

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

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Laces and Their Affiliation with Architecture

Part I

BY WILLIAM LAUREL HARRIS

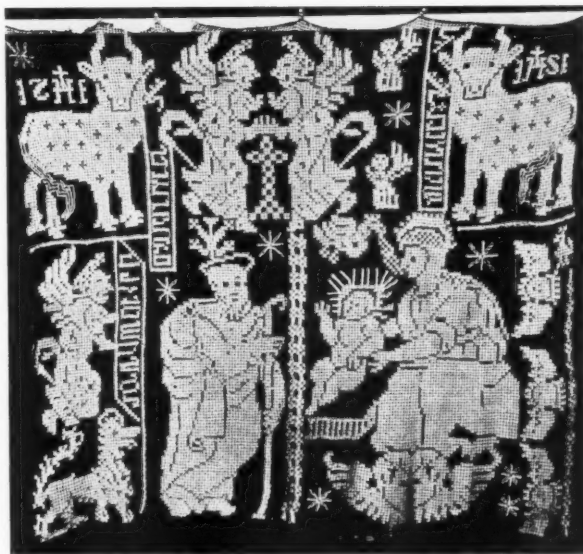
THE fascinating story of laces and embroidery is usually discussed from a pronounced feminine point of view, emphasizing and accentuating the evidence that laces of an almost infinite variety and style have in centuries past been used on collars, cuffs, petticoats and all varieties of seductive furbelows.

As a means of adding historical and manly attributes to ordinary accounts of lace and lace making certain authors tell us that William, Prince of Orange, wore an expensive collar of fine lace above his steel cuirass when he crossed the North Sea to take final possession of the English throne. Such writers often illustrate expensive books quite grandly with his portrait, rendered more ornamental than it otherwise might appear by a well-starched collar of Point de Genes.

One may also read upon good authority that two hundred years ago the gentlemen of France not only wore lace collars and lace cuffs but also possessed fine laces upon their pocket flaps, used lace to cover the lines of buttons and button-holes on their coat fronts, had lace at their waist bands behind and enjoyed the sight of lace upon their pants

and shoe-tops. But these varying and curious uses for an exquisite handicraft have little if anything in common with the main purposes of architectural design or interior decoration. Frequently laces designed for costumes in their general character conflict with the most essential rules of the arts intended for the embellishment of architecture.

Not infrequently, as one can note in illustration number two of this article, the finest laces are so intricate and so exquisite in their workmanship that the larger and more noble aspects of the Fine Arts are quite forgotten. The inspiration and thoughts actuating the designer of these exquisite fabrics are essentially feminine and complex, though one at least of these examples cited was intended for ecclesiastical employment and use. The student of such delicate



No. 1—THE HOLY NIGHT AT BETHLEHEM
German net-work of the Sixteenth Century. This panel was originally part of an elaborate antependium.

patterns is enchanted by the deft handiwork displayed and is encouraged to examine such wonderful bits of rare handicraft with a microscope.

One of the objects of this present series of articles on laces, tapestry and embroidery is to break this very spell of minute enchantment that not infrequently has paralyzed the inventive faculties of

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

Twentieth Century designer; when they have tried to adapt antique lace designs to modern uses.

Instead of the usual lackadaisical fiddle faddle about mechanical technique and confusing foreign terms which is frequently written in the name of Art for the entertainment of ladies who have nothing on earth to do, the present writer will endeavor to emphasize and accentuate the bold and handsome aspects of decorative design as applied to textiles and wall hangings.

We are now entering upon a new era in the history of America and in many cases it is advis-

ferred somewhat in consequence of the trivial, idle and puerile memories connected with lace collars and other fripperies rendered odious to our people through the selfish and inglorious careers pursued by famous men of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

A quite serious obstacle in the way of architects and decorators now wishing to acquire more perfect and practical knowledge concerning lace, tapestry and embroidery in their legitimate and numerous architectural and ornamental uses is the fact that books on such subjects are written chiefly for



No. 2—ITALIAN LACE

The second piece from the top is an excellent example, designed probably for an Alb or Altar ornament. Worked into this lace are seen symbolic ornaments executed so minutely and on such a small scale that their real effect is somewhat lost. This late seventeenth century example shows very clearly that while intricate and delicate workmanship may achieve astonishing results in lace, it may at the same time defeat the essential purpose of decorative design.

(From the Metropolitan Museum of Art)

able and necessary to sweep the table clean of all encumbrances and begin with a new foundation for many of our mental operations.

Under the general terms of lace making and textile manufacture new and unprecedented arts and industries are growing up in this country which always must be closely allied to Architecture.

All frivolous and exaggerated fashions of the Old Régime and the vanities of personal adornment which once prevailed in Europe seem, at least with men, to be quite contrary to the serious and vital tendencies of modern times. As a consequence the overweening and ostentatious habits of aristocrats in the past cast for us a certain shadow of discredit on the time-honored, exquisite and useful arts of making laces and weaving expensive fabrics.

Wonderful and delicate nets, drawn work, laces and every variety of fine textiles "ajoure" have suf-

fered somewhat in consequence of the trivial, idle and puerile memories connected with lace collars and other fripperies rendered odious to our people through the selfish and inglorious careers pursued by famous men of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

The unending complications of "lakis," "trine ad ago," "tela tagliata," "trine a fuselli" and other difficult and often conflicting methods of expression used in our best books on laces seem to the uninitiated as too complex and difficult for comprehension.

This unhappy confusion of ideas is very naturally discouraging for architects and artists who by education are trained to view things in their largest aspects and ensemble. If they turn to their trusted encyclopedias they discover that whereas one authority stoutly maintains that "there is no documentary or other evidence of lace earlier than the Fifteenth Century," there are other and equally unimpeachable authorities who illustrate their articles with photographs of "Bobbin lace found in an

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

Egyptian Roman Tomb of the Third Century" and further fortify their remarks by references to exquisitely knotted "lacs" discovered by Petrie at Qurneh in Egypt and undoubtedly manufactured sixteen hundred years before the Christian era.

Dismissing this particular confusion of our experts and all other complex and contentious argu-

ments as parts of a discussion quite irrelevant to the Fine Arts, a large and more noble aspect of the splendid craft of lace making at once becomes apparent.

Architects are of course not making Alençon, Point de Venise or Teneriffe and will probably never even sit contentedly doing tatting; therefore this larger and more open-minded method of discussing laces, tapestry, embroidery and all the kindred arts seems most necessary if the handicrafts and architecture are to be properly correlated and combined.

There is an important and almost unwritten history of fine laces to be studied that has nothing whatever in common with the efforts of laborious experts counting invisible stitches through magnifying glasses. Nor is there need to dwell on those unedifying accounts of past pleasantries among



No. 3—THE SACRIFICE OF ABRAHAM

Network, Italian XVI century. This fragment of old lace is part of a lectern cover. The severe limitations of the material used forced the artist to employ frank decorative methods of design.

(From the Metropolitan Museum of Art)



No. 4—LACE BAG, MAQUEY FIBRE

Found in a prehistoric grave in Peru.

ladies in high station or the escapades of their dashing and belaced gallants of long ago so often used of recent days to give a spicy flavor to dull literary efforts.

The almost unknown, but truly instructive and fascinating story concerning antique laces tells of a noble and devoted art closely allied to architecture, fine furniture and decorative hangings of every variety.

Moreover, the exquisite art of making textiles "ajoure" created masterpieces of design which at one time graced and embellished thousands of venerated altars throughout Christendom.

And even before the Christian era we have reason to suppose that the patient craftsmen of China, in the glorious periods of the Former Han, designed and wrought with knotted threads delicate veils of lace for precious objects of Celestial devotion.

Among superb, mysterious tombs and monu-

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

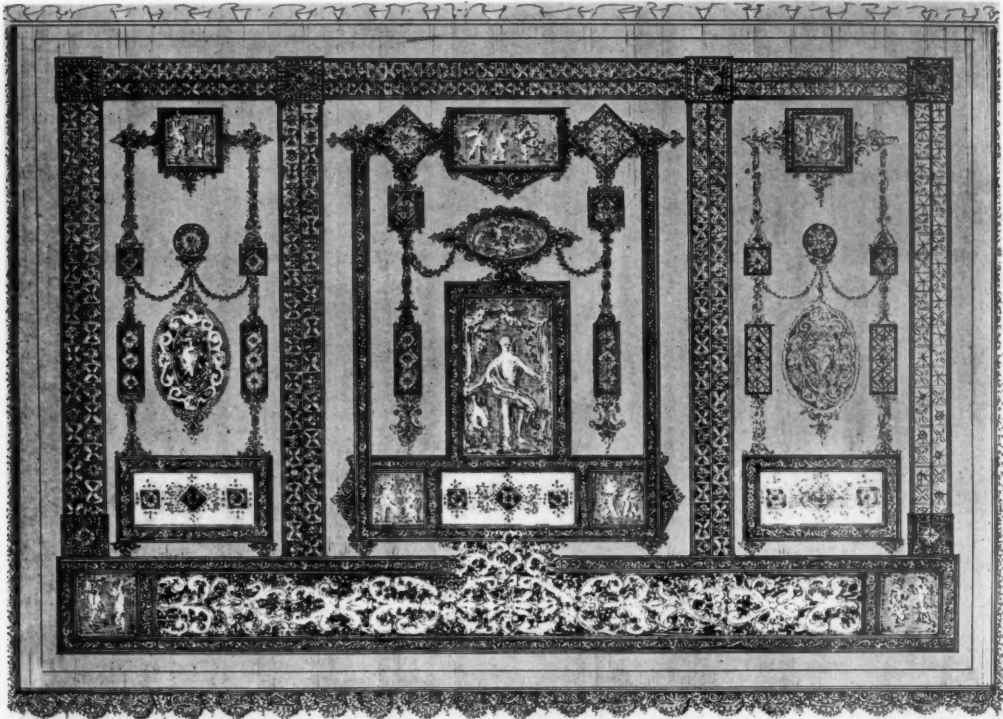
ments in Egypt dating as far back as the Seventeenth Dynasty rare laces have been found knotted in a square mesh after the fashion of the "lacis" of ordinary use, and in modern times called "modano."

And, more astonishing still, on the high tablelands and in the remote valleys of the Andes at a time so distant that the human mind is staggered by the mere mention of the weight of years, prehistoric artists designed and wrought for sacred

better woven than the products of any modern looms, bobbins or embroidery needles.

Many of these astonishing and beautiful textiles have been collected and arranged for public exhibition at the Museum of Natural History at Central Park West and Seventy-seventh Street. Figure one among the illustrations of this article is from the prehistoric American collections now to be seen in the halls of this great institution.

From these examples and other arguments very



No. 5—ORIGINAL SKETCH FOR A CURTAIN IN FLANDERS EMBROIDERY

Drawing made to indicate methods of assembling materials and designs from many different countries. The present example represents English, Irish, French, Italian and probably Belgian. Interesting as showing the manner in which the craftsman is led or instructed in the many different countries represented.

rites the most delicate of laces and nets which are more perfect in their craftsmanship than any fine fabrics of modern times.

Up to the present moment our textile designers for the most part have failed to profit by the great legacies of artistic lore bequeathed to us by the industrious Incas and untiring Aztecs whose strange and splendid civilization went down and perished before the conquests of the Spaniards.

The delicate threads contrived by prehistoric craftsmen of Cuzco and the Vilcamayn were twisted better and their finished fabrics were all much

easily formulated the case is clear that certain forms of lace making in pre-Christian days were not only practised and perfected but were among the most venerable and revered of the fine handicrafts. To a careful student the art of lace making appears closely allied with the long, slow growth of our civilization.

In the Egyptian tombs of the First, Second and Third Centuries of our era antiquarians have discovered, as already noted, squares of bobbin lace which were used as coverings for funeral vases placed as memorials to celebrated men.



No. 6—DESIGN SHOWING THE USE OF LACE IN ARCHITECTURAL SETTINGS

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

During the eight or nine succeeding centuries there are few records of lace making, though here and there among monastic books, illuminated manuscripts and decorative sculpture one finds traces of fine nets and laces of varying beauty and quality.

In the year 1295, however, an account was written concerning an ecclesiastical visitation at old Saint Paul's in London, and in the records then written out we find mention of a certain form of lace under the terms of "album filun nodatum" or knot-

by the Sisters of Saint Benedict to render gracious and more decorative the laces which they made for albs, antependiums, and lectern covers.

By the nature of their exquisite substance and because of the constant wear to which such ornamental objects are exposed it is evident that we can hardly expect laces of the Eighth Century to survive until our present time unless conserved in dry places as were the laces in Egyptian tombs.

But one can see ecclesiastical laces from the Thir-



No. 7—CUT WORK

Designed and executed in New York, on Irish linen. This particular form of cut-work is a special development of American industry. It is usually called Mazarin Lace.

ted white thread. When the Knights Templar were suppressed in 1312 an inventory of their possessions at the Temple Church in London mentions "one net which is called Espinum to cover the Lectern." From the name given to this lectern cover it would seem most probable that there was woven or embroidered in the net an ornamental and symbolic pattern. It seems probable that as early as the Eighth Century realistic ornaments and flowing patterns of a symbolic nature were utilized in Europe

teenth Century made on hand-woven linen of very exquisite texture. The alb of Saint Francis, dating from before 1226, now preserved at Saint Claire's Convent in Assisi, is decorated with "tela tirata" work, and in the exquisite patterns are introduced at least twenty varieties of polygonal design. The Coptic gammadion or token of the cross is also utilized, together with symbolic figures and strange animals the significance of which is not now apparent.

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

At the time in which these laces were deftly wrought by Saint Claire and her industrious nuns each thread for them no doubt was full of meaning.

It is interesting to note that in modern times the use of "tela tirata" or drawn work, and "tela tagliata," as cut work is usually defined, is increasing and these processes seem destined to have a very important influence on the designing of laces in America. Several of the illustrations with this article indicate the present-day possibilities of linen when skillful artists have fully developed its rarely decorative qualities.

The examples chosen exemplify a form of cut work now largely utilized for curtains and table-covers which is growing rapidly in general popularity and esteem under the nomenclature of Riche-lieu or Mazarin embroidered laces.

As a consequence of this growing tendency for the use of laces, which appears as both artistic and industrial in its character, the more ancient forms of laces embody in their quaint and carefully designed patterns a great and unappreciated fund of useful knowledge and precious inspiration. The very frankness and simplicity of ancient laces recommend them to all students of design. In future articles the popular modern forms of cut work now being utilized so extensively in our city will be discussed and illustrated at greater length and in detail.

An important factor in its present popularity is that this form of lace can be manufactured profitably under modern conditions in America. The danger which now besets this charming expression of industrial art is the ever-present monotony brought about through a deplorable lack of inventive genius among lace designers. In this question of design the advice and help of architects and decorators is very greatly to be desired so that the most artistic forms of textile manufacture may be closely correlated and affiliated with the development of American architecture and the allied arts of household decoration.

Our manufacturers are now apt to repeat and multiply a successful pattern "ad nauseum" till perfectly good forms of artistic expression are killed or quite discredited. Because of these and many other reasons it seems well worth while to turn back the pages of ancient history and discover if we can the innumerable exquisite and rare forms of art with which we are not now familiar.

There is also an ever-present danger for our industries if our art critics continue their present method of putting special emphasis on

the styles and fashions of the Old Régime, simply because such styles represent the best known periods of lace making. This danger is evident because the forms of art then practised are almost without exception forms of art that are ill adapted to modern methods of production.

The styles of lace designed and manufactured in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries are based upon the unfortunate social conditions then prevailing which limited severely the activities of women.

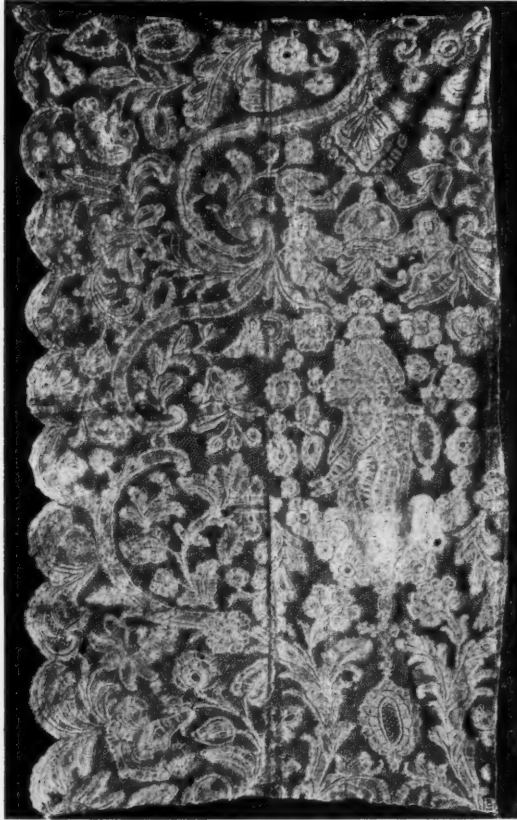
To a great number of European women in those "splendid days of old," time was almost of no value whatever, and they could cheerfully devote hours to making laces for wages which were infinitesimal or sometimes for no wages at all.

These French, Flemish and Italian styles of laces are only made to-day in countries where through the continuation of former social habits and manners of life a peasant class exists. It is the custom of our lace makers of America to buy lace panels from the peasants in their simple villages in Europe



No. 8—A BED-SPREAD OF RECENT DESIGN MADE IN NEW YORK

As in other work of this character, the hand-made fillet comes from Italy. The inserted bands of ornament were made in France and the background is Irish linen. In this way sometimes five or six different countries are represented in one example.



No. 9—THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN
WITH SYMBOLIC ORNAMENT

Point d' Angleterre, made in Flanders toward the end of the XVIII century. A fragment from a large decorative composition.

and to build up curtains, tablecloths and other decorative objects by modern methods with the artistic souvenirs of the Old Régime utilized as points of interest in the general pattern and design.

Here, again, one sees a need of active co-operation between architects, decorators and lace manufacturers because the curtains thus built up should of necessity be constructed on purely architectural lines.

A careful study of the earliest forms of lace making seems now especially advisable as the little known albs, lectern covers and antependiums of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries can bring forward many important suggestions and ideas for the craftsmen of to-day. Time and space will not permit a very extensive study of this subject at the present moment. It seems worth while, however, to note that the linen laces said to have been worn by Pope Boniface in 1298 and now in the treasury of the Sistine Chapel are quite Byzantine in design and seem to prove the semi-oriental inspi-

ration of early European textiles of this character.

The magnificent and at times fantastic artistic genius of the East appears not only in the early laces, such as those worn by Pope Boniface and Saint Francis, but survived for many centuries in the tradition of all handicrafts.

On the alb of Saint Francis just cited, symbolic animals and chimeras were utilized as ornamental motives as well as intricate Coptic patterns of a purely geometrical development. In later times strange Byzantine patterns continued quite generally in use among lace makers as is indicated by the upper panel of illustration No. 11, in which the unicorn and other strange creatures are repeated in a Seventeenth Century work of art.

The interesting and romantic story of St. Nilus and the alb of Boniface is a concrete example of



No. 10—SMALL LACE CURTAIN OF ELABORATE
DESIGN, MADE IN NEW YORK CITY



PLATE 236

VIEW FROM CIVIC CENTER

CITY HALL, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS



PLATE 237

DETAIL OF ENTRANCE

CITY HALL, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

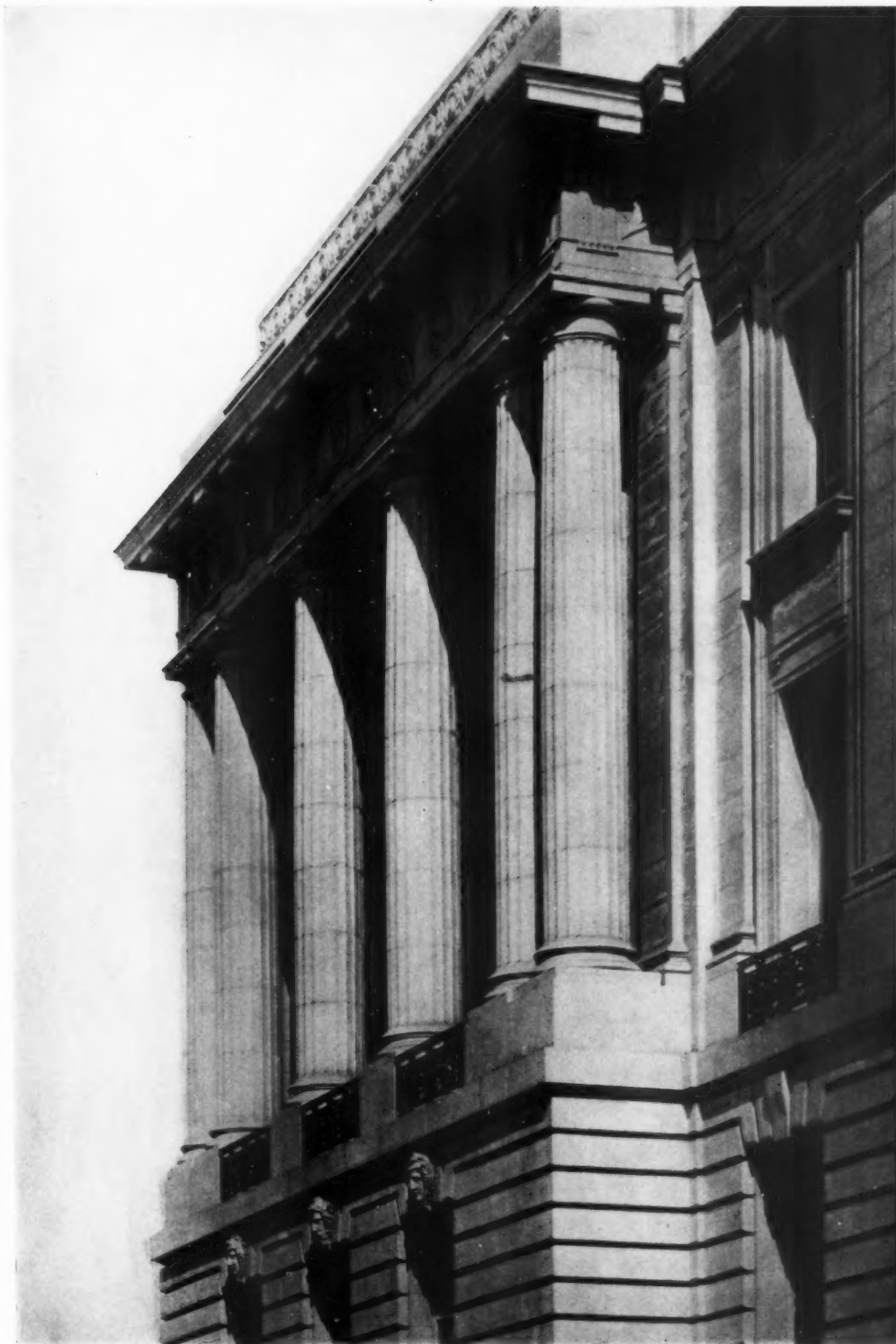


PLATE 238

DETAIL OF SIDE FACADE

CITY HALL, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

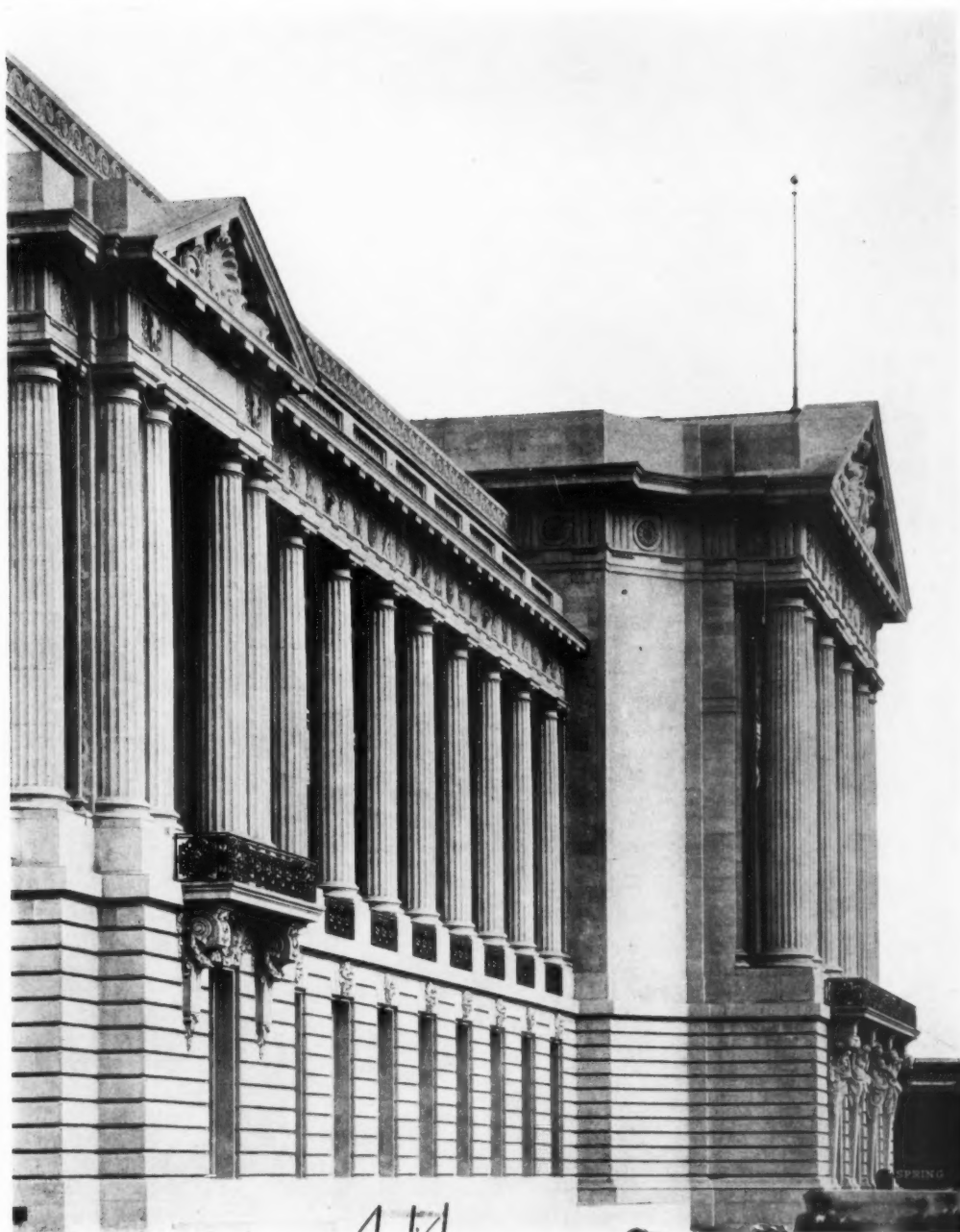


PLATE 239

LOOKING ALONG MAIN FACADE

CITY HALL, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

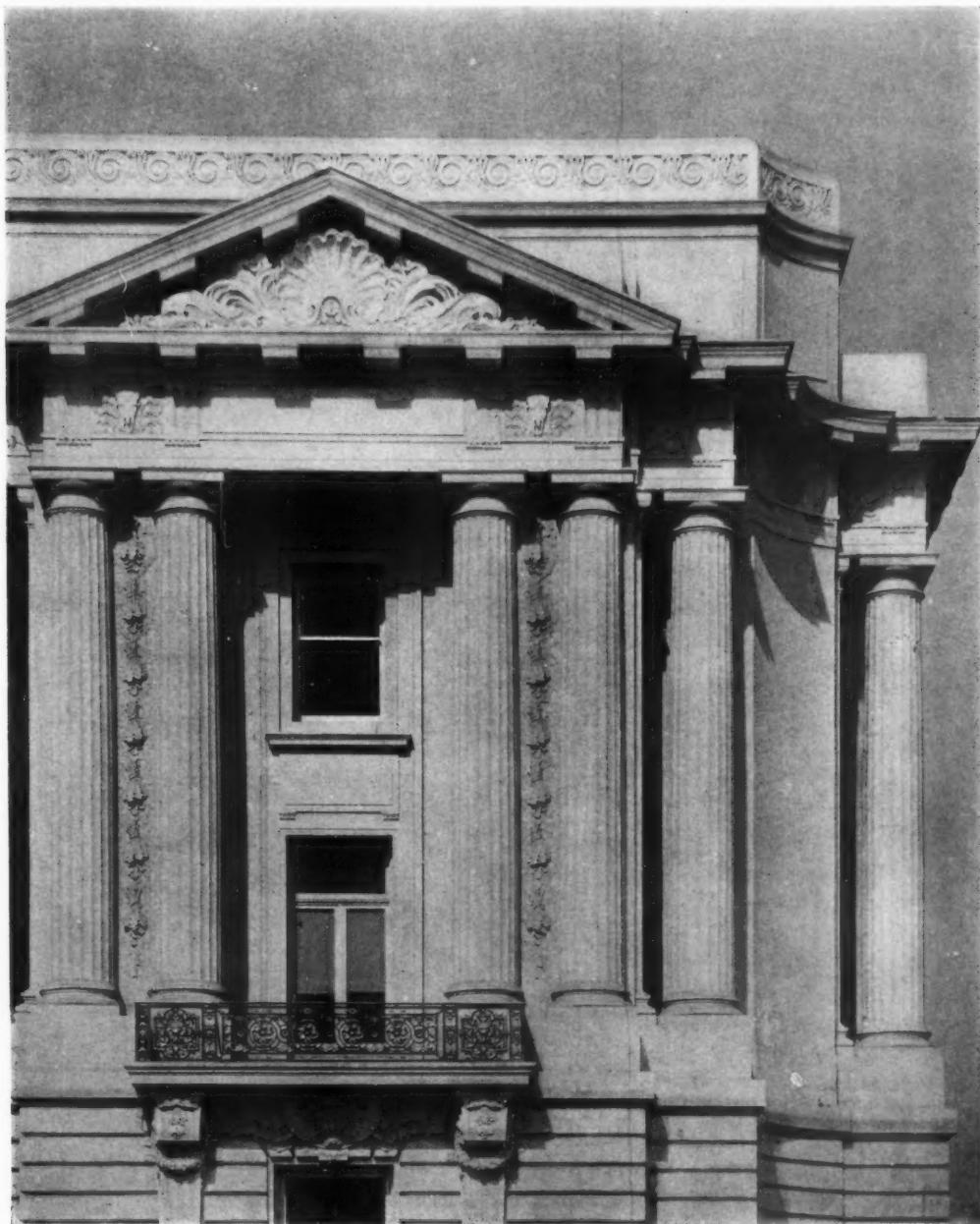


PLATE 240

CORNER MOTIF

CITY HALL, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

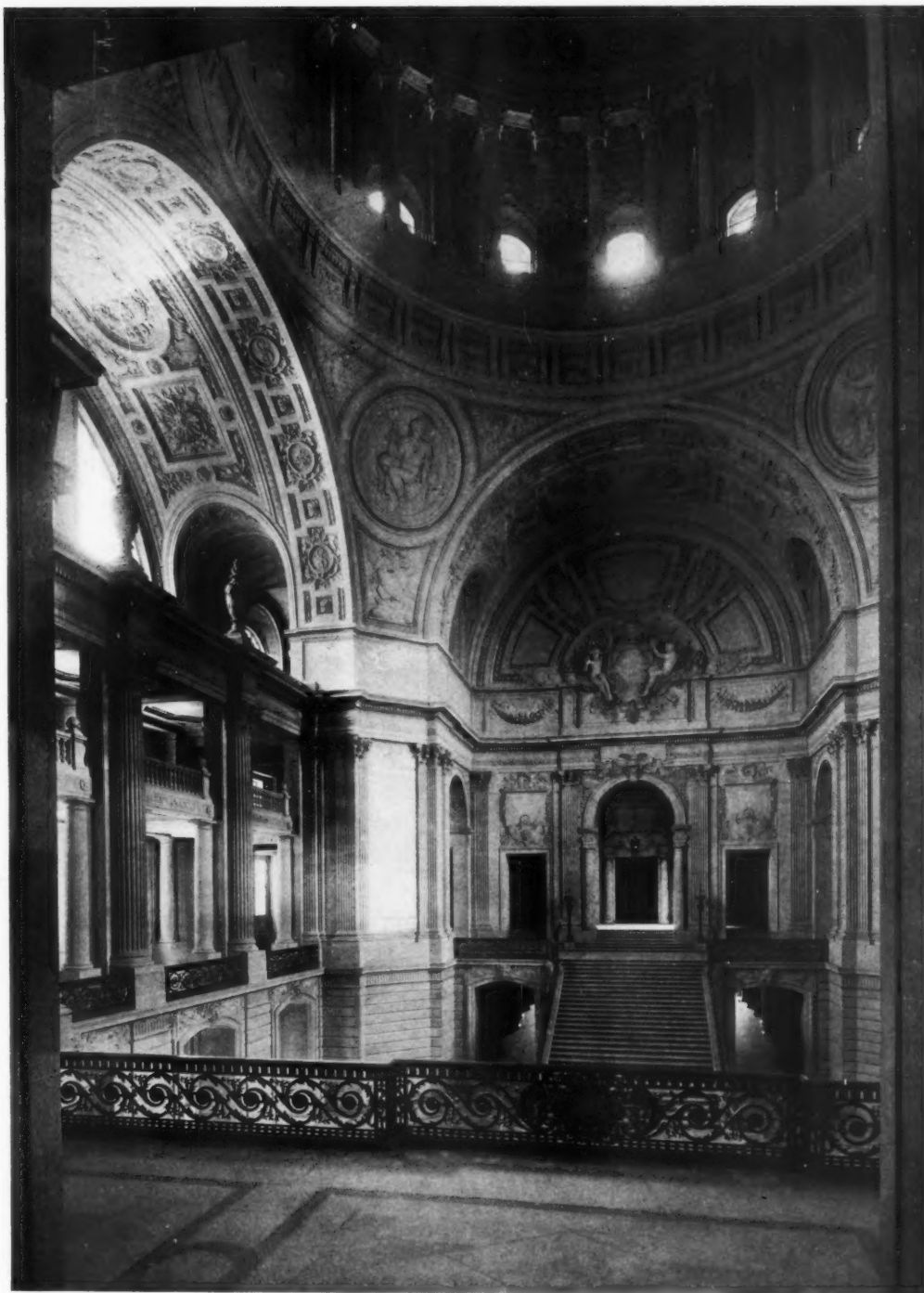


PLATE 241

GENERAL VIEW IN ROTUNDA

CITY HALL, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

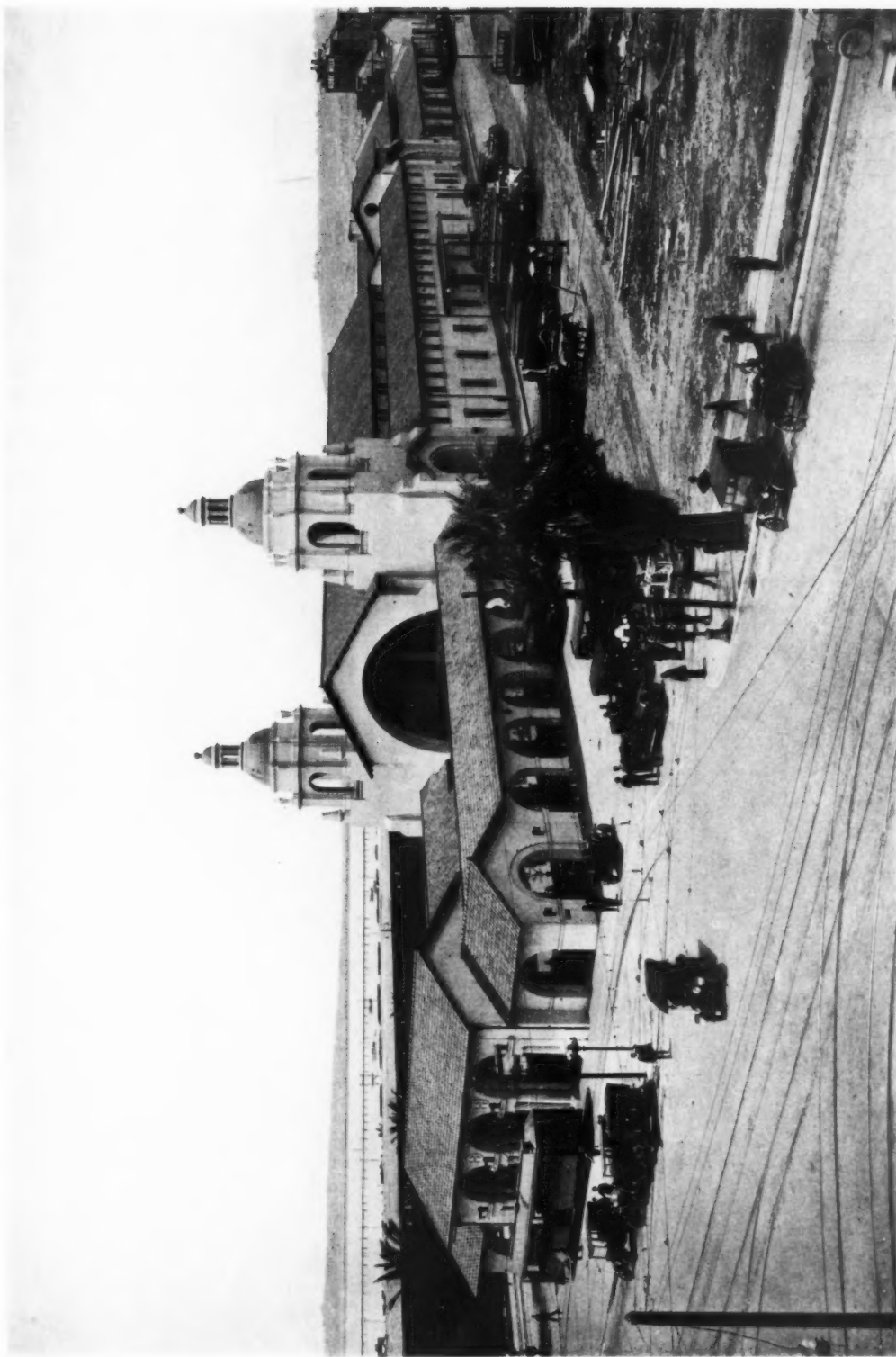


PLATE 242

RAILWAY STATION, SANTA FÉ RAILROAD, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS



MAIN WAITING ROOM

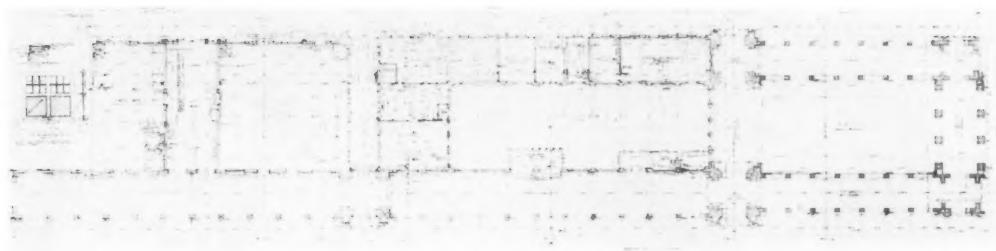


PLATE 243

RAILWAY STATION, SANTA FÉ RAILROAD, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

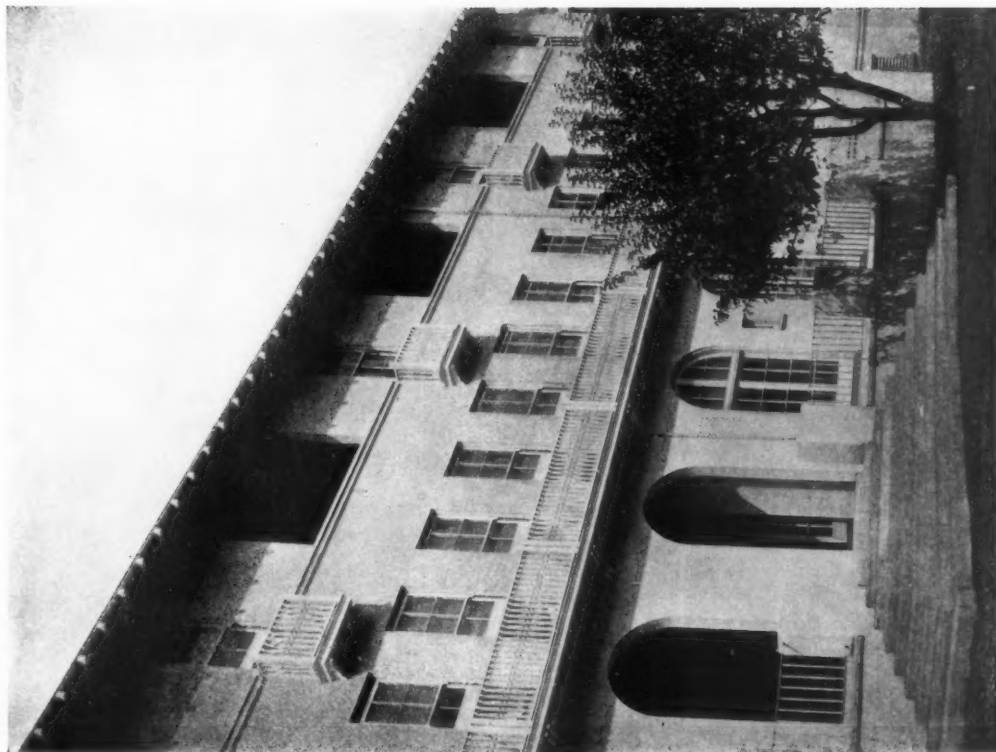
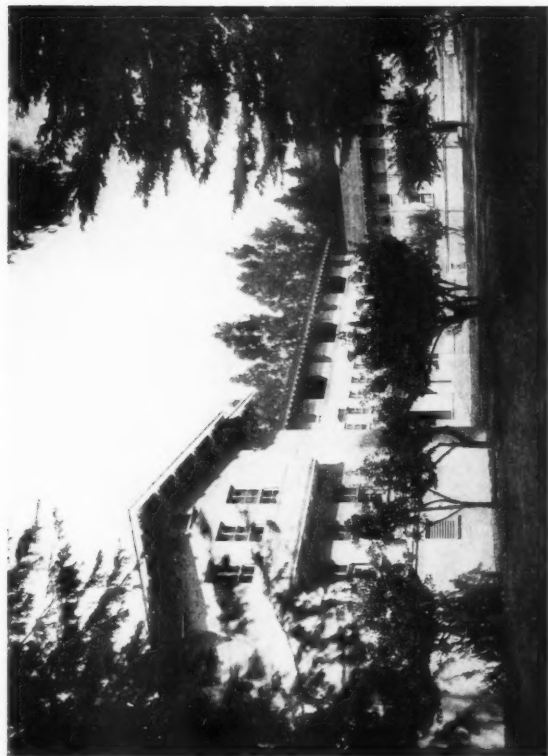


PLATE 244 MAIN FACADE AND ENTRANCE LOGGIA



GENERAL VIEW

DORMITORY FOR MILLS COLLEGE
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN
ARCHITECTS



ENTRANCE TO DINING ROOM

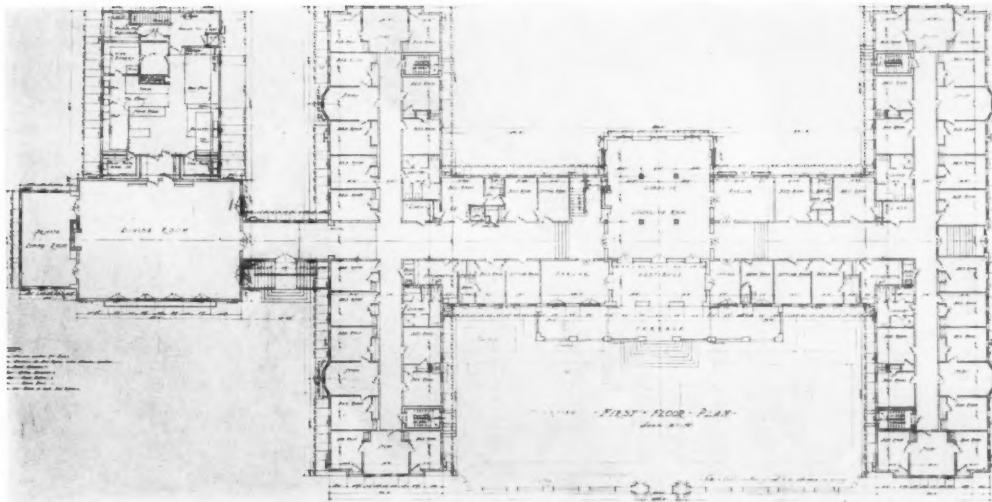


PLATE 245

DORMITORY FOR MILLS COLLEGE, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

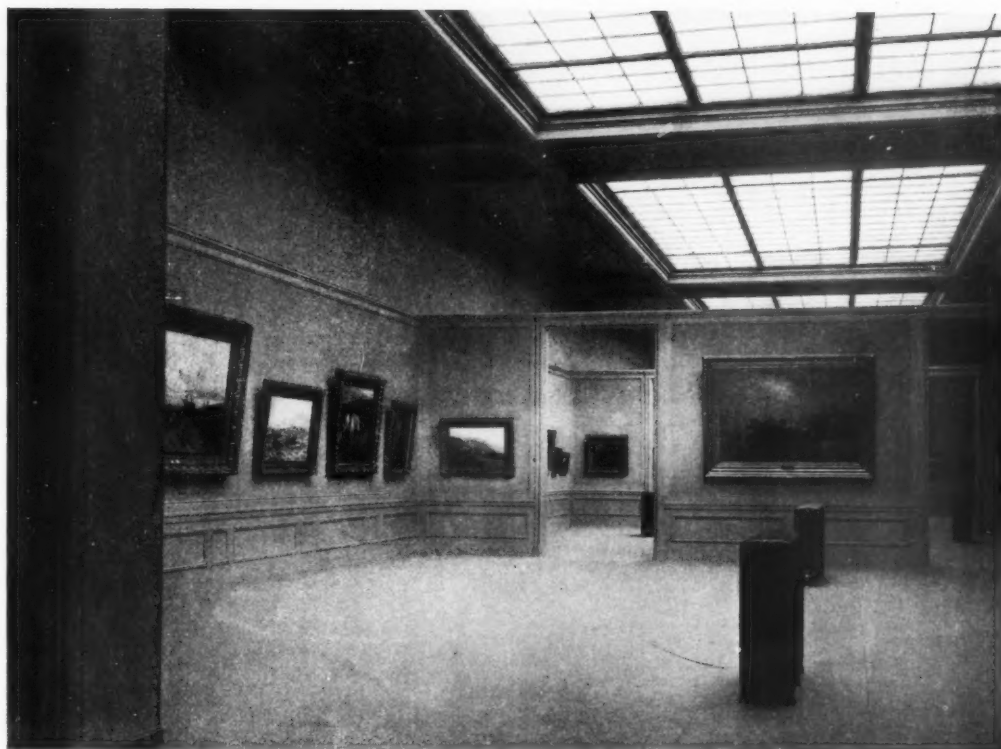
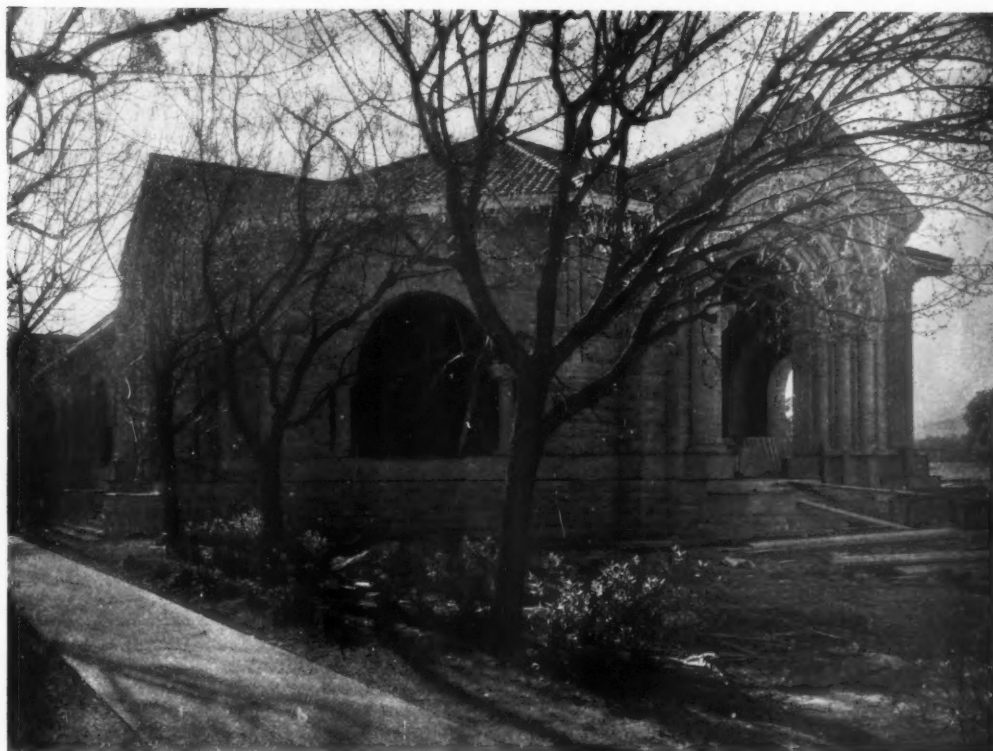


PLATE 246

THOMAS WELTON STANFORD ART GALLERY
LELAND STANFORD JR. UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA
BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS



ENTRANCE DETAIL

PLATE 247



THE ARCADE

□ □

THOMAS WELTON STANFORD ART GALLERY
LELAND STANFORD JR. UNIVERSITY,
CALIFORNIA

□ □

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

Byzantine influence in Europe and will be developed more fully at a later time.

The Fifteenth Century lectern cover called "of Saint Francis," now in the Pollen collection is a very quaint yet splendid strip of linen drawn work about 6 feet long and on it are depicted scenes from the Saint's life. These and many other curious historic pieces are well worthy of careful study and consideration and may be taken up again by the writer in the course of his study on Gothic laces.

The main object of the present series of articles is to prepare a firm and broad foundation of practical information and historical reference for the future use of all workers in the decorative crafts and artistic industries. It seems necessary to carefully indicate the ways and means by which the lore of ancient days may be rendered most helpful and most profitable to New York's Twentieth Century population. It is not enough that rare and ancient tapestries, laces, embroideries and other wonderful expression of the craftsman's skill should be placed on view in public places.

To thoroughly comprehend the priceless treasures of antiquity without the aid of long study and years of careful comparison seems impossible. But the slow process of individual comparison and the long years of study can be materially shortened both in art and industry if we learn to profit by the observations and experiences of other people.

In our public museums and private collections there is a wealth of precious information which THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT intends to make more

readily available for the present and future use of the architects, decorators and manufacturers throughout the United States.

In this work numerous illustrations will be utilized, drawn from both public and private treasures, showing on one hand the quaint, frank and sometimes crude pictorial efforts, such as illustrations Nos. 3 and 4 of the present article. Comparisons can be clearly drawn in this way. Between these bold and simple patterns of embroidered net or "naive" drawn work and such magnified examples and rarely finished products of the lace makers art as the wonderful fragment of that "Coronation of the Virgin," which among our illustrations is No. 10. Through this method of comparison and correlation between the textile arts and industries and the varied forms of architectural expression it is hoped that THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT will be able to assist both our arts and industries in these present days of war and social readjustment.

We are now confronted by conditions such as never before existed in the history of the world. Vast interests are at stake and the future of democracy is in the balance.

Architects, painters, sculptors, industrial organizers and all the innumerable crafts and trades on which our country's prosperity is based must learn to act in unison for the great good of the United States. If we can learn to act collectively, to combine more perfectly our talents and resources, then our arts and our democracy will go forward to victory.

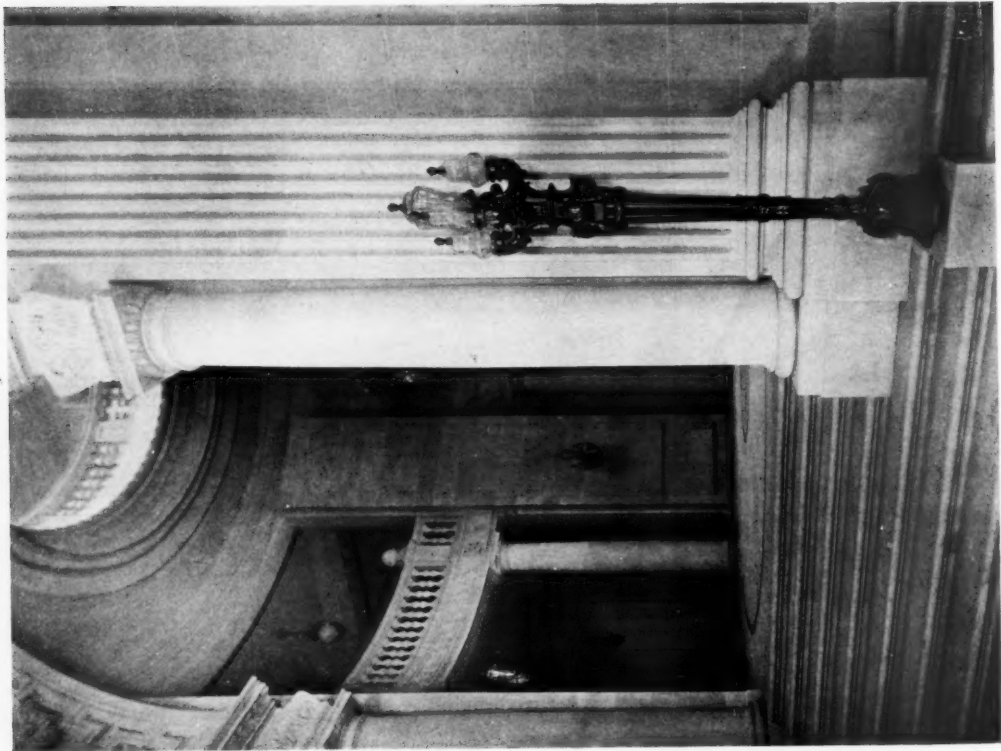


No. 11—EXAMPLES OF ECCLESIASTICAL ITALIAN NET

In which the lace maker and designer endeavored to overcome the natural rectilinary character of the material. The lower panel representing Adam and Eve at the Tree of Knowledge, is probably from Sardinia and was made about 1550.



DETAIL AT HEAD OF GRAND STAIRS
CITY HALL, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS



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"Architects as Slackers"

"Do not be a slacker! What is the reason so many architects are not subscribers to the journals of their professional societies? Why do some members of the Illinois Society of Architects neglect to read even our small Bulletin? Can any man in justice to himself neglect to keep fully informed of the work being done by his group in the community?"

"Has architecture, as a body, a larger percentage of slackers than any other profession? What is the reason so many architects evince such a lack of interest in any movement tending to better conditions? Is it caused by improper education? Is it the artistic temperament? Or is it the fact that many architects are simply damn fools?"

THE conclusion is forced upon us that the indictment contained in the above very direct expression by the Editor of the *Bulletin* of the Illinois Society of Architects is, to a certain extent, true.

Architects do not read their journals with the same care or pursue the custom with the same thoroughness as do men in other learned professions. To claim that the exactions of professional work do not leave sufficient time for reading technical and society journals is a lame and halting

excuse. Physicians and lawyers are as busily employed in their professional work as are architects, but neither would regard themselves fully posted in the essentials of professional practice if they failed to keep up with the journals of the proceedings of the societies in their respective fields. That architects are remiss in their habit of close reading of matters that affect their work is shown by the letters of inquiry received by every editor of an architectural journal.

Each year there are conventions of the Institute, each month, meetings of State Associations, Leagues and other organizations throughout the United States. The deliberations of the Institute produce every year a large number of reports that contain the most valuable information. In like manner, the various State Societies meet and discuss important topics. These are all, in one form or another, published.

To reply to the query, "Do you read the society and other journals relating to your profession?" by saying that they are mostly "hot air"—and this reply has often been made—is to prove conclusively that these proceedings have not been read. The physician or surgeon keeps himself posted on every report of some new remedy, some new treatment or some approved method of operating. The well-trained lawyer carefully files away, when once read, the digest of cases, the records of decision, the making of precedent. If professional men are to succeed they must do these things, as other successful men are always doing.

It may be urged, and in a sense it may be true, that the proceedings of architects' meetings do not have the same educational value as those of medical men and lawyers. These meetings are what they are made. If architects will omit the non-essentials, the purely esthetic and academic, or at least discuss them in smaller proportion and substitute the more basic, the truly fundamental things that relate to practice, they would have less cause to regard with indifference the things they read in architectural journals and bulletins. And the man who stays away and speaks of "hot air" has a good opportunity to assert himself in a valuable way and lend some weight, if he can, as to the topics that may be discussed if he will attend these meetings.

Some of these shortcomings are undoubtedly due to characteristics of temperament—often assumed without qualification—some to the fact that men without temperament are apt to be impatient with those who have it, and some of it is due to the fact that there are architects who are the kind of fools the editor of the *Bulletin* says they are. But the profession of architecture has no monopoly on that sort of fool. They are in all of the other professions and everywhere about, so why worry?

"Non-Essential" Business

WHAT is non-essential business? Business men everywhere are asking this question, hoping to learn with more definiteness than is now possible just what branches of business may be classed as non-essential and just how far the Government will go in enforcing its rulings.

As no policy has yet been announced by the Government, the question cannot be answered. What is now needed is early action by the Government that the industries of the country may be afforded an opportunity to meet the needs of any emergency in a manner so gradual as to permit deliberate planning and adjustment. Before a business is classified as non-essential and deprived by act of Government of labor and materials, the industry through duly elected representatives should be given an opportunity to discuss the matter and to learn the premises of the Government and the reasons for action. The motive of the Government—the concentration of industrial energy toward winning the war—appeals to all, and every industry can be relied upon to assist in bringing itself into adjustment with the war needs of the country.

The question as affecting labor is also one of great importance. If the Government shall have decided to deprive a certain industry of materials or labor because it is classed as non-essential in our war preparations, an effort should be made to place with that industry orders for products needed in war. This is but fair to a business that is being sacrificed for the common good.

The industrial housing problems are already so acute that to further complicate them by throwing a large volume of labor out of employment in one section, forcing it to find work in some other far distant locality, would be to create a condition to meet which successfully would tax every resource of the manufacturing interests of the country.

The Committee on Co-operation with the Council of National Defense of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States is working toward an early consideration of these problems. The formation of war service committees is strongly urged, as they would be able effectively to present to Government authorities the best manner in which industries might conform to war-time conditions. Any result that would through co-operation between the industries and the Government lead to a satisfactory inter-

pretation as to what is non-essential business would be in a truer spirit of democracy than one by compulsion of drastic governmental action.

Communal Halls for Division Camps

NO provision having been made by the Government for including among the groups of buildings for cantonments a communal hall, steps are now being taken to build a large auditorium at Camp Upton, Yaphank, Long Island, to hold at least ten thousand men.

The movement to erect this building was begun by Major-General J. Franklin Bell, commander of the 77th Division, in quarters at Camp Upton. General Bell was so impressed by the spirit developed when he heard the soldiers sing at the Syracuse mobilization camp that he invited the director of singing to visit Camp Upton. The result of this action is that General Bell has asked that a fund be raised to build a hall of sufficient size, and the prompt response insures the success of the undertaking.

A committee of architects, of which Mr. Grosvenor Atterbury is chairman, will have prepared under their direction working drawings for a common hall.

In a letter addressed to the press, General Bell states:

"I am anxious to have this camp become well known as one of the 'Singing Camps of the Army,' not only because singing men are fighting men, but because I have personally witnessed the fine spiritual effect of mass singing on soldiers. Nothing will so aid in unifying them in mind and spirit as their frequent singing together in large groups.

"The plans of the United States Government for training camps do not include any large meeting halls or open-air stadiums where even a fair proportion of the men can be assembled. Two or three such auditoriums which will together seat the 44,000 soldiers who will be under my care this winter are essential not only for the camp singing but for other recreational work, mass-instruction and communal meetings. My experience has amply demonstrated the vital importance of such assemblages."

If a singing man is a better fighting man, why not erect a communal hall as an essential part of every division camp?

The San Francisco City Hall

BAKEWELL & BROWN, *Architects*

In the issue of August 21, 1912, THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT announced the result of the competition for the reconstruction of the San Francisco City Hall and at the same time published the drawings and sketches of the winning design. In this number there are now presented a series of illustrations of the completed building. A comparison of these two illustrations will, it is believed, be not only interesting but also instructive, as it will show that so carefully was the problem considered in its original presentation that no radical change in the development of this project, either in arrangement or exterior appearance, has been found necessary.

In writing a description of an architectural composition, there must be certain premises established to obtain a clear understanding of the subject. These premises have been well set forth by Mr. Bakewell at the time of the original publication. He states:

"In the solution of an architectural problem it is necessary first to study the uses to which the building is to be put, and then to find an arrangement of plan that will meet the requirements in the simplest and most direct manner—a plan that is organic, in which the component parts are tied together by the simplest possible system of circulation. Then, above all, the plan should express some real architectural idea."

Reduced to its simplest form, the above means that to be successful a design must be useful, it must be simple and direct, and it must give an expression of an idea.

The illustrations indicate that there are three major component elements involved—a plan that will provide accommodations for a large commercial business, one that will make provision for the formal setting on those ceremonial functions that occur in every municipality, and lastly an expression in both the plan and the outer shell of both of these qualities.

Roughly speaking, the building is comprised in a rectangle 300 ft. by 400 ft., of which four-fifths of the area is devoted to fulfilling in a most admirable manner the housing of a large executive force.

At the time this competition was held there existed in San Francisco sentiment in favor of a purely commercial type, one that would be little more than an ordinary office building. This expression of public opinion was so strongly marked that in the program for the original competition the esthetic aspect of the problem was in large degree

ignored, and the purely utilitarian features of the proposed building were emphasized.

The plans show that this feeling was strong enough to influence the architects, who have planned a building that in this respect silenced even the most carping critics by its excellence of arrangement for business purposes. The general scheme of the various departments needs no extended description. Not only has the arrangement provided for an efficient and workable layout for each separate department, but the departments themselves have been so located in the various floors as to eliminate excessive travel by those who have business to transact in them.

There is left the provision for the ceremonial part of the building. This occupies the remaining fifth of the area covered, and, being located as it is in the center of the building, furnishes a monumental setting to the commercial part. While in a sense dividing, it ties the whole scheme together in a way that cannot be improved. At the same time it provides a dignified approach to the parts of the building that house the more ornamental departments of the municipal government and allows ample circulation of light and air. Moreover, the sections devoted to two such diametrically different purposes are so well and carefully interwoven that there is no harsh appearance of the junction between them. The authors have succeeded, in plan at least, in fulfilling all the premises laid down at the beginning of this article. They have a plan that is useful, and simple and that has a dominant architectural idea.

Turning to the exterior expression we find the same adherence to these premises. The two wings in which are housed the commercial elements show a simple, direct and at the same time a dignified expression of what is inside the walls, while the formal portion is strongly differentiated from them and acts as a foil for their simplicity, thereby heightening the effectiveness of both.

For a description of the ornamental features of the building we cannot give a more comprehensive idea of them than is set forth in an admirable manner by B. I. S. Cahill, A. I. A. While he refers particularly to the ornamentation of the interior, the same comments would apply equally to the exterior. He states:

"The festive part of the interior stands quite by itself in more senses than one.

"This superb feature is created by inserting a square centerpiece filling out the hollow rectangle from front to



GALLERY IN ROTUNDA

CITY HALL, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

rear, but leaving sufficient light areas on each side. This square centerpiece, with galleries all around it tying it to the main building through its floors, runs clear up to the inner vaulting of the great dome. In effect, from inside this cupola rests on the intersection of two short transepts, forming in plan a cross. The north and south transepts contain galleries to serve each floor and great windows to light the interior. A monumental staircase leads straight to the Supervisors' Council Chamber directly in front of the Civic Center entrance. Opposite this and across the rotunda is the Mayor's office. These are the motifs magnificently framed in the east and west transept recesses which are entirely open from the first floor up, whereas the side transepts, which are merely cross corridors in plan, are screened with the main 'order' carried across in three bays (with an interpolated sub-order) to mask the floor levels and break up the light. Each of these transept recesses is spanned with four giant arches between which oblique pendentives merge into and carry the circular cornice which marks the base of the dome. The inner dome springs from a closely spaced ring of Corinthian columns and terminates in an open lantern through which the eye finally rests on a boldly carved cartouche at the apex of the panelled upper dome. While it is possible to give a verbal description of all the architectural details of this great composition, we are inclined to think that this makes dry reading and gives no clearer ideas to a layman than the black spots of musical notation do. The pictures will tell the tale. But it might be noted that the clever features in the larger composition of this design consist first in dropping the main gallery floor below the real floor reached by secondary flights of steps. This is the key to the admirable vertical proportion of the interior 'pedestal' story and the high, animated 'order' above it. The second admirable feature which gives organic composition to a

square interior consists in apparently lengthening it on its important axis which leads to the heart of the city government at one end and to the head of the city government at the other. This is done by omitting the screen of architecture which on the minor axis serves to narrow the composition just where the narrowness is needed. This produces, moreover, the effect of length and variety from end to end, from low entrance to splendid steps and sumptuous chamber, whereas from side to side we get narrowness and symmetry, thus exemplifying the primal law of the highest organic structure. This motive, it may be noted, is echoed in the oblong character of the topmost cartouche, which repeats in the ceiling the idea of a major and minor axis shown on the plan. A third point, showing sound judgment and artistic ingenuity, consists in the way that the main order of the rotunda is made to mask two stories in the interest of breadth and unity. Not only is there no horizontal line running anywhere through the fluted pilasters of the "order" but the floor levels in the side are indicated as separate and independent inserts—the very ballusters ending at but not dying into the larger system. Moreover, the idea is still further emphasized by omitting any ornament or niche in the diagonal pylons which might break the clear lift of the corner, and by avoiding all horizontality in the details of the doors and openings at each end. The door heads are purposely shown at different heights so as to baffle and break up any sense of continuous cross lines."

It will not be necessary to go into a more extended comment on the engineering features of this work than to say that they show the same careful and efficient consideration and study that the architectural portion does.





DETAIL IN ROTUNDA

CITY HALL, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

BAKEWELL & BROWN, ARCHITECTS

Willis Polk Criticizes California State Building

In a long communication addressed by Willis Polk to Governor Stephens of California, and printed in the daily press on the Coast, Mr. Polk takes numerous exceptions to the design for the proposed State building, one of the group in the Civic Center of San Francisco.

Mr. Polk is at variance with the jury who selected the design for this building and refuses to agree as to the merits of the design. He likens it to a "wrong font" letter in a sentence in type, and further is emphatic in his opinion that the design as presented is a very weak adaptation of a celebrated building in Italy. All these opinions he advances and stoutly maintains by many arguments, ignoring a very general expression of opinion among architects that the accepted design provides a fitting and satisfactory solution of the program of the competition. Mr. Polk urges that a final decision as to the appropriateness of the design be left to a national committee of architects.

Summing up the question as to whether the design does or does not harmonize with the existing buildings in the Civic Center, Mr. Polk maintains that it does not, and sets down the following to support his contention. He writes:

(a) "It is out of scale in mass with the Civic Center buildings. It overtops them all. It is in effect abnormal in scale, just as a giant is out of scale with a normal human being.

(b) It is out of scale in detail. All of its details in feature are contrary to the abnormality of its mass—a violation of good judgment in the other direction. They are all too small, just as a midget is out of scale with a normal human being. Its order of pilasters is practically 25 per cent less in height than in the orders of the other Civic Center buildings. Its windows, scarcely seven feet in height, are little more than half the height of the windows of the City Hall, Library and Auditorium. It is in fact diametrically opposed both in mass and detail to the standard scale established by the existing buildings.

(c) Finally, it is a serious point of doubt in my mind whether the adoption of this design and the entire action of the jury in its acceptance was not a plain violation of the terms of the competition, and that such action is therefore void. The official program made it mandatory that the design of the State building should conform to the existing buildings. These mandatory terms, in spite of numerous official replies from the State Architect during the progress of the competition, were not complied with. Other evidences that it was the clear intention of

the program that such lines must be conformed to were ignored. It would be a pity if an action enjoining the State Treasurer from paying the architect's fees on account of the plans that have been made could not be legally sustained in court.

The action of the Board of Supervisors at their last meeting in unanimously recommending to the Governor that this matter be submitted to the National Commission of Fine Arts for review would unquestionably be the wisest course that could be pursued in a settlement of this controversy. I hope that the Governor will take such action."

Better Homes Exposition

Over one hundred and fifty manufacturers and dealers of the Allied Home Furnishing & Building Trades will open, on November 28, in Grand Rapids, an exposition of furniture, house furnishings, house decorations, household appliances and utilities, building material and a display intended to carry out the work of better homes planning. The exhibition will remain open until December 8.

The Managing Director, Louis W. Buckley, has issued a statement that all of the fifty thousand square feet on the first floor of the Klingman Building has been allotted and taken, and that twelve thousand square feet have been allotted for educational exhibits.

Twenty-one officially constructed and furnished dwelling rooms in suites of from five to eight comprise the main features of the exhibition. This interesting and educational work, showing how rooms should be planned and decorated, has been carried out by the designers of furniture and decorators in co-operation with the public schools.

The decorative feature will be carried out through the co-operation of the Grand Rapids Art Association, which will bring to the exposition the exhibition of paintings, home decorations, etc., of the Chicago Art Institute Extension Course, with lectures by Ross Crane. Some fifteen or twenty lectures on paintings and various home furnishings will be given in half hourly and hourly talks from 1:30 until 10:30 o'clock p.m. daily.

Welfare and Efficiency Congress

The Fifth Annual Pennsylvania Welfare and Efficiency Conference will be held in the hall of the House of Representatives at Harrisburg on November 21 and 22.

These conferences are held annually for the purpose of stimulating discussion on the problems of industry and labor with especial attention toward

reducing the number of injuries and deaths from industrial accidents.

The topics to be discussed at the Conference this year, while centering mainly about accident prevention and workmen's compensation, include also such important subjects as women in industry, Americanization, and industrial education.

The arrangements for this Conference are being made by the Department of Labor and Industry, which, on request, will furnish programs and other information desired.

Building for Council of National Defense

The new building in Washington, D. C., one of the war series for the Council of National Defense, is completed and occupied. This structure was built in sixty days at a cost of \$225,000 and is located at Eighteenth and C Streets, Northwest.

It is a wooden frame building with wire lath in structural exterior and board finish interior. In its construction, speed and economy were first considered. More than one million board feet of lumber were required and 450 men of all classes of workmanship were employed. The complete cost, it is stated, is at the rate of less than \$2.25 a square foot. As this building is occupied for use for a minimum period of two years at this cost, its rent is practically saved.

Waddy B. Wood was the architect. The building is considered a model, admirable for its purpose. Buildings needed for similar war work will undoubtedly be patterned on the same lines.

Chequers Court, a Summer "White House" for England

Chequers Court in Buckinghamshire, famous in the past as the repository of many Cromwellian records, will be in future the summer home of England's Prime Minister. The present owner, Sir Arthur Lee, M.P., has offered the house for that purpose to the nation and it is understood that the offer will be accepted. While not the finest of Elizabethan work in England, it has a very pronounced architectural character. Its origin dates back to the sixteenth century and like most of the other houses of the Elizabethan period it has seen many vicissitudes of restoration and repair. It has now been stripped of many of the incongruities that once adorned it and it is believed presents at this time as near as can be exactly the appearance it had when originally built.

Competition for Modern Houses

A competition under the direction of the Columbus Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in co-operation with the Columbus Real Estate Board and the Builders' and Traders' Exchange will be held in January next. Designs will be received up to Dec. 26, 1917. There are seven prizes offered, ranging from a first prize of \$200 to a seventh of \$10, with honorable mention for work placed eighth to fifteenth.

The committee in charge is composed of Frank J. Packard, George H. Bulford and Charles S. Inscho. Program and full particulars of this competition may be had by addressing the Columbus, Ohio, Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

Cincinnati Chapter, A. I. A.

At the annual election of Cincinnati Chapter, A. I. A., the following officers were elected: President, Louis Dittoe; Vice-President, Frederick Garber; Secretary, Gustave Drach; Treasurer, Moritz Sax; Executive Committeeman, Edward H. Chuckemeyer.

Architectural Institute of America

At the sixteenth annual meeting of the Architectural Institute of America the following officers were elected:

Dr. Charles D. Wolcott, president.

Henry White, Mabel Bordman, Robert M. Thompson and Mrs. H. F. Dimock, vice-presidents. Mitchell Carroll, secretary.

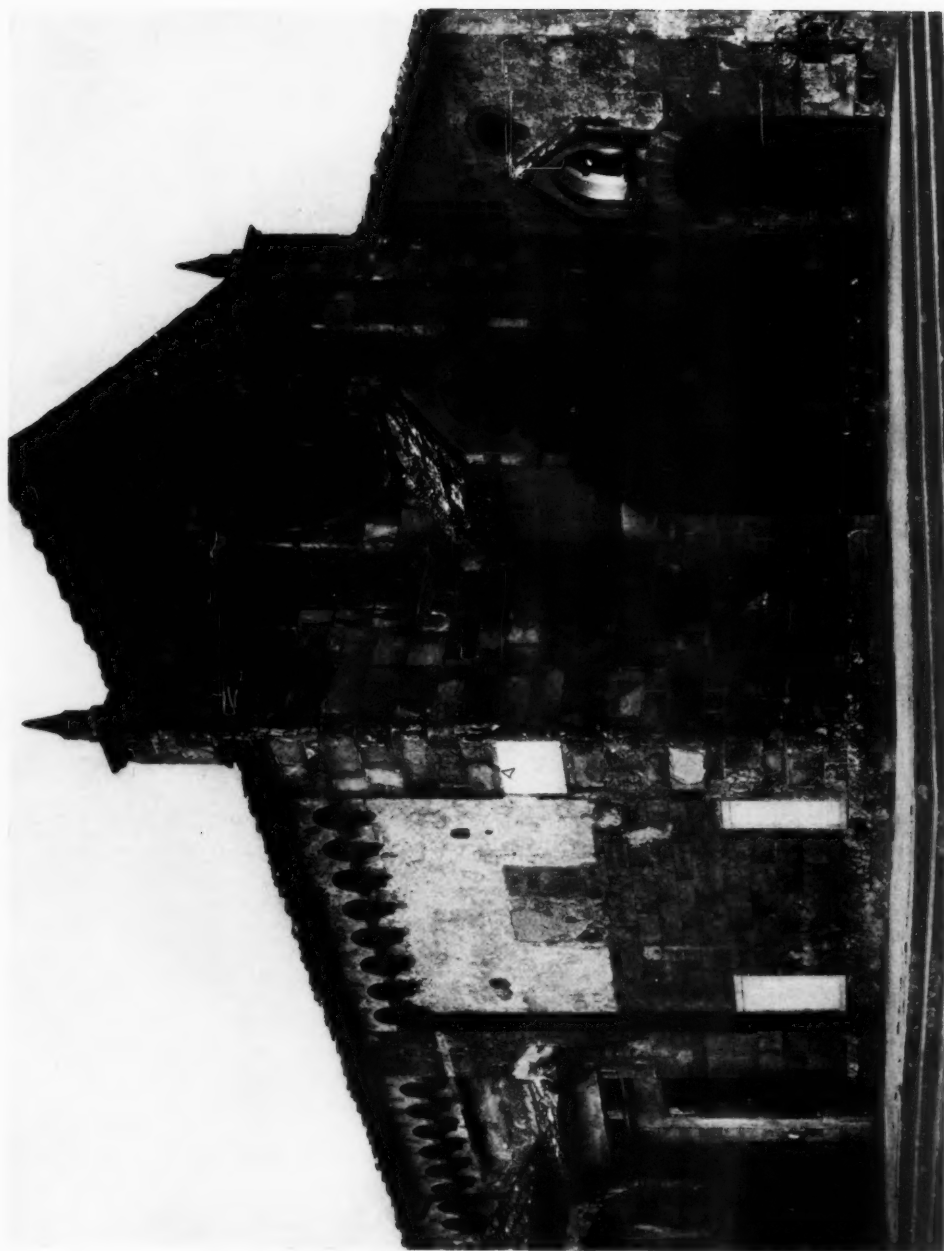
John B. Larnier, treasurer.

The guest of honor at the meeting was Victor Horta, the Belgian architectural director of the Royal School of Fine Arts and honorary president of the University of Belgium. His topic was "The Cathedrals and Public Buildings of Belgium and Northern France as Affected by the War."

Personal

Francis J. Creamer, a practising architect, of Philadelphia, and an expert on civic architecture and housing conditions, has been commissioned a second lieutenant in the Signal Corps and will sail for a foreign port in the near future. His office has been given up until the war is over.

Mr. John W. Robb, architect, of 1112 South Boston, Tulsa, Okla., writes us, "Burned out completely the first of the week. Will you state in your columns that I would like manufacturers to send me samples and catalogs promptly."



CHURCH OF S. FRANCESCO, FIESOLE, ITALY

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT