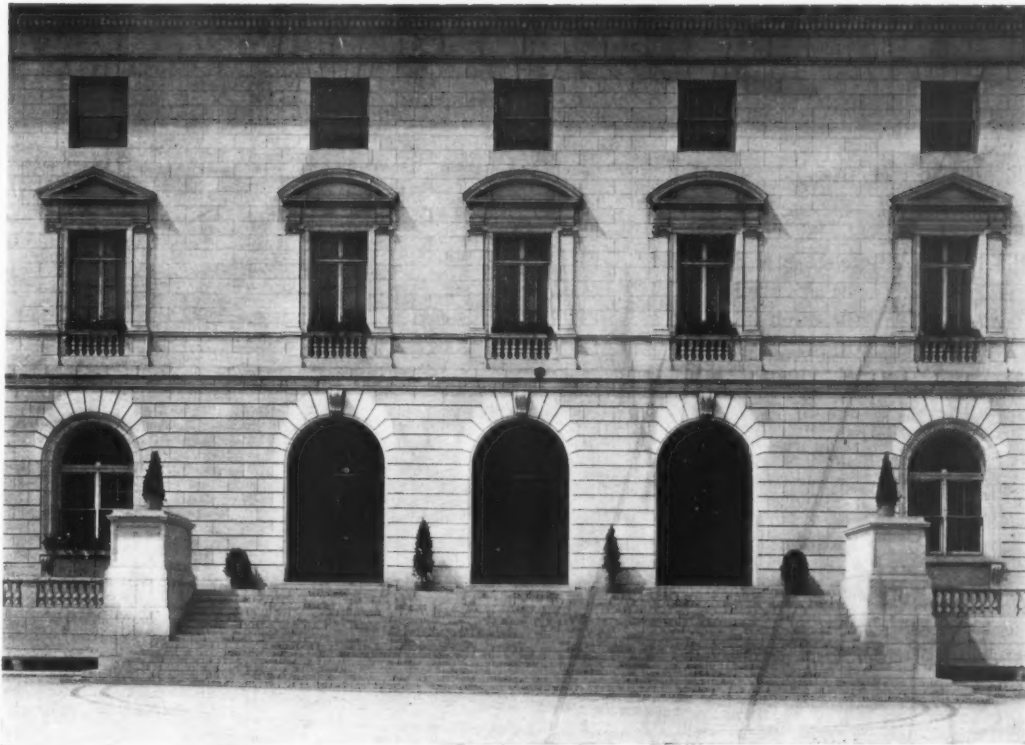


THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

VOL. CII.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1912

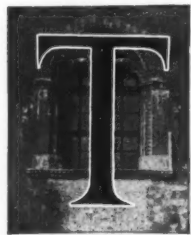
No. 1918



THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS

MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS



THE first town hall of Portland was erected in the year 1825, while Portland was still a town, and stood in the public square where the monument to the Soldiers now stands. This first building was both the town hall and the public market and was distinctly typical of the thought of the times in that the town government and the activities of the townspeople were held closely together, and the

town hall became the center of the work and thought of the citizens. In 1832 a City Charter was adopted and by 1858 Portland had become a city of consequence and had so outgrown the older town hall that a new building, much larger and more imposing, was erected on another site a short distance away. The city shared this new building with the County Courts and with the Police Department, and the traditional alliance between the citizens and the government found expression in a public auditorium, of fairly considerable

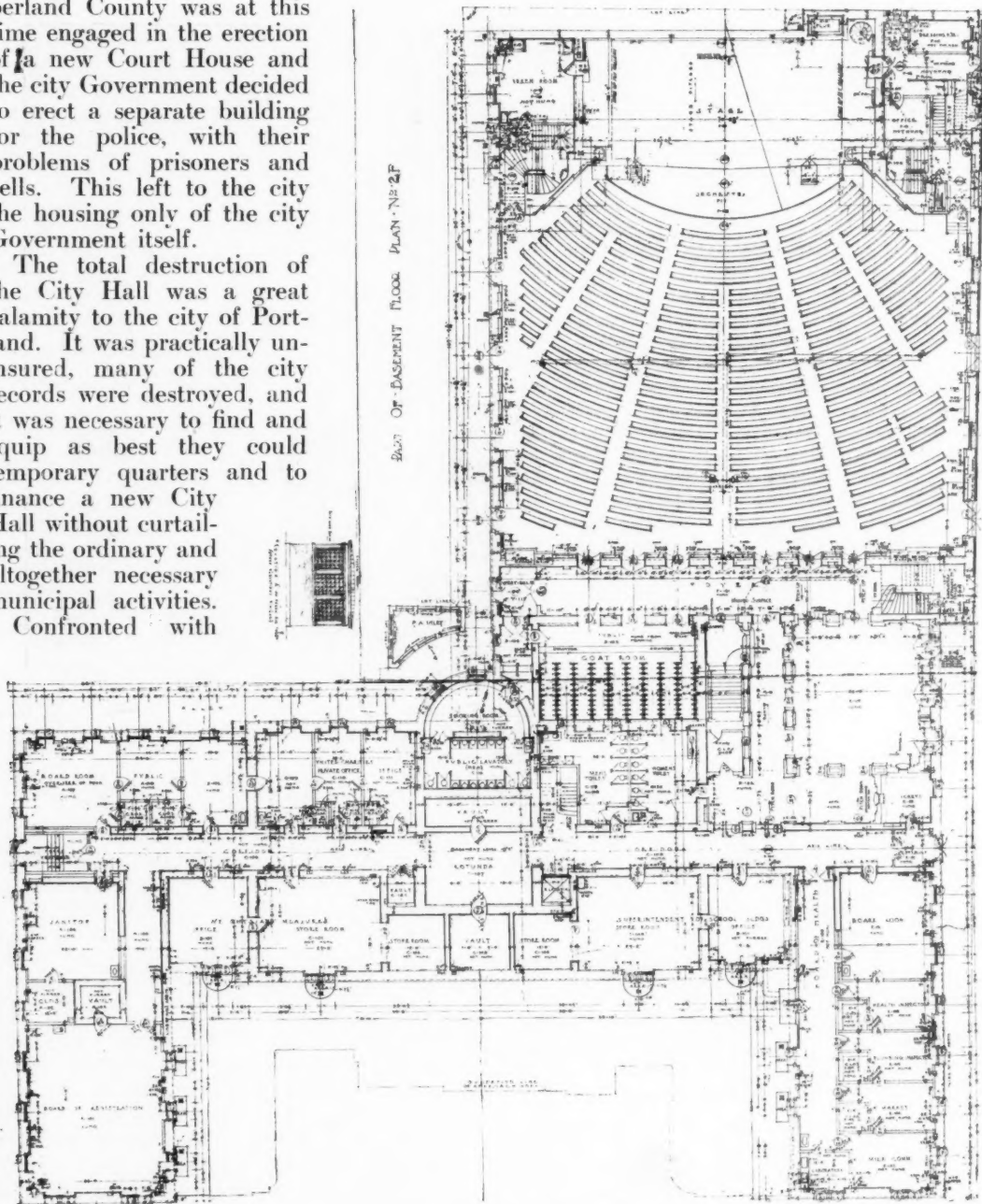
THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

capacity, within the building. This building was twice partially destroyed by fire. After the first fire, in 1866, it was rebuilt, but the second fire, on January 24, 1908, so completely wrecked it that the ruins were abandoned and an entirely new building determined upon. Cumberland County was at this time engaged in the erection of a new Court House and the city Government decided to erect a separate building for the police, with their problems of prisoners and cells. This left to the city the housing only of the city Government itself.

The total destruction of the City Hall was a great calamity to the city of Portland. It was practically uninsured, many of the city records were destroyed, and it was necessary to find and equip as best they could temporary quarters and to finance a new City Hall without curtailing the ordinary and altogether necessary municipal activities.

Confronted with

so serious an emergency all political finesse was abandoned and a commission of three eminent citizens was appointed to formulate a course of action and to have in entire responsible charge the construction of a new building subject only to the approval of the



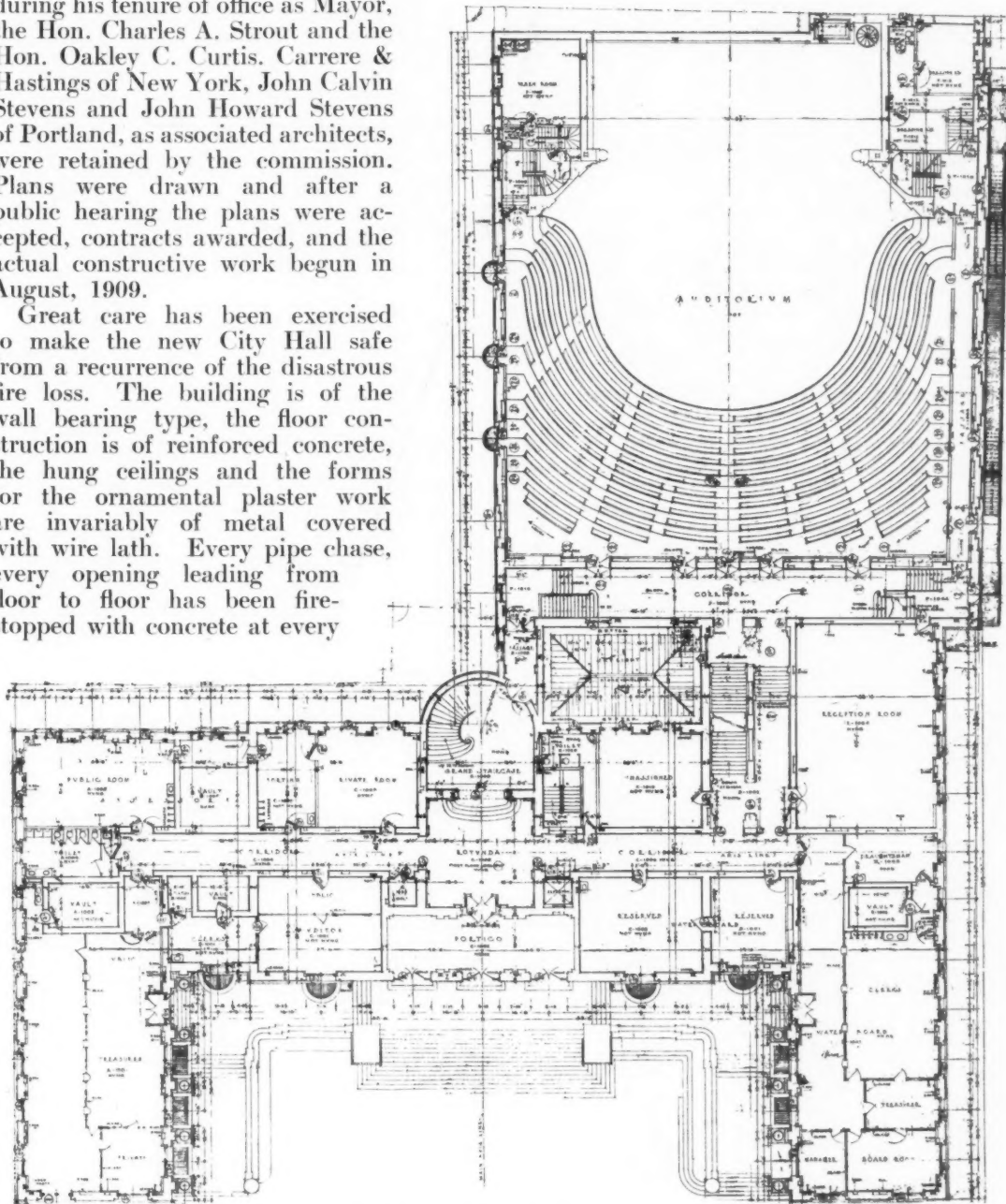
BASEMENT PLAN

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

City Council as to the amount of expenditures. The city was fortunate in the character of the men appointed to this commission, composed of the Hon. Adam P. Leighton as Chairman, the Hon. John F. A. Merrill as Secretary, and Mr. Richard C. Payson, and, as members ex-officio, each during his tenure of office as Mayor, the Hon. Charles A. Strout and the Hon. Oakley C. Curtis. Carrere & Hastings of New York, John Calvin Stevens and John Howard Stevens of Portland, as associated architects, were retained by the commission. Plans were drawn and after a public hearing the plans were accepted, contracts awarded, and the actual constructive work begun in August, 1909.

Great care has been exercised to make the new City Hall safe from a recurrence of the disastrous fire loss. The building is of the wall bearing type, the floor construction is of reinforced concrete, the hung ceilings and the forms for the ornamental plaster work are invariably of metal covered with wire lath. Every pipe chase, every opening leading from floor to floor has been fire-stopped with concrete at every

floor, fire doors of asbestos-lined steel separate the auditorium from the administrative portions of the building, metal windows with wired glass guard the exposed portions of the building from the dangers of an outside conflagration, and it is believed that the new



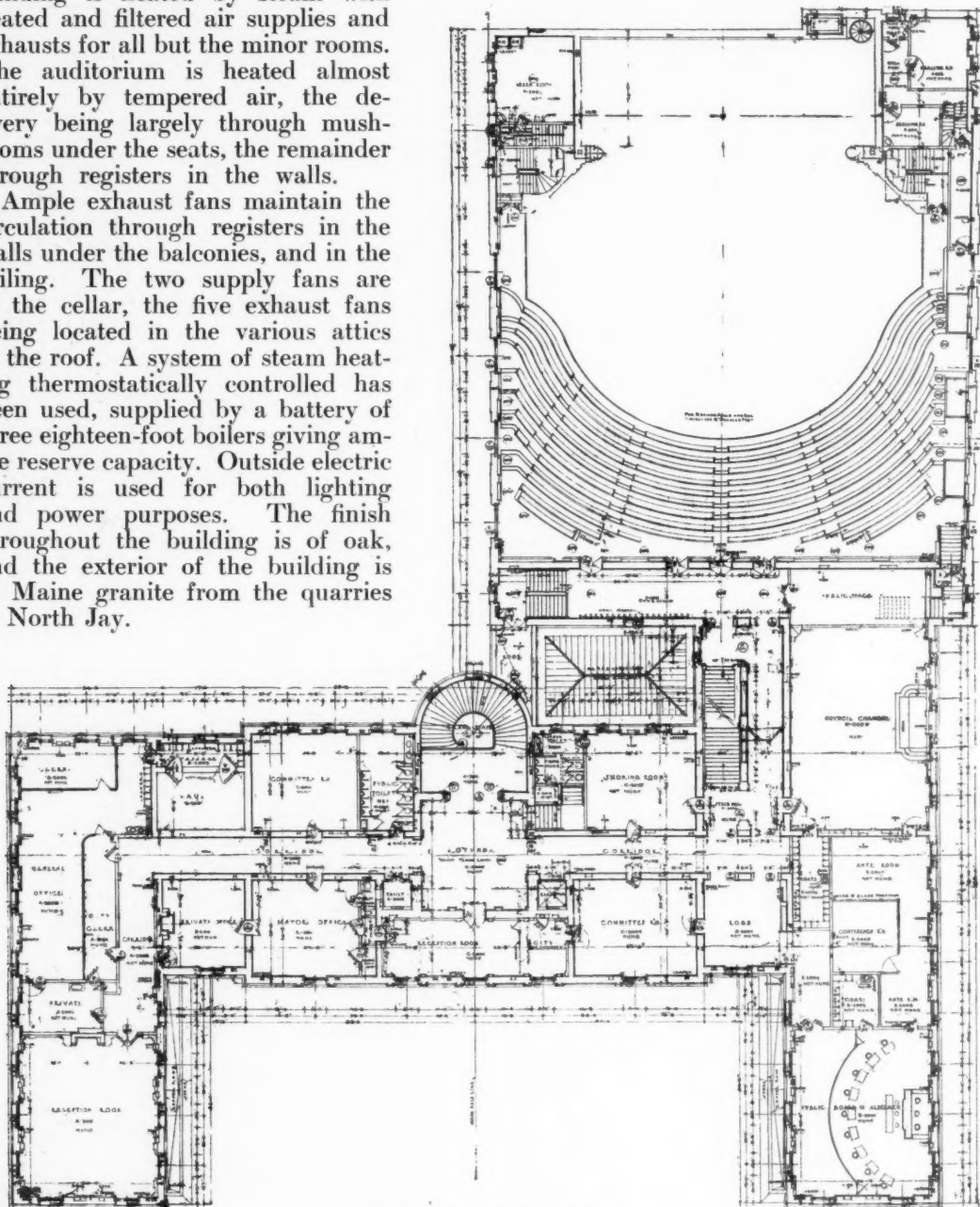
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

City Hall is secure from the destruction which overtook its predecessor. The heating and other mechanical equipment has been studied and installed with regard to ease of maintenance, having in mind the inevitable fluctuations in the management of a public building. The business portion of the building is heated by steam with heated and filtered air supplies and exhausts for all but the minor rooms. The auditorium is heated almost entirely by tempered air, the delivery being largely through mushroom rooms under the seats, the remainder through registers in the walls.

Ample exhaust fans maintain the circulation through registers in the walls under the balconies, and in the ceiling. The two supply fans are in the cellar, the five exhaust fans being located in the various attics at the roof. A system of steam heating thermostatically controlled has been used, supplied by a battery of three eighteen-foot boilers giving ample reserve capacity. Outside electric current is used for both lighting and power purposes. The finish throughout the building is of oak, and the exterior of the building is of Maine granite from the quarries at North Jay.

So many and important had been the uses of the auditorium in the old City Hall before its destruction that the commission was ordered by the City Council in response to the wishes of the city as expressed by a referendum vote, not only to replace it but to greatly enlarge it and to widen its



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



THE MAIN STAIRWAY

scope by making it suitable for conventions. The new auditorium, seating over 3,000, is at the rear of the City Hall proper, the main floor and the entrance lobby being at the street level with the entrance from Myrtle Street. The exits are numerous and very direct, opening both to Myrtle Street on the one side, and to an alley on the other, in addition to exits leading out through the corridors of the main building itself. In addition to the general lighting of the hall, a system of exit lights has been provided, attached to a separate outside electric service, and as a still further precaution against the entire darkening of the hall through the failure of the electric supplies, gas burners have been provided on all of the exit stairs and at all principal points of exit. The balconies are of the cantilever type and are constructed entirely of steel and reinforced concrete, and the few necessary columns have been so placed as to offer no obstruction to the

view from the seats. An element of cleanliness and ease of maintenance has been added by painting the cement floor surfaces of the balconies and eliminating the usual carpets. Opera chairs fixed in place have been used in the balconies which together hold about 1,500 seats, but on the main floor folding portable seats have been provided, in order that they may be removed and stored under the stage, and the main floor used for dancing, fairs, or exhibitions. The main floor is of maple, almost unobstructed by columns, and is admirably adapted to any of these purposes. At either side of the stage are the service rooms for the auditorium, on the side toward Myrtle Street the rooms being smaller with a separate direct entrance from the street and a separate staircase, and admirably adapted to their use as dressing rooms or as offices in connection with conventions. At the opposite side of the stage are the caterer's rooms, with

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

a service entrance from the alley and with easy communication to the main floor or the balconies of the auditorium. On the upper floors, above the caterer's rooms, are the larger dressing rooms, or coat rooms, with a private staircase. An important feature of the plan, and as has been well demonstrated in the public uses already made of the hall, an eminently successful feature, is the screened passage leading to the stage. The reception room for use in connection with the auditorium is on the first floor, directly above the entrance lobby to the auditorium and within easy reach of the formal entrance to the building from Congress Street. From this room, by means of the passage just mentioned as leading along the east side of the first balcony, is a direct access to the stage without passing through the body of the hall.

In the auditorium is a great organ which forms the background of the stage and the focal point of the auditorium. It is rated in size as the fourth in the world and as the third largest in this country, and in quality of construction, purity of tone, or musical adaptability second to none. An echo organ has been placed in the ceiling and is operated from the same movable console as the main organ. This organ was the gift of Mr. Cyrus H. K. Curtis, of Philadelphia, a native of Portland, and was installed as a lasting memorial to the late Herman Kotzschmar, a Portland musician of nation-wide reputation and musical instructor to Mr. Curtis during his early years in his native city. This great organ has tremendously widened the scope of the auditorium and has made possible to Portland, already an extremely musical city, the assumption of a prominent place in the musical world.

To the "Forecourt" type of plan adopted for the administrative portion, or the City Hall proper, is due the fact that every office is light and receives ample natural light and ventilation. The formal entrance to the building is at the center of the front, at the first floor level, and opens directly to the main rotunda and the grand staircase, corridors extending to the wings.

A second large staircase has been placed in the east wing for the joint service of the auditorium and the Aldermanic Chamber and Council Room. The communication between the auditorium and its balconies and the corridors and staircases of the main building is entirely unobstructed, the latter serving as a means of exit. The uses of the auditorium are of such nature that a complete separation is neither necessary nor desirable.

At the head of the grand staircase, and directly above the main entrance, is the Mayor's suite of offices. In the west wing, closely adjoining the Mayor, is the formal reception room, while on the same floor but in the east wing have been placed the rooms of the Aldermen and the Council. The arrangement of these latter is somewhat unusual. The rooms for the meetings of the various committees and joint committees while the main bodies are in session have been placed between the two, with no means of access save through chambers themselves. The coat rooms, also, have been placed where they can be entered only through the portions of the rooms to which the public is not admitted. The spectators are admitted only to the railed-off space entered directly from the public corridors in both rooms, and to the public balconies with which each chamber is provided.

The building, completed and successful, is an excellent example of the efficient operation of the commission plan of management, and the elimination of all of the pettiness of politics. The building was completed within the amount of the original appropriation, and a small portion returned, unexpended to the City Treasury. Completed, the total expenditure was about \$930,000.00, or about forty-two cents per cubic foot, inclusive of architects' fees, commission expenses, furniture and furnishings, a \$6,000.00 land purchase, and all of the incidentals entering into the work. The business portion of the building has been in use for nearly a year and the auditorium for a sufficient length of time to demonstrate the entire fitness of the building for the purposes for which it was designed.

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

Address all communications to "THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT"

SUBSCRIBERS' RATES:

In the United States and Possessions (Porto Rico, Hawaii,
Philippine Islands and Canal Zone),
Mexico and Cuba

TEN DOLLARS PER YEAR, POSTAGE PAID
ALL OTHER COUNTRIES . . . \$12.00 PER YEAR
SINGLE COPIES (Regular Issues), 25 CENTS

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

VOL. CII SEPTEMBER 25, 1912 No. 1918

THE TRANSFORMATION OF LONDON

OUR esteemed contemporary, *The Architects' and Builders' Journal*, of London, is moved to vigorously protest against the decadence which, it is claimed, is everywhere evident in the transformation now in progress in architectural London. All this transformation, it states, is proceeding without architectural control, and the appointment of a jury of the Fine-Arts to regulate the height and character of the new buildings that are arising is strongly advocated.

It would appear that in this respect conditions in London are very similar to those existing in New York. The Frenchman will tell us that "they do much better in Paris," and this is doubtless true although it is not so very long ago that a visiting French architect extolled the beauties of New York's street skylines as contrasted with the monotonous evenness of the height of the buildings on some of the Paris boulevards. Nevertheless it is true that if owners and their architects could be induced to confer together as to design and height of contiguous buildings, many of our architectural opportunities would be conserved and many inconsistencies and glaring errors would have been avoided.

It is contended in the article referred to that the present style of architecture of most of the newer buildings in London is not in harmony with tradition and the academic spirit that should prevail, and that in the striving for originality the example set by the "real English classic work of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,—the finest in the world" is overlooked. In fact, it is held that so well regarded is that period of English architectural development that "Americans come over to study the best English buildings and then reproduce them. What is the result? They do better work than we do."

There can be no doubt concerning the accuracy of the foregoing statements. Anyone familiar with the trend of present architectural development in London will recognize the fact that characteristics which formerly marked architecture in England and which made it so much admired both at home and abroad, are largely lacking in modern work. It hardly seems possible, however, that present conditions will long prevail. In all probability, improvements in which the features of permanence and sound design have been given greatest consideration, as has generally been the case in times past, will soon replace structures erected as the result of hasty and ill-considered plans for the development or rebuilding of the various sections of the city to which the article in question refers.

BILLBOARDS IN NEW YORK

A VERY thorough report submitted by the then Commissioner of Accounts Fosdick to Mayor Gaynor of New York with reference to existing billboards discloses many evasions of the city ordinances governing their erection and many violations of public comfort. The report states that there are approximately 3,700 billboards in this city and that twenty-five per cent. of them are of the "double-decker" variety, or two signs placed one above the other and each ten feet in height. Special reference is made to the menace to public safety in the many insecurely constructed billboards and to the fact that owing to excessive height and location they shut out light and air and are therefore unsanitary.

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

The subject is one that cannot fail to be of interest and it seems plain that steps should promptly be taken to abate what can only be regarded as a nuisance. The fact that the erection and maintenance of these billboards affords occupation to a large number of people and that the invested capital in New York reaches the considerable sum of approximately \$1,000,000, is evidence that it will not be as easy to control this question now as it would have been some ten years ago when a note of warning was first sounded.

Commissioner Fosdick has not confined his discussion of this subject to the purely hygienic and commercial sides of the question but shows by his reference to the artistic features involved that he thoroughly appreciates how glaringly offensive are the majority of these signs, which are designed with so little regard for artistic effect as to convey to the foreign visitor a decidedly poor impression of our æsthetic perceptions.

In concluding his report Mr. Fosdick

writes as follows: "Not only are billboards ugly in themselves, but they mar the sightliness of every structure about them, so that real estate values are often affected by their presence. Beauty of environment is an asset of permanent value, and the surrounding property cannot be defaced without affecting materially the property in the entire neighborhood. The City of New York annually spends millions of dollars on public buildings, monuments and parks. No public work is attempted without due regard to æsthetic considerations, which enter largely into the cost of construction. Millions of dollars are annually expended from private sources for the same purpose. The uncontrolled erection of large and blatant billboards in juxtaposition to these studied architectural effects is not only an inconsistent public policy but is unquestionably an injury to the general welfare.

"Courts have been slow in their interpretation of the police power to include elements of the æsthetic."



THE AUDITORIUM

THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS

MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS



THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS

MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS

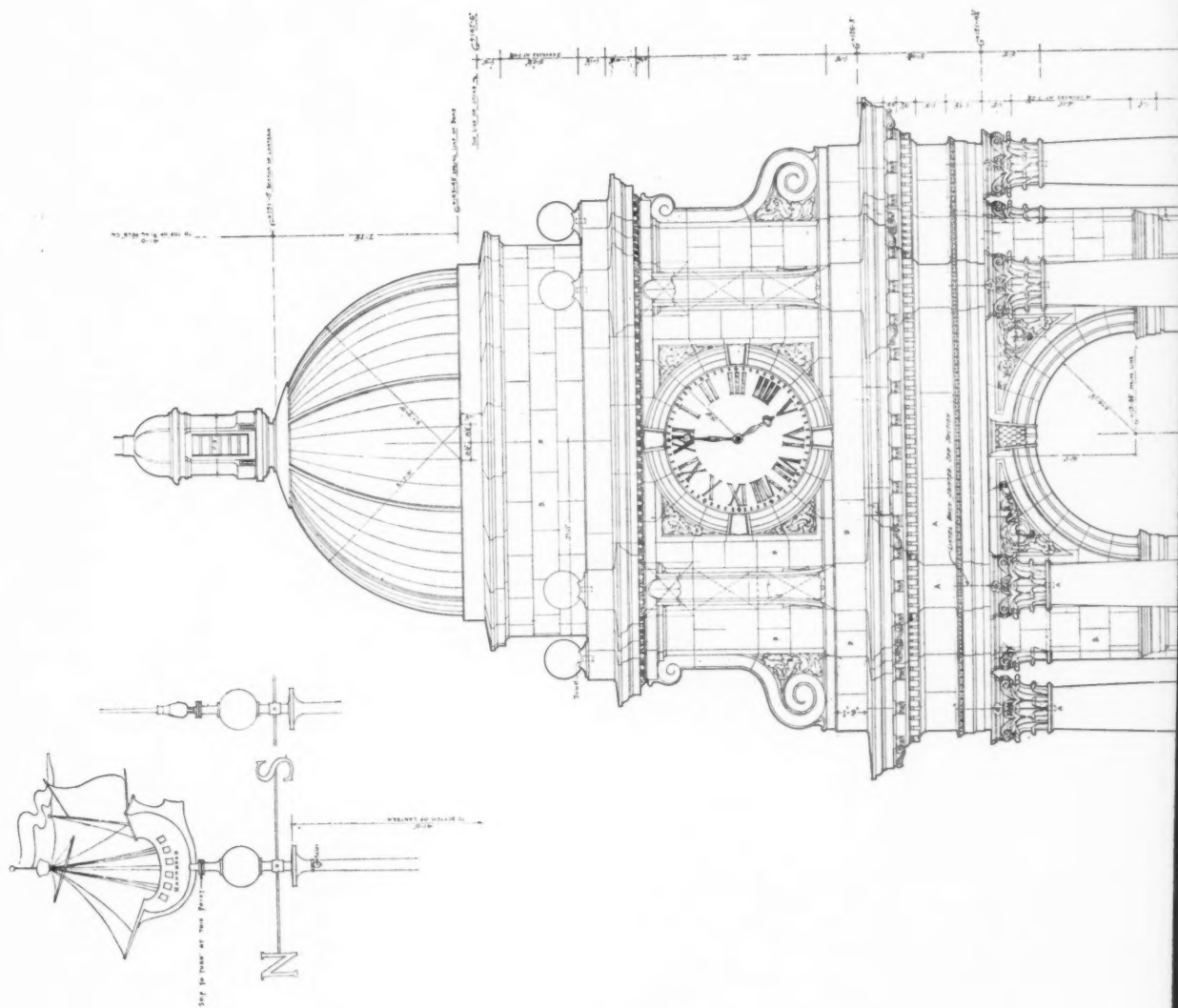


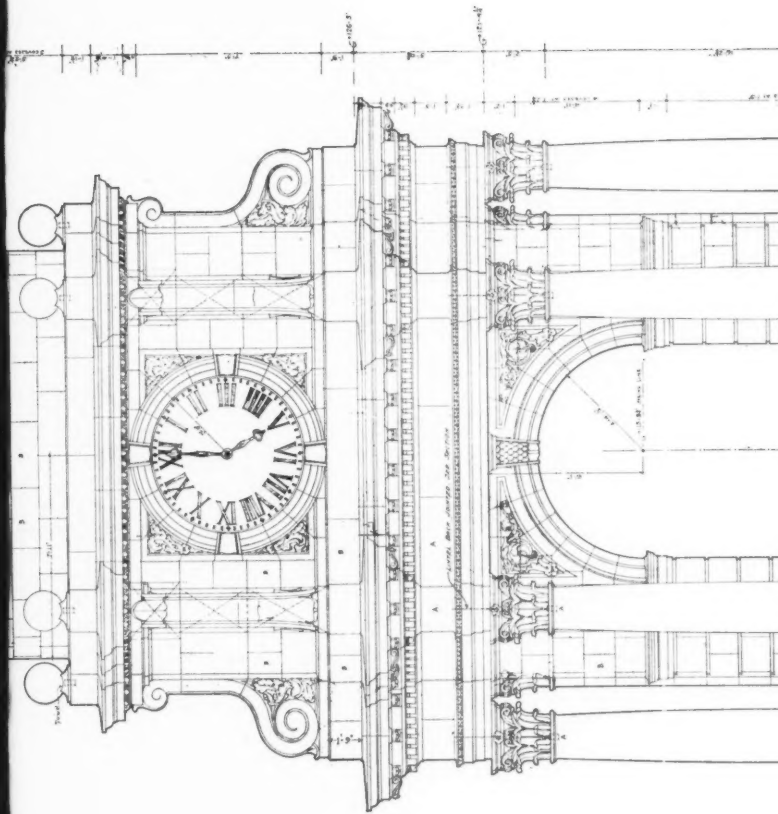
THE TOWER

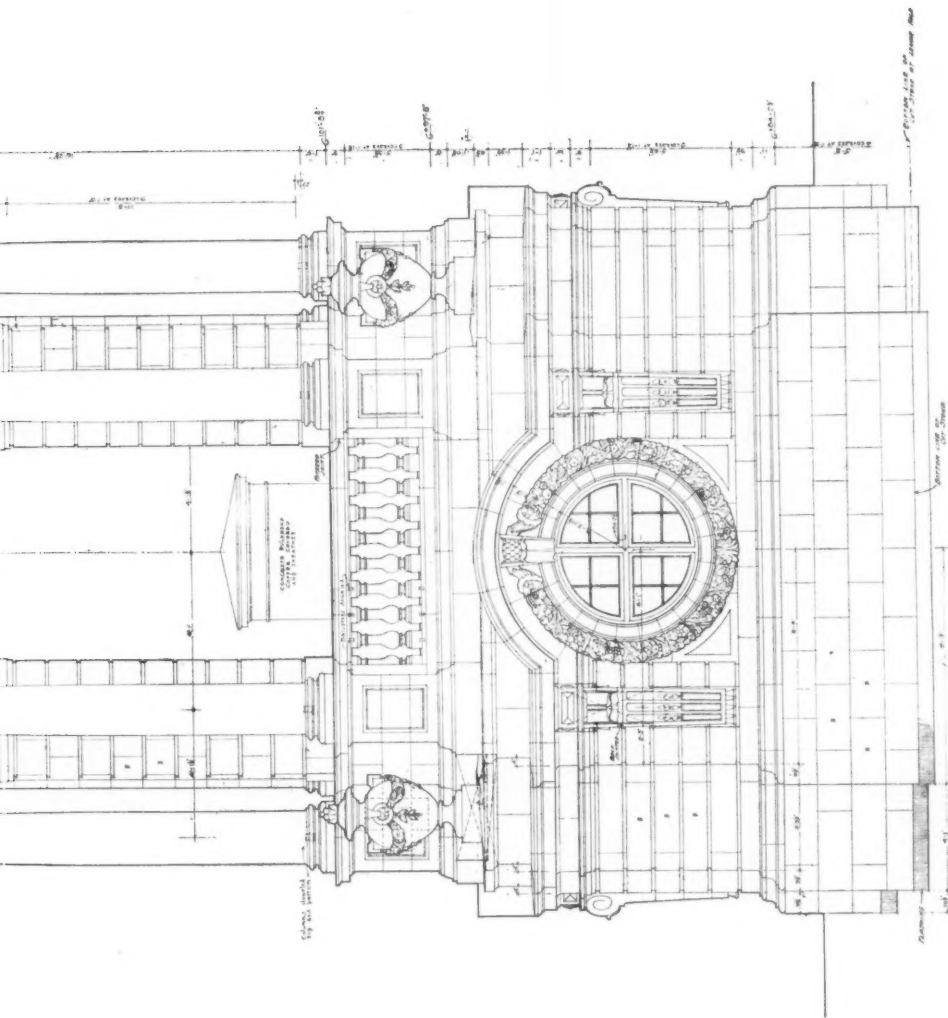
THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS

MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS







¾" SCALE DETAILS OF TOWER

PORTLAND CITY HALL
PORTLAND - MAINE

NOTES: LETTERS ON WALLS INDICATE
FOR THE TOWER 315' TO 320' HIGHER

THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS

MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS



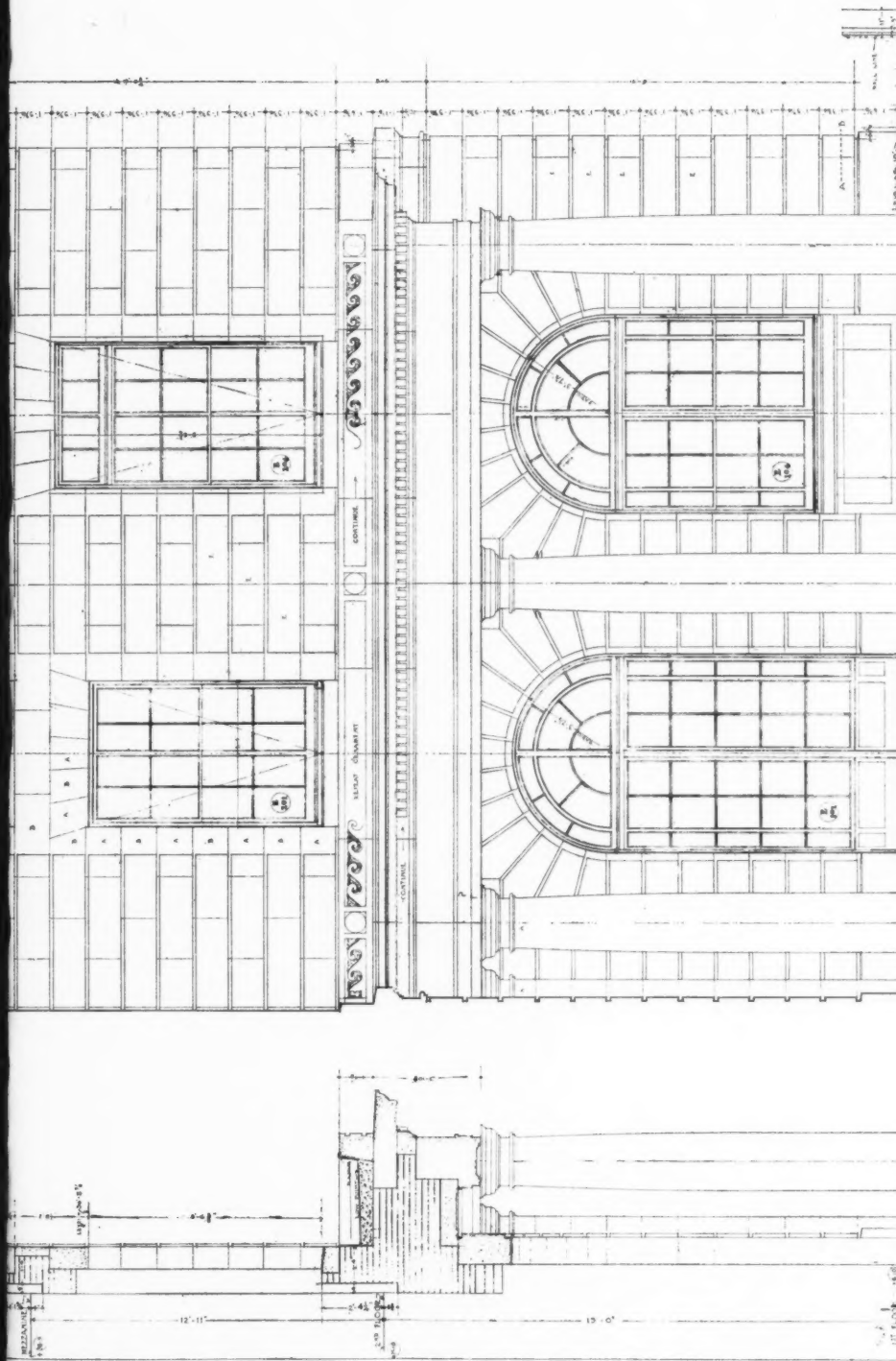
LOOKING ACROSS MAIN ENTRANCE

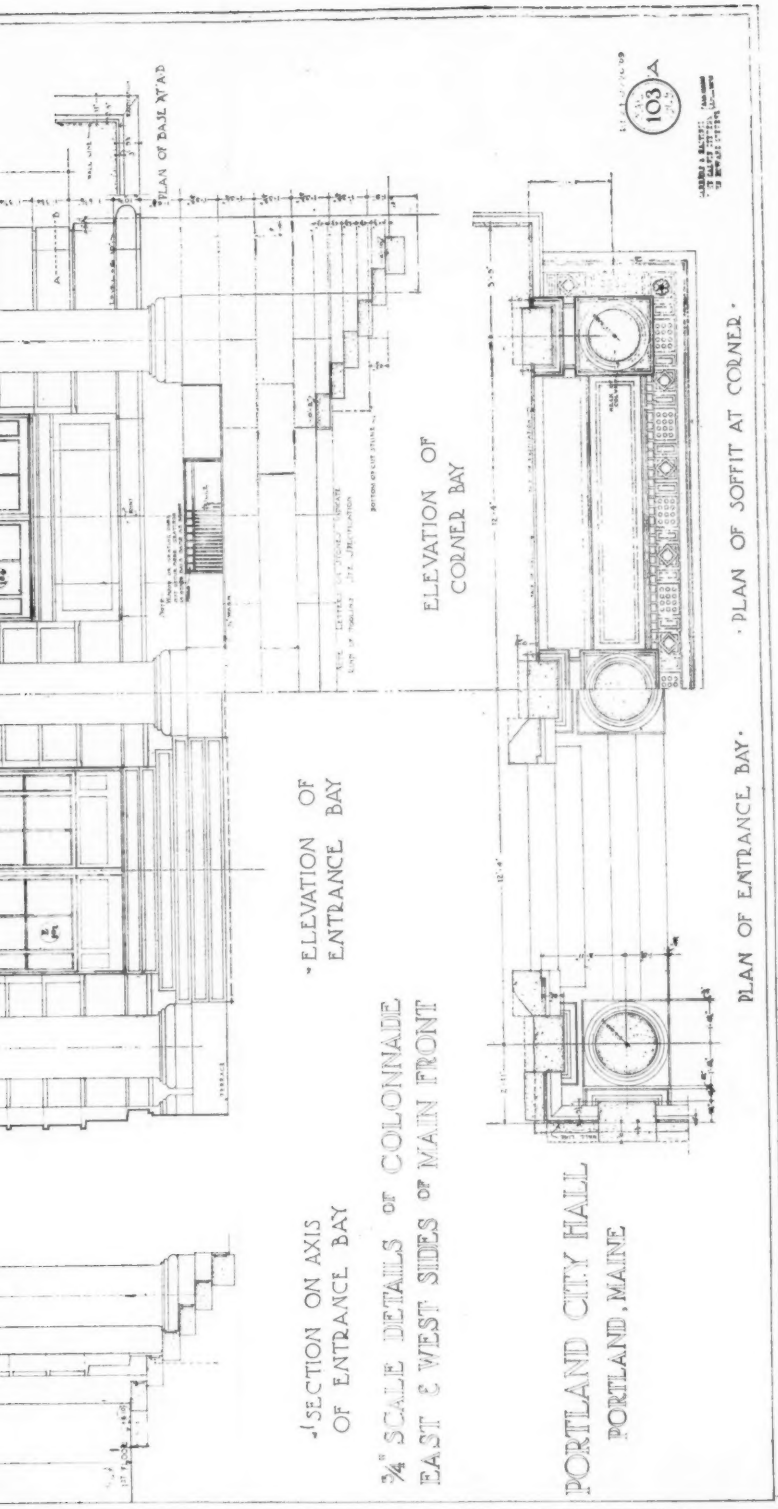
THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS

MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS









EXTERIOR OF AUDITORIUM
THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE
MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS
MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS

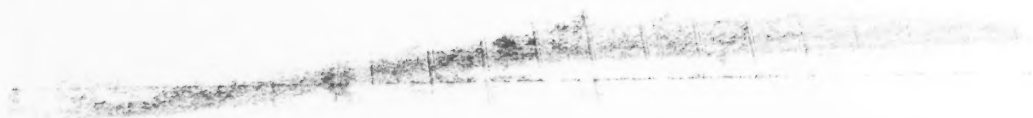


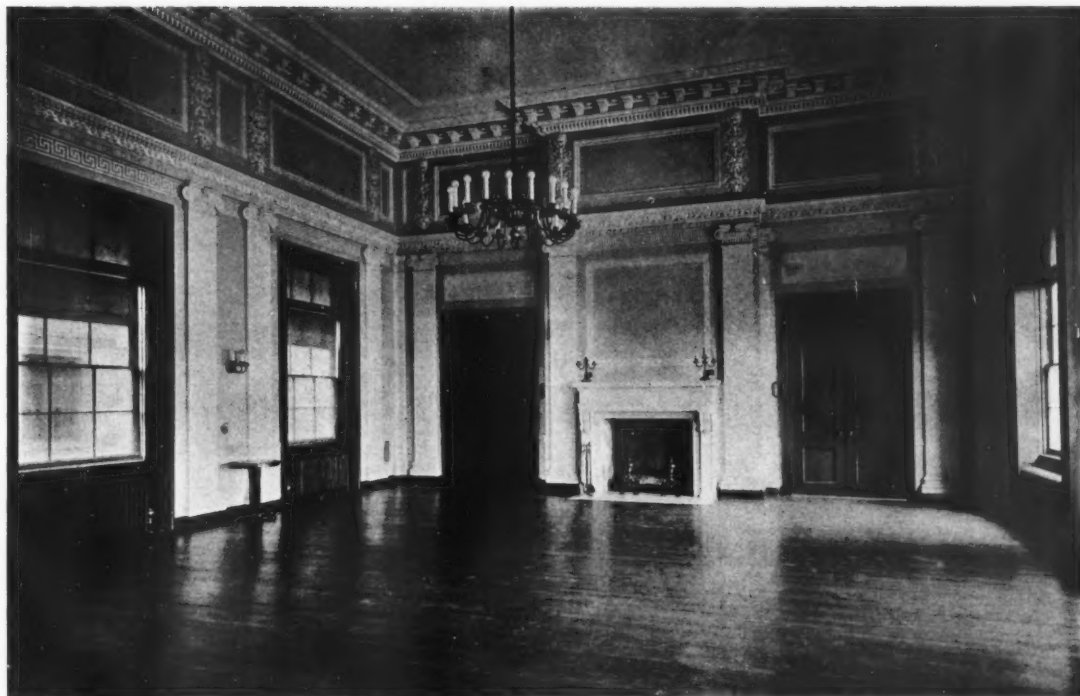
DETAIL OF FRONT

THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS

MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS





STATE RECEPTION ROOM



THE MAYOR'S OFFICE

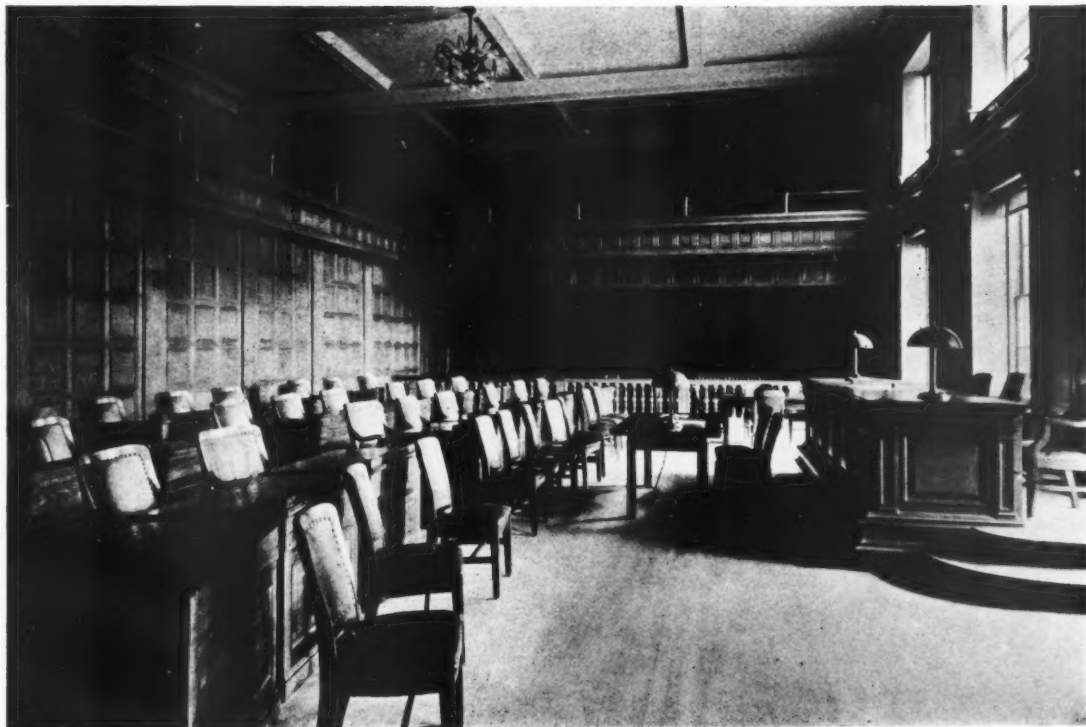
THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS

MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS



BOARD OF ALDERMEN

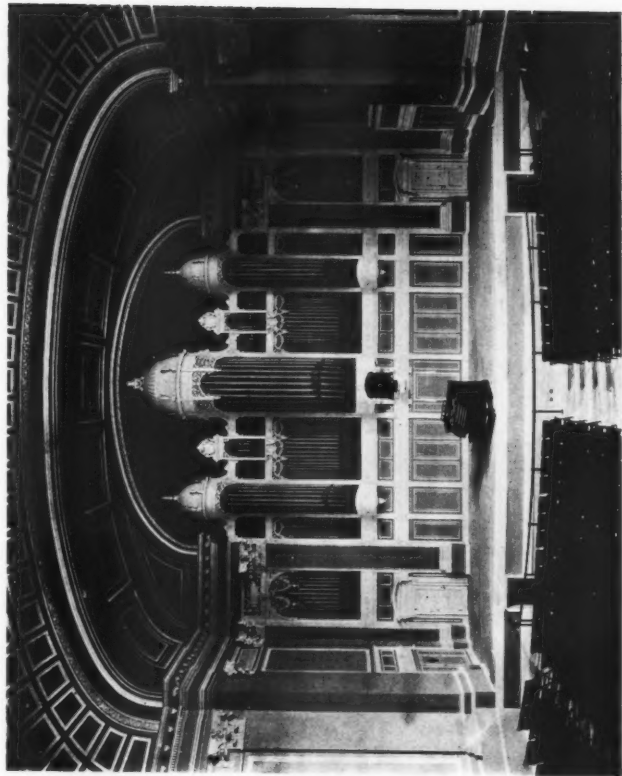
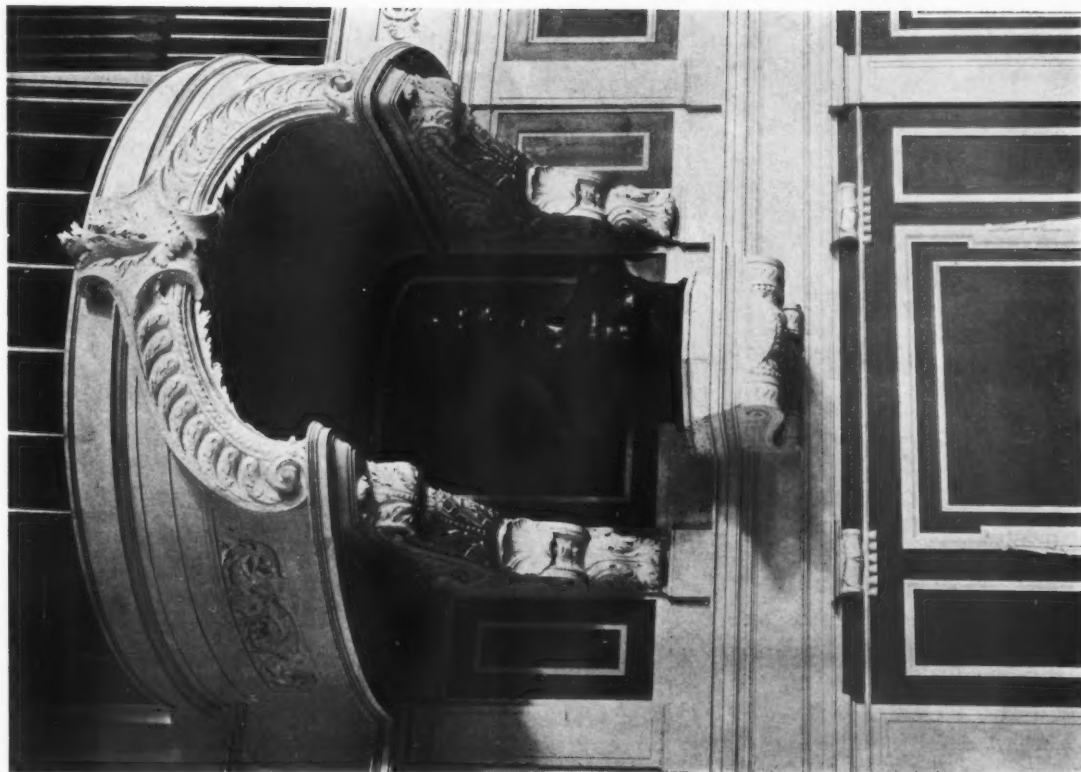


THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS

MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS



AT LEFT, DETAIL OF ORGAN
ABOVE, THE ORGAN IN THE AUDITORIUM

THE CITY HALL, PORTLAND, MAINE

MESSRS. CARRERE & HASTINGS, ARCHITECTS
MR. JOHN CALVIN STEVENS AND MR. JOHN HOWARD STEVENS
ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS



VIEW IN INTERIOR COURT

THE DAVANZATI PALACE, FLORENCE, ITALY—VII