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The
Architectural Record.

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CERAMICS IN ARCHITECTURE.

New Uses for the Sharp-fire Variety.

SINCE Architecture entered upon its "Iron Age," the field of employment for ceramics for architectural purposes, which was already a very wide one, has been enlarged to an immense extent. Enameled terra-cotta rendered incalculable service in those wonderful countries, Assyria and Persia, whose influence upon the development of the arts in the western world it would be impossible to exaggerate. The impulse which led to this development has been represented by short-sighted critics as having come from Egypt and Greece. While Greece, true to the principles of the art of working in stone, was applying those principles with a logic and an energy which resulted in masterpieces whose ruins are still the admiration of the world, Assyria, handling another material, easier to paint and decorate, namely, burnt clay, had already produced monuments which, although differing in character, were not less beautiful. It is sufficient for us to mention here, as this article is not historical but deals with a practical, up-to-date matter, that admirable frieze, *The Archers in the Palace of Darius*, which is now to be seen in the Louvre Museum. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, while Gothic art was renovating the world of architectural forms, Persia was the scene of a new efflorescence of the eastern arts generally, and she produced in particular those splendid masterpieces of the fictile art which are so eagerly sought after by our museums and collectors—we mean the Persian tiles, those admirable and unsurpassed examples of decorative art. It would be an easy task to trace Persian influence, through Arabia and Morocco, into Europe, were the hispano-moresques represent, though in a specialized form, the oriental tradition of the ceramic art. During the Italian Renaissance, the researches of the Della Robbias in connection with enameled terra-cotta are sufficiently known. It is proper to remark here that the Della Robbia school remains a statuary school and that it employs the enamels and colors in the decoration of sculptured works, the enamel and the

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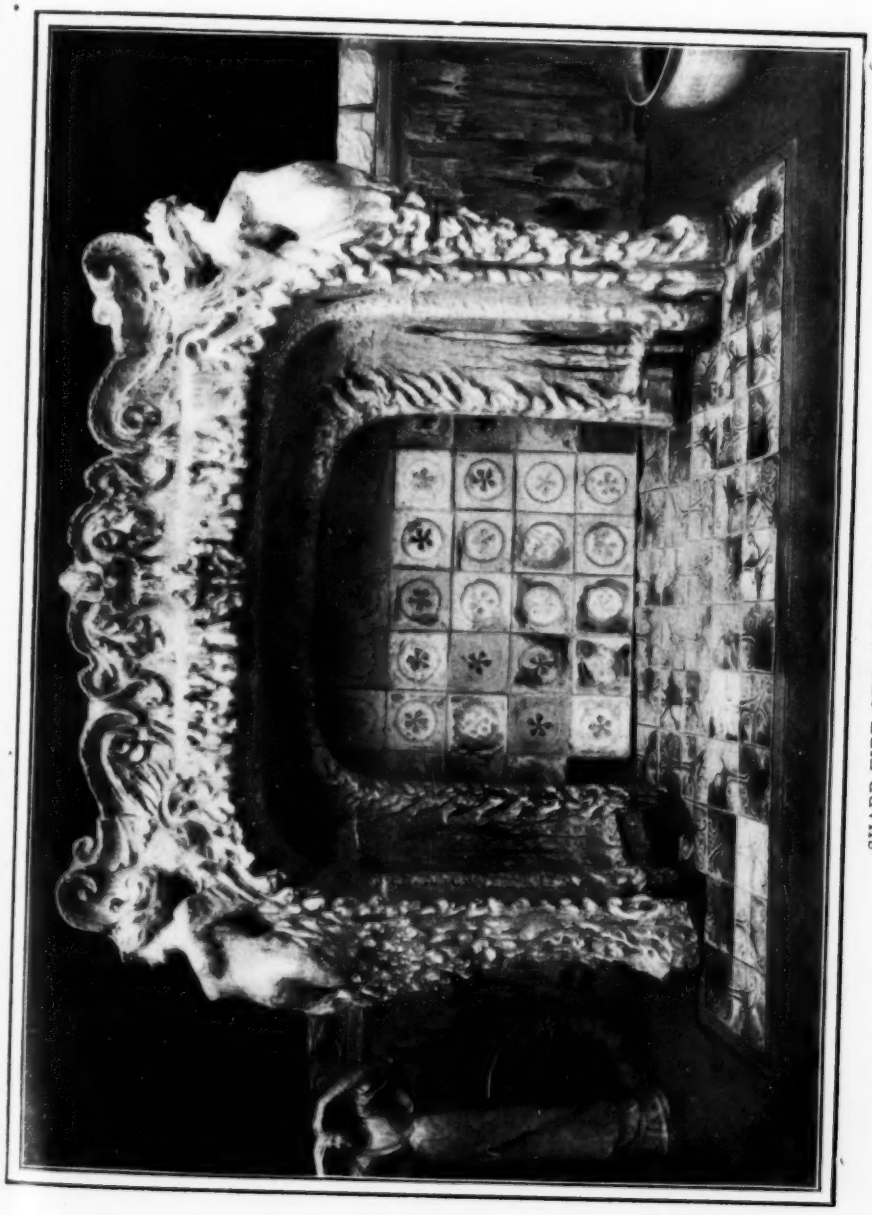
A FIREPLACE FRIEZE.

color being in this case a means and not an end. In the third generation of the Della Robbias, however, enameled and painted terra-cotta became more and more decorative and architectural. The Château de Madrid which Francis I erected near Paris was decorated entirely with enameled and painted tiles, but the relative fragility of the materials employed led to the dilapidation and ruin of this edifice, which, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, afforded a perfect type of decoration in enameled and painted tiles.

The neo-classic Renaissance, which made such cold, dry application of certain ancient principles badly interpreted, was intolerant of the brightness and richness of enameled-tile decoration, just as it was of polychromy in architecture and sculpture, from which the Middle Ages, like Antiquity, had managed to obtain such powerful effects. It was the reign of the dull and the colorless in architecture.

In our own times, which appear to us remarkable from the double standpoint of broadness of spirit historically (revival of types the most diverse) and of the constant movement towards forms suited to our own particular needs, the great value of enameled bricks and tiles in architectural decoration has been thoroughly grasped. Even in houses built of stone, enameled-brick friezes above the doorways or along the cornices lend brightness to the façade, while within, the fireplaces, revêtments, panels, cornice and doorway friezes, hall and bathroom decoration, and even the furniture, show what a prominent part enameled bricks and tiles play in the quite contemporary renaissance of decorative styles. In the United States the use of enameled bricks in building and decoration is even more widespread than in Europe.

But it is not with enameled bricks that we are concerned here. The considerable progress made in the potter's art in our time has led to parallel researches in what are called the sharp-fire arts. For twenty-five years efforts have been made in France to redis-



SHARP-FIRE CERAMICS—CHIMNEY PIECE.

cover the baking and enameling processes by which the marvelous Japanese stoneware was produced. It is a difficult, deceiving art, full of surprises and disappointments. To its new efflorescence in France the names of true and steadfast artists, such as Delaherche, Dalpayrat, Chaplet and others, are indissolubly attached; but examples of sharp-fire stoneware, with its characteristic beauty of material, enamel and color, have continued to remain rare and precious up to the present on account of the uncertainty of the results, due to the extreme difficulty of the processes employed and the variations caused by the action of the flame, air

SHARP-FIRE CERAMICS—PARTS OF FRIEZE AND OTHER OBJECTS.

pressure and smoke in the oven during the baking. The manufacture of sharp-fire stoneware is still an artistic, and not an industrial occupation.

At the same time, the quality of the products obtained by enameling and sharp-fire baking is such that it was to be expected that efforts would be made to utilize these products industrially. Sharp-fire stoneware, in fact, possesses to an incomparable degree the qualities of hardness, imporosity, brightness and fixity of colors. While ordinary enameled bricks or tiles—that is to say, those baked at a temperature ranging between 1200 and 1300 Fahr.—are still porous, the stoneware baked at 2430 Fahr. is absolutely imporous. Furthermore, in the case of the ordinary enameled brick the enamel remains as a coating on the brick and can be scratched with a knife. The sharp-fire brick, on the contrary, is so hard that it will cut china, earthenware and marble. Enamel

subjected to this high temperature impregnates, so to speak, the substance of the brick and makes one body therewith. The superiority of these bricks is evident. While the common enameled brick remains porous in spite of everything, is sensitive to atmospheric changes and allows damp to penetrate it, and while the enamel cracks in the sun, thus leading to the disaggregation of house fronts, the sharp-fire brick or tile remains entirely unchanged.

All this was known, but the difficulties connected with baking at high temperatures, and the delicate care with which sharp-fire enamels had to be manipulated, made the cost price of these products extremely high, to say nothing of the fact that it was impossible to be sure of always obtaining the desired result, and that the variableness of the enamel subjected to such temperatures made the process altogether uncertain. What might suit jugs and vases, to which the fact of their being unique gives all the greater value, could not apply to friezes, the characteristic of which is precisely that of presenting, in a multiplicity of tiles or bricks, a real unity.

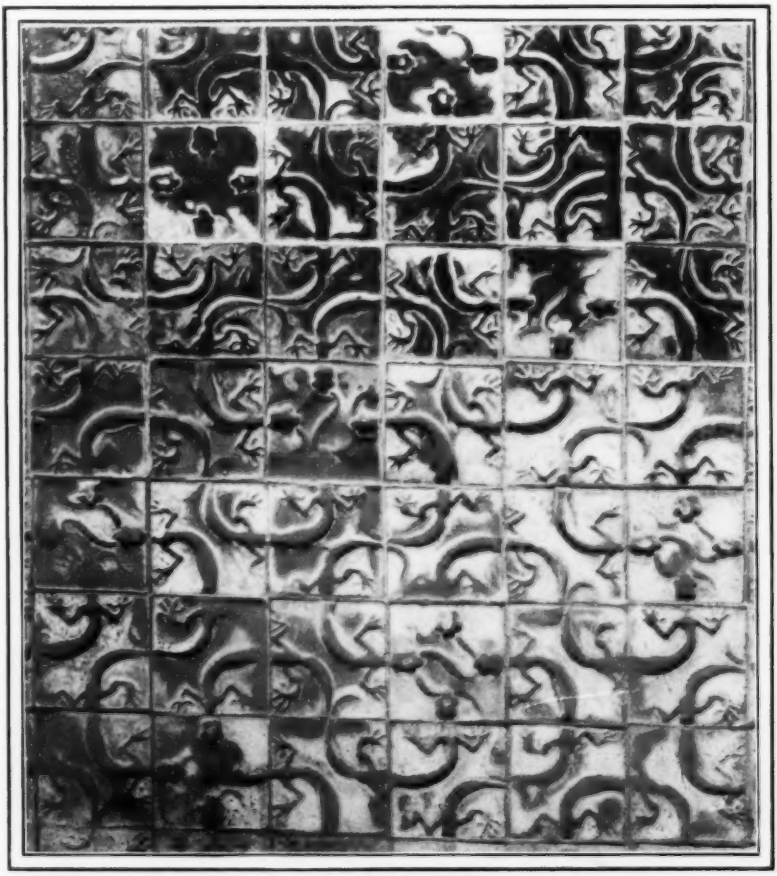
Fresh researches, conducted by a French chemist in a close and rigorously scientific spirit, have led to sharp-fire ceramics being put once for all on an industrial footing, and we think that a brief account of the result of these investigations will interest the readers of the Architectural Record, for it is probable that the development of this art will take a large place in house decoration, internal and external in the twentieth century.

Monsieur A. Bigot is now able, after a long series of experiments, to manipulate his sharp-fire enamels with such sureness that he can turn out a set of tiles, bricks or slabs absolutely equal in aspect, thus rendering it practicable to utilize these products in the architectural decoration of houses. We give here a few examples of his latest work, but the variety of possible productions is really infinite. One can have plain slabs, on which only the glazed enamel decoration figures, or slabs with an arabesque, or any sculptured subject—animal or floral—where the enamel accentuates the reliefs and gives the sunk parts a very effective appearance of depth; or again, larger sculptured pieces, such as ornamental chimney-pieces, cornices, etc. To all these subjects the fusion of the enamel and the play of the flame impart an incredible vividness and brilliancy.

In addition to the material qualities possessed by these sharp-fire tiles—qualities which will enable them to supersede the ordinary bricks and tiles as soon as they are put on the market—we must mention one of their most attractive merits, namely, the endless variety presented by one single set of tiles. In a series

SHARP-FIRE CERAMICS—A BUST.
(In possession of the Architectural Record.)

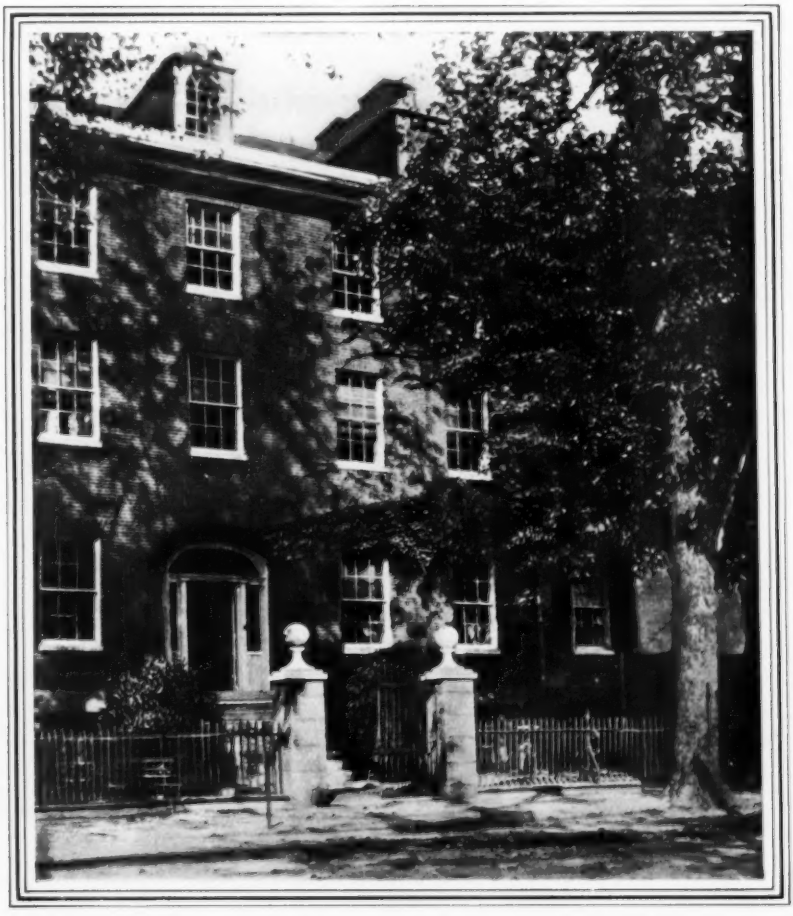
made of any given enamel the play of the flame, the action of the heat, imperceptibly different here and there in the oven, will give each tile an individuality of its own while leaving it fundamentally similar to all the other tiles of the series. Thus we have no longer the uniform, frigid tints of the ordinary enameled brick, but a thing with some shading about it, something more lifelike and



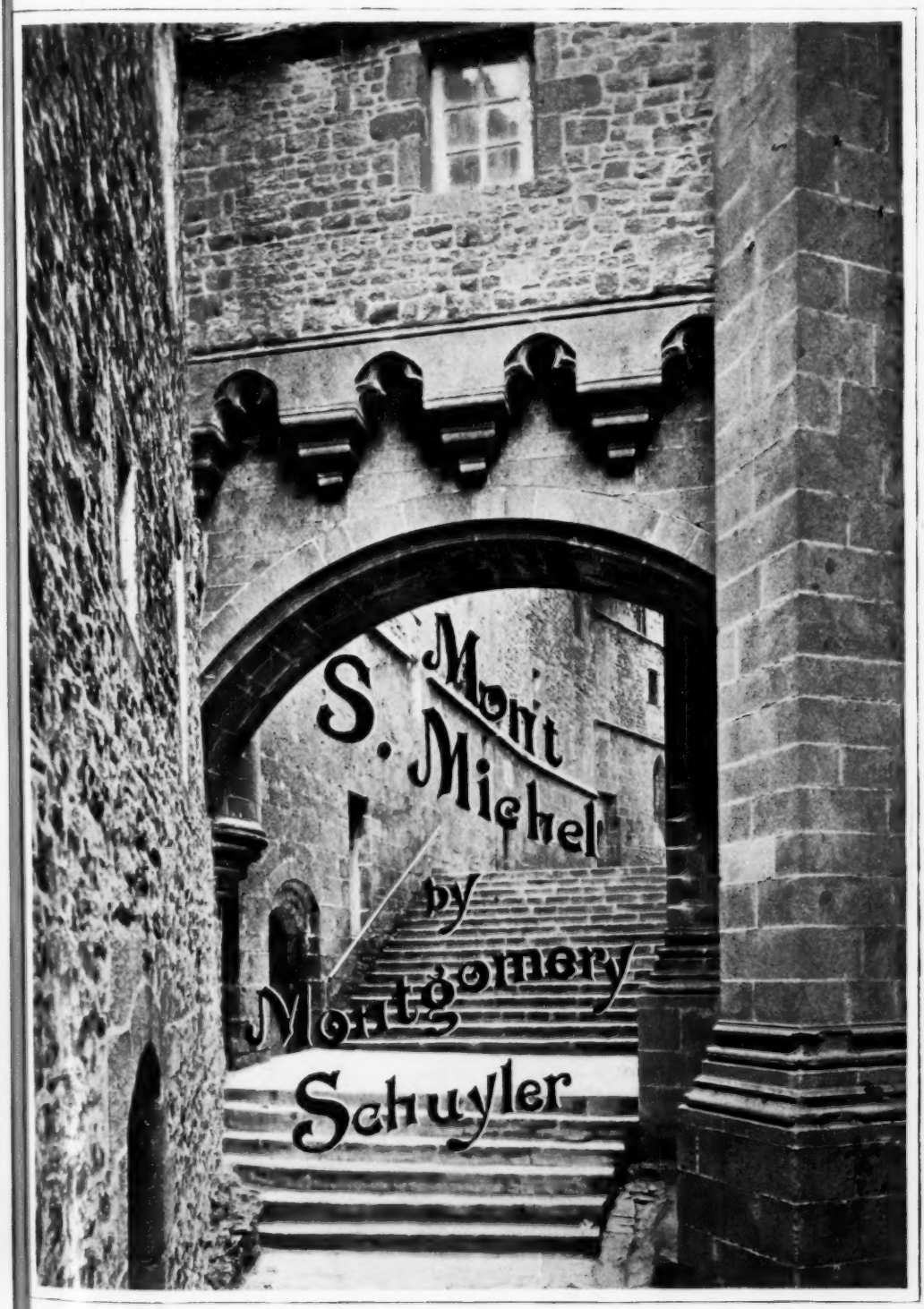
DECORATIVE PANEL IN BIGOT TILES.

truer to nature. It is somewhat like the leaves of a tree—they are all the same, and yet no two are precisely similar.

The art of sharp-fire pottery will restore to our decoration the life and variety which it now lacks, and everybody who takes an interest in the progress of the decorative arts—one might almost say in the renaissance—will carefully follow the latest investigations in this field. *Jean Schopfer.*



HOUSE ON COURT TERRACE.
Frederick, Maryland.



THE CHATELET.

This is the entrance to the Abbey proper, there being three fortified gates outside of it that give access to the Mount. It is considerably earlier than the girdle of fortifications at the base of the Rock, the date of it being given as 1257, and appears impregnable to a besieger without artillery. In fact, Mont St. Michel was the only strong place in Normandy that defied Henry V., the victor of Agincourt, repelling two attacks of the English, one in 1417 and 1423. Henry VI. ineffectually bombarded it in 1427 with stone balls, and two of his cannon, captured or abandoned, are still to be seen flanking the second gate of the fortress.

ARCHITECTURAL DAYS. No. 1.

A First Day in Europe.

The hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.—Hamlet.

IT was not my first first day in Europe. That had passed a good many days before. As was usual with good Americans in those old days, before the German maritime competition had set in, it had been passed in the shade of the cloisters and the "Rows" of Chester. How good it is of the English to keep this antiquity unspoiled, for the first impression of visiting Americans, where it shall so swiftly efface the reminiscence of Boston that is constituted by Liverpool! Things have changed now, and Southampton, or Cherbourg, or Havre is as apt as the Cove of Cork to be the passionate pilgrim's landfall, and any of these towns as the brown parochial little cathedral to give him his first taste of Europe.

It was Cherbourg that happened to be our port, and, that the fates might do their handsomest by me, they had shipped by the same steamer an eminent architect of Chicago, who was also, what the term does not, perhaps, necessarily connote, the most mellow and amiable of traveling companions, with the additional advantage that, in virtue of a boyhood spent at the École Centrale, in Paris, his French was of an impeccability. Seeing that neither of us had ever seen the west coast of Normandy before, nor was likely to see it again, and having our imaginations additionally inflamed by the copy of Mr. Percy Dearmer's delightful "High-

ways and Byways in Normandy," in the possession of a fellow passenger, we conspired to let the Exposition wait while we gave one day to the country, according to the prescription of the American politician; the more as Mont Saint Michel, which, according to Victor Hugo, is to France what the Pyramids are to Egypt, was but eighty miles away, and at the base of the blunt peninsula, of which Cherbourg stands near the tip. And Coutances and Avranches were on the way.

To the picturesque tourist, Cherbourg has about as much charm as Liverpool. Baedeker, who by the way is less appreciative and satisfactory about Normandy in general than the obsolescent Murray, describes it as "modern, clean, well built and comparatively uninteresting," which may be called a conservative estimate. The breakwater and the docks are the features of the place, of great interest to engineers, of great impressiveness even to laymen who recall the secular struggle with the elements, since the days of Louis XVI., the struggle like that of building the Eddystone, that it took to establish the dike. To an American it is impressive by dint of the "awful orderliness," which, according to Mr. Kipling, "cows" him when he first encounters Europe, but it is also of unmistakable modernity. Decidedly, that is not what we "came out for to see." A still more startling manifestation of modernity, and one of its ugliest, was vouchsafed to us as our lighter steamed in, in the gray of the July morning, for apparently the whole available French navy was riding behind the mole. There had, in fact, just been a great naval review by the President of the Republic, the foliage of the triumphal arches erected in whose honor we presently saw still withering in the streets. In the expression of ugliness and brutality in their modern war ships, as, as in the arts of expression in general, the French lead the world, and this holiday squadron looked almost grimmer than had looked, two years before, the returning victors of Santiago in New York Bay, leaden war paint and all. The actual formidableness is, of course, another matter. When that frightful sea monster, the Jean Bart, appeared in our waters to represent France at the Columbian celebration, a practical British naval officer is reported to have observed of the competitive exhibition: "That Frenchman is the dirtiest looking of the lot, but really she doesn't amount to very much." Whatever the expert might say to the efficiency of the assembled Frenchmen, the inexpert could not help being immensely impressed, and thinking how a Chinese admiral would rejoice to have monsters of such hideous mien to add to his masks and stinkpots, and other apparatus of intimidation.

We saw without envy, indeed, with conscious superiority, the steamer special pull out with our late shipmates, for Paris and the

Exposition, leaving us with an hour to kill before the train should start from the other station, that was to drop us at Pontorson, the station for the Mount. Cherbourg is so "comparatively uninteresting," that even an hour there is hard to kill, especially before people are up on Sunday morning. And, in fact, it was much more than an hour. During some days in Normandy, only one train on the Great Western system was on time, and that I missed because I was experimentally certain that it wouldn't be, and resented its punctuality as perfidious. But what can you expect of people who translate "Stopovers Allowed," on their time tables, into "Solutions de Continuité Autorisées?"

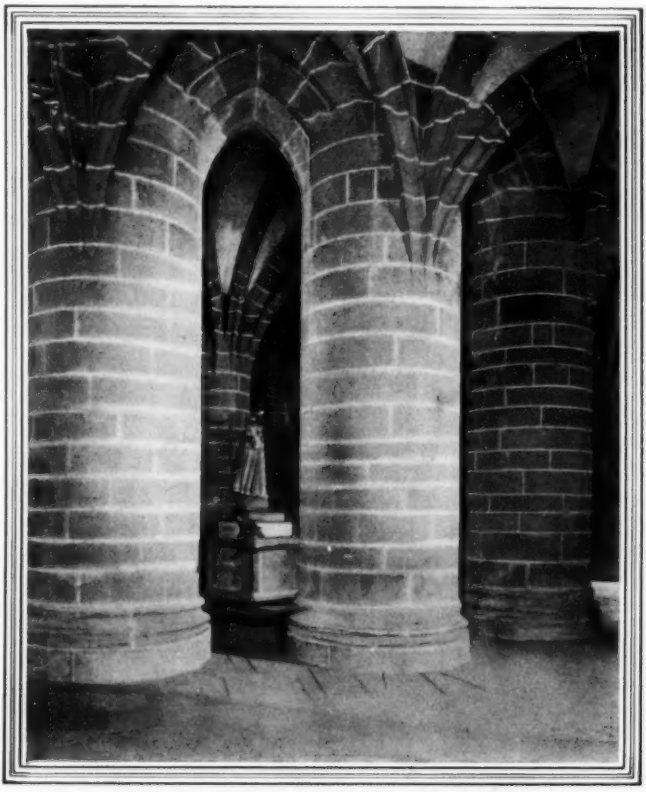
It is only when he has cleared the long cut through which the road passes from Cherbourg, and left Cherbourg behind him, that the passionate pilgrim finds himself unmistakably three thousand miles and several centuries from home,—

In that New World which is the Old.

Nay, before he has cleared the cut. The cut itself is rather ragged as to its unsodded slopes, unkempt in comparison with the best English lines, and it would be thought rather slovenly on the Pennsylvania. But along its bare and gullied sides spring profusely the field flowers which assure the American tourist that he has changed his skies. They have a general resemblance to what he may see at home, but they have so much more of depth and life of color than even our autumnal herbage, and at midsummer the burning yellows, the red flame of the wild poppies, the rich purples, dim to effacement the memory of the American flora. When one comes, at the stations, upon the gorgeous and incomparable roses which are one of the chief triumphs of French gardening, he is enabled to perceive how much genial nature has assisted ripe art in their production. But it is only when one has cleared the cut that this wilderness of bloom takes its place as a mere detail in the furniture of the landscape.

How fortunate we are in making this entrance into Normandy on its most charming side! Via Havre and the Seine it is almost wholly the handiwork of man that attracts and holds us. The landscape for the most part is but tame. But this rich and rolling country, with all the evidences, and even more, that the Seine valley gives of immemorial tilth and habitation, is far richer in turns and surprises and unexpected points of view, insomuch that it keeps two traveling companions busy, summoning each other from one window to the opposite not to miss any of its sudden revelations. "A park-like country," my companion aptly calls it. It is interspersed, at just the right spots and intervals, with groves that seem to have been planted by an artistic landscape-gardener

for the pleasure of the voyager, and that sometimes have in front almost the look of forests, until one takes them in flank and finds that the plantation is but a strip a few trees deep. The exposure brings to his mind that the decoration of the landscape is by no means the primary object of the plantation, that in this country,



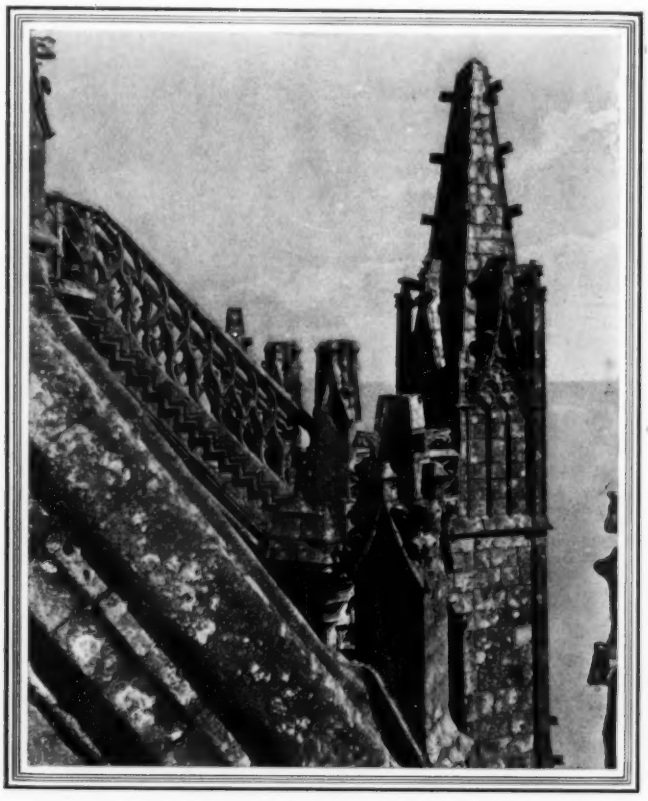
THE CRYPT OF THE GREAT PILLARS.

This massive crypt is sometimes described as of the eleventh century, being confused with other work on the same level. But the completeness in the piers of the arrangements for vaulting and the excellence and refinement of the workmanship would suffice to discredit this date. As a matter of historical fact, the crypt was begun as the foundation of the existing apse, and as part of the general plan of it, in 1453. Nothing shows more forcibly the unfailing sense of fitness which presided over the work than the fact that the massiveness and simplicity of the crypt were of the same design with the elaboration of the superstructure.

where nothing is wasted, timber is a crop like any other, a crop sown and reaped by instalments. But the discovery does not diminish, if it does not even enhance, one's delight in the aspect of the wood harvest, any more than the narrow strips of root crops, green brown or yellow, into which the incredibly frugal and patient tiller has divided the produce of his infinitesimal patch of soil. So

minute is the farming that the space cannot be spared for fences, and that peasants whose holdings adjoin turn their furrows on each other's land in alternate years.

To us, at a junction, presently enter a British bridal couple, notable and distinct among the throngs of French people "making the Sunday," and proceed, with some plausibility, to execrate the



THE LACE STAIRCASE.

The sense of fitness shown in the crypt is equally noticeable in the "lace staircase" of several centuries later, in which the surface of a flying buttress is utilized for a protected flight of steps. Rich as the work is, it shows nothing improper to the intractable granite of which it is composed, and its ornament is simply the elucidation of its structure.

system which has left them to find their own undirected way to the Mount, which is their goal also, and has all but carried them off, unwilling and unaware, straight to Paris on the main line express from Granville. To then the country seems "quite English," South English, "except for the building." Certainly it is more characteristic of England than of most of France that the traveler sees who makes his way to Paris from one of the channel ports,

this picturesque and varied landscape, with every now and then a river, which might be "Yarrow,"

> **Winding through the pomp**
> **Of cultivated nature.**

Every prospect pleases, and man by no means appears vile. The Norman peasants, too, are making holiday, at least the *paysannes*, for the *paysans* are somehow much less in evidence, and very wholesome and human they look, with their white coifs, their black gowns, enlivened, even among the young girls, only to a sober gray, their homely neatness, their shrewd, kindly, weather-beaten faces, and even their toil-worn hands. It is one of our distinctions that American women do not share the labors of the field. If I am not mistaken, Uncle George pointed it out to Rollo with patriotic pride. But one would not like, patriotically, to institute a comparison between the Norman farmers' wives and daughters, and the wives and daughters of the American farmers, whom one would be apt to see upon a station platform in an agricultural region, either of New England or of the West, whether in fact, or in what their author, I believe, calls the "veritisms" of Mr. Hamlin Garland. One recalls some such weary and dejected group, or rather series, of scattered and silent women waiting for their train, as he looks out at these countrywomen, forgathering with their neighbors, and pouring forth a ceaseless flow of lively chatter, quite ignoring the strangers who in America would keep them silent. It is not at all that they are talking for the benefit of the stranger. It is only that, according to that happy barbarism of Lowell's, they are

> **By throngs of strangers undisprivacied.**

Signs are not wanting that the conditions of life are even harder here than on the hill farms of New England, or the prairie farms of the Middle West. But it seems as plain that its asperities are mitigated by the pressure of the social obligation to take it as pleasantly as may be. Some of its hardness the passing tourist cannot help but apprehend. It is plain that it is not a joyous task to wring a living from one of these patches that with us would be scarcely too large for a kitchen garden. And at this station, the sight of a slouchy stripling, in the misfitting uniform and baggy red pantaloons of the French infantry, being embraced and cried over by the peasant mother who has come to see him off, needs no interpreter.

Doubtless, these good people are, in ways, more provincial than the American farmers' wives with whom yet they surely would not change lots. It was not in Normandy, but weeks afterwards in Touraine, that my companion came upon two Tourangelles and

a Tourangeau clamorously insisting to the station master upon their right, in consideration of three third class tickets, to take the cow along free of charge. It was not in Normandy, but it might have been, and it could not have been in Connecticut or Illinois.

It was at Coutances that two travelers, breakfastless since dawn, came upon another of the things that, according to the most famous of sentimental journeyers, "they order better in France." For here they could buy for three francs a "panier á provision," which contained enough, of excellent quality, for both:—half a fowl; a mutton chop; *item*, a slice of fresh Camembert; *item*, a pint of claret, not so good as the cider that is to be had so cheap all over Normandy; *item*, a pint of water wherewith to mitigate its asperities; *item*, a glass and paper napkins. Abundant time in which to consume this repast, for MM. the travelers are merely begged to leave the basket at any station when they have done with it. One finds also at the station good peaches at not far from New York prices. Mr. Dearmer, the latest of sentimental journeyers, paraphrases Sterne by saying that, in France in general one is "treated twice as well as in England, and charged half as much." We were presently to verify this. But meanwhile, how could we help instituting a comparison between what happened to us here and what would have happened in our own beloved land, if on a way train in a rural part we had thrown ourselves on the uncovenanted culinary mercies of the country? The contrast is upon an essential point of civilization. It is not flattering, and the American cannot fully restore his national self-esteem by dwelling, as the British tourist is fain to do, upon less mentionable matters which they order better in England.

As the train rolls on through the sweet and cheerful Norman country, one perceives that the exception of "the building," taken by our British companions, is a very large one. To begin with, the South of England is brick built, and West Normandy is stone built. But this difference of material is hardly more striking than the difference in the quality of the building. Ruskin, fresh from France, broke out in the "Seven Lamps" in quite pardonable indignation over the contrast: "What a strange sense of formalized deformity, of shriveled precision, of starved accuracy, of minute misanthropy have we, as we leave even the rude streets of Picardy for the market towns of Kent." The cabins of the peasantry are, here as massive as they are rough, the most straightforward and enduring supply of the practical requirements, mostly of solid stone, among the older altogether, but having the same character of rugged simplicity in the modern instances, in which plaster is rough cast over a backing of invisible rubble or rough brickwork, with roofs of thatch or tile, crowned at the ridge with a

half-round drain-tile. Even the few still later houses of exposed red brick have nothing incongruous, and keep themselves in countenance by dint of mere unpretending simplicity, while the massiveness of wall and roughness of roof and deep reveals of plain openings give them a literal picturesqueness, or attractiveness to the sketcher. And at every hamlet rises above them the gray Norman church, so plain that one cannot commonly guess its date within centuries as one sees it from the car window, the "crossing" commonly denoted by a saddle backed tower. Mr. Freeman might have learned, in the Normandy upon which he was the chief authority, that doctrine of the unity of history upon which he so strenuously insisted. Nowhere else is it more visibly impressed upon the traveler than in the buildings that bridge a decade of centuries, from the churches that were here before William of Normandy sailed for England, to the cabin or the station of last year. Here, more than elsewhere, it is continually borne in upon us, the art of architecture has never ceased to be vernacular. More than elsewhere, even in France, for we have scarcely seen an example of that academic and artificial modern French architecture of the schools, of the great Paris school, that in most parts of France competes with the vernacular building that is the artistic development of handicraft, and in which good sense is carried to the point of that fine sense which we call "good taste." Here, at Coutances, even the bulbous cupola of the Italianized tower of the church that confronts the cathedral, takes on an indigenous and home-grown air, while the spires of the great minster itself impress one with the truth that this old work is all of a piece, from cabin to castle and cathedral. Ruskin we find with pleasure, has been beforehand with us in this observation. Of this very spire of Coutances he emphasizes "the complete *domesticity* of the work; the evident treatment of the church spire as a magnified house roof."

The "public works" are worthy of the houses and the churches. The highways, as straight and level as the surface admits, are wide and white and clean. The stone bridges, which are much in the majority, are as vernacular, and of as indeterminate an antiquity, as the cabins or the village churches. Of the bridges of metal which are given over to the modern engineer, to whom all bridges are intrusted at home, there is no more to be said in praise than of ours—not so much, indeed, for they are not so scientifically attenuated according to the nature of their material, and so exchange for heaviness and clumsiness the aspect of lightness which an engineer who was an artist, as well as a scientist, would know how to raise to grace.

The Gothic of Normandy is almost unfailingly as happily placed

as wrought. As we pull out of Coutances, we look back to "a city set on a hill." And presently we come to Avranches, a city even more conspicuously and picturesquely perched, climbing the slope and bristling along the ridge, "piled deep and massy, close and high," like another and more famous "romantic town." Beyond Avranches, the country again declines, for the few miles that are left to Pontorson, to the gentler undulations that we have been watching all the morning, the quiet rural landscape, striped with vari-colored crops, ripening to the literal sickle, interspersed with fringes of woodland, punctuated with commas of gray cabins, semicolons of village churches or of "manoirs" that sometimes approach the proportions and the pretensions of chateaux; and we comprehend and approve the vogue in his native province of the song of the Norman poet, Frédéric Bérat:—

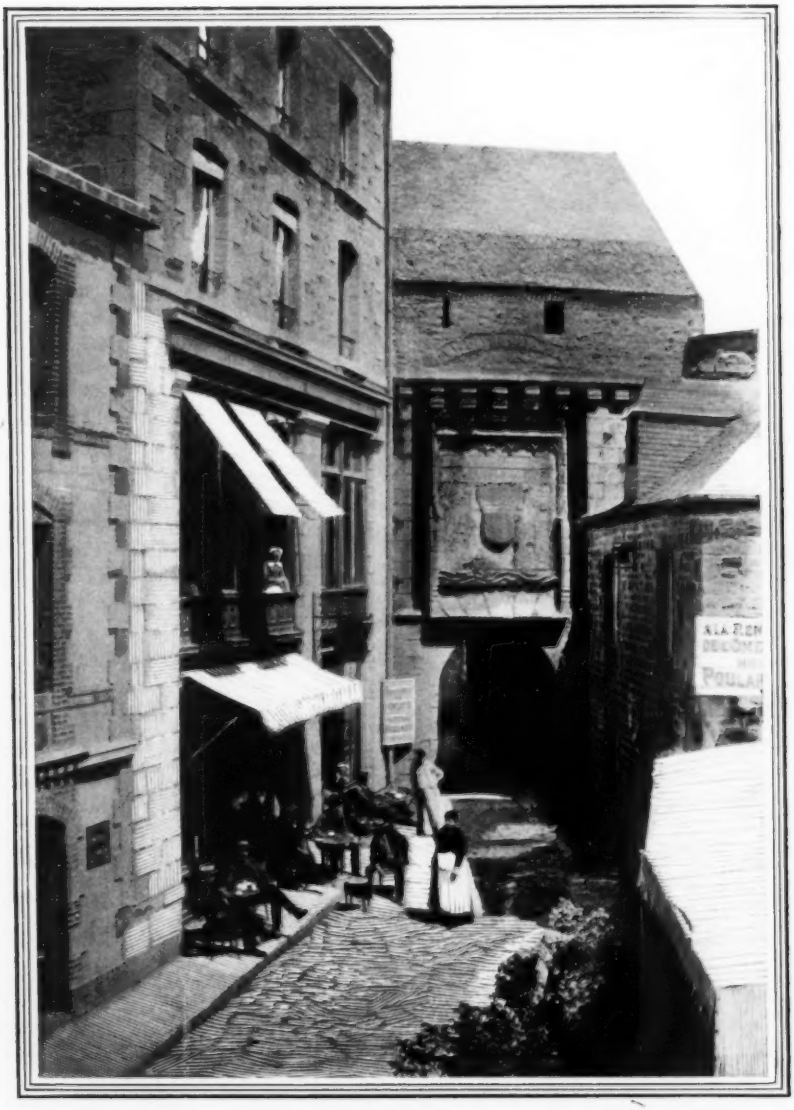
J'ai vu les champs de l'Helvetie,
Et ses châlets et ses glaciers;
J'ai vu le ciel de l'Italie,
Et Vénise et ses gondoliers.
En saluant chaque patrie,
Je me disais: "Aucun séjour
N'est plus beau que ma Normandie;
C'est le pays qui m'a donné le jour."

Pontorson is only the station for the Mount five miles away. In Roman times, they say, there was firm land, and roads all the way. But the sea broke its way in and gradually islanded the Mount, so that it was accessible only at certain stages of the tide, and to the ignorant or unwary the transit was a danger, as readers of French fiction have been often reminded. It was only in 1880 that the existing road was made which gives a safe access at all times. If we had a Mont Saint Michel at home (which is absurd), we should, undoubtedly, have a trolley line running to it (which would be still more absurd). Want of enterprise, or a sense of the fitness of things, which, in some cases appears to be a synonym for the same, has restrained the public conveyances to lumbering omnibuses drawn each by three of the fat and comfortable, but not swift Percherons, so that the passage is a matter of an hour. But who would grudge the time? The level road leads between strings of cabins whose inhabitants seem to eke out a precarious livelihood by selling drink to each other, for quite every other cabin advertises itself as a "Débit de boissons." Half-way or so there is a burying ground in which the national obligation to be gay is seen to be stronger than death. With its light iron crosses and monuments, all garlanded with immortelles, the aspect of this graveyard is not only cheerful, but almost "chipper," distinctly more so than the gray, solid and sombre habitations of the living.

There are huge heaps of sand along the road at intervals, waiting, presumably, to be converted into merchantable cement, and further out flourishing crops on either hand attest that there is enough earth mixed with the sand of the lands reclaimed from the sea, to nourish them, under the minute husbandry of the Norman peasant, whose clumsy, two-wheeled carts stand about or move, drawn by one, two, three and even four big horses tandem.

The first glimpse of the Mount is attended with difficulties to the "insides" of an omnibus. In my case it was complicated with the feet of the British bride, who had wisely chosen the box seat, and between whose dangling boots, which fell, or rose, some inches short of the foot board, I caught my first view of the bristling pyramid that crowns the rock. [I hasten to add that they were very neat boots—for an Englishwoman's). Only a few moments more and we come to the one practicable aperture in the circuit of the old towered walls that enclose the abbey fortress and its dependent hamlet, where they are not as effectually defended by the natural scarp of the cliffs themselves. A sharp turn to the left between the hooded barbicans, another to the right inside, a few steps straight on, and one finds himself confronting a very old gateway, crowned with an escutcheon, that gives entrance to the single street that climbs the cliff and encircles the castle, and landed upon the sidewalk of a very modern inn. He is "chez Poulard Ainé."

I was about to write that he finds himself in the arms of Madame. For of the warn welcomes that the traveler finds in the Norman inns, the warmest is that Madame Poulard Ainé. You, you are made to feel at once, are the guest she has been waiting for all these years. The pleasure of receiving you is her final purpose in keeping an hotel. The American traveler shudderingly recalls the kind of reception he has experienced, and would be likely to experience at a like establishment in the provincial parts of his own land. He is moved to desire that some benevolent plutocrat would organize an excursion to Normandy of New England tavern keepers, who need the experience so immensely more than the school teachers who are so much apter to get it, that they might take some lessons in the rudiments of their calling and of social civilization. They might find Madame "insincere." In the first place, it seems quite out of the question that so much "bonnefemmie" can exist without a basis of genuine human kindness. In the next, it is none of their or our business whether she is or not, when she is exerting herself for the pleasure of her inmates, who are made to feel that they are her guests. Dear brethren—and sisters, more especially in the country tavern-keeping line, how much we have to learn!



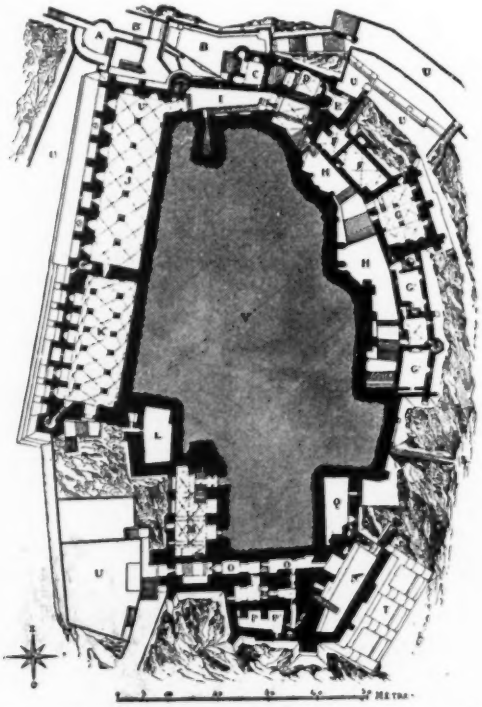
THE PORTE DU ROI.

This illustration shows the "business quarter" of the village of Mont St. Michel, and is what the visitor first sees on coming within the walls. The Porte du Roi is opposite, which is the entrance to the single street which climbs and skirts the rock on its Eastern side, and from which access is gained to the castle through the Chatelet. The modern building at the left with awnings is the original Hotel Poulard, and Madame Poulard is seen at the center. The Porte du Roi is the inner gate of the defences, and belongs to the fortifications erected early in the fifteenth century.

SOUTHERN VIEW FROM THE DIKE.

The dike, or embanked road in the foreground, continues across the marshes to Pontorson. It is a government work, finished in 1881. Before that the passage across the sands was unsafe at some stages of the tide. The construction of the dike was the preliminary step to a reclamation of the marshes for agriculture, which has already come near to compensating, by the crops raised upon the made land, the cost of the improvement. The distance across the sands, which was exposed until before the construction of the dike, is about a mile.

It would be the merest affectation to ignore the name of Poulard in writing about Mount St. Michel. There is not only a Poulard (Madame elicited him from his ranges and saucepans, when we expressed doubts of his actual existence, and proudly and merrily introduced us to a handsome, beaming person of her own early middle years). There are other and rival Poulards, whom Madame declares not to be properly Poulards at all, a Poulard

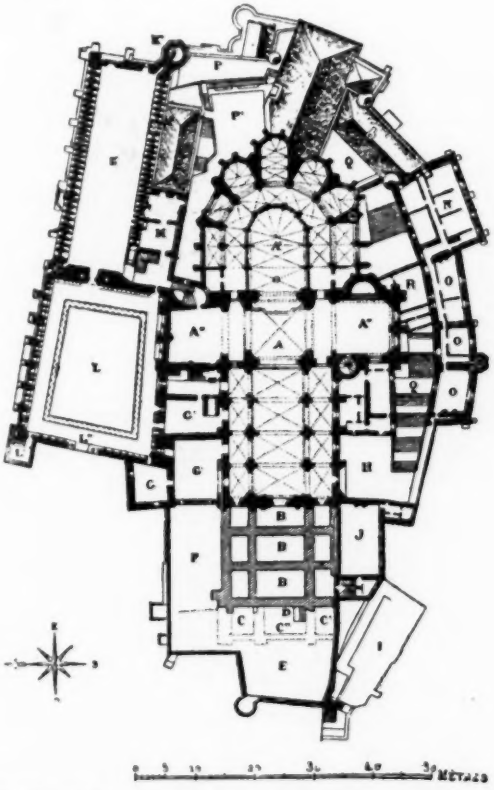


MONT ST. MICHEL. PLAN AT THE LEVEL OF THE GUARD ROOM, ALMONRY AND CELLAR.

Key to plan: A, tour Claudine; B B B, ramparts; C, chatelet; D, guard room; F F, steward's lodging and bailey, or outer court; G G G, abbot's lodging and abbatial buildings; H, courtyard and great stairway; I, courtyard of the Merveille; J, almonry; K, cellar; L, former abbatial buildings; M, crypt known as "Galerie d'Aquilon" (of the North Wind); N, hostelry; O O, passages connecting abbey with hostelry; P P, prison and dungeon; U, garden, terraces and covered way; V, body of rock.

Jeune, a Veuve Poulard, and the rivalry is the chief contemporaneous human interest of the Mount. Solemn warnings stare at you from coigns of vantage on the cliffs, not to confound the Poulard, "At the Renown of the Omelette" with other establishments bearing the same name. The widow and the junior have their agents out to decoy you from the elder line and the path of virtue. What happens to you if you yield to their blandishments

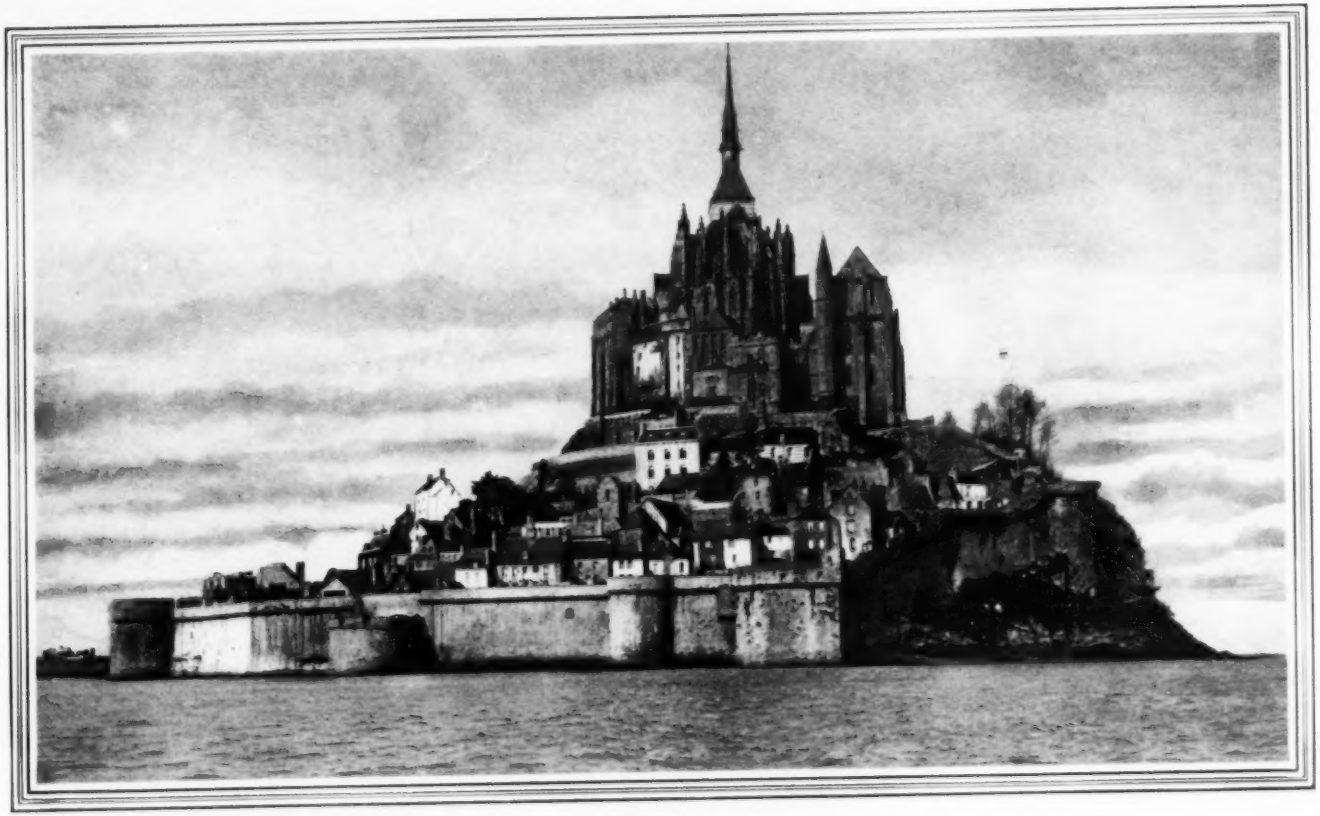
I neither know nor care, knowing how well you are rewarded if you resist, and obtain lodgings in any one of the three houses into which the original humble auberge has expanded. The chambers are comfortable, the table d'hote excellent, the omelette worthy of its renown, the "addition" to an American absurd in its moderation. One finds himself extremely well chez Poulard ainé (not on any account jeune or veuve).



MONT ST. MICHEL. PLAN AT THE LEVEL OF THE UPPER CHURCH, THE CLOISTERS, AND THE DORMITORY.

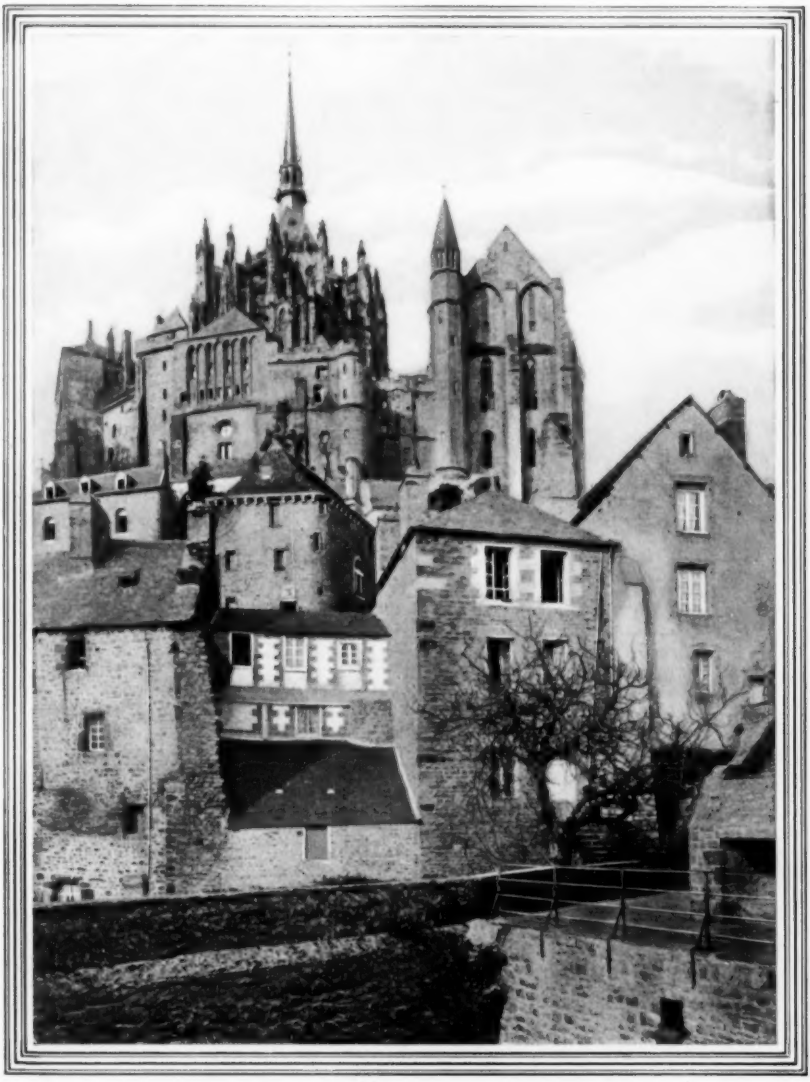
Key to plan: A, A, A, church, choir and transepts; B, B, B, first three bay of nave, destroyed in 1776; C, C, C, towers and porch; E, former terrace; F, former chapter house; G, G, former cloi.tral buildings, dormitories; H, platform; I, ruin of hostelry; J, infirmary; K, dormitories of the Merveille; L, L, cloisters; M, vestry; N, abbot's lodgings; O, O, O, guest chambers; P, P, courtyard and terrace; Q, courtyard of apse and great staircase.

But after all, even Poulard ainé is an incidental and secondary attraction to one of the wonders of the world. As a Christian hermitage the Rock has a fairly authentic history of a millennium and a third, from the time, in the seventh century, when the Bishop of Avranches, posthumously promoted to be St. Aubert, began to resort to it for meditation. But it was not till early in the



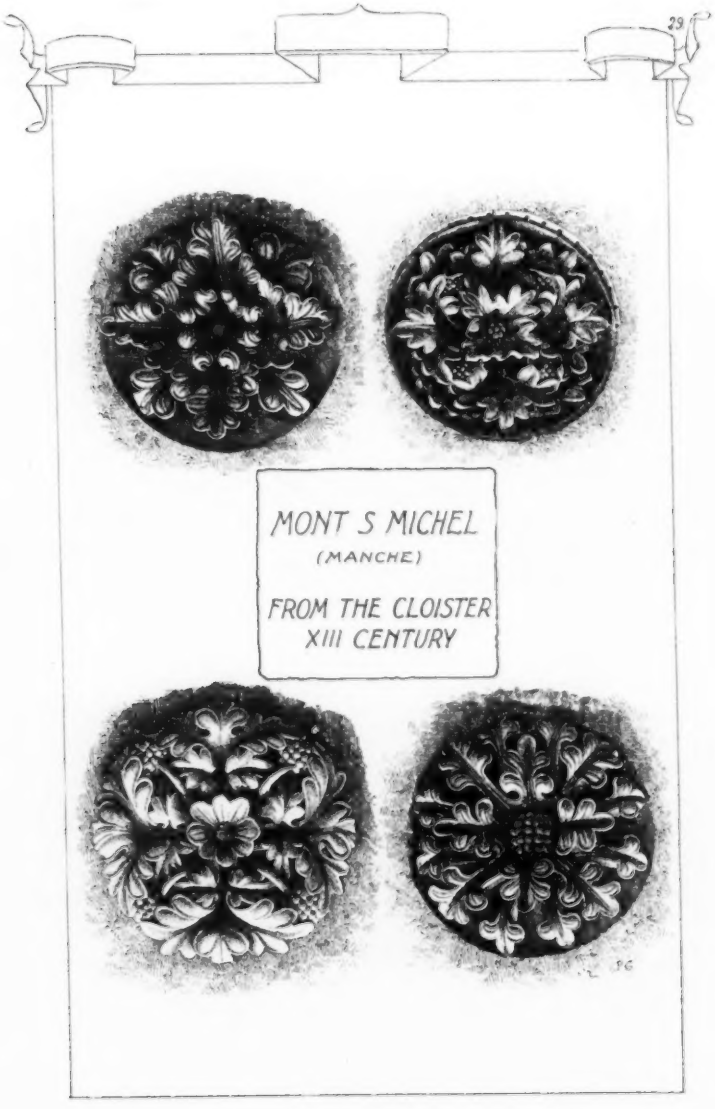
EASTERN VIEW.

This is the best general view of the fortifications. They do not extend completely around the rock, which, to seaward, is equally fortified by nature through the sheer rise of its sides. The tall and long wall near the summit in the Southern view is the flank of the "Merveille," of which the East end is seen in this. This was the conventual building proper, the residence of the monks and of the Knights of the Order of St. Michel, founded by Louis XI. in 1469, though the building itself, 246 feet long by 108 high, dates from the thirteenth century.



LOOKING WEST, FROM THE RAMPARTS.

The illustration gives one of the most impressive views of the general architecture of the Rock. The building, it will be seen, is in three tiers, the first being the lower side of the single street of the village, the second the upper side of the same, while the third consists of the abbey itself and its dependencies. The street winds as well as rises. The domestic building is of all ages, from the thirteenth century to the nineteenth, but, being almost all of massive granite, even the oldest is in good preservation.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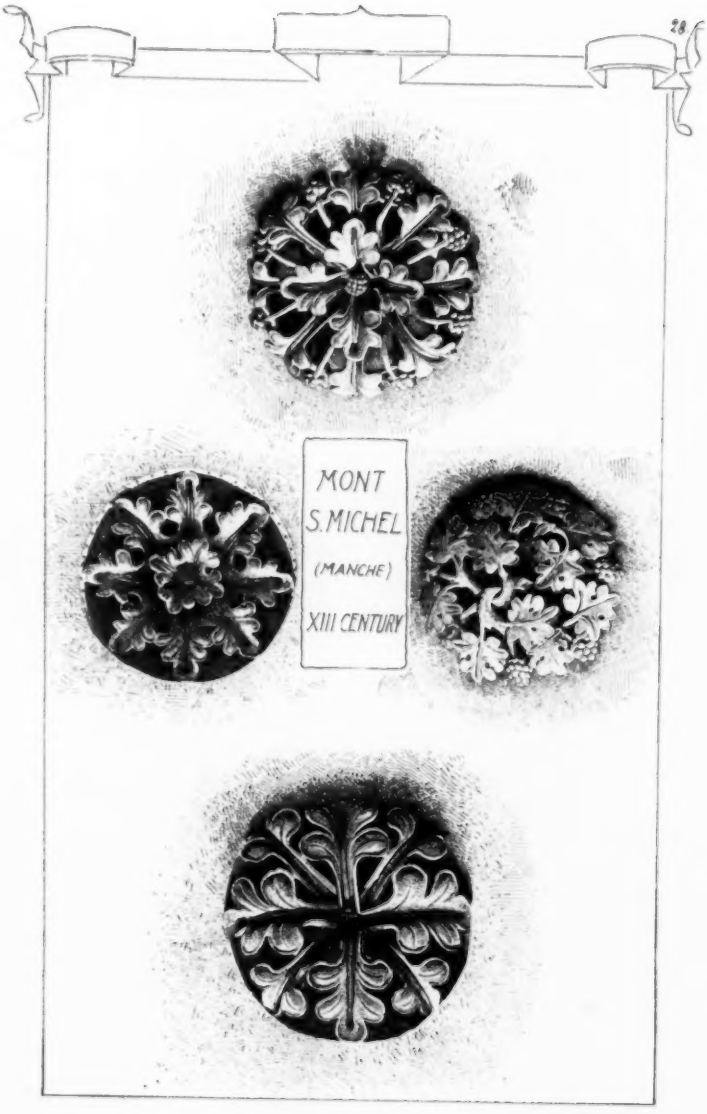
FROM THE CLOISTER
XIII CENTURY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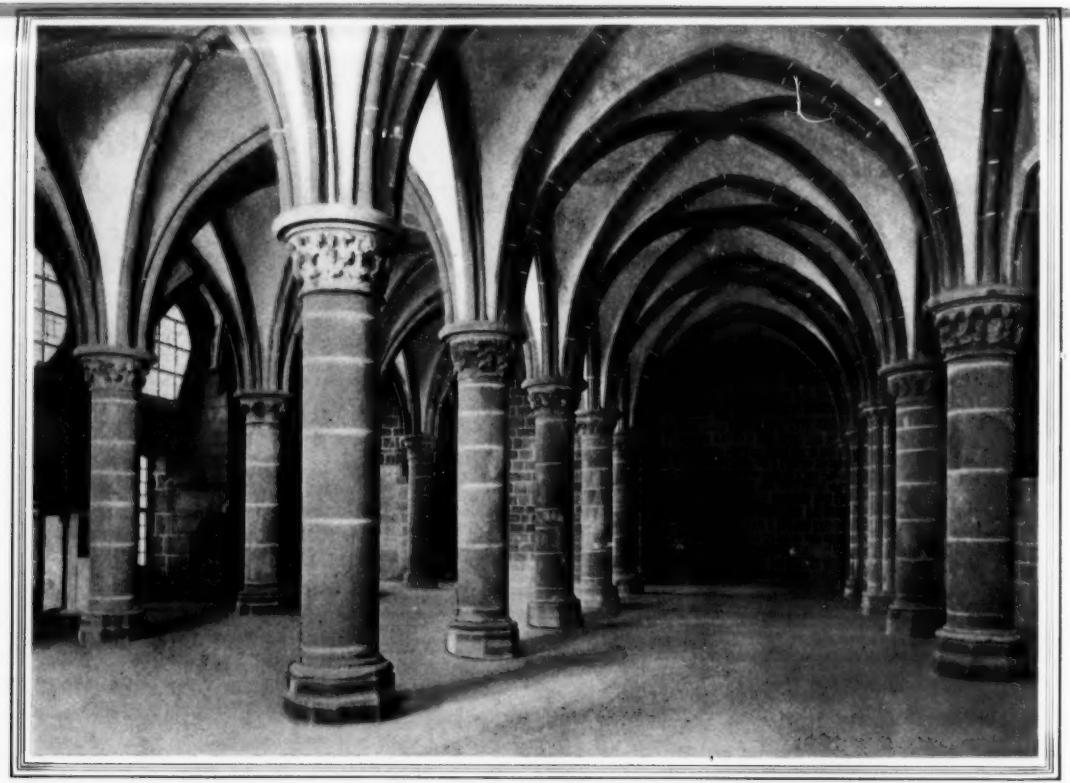
MONT
S. MICHEL
(MANCHE)
XIII CENTURY

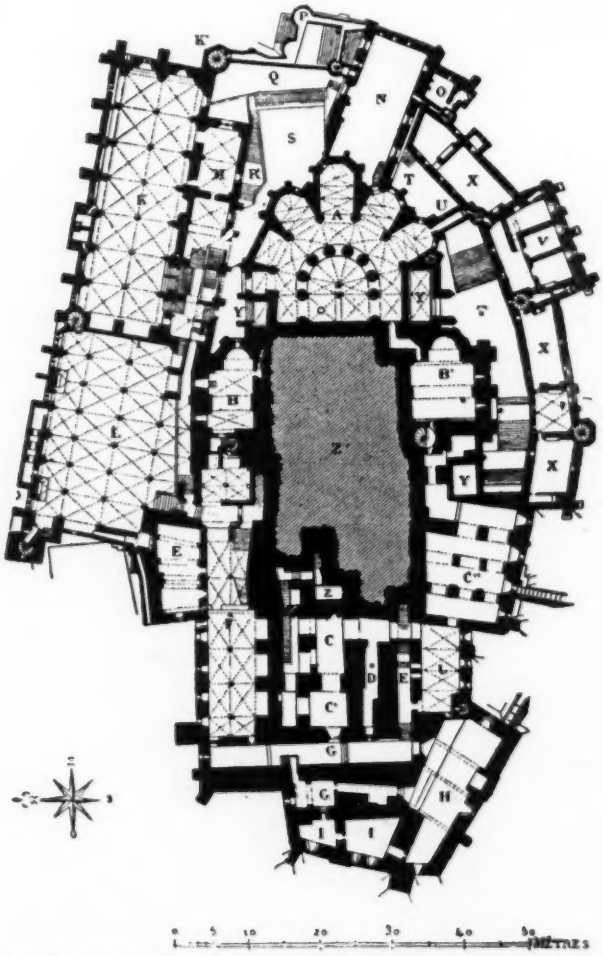
eleventh century, half a century before Duke William sailed for England, that Abbot Hildebert conceived the great design of establishing a platform at the summit, and building above it with its own material and granite from the nearest coast, literally, to recur to our Ruskin, "raising into ordered spires the wild rocks of the Norman sea." The Benedictines believed in work, as well as in poverty, chastity and obedience, and it was by monastic labor that the first foundations were spread. Thenceforward, for five centuries, building went on. Part of the existing nave is of the eleventh century, the whole "Merveille," the austere gabled pile on the northeast of the Mount, with its almonry, refectory, dormitory, cloisters, of the early thirteenth; the Châtelet and most of the fortifications of the fourteenth, the choir of the fifteenth. Thus, on these few acres, is spread the magnificent epitome of French Gothic architecture, ecclesiastical, military and domestic. The epitome was finished, as Mr. Dearmer remarks, only just in time, for the last touches were given to the choir in 1518, and in 1520 the royal builder who Italianized everything he touched and who touched so much, Francis I., visited the Mount. He left no traces, happily for us. But there is an odd incongruous piece of eighteenth century classic, in the front of the abbey church, a double "order," after the fashion of that time. The innovation has itself become an antiquity, as weather-worn and lichened as the far older work it adjoins. It is to be hoped the restorers will abandon their reported purpose of removing the anomaly and restoring the nave to its pristine proportions; for the anomaly is part of the "res gestae."

All this is no more to be studied and apprehended in a day than it was built in a day. A fortnight on the spot would be needed to "get it." All that one can arrive at in one climb and ramble is the conviction of the little maid who serves you with appropriate Benedictine, on your way down by the ramparts, that it is "bien compliqué." For the real study of it one must resort, unless he has time and ability to do the work all over by himself, to the latest and best authority on the Mount, the exhaustive and profusely illustrated volume of M. Paul Gout, which leaves no historical or architectural point untouched, and which has the advantage of showing that a Frenchman may wear a great weight of learing lightly, and does not necessarily become illegible, even when he knows a great deal. Or one may resort to the more compendious elucidation in Sir Walter Armstrong's English edition of M. Corroyer's "Gothic Architecture" in which the Mount is taken as the type of a mediaeval abbey fortress, in M. Corroyer's words, "the grandest example of combined religious and military architecture of the finest mediaeval period."



THE SALLE DES CHEVALIERS.

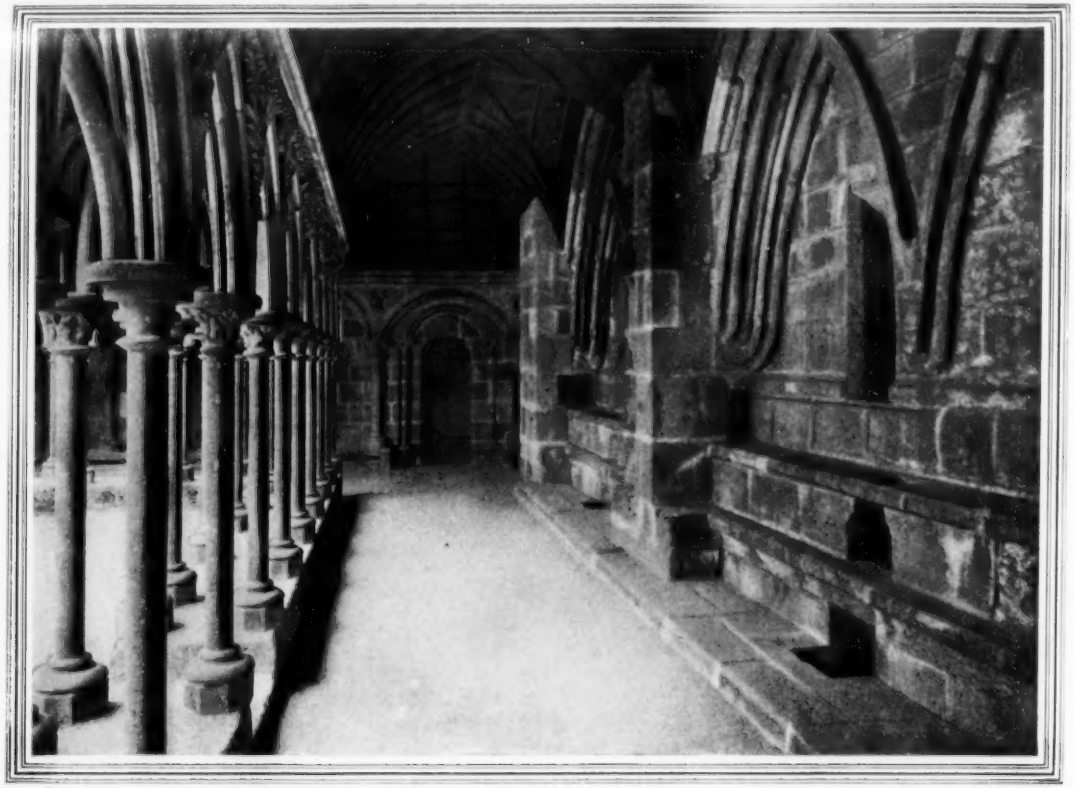
As may be made out from the ground plans, the Merveille really consists of two buildings, being divided, midway of its length, through all three stories. The lower stage is divided between the cellar and the almonry, the second between the Salle des Chevaliers (Knights' Hall), and the Salle des Hotes, which was the refectory and dormitory of the monks. The most elaborate and beautiful of all these is the Knights' Hall, in early but still completely developed Gothic. It has no outside roof, the floor of the cloister resting directly on its vaulting.



PLAN AT THE LEVEL OF THE LOWER CHURCH, REFECTORY AND KNIGHTS' HALL.

Key to plan: A, lower church; B B, chapels under transepts; C C C, substructure of Romanesque nave, monks' burying ground and base of South platform; D, old cistern; E, old cloistral buildings and refectory; F, old ambulatory; G, H, I, passage, hostelry and offices; K, K, L, M, refectory and Knights' Hall; N, officers' quarters; P, chatelet; Q, courtyard of the Mehveille; R, S, staircase and terrace; T, courtyard of church; V, X, abbot's lodgings and guest chambers; Y, Y, cisterns; Z, body of rock.

How the impression of the energy and perseverance as well as of the skill of the old Benedictines deepens upon you as you climb the flights of more than a thousand steps, cut out of the native rock, and "worn by the feet that now are silent" which lead from the lowest level of the single street to the uppermost terrace. The cincture of fortifications that girdles the rock and encloses the buildings is later than most of them, a modern erection

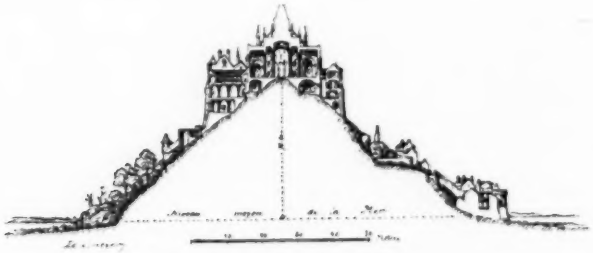


THE CLOISTER.

The floor of the cloister is the roof of the Western half of the Merveille. The arcades between the ambulatory and the court are double, the springing of the arch in one row corresponding with the point of the next, with space between the rows for an exquisite groined vault. The shafts are of granite, but in the superstructure Caen stone is used. It is the only exception in the whole pile to the use of granite, and tempts to a freedom and fantasy of design corresponding with the facility of the material. It is instructive to compare the treatment of the arcades with that of the enclosing walls of granite.

of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. With incredible labor the abbot and his monks and soldiers reared these massive defences just as gunpowder was about to supersede them. The place was never in fact taken in any of the many attempts upon it by force or treachery. It must have been impregnable, between the defences of nature and of art, before artillery, and, as my companion observes: "It still looks proof against sneak thieves." And how grim is the aspect of the strong places! One look into the darkness of the kennels that in their time have served as dungeons for some of the greatest men in France is quite enough for the modern observer, who would not house his enemy's dog in one of them. As the late Thomas Carlyle would gleefully have remarked on inspecting them: "Those were earnest times."

The hapless prisoners thus lodged were let out to haul up the supplies for the abbey from the base of the Mount by the steeply inclined plane that is still shown you. But the pile is not all dungeons and defences. The refectory and the Hall of the Knights



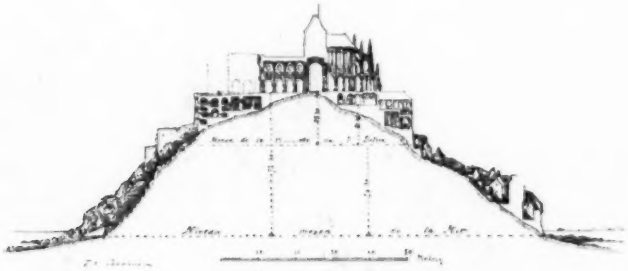
ABBEY OF MONT ST. MICHEL.
Transverse section from north to south.

still give the notion of barbaric geniality and rude good cheer, and the cloistered terrace of air and exercise, if not of "out door sports." Alone of all the work the cloister is built in freestone, and the unfailing good sense of the monkish builders is seen in the higher ornateness which is given to its capitals and spandrils than to the more intractable granite. Rich as are, for example, the crocketed flying buttresses of the choir, the richness has been stopped distinctly short of the elaboration to which the ornamentation of the cloisters has been carried, while the intractability finds its compensation in duration. Whereas the soft stone has had to be restored conjecturally, and has in consequence the perfunctory and lifeless air that belongs to all modern work in comparison with mediaeval, the detail of the weather-worn and lichened granite is distinct enough to afford copies in which the modern workman cannot err, nor restorer go wrong. The Franch official restoration has been done with perfect knowledge and dis-

INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH.

The nave of the abbey church, of which the western bays have fallen or been demolished, and which is fronted with a mask of eighteenth century classic, is itself an excellent specimen of the twelfth century Romanesque of Normandy. A good part of it, indeed, is of the eleventh century, but it is in as fully developed a style as the later churches of the province, showing the arrangement of nave, arcade, triforium and clerestory in perfection, and also the intention of covering the nave with a vault even before the builders had skill or courage to undertake the actual vaulting.

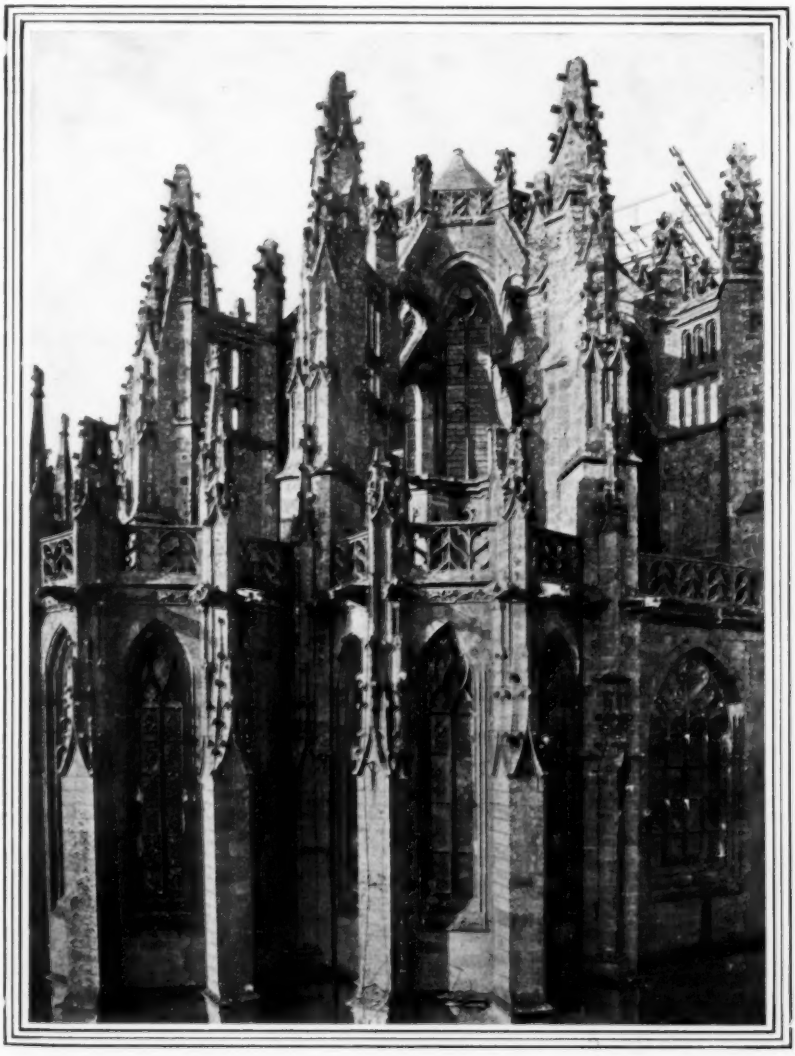
cretion, the chief exception being the roofing of the cloisters in black and orange tiles of garish newness, which have the air of a votive offering from a brewer of the wildest American West. It was a happy thought to crown the edifice with an unfeignedly modern flèche, in the form of M. Fremiet's "St. Michel." Although in place, four hundred feet and more above sea-level, this tells only as a shapeless splash of silhouette against the sky, and from any accessible point of view only as a poised, aspiring shape, yet, close at hand, one sees it to be a work which the monkish builders at once could not have produced and would have been glad to have reproduced if they had known how. Some such vindication of our generation was sorely needed to keep the modern visitor in countenance among so much that is the despair of modern artists, the faithful, skilful and beautiful elucidation of the structural facts which is the design; the faithful, skilful and beautiful execution of the design which is the workmanship. One can not fail to



ABBEY OF MONT ST. MICHEL.
Longitudinal section from west to east.

see at every turn that the monkish builders had found the secret of life in that deep and thorough enjoyment of their work, which was the secret of the best that life had to offer in the fourteenth century, as it is at the beginning of the twentieth and, in the handicrafts at least, it is the moderns who suffer in the comparison. In these, the world's work is not so interesting to the workmen, and so not to beholders, as it was then.

But even this "mediaeval miracle" cannot hold our attention as we emerge upon the topmost terraces into the open air of the July afternoon from our weary scaling of its outworks and dungeons and halls and cloisters and shrines. Look out upon the prospect; look round upon the "circumspect." Close under us, to landward, drops the cliff, and half way down yawns the fissure of the single circling street between the rock and the ramparts, lined with the quaint old houses, standing free on the outer edge, and on the inner plastered against the face of the native rock which even crops



THE APSE.

The choir of the old abbey church fell in in 1421, while the English, from the mainland, were still threatening the Mount. When peace came, after a hundred years, in 1453, the Cardinal-Abbot D'estoteville laid, in the Crypt of the Great Pillars, the foundations of the new choir, which was steadily continued under his successors, until the completion in 1520. The choir is thus the swan-song of French Gothic. Francis I. visited the Mount in 1518. The detail attracts the attention of most visitors, but M. Paul Gout is quite in the right in saying that the real glory of the choir lies in the "powerful grasp and the expressive clearness of the general conception."

out untrimmed in the chancel of the little parish church, while every level the size of a parlor that accrues along the slopes is a blooming garden.

Beyond the base stretches away eastward the sandy line of the dike by which we came from Pontorson, the horses along its surface dwindled, from our eminence, to flies. To the north the great bay, bounded by a line of faint blue bluffs, the sands covered by the incoming tide and the varying depth marked by the interchange of colors on the surface where "The shoaling blue plays into green," a wonderful iridescence of emeralds and turquoises. Straight out to sea, the cliff drops almost sheer, even better defended by nature than to landward by man's art, and its rocky sides half clothed with shaggy trees, hanging on for dear life, like the hanging habitations on the other face. And straight away southwestward, the declining sun marks a shining street along the sea:—

Splendet tremulo sub lumine pontus.

At the end of that shining trail is New York, only a week away by the almanac, a thousand years by the impressions of this so crowded day. And we fervently agree that it is good for us to be here, and that, if we had to take another steamer back to-morrow morning, we should have been richly overpaid for coming.

Montgomery Schuyler.

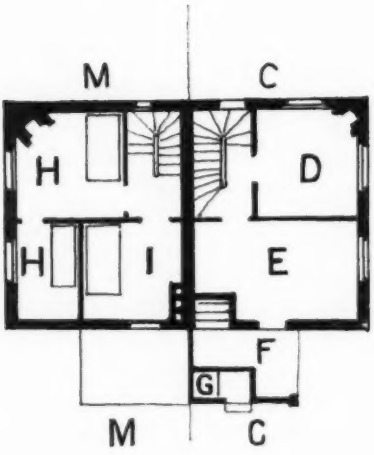
Note.—The plans and sections given in the text are from Corroyer's "Gothic Architecture," published by Macmillan & Co.

THE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AS IT IS IN FRANCE.

HOW do we manage matters in France? I will tell you how a Frenchman sees it, although I may speak of much well known to many. The ideal architect, now as ever, should be both the scholar and artist. He should possess very varied knowledge. He should know the theory of all arts and all sciences, which have anything to do with architecture. With this he should combine taste, the fine judgment and the genius of his art. Knowledge of history, of literature, geometry, mechanics, perspective and physics is necessary. But something which is absolutely indispensable is a thorough knowledge of design; for, after all, the entire art of the architect manifests itself in design.

When an architect is consulted with regard to a work of architecture, he should be able on the spot to design mentally one or even several projects of the structure in question, in accordance with the intentions of the person who wishes to build. This mental design makes it possible for him to propose at once to the owner one or several types of structure for the proposed building. When the first general understanding has been arrived at, the architect makes a sketch, a rough tracing with the pen, indicating only the ensemble and the principal divisions, serving as a basis for the execution of the real design or the final project. The architect should be able with his sketch to give an approximate estimate of the expense, based on the cost price per metre (or foot) of surface and per floor for a structure of the character ordered.

When client and architect agree on the ensemble of the structure and its essential points, the architect starts on the execution of his project. He first draws his design with pencil and on a reduced scale. The simplest and most commonly used scale is one decimetre or two decimetres, on which one or several of the divisions as units of length are taken. If it is understood that 1 centimetre, 2 centimetres, 5 centimetres represent 1 metre measured on the ground, we say that the design executed is on the scale of $0^{m},01$, of $0^{m},02$, of $0^{m},005$ per metre. The custom in France is, to draw the plans at 2 centimetres per metre. The design, first executed with pencil, as we said above, is drawn in ink with ruler and pen, following the lines traced with pencil, which after this second operation are erased. The interrupted lines (— - — - — - — - —) represent axes, as *e. g.*, the axes of the walls; the dotted lines (.....) indicate the concealed lines and outlines. The connecting lines for the sides are likewise dotted; but on the plans painted with indian-ink, they are often entered with red ink.



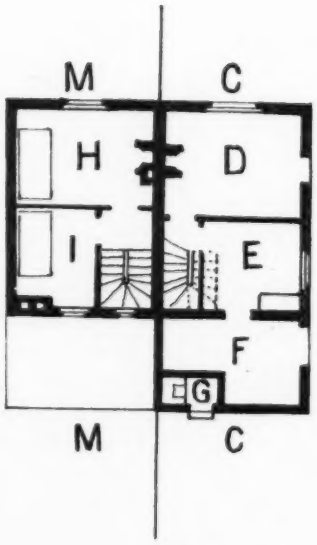


FIG. 1.

To express the design, the architect must represent in form of a plan, a profile and an elevation, the building which is to be erected.

The plan gives the fundamental conception of the building. It is, in fact, on the composition of this plan, that the first merit of a work of architecture depends: the usefulness, I mean, of the building modeled upon the needs and convenience of its inhabitants. The skill of the architect consists in combining the convenience of the interior connections, of the necessary exits, with a regularity which is always desirable; but to this regularity, to symmetry, to the uniform correspondence between all the parts of a plan, he must not sacrifice everything else; above all it is necessary that the general and special arrangement agrees with the needs and the use of the building. The composition of the plan of a building requires also the choice of the general idea, on which the form of the building, its special physiognomy, its character must depend. The elevation depends also on the plan. If the latter is simple, the structure overground will at once show a certain stamp of simplicity.

If the plan in the design of a building must above all correspond to, and satisfy, the idea of convenience, we may on the other hand say that the elevation alone is directly responsible for its beauty. To express this the architect makes use of geometrical and perspective drawings.

When the architect has designed the building to be erected in

FIG. 2. APARTMENT HOUSE ON THE CORNER OF CHAMPS ELYSÉES AND RUE DE BERRI.

plan, in profile and in elevation, he has to proceed to the representation of the secondary parts of the architectural ensemble, to the representation of the various ornaments which are to form the decoration of the building. These details, these portions of the architectural arrangement must be represented either on a large scale or full size, so that their different parts may be clearly understood. Together with these different designs, the architect must furnish estimates and specifications. The part embracing the statement of the work is called "devis descriptif" the part concerning the cost of each detail of work is the "devis estimatif." The "devis" must show in a precise manner the projected building,

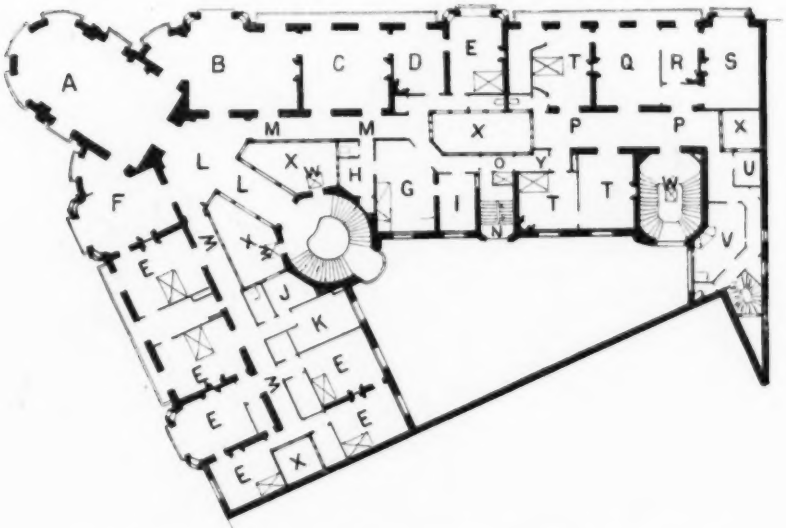


FIG. 3. PLAN OF APARTMENT HOUSE ON THE CORNER OF CHAMPS ELYSÉES AND RUE DE BERRI.

in its ensemble and in its parts; it must give the conditions, requirements and processes best fitted to insure a perfect execution; indicate the nature of the materials to be used, the quality of these materials, the troubles which the same may cause and which must be avoided. Of course, the forms and dimensions of the rooms, their arrangement and ornamentation are exactly fixed by the designs representing the plans, profiles, elevations, and the details on large scale, which form the ensemble of the project. Nevertheless, the architect will describe in his "devis" the arrangement, the decoration of each of these parts. A methodical classification is necessary in the making up of a "devis," so as to avoid the confusion which may result from the great quantity of subjects treated. We

usually allow for the subject matters a certain number of principal divisions, with headings as follows: Earthwork and Excavation, Foundations, Masonry, Carpentry, Roofing, Joiners' Work, Glaziers' Work. Under each of these chapters we bring together the material, workmanship, transportation, etc., etc., for each class of work. In spite of all attention paid to the drawing up of a "devis" in the description of the work as well as in the estimate of prices, certain errors may be committed, which will cause a variation in the amount agreed upon for the finished work; on

FIG. 4. STAIRWAY OF APARTMENT HOUSE ON CHAMPS ELYSÉES.

the other side, the owner may require some changes in the course of the execution. To avoid this, in order not to be bound irrevocably, we often suppress the "devis estimatif" and retain only the "devis descriptif," after the owner and the builder are sufficiently posted regarding the cost. On the whole, in France, the work of the architect consists in furnishing the project, involving a more or less large number of designs, and the "devis." Having done so, he is responsible only for damage caused by some faulty design or specification of his.

We said above that on the composition of the plan must depend,

not only the form of the building, but also its special physiognomy —its character. The architect must therefore apply to the composition of the plan all his science, all his intelligence and all his talent. Of course, an ideal architect would have to *invent* this plan, take it entirely from his own brains. Such an ideal architect would not have recourse to any work, he would even avoid thinking of a plan previously executed, because that could only interfere with his creative ideas, or at least influence them. But besides possessing very extraordinary knowledge, such an architect would have to be a man of remarkable genius. In France—as, no doubt, elsewhere—architects of genius are rare. Some have thought they were, and—were much mistaken. The greater part of those who have relied chiefly on their own imagination, only did something

FIG. 5. PLAN OF DWELLING OF CARAN D'ACHE.
M. Grandpierre, Architect.

beyond their power, and failed. As a general rule, therefore, a sensible and prudent architect will take care not to try to *invent* too much. No doubt, it will not be necessary for him, if he knows his business well (I say "well"), to have recourse to books on architecture; that is if he knows by heart the characteristic work of his predecessors, the common points where all masters have met, the best relations between given forms, the proportions best fitted to the special character of every sort of arrangement, the details of ornament agreed upon by the most celebrated artists. No, I repeat it, a good architect need not consult any work on architecture, because, no matter what problem may be before him, he will at once *see* in his mind's eye a standard plan of this building. I mean to say, the disposition and the distribution proper

FIG. 6. FACADE OF DWELLING OF CARAN D'ACHE, THE WELL-KNOWN CARICATURIST.

M. Grandpierre, Architect.

for this building, the best order and the best arrangement so far given to such and such details and to its ensemble. If, by chance, the architect should not have the standard plan in question present in his mind, he should, of course, be advised to look it up, either in technical books or in the works of his fellow architects. I may say that there are standard plans for all kinds of structures, from the standard plan of the laborer's dwelling to the standard

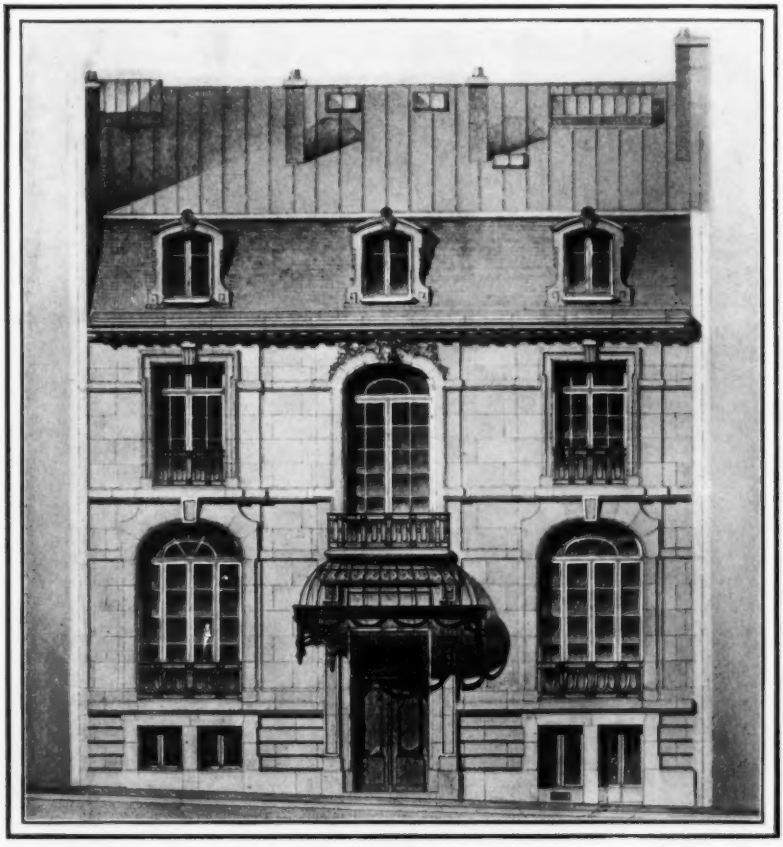


FIG. 7. PRIVATE RESIDENCE. M. Parent, Architect.
(See Fig. 8.)

plan of the church, from the standard plan of the theatre to the standard plan of the hospital; and we may lay it down as a principle that the architect, before composing the plan of his building, must know the standard plan of that kind of building, and must not let it pass out of sight—unless he is a man of genius. Of course, he must not copy it, that would be too simple; besides, it might be that the standard plan would not answer sufficiently well the particular taste and wishes of his client. What is necessary is

that the architect, although inspired by the standard plan in its essential lines, should follow the general ideas of his client, and add to the work yet ideas of his own. The amount of the latter will be greater or less, according to the kind and importance of the work, and also according to the power of his originality. In one word, there must be in the mind of the architect a sort of mysterious collaboration between the architect's own conceptions, the requirements of his customer and the standard plan. From this triple collaboration the composition of the plan of the building in question will originate.

In France we design usually first the plan of the ground floor and that of the second floor, then the plans of the other floors, last of all the plans of the basement and of the upper part of the building. Thereafter we execute usually two sections of the struc-

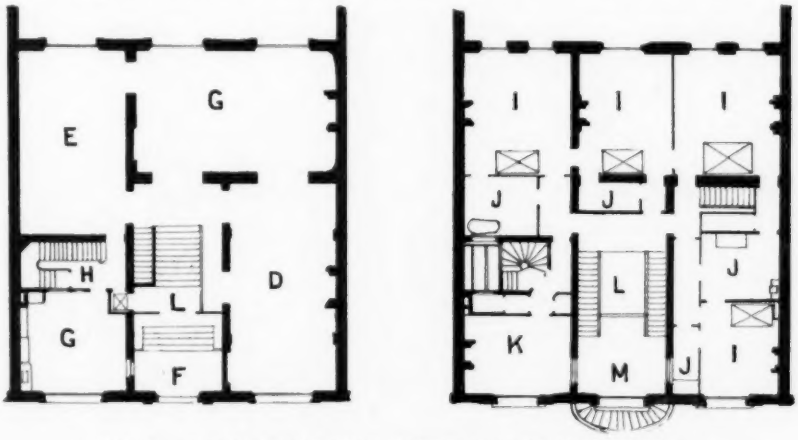
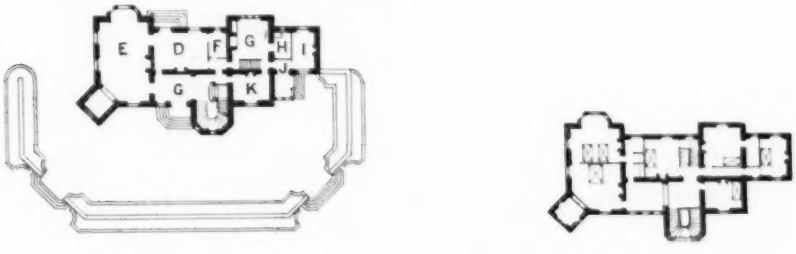


FIG. 8. PLANS OF GROUND FLOOR AND SECOND FLOOR.
(See Fig. 7.)

ture, the longitudinal section and the transverse section. Finally, we design the elevation of the front of the building. In this last composition the taste, the intelligence and the rhythmical sense of the architect find occasion to manifest themselves. But in these matters one must take care not to yield too much to fancy. Trying to be original, one may so easily become bizarre; excess in ornamentation is almost always worse than excess in soberness. Many of our French architects are skilful decorators. Some, tempted to show what they can do, exaggerate the importance of the ornament. A detail becomes too pretentious. People of taste shudder. How many new buildings are there, whose front are overloaded with incongruous motives! Within a few metres of height, these intemperate architects have piled everything imaginable in order to produce the useless. We see only reliefs

without motive; senseless balconies, one above another; columns on the balconies; brackets suspended anywhere. It looks as if the ornaments had broken loose from architecture. And yet, it must be observed, it has taken much talent to get it there. Taken singly, some of these motives are meritorious. The trouble is that they do not harmonize with the ensemble of the building, they do not even harmonize with themselves. Of course, we have to decorate the façade. Ornament is a complement of architecture, a necessary complement; the ornament gives to the general design its brilliancy and charm. The ornament of a building, no matter of what nature or of what importance, must not be the work of caprice; it must justify itself by declaring something of how the building is constructed, where its points of support, its anchorages, its chief floor, etc., etc., are. The ancient architects made great use of these elements. There lies the origin of the colonnades, the buttresses, simple and composite mouldings, the



A. B.

FIG. 9. PLAN OF GROUND FLOOR AND SECOND FLOOR OF CHATEAU DE LA CHATAIGNERAIE.

(See Fig. 10.)

dentils and modillions of the cornice, the lion's heads and dripstones, the acroteria of the roof, the railings and friezes of the façade, the corbelling-out brackets, the gargoyles of the terraces and the caryatids of the porticoes. All these motives have their reason in the structure of the building. At all epochs, the ornament, in obedience to the same laws of propriety and truth, proclaims on the outside the use, the destination of the building. A good architect will not lose sight of these eternal laws. Nor will he forgot them when designing the divers ornaments which are to embellish the interior of the building. In France, of all these parts, as well as of all detail of the outside decoration, the architect furnishes a special design, either on a large scale, or in full size. Whether these designs are washed with india-ink or drawn, is of little consequence.

A good architect can, of course, execute, arrange, decorate all kinds of private or public buildings. As a matter of course, however, a

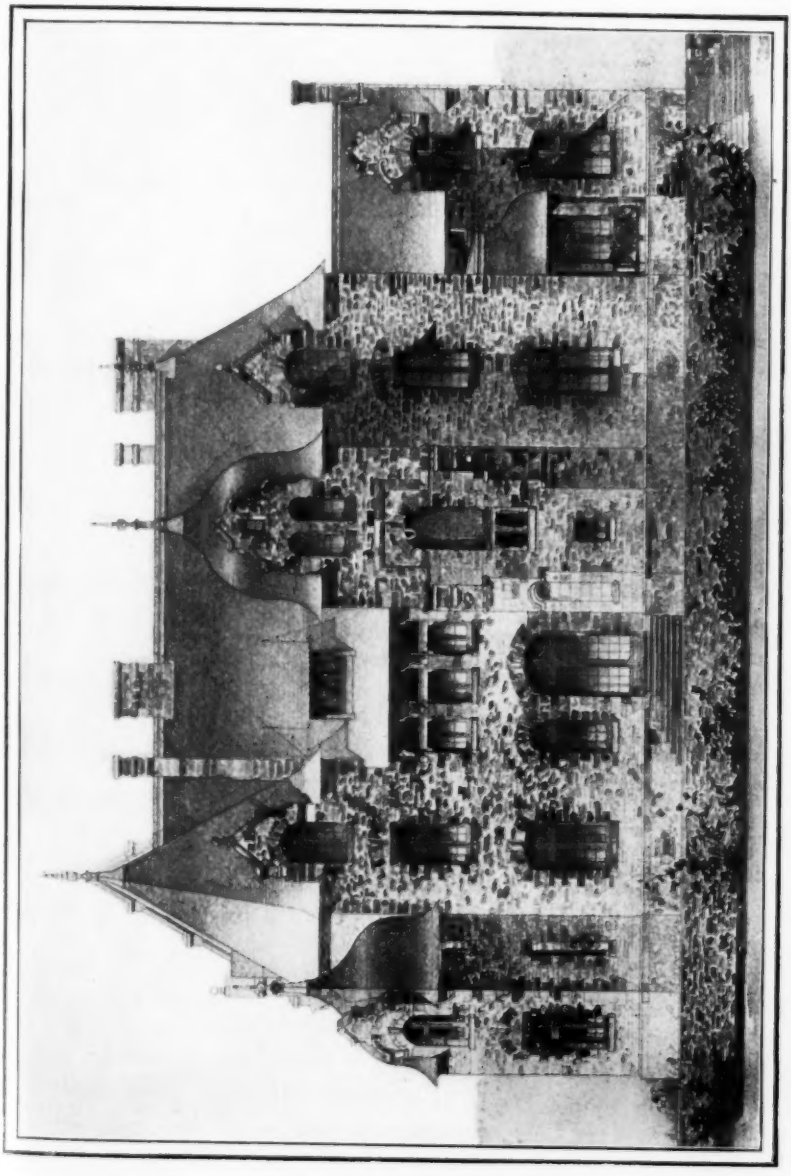


FIG. 10. CHATEAU DE LA CHATAIGNERAIE. M. Lucien Roy, Architect.
(See Fig. 9.)

good architect, a celebrated designer, will not give his talent and his time to the construction of buildings of no architectural importance and of quite elementary execution. We have in France, therefore, two categories of architects: those which busy themselves with humble, ordinary constructions, and those who devote themselves to the more important works. For the former, the knowledge of the "standard plan" is almost sufficient. Suppose, for instance, they have to erect a small house, cheap, intended for the lodging of a single family. It would be perfectly useless to trouble one's head how to compose the plan. For this little house, we require a cellar, a dining-room, a kitchen, a shed, water-closet, two sleeping rooms and an attic. Logically, the same plan will be found in almost every case. We may adopt plan A, or we

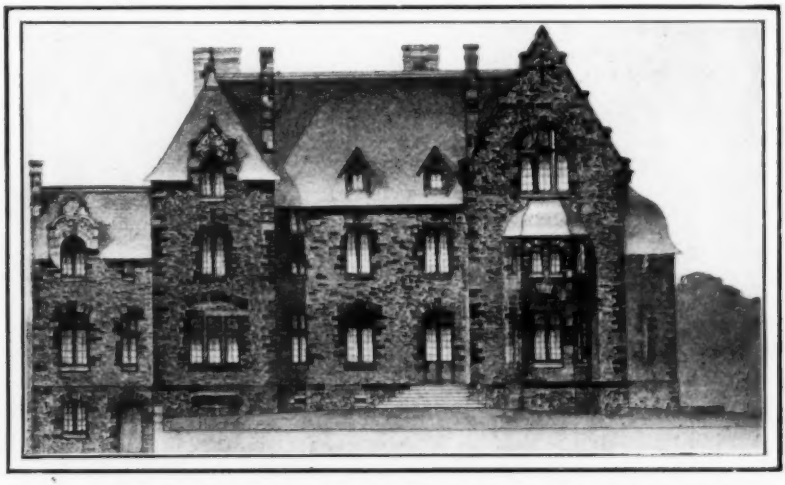


FIG. 11A. CHATEAU DE LA CHATAIGNERAIE. REAR FACADE.
M. Lucien Roy, Architect.

may choose plan B (Fig. 1), the type will be the same. Necessarily we shall have on the ground floor C C the dining-room D, the kitchen E, the shed F, the water-closets G, and on the second floor M M, the bedroom H and the bedroom I; above, the attic, and, of course, the cellar in the basement. Likewise in apartment houses of lesser importance, having approximately the same size and the same number of apartments per story, we shall almost always find the same standard plan. For this sort of building the decoration is nil or commonplace. The architect, being unable to go beyond the restricted amount usually allowed to him when he has to do with a dwelling of laborers or people of small means, has no use for much imagination. On the other hand, when he has to do with a more important substantial apartment house, the archi-

tect will have to display a certain initiative, even though he still must keep in view the standard plan of that kind of building. The apartment house (Fig. 2) which Mr. Friese has just executed at Paris, at the corner of the Champs-Elysées and Rue de Berry, belongs to this class. Its plan (Fig. 3) corresponds to a programme, in which apparently importance has been given to the great reception room A, by placing it in the axis directly in front of the landing, which secures for it much light and an advantageous shape. The rooms are well disposed: the dining-room B, the billiard-room C, the reading-room D, the seven bedrooms E, the small parlor F, the kitchen G, the pantry H, the servants' dining-room I, the bathroom J, and the linen-room K, are placed logi-

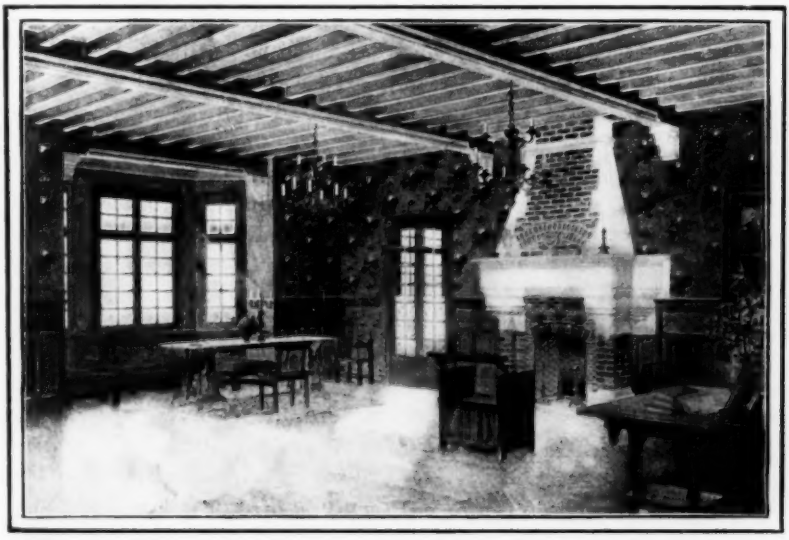


FIG. 11B. GRAND SALON, CHATEAU DE LA CHATAIGNERAIE.
M. Lucien Roy, Architect.

cally, they receive their light from the street, from the great courtyard or from the courts X. All the rooms have suitable connections through the anteroom and the gallery L and the exits M. The servants' stairs and the space for the lift O form the end of this apartment. On its side we find a less substantial apartment. This apartment consists, in fact, only of a gallery P, a large parlor Q, a small parlor R, a dining-room S, three chambers T, a bathroom U, the kitchen V and a small exit Y; the servants' stairs for it are marked Z; its elevator and the two elevators of the large apartment are marked W. The principal stairway (Fig. 4) which we should prefer placed closer to the large reception room and of frankly circular shape, has rather modest proportions; but then

again, it is large enough, because two elevators serve as exit for the large apartment. The vestibule forming the entrance is interesting, notwithstanding its soberness. On the whole, we have here an apartment house of sufficient richness, and yet one which has been treated better from the point of view of the construction than from that of the architectural decorator.

If we are compelled, in composing the plan of even an important apartment house, to limit ourselves to a programme of rather simple decoration, the case is quite different when we undertake a private residence, even though this dwelling be of modest proportions. This is the case with the small residence which M. Grandpierre has recently executed for the caricaturist Caran d'Ache, and whose plan for the ground floor A we give (Fig 5), as also the plan for the basement B, the plan for the second floor C and the plan for the third floor D. The house has on its ground floor two large reception rooms, one of them being the real reception room, the other serving as dining-room F, both being quite open, one upon the street, the other upon the garden and the gallery G, a winter garden, the view on which embellishes the dining-room. Under the landing-place of the stairway with straight railings, we find an exit through which we pass from the vestibule or from the dining-room to the pantry H, which contains a dumb-waiter, and to the water-closets I. These two rooms are in an annex jutting out from the basement and the ground floor only. An outside stairway gives access to the basement from the garden. In this basement, to which we can get from the interior of the house over stairs placed under those connecting the upper floors, we find the kitchen J, receiving its light from the street, further the room for the range K: lastly, four cellars L, one of which opens upon the street, with steps for the servants, to take firing material in, and a lower pantry with dumb-waiter M. Now let us see the upper floors. On the second floor, large bedroom O and sitting-room P, opening upon the street, with wardrobe; dressing and bath-room Q lit through a glass ceiling under a small court; second room R on the garden, water-closets S, and every room free of access. On the third floor, under the top, two bedrooms T T, linen-room V, water-closets V, exit X; the three cabinets receive their light from the little court Y. Notwithstanding its apparent simplicity the façade (Fig. 6) shows a fine design and its decoration is of a pretty artistic character.

We give in Fig. 7 the façade of another private residence with (Fig. 8) the plan of the ground floor A and the plan of the second floor B. The programme which guided the architect, M. Parent, in the composition of this residence, involved the settlement of an aristocratic young household. This explains the exceptional

FIG. 13.

PLAN OF THE HOTEL DU PRINCE BONAPARTE. Architect, E Janty.

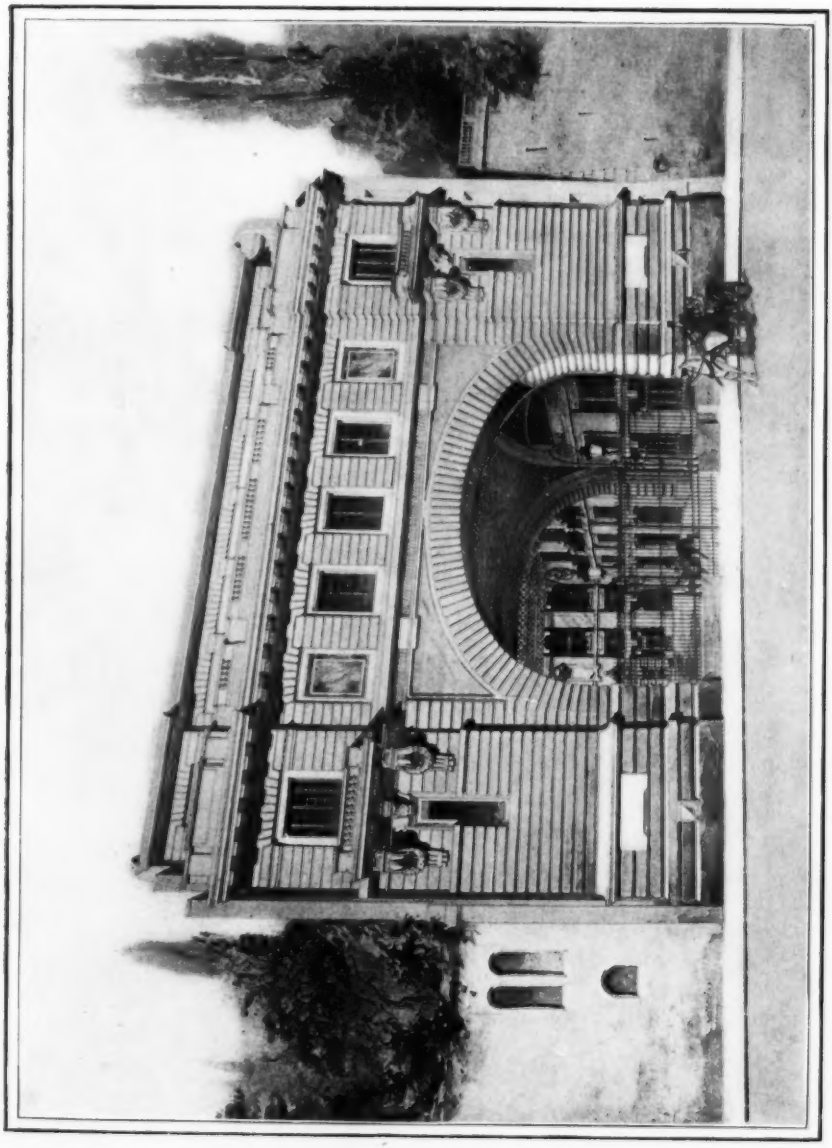


FIG 14. HOTEL DU PRINCE BONAPARTE. E. Janty, Architect.

Façade on rue Fresnel, Paris.

Façade on Rue Fresnel, Paris.

FIG. 14. HOTEL DU PRINCE BONAPARTE.

E. Janty, Architect

Façade on Avenue d'Iena, Paris.

FIG. 15. HOTEL DU PRINCE BONAPARTE.

E. Janty, Architect.

prominence given to the reception rooms on the ground floor: a large room C, a second room D and a dining-room E; the vestibule F, the pantry G and the servants' room H make up this ground floor. The family apartments are on the second floor; they embrace four bedrooms I with dressing-rooms J and a smoking-room K. Remarkable is the special disposition of the principal stairway L, which leads to a tribunal M, over the entrance and furnishes an occasion for a very fine motive of decoration. The basement and the third floor are given up to the service of the house. In the distinguished and harmonious façade the style of the XVIII century has been adopted, so as to form a frame for works of the art of this epoch and for precious family souvenirs. But the architect has skilfully adapted to the modern requirements the form en vogue in the last century, and with antiquated elements he has produced a flawless work, of magnificent character and, above all, of positively French noblesse.

Our Figure 9 represents the plans of the ground floor A and of the second floor B of a structure which has more of the rural manor than of the château proper. This building is a very successful specimen of rational architecture. Its author, M. Lucien Roy, by reproducing old-established forms, has obtained elegance by skilful use of materials, by tasteful simplicity, without recourse to painting or moulding. He has thus overcome an almost unsurmountable difficulty. In his very clear plan, he has combined on the ground floor a vestibule C, a large hall D, a dining-room E, a panty F, a kitchen G, a washing-room H, a linen-room I, an entrance J, an office K. On the second floor we find the bedrooms. The principal façade of this manor (Fig. 10) is of a design which could serve as a model. We give also (Fig. 11) the rear façade and the view of the large hall, and (Fig. 12) some detail: the staircase, the beginning of the stairway, the skylight of the staircase and the porch of the servants' entrance.

The design of the plan (Fig. 13) which M. Janty has executed for Prince Roland Bonaparte is extremely remarkable. We give here the description—Ground floor: A peristyle, B vestibule, C smoking-room, D billiard, E principal stairway, F private stairway, G servants' stairway, H offices, I archives, J exits, K gallery, L watching-room, M store-room, N dark cabinet, O library, servants, P photography, Q historical museum, R courts, S waiting-room, T hydrotherapy, U armory, V wardrobe, X library store rooms, Y librarians, Z reserve library. Second story: A waiting-room, B library, C reading-room, D principal stairway, E private stairway, F servants' stairway, G gallery, H janitor's rooms, I toilet, K pantry, L dumb-waiter, M dining-room, N terrace, P exits, R courts, S large reception room, T small apartments. The ground,

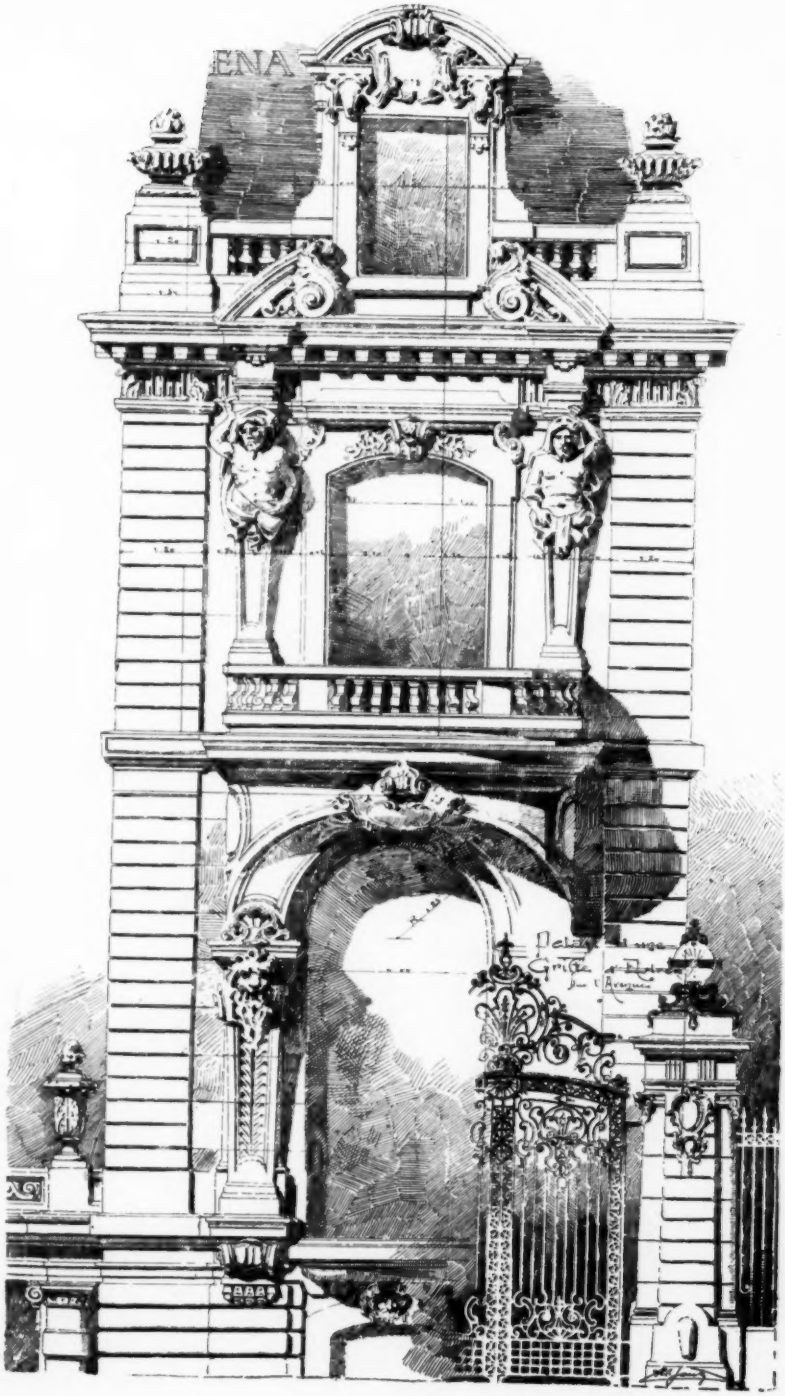


FIG. 16.

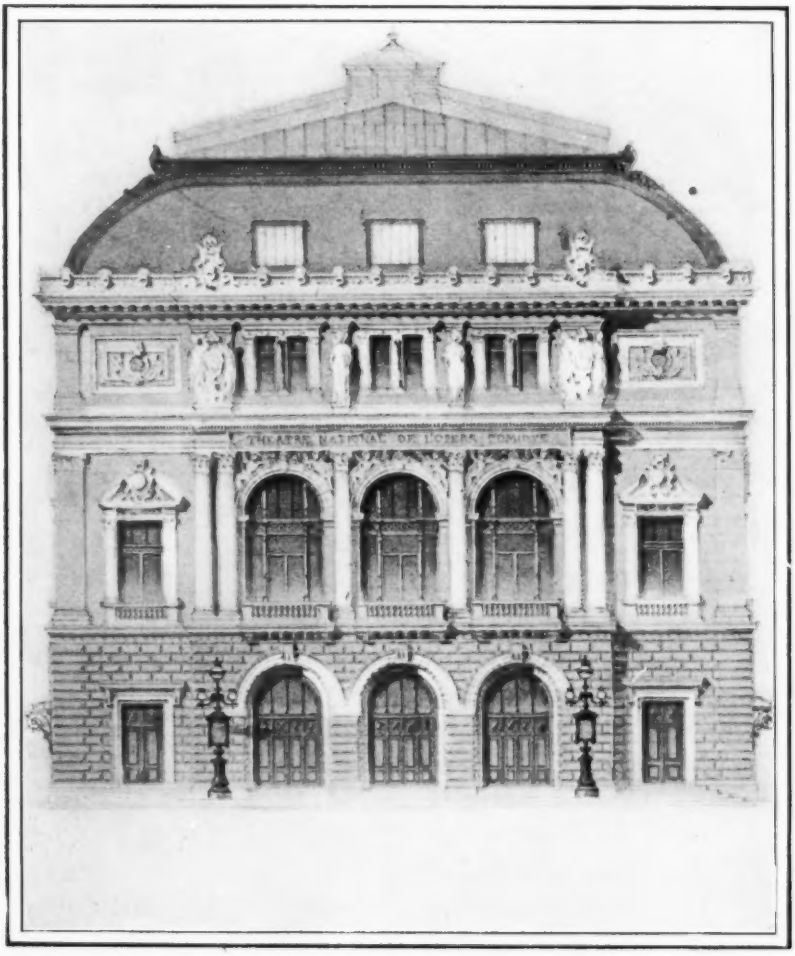


FIG. 17. FACADE OF THE OPERA COMIQUE, PARIS.
M. Bernier, Architect.

of irregular shape, contains 2,706 square metres surface entirely built over; it opens upon two roads and has a frontage on Rue Fresnel of 34 metres (Fig. 14) and on Avenue d'Iena of 41 metres and a half (Fig. 15). The difference of level between the two ground floors amounts to fifteen metres. A large exterior court extends along Avenue d'Iena in front of the house, which rises to four storys. Its centre recedes slightly as compared with the two wings. The latter, broken by a large bay on each floor with large projecting balconies, trumpets, carytids, contrast through their sculptured relief with the severe order of the five windows in the centre. The effect is superb and the contrast powerful. The importance of the stories will be understood if we give the figures of their height: Ground floor, 4.50 metres; second floor, 7 metres; third floor, 5.50 metres; height of the façade on Avenue d'Iena, 26 metres to the top. If I was asked to point out what is perhaps the most remarkable in this palace, I would refer to the prominence

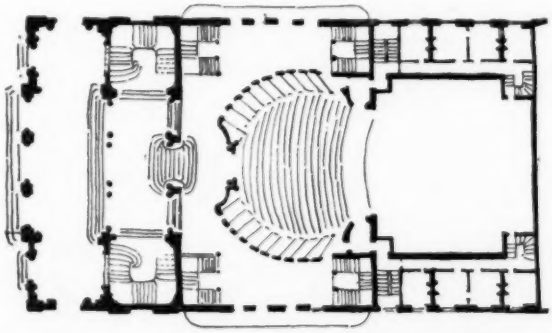


FIG. 18. PLAN OF OPERA COMIQUE, PARIS.
M. Bernier, Architect.

and the intelligent disposition of the library, made up of four galleries surrounding a square court, lit throughout from the ceiling; it can contain two hundred thousand volumes.

It would have been easy for me to give examples of much more pompous, much more pretentious architectural compositions. I might have referred particularly to a certain number of structures with Gothic façades; but they have not given any brilliant results. In fact, the structures in which forms of the middle ages have been utilized lose all their charm when they are not placed amidst favorable surroundings, and when they are emasculated by modern requirements of their picturesque character. The few examples which I have selected appear to me much more rational and more beautiful, thanks to their very soberness. These examples will show that one can be original without becoming bizarre

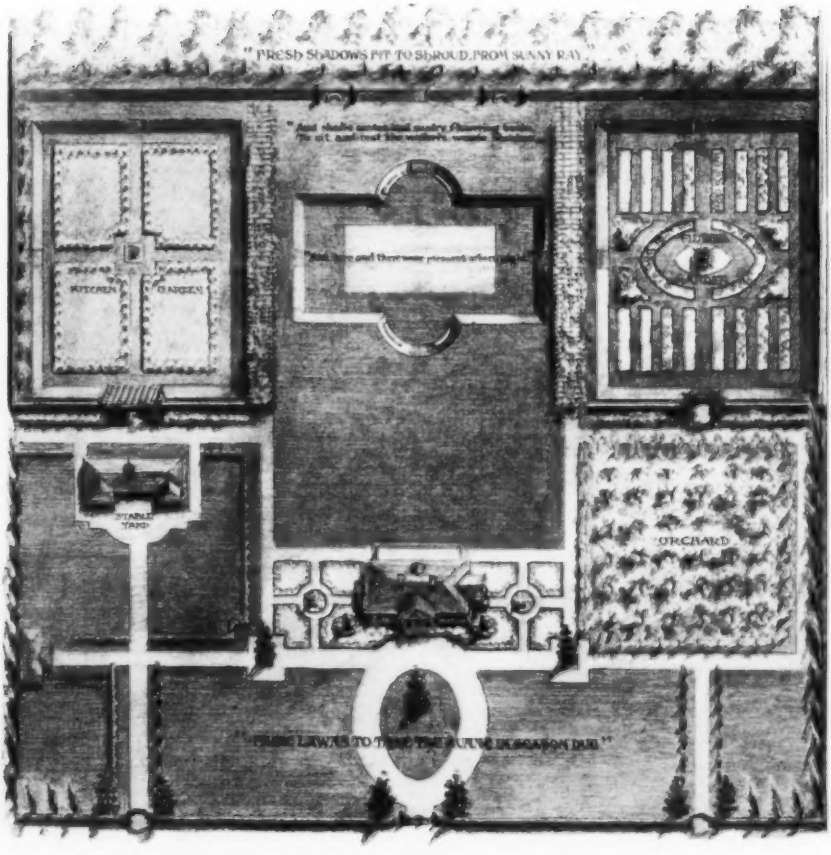
FIG. 25A. COMPETITIVE DESIGN FOR THE OPERA COMIQUE OF M. ESQUIÉ.

and elegant without affectation. In order to show how our best architects can interpret the same subject, I will give, in closing, some of the plans and façades sent to the competition for the new Opera-Comique of Paris.

The project of M. Bernier (Figs. 17 and 18) was adopted. It is certainly a great success. The façade is classical with three central *clavées* and two pavilions. But I have kept for the end the project of M. Esquié (Fig. 25); I was astonished that it was not adopted, for it seems to me the most rational and the most eloquent. The façade is an arcade resting on groups of Ionic columns and separated from the motives of the "ramplage" by a large vaulting. The "ramplage" in question is very interesting; two large pilasters crowned by fragments of an interrupted pediment serve as frame for a large bay divided by mullions into three arcades surmounted by an enormous bull's-eye window; over the latter is a tablet with the name of the theatre; other arcades, on right and left, accompany this bay. The basement is composed of arcades and of rustic pillars, with a large balcony supported by caryatids. On the sides we see bow windows of the lateral façades corbelling out over richly decorated rear vaults. So much for the description; but what is difficult to render in words, is the talent displayed in this composition. The most amiable forms of French architecture from the style of Louis XIII to and including that of Louis XV meet here, with perfect harmony. The decorative statuary work plays a predominant part; everything fits its place, every detail is set forth to its greatest advantage, and nothing clashes with the ensemble. This splendid composition is presented in a simple design rendered with very great skill.

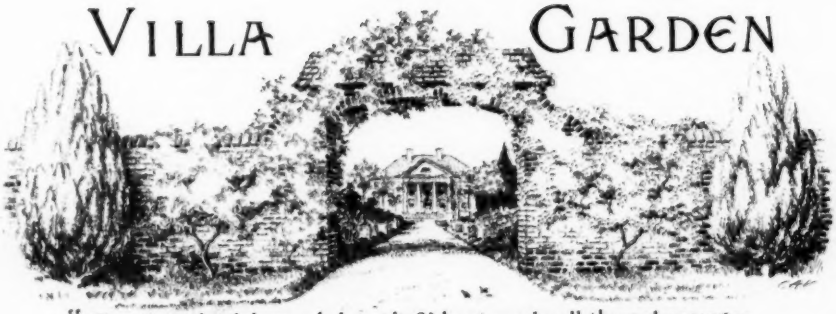
Alb. Allain,
Architect, of the City of Paris.

"Close to the gate a spacious garden lies,
From storms defended and inclement skies.
Four acres was the allotted space of ground
Fenced with a green enclosure all around."



PLAN OF SMALL VILLA GARDEN.

THE VILLA GARDEN



"For when thy labour al done is & hast made all thy rekenynges
In stede of rest & of newe thynges thou goest home to thyne house anone"

THE domain of landscape architecture may be divided into two fields, the design of public and private grounds. The problems peculiar to each are clearly distinct; their treatment requires the knowledge of the specialist; and there can be no doubt that as the demand for landscape architecture increases, specialists will gradually evolve, who will give their entire time to the one class of design for which they are peculiarly fitted.

As the title of this article implies, we are here concerned with the second division only, which is, in many respects, the most interesting. The area of land surrounding the villa usually amounts to from one to four acres, and is likely to call for an expenditure, roughly estimated, of about four thousand dollars. The outline of the property is generally rectangular and does not contain any great inequality of surface. Further, the villa is frequently surrounded by beautiful country, whose scenery is unobstructed by towns or cities, and the few hamlets of farm houses that appear here and there nestling among the distant hills, add to, rather than diminish the beauty and interest of the landscape.

It may be premised that those who seek the quiet of the country, in spite of the cost, in time and trouble, of frequent traveling to and fro from the city, are devotees of the pleasures, and, one might almost say, excitements that are derived from the careful, if not scientific management of the grounds. They are lovers of the country; they love the attempts, always interesting, if not always successful, to make the herbaceous border thrive, the kitchen garden yield the first fruits of the season, and the greenhouse respond to the promptings of knowledge newly culled from some "Practical Exposition on the Management of the Conservatory!" It may be further premised that the reader is equally re-

sponsive to the intellectual charm that arises from having the grounds so designed and adjusted that the various interests, both utilitarian and æsthetic, shall figure as units in the general scheme. As in poetry, so in landscape architecture, the cultivated person finds in just form and proportion—that is, in the general design or motive of a given composition—a greater satisfaction and a more lasting pleasure than in any one of the parts. The most perfect object unfittingly placed is displeasing, while on the other hand, the details of a composition, even though uninteresting in themselves, become valuable and satisfying if fittingly combined and placed.

Perhaps no word in the English language is richer in delightful associations than the word "garden." But its glory is largely a thing of the past. The term as used nowadays conveys a picture to one's mind of long sweeping lawns, bounded by a "border plantation," and dotted here and there by circular beds of geraniums or "elephant ears." These are not gardens, they are creations of modern landscapists, who have adopted Nature as their guide and disregarded the principles of design as being too artificial.

Under ideal circumstances, garden designs should tend toward a common standard. While this is not attainable, owing to the infinite variety of problems which each particular case represents, yet it should be the endeavor of every designer to conform as nearly as possible to this ideal standard. The results of such a standard have been attained both in sculpture and architecture, and it is my belief that in garden design, although no classic standard exists, the so-called architecturally designed gardens of the seventeenth century come nearer to representing the ideal spirit than do the garden designs of the periods before or after. Indeed, it may be said that up to that time garden design was evolving toward perfection, and that since then, it has been steadily deteriorating. That which chiefly characterizes the gardens of old is the fact that they are designed: that the various features of the garden are individually subordinated to the principles of proportion, relation and symmetry. The principles that govern the designing of a house and the principles that govern the designing of a garden are essentially the same, though the application of those principles may differ. It may be well to point out here that during the past years undue stress has been laid upon the needfulness of conforming the design of the grounds to the style of the house; whereas, the obvious logic of the problem is first, to conform the grounds to the inherent and unchangeable character of the property and its immediate environment; and second, that the house be designed in conformity with the pre-determined character of the "ground design." This reversal of the logical order of the

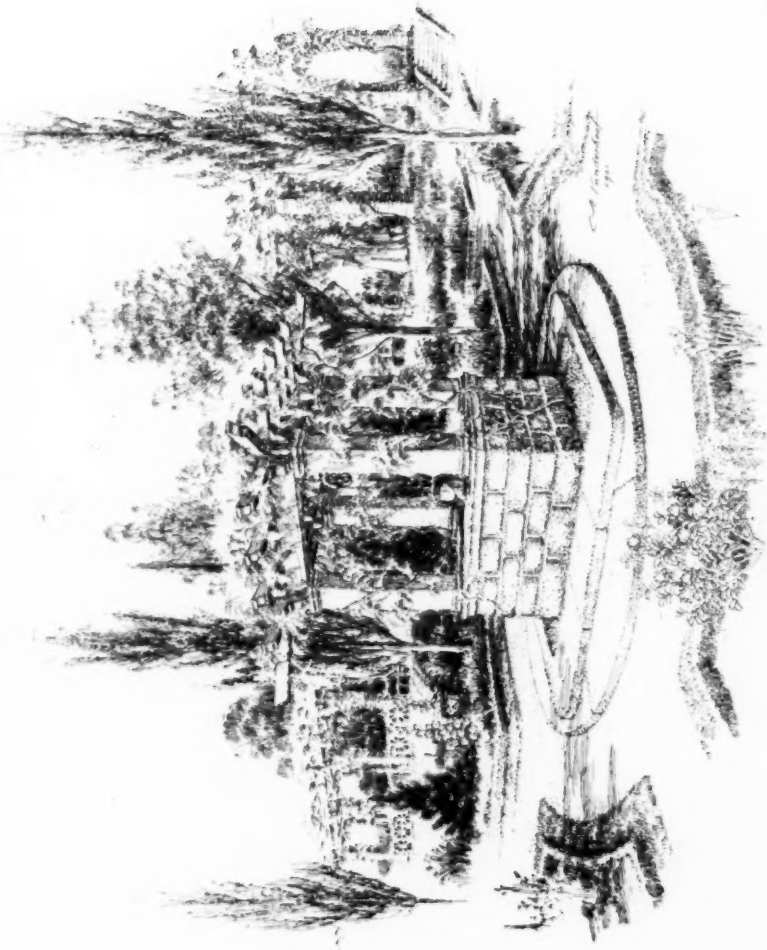


FIG. 2. SKETCH OF A WELL-HEAD IN A VILLA GARDEN.

determining factors in the designing of grounds and house, is obviously a resultant of the fact that the house is of primary importance from a utilitarian point of view, and has therefore been considered of primary importance in the design.

It is in accordance with these views of "garden design" that the accompanying plan and sketches have been drawn. The boundary of the property is supposed to represent the shape of the average villa plot, which necessarily determines, in general, the skeleton of the design. The boundary is not supposed to be concealed, but distinctly emphasized, both as part of the general effect and because the essential charm of the garden is in the fact that it supplies that seclusion which all desire, save the vulgar, or the philanthropist, who, though not willing to part with his goods, is yet willing that all the world should enjoy them at a distance. The word "garden" itself means an enclosed space, a garth or yard surrounded by walls, as opposed to unenclosed fields and woods. No garden is complete unless entirely enclosed, either by a wall or hedge, and especially is this true in regard to the small garden.

Although the object of the design and sketches is to show the possibilities of treatment of small gardens at a comparatively small cost, it must be understood that what is here shown is general, and must be viewed as suggestive rather than explicit. The accompanying plan represents both the maximum area and expenditure thereon that could be reasonably included within the term "Villa Garden." The area is four acres, and the expenditure, allowing for variation in the local facilities for work and in the nature of the property itself, is calculated from four thousand to five thousand five hundred dollars. However, as I have pointed out, the essential part of work of this nature is the design itself; that is, the ground plan arrangement of the walks, roads, houses and the garden. Therefore, those not desiring to expend the amount above mentioned, may easily reduce the expenditure to one-half, and yet retain the primary value of the design. For example, in respect to the present design, it is important to retain the tennis court in its relation to the two gardens and the back walk, but it is not essential that either the tennis court or the two gardens should be sunk, nor that the back walk should be raised. Thus, by omitting these variations in level, not only would the entire cost of excavation be saved (a most important item in the financial budget), but the necessity of having numerous steps be avoided. Again the drives and walks might be narrowed down, and less expensively constructed, while the cost of the arbors could be lowered by reducing them in size and by altering the material used for their construction; and, notwithstanding all these changes in the detail of the original design, the chief charm arising there-

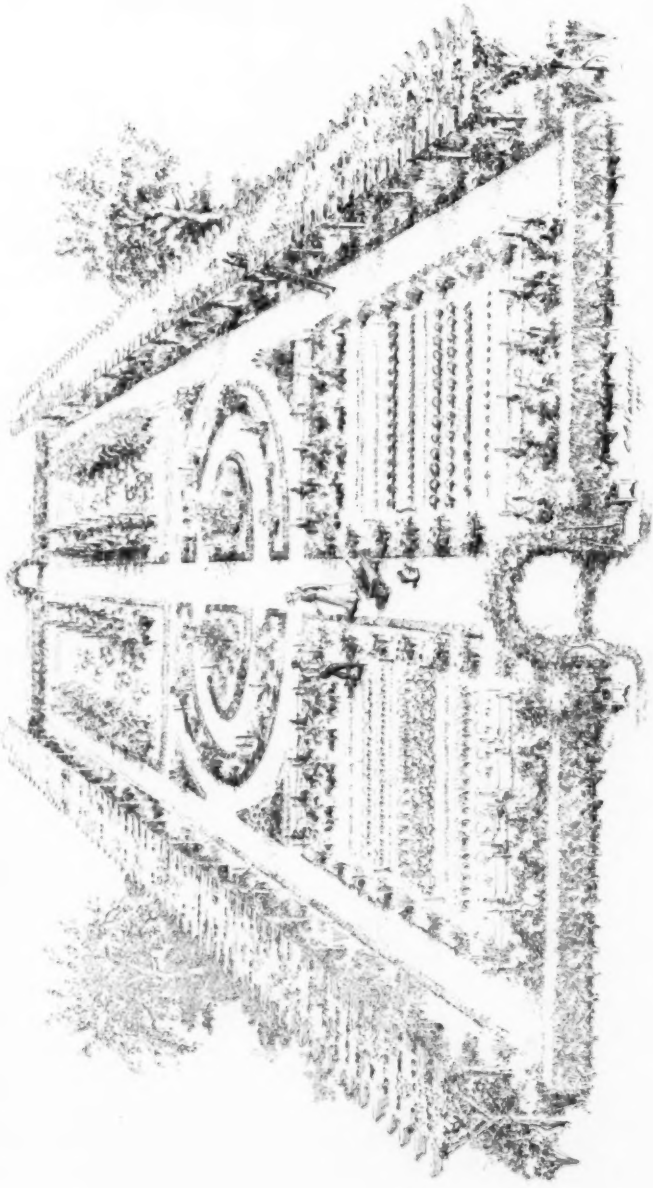


FIG. 3. THE KITCHEN GARDEN.

from would still be preserved. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to point out that if the cost is greater than is desired, even when reduced upon the lines above suggested, the expenditure could be further curtailed by combining the two gardens into one, as indicated by the accompanying sketch; while the idea of making a special feature of the tennis court might be excluded, the lines of which could be marked out upon some well-graded portion of the grounds.

There is another way of complying with the necessity of economy, which is, undoubtedly, the most satisfactory method. One of the peculiar charms of the small garden is not only to watch its growth under the hands of the contractor, but to note its gradual development under one's own personal care and supervision. And so although it may be necessary to have the roads and paths and heavy grading done immediately by contract, there are many features of the design that can be developed year by year, which would cause no inconvenience if left uncompleted for as long as might be necessary. By so doing not only does the personality of the owner become actually interwoven, as it were, into the spirit of the garden, but there will be the added pleasure of seeing the grounds slowly evolve into the perfected creation. Too often, however, does impatience overcome discretion and an inferior design is decided upon, which has economy for its sole advantage, and is almost sure to give dissatisfaction in the end. It is better to wait an indefinite time than to cheapen the design for immediate effect, resting in the fond delusion that later on the make-shift will be removed, and the final improvements completed; for the weight of inertia is strong, and the chances are a thousand to one that naught but the disintegration of dry rot will remove the impostor! It is, of course, necessary to build the house at once, but the completion of the garden can wait, if advisable, and the final results will amply repay the lovers of practical perfection.

It may possibly be suggested that the interest of economy would be furthered by omitting such features as arbors, and pergolas, covered seats, and the like, from the design, but I most emphatically object to any such proposition, for no garden is ideally perfect without some suggestion, no matter how slight, of architectural forms. Even although it be nothing more than a wire trellis, a rustic arch or a simple well-head, it is enough to create the subtile force of associations that link the humblest cottage garden to its more magnificent prototype of the ancient countries, so full to overflowing of the rich poetry and thrilling interests of human events. A "true garden," like any other artistic creation, be it sculptural, architectural or industrial, is not only interesting for its intrinsic value, as a source of immediate pleasure, but for its extrinsic value, as a source of associative suggestion, and if this latter "value" is omit-

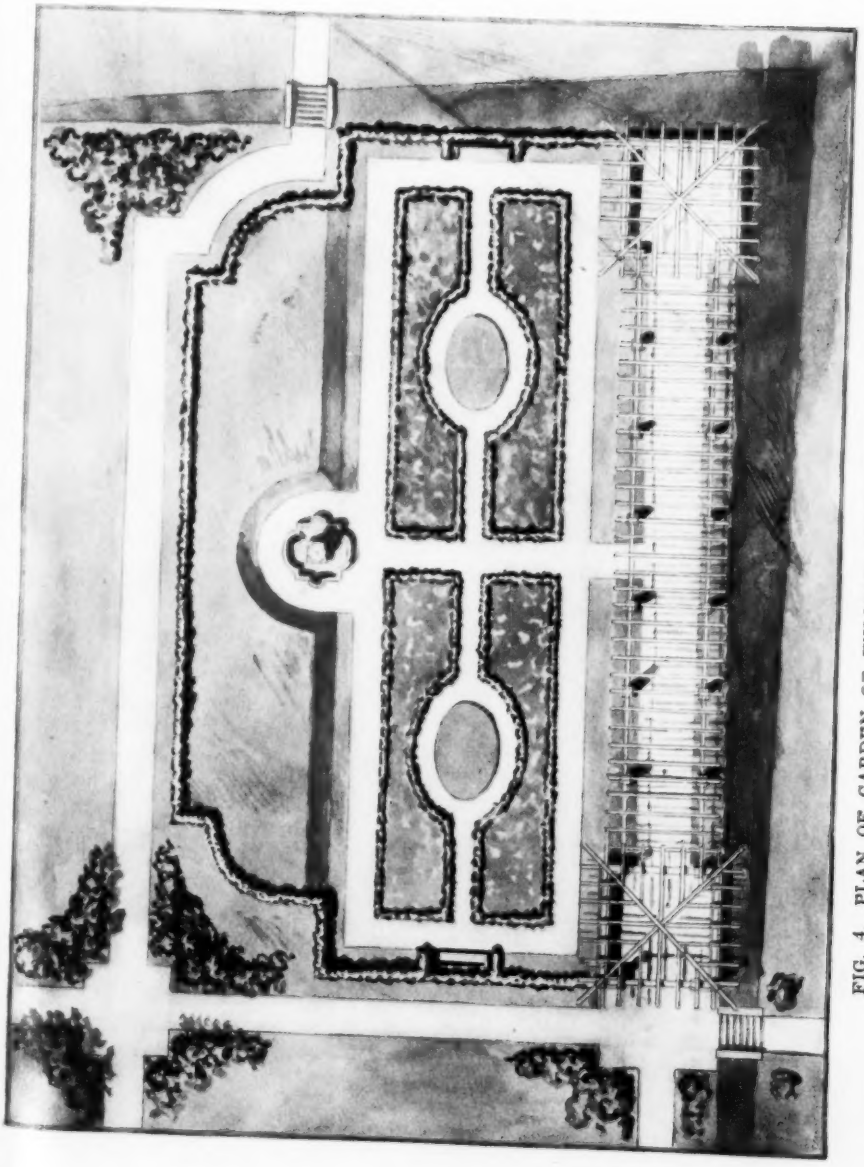


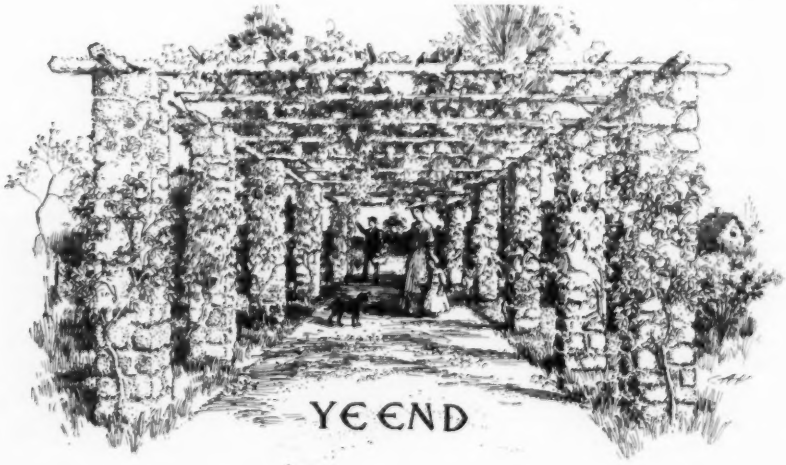
FIG. 4. PLAN OF GARDEN OF WILLIAM ALLEN BUTLER, YONKERS, N. Y.
Architect, George F. Pentecost, Jr.

ted, the garden is robbed of its greatest charm to the cultured mind.

The first important point in selecting land for garden purposes is to determine whether it can subserve the requirements of a satisfactory design. The second, and equally important matter, is to decide upon the design; and as this is, after securing the property, of the first and last importance, the pressure of the closing season, or the urge of impatience to see the work commenced should not hasten the final determination of the design. Upon the care with which the entire scheme is originally planned depends the ultimate satisfaction derived from it: and no amount of skilful execution will rectify errors in the original composition.

The chief points to strive for in a design is the concentration of its various constituents: to each unit of the whole to give a positive value. The greatest wisdom is often displayed in knowing what not to attempt. Ninety-nine gardens out of a hundred, and especially formal gardens, are ornamented with stuff that could be removed and never missed. Simplicity, compactness, thoroughness and neatness are the key-words to the perfect garden. The adage of the "naturalists," that roads and paths are necessary evils is an error. Roads and paths, on the contrary, are not only necessary from a utilitarian standpoint, but have a positive value in the perfected design. There is a place for everything and everything is in its place, because the fancy of some particular person desired it to be in that particular spot. Nor is it necessary to consult Nature to find out what is and what is not permissible. Nature has little to do with the formal garden beyond supplying the raw material; there man alone and his vagrant fancies rule supreme. It is his garden, not Hers!

George F. Pentecost, Jr.



THE CONTEMPORARY SUBURBAN RESIDENCE.

UPON the mere numerical preponderance of the suburban house in the domestic architecture of the United States there can be no manner of doubt. The majority of ordinary middle-class Americans live in suburban houses, and it is a majority which will increase. Every large American city is fringed with a larger or smaller stretch of two or three-story houses, built for the most part of wood upon lots of varying size, but alike in the fundamental fact of being individual and detached structures. Indeed, a great many Western cities of not more than a few hundred thousand inhabitants, which have come in for a considerable percentage of their growth since the introduction of the trolley, are chiefly suburban cities. It all depends upon the machinery for distributing population. When a pair of legs was the only vehicle of locomotion which the ordinary men could afford, large cities were unavoidably compressed into very small quarters. The horse car and the "bus" added a mile or two to this area, but did not dispense with the necessity of severely economizing space. The trolley has stretched it out several miles further, while future improvements in the machinery of transit may well make any spot within fifty miles of the centre of an important city available as a place of residence for its wage-earners. And we may be sure that men will take just as much space as they can get. The extent to which urban population may be distributed will be restricted only by the means of transit, which it will pay to provide.

In view of this numerical preponderance of the suburban house in American domestic architecture, it is manifestly of the utmost importance that a good standard of design should be established. As long as the suburban house is, to speak mildly, merely a collection of architectural improprieties, there is manifestly no hope for the education of the great American public in matters of taste. In the city graceless and tedious houses certainly exercise an evil enough influence upon popular æsthetic standards; but in the midst of a city the ordinary resident has little or no personal participation or responsibility in the making of the house in which he lives. His dwelling is forced upon him, and he has to take it as the good builder made it, whether he likes it or not. The suburban resident, on the other hand, as often as not, mixes personally in the high art of architecture. His house frequently does, and always can, embody his own ideas and tastes.

He takes a lively personal interest in his 50x150 lot, in the dwelling that is perched upon it, in the vines and flowers that he has

carefully planted, and in the green grass which he faithfully cuts. How frequently in wandering through suburban towns, does one come across a bit of a place, in which some freak of arrangement, some unusual elaboration of foliage or flower shows plainly the loving hand of the owners; and in almost every case the little trick is as laughable as it is pathetic. But this interest may well be the seed of better things than gates of rusticated masonry to some little frame cockle-shell of a house. The suburban dwelling really interests more average Americans than any other architectural product; and the improvement of the design of these dwellings

FIG. 1. HOUSE AT SUMMIT, N. J.

would do more to refine popular æsthetic standards than the most assiduous attendance upon art exhibitions and lectures.

That such an improvement is taking place, it is the purpose of this article to show, but before we come to the showing it will be well briefly to consider what the limitations and advantages of the detached suburban house are. Manifestly its great advantage consists in the simple fact of its detachment. It need not be treated merely as the section or slice of a row. It is separated from other houses, if not entirely dissociated from them, and can be allowed a certain amount of individuality. But it is also obvious that this detachment is not absolute. The architectural problem which it presents is largely affected, if not entirely controlled

(1) by the natural advantages or disadvantages of the site, and (2) by the general street plan and lay-out of the suburb in which it is situated. The suburban house, consequently, just as it differs from the city house, in possessing some individual rights, also differs from the country house, in the fact that its surroundings are not entirely a matter of choice. This condition may be disguised, as it is in some selected suburban settlements, by scattering the houses, not along streets that run parallel to, or at right ang'es

FIG. 2. HOUSE AT SUMMIT, N. J.

with, each other, but along streets that, like country roads, pursue devious and irregular courses. Nevertheless, whether a regular or irregular street plan be adopted, the fact remains that the suburban house is but an incident in a general scheme, which cannot be controlled by the designer of any one place.

Hence it is that an absolutely essential prerequisite of good suburban architecture is an interesting and effective general lay-out. It is not the purpose of this article to define the conditions to which an interesting and effective lay-out should conform; but a few gen-

eral considerations may be urged. In the first place, if the grid-iron plan is inconvenient and uninteresting in a city, it is even more so in a suburb. It is inconvenient, because a suburb always has a business and a railroad centre, to which, more or less directly, all the main roads should lead, and it is uninteresting, because it takes no account of the lay of the land, and the desirability of keeping in a suburban street something, at all events, of the unexpectedness and irregularity of a country road. In the opinion of the writer this seeking after the merely unexpected and picturesque should not be carried too far in any scheme of landscape

FIG. 3. HOUSE AT PLAINFIELD, N. J.

lay-out. It should be frankly recognized that a place, which is to be made suitable for the habitation of men, must be treated formally, and must reach its effects, not by merely imitating natural appearances, but either by modifying or enhancing them for human purposes. Still, any amount of the unexpectedness and irregularity which the designers of the street system of some of the better suburbs near New York are constantly seeking, is much to be preferred to the dreary, rectangular dullness of the grid-iron arrangement. The great controlling purpose should be to find an arrangement appropriate to that mixture of town and country, which a suburb must necessarily be, and for this reason it must become neither too obviously citified or too affectedly countrified.

It is rarely the case, however, that an American suburb sins in the direction of being too countrified. It is so in some few cases; but for the most part the streets are blocked out in a wholly meaningless and mechanical manner, and with no other purpose in the world than to slice off a larger or smaller number of villa plots. The great need of the average suburb is something more of the atmosphere and flavor of rural life, a more intelligent at-

FIG. 4. HOUSE AT SOUTH ORANGE, N. J.

tempt to individualize each separate house and grounds. The most frequent and fatal obstacle to such an individual treatment of each separate place is the small size of the plot on which the average suburban house is built; and this in turn is partly the result of laying out the blocks on too small a scale, so that the effect of the little house with its back-yard touching another back-yard in the rear, and with only an alley-way dividing it from the houses on either side, is not essentially different from that of the poor part of a city. Of course, in the great majority of cases, this is simply

and entirely the result of necessary economy, but in a large number of cases it is just as obviously the outcome of ignorance or indifference. In all these latter cases an entirely practicable increase in the size of the better grade of suburban lots, would give the architect a chance really to individualize the house and its surroundings. What these dimensions should be we do not attempt to say. It is sufficient to insist upon the desirability of making them as large as possible, because the larger they are, the more complete and self-contained each individual place may become. At the present time the land-owners, who are developing under careful

FIG. 5. HOUSE AT SUMMIT, N. J.

restrictions, the pleasantest suburbs near New York, rarely sell in plots which are less than an acre, and while such plots are available only for relatively well-to-do people, it is, after all, only the relatively well-to-do who, under present conditions, count at all in the process of architectural improvement. As the popular taste for the proprieties of suburban architecture becomes more refined, the size of the average plot upon which the suburban house is built will most assuredly increase, and the tendency will be accelerated by the constantly larger and consequently cheaper amounts of land which will be opened up by improved methods of communication.

The larger building plot, which we have mentioned as one condition of the architectural improvement of the suburban house would have many advantages. It would enable the architect to situate the buildings very much further back from the street; it would give him a chance to provide an effective approach, a proper grouping of trees and foliage, a good distribution of spaces, and, in general, a plan for the grounds, which was convenient, logical and appropriate. The house would become more of a country

FIG. 6. HOUSE AT SUMMIT, N. J.

house, with a definite place in the landscape, and an arrangement of the grounds which would give its owner a chance by their cultivation and development, to take more than a languid or sentimental interest in the soil. At present, this is undoubtedly the crudest aspect of American suburban architecture. One sees many suburban houses which must be and are extremely comfortable places in which to live. One sees fewer, but still a good many suburban houses, in which an intelligent attempt has been made to draw an appropriate and well-proportioned façade; but it is a very

rare thing to come across a suburban place, no matter how large, in which the grounds have been treated with any kindness or any feeling for landscape architectural effects. A privet hedge outlining the property, a few shrubs scattered promiscuously about, a tree here and there where it has happened to grow, a hydrangea or a bunch of geranium in the midst of the lawn—that is, as a rule, as much landscape gardening or architecture as the ordinary suburban resident needs, and when he seeks for more the result is so flagrant that one inevitably regrets that he had not remained content with less.

This deficiency in the ordinary American suburban and country house is due to the failure of the average American to make any adequate provision for the treatment of his grounds in relation to his house, and the consequent inexperience and lack of training of suburban architects in this class of work. But conditions are likely to improve in this as well as in other respects. Although very few actual results of the demand have as yet been produced, there is a manifestly increasing interest in the appropriate treatment of the grounds; and it is to be expected that in time this interest will have a wholesome and pervasive effect upon all the better grades of suburban architecture. In that event the good suburb will cease to become the commonplace and dreary thing which it now so often is; but the precise forms, which the change will take are not easy to predict. In the better American suburbs of the present time the effect which, by the natural process of tradition, both owner and architect have sought to attain is something like that of a New England country town. The streets are lined with two or four rows of elms or maples; the house is separated from the street by a considerable stretch of lawn; but no attempt is, as a rule, made to obtain any actual privacy, and the walls which so frequently shut off the grounds of the house from the street in a foreign suburb, are rarely if ever seen. It is improbable that American neighborliness will ever consent to the complete separation both from the passers-by and each other which the foreign suburban resident likes; but as the desire for a more formal and architectural treatment of the grounds becomes stronger, it is probable that screens, both of brick and foliage, will be much more freely used than at present. The use of such screens will have at least one good result. The American suburban resident of the present day not only likes to expose himself and his family to public view, but he has a much less commendable want of reticence about some of his domestic arrangements—such, for instance, as the drying of his laundry—which are not either interesting or seemly objects of public inspection, and one of the first reforms of suburban architecture will most assuredly be the more general

erection of some effective barrier, behind which the household can dry its linen.

We have already indicated the point of view, from which, in the past, the American suburban house has been most frequently and most flagrantly open to criticism; and this is that it has not been, architecturally speaking, a country house at all. The one characteristic which should distinguish rural architecture is that of possessing some organic and necessary relation to the land on

FIG. 7. HOUSE AT CRANFORD, N. J.

which it is situated and the landscape by which it is surrounded. This appearance of composing unobtrusively and effectively with their site and surroundings has been obtained in rural buildings by two methods. In some of the French country architecture, and in that of the Italian villas, it was obtained by low, simple outlines and masses which fitted the structure snug and close to the land on which it was built. On the other hand, in many English country houses, a building, which structurally was not very well adjusted to its site, was given an equally appropriate effect by means

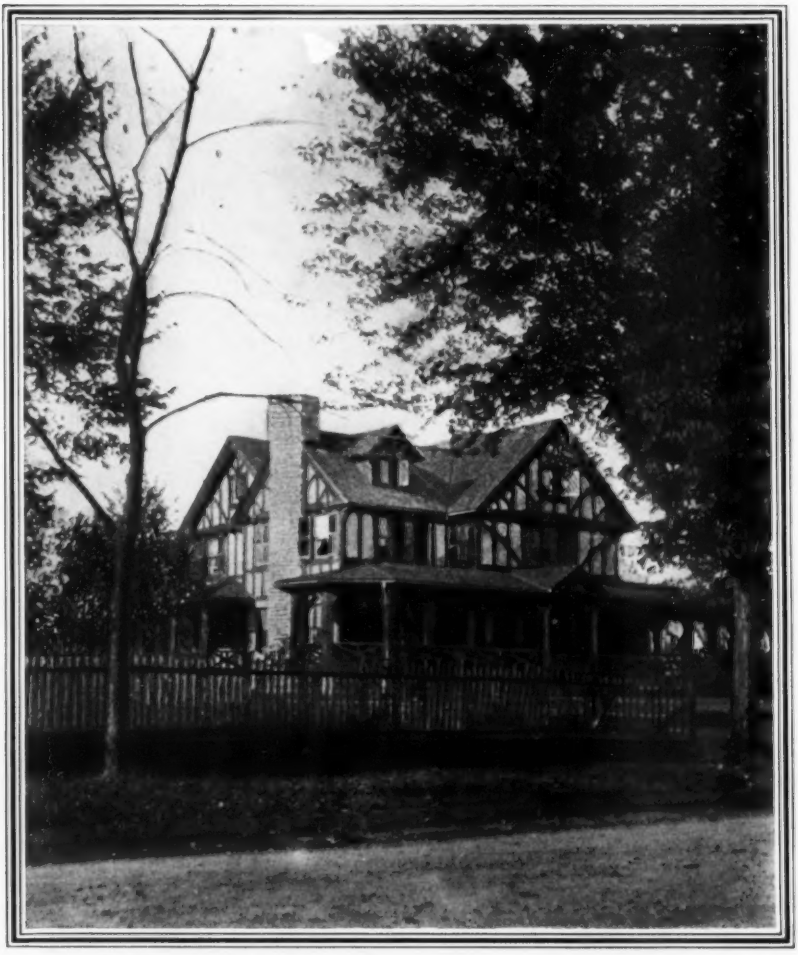


FIG. 8. HOUSE AT PLAINFIELD, N. J.

of the planting and treatment of the land itself, which was, as it were, built up and worked over until it presented a most picturesque, attractive and eminently habitable appearance. The very same thing was frequently done in former times in this country; and the better American rural architecture in the Colonial period, whatever its defects, was eminently suited to the country in which it was built, and the uses to which it was put. But more recently the American country, and particularly the suburban house, has not been informed by any proper feeling as to the kind of building which fitted the land, and the country house will improve just in proportion as this feeling is renewed among suburban architects and their clients.

From 1885 until 1895 the great mapority of suburban houses were built in what was known as the "Queen Anne" style; and surely no "stvle" was ever invented which lent itself more to the freakish and meaningless eccentricities which are as utterly out of place in rural as they are in every other kind of architecture. A "Queen Anne" cottage was at best a prettified bijou frame building, which in its design was a collection of incongruities and in its effect gave the impression of something perched upon the land, instead of something growing logically out of it. And the detail was as incongruous and meaningless as the masses and outlines. On the inside the better grade of these houses were extremely comfortable; and this fact showed what both their designers and owners had most at heart in drawing and approving the plans. The outside practically took care of itself, except so far as the piazza was concerned, for the average American's idea of a country or suburban place was a place in which he could sit on a "piazza" and, when not reading the Sunday newspaper, "look at the 'view.'" This piazza itself was as a rule an appendage, which absolutely prohibited a logical and appropriate design. No one will dispute the fact that in the summer climate of this country, a verandah of some kind is an absolute necessity; but the conception of making a suburban house practically nothing but a comfortable interior and a spacious piazza could have originated only among a people whose interest in the country was most external, artificial and occasional. It is only people who rarely go off their "piazza," who could sacrifice the whole building to such an extension into the open air of the interior of the house.

Since 1895 there has been a marked tendency toward an improvement in the design of the better class of suburban houses. By the better class of suburban houses, we do not mean those that are built by exceptionally wealthy men from plans by well-known city architects; we mean the suburban house which costs somewhere between $8,000 and $15,000, and which is as a rule designed, either by local architects, or perhaps some local builder. The illustrations, which accompany this article have been selected somewhat at random, from houses of the class mentioned. They have not been selected because they are in themselves highly satisfactory examples of suburban buildings. On the contrary several have been used, such for instance as Fig. 3, because they show the old freakish tendencies interestingly mixed with traces of a more reposeful and intelligent treatment. Every one, however, who has watched the course of suburban building during the past fifteen years, will recognize that they indicate a decided advance over the average which prevailed during the earlier part of that period. As a rule they are no longer cocked

up capriciously in the air, but take their place more naturally and smoothly upon the ground. The piazza is much less frequently the chief external feature. While it is still in many cases unduly prominent, it is either much better managed, or the design, as in Fig. 8 is frankly adapted to it. The roofs are for the most part pitched lower, and the outline is not broken by a number of meaningless and fussy gables. The whole design is prone to be decidedly simpler and more logical, and whatever ornamental detail there is, is better managed. The buildings remain for the most part commonplace, and they are likely to be least successful where they are most original. They indicate rather the prevalence of a better general tradition than better training and taste on the part of their individual designers. Several good types of design and material have been introduced by well-known architects; and these types are little by little leavening the whole mass. For Americans are the most quickly imitative people in the world; and when their imitativeness has a standard to copy, which makes an appeal to their sense of excellence, good effects follow with astonishing rapidity.

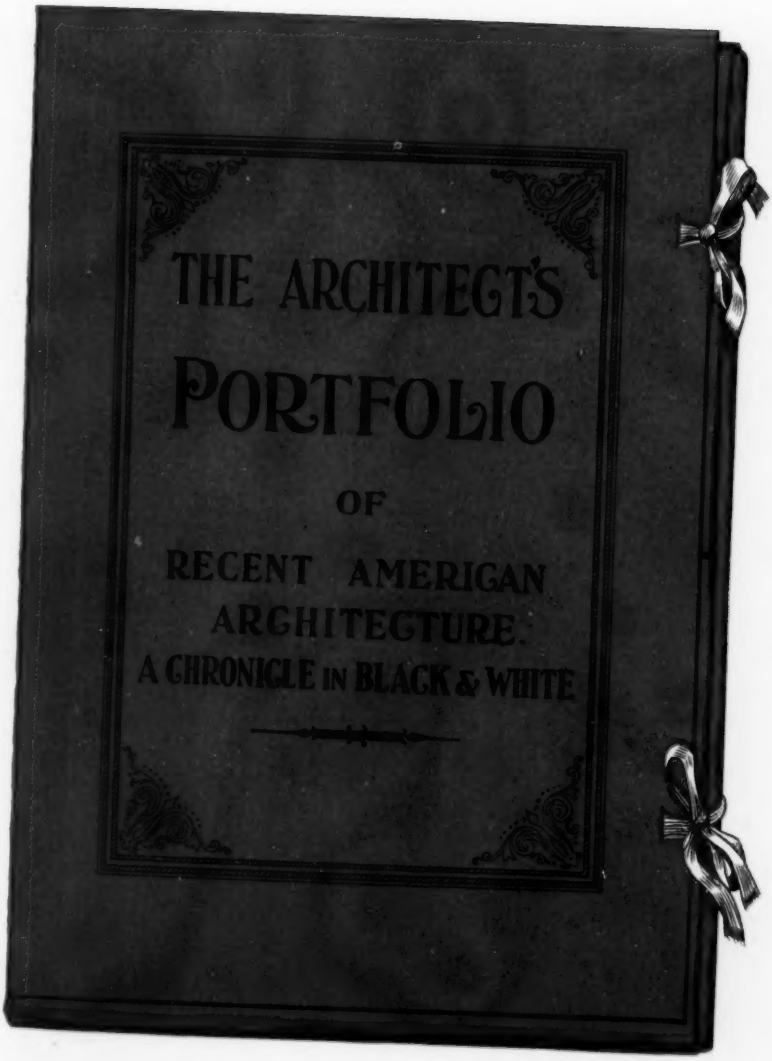
Generally speaking, it may be said that the designs indicate three tendencies. In the first place there is the tendency to moderate within bounds of taste and decorum the peculiar "features" of the "Queen Anne" cottage. Gables are cut out, the roofs are less inclined and a coherent, modest and decent design tends to emerge. More distinctive and dignified effects are, however, obtained by the much more frequent use of Colonial forms. The Colonial house had the immense advantage of being a country house of moderate height and good proportions, built by people who lived and not merely slept in the country, and its increased adaptation to modern uses, of which there are many signs, can be productive of nothing but good. Finally, it is natural that the Elizabethan timbered house should begin to be more extensively used, for it always appeals to people whose taste in architecture is for the quaint and the picturesque. Its danger always is the sacrifice of simplicity and good proportions to mere picturesque charm; and it needs the softening and moderation of a much more elaborate and loving treatment of the surrounding land than it has yet received in this country.

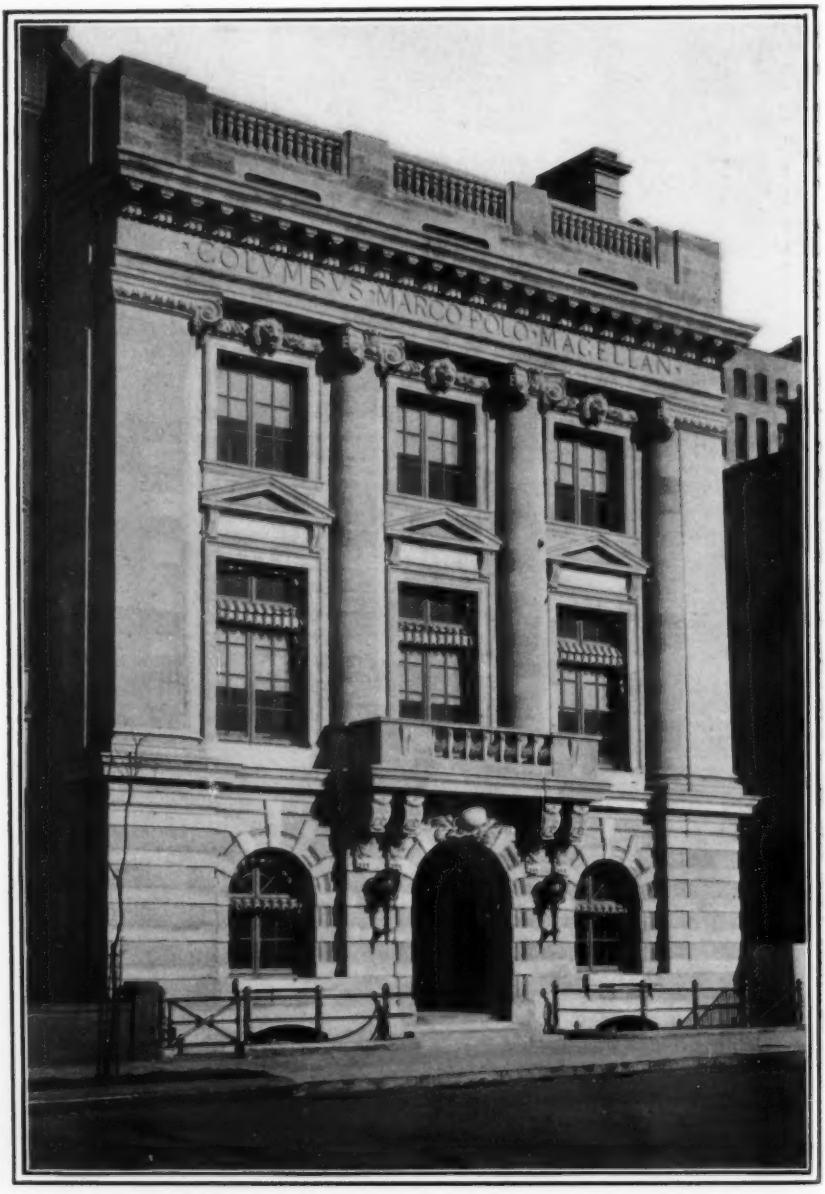
What the suburban architect should then try to obtain is, in the first place, a good general lay-out of the suburb, in which he is interested, the division of the land into plots large enough to give individual hurroundings to each particular building, and an architectural treatment of this plot, which seems to create an inevitable relation between just that site and just that building. The best that can be said for contemporary suburban architecture is that

in individual and selected cases, one finds a better general plan, larger plots and more seemly buildings; but in no case has full architectural advantage been taken of these improved conditions. While architects and owners are feeling their way in the right direction the process of improvement is still in its earliest stages.

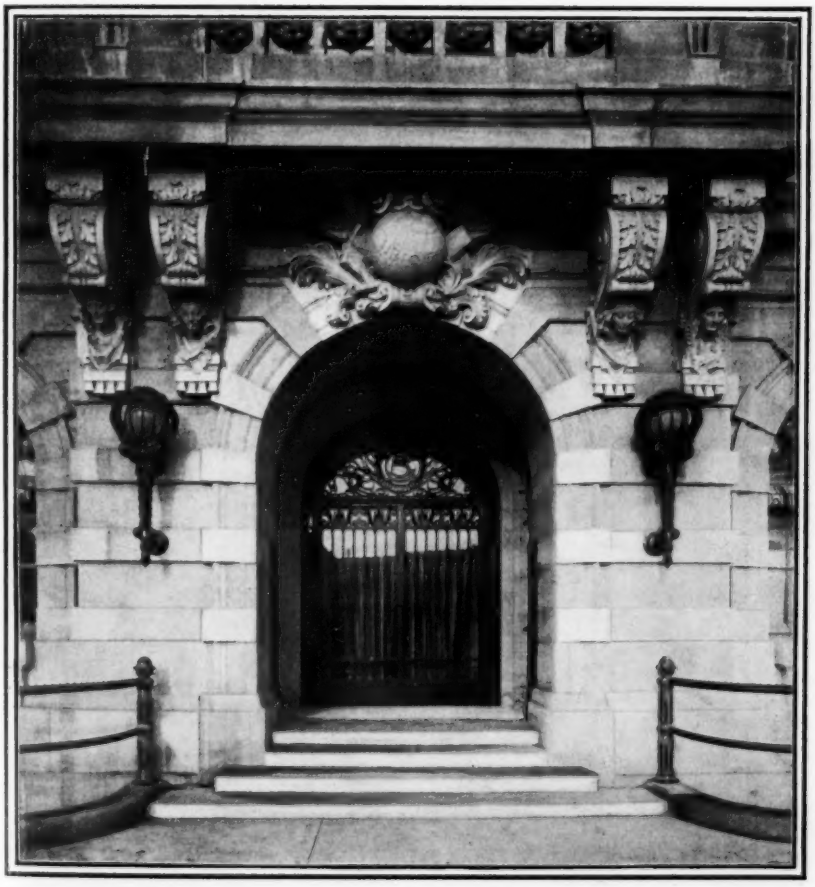
FIG. 9. HOUSE AT PLAINFIELD, N. J.

M. Valentin, Designer. L'ART NOUVEAU MANTELPIECE.


THE ARCHITECT'S
PORTFOLIO
OF
RECENT AMERICAN
ARCHITECTURE
A CHRONICLE IN BLACK & WHITE



THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY'S BUILDING.
West 81st Street, New York City. Howells & Stokes, Architects.



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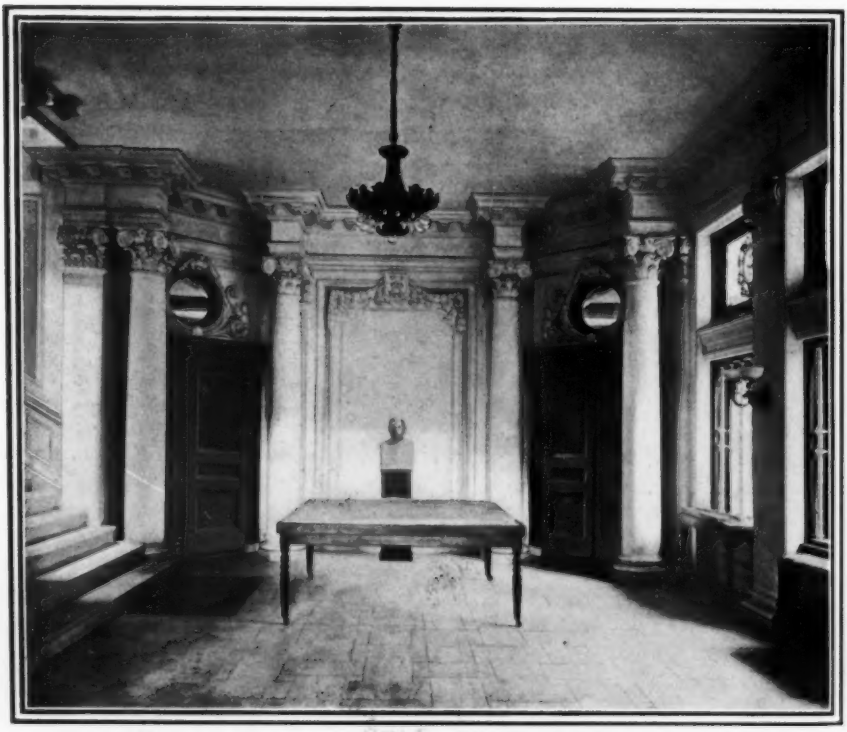

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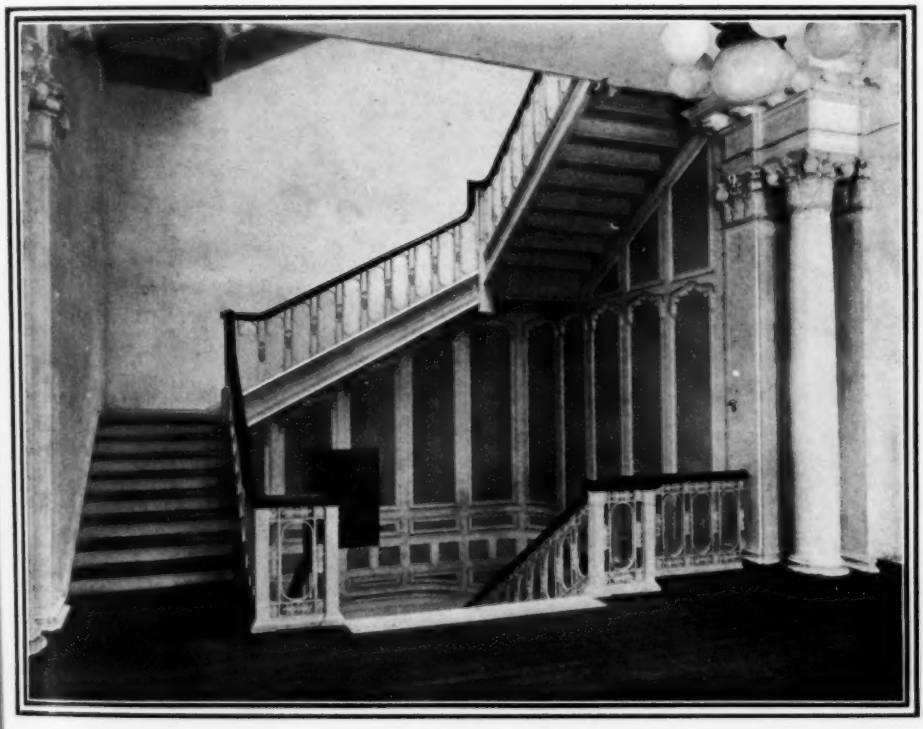

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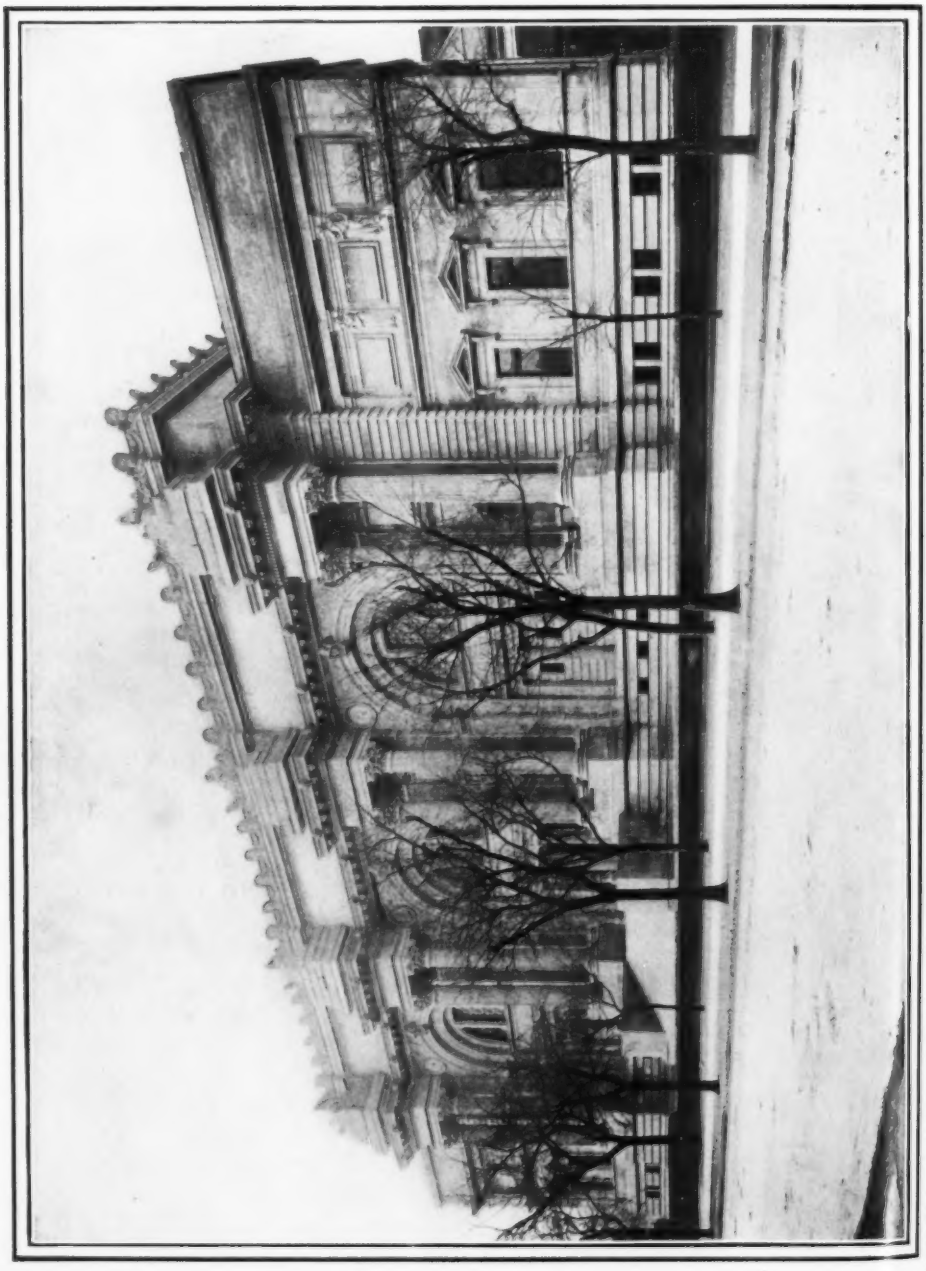
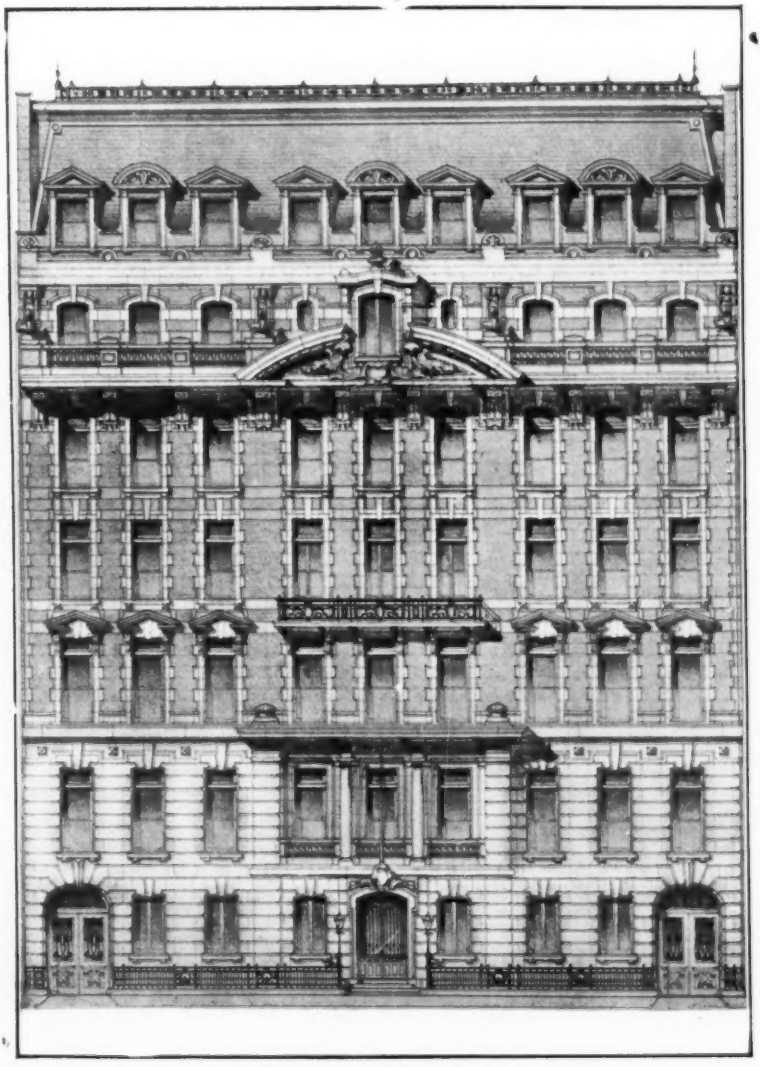


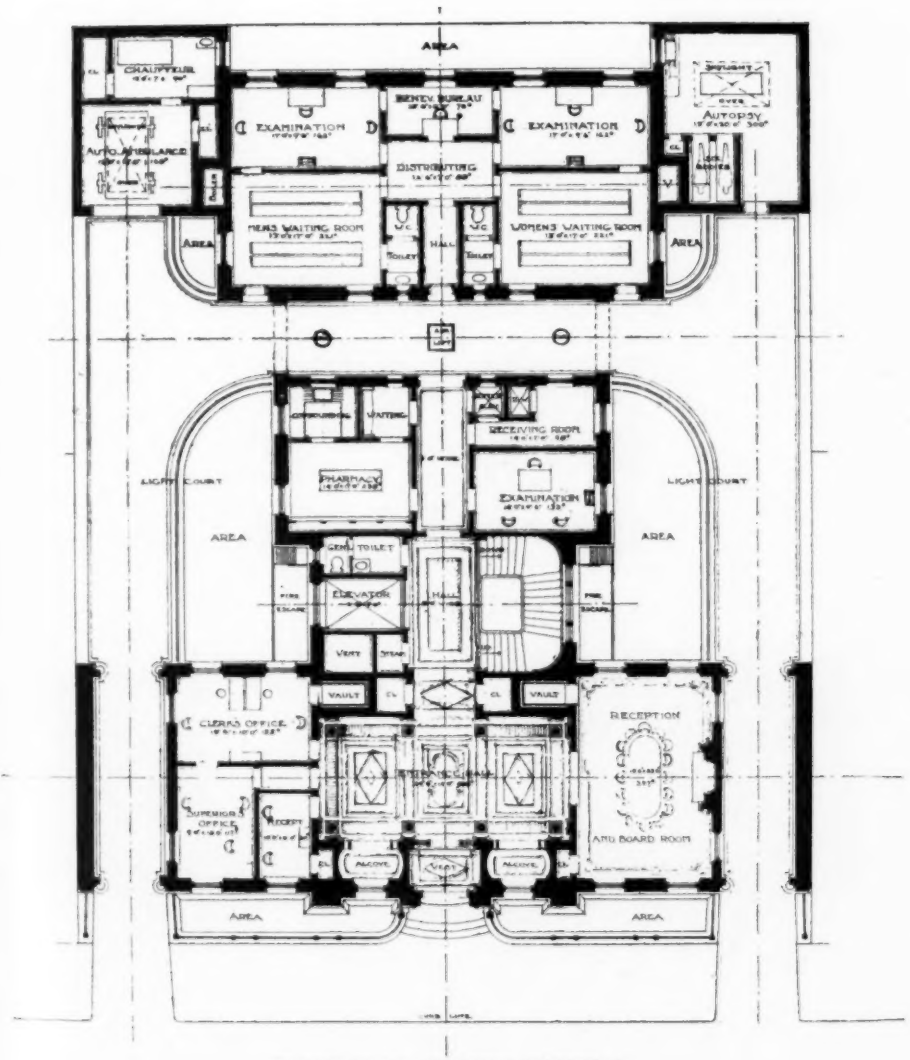
APARTMENT HOTEL BUILDING.

New York City. F. R. Comstock, Architect.



PROPOSED FRENCH HOSPITAL.

West 34th Street, New York City. Welch, Smith & Provot, Architects.

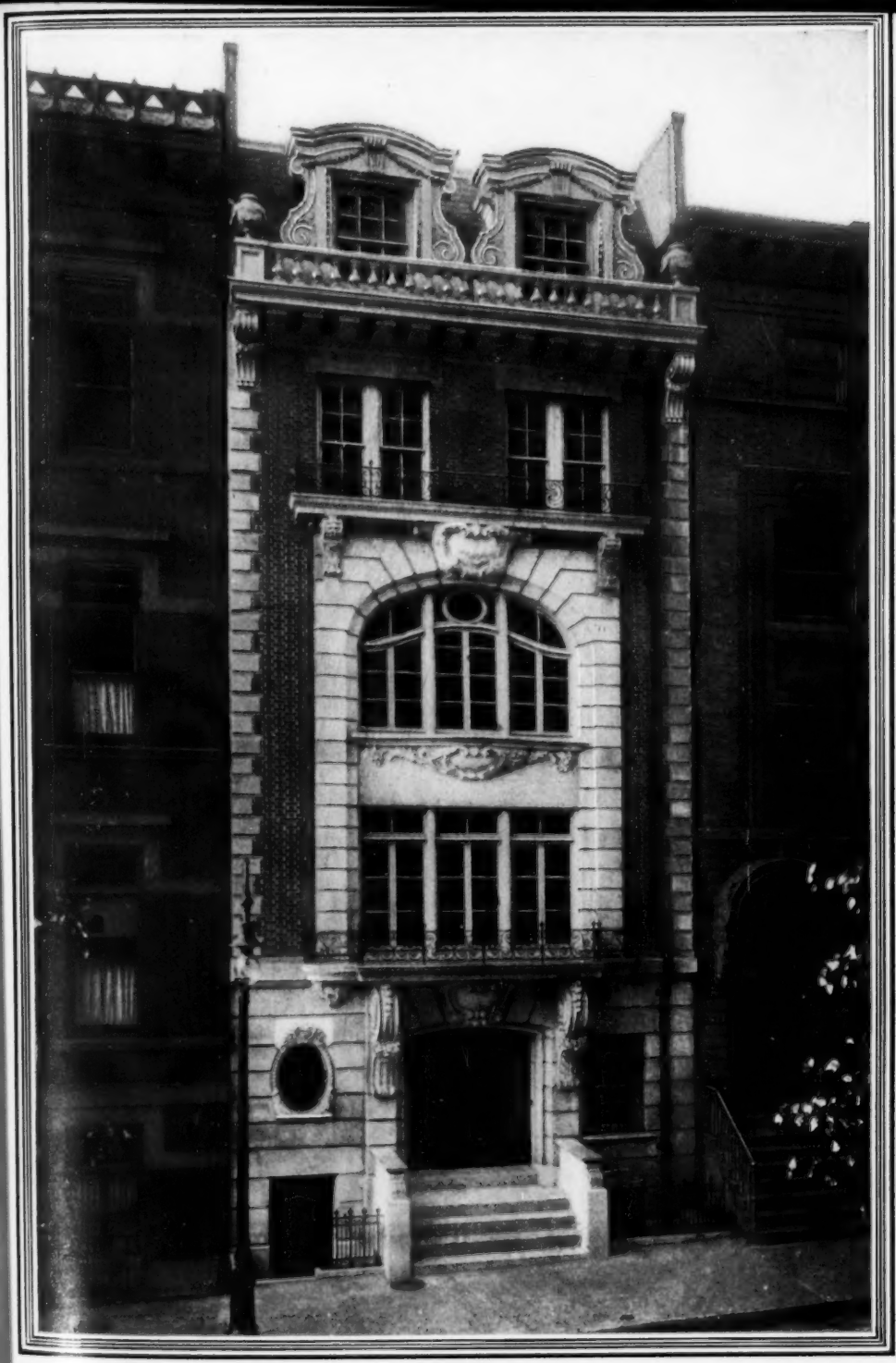


FLOOR PLAN, FRENCH HOSPITAL.

West 34th Street, New York City. Welch, Smith & Provot, Architects.

LYING-IN HOSPITAL.

2d Avenue and 18th Street, New York City. R. H. Robertson, Architect.



32 E. 51st Street, New York City. RESIDENCE. Architects, Charles Brendon & Co.

The illustration shows an interesting modification of the usual form of apartment house. It is really a compromise between the strictly basement and "high-stoop" house, combining the advantages of both. The service entrance, it is seen, is here separated from the main entrance and vestibule. The first floor contains, besides the entrance, a reception hall and toilet. The stairs ascend at the rear side of this hall, which occupies about one-half of the whole depth of the house, the rear part of the floor being devoted to kitchen, offices and servants' sitting-room. On the second floor the stairs open onto a central foyer hall, the drawing-room occupying the front of the house, and dining-room and pantry the rear. All on this floor, therefore, is according to the usual type of the American basement house; nor is there any divergence on the floors above. As to the design of the façade, it is an orderly piece of work of an eclectic character. It is commendable for the amount of discretion it embodies, for its "homely" air, and for a certain refinement.

THE GRIDIRON BUILDING.

Cor. Broadway, 5th Ave. and 23d St. D. H. Burnham & Co., Architects.

OFFICE BUILDING.

Northeast Corner Wall and Water Streets, New York City.

Robert Maynicke, Architect.

RECENT APARTMENT HOUSE DESIGN.

Central Park West, New York City

IN the October number of the Architectural Record we took a walk down Upper Fifth Avenue, and noted the stream of architectural tendency swirling along that thoroughfare. That thoroughfare might as well be called Central Park East as the corresponding thoroughfare on the western side of the park Central Park West. But Fifth Avenue traditionally denotes swelldom already, while Eighth Avenue is of an humble association. Mayhap the very fact that the East Side is a prolongation of the most fashionable avenue of a former generation is the reason why it should have been chosen as the abode of the billionaire. At least, there is none in the topography or otherwise in the nature of things, why one side of the park rather than the other should be picked out for the abode of the wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice and the profit of the early snappers-up of "options." But so it plainly is, that Central Park West is given over to them that live in apartment houses. A single dwelling is as rare a bird in these regions and as like a black swan as an "associated dwelling" on the side more favored by the caprice of fashion. It is a fact, that, excepting the several "sides" of Chicago, no human town is capable of sustaining two acknowledged and equivalent centers of fashion.

Perhaps the tendency of Central Park West was determined and its fate as the seat of the fashionable apartment house fixed when, about twenty years ago, the first of these houses was erected in the Dakota, for long a lonely pioneer. It is not especially encouraging as an architectural sign of the times, to consider that that building remains, architecturally, by far the best of the apartment houses of the west side of Central Park, and, for that matter, of the whole city. The confronting Majestic lacks the form and outline of the earlier building, and the San Remo, up above, is a grievous thing to look upon from the Park. Even these two are becoming antiquated, in comparison with the great mass of the apartment houses built and building higher up the avenue, though they remain conspicuous by size and situation, and do not suffer by comparison with most of their successors. For the two miles, almost, from Seventy-second to One Hundred and Tenth, the frontage of the park is an almost continuous row of apartment houses, of which the respective dates can be made out partly by the architectural style, but still more by the com-

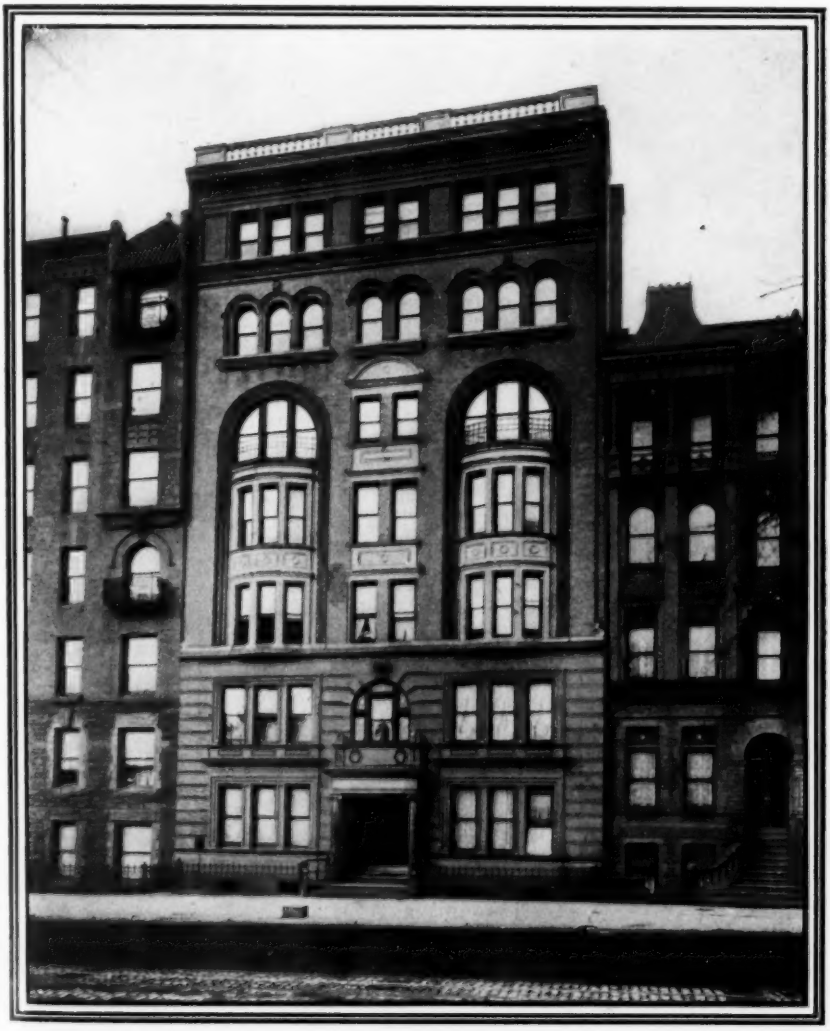
APARTMENT HOUSE.

Nos. 348 and 349 Central Park West, New York City.

parative expensiveness. There are whole block fronts among the older, which denote that they are intended for the class of tenants who overflow upon the Harlem flats and the side streets of the upper East Side. But the later additions plainly indicate that they are meant for occupants much better-to-do. The exterior architecture, as well as the interior accommodation, is aimed to attract such occupants. It constitutes, in fact, a criterion, applied by experts, of the architectural taste of the generality of the fairly well-to-do of New York. And it is not flattering.

The American in Paris is apt to find that city monotonous, missing from the streets the wide variety of material, as well as of design, which he has left at home. But an American who had spent several years in Paris, on returning to his native New York was impressed precisely with the monotony, in spite of the apparently desperate efforts of all the builders to escape from it. One can very well understand that after a promenade the length of Central Park West, there is variety enough and to spare of material, brick red and yellow and black and brown and gray, stone from all quarries and of all tints, against the uniform gray Caen of the French capital. But the sameness and tameness of the architecture are the more insistent and depressing by the very violence of the attempts to escape from those qualities, and the very strain after novelty. As the Parisian would say: "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose." Imagine this speckled and variegated front of two miles all of the same material, and relying for its differences upon individuality, upon the careful working out in the various fronts of what might fairly be called architectural ideas, of some harmonious proportions, some well wrought features. How much more interesting it would be! In fact, architectural ideas are rare swimmers in this long expanse. Let us try to pick out what there are.

Doubtless, the apartment house, which consists architecturally of a street front of five or six, or seven or eight stories does not readily lend itself to architectural treatment. It is an aggregation of rooms of which those that are visible from the street, being the show rooms of their several dwellings, are of the same importance all along each floor, and in the different floors. The requirements of the dweller on the fifth floor are precisely those of the dweller on the first, so far as the builder takes notice of them. The spacing and the dimensions of the openings are fixed by practical considerations. There is none of that subordination of less to more important rooms which supplies a motive for domestic architecture. There does not seem to be much left for the architect to do. In fact, there is not much left for the "artchitect" to do. So he merely faces with stone the first or second story,

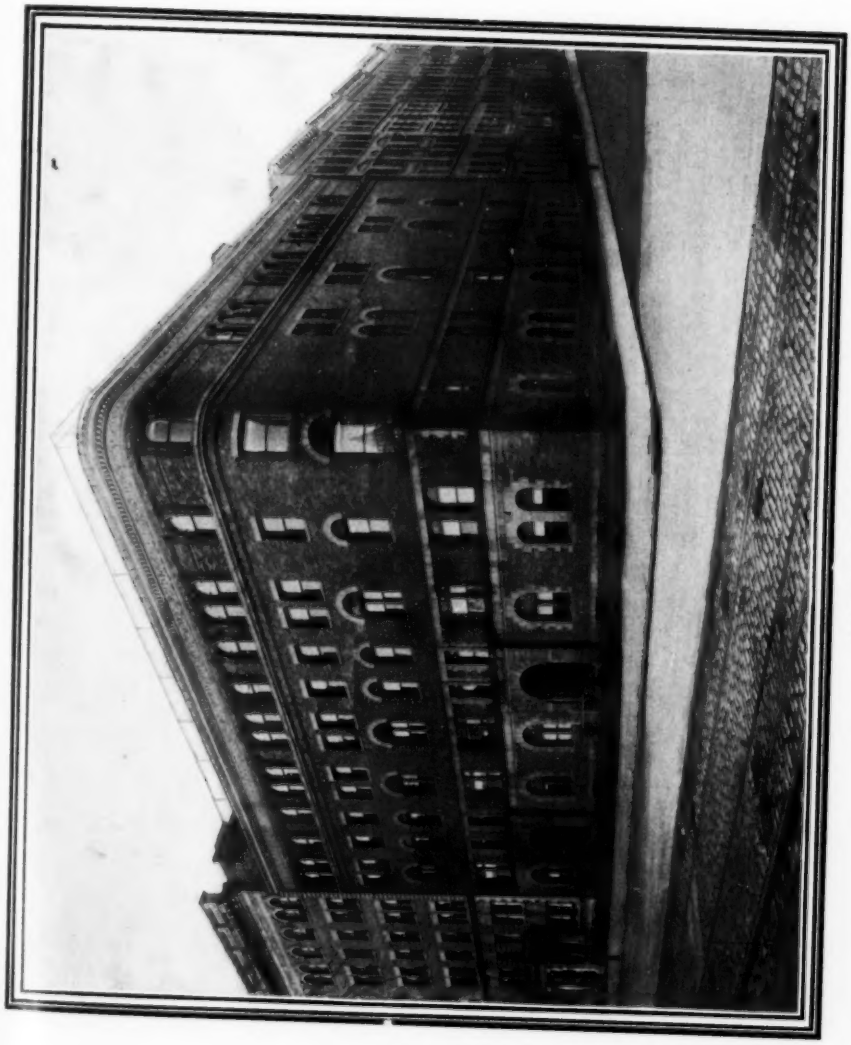


APARTMENT HOUSE.

Between 84th and 85th Streets, Central Park West, New York City.

protrudes a columned porch from each front door, crowns the edifice with an umbrageous cornice in sheet metal, and lets it go at that. One of these things makes you yawn. A mile of them gets on your nerves, and all the more when the designer undertakes to dissemble his mental vacuity by hunting for some new combination of material. "As you will, *mio caro*," old Bomba is reported to have said to young Bomba, when that aspiring prince changed the Neapolitan uniform from the Austrian white to the British red; "as you will, mio caro; dress them in white, dress them in red, they will always run away." The architect may bestow his tediousness in brick or stone of any color. It will grow only the more tedious for the "variety."

Let us look, in this panorama of platitude, for those things which do show an architectural intention. Here is one, between Eighty-fourth and Eighty-fifth streets, flanked, it will be observed, on one side by a bald "artchitectural" apartment house, of which the architectural calvity is accentuated by the attempt to dissemble it with the ridiculous toupée of the tiled and corbelled projection at the end, and on the other by an exceptional single dwelling. The central front has at least the air of having been designed by an architect, or let us say, merely designed. That is a distinction. It has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and a composition laterally as well as vertically. The detail too, is discreet and studied, and really, the modest front is one of the best designs visible on the Central Park West. We have to own that the building is a good story spoiled in the telling, and that the front looks much better in the photograph than in fact. There is so much variety in the design that there is need of none in the material. A monochrome, preferably of red, is clearly "indicated;" but in fact there are half a dozen colors not harmonized at all. The basement is of brown stone, with "binders" of a darker hue. This is very good in itself, and the mere expression that the wall is a construction and not a mere brown stone veneer, becomes an architectural nuance worthy of much more extensive adoption. But the superstructure is of tawny brick, with terra cotta wrought work of a darker tint, which is all very well in itself, but has nothing to do with the basement. Worse yet, the mullions of the bow-window and the panels at the center are apparently of so-called blue stone, which is here in fact green, which is a discord in color, and introduces another unmanageable element to that which had too many. Moreover, the story of arcaded openings over the three stories grouped under the tall arches, is much too much like the lintelled attic. Doubtless the front would have been better if the attic had been omitted, and the main cornice superposed upon the little arcades. And certainly it would



APARTMENT HOUSE.
Nos. 426 and 428 Central Park West, New York City.

have been better if the builder could have refrained, as evidently he couldn't, poor man, from crowning the edifice with an umbrageous sheet metal cornice, painted to match the terra cotta, and a sheet metal parapet painted to match the green stone, and neither of the slightest architectural interest. A good front has been marred by the use of heterogeneous material and vulgarized by a tin top.

Strange, the simple faith the builder shows in the impressiveness of this tin top, like the similar faith of a foolish and bald man in his wig, which he hopes his neighbors will believe in, though it does not deceive himself. Here, away up the avenue, is an apartment house (Nos. 426-428), in which there is certainly nothing else to resent, and it would be highly respectable but for that ridiculous wig. You may say that it is only inoffensive. But if you walk the length of Central Park West you will learn that mere inoffensiveness in an apartment house of the region is something to be grateful for. Look at it in conjunction with its neighbor to the left, which is a fair sample, and be thankful that this man did not continue that thing. Moreover, there has gone some real architectural thought to this simplicity. The main divisions are emphasized; and the baldness which would result from an absolutely uniform treatment is skilfully avoided by the arched tympana of the heads of the windows of the third story. The device is clever and effective by which the angle, left square for two stories, is rounded at the third, affording an architectural feature, as well as a commanding point of view to the inmates; and there is a grateful sense of walliness in the subordinate front on the side street. On the other hand, the arcade of the attic is not improved by the useless and incongruous pilasters flanking the openings, while it is distinctly injured by the tall sheet metal cornice, though even this is much less umbrageous than usual, as may be seen by comparing it with its neighbor, which is of the average monstrosity. Upon the whole, by dint mainly of mere simplicity and absence of pretension, in conjunction, to be sure, with some artistic sensibility and the power of expressing it, this very plain and straightforward edifice is one of the best things on the avenue, and shines by contrast with edifices upon the aspect of which several times as much money has been spent, but under the guidance of no more artistic motive than a desire to show that it has been spent.

For an example, to be sure an extreme one, of "fancy building," of a desire to make an architectural impression without an architectural motive, look at the two apartment houses on the corner of Eighty-eighth—"The Mohawk" and "The Minnewaska" are their noble names. The most striking feature about them is their

ARDSLEY HALL.

92d Street and Central Park West, New York City.

APARTMENT HOUSE, "THE TOWERS."
94th Street and Central Park West, New York City.

junction by means of the Siamese ligatures above the second and seventh stories. The New York slot is in any event a poor substitute for the Parisian court, and, except in the most liberally planned of the apartment houses, offers an insufficient provision of air, and a still more meagre supply of light. Architecturally, the fashion is not to treat it at all, but to line it with common brick and leave the back of it quite bald, with a struthious unconsciousness that it is visible from the street. But at least it is feasible and inexpensive to leave it alone as a slot. What good does it do to bridge it in two places, as is done in this case, and thereby wantonly direct attention to the ungainly lankiness of the two archways? Apart from this the present structure is noticeable for the treatment of the roofs, or rather of the attic. This has the singular air of having been designed for a Mansard, with dormers, and of having had the sloping and slated roof afterwards straightened to the vertical and built of stone in continuation of the wall. The innovation is not likely to be imitated. Conceivably, the dormers might be effective if they were relieved against a sloping roof. Certainly, they are absurd objects in their actual places and surroundings, and their absurdity is accentuated by the protusion of the chimneys. These might also be effective to animate the skyline of a peaked roof, but are worse than ineffectual where and as they are. And there is a culmination of absurdity and "fancy" in the roofed cages which enclose and crown the tops of the projecting bays.

The multiplication of bay windows, indeed, is one of the "notes" of the newer architecture of apartment houses in Central Park West. It is the most conspicuous fact about the "Ardsley Hall," at the corner of Ninety-second street, and also about "The Towers," so-called, at the corner of Ninety-fourth. Evidently the main advantage of the avenue for residential purposes, is the view it commands of the park from which it takes its name. And evidently the best disposition to command and enjoy this view is an unbroken flat front, which enables the inmates to look at once up and down and across upon the rural scene. The architect of "The Towers" has recognized this self evident truth by leaving flat his front on the park, and accumulating his "towers" on the street side. But the architect of Ardsley Hall has not been so well inspired, and has projected four full semicircles on Central Park West, whereby his tenants are confined to a slice at a time of the view which they would rather command from one aperture. The exterior effect to which the interior advantage is thus sacrificed would be worth some sacrifice to avoid. In each case the result is a central feature of a slot with two flanking towers, something like the gate house of a mediaeval keep. A very grim and gloomy slot

APARTMENT HOUSE.

88th Street and Central Park West, New York City.

it in each case is, being deep and dark and narrow, and its grimness and its gloom are enhanced by the portico that is meant to relieve them. The portico of the Ardsley is distinctly the worse, since the designer has had the unhappy thought of giving it importance by extending it through two stories, and has thus attenuated his order to an intolerable lankiness. The whole portico is, in sooth, a painful object, that shows a kind of genius for discordant proportion. The other is better, in so far as it is simpler, being a plain Doric tetrastyle of one story. But why any portico at all? No feature could go worse with these round and tower-like bay windows. And practically, the need of shelter at the entrance, which is the explanation of the "fancy" feature there, is not answered by a shelter which is only a canopy and exposes the waiter underneath to all the winds that blow and rains and snows that drive from the sides. How much more rational the porch protected at the sides as well as overhead of Nos. 348-349, which adjoins "The Towers" on the north, and which indeed is in general about the high-water mark of the recent architecture of the avenue. To be sure six stories are more manageable than eight. But there has gone some reason and study to the composition of this front, of which the disposition is judiciously emphasized by the changes of treatment from center to sides and of material from top to bottom. It is at least a design and it fairly shines by contrast with the higgledy-piggledy of "The Towers." It would not be fair to leave the Ardsley, poor thing as it is, without praising the architect, or, perhaps, still more the builder, for conspicuous common decency in denying himself the saving of a tin cornice, and, unless he has succeeded in deceiving the passer, carrying out his upperworks in honest masonry, and with the modest dimensions and projections which the use of honest masonry compels. It is refreshing to find something to praise in the architecture of Central Park West, refreshing and also difficult.

Franz K. Winkler.

OVER THE DRAUGHTING BOARD.

Opinions Official and Unofficial.

All, or almost all, artists in mosaic colored glass windows are free to confess that the beauty of their work is ofttimes greatly marred by the flesh painting, because of its flatness in conjunction with the roundness of their figures, and because of its artistic and technical inferiority in comparison with the mosaic proportions. They have struggled persistently against the first weakness, and in some cases with marked success, and where they have been successful it is owing to their having adopted a method, introduced by Mr. Louis C. Tiffany, of superimposing glass on glass. The steps in this process of work are as follows: The features are painted in a monotone upon a piece of colorless glass, cut to the form of the head and hands; over this is placed a colored piece, chosen for its flesh tone, and, if necessary, assisted with paint; and then a thin piece is placed over all, selected for its skin-like texture. In this way a satisfactory result is generally obtained, and all because the flesh is in harmony with the figures, which, it will be remembered, are clothed with deep-toned richly colored glass of variable thickness, having all the appearance of actuality.

A Difficulty and Its Solution.

The second weakness, the greater of the two, takes its rise in the fact that the artist of the window does not do the flesh painting himself, but entrusts it to the hands of some other person; thus abandoning the vital portion of his window to a "glass-painter," who is invariably a man of limited ability, generally a poor draughtsman, and always a slave to the traditions of the art in its application to stain-glass work, having no sympathy with the theory of work employed by mosaicists. What would be thought of a novelist, who was content with writing his title page, the heads of his chapters, and a line here and there, leaving the main portion of his novel to be filled by a clerk of his publishers? The idea in itself is an absurdity, and the result, without a doubt, would be a failure. If this is true of the novelist, it is also true of the artist in glass, for outside of his space and color composition, the flesh painting is the

most important factor in his window. It is in the flesh that he expresses his sentiment and tells his story—that is if his window is anything more than a study in color.

It would seem that the solution of the difficulty is plain, for the artist could, if he would, obviate and banish this weakness, as well as the former, from his window, by painting the flesh himself, and by adjusting the superimposing. Yet in actual practice he obstinately continues to turn over the flesh to be painted to a so-called artist in glass painting, and in this way allows the very life to be taken out of his work. Why? Because he mistrusts his own ability to paint upon glass; because he imagines it is a difficult process and one that takes a long while to master; because he listens to the jealous and idle talk of glass painters, who invariably attempt to shroud their methods of work in mystery, and guard the great secrets of their art from profane eyes. The truth is, the mystery is a figment of the glass-painter's mind, and "the secrets" of his art are as transparent as the glass he paints upon.

Of all the dependent and accessory arts, there is no one so simple, so easy to acquire, as that of the glass painter, more especially for a worker in oil. A few well directed experiments: testing the vitrifiable pigments by fire, the various color results singly and in union with one another, will put him in possession of all the fundamental knowledge he will require, while the perfection of technique will come almost before he knows it. Mr. Edward Simmons, who had never employed fusible colors, until he produced his Harvard memorial, succeeded in painting the flesh in this window in a most masterful way, and with little or no trouble; Miss Violet Oakley did the same thing in her All Angel windows; and the Misses Cowles, absolutely without previous instruction in glass painting, painted not only the flesh, but also many other parts of their interesting window, now in Grace Church, New York. This group of clever artists have pointed out the way to make a window truly the work of the artist in every point, except the parts that rightfully belong to the artist-artisan, and the mere mechanical portions.

The only obstacles of moment that stand in the way of making glass windows what they should be are the following: First, the one that comes from the commercialism of the window builder, viz., that it would materially increase the cost of the work if the artist painted it, as he would not paint the flesh for as low a price as a glass-painter. Moreover he would not be satisfied with imperfect results, and might paint it all over again, another possible addition to the cost. The second obstacle comes from the ignorance of the buyer of the window, from not understanding the importance of having the artist do his own painting, and a consequent unwil-

lingness on his part to pay a price which will cover this part of the work. The last obstacle comes from the artist himself, in not insisting upon being allowed to carry out his window from beginning to end, or from a lack of confidence in his own ability to execute the work.

These obstacles can be removed: the builder must be satisfied with a smaller profit, the buyer must be educated, and the artist must be bolder, and persistently insist upon having his artistic rights. The day for bad windows, commercial inanities, has gone by. The future is solely in the hands of the artists, and it behooves them to take advantage of their opportunity, before it is too late.

* * *

American Country Life and Art.

About ten years ago or more, Americans decided that they were not taking enough interest in art, and since it is in the blood not consciously to submit to any limitation, they have ever since been zealously and pertinaciously repairing the deficiency. More recently they have decided that they do not take enough interest in the country, and now with perhaps even greater enthusiasm, they are preparing to make themselves more familiar with nature. Bird books are published by the score and sell as well as romantic novels. Books about all kinds of gardens are almost equally in demand, and a hot fight is on between the advocates of the formal and the so-called "natural" garden. Within the last six months two periodicals devoted to different aspects of country life have been started, and will, we hope, have a most prosperous existence. And so it goes, and will continue to go until another generation comes along, which will reap the fruits of all this effort, and will be able to take over simply and unconsciously what their parents have been obliged somewhat laboriously to acquire.

The decision on the part of young America to take an interest in the country, is one of the best of the many good decisions which young America has recently been taking. It will have many excellent results, among which not the least excellent will be a higher standard of orderliness and propriety in those necessary adaptations of the soil and the natural growth to human uses. No one who has spent much time, even in the earliest settled of our American country districts, can avoid noticing a lack of neatness and tidiness about such arrangements. The roads are generally badly made and badly kept in repair. The fences were built in a cheap and slovenly way in the beginning, now present a forlorn, neglected appearance. The sides of the road are overgrown with weeds, and except in the middle of villages, have been planted only by the haphazard methods of nature herself. The houses

situated near, altogether too near these roads, are arranged, for the most part, as if their owners had no idea that they were subjects of public inspection. The grounds are generally clean, but so bare, so entirely lacking in any attempt to conceal what is unsightly, and to make that which is necessarily conspicuous any more pleasant to the eye that they involuntarily suggest a corresponding bareness and emptiness in the lives of their occupants. A few old and straggling vines, an occasional lilac bush, and here and there a little border of flowers—that represents in many parts of New England the efforts of three or four generations of owners to enhance the seemliness of their surroundings. And this is the sad case with places, upon which, at one time or another, a good deal of money has been spent.

The trouble seems to be that in this country there has never been permanently attached to the soil, a class of people who had leisure, wealth, and something more than a common-school education. In the East the farmer has generally been obliged to lead a life of constant drudgery, with the result of rarely getting more than a bare living out of the soil. In the West, farming has frequently been more profitable, but it has not yet resulted in the settlement on the soil of any large number of leisured and cultivated people. The land has been worked too much in the speculative spirit, and its owners have not the impulse or the ambition to build up fine and permanent agricultural domains. In the South only has such an attempt been made upon a large scale, and since the war, the South has in this respect gone the way of the rest of the country. The consequence is that the standards of agricultural life have been, as a rule, narrow and utilitarian, and that even when a farmer did have a little leeway, he was under no social compulsion to use his surplus for the purpose of making his surroundings genial and pleasant.

The generous and handsome country places in the United States have, for the most part, been the creation of men who have made money in the cities, and who have bought and operated farms chiefly for their own diversion. But until recently this has never been done with a sufficiently serious purpose, or by a sufficiently large number of people to have any general or wholesome effect. The rich man, who likes to breed fast horses, raise fancy cattle and rare flowers, is the kind of rich man who deserves encouragement; but his personal relation to his farm is too occasional, and its operation is too independent of ordinary economic conditions to make his example pervasive and popularly interesting. It is necessary that a larger number of people should take a lively personal and local interest in the country before any general social results will follow, and it is something of this kind which now seems

to be taking place. The summer hotel is being supplemented by the country house. All over New England small settlements of city people are gathering; and these people, who are frequently possessed of only moderate means, take a much more intimate and dependent relation to their farms and gardens, than does the multi-millionaire. It is in the interest of these people that periodicals like "Country Life" and "House and Garden" are being published, and it is to them that must be entrusted the improvement of the outer aspects of agricultural America.

It will be a slow business, because the natives of New England regard these new-comers as intruders. Far from being dazzled by the "smartness" of their horses, and the comeliness of their houses and grounds, the New England farmer regards them with suspicion and alarm. He is both afraid of being crowded out, and resentful of any suggestion of social inferiority. Should the farmer's wife make a call, it is always a delicate question whether she be received in the kitchen or in the drawing-room, whether she consort with the "help" or the mistress. And the difficulty which ensues of finding any except a business basis of social intercourse is a difficulty which inevitably arises when people of widely varying standards are brought into ordinary social relations, and when those that cleave to the lower standards possess an admirable and justifiable sense of personal independence and self-respect. We have not raised this difficulty for the purpose of laying it, but only for the purpose of indicating how much must be done in the way of education, before any adequate social basis can be reached for a wholesome, permanent, and better behaved American country life. In the meantime, there is abundant cause for satisfaction in what seems to be the increased interest in the soil and its products by large numbers of comparatively well-to-do and well-informed people. The good effects which will probably be felt in all departments of American art, but particularly in architecture can scarcely be overestimated.

* * *

The Young Barbarians at Play.

Perhaps the greatest spectacular events of modern American life are the more important intercollegiate foot-ball games. There is certainly no other sport, or no other occasions upon which great numbers of Americans gather together, which affords such intense exhilaration of feeling and such a combination of lively, yet imposing impressions. And yet with that unfortunate combination between pleasure and ugliness which seems inevitable in American popular diversions, the actual architectural surroundings of these games are in every case deplorably uninteresting. The ap-

proaches to the foot-ball field are generally narrow, inconvenient and even sordid. When the field itself is reached one finds, as a rule, merely a wooden fence with an insufficient number of gates leading to an amphitheatre of metal or wooden seats. No attempt is made to enclose the back side of these structures. The beams and columns stand exposed to public view in all their gaunt nakedness and confusion. No attempt is made to lead up to the main entrance appropriately or attractively. In short, there is a complete absence of any effort to make the appearance of the field a bit better than that of any schoolboys' base-ball club. Yet when one enters the amphitheatre, bad as the arrangements are from an æsthetic point of view, what may be called the natural proportions of the structure are not bad, and the effect, when the benches are full and the flags waving is extraordinarily impressive.

However slow the college authorities may be in appreciating the desirability of making university athletic playgrounds as attractive and impressive as the contests which they accommodate, deserve, it is interesting that the architectural problem involved is receiving attention from the good architects. One of the most noteworthy experiments at the Buffalo Fair was the Stadium, which was designed by Mr. Walter Cook, not only for foot-ball games, but for all kinds of athletic contests. The structure was decidedly experimental and was particularly defective in its treatment of the two ends of the amphitheatre; but it had some effective proportions, and will surely assist other architects in their subsequent treatment of the same problem. An idea of this kind is very contagious among Americans. Of course, St. Louis is to have a Stadium also, and still another is to be built on the grounds of Chicago University for the international Olympian games in 1904. Since these, however, will be only temporary structures, it is more significant that Harvard seems to have taken the same idea. For several years past the athletic committee has been coöperating with the Metropolitan Park Commission in making extensive improvements on Soldiers' Field, planned not merely to make the Field more useful and healthy, but also to improve its appearance. More important for our present purpose is the fact that a design for new seats has also been prepared, which is described as an "engineering structure of steel covered by concrete." This does not sound very attractive, but it is something to have the steel structure covered at all; and the result may be safely left in the hands of Mr. McKim, the architect. What Harvard has begun the other colleges will imitate, until ten or fifteen years from now the young American barbarians may play in surroundings that will give distinction, even to the roughest sports.

Certainly it is very desirable that Americans should have their liveliest pleasures associated with æthetically interesting surroundings. For the business of æsthetic improvement is, as a rule, a very serious business in this country, and higher standards and good examples have to be imposed upon the public, very much as the doctor imposes his pills. People do not enjoy them, but being told that they are salutary they are accepted. As a part of this process the recent change of official heart in Washington is very encouraging, resulting as it has in the selection of very good designs for the new Agricultural Building, and an admirable Commission to supervise a necessary revision of the park plan of the city. For unless the government architecture and architectural arrangements are educational, the effects of private individuals must be in large measure unavailing. Yet more important than any educational official architecture is an enhancement of the æsthetic value of the surroundings of people, who are merely out for a good time; and consequently any step in the direction of making the great spectacular athletic contests of the year a beautiful as well as an exhilarating sight will do more to popularize better æsthetic standards than a vast quantity of good official architecture.