most meagre order, it is essential that both architect and builder should be agreed as to the manner in which the work is to be carried out. Mutual agreement is doubly important in works in which restorations or additions are involved. Not always is it expedient to employ local men; but in those remaining areas where tradition is strong, and where the old work commands especial respect, the practice has much in its favour. Mr. A. R. Powys is devoid of sentimentality in his attitude towards the use of local materials: "One of the rules that would at once be suggested—that referring to the use of local materials only—I hold to be absolute nonsense. Where do we get our rafters and floor boards from? Where did the people who built the marshland churches get their stone from? Are we not proud of Purbeck marble in churches distant from Dorset? What about the fine Derbyshire alabaster retables and tombs which went all over Europe? Collaboration between architects to secure conformity to local character in material, style, and character cannot be attempted," he goes on, "till architects and individual members of the public can rid their minds of prejudice in favour of or against revived, traditional, or modern methods, materials, and style. We should preserve the old because they are good works of craftsmanship . . . because of their sane relationship to life as it was when these works were done. If we can relate our new work to life in the same sort of way, it is likely that it will be as seemly beside the work of any period as is the brick-built Georgian farm in a village that until that king reigned saw no walls except those of chalk or flint. . . ." "It might be better if we were a little more 'Jacks-of-all-trades,' a little more amateurs, forgetting the ways of the past. I should never discourage the amateurs. The architects must prove to the amateurs that we are worth our fees."

TRADITIONALISM

These sane remarks should go far to counteract the present tendency for overstressing the claims of past styles. Preservation itself can also be over-emphasized, "for," says the lay critic, "if you do not consider yourself capable of equalling the work of the past, you are not fitted to judge its claim for survival." The march of modern progress demands that works of great beauty must be destroyed; and only where it is certain that the common good can be served by preservation must we adopt an attitude of hostility towards their destruction. Preservation or restoration, when undertaken, should be carried out under the direction of an architect who is very sure of his ground. The writer has found in the course of university extension

A desirable row of cottages at Oare, Somerset. By Clough Williams-Ellis.

A cottage in Gloucestershire, much in need of succour under the Chamberlain Act.

lectures that the lay public, often greatly interested in individual work, has a curiously long memory for the mistakes which were made in "restorations" by the experts of the Gothic Revival period.

THE SPECULATIVE BUILDER

The replies to the questionnaire show that there are several architects who are staunch champions of the builder's point of view. They are indignant that the speculators should be made, as Mr. C. H. B. Quennell so aptly puts it, the "whipping boy," and suggests that in one sense at least the speculative builder is often more worthy of his remuneration than the architect. Mr. Cecil Howitt recommends "a closer study by architects of the planning and methods of economical building employed by the speculator. By this means it is possible for an architect to produce buildings as economically as the ordinary contractor." Mr. Bertram Kirby is quite emphatic. "A speculative builder is an expert at producing the maximum accommodation at a minimum cost. Unless or until architects, i.e. architects with recognized qualifications, can reconcile these principles with æsthetic considerations, he will not employ them (nor will the public), and cannot be compelled to do so. The failure of architects to understand the elements of cheap building is largely responsible for the existing state of affairs." A well-known architect, who prefers to be known under the pseudonym of "A Son of a Builder," writes: "The architect is held upon a pedestal largely because he signs the certificate. The building world has no illusions about him; but it pays to keep him up in the air out of harm's way." In fact, many architects are not sufficiently conscientious where their clients' pockets are concerned, and will not take the trouble to find out for what the speculative builder is a *sine qua non*. If the "profession" as now constituted wishes to fight commercial competition, it must undertake not only the education of the public, but also that of the *architect*.

Other correspondents are not sure that æsthetically as well as practically the architects are entirely exempt from blame. One, who wishes to be known as "Agag," prefaces his remarks by saying: "This country is occupied by a race of barbarians; they have the designs they deserve," and goes on: "There is a pleasant hill road in a country village, eleven miles from London, where the aristocracy of the place live. It bristles with architecture . . . the crowning honour on this hill is a house designed by an architect for his own occupation. No doubt he deserves it; we do not; and some protection should be given to us." Mr. Charles J. Cable says: "I do not agree that the worst atrocities are committed by speculators. These people are now exercising great intelligence in stealing architects' designs. . . . Some architects beat speculators in spoiling the countryside." Mr. T. H. Lyon says: "Some of the worst architecture I have ever seen has been the work of be-lettered architects."

AMATEURS

Amateurs likewise are not always held to be responsible for evil. As we have seen, Mr. Powys has something to say in their favour; and Mr. Paul Phipps considers that: "Amateur meddling with the art of building will probably never be entirely discouraged, and it is a question whether it is desirable to do so. After all, Sir Christopher Wren, Lord Burlington, and many others, at least at some time in their careers, were more or less amateurs, and this country loves amateurs of every kind."

It is interesting to note that from the replies to the question as to how to improve the standard of rural building, 9 per cent. press for registration, either as the only or the best solution. About 14 per cent. consider that to give statutory powers to local authorities or their attached architects, or architectural committees, would be the best course. These authorities would be able to refuse to pass elevations which did not come up to a certain standard. Seven per cent. go further and suggest that no plans without the signature of a qualified architect should be passed; but, as Mr. A. Ough points out: "Such a system is good in principle, but in practice does not guarantee sufficient artistic skill to prevent the erection of unsuitable designs, although the construction is satisfactory." On the other hand, 33 per cent. who deal with this subject are of the opinion that the education of the public taste is not a hopeless task, and that only by constantly bringing good architecture to their notice can any real good be effected. Mr. Purchon is one of the few who combines both points of view. "I consider it necessary and practicable to achieve an æsthetic control of building by committees on which architects are strongly represented. . . . When the public finds that it is not allowed to erect offensively ugly buildings it will begin to realize that there may possibly be something the matter with such structures." But he also suggests improvement "by giving a proper place in our educational systems to the study of the arts, including that of architecture. This is a slow method, but it is the only one that will enable us to rely on public support in such matters." Mr. Basil Oliver is in favour of control. "Registration used to be the great hope for curing these ills; but the power of the speculators being still strong enough to prevent this, I would give to architect-dominated committees as full autocratic powers as are now given to borough, urban, and district surveyors. . . . Where no architects are employed the worst horrors could be nipped in the bud without any feelings of embarrassment by the committees." Mr. Arthur G. Lynham has similar sentiments. ". . . With town planning in being it should not be impossible to provide the necessary powers to enable a reasonable control of the design of buildings to operate. I have no faith that any body without statutory powers would have any effective influence in the matter." On the other side, Mr. J. A. Gotch produces the most illuminating arguments against legal control. "In my view the elimination of ugly buildings will gradually follow an improvement in public taste, and this can only be the growth of time. Such an

"Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." This hut, although anything but staggeringly beautiful, stands as an object lesson. It is a communal tool-shed to an allotment, and saves its district from the usual welter of old iron and rabbit-hutch-like structures which are the hall-marks of allotment gardens. But it is a pity that better attention was not paid to its design.

improvement is already dimly visible, but to rush things and try to compel people to acquire that indefinable quality, good taste, under penalties (even the penalty of having their plans rejected or delayed) would be both vexatious and futile. The suggestion made in connection with the Registration Bill, and one which would have gone far to solve the difficulty, namely, that a local authority should pass no plan that was not submitted by a qualified architect, was rejected as being impracticable and too great an infringement of liberty. In short, you cannot compel people to be good; you can only induce them, and that not always with success."

The suggestions for educating the public taste are many and valuable: the Press, particularly the lay Press, broadcasting, posters, books, lectures, and the teaching of architecture in schools. Sir Herbert Baker, Mr. F. E. Bennett, Mr. T. F. Maclennan, Mr. Harding Thompson, Mr. H. E. Box, and many others, write in this vein. Mr. Guy Dawber says an improvement can only be effected "through the Press, public opinion, and the increasing knowledge on the part of the general public that bad building does not pay —from a commercial as well as æsthetic point of view." Mr. Howard Robertson writes: "Greater Press activity, publication of good designs, etc., provides the best means of influencing the public in this direction." Several pin their faith to lectures, and it seems that if these lectures were devoted to the architecture of local areas, and explained not only the elements of what constitutes architecture, but also the particular conditions, geological, geographical, and traditional which gave rise to the local buildings in the past, a lively interest in the future might be induced. Moreover, it is possible that the layman would be cured of the prejudices which unfortunate associations had produced, and so be led to desire not merely a dwelling which competed with its neighbours by ostentation, but rather a house of which he could be proud because he understood its merits.

A practical suggestion comes from Mr. S. W. Mobbs: "In view of the fact that the surveyors to municipal authorities administering the building by-laws are in a position to influence design to a large degree, and further that they have to carry out a good deal of architectural work themselves, whether they like it or not, I would suggest that the R.I.B.A. should endeavour to induce the Institute of Municipal and County Engineers to include in their examination syllabus a subject covering at least the elementary principles of architectural design."

The "Son of a Builder" discusses another important point in the spread of good design: "The country builder," he says, "is aided by the publication in trade papers of plans of bad buildings which he can cut out, stick on a board, and go ahead gaily. Why blame him? He has to make a living!" Here the remedy is obvious: the professional bodies, if their opinion carries any weight at all, can safely denounce these designs without fear of legal action, but at the same time they must provide a substitute. Mr. Cart de Lafontaine suggests that "some improvement could be effected by the publication by the R.I.B.A. of a book of standard designs on the lines which have proved successful in the U.S.A. I believe (he goes on) that the publication of such standard designs would not have any adverse effect on any architect's practice; the educated public would still prefer to have a house designed by an architect."

ORGANIZED EFFORT

"The Son of a Builder" sees in the future architecture completely reorganized. "There will be immense financial groups developing estates according to the themes they select, they will specialize in houses of a particular type, producing an article to suit their selected clientele. There will be similar groups making offices, railway stations, town halls, and so on, and these groups will have their chains of businesses centrally controlled; the result will be vast cumulative efforts. Gone will be the day when a man must take twelve months to get his home built; he will have plenty to select from, and *the group which does the finest work will flourish*; we shall have buildings with a reputation behind them; and above all, we shall have that organized effort which is entirely absent from one of the biggest trades in the country today.

"The result will be that instead of isolated activity we shall have control, and instead of 100 men putting up much the same atrocity in various parts of the country, we shall have one group putting up, according to the vision of the man at the top, a properly organized product. The better this is, the sooner shall we see the demise of the 'Speculative Builder,' for the very obvious reason that he will not be able to make it pay.

"It is in new methods, and not in old bottles, that we must look for our stimulant."

The picture here conjured up will be distasteful to many; but there are some indications to prove that it is not pure fantasy. Not all the concerns which employ an "architectural" staff at the present time produce work which is inferior to that produced by the *average* professional architect, and it seems almost superfluous to point out that many architects who, for psychological reasons, are incapable of producing good designs on their own responsibility can often work brilliantly under direction. Indeed, it is not too much to say that a large proportion of the best work of the day is done by ghosts who work for jaded seniors who have reached a position of eminence owing to gifts, social and otherwise,

and it is equally lamentable that many gifted men have failed to gain that eminence largely because the "profession" is organized on lines which encourage neither mass efficiency nor individual effort.

One of the largest building firms in this country, and one which has admittedly "protected the public" for several years, has toyed with the idea of establishing an architects' department; and a company promoter whose name is a household word has considered a plan whereby building, properly organized on a large scale, could throw in the services of an architect, not of hacks or quacks, but of first-rate designers whose fees could be saved by the intensive study of economic production in competition with the haphazard methods now employed.

Pessimism can achieve nothing. Petrol pumps and corrugated iron have come to stay—at least until science has devised a less messy form of transport and a cheaper and more beautiful building material. There should be no medium in general use from which the architect should be unwilling to extract the best that it can give, for it is his conservatism which has resulted in ye olde halfe-timbered garage. The ignorant owner, no doubt remembering that he had seen much expensive *modern* work in this manner, probably thought that he was being "artistic" in emulation. Our speculative barge-boards, Gothic bays, and other enormities are lineal descendants from work by two architects who within the memory of the oldest of the old brigade made them popular.

Education of architects is undergoing reorganization. The old system of articles, good as it was when scrupulously undertaken by the principal, was frequently a cloak for sheer robbery, the pupil doing hack-work when dull, or ghosting when brilliant. Today most architects are trained in schools which, as a rule, incubate a respect for tradition tempered by the realities of the present time. In these schools in the past history may have been stressed too much and fine building too little. It might be an advantage if all students, before they became immersed in stylistic prejudices, were introduced, not to styles, but to *architecture*. What was good in Rome in the pre-Christian era might be shown beside what was good in Christian architecture; what was good in open-air Greece, beside the best of central-heated America, and the underlying principles explained without treading too heavily on the Victorian era, or too lightly on that of the Regency.

Finally, there is one more requirement of teaching; that of economy. Too many architects are turned out who could design in the "classic style" a palace, or a bank, where expenditure is not restricted. But, and this can be no exaggeration, for not 1 per cent. are these magnificent prizes offered, nor in competitions won. From small beginnings it is possible to proceed to greatness, but it is not easy to step from a pedestal of considerable height. It must be confessed that many schools in the past have fitted most of their students with a competence for work which could never come their way, and have left them totally unfitted even to attempt the smaller domestic work on which they must almost inevitably start their careers. Education, to the "enjoyment of beauty in all its forms," appears to be the best medicine, not only for the layman, but also for all who profess to an interest in the well-being of architecture—whether "in little" or "at large."

H. M. TOMLINSON

Views of Three Landowners

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Hints on Estate Development

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Personal Experiences

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Sir George Courthope

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WHEN I succeeded my father nearly eighteen years ago, I found the property, which for many years had never paid its way, heavily burdened with death duties. There was no prospect of being able to continue on the old lines, and I decided, before parting with the home of my forefathers, to risk part of the little capital I possessed in trying to develop latent resources and make the estate self-supporting.

I had some 650 acres of well-stocked but neglected woodlands, containing some very fine timber and a great deal of rubbish. In former days, trees had been sold standing, or on the ground, to timber merchants at a price which had never shown a profit on the woodland expenses. A small staff of sawyers was employed to fell and prepare timber for estate repairs; an old-fashioned pit saw was used. My first experiment was aimed at getting the timber merchants' profit into my own pocket.

I calculated the annual increment of my woods and, with the help of the English Forestry Association, designed and erected a small modern sawmill of sufficient capacity to deal with the normal annual output of timber. The venture was successful from the first year, and converted a regular annual loss on the woodlands into a substantial annual profit. That an estate sawmill has the capacity, even in its infancy, of turning out work of high quality is proved by the fact that my little mill

Four cottages built by Sir George Courthope. They are built of bricks from his own field, and house the workers on the brickfield.

Six pairs of cottages built by Sir George Courthope on his estate at Whiligh.

supplied the oak timber required for the recent restoration of Westminster Hall, the banqueting hall of Hampton Court Palace, and the roof of Chelsea Hospital.

The sawmill project led naturally into the next one, namely, that of putting the woods into a condition of sound forestry so as to increase the annual output of timber. A forest nursery was established, one of my men was sent to the Woodmen's School in the Forest of Dean to be trained, and unproductive portions of several farms were set aside for planting. About 40,000 young trees are now planted out every winter.

Many people imagine that commercial forestry always spoils the landscape and ruins the sporting value of an estate; this is not my experience. A little care in the selection of species or in setting out the outline of a new wood, and the planting of ornamental hard woods (such as horse-chestnuts, maples, rowans or copper beeches) in the outskirts of a conifer plantation not only adds colour and variety to the landscape, but counteracts the drawback of pure fir woods from the point of view of pheasant shooting.

Another development which has justified itself without showing such attractive profits as the home conversion of timber is the estate brickyard, which was started with demobilized soldiers shortly after the war. At first only hand-made bricks, burnt in clamps, were produced, but after two years' experience had proved that a brick of good quality could be produced for which there was a ready sale, a wire cutting machine and engine were installed and two conical down-draught kilns erected.

More recently, another small industry has been started by the erection and equipment of a wheelwright's shop. The sawmill was turning out considerable quantities of wheelwright's material, and at the same time considerable sums were expended each year in the supply and maintenance of timber wagons, farm carts, and other vehicles. My wheelwright's shop now does the whole of this work, and is able in addition to sell a sufficient number of wagons, carts, wheelbarrows, ladders, etc., to show a handsome return on the outlay.

As will be imagined, these developments involved a considerable increase in the estate staff and created a housing problem. Since 1920, sixteen new cottages have been built and six or seven others provided by the adaptation of existing buildings.

Another class of development has also been in progress simultaneously with those mentioned above. A number of the farmhouses on the property were far too large for the economic occupation of the average tenant farmer—two at least of them being old Tudor manor houses. As opportunity offered, a rearrangement of the farms has been carried out, and three former farmhouses have been adapted for use as private residences. By this means, a substantial increase of the estate rent roll has been provided.

In some cases large farms have been subdivided into smaller holdings; in others, land has been taken into hand.

Other improvements have been effected to produce an increased rental. These include water supply to a number of farms, electric light and power to others, the erection of Dutch barns, covered middens and other buildings required to bring the farms up to a state of efficiency. The tithe rent charge on the whole property, with the exception of the extraordinary hop tithe, has been redeemed.

The greater part of these developments, including the tithe redemption, has been carried out with the aid of loans from the Lands Improvement Company, without which it would have been quite impossible for me to finance so extensive a programme. The increased revenue produced by these improvements far exceeds the annual rent charges created for the repayment of the loans.

I hope this short account may be of interest to some of your readers and may encourage other landowners to consider whether their properties will not repay them for further development.

GEORGE L. COURTHOPE

Lord Hylton

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NEARLY thirty years have elapsed since I became owner of a largish family estate in East Surrey (conveyed some time back to a private company, of which I have continued chairman and managing director). It embraces an area of about 3,000 acres in the parishes of Merstham, Chipstead, Chaldon, and Coulsdon, with a small outlying property at South Nutfield; includes the crest of the North Downs from Upper Gatton Park on the west to Hilltop Lane, Chaldon, on the east, with more than one section of the historic Pilgrims' Way; and touches Farthing Downs and Coulsdon Common towards the north. It became fairly obvious, even before the Great War, that a demand would sooner or later arise for portions of the estate as building sites, being within 15 to 18 miles from London, the higher ground commanding splendid views over the Weald country to the south, as far as Chanctonbury Ring and what Horace Walpole called the "mountains" of Sussex. But having been always anxious that such development should interfere as little as possible with the natural amenities of the district, restrictive covenants drawn by my legal advisers have been inserted on the occasion of every sale or lease against more than a certain number of houses being erected per acre, etc. etc. Approval of plans of new buildings is required by the estate, and all advertisements and hoardings are prohibited. From time to time modifications in these covenants have become advisable, but as they were imposed in the first instance for the protection of the new owners, as much as in my own interest, I am glad to take this opportunity of testifying that only on the rarest occasions have attempts been made to infringe them; and I may perhaps be pardoned at experiencing some degree of satisfaction at seeing what is, or was, my property nearly entirely free from the devastating scourge of hideous advertising signs and devices so prevalent in many unhappy places.

Immense importance should be attached to the planning and lay-out

of an estate such as this, if beautiful scenery is not to suffer; and here I consider myself fortunate in having secured the valuable services of Mr. J. A. Rosevear, F.S.I., of Victoria Street, Westminster, and East Sheen, as our adviser on town-planning in conjunction with our local surveyors, Messrs. Clutton & Co., of Reigate, who will be responsible for the "right grouping" of new buildings. As regards the most fitting building materials, the subject attracts me, who happen to have endeavoured more than twenty years ago to pass through Parliament a Bill, one of its objects being a freer use of building materials than was feasible under existing by-laws.

In this area it seems a pity that the native "green" sandstone quarries should no longer be in request. The churches of Merstham and Chipstead bear witness to its durability for centuries, though Father Time will, I admit, eventually lay a rather heavy touch upon the surface. But stone which has been carefully extracted from the quarry weathers quite satisfactorily, as may be seen at Merstham House and its large block of stables, built more than one hundred years ago. The present-day cost of labour alone seems to deter the future use of this material from quarries which were noted as far back as the reign of Edward III, and then utilized for buildings at Windsor Castle and the Tower of London.

From old pictures in my possession it is evident that at the dawn of the last century the Merstham hills were bare of all but hedgerow timber. My predecessors did no little planting from that time onward, and of late years from time to time young trees have been planted along roadsides, the old plantations thinned, and portions replanted. For the last thirty years very little timber has been cut on the estate, which seems to have thus acquired a more wooded and pleasing aspect than in my young days, though here as elsewhere, of course, windfalls occasionally cause gaps and old trees decay. Much credit should be awarded to the planters of ornamental trees and shrubs in the grounds of the many new houses.

In a district like that in question, a difficult problem is presented by the terrific cost of making new roads, though such are imperatively necessary unless the miserable system of "ribbon" development by a continuous line of houses along existing roads only is to be pursued; and I cannot but think it would be wise policy on the part of the State were freedom from all taxation on road-making expenditure granted to individuals. The district of which I write has the advantages of a good water supply from the East Surrey Water Co., gas mains are laid by the Redhill Gas Co., and electric current is now provided from London; but the charges for all these conveniences are high, and considered by some prohibitively so; in a recent case under my notice, where a new house of some size has been built, the owner preferring to provide his own electric current in view of the price asked by the company.

On the property still under my direct control all old buildings have been very carefully preserved. Mr. Paxton Watson, himself a resident in Merstham for some years, has displayed great taste and architectural talent both in restoring old, and designing many new, houses. Notable examples of the former class may be seen in the village street at Merstham and at Hoath Farm, while admirable specimens of the latter are visible along Rockshaw Road. The ancient manor-houses of Chaldon Court and of Alderstead may also one day afford opportunities for the restorer's skilled efforts, whilst at this moment the present tenant of Tollsworth Manor, in Chaldon parish, is devoting care and attention to that interesting residence, dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which had suffered some eclipse.

An "Owner's Town-planning Scheme" is now being worked out for the whole property, looking ahead for many years to come, providing for the future widening of existing roads, the formation of new thoroughfares, including a new "ridge" road along the North Downs from Shepherds Hill to Hilltop Lane, and a length of the historic Pilgrims' Way. Existing trees will be preserved along the ridge, and houses restricted to a low density and carefully sited, giving each property uninterrupted views across the country "below hill." Building will be prohibited in certain areas which will be preserved as open spaces. Provision is made for "zoning" others for residential, industrial, and business purposes.

It is hoped that, with the co-operation of the local authorities, whose assistance landowners should endeavour to enlist whenever possible, the broad lines of such a scheme, while providing all reasonable facilities for the acquisition and future use of land required for public or private purposes, may ensure the preservation of much, if not all, of the natural beauties of a picturesque bit of country, hitherto not greatly spoilt by bricks and mortar, but certainly in some danger—as London daily creeps towards its boundaries—unless safeguarded by judicious regulation.

The gentle poet Gray reminds us that "A favourite has no friends"; in these latter days the same plight befalls a landowner who, living or dead, has become the special prey of the tax-collector and the chosen target of the Socialist orator; but the writer would fain express the hope that this brief statement, though he fears somewhat egotistical, may be admitted as a plea on behalf of his class that they and their advisers are not invariably guided by purely selfish motives in their discharge of inherited responsibilities.

Recent developments in Merstham have at least well rewarded the neighbourhood by the establishment in its midst of many new residents, who have already distinguished themselves by various notable acts of local patriotism and discriminating benevolence.

HYLTON

A pair of cottages on the estate of the Countess of Lovelace at Ockham, Surrey.

Mary, Countess of Lovelace.

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THE late Ralph, second Earl of Lovelace (my husband), succeeded his father in 1894, and it was soon brought to his knowledge that repairs and additions to buildings, old and new, were urgently required on three estates, namely, in Surrey (where our home was to be), in West Somerset, and in Leicestershire. The first earl, a man of great talents, who was a self-taught architect and engineer, had done much building in the years between about 1840 and 1870, and had, no doubt, added greatly to the comfort and prosperity both of farm tenants and of cottagers; but in his old age his activity declined. His successor found that the older buildings, especially the pretty old brick and tile cottages in Surrey, had in many cases become half ruinous.

I had all my life been keenly interested in building, especially in the humbler sort of rural houses, which most abound in every landscape, and which do so much either to enhance its beauty or to deface it. Lord Lovelace therefore was glad to make over to me the principal responsibility of dealing with these problems, but no work was ever carried out by me without his full knowledge and approval. We had the assistance of a very able and energetic clerk of works, J. H. Perkins, now, alas ! dead, to whom I gladly acknowledge here my debt of gratitude for untiring and indispensable help.

But I soon found that the kind of drawing which I had practised all my life did not enable me to express clearly what I wanted in building matters, either to him or to any other workman. I therefore had to put myself to school again, and my friend, Mr. C. R. Ashbee, the well-known architect, very kindly allowed me to come to his office at 37 Cheyne Walk and to practise the making of working drawings there under his assistant, the late Mr. Ernest Godman. I attended there off and on for about a year, bringing my problems with me, and the knowledge which I owe to Mr. Godman's kind and patient teaching has been invaluable to me ever since. I think we worked first on drawings for repairing some delightful old places on the Somerset hills. From these we passed on to dealing with old Surrey work, which was in the strongest contrast to them: thin walls of crumbling brick, cris-crossed with rotten timbers, pretty outside, but miserable as seen from within, and often full of vermin.

My year of tuition over, I soon found myself, with Perkins's invaluable help, dealing with a great many places of this kind. Sometimes these old brick and timber walls were still sound enough to stand if well lined with cement or other material on the inside and we kept them wherever we could.

Their windows were usually old leaded casements, and these we mended or replaced with some of similar make and size. Of course, these windows were aways very small, so where more light and air was wanted I always, if possible, put in more casements to match the old. But on all *new* houses, or new additions to old ones, I would never use leaded casements, which are utterly unpractical and unnecessary in these days of cheap glass.

I find the best possible windows for cottages and for country buildings of all sizes are wooden casements of a pattern given me by my friend Mr. Voysey. These can be made of any size. They consist of smallish panes—average size about 9 × 6 in., set in stout wooden framing of the simplest possible design.

The best arrangement is a pair of casements opening outwards (the builder should *not* be allowed to make one of them fixed), and there should be no centre mullion. Of course, the opening should be broader than its height. The advantage of this kind of window is that it can be opened in any weather. You can open it for a few inches only on the side which is away from the wind, or, on a still summer day, throw open both halves and enjoy the whole width of the view. And it can be manipulated without disturbing the objects on a cottage window-sill: the geraniums and the family Bible, the work-basket, etc. etc.

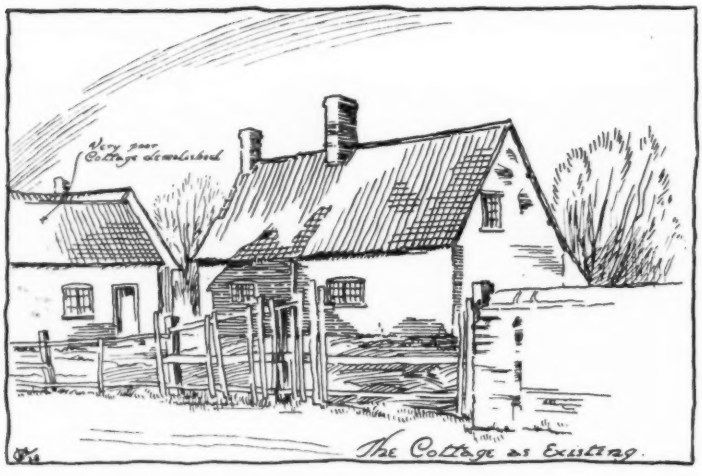
In all new buildings we tried to work in the old rural tradition, and, of course, with local materials. I would never carry a single brick or tile into Somerset, nor an inch of stone or slate into Surrey ! We have never made copies of the old cottages, but only tried to emulate their broad, quiet lines and ample roofs. Last, but not least, we have allowed no ornament, and no silly modern additions, such as useless barge boards and spiky ridges. There is no denying that our ancestors often made cottage rooms too low—I have seen them only 6 ft. 3 in. high—and windows too small. But it is dangerous to add much more than a foot of height, and the amount of glass which can be safely used without causing disfigurement must be very carefully thought out. If there is any excess in these proportions the outcome is not a cottage, but a little ugly villa.

The first and most necessary addition was always a good larder. I believe that the want of a wholesome place to keep food in has been a constant cause of illness in past times. And there must always be a roomy scullery to hold greasy pots, etc., and the sink. This last must never be placed in the kitchen, for whether a parlour is provided or not, the kitchen is where the people will really live.

I have said nothing of Leicestershire, because we had to struggle with special difficulties there, and most of the property is now sold. But I ought to say that Lord Lovelace enriched the neighbourhood there by commissioning Mr. Voysey to build a row of cottages and a small public-house, the "Wentworth Arms," at Elmesthorpe, near Leicester. and since my husband's death I have, as tenant for life of his estates, continued to carry out his policy.

M. C. LOVELACE

Another house on the estate of the Countess of Lovelace at Ockham, Surrey.



The Community Council

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Individual Enthusiasm

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Cambridgeshire's Success

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A RURAL community council is not a statutory body and therefore it might be thought that it can do little or nothing to control development in the countryside; but if it has no "powers" as "powers" are generally understood, that does not necessarily mean that it is quite impotent. Indeed, a voluntary association may have certain advantages.

In such matters as building their houses most men evince a strong objection to any kind of interference. It is approximately true to say that "the Englishman's bungalow is his castle," and even those buildings with unsubstantial walls of inch boarding prove as difficult to storm as the most massive fortifications of a medieval stronghold.

But while men resent control and compulsion in these matters they are sometimes prepared to listen to sound advice; and here a purely voluntary organization, like a rural community council, may exert considerable influence by acting in such an advisory capacity.

This is what is happening in Cambridgeshire. Here the rural community council is fortunate in having some keen architect members on its rural planning sub-committee, whose chairman, Mr. H. C. Hughes, is largely responsible for the good work which the council is doing along these lines. At the moment the council is engaged in helping to make the Housing (Rural Workers) Act, 1926, a success in Cambridgeshire by taking up the panel scheme of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

This activity is described in the rural community council's annual report (23 Trinity Street, Cambridge; price 6d. net).

The rural community council, in the absence of a local society of architects, undertook to organize a panel for Cambridgeshire.

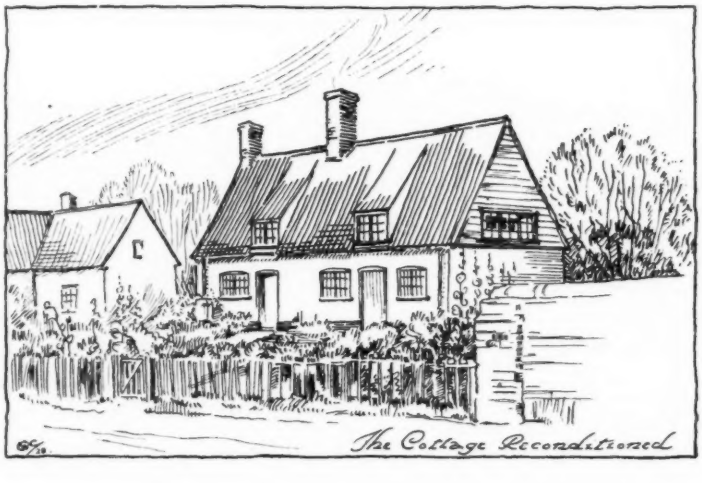
At the invitation of the council, a meeting of Cambridgeshire architects was held in November last year, and five architects were nominated to serve as the architectural part of the consultative panel, to give advice freely, either to owners intending to recondition cottages or to councils administering the grants. . . . An owner considering the problem of the reconditioning of a cottage under the Act, and wishing for architectural advice, applies to the rural community council.

A member or members of the panel are appointed to report on the case, and their report is considered by the panel at its next meeting. Also, if a district council feels that architectural help would be valuable to retain the beauty and character of an old building, the panel can be freely consulted.

The panel has now some interesting cases in hand, and is undoubtedly going to be instrumental in securing the right treatment for fine old cottages in several villages.

Now all this is excellent work and well worth doing, but while these old cottages are being saved for a few more decades it is distressing to see the type of modern cottage and bungalow which is springing up by their side.

Here, too, the rural community council hopes to be of some service, having already requested the panel "to give earnest consideration to the problem of designs for cheap houses and bungalows which would not spoil the beauty of the countryside, and especially to that of cottages suitable



Fine old cottages saved. Above and below, a pair of cottages at Harston to be reconditioned with the aid of the Government subsidy and the advice of the Cambridgeshire panel of architects. [Reproduced from the annual report of the Cambridgeshire Rural Community Council.]

A peasant's house near Florence. As the villa to which it belongs is now a national monument, this example of a small Tuscan farmhouse cannot be altered.

for erection by district councils." This is asking a good deal, and at present the panel is considering only the question of roofing materials.

A most interesting venture has been made in the village of Grantchester, which ought to be recorded here, although the credit for the enterprise belongs rather to an individual member of the council, Mr. H. C. Hughes, than to the council as a whole. It was an attempt to provide at a reasonable price really first-class cottages which would not be out of place in so charming a village as Grantchester. A piece of land having been given by King's College, a pair of cottages were put up early in 1926 for £496 9s. 2d., plus a subsidy of £160, the money being collected through an appeal to Grantchester residents and members of King's College, on the understanding that a dividend of only 3 per cent. would be paid on the capital. The property was vested in four local trustees, and the rent of each cottage was fixed temporarily at 6s. per week, including the water and poor rates. A little old work has been incorporated in the cottages, the sash windows for the entrance front and two gable ends being bought cheaply from old houses in Trumpington which were being demolished. Crittall metal casements are used on the rear elevation. Cement was supplied free by the Cement Marketing Co., Ltd. To Mr. Hughes, who gave his services as architect, and to the builders, who worked not by contract, but on costs plus a percentage profit, considerable credit is due for providing a pair of modern cottages which add to the charm of a very beautiful village.

Not only has the rural community council sought to influence the design of buildings in different parts of the county, it has also taken a wider view in urging that even an agricultural and comparatively unspoilt county like Cambridgeshire ought to formulate a regional planning scheme. Already an unofficial zoning map of Grantchester and neighbourhood has been prepared; and a joint town-planning committee of the representatives of the borough and district councils has held preliminary meetings. Meanwhile the rural community council is marking 6-in. scale maps of the parishes, showing public footpaths, beautiful trees, views, and buildings—a preliminary survey which should be of considerable use in the future.

W. P. BAKER

The Italian Country

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Government Help

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Milton's Laurel

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IN Italy the beauties of the landscape, threatened as they are in every other country by the changes and developments of modern life, have been put on the same level as works of art. This means that the lines of a hill, celebrated forests and woods, famous panoramas, unusual rocks, a tree, or a group of trees with an historical interest, are considered as sacred as works of art. The law in connection with these, also, considers the peculiar character of a town and does not, easily, allow this to be altered, having gone, at times, even to the absurd length of insisting that a railway station should resemble a medieval castle or, as in Sardinia, a peasant's cottage, so as not to disturb local colour.

As early as 1862 public interest had been drawn to the fact that the natural beauties of Italy were being destroyed, and in 1874 the Italian Alpine Club established a prize for the sections that took the greatest interest in this subject. In spite of this a certain amount of vandalism went on and, again, in 1898, a public protest was made when the Falls of Tivoli were in danger; in 1905 there was almost a rising at Terni when steelworks tried to use the waters of the Falls of Marmore. It was at this time, too, that the public saved the pine-woods of Ravenna, sacred to all lovers of Dante and Byron. A law was then drawn up to safeguard natural beauties of the nation, but it worked badly, and there was, once again, a general outcry when the Lake of Antillone was destroyed by electric works.

In 1906 an Association for the Preservation of Natural Beauties was formed at Bologna. It held a congress in 1909, when the first laws on antiquities and works of art were passed. In 1913 this association joined the Italian Alpine Club, but in spite of their joint efforts irreparable damage was done in all parts of the country until 1912 when, at a rumour that the villas near Rome were to be used for factories, a law was passed for the protection of buildings, forests, views, and gardens. The proprietors of villas that were turned into national monuments were obliged also to keep the farmhouses belonging to the property intact. About this time it was forbidden for a hotel to be built on a certain point on the Lake of Garda and, to show there was necessity for strong measures, the reflection of Mount Sorapis on the Lake of Misurina, a famous beauty spot in the Dolomites, had been entirely spoilt by the hotels built on the side of the lake.

The present Government has not only

The Fount of Clitumnus, in Umbria, springing from a rock in a grove of cypress trees. This spot, famous in classical poetry, is protected by law.

added to these laws, but sees that all laws on this subject are respected; it gives a great importance to their application, but as many private interests are concerned it will take time before they can be perfectly worked. The newest law considers, also, the saving of a panorama. Portofino has become a national monument; houses there can only be built when they conform to a general plan; Assisi is, also, under this rule, as is a whole part of Rome, the Quarter of the Renaissance, built by the Popes of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The law enters, too, into the smallest details; proprietors of houses are not allowed to give rein to strange taste in colour. The Ministry of Fine Arts and the municipality must be called in to decide if the colour of old buildings can be changed.

All these laws are, of course, difficult to apply because, more often than not, prohibition to build clashes with the interests of proprietors of land. Near Florence the gardens of a famous villa were to be cut up for roads and houses, but as it would have ruined a beautiful place the law stepped in. Unfortunately, in spite of this, the surroundings of Florence, to quote one city, are being ruined by the lack of any cohesion in the type of buildings that are put up. There is no rule, such as in the United States, for keeping a certain part of a town for buildings of a certain value, and cheap, ugly houses are spoiling some of the most characteristic hills. It is an English architect, Cecil Pinsent, who seems to be able to build new houses in character with the old villas near them, and with the olives, vines, and cypresses that make the beauty of the surroundings of Florence.

Though all the laws seem as if they must belong only to modern times, or since the invention of railways, their germs existed in the Middle Ages. In Genoa of the thirteenth century no house could be built unless its plan were first submitted to a special committee, which decided if it were fit for the place chosen, and then established the dimensions, which could not be surpassed.

Through ignorance, carelessness, and greed, a great deal has been lost to us; the laurel under which Galileo and Milton sat has been cut down, and ancient villas pulled down, to make place for glaring new ones. And what might the seacoast, from Massa to Viareggio, have been if the pine-woods had been left as when Shelley had seen them, and carefully planned towns built behind the forest!

Certainly the saddest of all has been the destruction of great forests, such as Carpenedo and many others; Montello is only a memory, though alive in the words of Martial and Pliny the younger. But Vallombrosa and Camaldoli can still boast of magnificent trees, and Sila, in Calabria, and a part of Abruzzo have been turned into national parks.

Thanks also to saving laws, the Pini Sachetti grow ever more imposing on the skyline above Rome, and the Fount of Clitumnus is untouched. Everywhere the Government of Mussolini is replanting the bare hills, and, what is more, is growing in the younger generation a new pride in their wonderful country, and a new spirit—a hatred of destruction.

YOI MARAINI

NOTE.—Luigi Parpagliolo is the great authority on all these laws. His book, *La Difesa delle Bellezze Naturali d'Italia* (*Defence of the Natural Beauties of Italy*), published in 1923, is as interesting as it is detailed on this absorbing subject.

The Japanese Country

★ Advertisements and Nightingales ★

WITH the introduction of European-styled architecture into the country, the preservation of rural Japan is just beginning to become a problem, not without some signs of the day when we, too, will have to struggle to save the country from the "anarchy of machinery run mad." The romantic scenic character of the country, with undulating hills decked with terraced fields, enlivened with masculine pine trees, softened by swaying groves of slender bamboo, seems to furnish a most suitable setting to the traditional style of country houses with simple lines and curvature of thatch or tiled roofs of sombre colours. For centuries these houses and villages have been a contributing factor to the beauty of the landscape. They are harmonious to the scenery they help to build. They give an appearance of having naturally grown there, so to speak, the human artifice being kept subordinate to the will of Nature. That people have been greatly influenced by Nature in the construction of their houses may well be seen in the shape of the thatched roofs. It has been observed by some that the thatched roofs in the area within the sight of Fuji-san are made, either consciously or unconsciously, in a greater resemblance to the shape of that famous mountain than those of remoter regions. It seems but natural that it should bear such resemblance, for no mountain anywhere in the world has entered so deeply into literature, art, and the very life of the people as Fuji-san has in Japan. The towering peak, symmetrical from all directions, gradually rising from the plain of Musashi with a grand sweep of majestic curve, lording over the surrounding country, has always stood emblematic of the highest in the ideals of the people. It has been looked up to as sacred, and thousands of people still pay pilgrimage to the summit every summer. There is something spiritual in the mountain when the snow-crested top of the stately form looms above the horizon on approaching Japan from the sea. There is something ethereal in its reflection upon the lakes that surround its base.

As in the case of many other countries, Japan has seen a sad decline of rural districts as a result of the centralization of population in big cities. In many instances their vitality has been sucked dry. Industrial centres, such as cotton mills, silk factories, docks, and iron works, etc., constantly draw young men and girls from their rural homes, leaving the aged and less enterprising to attend to the farms. The problem is receiving some consideration, and provisions are being made to make the life of the country tolerable. One of the artistic efforts made along this line, which is by no means adequate to cope with this great problem, is the introduction and encouragement of "peasant art" among country folk, in which movement Kanaye Yamamoto,

The Kiyomidzu Temple in Kyoto, in the cherry season. Above, the cherry blossom, an emblem of national ideals.

A thatched cottage in a Japanese garden at Nara, at the residence of Mr. Seki.

a painter of recognized standing, is doing good work in certain parts of the country. The work has proved invaluable, especially in the northern parts of Japan, where the cold winter prevents outdoor work for many months in the year. The movement has done much in developing artistic taste and in stimulating interest in life in general, especially among people in the country. Already their products, such as wood carvings, are receiving favour among the city people, and there seems to be a great future for the work.

Another aspect in which the rural districts are made to suffer by modern cities is the invasion into their midst of cheap European-styled houses built by city men for their summer use. Fortunately, with certain exceptions, their number is not yet too large to change the character of the scenery, and their occasional red roofs and painted woodwork half hidden among trees are not yet too repulsive. However, there are tendencies for worse days to come. Already there are land and housing companies active with their seductive offerings of homes in *bunka-mura* (cultured village) with "western-styled houses" within an easy reach of cities. *Bunka-jutaka* (cultured living-houses) and *bunka-seikatsu* (cultured or advanced living), both meaning primarily a mode of life after the fashion and manner of the West, have been in vogue in big cities, where even apartment houses in the Western manner are being experimented, though so far not with any degree of success. Already some of the spacious estates in Tokyo that formerly belonged to feudal lords have been turned into "cultured" districts with foreign houses, and there have been recently opened two or three "farm cities" or "garden cities" in the suburbs of Tokyo, which are no more than an attempt to reproduce a similar experiment of Europe and America. Even these are looked upon as a phase of modern experiments.

Advertisements in the rice fields and on the walls of village houses along the railroad line are far from being pleasing in Japan. But they may be worse than they are now, and efforts are being made to put an end to such mutilation of scenery. In this commercial age it is encouraging to take note of the fact that the city of Kyoto, which had been the capital of Japan for nearly eleven centuries before it was removed to Tokyo some sixty years ago, refused many thousands of yens of annual revenue in order to keep its telegraph posts free from advertisements.

Thanks to the valuable services of the society which looks after the preservation of natural objects of historic, as well as scenic, interest, many beautiful scenes are being preserved for the enjoyment of the people. With the crowded condition of cities, and with a greater increase of hustle and bustle in their daily routine of life, the need of the people for some beautiful spots to rest on and to come in contact with Nature will be more impelling than ever before. Such a need is being felt more and more keenly and universally, and provisions are being made in the neighbourhood of big cities, as public parks within them are by no means sufficient. However, in many instances these provisions in forms of pleasure-grounds with a scenic advantage in which efforts are made to combine unspoiled Nature with facilities for amusements, leave much to be desired, though most of them in the neighbourhood of Tokyo and Osaka are well patronized.

Compound of historic temples and shrines, parks and old castle grounds, as well as other places of scenic beauty, are constantly sought by the people. Some of these places are noted for plum blossom, which is peculiarly associated in the mind of the Japanese people with refined taste suggested by the sturdy quality of the plum tree, which enables it to bloom when there is snow still on the ground early in the year, and by its fragrance and the songs of *uguisu* (Japanese nightingale) which it attracts. Many places throughout the country are famous for cherry blossom. When the buds begin to swell early in spring, the admiring people gather beneath the branches. The flowers hardly keep for more than two or three days, yet the whole country goes into ecstasy over

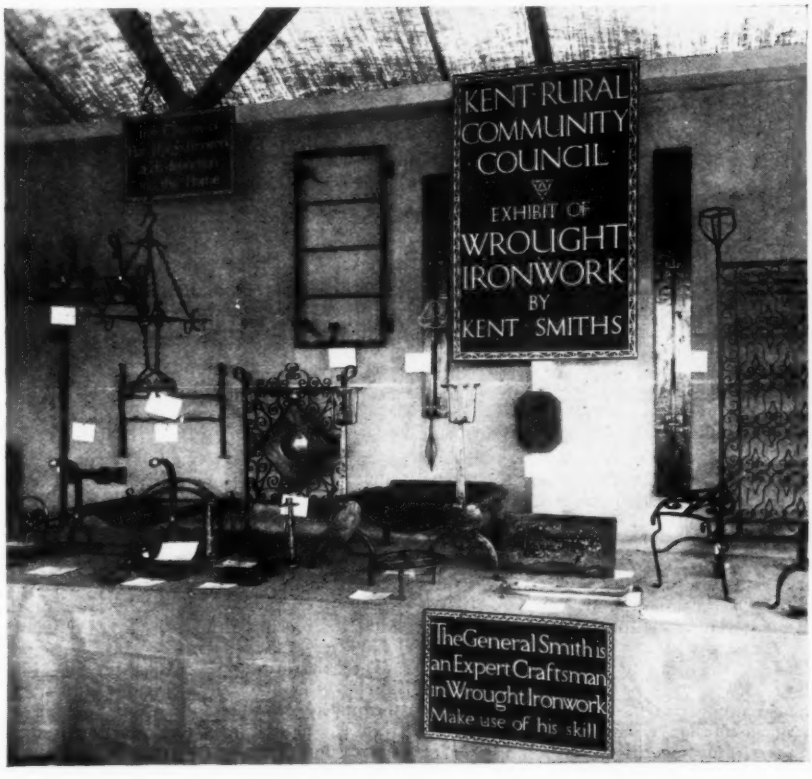
The holiday home of Viscount Soga, a thatched house by the seaside at Atami.

" The smith . . . makes fire-baskets, fire-dogs, lanterns, fire-screens, trivets, candlesticks, candle-sconces, and boot-scrapers."

them. The cherry blossom (the fruit is not eatable) is, indeed, a great favourite with the Japanese. They see a reflection of their ideals in it, as a well-known poem has it: " Should a stranger seek to scan the spirit of Japan, tell him it is the scenting morn's sunlit arc which blows the cherry wild and fair." Still, it is not so much the beauty of the flower itself that attracts, but the sudden miraculous way in which the blossom covers the bare, sombre branches with profusion, and the exquisite way in which it scatters to the wind without any tenacity to life, not a petal remaining to wither on the branch. Even so the knights of old Japan, when the call came from their lords, when the inevitable hour arrived, scattered their lives with a smile of a falling petal of the cherry blossom. Long, drooping blossoms of ancient wisteria, luxurious bloom of peonies symbolic of wealth and aristocracy, blaze of colours of azalea in all the shades of red, yellow, and white, whether found in city parks or in rural districts, are sure to draw large crowds of admirers in their season. Filled with people are the extensive ponds of iris at the time of the boys' festival in early May, when paper-made carps fly over the thatched roofs of villages as symbolic of success for the boy born within the twelvemonth. The chrysanthemum shows have become more of a city affair, but the autumnal brocade over the hills and on the banks of gorges, where a wide variety of maple trees play an important part in the rivalry of colours, draws multitudes of admiring people to the countryside.

That the people of the country take tremendous interest and pride in the scenery within their province, be it seashore, a lake, a mountain, a river or plain, was enthusiastically demonstrated not long ago when one of the leading papers of Japan tried to choose a new set of beautiful scenes by means of popular votes from all over the Empire, assisted by a commission of artists. Judging from the tremendous enthusiasm shown in upholding the scenery found in their immediate surrounding, it looked almost impossible for those people to do aught to mar or allow others to destroy that scenery, no matter for what purpose or in what form. However, the beauty of rural Japan is by no means secure against the encroachment of those forces, which may be likened unto an octopod or some other monster, and which endanger other countries.

JIRO HARADA



Rural Crafts

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The Smith Comes Back

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Standardization of Beauty

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"THE smith he is a handyman," and now that the motor-plough and the motor-tractor have done away with his horse-shoeing business, he may again come into his own as the artist he once was. (Nothing like necessity to make an artist of a man.) " Hand-made " is still a stamp of unchallenged worth, and may become a prerogative of wealth and luxury. To some extent the hand-made goods keep their place by qualities not attainable by mass production. It is not only the sterling strength of hand-sewn or hand-spun materials which still appeals to a limited class of users; there are refinements, such as the tapering of plough-lines or rake-handles, that are beyond the powers of the bulk-producing machine.

If more people knew of the fineness of native ironwork, any fear of the extinction of the smith would disappear. Every village in the country, nearly every parish church, has noble evidence of the smith's craft, but he has had too few chances latterly to exercise it in its higher ranges.

There is certainly room for the craft to develop again—especially in the domestic sphere, such as in hinges, locks, fire-irons, gates. One smith I met recently has had entirely to give up horse-shoeing—and is finding scope in artistic work. He makes fire-baskets, fire-dogs, lanterns, fire-screens, trivets, candlesticks, candle-sconces, and boot-scrapers. Tradition lingers splendidly in his hinges and latches, where decoration is permissible, and it is usually appropriate and good. There is something permanent-looking and satisfactory about these well-cut and hammered things, that have, too, in the twisting of the metal and curling of an end to make a natural ring a suggestion of the gusto of a strong man enjoying the mastery of his job.

An unexpected thing in these articles that are made for casual sale is the moderation of their price, and this applies to the elaborately wrought gilt gates as much as to the adjustable trivets. Such work should be seen, especially by architects who tend to use reproductions of old metalwork as

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Rural Preservation in Literature

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THE books, reports, and pamphlets likely to be of service to those concerned in saving the English countryside from its present dangers, vary greatly in character and may be classified under several heads.

One of the most important groups deals with the traditional architecture of districts or "regions," especially cottage architecture; for cottages, barns, and farmsteads are obviously more often demolished than churches. In this group should be placed Mr. Ambler's excellent study of the old stone houses of Yorkshire (Batsford), and Professor Richardson's *Regional Architecture of the West of England* (Benn). There is also a new book, *The Old Cottages and Farmhouses of Norfolk*, by Mr. C. J. W. Messent (H. W. Hunt, Norwich), which I have not yet seen. These various books deal with the different provincial "schools" of architecture, and are of value as a guide for those engaged in attempting to maintain, so far as circumstances permit in modern building, the traditional style of architecture indigenous to each locality and based on local materials.

Another group comprises publications concerned with the repair and preservation of old cottages. The Ministry of Health has recently issued a *Housing Manual on the Design, Construction, and Repair of Dwellings* (H.M. Stationery Office, 9d. net), which includes a couple of pages of sensible advice on "The Reconditioning of Old Buildings."

It is pointed out that "both sympathy and ingenuity are needed to enable the right choice to be made between alternative methods for bringing old buildings sufficiently into accord with modern ideas of health and comfort," and that "where for reasons of economy, or on account of the difficulty of obtaining suitable labour or materials, the use of the most appropriate material has to be abandoned, as in the case of thatch or stone slates for roofs, or ashlar for walls, it is of special importance to select as substitutes materials which will clash in colour or character as little as possible with those formerly used in the locality."

Hints are given as to practical methods of rendering these old cottages "fit for human habitation" in the eyes of the law, as an alternative to pulling them down, and one illustration shows a typical tumbledown cottage so treated. The Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings has also done good work in the same direction, and the Royal Society of Arts has just published a second edition of its pamphlet entitled *The Preservation of Ancient Cottages*, in which are illustrated several charming cottages which have been destroyed, others which are derelict, and two which have recently been saved by the Society's efforts.

The Council for the Preservation of Rural England ("C.P.R.E."), in its pamphlet, No. 4, discusses *The Repair of Old Cottages under the Housing (Rural Workers) Act, 1926*. It is observed that financial assistance is now available for reconstructing such cottages as can be rendered habitable, and makes practical suggestions to those authorities who have not the benefit of skilled advice. Proportion matters more than detail, and attempts to raise the height of rooms to comply with local by-laws, or to alter the roof-pitch, may destroy the whole character of the design.

The literature of cottage-preservation, indeed, has now become ample; but there are many other equally urgent problems requiring solution. These are all summarized in Professor Abercrombie's booklet, *The Preservation of Rural England* (Liverpool University Press and Hodder and Stoughton, 1s.). He does not ignore the question of preserving old buildings, but he devotes his attention mainly to the available measures — statutory and voluntary — for regulating development on sound lines. He agrees with other writers on the subject, that our present difficulties are caused chiefly by uncontrolled, greedy, and haphazard building; by the phenomenal growth of motor-transport; by hideous advertisements and petrol-stations; and by "ribbon-developments" along roads rather than ordered grouping in "satellite towns." To remedy the innumerable abuses that have arisen during the last few years, he relies primarily on the application of the Town-planning Acts, but he also outlines other directions in which legislative action is possible.

One of the leaflets of the C.P.R.E. has already been mentioned. Of the others, No. 1 describes the aims and objects of the Council; No. 2 is entitled *Town Planning and Protection of Scenery*; and No. 3 bears the scare-headline, *Save the Countryside!* No. 5, a *Memorandum on the Reservation of Agricultural Land and Grouped Building*, is a much more serious effort. Various methods of land reservation are discussed in their social and financial aspects, the vital problem of ribbon-development along arterial roads is faced squarely at last, and the suggestion is made that county councils should be given town-planning powers. Pamphlet No. 6, *Improvement and Control of the Design and Materials of Rural Buildings*, is even more important, for it firmly grasps a rather troublesome nettle. It is not yet actually published, but a perusal of a proof convinces me that the C.P.R.E. is now getting to grips with the real obstacles. This pamphlet makes definite recommendations on the formation, composition, and functions of voluntary advisory panels to be set up locally to deal with the designs of buildings where ordinary architectural advice is either unobtainable or has not been obtained. As a last resort, official control may be exercised, and powers already existing are enumerated here. The use of standard designs and details, a practice common in the eighteenth century, is suggested, both to builders and manufacturers.

There are other publications, hardly literature, but rather implements useful to the idealist bent on saving rural England. But most important of all publications on this topic, in my own judgment, are the detailed surveys and town-planning reports on important regions of England, such as East Kent, West Kent, and the Leeds-Bradford area, all recently produced. The latest of all is the *Preliminary Report of the Brighton, Hove, and District Joint-planning Advisory Committee*, covering an area including a large part of the South Downs.

MARTIN S. BRIGGS

A cottage near Normandy Village. [*From* Old English Cottages and Farmhouses in Surrey; Photographed by W. Galsworthy Davie, and described by W. Curtis Green.]

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being the quickest way out of their difficulty in finding decent fittings. It should also be an article of grace with all week-end cottagers that their fire appointments and latches and window fittings should be made by the village smith. It may help to quieten the conscience of the week-ender who occupies a cottage that might have been the home of the villager.

In another direction, I have never seen such effective manual skill, exercised by almost primeval means, as the turning of chair legs by an old Sussex labourer. He deserved the rewards of a great artist. He split the beech logs, roughly shaved them, and finally turned them at a speed that a machine might envy. This old labourer could make a chair leg, "cut saucy" as the costers say, with many grooves and ridges, within a minute!

Quickness, of course, is not everything. Now, more than ever, is there need for infinite pains in craftsmanship, for mass production means inevitable standardization, and the producer has far more responsibility when he turns out thousands to the same mould than if only one object is made. Standardization must be standardization of beauty, not of ugliness. "The history of the crafts and industries," says a writer in a foreword to the catalogue of the recent Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the Royal Academy, "teaches us that individual craftsmen are necessary to a country to provide standards, incentives to artistic invention, and new ideas to the mass production manufacturer. Where and when a handicraft expires, so also the quality of machine production in that country fails."

These are very true words, bearing on the truth so clearly brought out by the interim report of the Royal Commission on National Museums and Galleries, that there can be no efficiency in application without high quality at the fountain head of research.

A. HAMBLIN

Two roadside pictures taken within a few miles of one another, but in areas controlled by different authorities. Above, a line of trees needlessly destroyed. Below, the trees preserved and the footpath taken along the field side.

Preservation and Economy

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IN these times of financial stringency and strenuous effort it is necessary to examine every subject from the point of view of economy. We cannot afford waste, either in expenditure of money or of our resources, whether spiritual or material.

Nature and man, her progeny, is prodigal, and that is one reason why we cannot leave things to chance, but must have a policy and a plan.

It is the waste of our natural resources, including the desecration of the countryside, that is causing persons and authorities all over the country to realize the necessity for such a policy and plan.

Some people hold that the origin of many of our troubles in this matter, and others, is the fact that nearly every subject in this country is looked at almost solely from the standpoint of the townsman, and that the position—almost the existence—of the countrymen, and of agriculture, is largely disregarded.

Whatever truth there is in this view it seems clear that today the townsman is waking up to the fact that the countryside, in which he sought relaxation, and which the motor is increasingly opening up to him, is being spoilt—that his heritage is in danger.

The townsman wants both to have his cake and eat it. He spreads into the country, with his urban contraptions, because he loves it, even if only skin deep, and by the manner in which he spreads spoils what he loves.

The spread of the huge town involves him in the waste of time and effort of longer and longer daily journeys to and from his work, and he is always being overtaken and again cut off from the country by more bricks and mortar.

It is an axiom that the smaller the place the better people know each other (sometimes too well), so that he gains nothing in sociability by his tenuous attachment to a huge community, and loses much in identity; but he does have the advantage of accessibility to the more highly organized and liberally endowed cultural and recreational institutions, and the great stores.

We may look back with longing to the old self-contained and seemly county town, but our habits and outlook have so changed that the present remedy proposed, which seems to deserve our consideration, is the largely self-contained satellite town, divided from its kindred and parent by belts or wedges of open land.

In considering the application of any system, the factors of economy of time, effort, and expenditure, and of the conservation of resources, must be given great weight; and this emphasizes the necessity for survey before action.

As we are townsmen we shall first survey our present position in respect to housing, and estimate the additional accommodation required to meet the present shortage, the rehousing of families to be displaced from slums, and to provide for the future, bearing in mind that a falling birth rate may, for some time to come, be offset by an increasing marriage rate and the smaller family unit, each unit requiring a home.

To meet the required accommodation we shall wish to select the areas most suitable in respect to health, amenity, ease of access, and availability of recreational and other facilities, and the most economical from the point of view of public services, such as education, roadworks, water supply, electricity, gas, sewerage, etc.

We shall, if we are wise, attach even greater importance to a survey of the industrial situation (unless we are a pleasure or residential town dependent almost entirely on amenity), and consider the need for expansion or decentralization, facilities that are present or can be contrived for additional industries, mineral resources that are available for development.

It will be found that if our residential and industrial needs, both present and future,

are catered for in compact formation of loose texture, there will still be left in most cases vast areas of countryside that can be left inviolate for our recreation, quiet enjoyment, for the raising of the fresh food we require, and the grazing of the cows whose milk nourishes our children.

As it is assumed that our policy embraces conservation as well as development, we shall make a survey both of landscape and of buildings and groups of buildings that have now become part of the countryside. By analysis of the component parts we shall learn both what it is essential to preserve and also where groups of buildings can be fitted in without detracting from a favourite view; or, as on a ridge, where peepholes should be left, or what building line would leave a clear view over the tops of any buildings. By reducing the problem to its essentials we facilitate its solution.

Preserving well-known panoramas will not suffice, because the normal beauty of the English countryside lies in its quiet charm rather than in a series of spectacular pictures. To save this charm it is necessary that the prevailing harmony, which must be carefully studied, should be preserved. It will, I think, be found that the exclusion of incongruous colour will go a long way towards this. Much of the damage is wrought merely through lack of thought, and would not be perpetrated if a good standard had been set and its reason explained.

If on a country road motor traffic now makes it necessary to provide a separate space for pedestrians, it may not be necessary to cut down the hedge and trees; it may often cost less and be much safer and pleasanter to make a footpath on the field side, plant a new hedge, and leave the road to the hurrying motorist.

The question of the economical expansion or extension and maintenance of public services needs most careful study. It seems to be generally accepted that not only must a compact—as opposed to a straggling—form of development lead to economy, but also it has often been observed that certain areas, which it is desired to preserve for reasons of amenity, are just those which it would be costly to provide with services such as water and sewage disposal.

For example, in one region, those in authority have said that it will be considerably cheaper to face the relatively small compensation which may be involved in keeping certain large areas of land free from buildings than to have to meet the cost which, owing to local circumstances, the sewering of these areas would involve.

We know that the conservation of our water supplies is a matter of national importance, and happily many large catchment areas comprise a form of rural preservation; but economy in distribution is also essential, and this may be a sound economic reason for leaving some of our distant hilltops high and dry above the tide of building.

The question is often asked, "What is building land?" People say they see country fields studded with boards advertising "eligible building land" often where no public services are available, and where it would be expensive to provide them. In some cases such land is taken out of cultivation, hedges and trees are cut down, and perhaps a few road sites are marked out. If the estate develops quickly, buildings take the place of pleasant fields, and the services, such as water and sewage disposal, have ultimately to be provided by the authority. If it hangs fire it stands a place of half-baked desolation, producing little but weeds. It is said that often in the aggregate land so advertised round about a town comprises many times the area of the existing town which has taken centuries to reach its present size.

We must not, however, look at the question of the preservation of rural England from a negative standpoint. Rural England must not be looked upon as the preserve of the few; we want to preserve it for the benefit and enjoyment of all, and to avoid letting things run on so that our country is neither one thing nor the other. This can only be achieved if there is a policy and a plan devised co-operatively and based on a thorough study of all the factors of the situation, social, economic, and æsthetic.

Parts of such a policy and plan can no doubt be implemented by a town plan; but the machine is of least importance and is of little value unless informed public opinion and the support of the bulk of the landowners is behind it. The more, therefore, the problem is discussed in all its aspects the quicker will a satisfactory solution be found, and it is not a matter which brooks delay.

G. L. PEPLER

Some Societies in the Movement

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The following list describes the aims and objects of a few of the societies affiliated to the C.P.R.E.:

THE NATIONAL TRUST: To promote the permanent preservation of lands and buildings of historic interest or natural beauty which it holds (under the National Trust Act, 1907) for the benefit of the public.

THE SCAPA SOCIETY FOR PREVENTION OF DISFIGUREMENT IN TOWN AND COUNTRY: To protect rural and river scenery, to promote regard for dignity and propriety of aspect in towns, and to assert the importance of beauty in out-of-door life. It concerns itself especially with the abuses of spectacular advertising.

THE COMMONS AND FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION SOCIETY: To ensure to commoners and the general public the full use and enjoyment of commons and other open spaces and waste lands, and to maintain all public rights over footpaths and bridle ways.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE: The object of the rural policy of this Council is to develop co-operation between voluntary bodies and public authorities in all matters making for better conditions of life in country areas, and to bring this co-operation about by the formation of rural community councils for counties and village community councils for villages.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS offers to those who need it its special technical knowledge of the structure of ancient buildings, their preservation and repair.

THE CENTRAL LANDOWNERS' ASSOCIATION: The only organization in England and Wales solely concerned with safeguarding the legitimate interests of owners of rural land.

THE GARDEN CITIES AND TOWN-PLANNING ASSOCIATION: The aim of the Association is the formation of garden cities as a means of preventing the continuous growth of the large towns and the spoliation of the countryside by ribbon development, and also the adoption of the Town-Planning Act by all local authorities as a means of directing the full growth of undeveloped areas.

NATIONAL HOUSING AND TOWN-PLANNING COUNCIL: To disseminate among all local authorities all available information respecting their powers and duties for the improvement of the housing conditions of the people and the planning of their districts.

THE MEN OF THE TREES: To encourage the planting and care of trees, to educate public opinion on forestry needs throughout the world, to foster the love of trees in every section of the community.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS FUND was instituted at a meeting on January 26, 1927, at which the Prime Minister presided. It has for its object the preservation of ancient cottages of architectural or historical interest.

THE SEVENOAKS AND DISTRICT HOUSING AND TOWN-PLANNING ASSOCIATION aims at a good regional plan for the area, including necessary by-pass roads, protection of country lanes, villages, and parks, especially the historic group of Knole in relation to Sevenoaks High Street.

THE LAND AGENTS' SOCIETY: To promote and protect the interests of the highly-specialized profession of land agency and to ensure, for the benefit of the public, a high standard of professional skill and integrity amongst its members.

THE SHEFFIELD ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF LOCAL SCENERY: The preservation of the Peak district from defacement by inharmonious buildings, petrol stations, advertisements, etc. Its biggest effort is the purchase of the Longshaw estate for the nation.

THE TILLINGBOURNE VALLEY ASSOCIATION was formed thirty years ago to protect the interests and beauty of the valley. It was revived last year to oppose a threatened 60-ft. concrete road, with the Duke of Northumberland as president. It is believed that the opposition has been successful.

THE INSTITUTE OF BUILDERS: Its special interest and charge is building education, in which connection it devotes its main attention to the development of a suitable type of advanced education.

THE SURVEYORS' INSTITUTION: To secure the advancement and facilitate the acquisition of knowledge of the practice of managing and developing estates.

THE LONDON SOCIETY: To stimulate a wider concern for the beauty of the capital city and to secure its practical development on a preconceived plan. It aims at achieving this object by the united action of its citizens.