

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

VOL. CL.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 1912

No. 1902

THE EFFECTS OF THE RENAISSANCE ON STAINED GLASS AND THE BREAK UP OF THE ART. PART VI

By CLEMENT HEATON

The Church of Montmorency, Northwest of Paris

AT Troyes and Rouen we see provincial centres struggling to get along without interference as long as they could. We can, however, at Montmorency visit a spot where active intervention took place. [The church here was built by Anne de Montmorency, Connétable of France and Superintendent of the Crown Buildings from 1526 to 1541. He was therefore, by his duties, called on to study the monumental arts, and his position and wealth made him, after the King, a great art patron; his temperament disposed him to preserve French traditions more than did Francis I, who was entirely under the influence of Italian artists. Benvenuto Cellini, and his talk about the "antiquated style," must have upset the King's notions of art.

The date of

the glass in the choir at Montmorency is fixed by Mr. Lucien Magne at 1525. Here there is an evidently Gothic tradition of technique, both in arrangement and rendering, so it makes a good architectural whole. But there is also an introduction of Renaissance details, thus it is a *transition* work, though mainly Gothic.

In the window of the *Connétable's* sister, in the north aisle, is a beautiful figure of the Magdalen at the foot of the Cross; but here we get new features which arrest attention. The Gothic canopy is still there, it is true, and Gothic angels in the tracery. But the details are transformed; little winged cupids are seen among the ornament, one of them holding a shield, and there are swags which fall from the mouth of a cherub on a frieze. Underneath this confusion is a crucifixion, where the very small wooden-like figure is on a huge cross, with clouds



THE EAST WINDOW, CARLISLE

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CHOIR OF GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL, 1360

above. Behind is a landscape, with a castle and rocks, trees and mountains. In the corresponding opening little Gothic angels hold a curtain over the figure of the lady. The technique is right and the color good. But there is *incoherence of thought* and decorative impropriety in the arrangement; want of balance between the parts, and the old Gothic traditions jar against the new additions. The whole effect is that of *disorder*, and yet parts are of real beauty.

It is in this way that the displacement of the architectural ideal was so fatal. The glass designer was forgetting the building and forgetting the mullions. He had to think first of the donors, and used as fillings saints, sacred scenes and architectural frame work. His mind also was full of the new Renaissance ornament, and of backgrounds with landscapes. Being badly informed,

yet having by education the habit of Gothic work, all was muddled up together in the way we see.

But no doubt Anne de Montmorency was pleased. He was interested in Italian art as well as French and collected medals. He wrote to the French representative at Rome to send him where-with to complete his collection; and we see some of them shown in the tracery, where angels are generally found.

Compare all this with the grand decoration of the thirteenth century, and it immediately appears how rapid was the descent, here, where there was unlimited wealth and no trace of protestant antipathy. The Quattrocento artists had not played such havoc with glass in Florence and it is the sudden inrush of ill-understood Cinquecento ideas, taken up as a fashion, and combined with the late Gothic technique, which gives the result we see at Montmorency.

Ecouen

The church and chateau of Ecouen, not far from Montmorency, were built by the same Anne de Montmorency. There is glass here bearing the date of 1544, in

two series of windows. Those in the choir are of the same type as those of St. Etienne du Mont at Paris, by Eugrand-le-Prince, whose character they continue.

But here in the architectural panels between the subjects is a false note: these panels, originally a Gothic feature, have a central cartouche with the date thereon, which is supported by naked figures of the Jean Cousin type, combined with a confusing mass of scrolls, masks, fruit and foliage. Here again is *disorder*, while unnecessary elements are in profusion. It seems to be a sculptor's design, and putting all the facts together it would appear to be due to Jean Goujon, who was working here at this time. He had been at Fontainebleau and at Rouen, where a fountain outside the church of St. Maclou has the same character of design; this is attributed to him as he was for a time there, before 1544.

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At Rouen also are found two windows of the type of these at Ecouen with similar cartouches and scroll work, but bearing the date of 1555. These windows seem to be the least worthy of critical examination in this neighborhood.

In the chapel at Ecouen the other series, also dated 1544, is by another artist who has been erroneously identified by Mr. Lucien Magne as a certain "Laurence Fauconnier, of Bourges." But this name really refers to a lady who gave a window executed there in 1544, according to documents discovered by archaeologists at Bourges; there is no relationship between the two. Both windows were executed in the same year, yet show different architectural design and different technique, so they cannot be by the same hand. While the work at Bourges (which is by Jean Lescuyer) shows French Renaissance of the district of the Loire, in these windows at Ecouen are now introduced the Italian classic orders. This seems due to the architect Jean Bulland, who was at the time adding columns and a pediment to the Chateau. He wrote a treatise on the orders; so he must have been much interested in them. We give a reproduction of these in the glass, from a tracing made especially for this article, as it is an historic point in the history of the art. Behind the buildings and trees are delicate clouds on a pure white ground, above a distant landscape. A general sketch shows how the leading is avoided, or hidden among the trees, while two details show, one a figure borrowed from Raphael, and the other, a vase with a cast shadow on the ground. This latter is found in the subject of the "Annunciation" and therein is quite a collection of useful objects: a candlestick, a winding-bodkin and balls of wool, scissors a spindle, two jugs and a brush, etc. To avoid thus the necessary elements of the art, and to introduce the classic buildings so foreign to its genius, with landscape

and clouds; to insist on details in perspective with cast shadows—all this was to send the art of glass painting to perdition.

Later Work, at Rouen, Chantilly and Gisors

So, by 1544, the fear of color; natural-esque drawing on thin white glass; cherubs, heads among soft white clouds; garlands and scroll work; Italian figures and natural shading—all this had come in and transformed the art. The designer was now doing all he could to make an Italian picture, and at Chantilly we see prints from Raphael used bodily. The same borrowing is found at Gisors and Conches. The aim of the glass painter was to give relief, and we see what came of the idea that in glass you can "represent form as well as in other material!"



CATHEDRAL, BOURGES. CHAPELLE JACQUES-COEUR. 1448-1450

The Annunciation, St. James and St. Catherine. Perhaps the most carefully designed and executed work in glass of late Gothic in existence. Probably by Henry Mellein of Bourges.

At Rouen the use of glass painting seems to have persisted very late; one finds there a considerable amount of late Renaissance work, but it is as a whole poor stuff. A panel dated 1572 in the Museum is useful as a landmark; while in the district of Troyes and Chalons-sur-Marne one finds windows entirely white and yellow, and all the color has gone; this type is not found at Rouen.

The Latest Phases of the Art

The window in the first chapel on the north of the nave in Bourges Cathedral, executed in 1619, has been referred to. It is very realistic and is in enamel mainly. But it is much better than might be expected from the date and shows that in this district some decorative sense lingered yet in glass. Fragments in Paris about the same time are hideous attempts at muscular development. In Holland and Switzerland debased forms of glass painting were still in use. But it is a weary and sterile task to study such things, and it will not be attempted here.

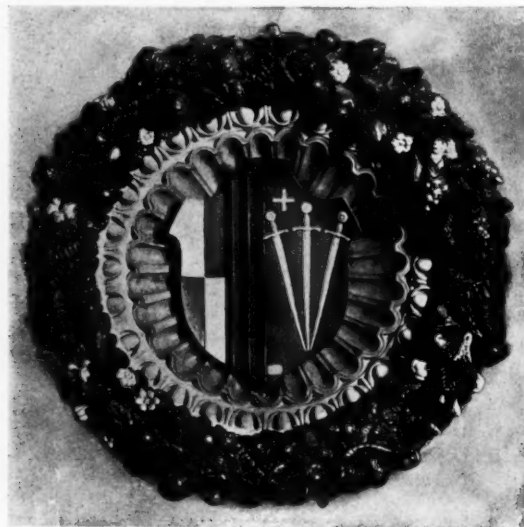
The last flicker is seen at Oxford. Isaac Olivier, in 1700, executed a subject window for Christ Church Chapel. Peckit of York, 1765-1774, executed a window in New College and various panels in York Cathedral. In 1777 Jervais did the west window in the

chapel of New College, after designs by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Francis Eginton, in 1794, worked at nine windows in the chapel of Magdalen College and did some for St. George's Chapel, Windsor. He died in 1805, and as the art was revived before 1850 there is only an interregnum of about forty years and perhaps less. Possibly in a feeble way something was being done in England all the time till the "Revival."

In 1769 R. S. Godfrey exhibited in Paris windows he had made in England, and which were supposed to rival those of the middle ages. This incident shows clearly that the art was preserved in England.

Yet restorations of panels at Ecouen were made as late as 1797. It is poor work—but this date (if our reading is correct) makes them interesting as showing that even then there survived in France a slight amount of tradition for such things. (The date, though partly erased, can be read from a ladder).

These efforts to keep alive in Oxford an art scorned in France show that the art of glass painting, in spite of the overwhelming Italian influence, met the needs of the northern temperament. It was a smouldering fire; from which the general change of thought which took place in the nineteenth century caused flame to burst out again.



ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND

THE fact that in recent years several important buildings erected in London have been designed by foreigners (Americans) has caused members of the English architectural profession to arrive at the conclusion that English architecture is passing through a period of decadence, which only the most aggressive measures will serve to terminate.

Many reasons for this condition have been suggested by correspondents and contributors to the English architectural press, the causes assigned being lack of appreciation on the part of the British Government of matters relating to art and the failure of the profession and Government alike to provide proper educational facilities for students of architecture.

The apathy or indifference of the Government to good art is probably no greater in England than it is in America, but beyond doubt there exists in this country most excellent facilities for education in architecture.

It seems, therefore, safe to assume that the rapid advance in architectural practice apparent on this side of the water is due to these educational opportunities more than to any other.

The paternal solicitude shown by the man in practice for the educational welfare of his younger brother is evidenced by such organizations as The Society of Beaux-Arts Architects, the Committee on Education of the American Institute of Architects, and the very substantial recognition and support given by the profession at large to the architectural schools of the various Universities and Colleges throughout the country.

The sentiment of at least a portion of the profession in England with regard to this subject is clearly shown by the following letter which was published in *The Builder* of May 3rd:

SIR,—When the work of designing such important buildings as the Ritz Hotel, the *Morning Post* offices, and the Automobile Club is entrusted to foreign architects, it is evident that there is something radically wrong with the architectural profession in England. In the cases we have quoted it can scarcely be urged that the buildings are of such a special nature as to require the services of foreign architects in preference to those which, one might reasonably expect, could be equally well-rendered by our fellow-countrymen.

Why, then, have the owners of these buildings thought it advisable to go so far afield for the professional assistance they required? We are afraid the answer must be that the owners have had sufficient discrimination to see that they are likely to obtain a better result by the employment of the foreigner. In other words, it is impossible to obtain the services of English architects who have been equally well trained in the technique of their art. The dearth of highly-qualified men in this country is due to our present unsystematic and inefficient mode of architectural training. And so long as we remain without properly-organized and properly-administered schools of architecture, we may anticipate that the work of the better-trained foreign architect will be more and more in evidence in the United Kingdom. Recognizing this fact, it is imperative that the architectural profession should seriously consider what steps can be taken to cope with the difficulty.

It seems to us that, following the formulation of a sound and comprehensive scheme of architectural education, the Government should be approached to give its financial support to enable the scheme thus put forward to be realized in its entirety.

We are aware that the British Government rarely, if ever, does anything in the cause of art; but in this particular case it might be induced to see what foreign countries have long ago realized—viz., the undoubted fact that good architecture is a national asset, and as such, State assistance to art education has proved a sound financial investment. But however good such a scheme may be in theory, and however well endowed, all would go for nothing unless the direction of the students' work were under the absolute control of specially-trained men. Handicapped as they have been in the past by the non-existence of any school for the advanced study of their art, the architects of this country cannot be expected to furnish the necessary teachers. It would seem, therefore, that upon its inauguration a National School of Fine Art would have to rely upon obtaining professors from foreign countries.

To those who do not know the details of the system of architectural training which has been carried on so long and successfully in France, the following brief description of the curriculum of study at the Beaux-Arts may be of interest.

After a competitive entrance examination for admission, the student in Architecture attends a course of lectures on each of the following subjects: Mathematics, descriptive geometry, stereotomy, physics, chemistry and geology, construction, perspective, building regulations, history and theory of architecture. In addition to the foregoing subjects, which are specially applicable to the training of architects, it has been wisely felt that as architecture is but one branch of art, it is necessary that its exponents should receive at least some instruction in the sister arts of painting and sculpture.

As the architectural student receives his specialized instruction, so in like manner do the painters and sculptors become specialists in their separate arts. But prior to this specialized training, all students of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, whether painters, sculptors, or architects, are obliged to attend a course of study on design, modeling, elementary architecture, literature, and decorative design. By adopting this method of training, painters, sculptors, and architects are taught at an early age to appreciate the merits and necessary limitations of their colleagues' work. The exponents of the three arts thus become accustomed to work

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together, and it is only by this appropriate application of their united efforts that a homogeneous and thoroughly satisfactory artistic result can be obtained.

To compare the results obtained under this methodical training with those that follow the haphazard system (or want of system) in vogue in this country is not only humiliating and depressing, but shows that our much-vaunted commercial instinct, in this instance, is disastrously astray.

This is only one aspect of the many problems relative to the welfare of the architectural profession which show the urgent necessity of obtaining statutory powers to enforce a satisfactory system of architectural education. So long as we are content to see untrained men allowed to practise in this country, just so long will the decadent period of architecture now existent be apparent.

VISITING ART

THE international spirit has been slow to invade the field of art in this country, but it is here. Within the past five years we have had exhibitions of contemporary Russians, Germans, Dutch, Scotch, Spanish, and French art, with something, too, of the modern English school. At the present moment France is arranging to lend us representative examples from the Government collections in order to familiarize our public with the character of the French museums. Next Winter we are promised a traveling exhibition of Scandinavian pictures revealing the artistic tendencies of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark.

In some instances, of course, commercial considerations play their candid part. It is desirable from a business point of view that Americans should have an opportunity to form their opinion of the art of all the countries of the world. The rumor has been spread abroad that when we know what we like we buy it.

The motives inspiring this "cousining" habit, to use a back-country expression, are by no means all mercenary however. Occasionally, as in the case of the French, a very genuine and high type of idealism is involved. Art to the Gallic mind is only less dear than liberty. The French have helped us loyally in our struggle to win both.

There is also the increasingly complex nature of our hospitable Republic to consider. The call of art is almost as strong as the call of nature, and as soon as our immigrants become amalgamated with us they

feel the need of strengthening their diluted racial instincts with their native art.

In the meantime we are reaping benefits. It cannot be denied that our early American schools, although fed from European sources, showed traces of the over-spiritualized New England type. More sensitive than robust, the pictures of an earlier generation of American painters reflect the slightly arid intellectuality of our spiritually burdened ancestors. This quality, which had its charm, has almost entirely disappeared from the painting of the present; its place is taken by a blunt concern with the obvious, a fancy for brutal fact that in itself repelling, indicates wholesome reaction.

There is every probability that a certain infusion of the peasant spirit in an art that has tended toward aristocracy will increase its chances of life and health. No one can examine the splendid group of RODIN's sculptures now in the Metropolitan Museum without feeling the benevolent influence upon his high-strung imagination, of his humble origin, and the characteristics fostered by his nearness to the world of common things.—*N. Y. Times.*

WHAT IS DECORATION?

THOUGH the word "decoration" is frequently used, it is difficult, if not impossible, actually to define its limitation; it is, in consequence, employed in many and distinctly different ways, and certainly to many paintings of a very different treatment. It is generally accepted as embodying a simplifying of masses, of flatness of treatment, curtailing a tendency to absence of shadow, confinement to simple planes, careful composition in the proportionable filling of space, all combined with a certain architectural dignity or structural feeling by form and line, producing a mural feeling and a mural rest. The author could think of no stronger guidance to decorative effect than the influence upon the painter of the walls themselves, provided he will allow their unconscious appeal its full scope by executing the work upon the site.—*Edgar Wood, F.R.I.B.A.*

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

Founded 1876

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT (INC.)

No. 50 Union Square, New York
(Fourth Avenue and 17th Street)

G. E. SLY, PRESIDENT

E. J. ROSENCRANS, SECRETARY AND TREASURER

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SINGLE COPIES (Regular Issues), 25 CENTS

Entered at the Post-office, New York, as Second-class Matter

VOL. CI JUNE 5, 1912 No. 1902

COSTLY ERRORS

IT may be considered significant of the rapidly growing appreciation of art in this country that in two of its larger cities there should be manifested at the present time a strong and active sentiment demanding, both by reason of their unsightliness and locations which act as barriers to the consummation of well developed plans for civic betterments, the removal of buildings erected within comparatively recent times. The first is the intensely inartistic Post Office Building in this city. Although constructed not more than forty years ago, lack of appreciation of the city's future growth and the absence at that time of a now well defined public sentiment that deprecates the placing of buildings on any of our park areas, permitted its being located on the southerly portion of City Hall Park. If present efforts are successful this eyesore will be razed. If in addition to this, the Tweed Court House and the City Court Building, now encumbering the northerly portion, can be removed, this naturally beautiful neighborhood will be restored to something like its former appearance. The City Hall, a building in which every New Yorker takes pride, will then have a proper approach and adequate setting and it seems

doubtful if any man or party will ever again have the temerity to advocate locating a building in this park.

The second instance is noted in Philadelphia. In an article printed in a recent issue of the *Philadelphia Record*, the President of the Board of Trade is quoted as declaring that the placing of the City Hall in Philadelphia on its present site was an architectural blunder. Undoubtedly opinion of those qualified to speak will agree with the sentiment expressed. This building is probably as unfortunate in its placing as is that of this city's Post Office and can as well be spared to make way for well considered plans of civic development.

Here we have two examples that illustrate how costly it may be for any city to proceed with an isolated improvement that is not a part of a well considered and developed general plan providing for future growth. When these improvements also lack individual merit, the situation becomes aggravated. The movement now rapidly gaining force in this country will, it is believed, offer a safeguard in future against such blunders as those cited.

PROGRESS IN COMPETITION METHODS

THE selection of Mr. Walter Cook, President of the American Institute of Architects, as Consulting Architect to the Court House Board, New York City, and the announcement printed in another column, concerning the plan to be followed in the selection of an architect for the contemplated new structure, seems to furnish assurance as to the character of competition which will be conducted, even in advance of the issuance of formal program. Instances multiply which illustrate the influence for good exerted by the American Institute of Architects. Less than a decade ago, the building of so important a public structure as the one proposed would have been considered an opportunity for politicians and others to have reaped large profits, and the initial step in the process by which this could be most easily accomplished would have been the selection of an architect who would interpose no obstacles. So strong is public sentiment now swung toward the American Institute plan of competitions for public work, that failure to recognize the Code and follow its provisions

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is almost considered *prima facie* evidence of contemplated irregularities. Truly, the progress made is most satisfactory, and there now seems to be every reason for looking forward with confidence to a time in the

not distant future when the architecture of our cities, particularly that of their public buildings, will be a source of just pride and satisfaction to all cultured and patriotic citizens.

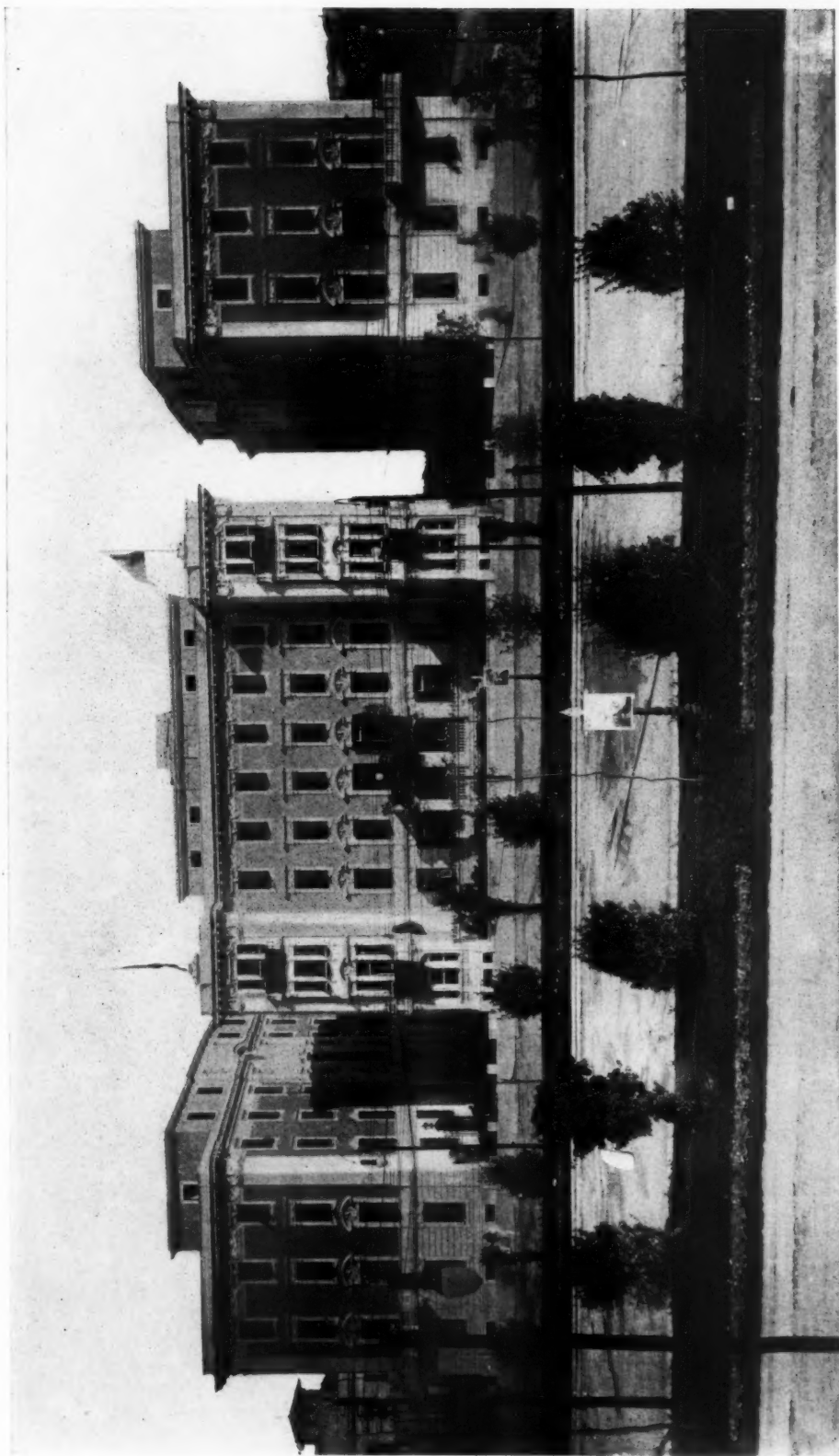


A DINING ROOM INTERIOR. MR. CHARLES A. PLATT, ARCHITECT

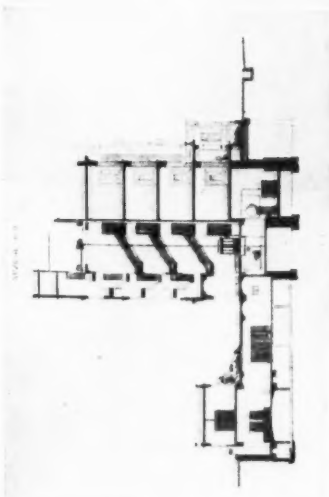
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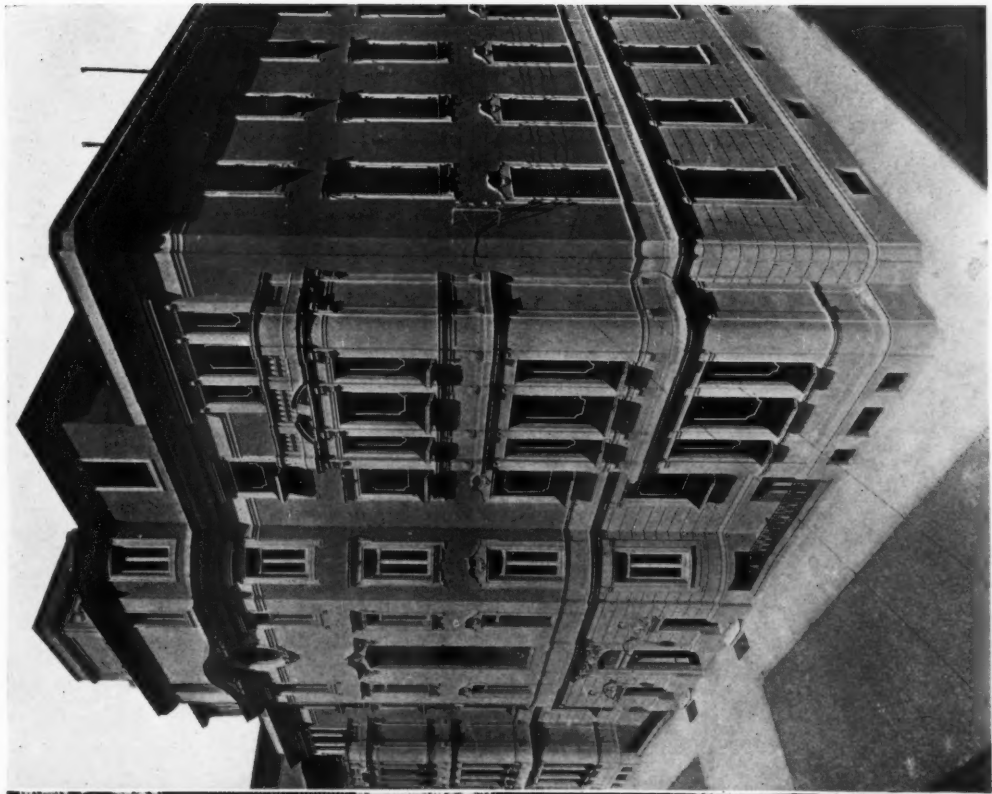
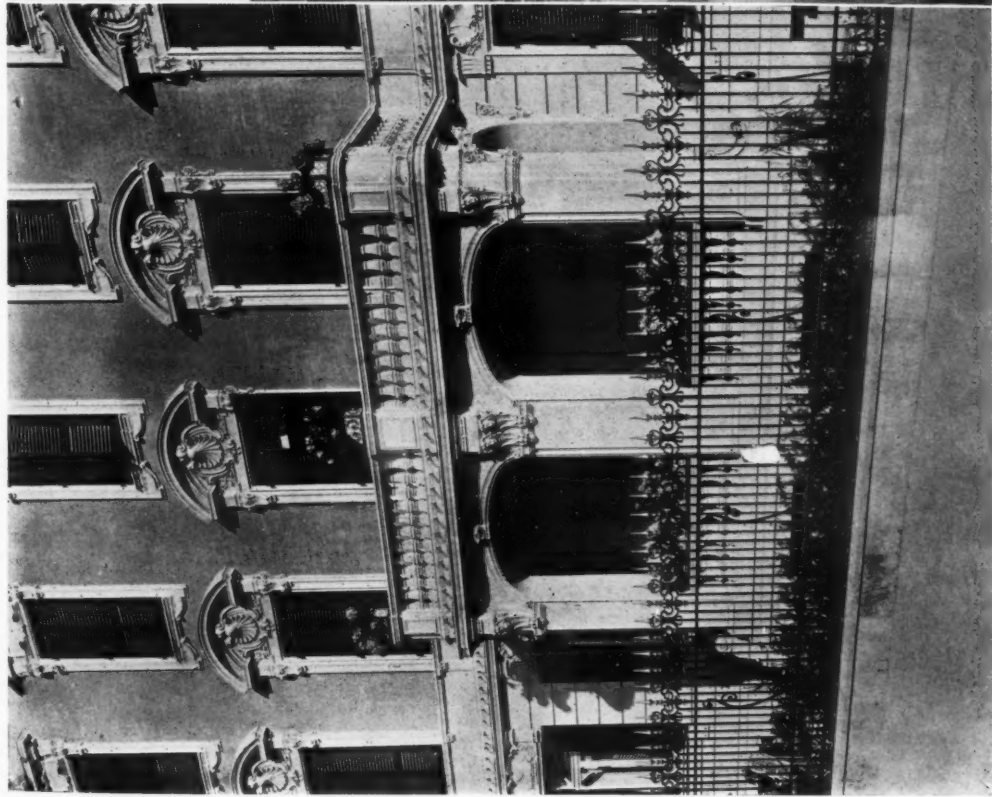
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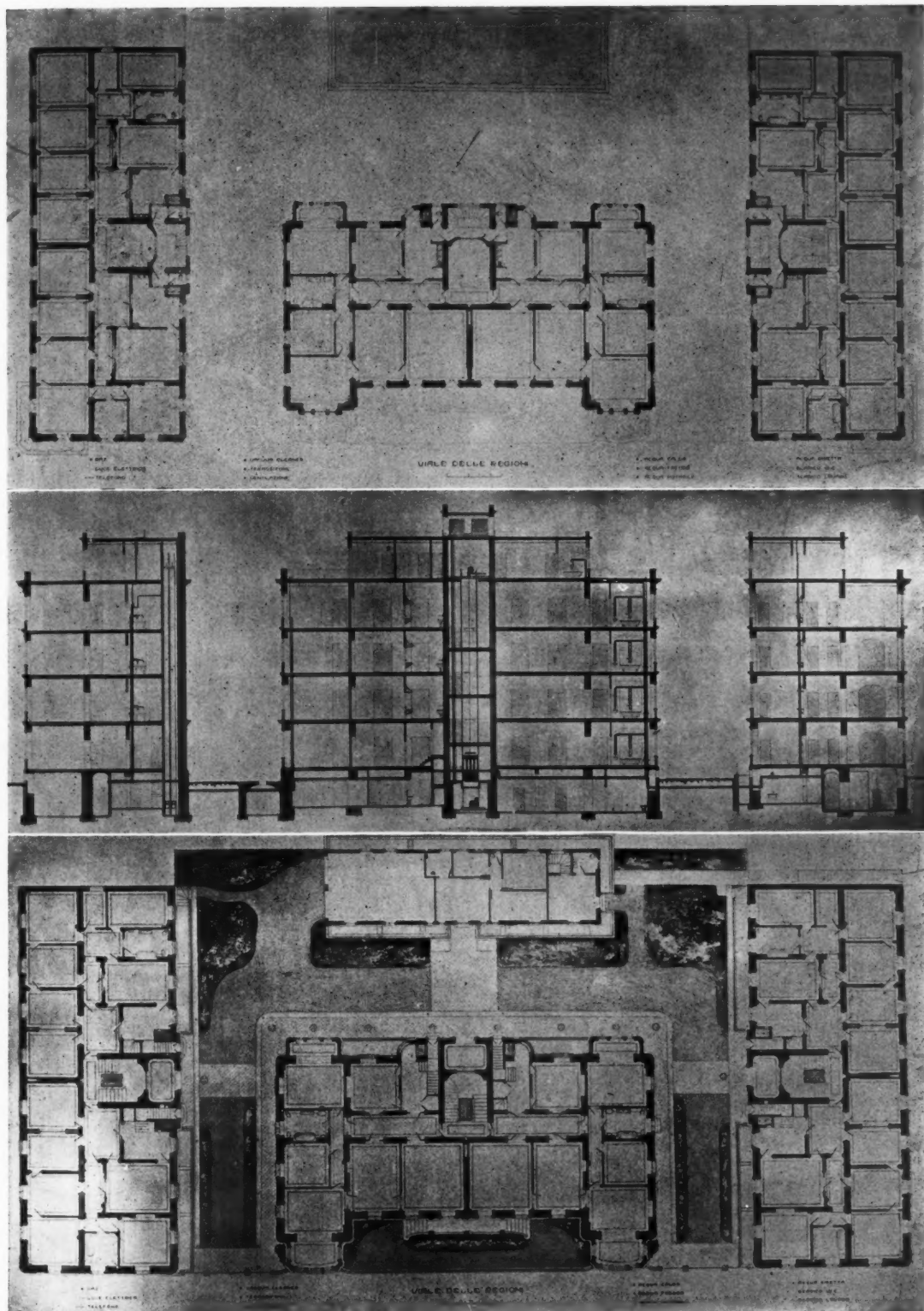
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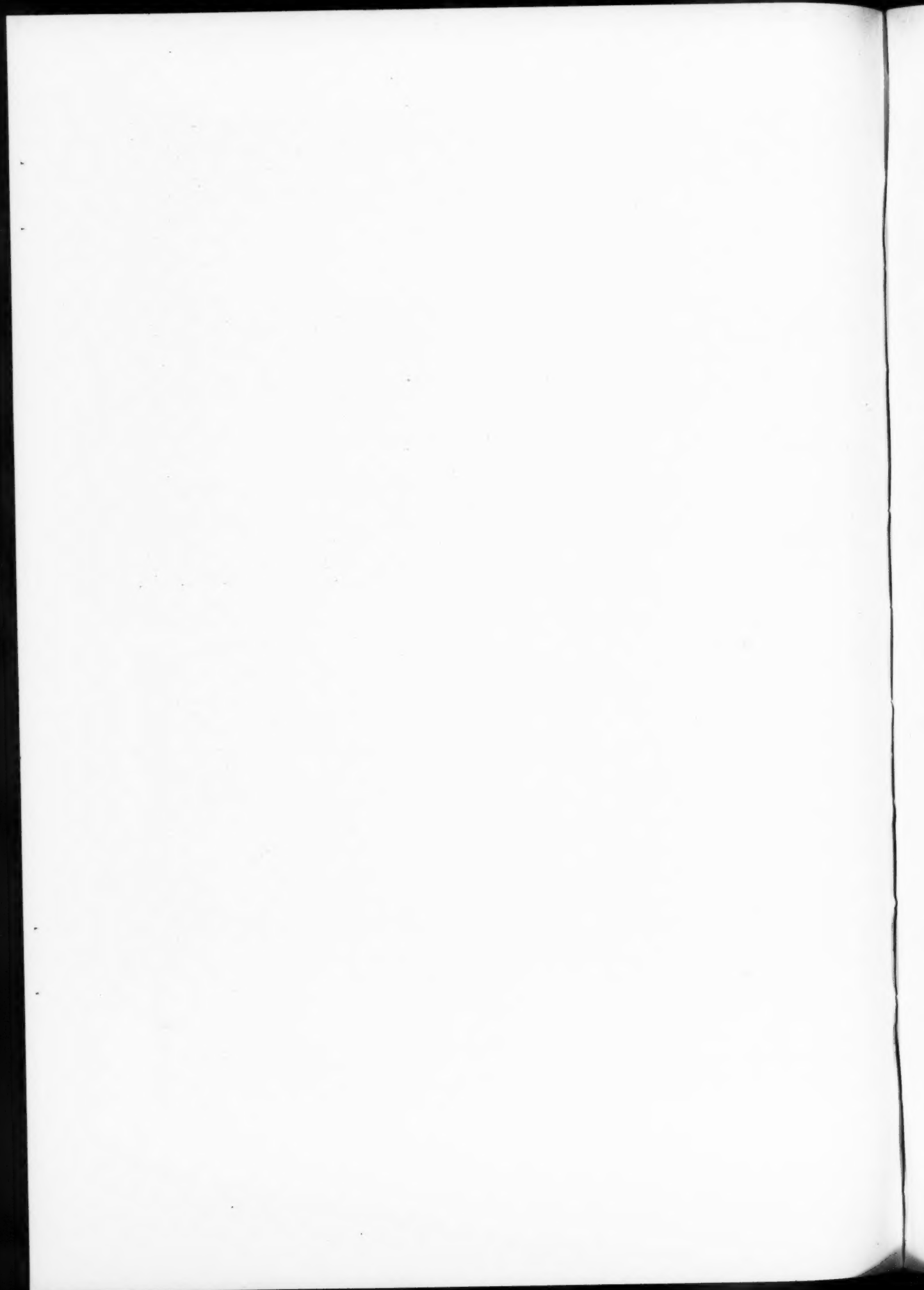
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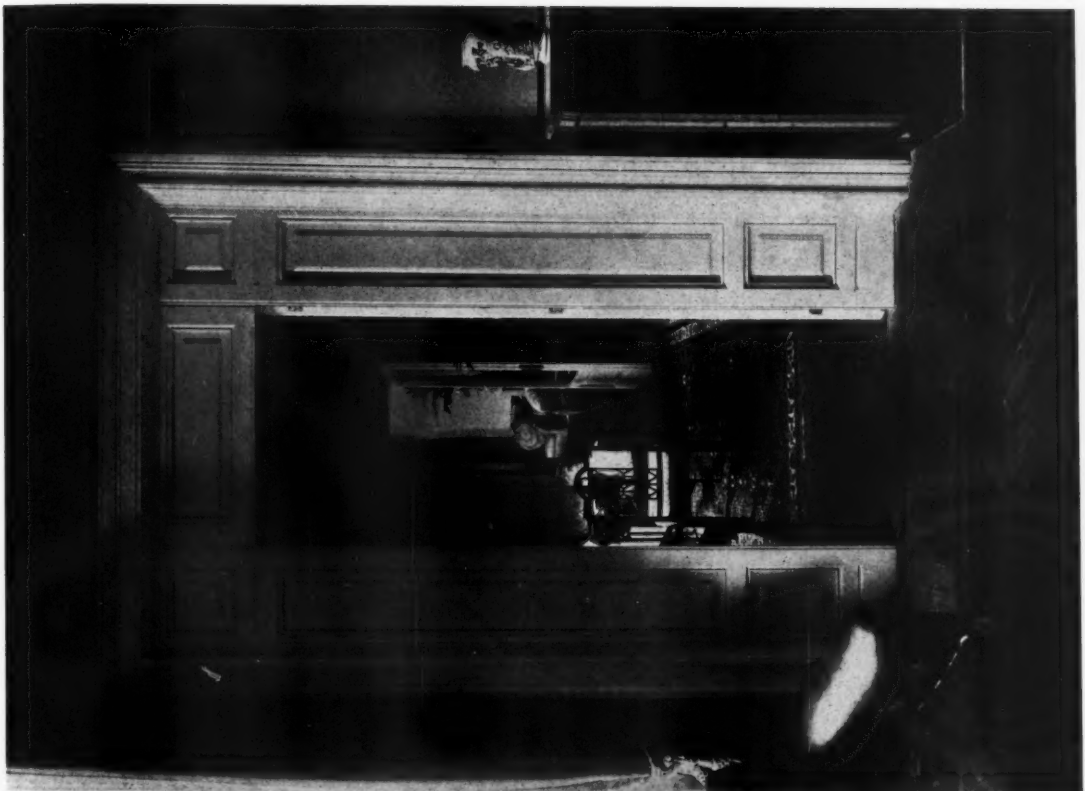


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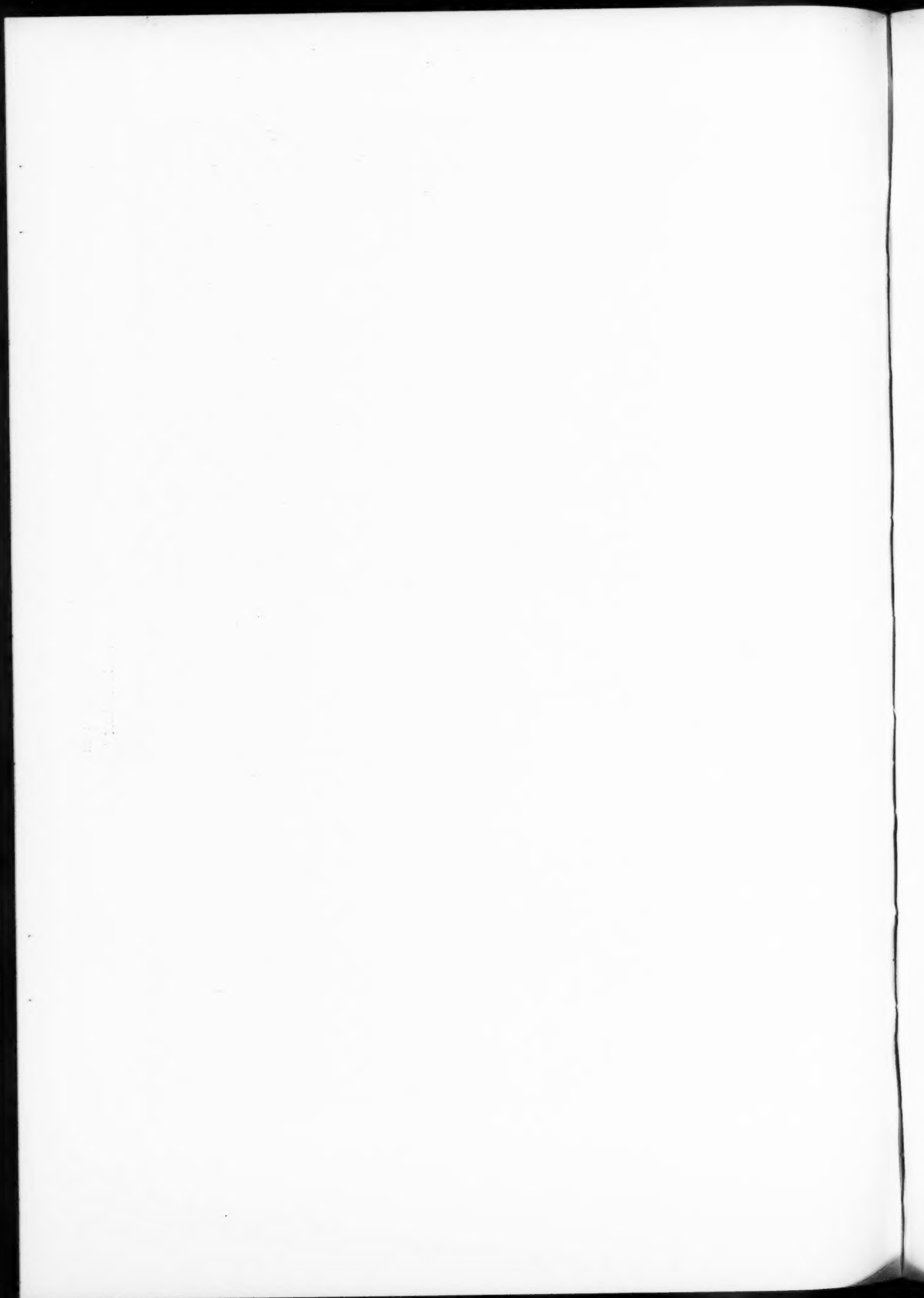


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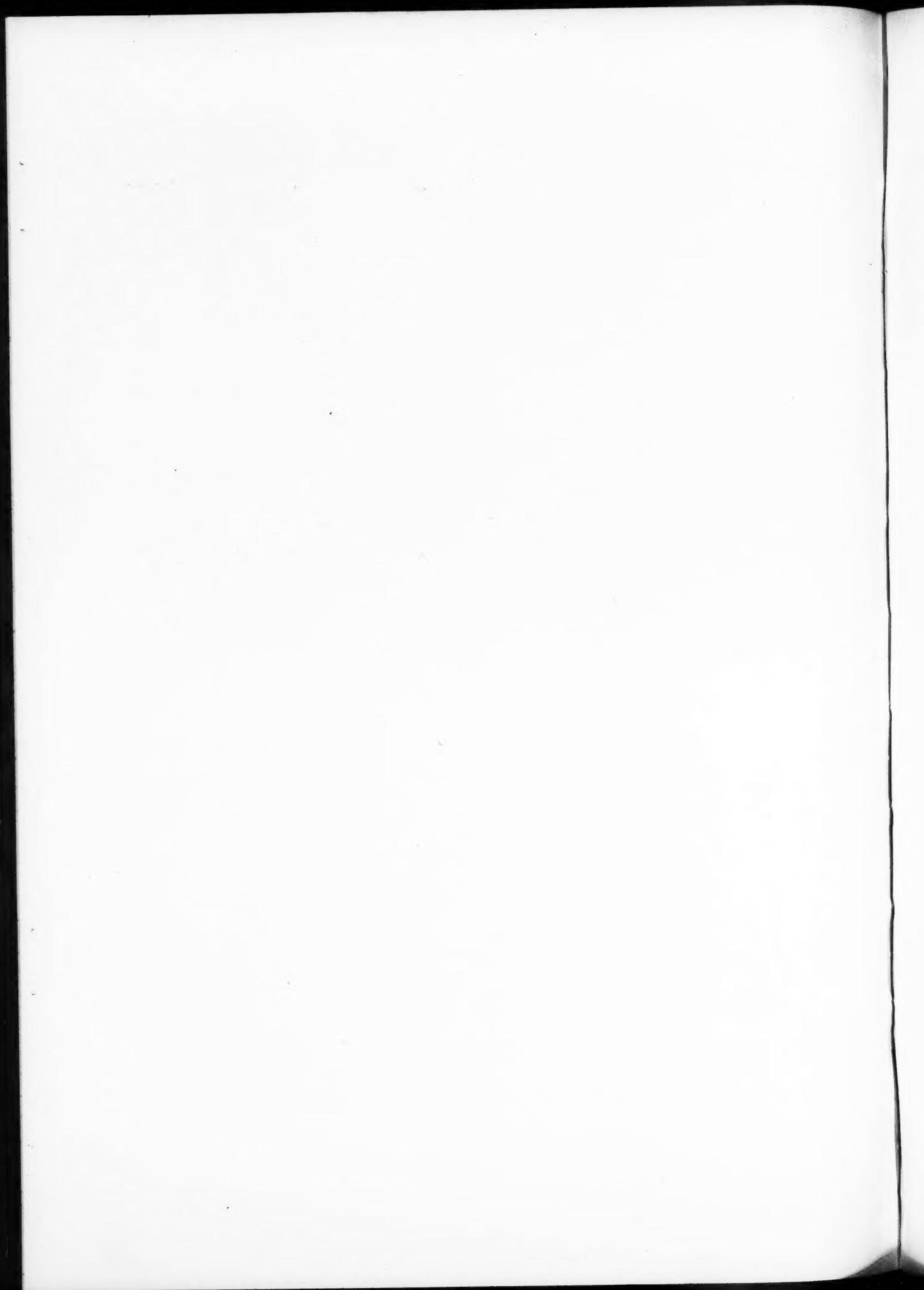


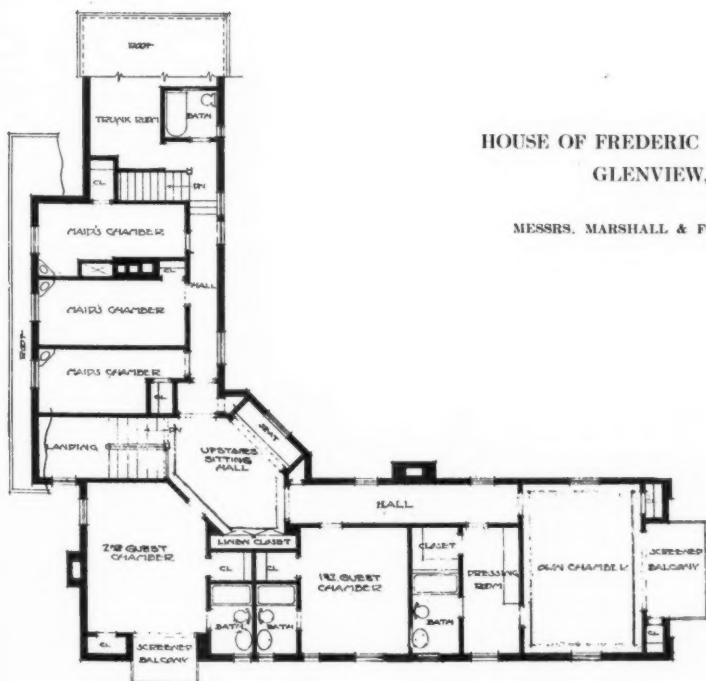
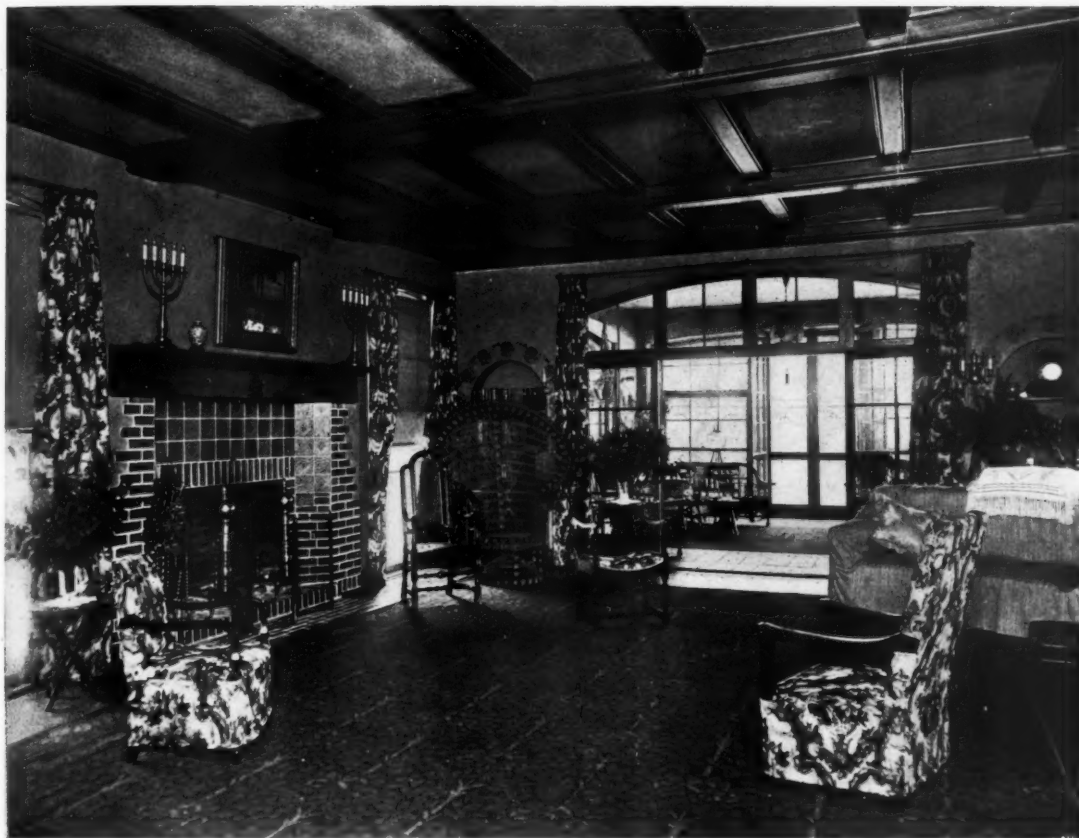
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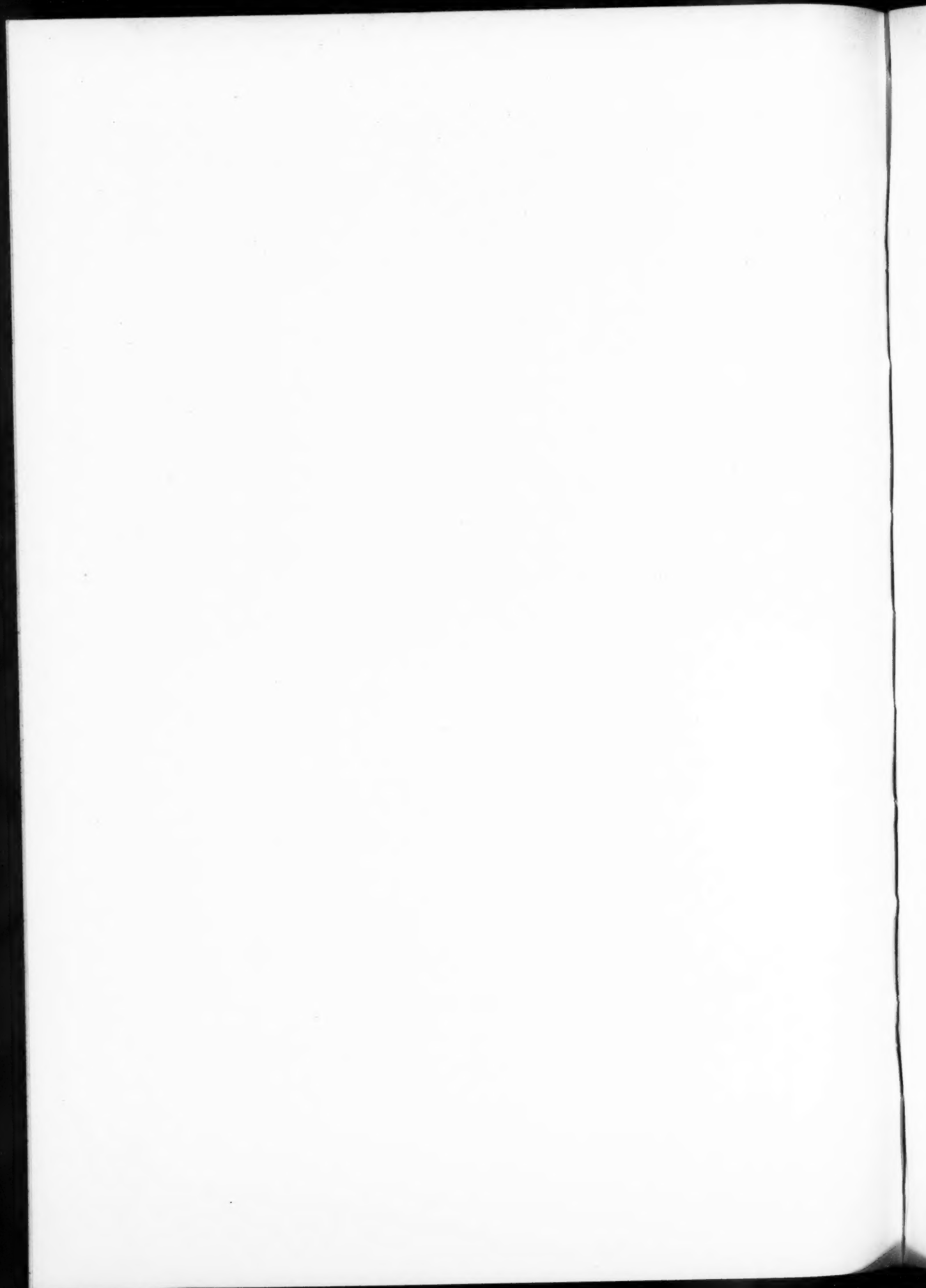
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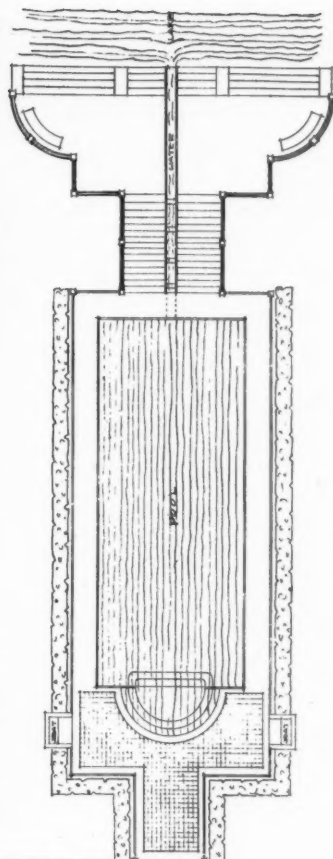
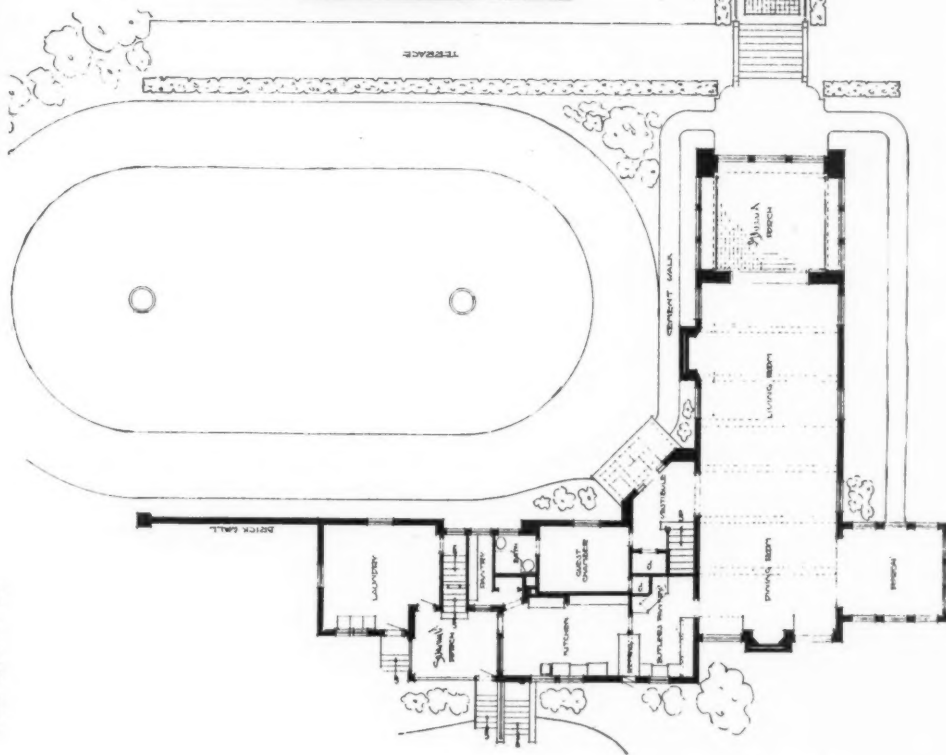




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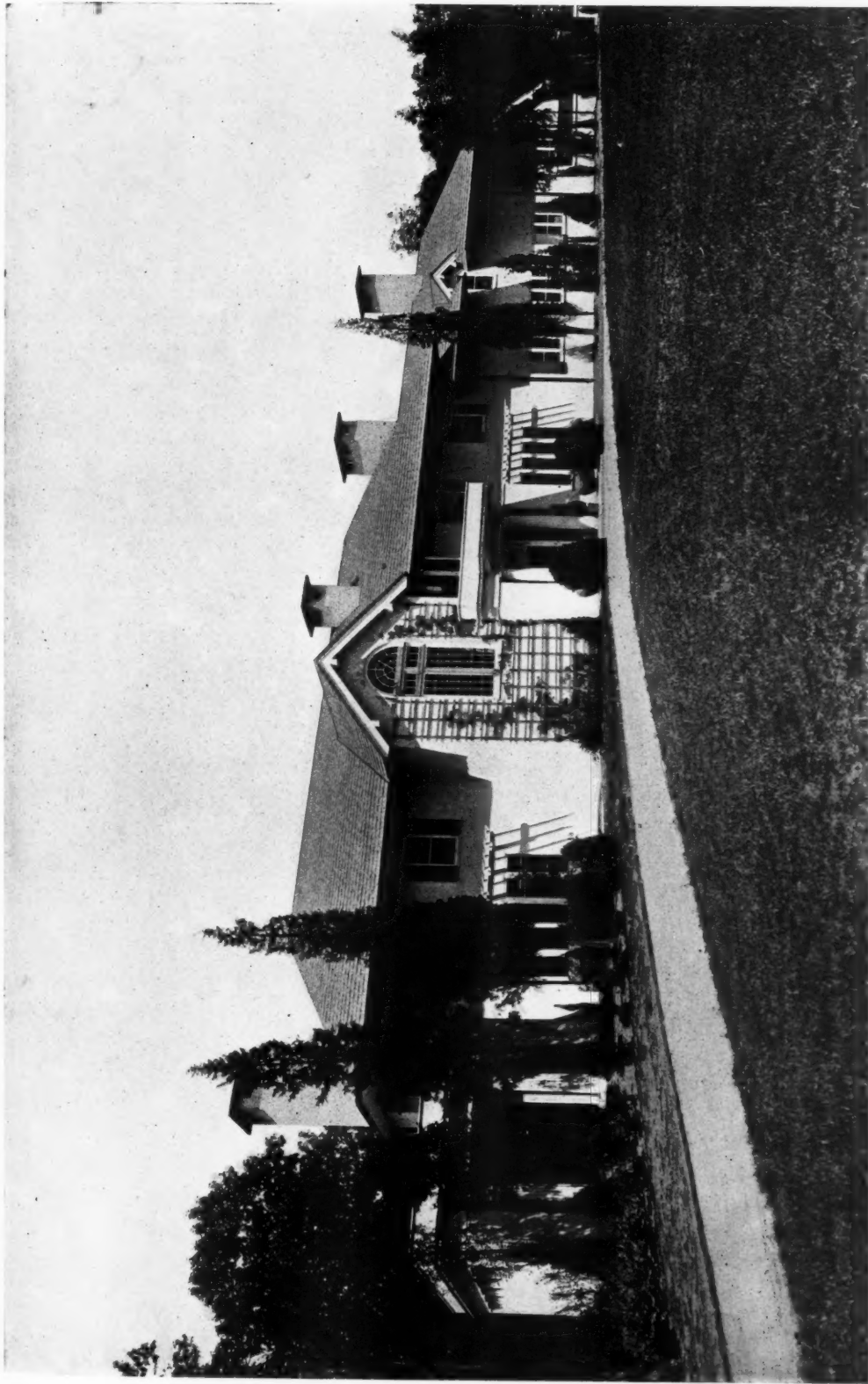
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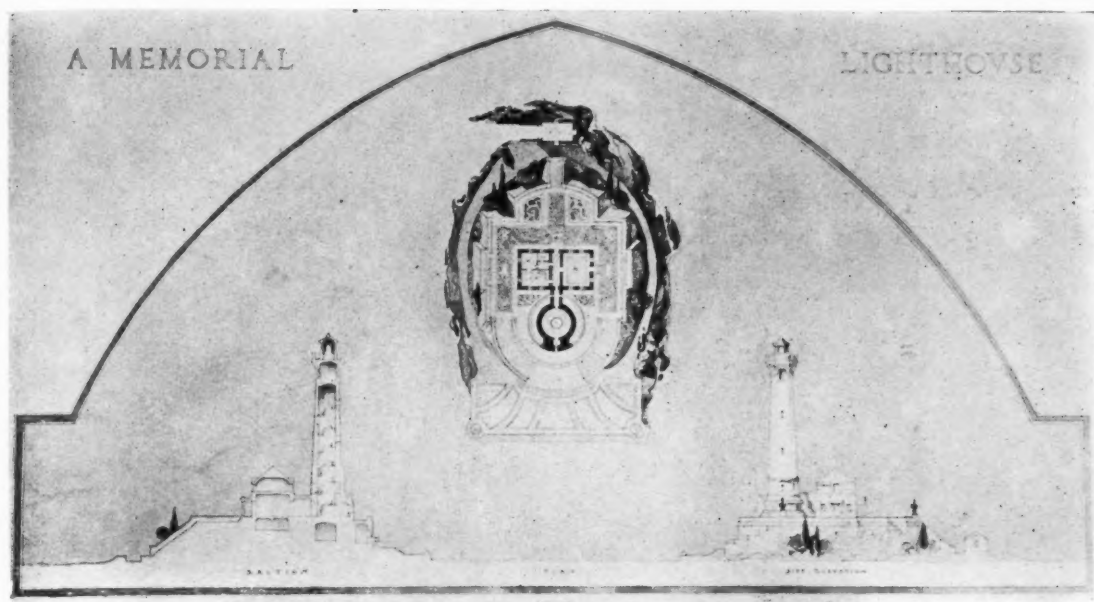
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NORTH ELEVATION

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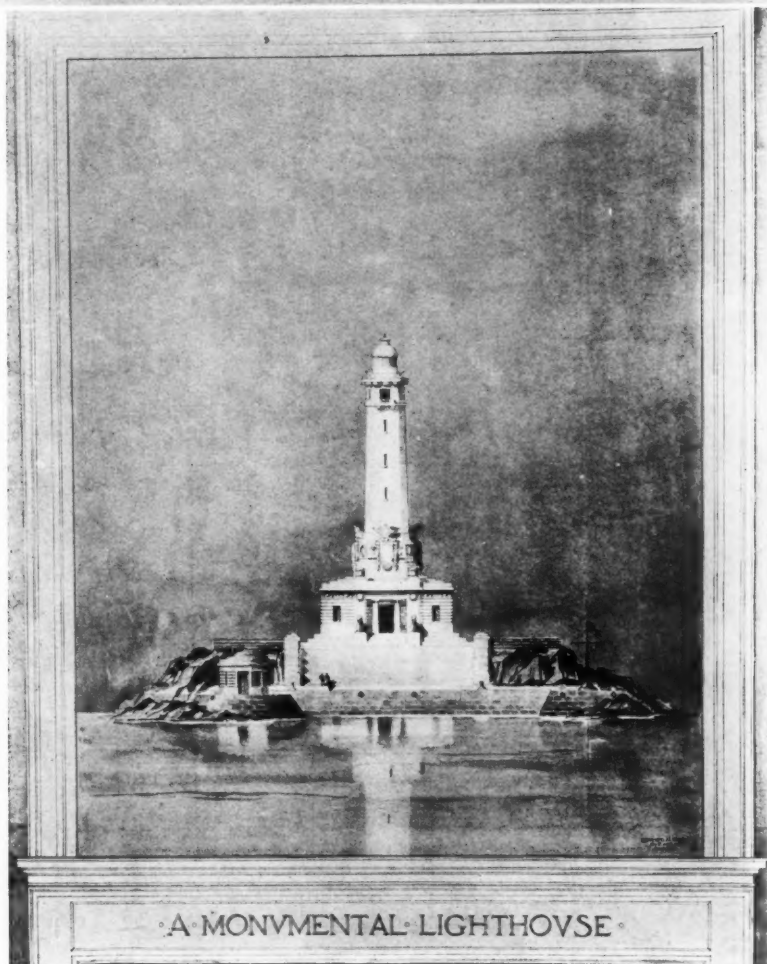
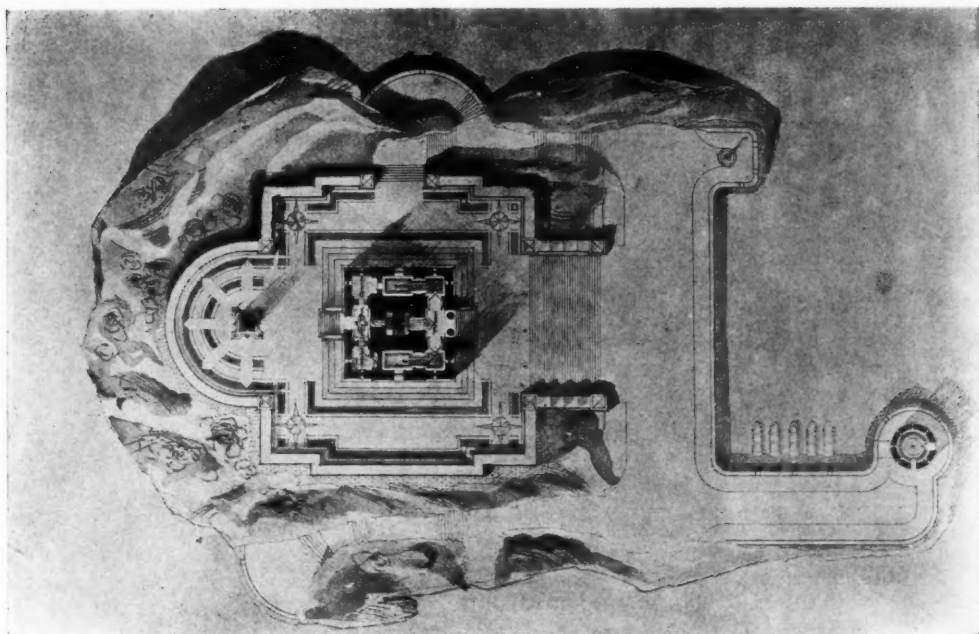
W. H. UHLER

FIRST MEDAL

DREXEL INSTITUTE

Class "B"—V Projet (Problem in Design). A Memorial Lighthouse

STUDENT WORK SOCIETY OF BEAUX-ARTS ARCHITECTS



°A MONVMENTAL LIGHTHOVSE°

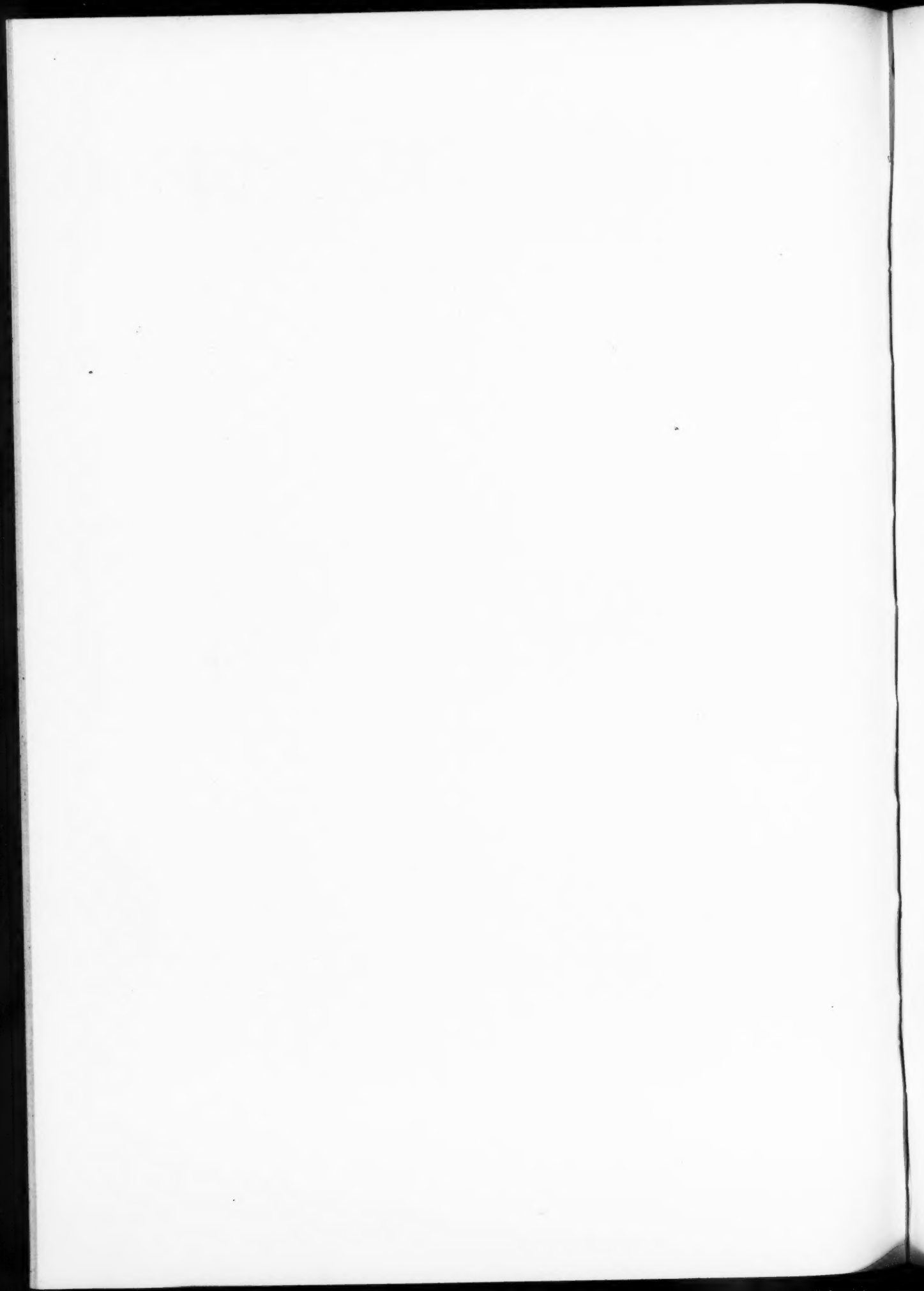
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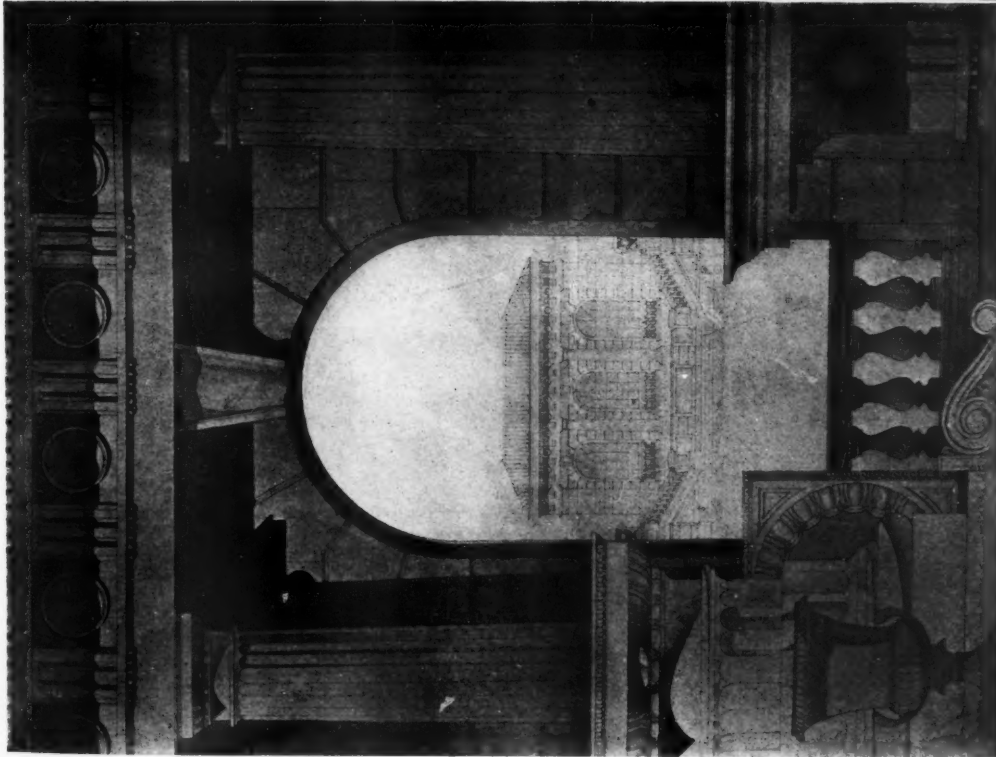
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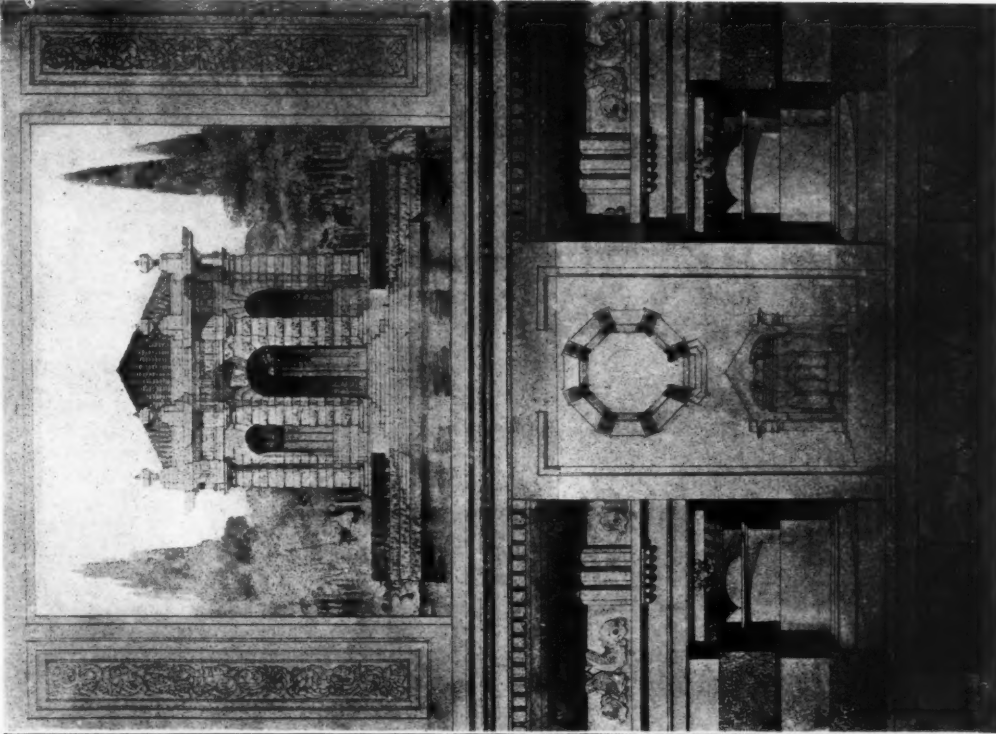
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JAMES W. PHILLIPS,

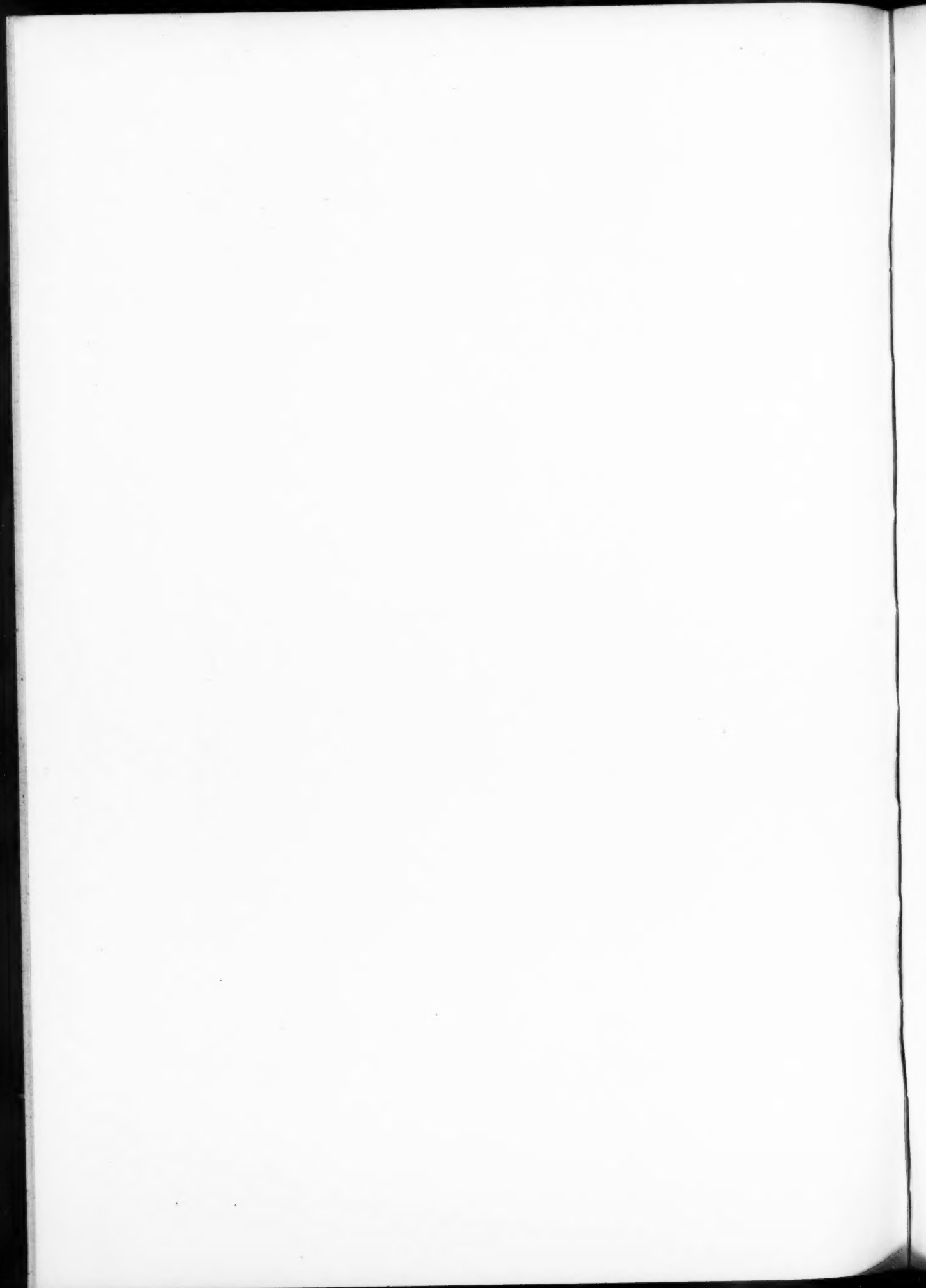
MENTION PLACED

CARNEGIE TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

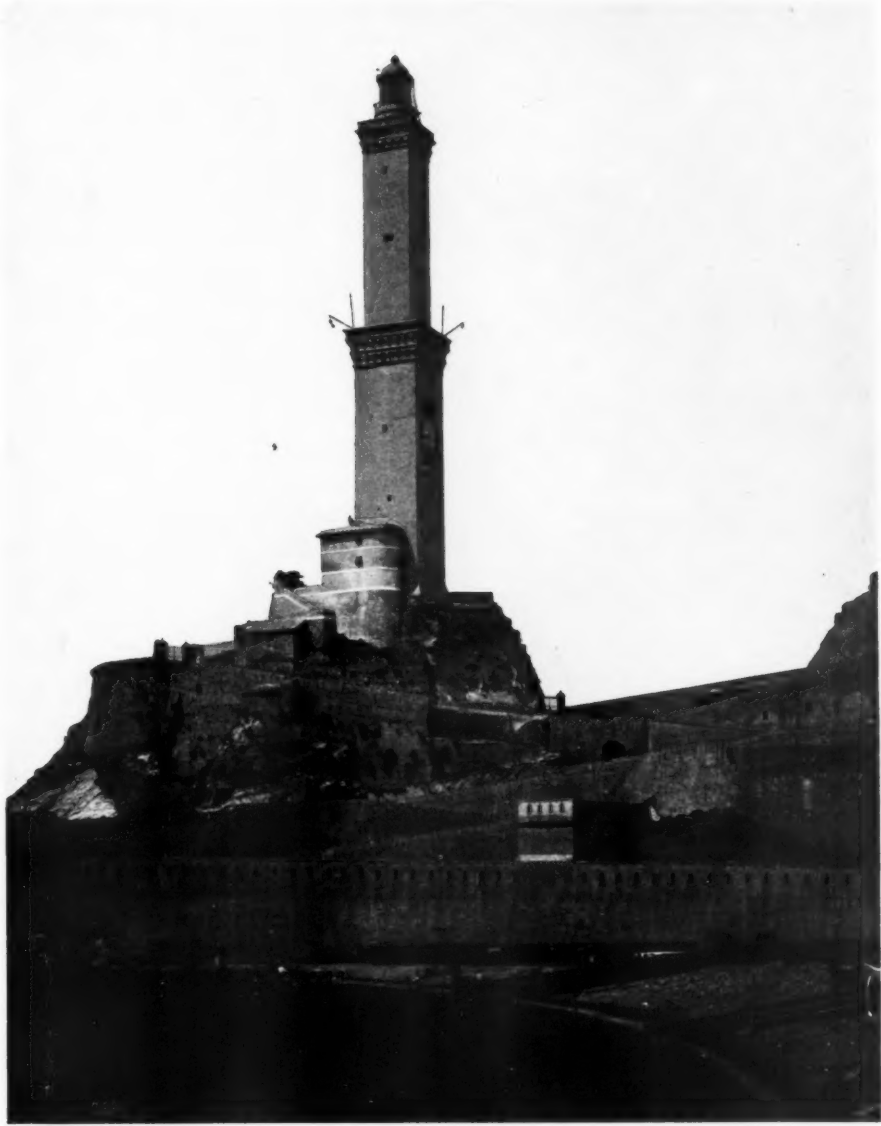
Class "B"—V Analytique (Order Problem). A Private Aquarium



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THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT



LA LANTERNA—LIGHTHOUSE AT THE WEST END OF GENOA
It is 226 feet high and 384 feet above sea level