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MONUMENT TO DAUDET, IN PARIS
BY M. DE SAINT-MARCEAUX

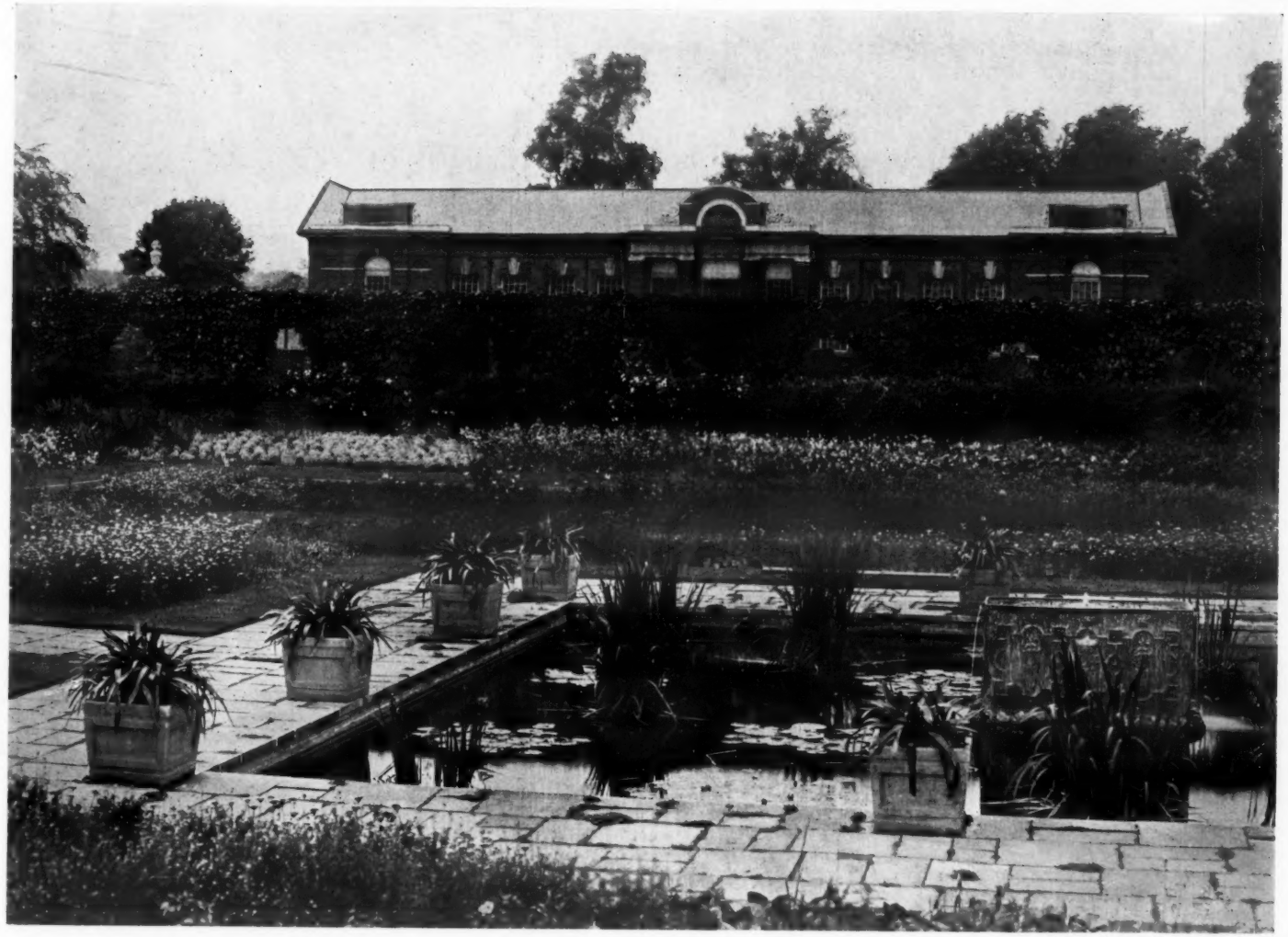


Photo: "Architectural Review"

THE DUTCH GARDEN AT KENSINGTON PALACE: VIEW LOOKING ACROSS, WITH ORANGERY IN BACKGROUND

THE DUTCH GARDEN AT KENSINGTON PALACE

WHEN persecutions and oppressions first drove the Flemings to this country, and, later, when William of Orange came over to occupy the English throne, many fresh methods were introduced into the arts of building and the planning and embellishment of gardens. As regards the former, we have only to turn to the many old houses in the Eastern Counties to see what fancies in brickwork the Fleming brought with him; while of gardens Dutch in character we have examples remaining too, though, in the nature of things, they have not come down to us with all their original features preserved. Indeed, in this matter of old gardens we have a whole century or so of energetic destruction between us and the originals, a time when, started by the ridicule of Addison and Pope, the landscape gardener set to work his will on all formality; and a little later time when "Capability Brown" (nicknamed, it will be remembered, because of his habit of saying that the site before him offered great capabilities) was destroying fine old gardens throughout the length and breadth of the land in the mistaken zeal of a new conviction and under the patronage of an equally mistaken noble ownership. The Dutch garden, it is true, got carried to such a degree of shaping and boxing and formal enclosing that it brought its own destruction with it. Yet many examples testify to its charm, and we find to-day that the lure of the principles which govern it is no whit abated. One such example may be seen at Kensington Palace, in the space to the east of the building. Here is what is termed "the Dutch garden." It is, however, not a relic of Dutch William's day, as many people suppose, but quite a modern creation, having been made, we believe, about four years ago on what was formerly the framing ground. It is a very pleasant place nevertheless, and at the present time, when its flowers are in bloom and the enclosing pleached alleys of lime-trees* are in full leaf, it makes a delightful picture. The accompanying photographs serve to give a fair representation of the garden, though they lack the colour which constitutes so large a part of its attractions.

In Tudor and Elizabethan days the garden was a place enclosed by walls, over which there was always a desire to look; as witness the "mount" so commonly placed in such gardens. At Kensington the reverse is the case, for instead of looking out of the garden the public looks into it, through the many openings that have been left in the leafy walls. Delightful glimpses are obtained through these openings, and fuller views over the four gateways—one on each side. These gateways, it may be added, are not happy in their design, nor is the ironwork of their gates of a sort that can be commended; but, fortunately, the flowers hide them largely from view.

A path of random stone paving is laid around the water space, and in the latter are placed three old lead cisterns, which have thus been put to very good use. Water is rarely introduced into gardens without success, and certainly in this Dutch garden at Kensington its effect is most pleasing. As Bacon wrote: "For fountains, they are a great beauty and refreshment; but pools mar all, and make the garden unwholesome and full of flies and frogs. Fountains I intend to be of two natures; the one that sprinkleth or spouteth water, the other a fair receipt of water of some 30 or 40 foot, but without fish, slime, or mud."

To gaze upon this garden at Kensington Palace, with its brilliant patches of colour, is a refreshing change from the noisy streets hard by, and the sense of pleasure is increased by the leafy canopy that spreads overhead and around.

Photo: "Architectural Review"

THE PLEACHED ALLEY

* The word "pleach" or "plash" or "impleach" is from the French "plesser"—from "plecto," to plait, infold, or interweave.

THE DUTCH GARDEN AT KENSINGTON PALACE

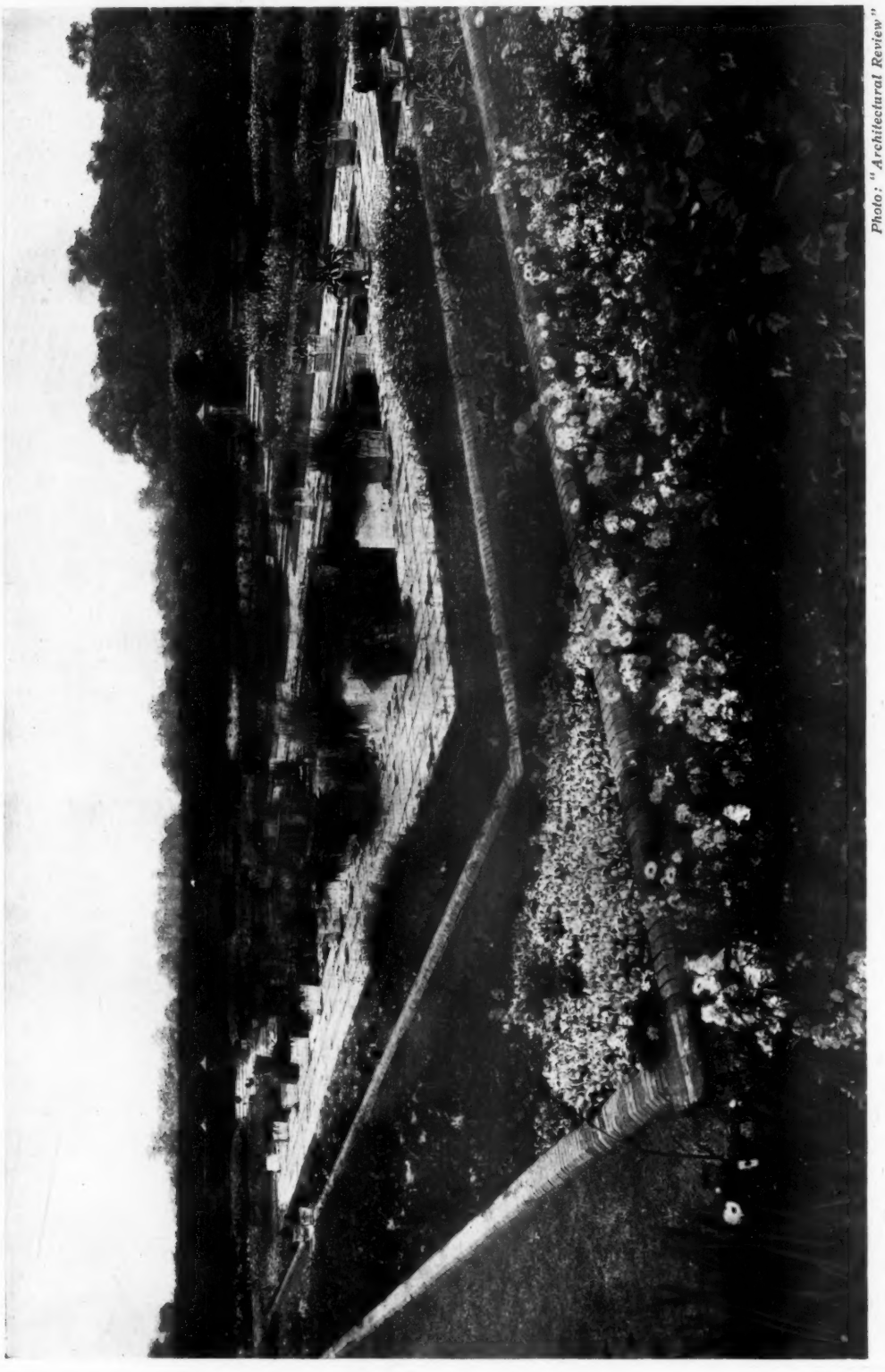


Photo: "Architectural Review"

GENERAL VIEW

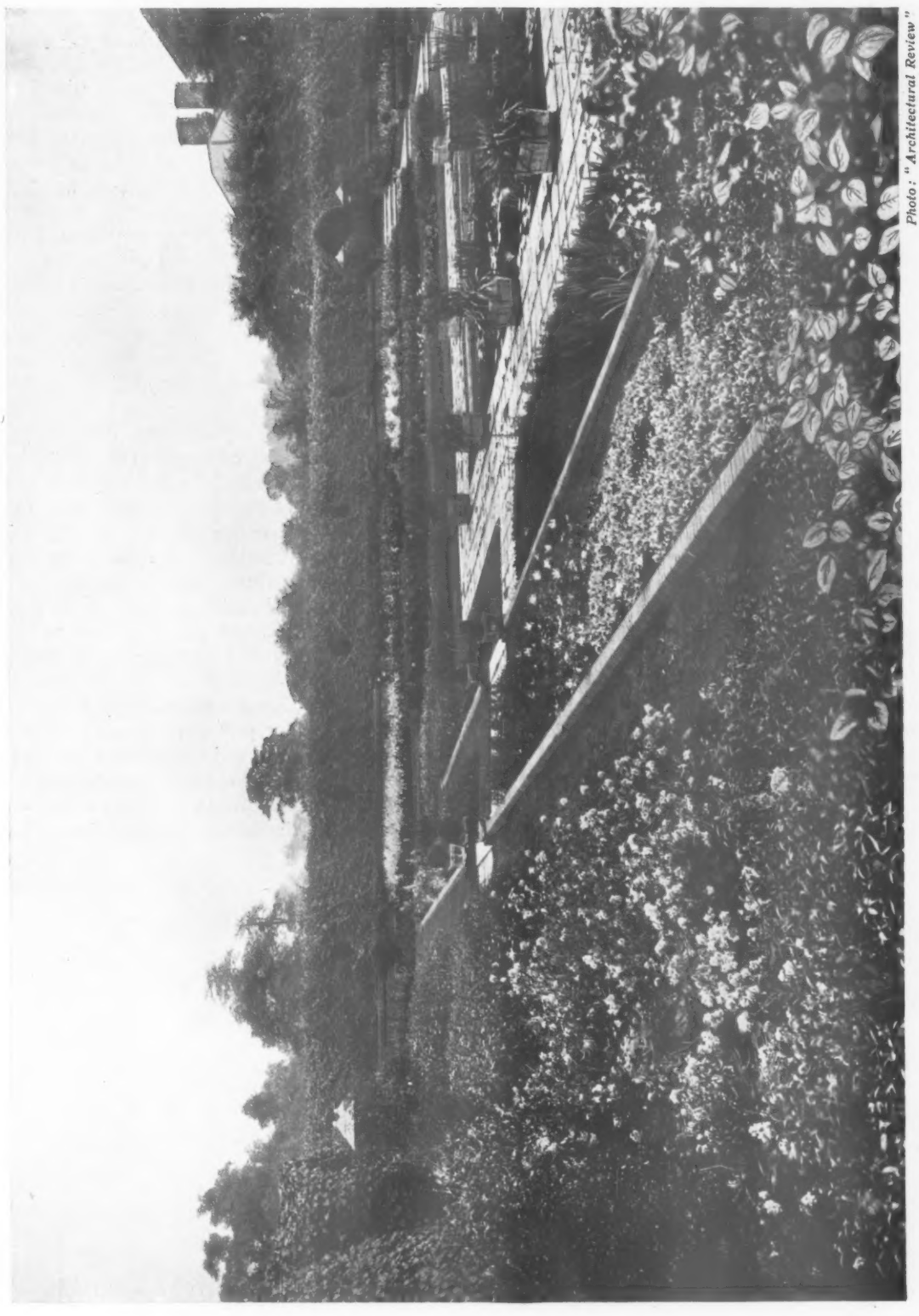


Photo: "Architectural Review"

VIEW LOOKING ACROSS

MODERN ATHENS

BY LIONEL B. BUDDEN, M.A.

(*Concluded from page 320, No. 187*)

WHILST the University, Library, and Academy together form from certain points of view the finest group of buildings in modern Athens, they do not enjoy the best site. That is occupied by the Royal Palace, the axis of whose main façade coincides with the axis of Syntagma Square and Hermes Street. This structure terminates a gradient vista, the fall (averaging about 1 in 70) beginning at the east end of Syntagma Square and continuing steadily down to the west end of Hermes Street. It must be confessed that the design of the Palace—by Gärtner of Munich, 1834-8—is not equal to the possibilities of its position. The expanse of dull wall-surface, the mechanically distributed windows, the spare employment of marble dressings, and the absence of an adequate cornice, give an appearance of jejuneness and poverty quite inconsistent with the fountain, terraces, and steps, the orange trees and oleanders, of its formal approach. Nor is it much better suited to the landscape garden that encloses its south and eastern sides. It has not the character of a palace. The entrance portico is well proportioned and archæologically accurate, and might be admirable if employed in another connection. Here it is insufficient both as regards its function in the design and as the terminating feature of a long vista.*

* Of the interior the finest apartments were the ballroom and other chambers in the central block, all of which were unfortunately gutted by fire in the winter of 1909-10.

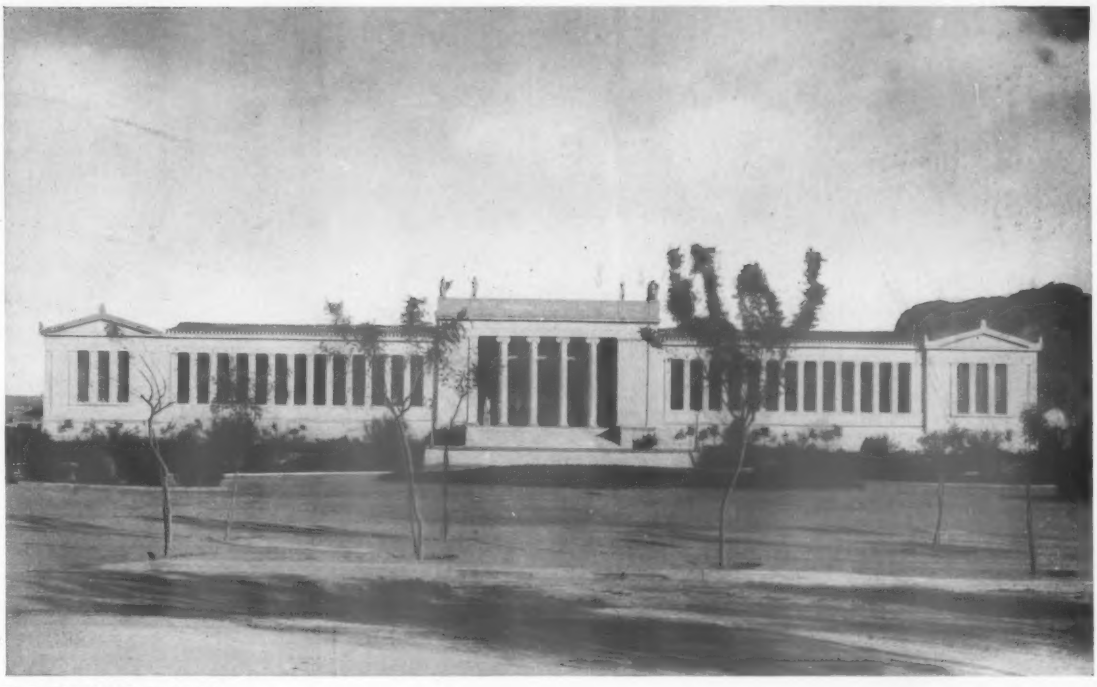
The irregular development of Athens and the consequent disparity of land values has led to the erection of several large public buildings on sites whose principal recommendation has consisted in the advantageous terms on which they could be purchased. Their environment may be squalid or (and this is the more general rule) may simply consist of waste ground marked out into building areas and divided up by road lines, but otherwise undeveloped and showing little sign of immediate development.

Within a combination of these conditions falls the site of the National Museum, a building to some extent supported by the proximity of the Polytechnic Institute, but almost submerged in the half-developed wilderness of jerry-building which exists at the northern extremity of the city. The Museum, erected in 1871-89, was designed by Lange of Munich. Its composition is marred by the weakness of the central feature above the entablature. The height of the attic and the character of its modelling are alike inadequate, nor do the figures silhouetted against the sky appreciably remedy these defects. On the other hand the entrance portico-in-antis is a very graceful arrangement, and the remainder of the conception, in which the rectangular pier motif, typical of Athenian monumental designs, is effectively worked out, harmonises well with it.

Amongst the other public buildings in the city the most important, judged from the point of view of their influence on Athenian practice, are:—

The Polytechnic Institute, erected in 1858 on a site adjoining the one subsequently occupied

THE ROYAL PALACE



THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

by the National Library. In this design by L. Kaftanzoglon the main structure is set well back from the road. Its superimposed Doric and Ionic portico is approached across an open forecourt flanked by Doric pedimented wings. The columns in the latter features are, as usual, of white Pentelic marble, but behind them the wall surface is coloured a dark red, the effect being happier than might reasonably be expected.

The Zappeion, a permanent exhibition building in the public garden to the south of the Palace. It was erected in 1888 at the expense of the brothers Zappas, and was intended for the display of Greek industries. Whilst its semicircular shape is so unsatisfactory as to require a close backing of trees or some other kind of screen at the rear, the main façade—the diameter of the semicircle—needs only slight amendment. Unfortunately its effect is prejudiced by its proximity to the Olympieion. Its white Corinthian columns appear puny and aggressively new beside those of the great temple, which are twice as high, and after centuries of exposure now glow a dull soft gold like the ruins on the Acropolis.*

The Parliament House in Stadion Street, which, though little better than the Palace in point of expressiveness, and in sheer architectural quality about equal to the University, has yet undoubtedly inspired much of the pseudo-Renaissance villa work on the outskirts.

The Municipal Theatre (by Ziller) in Athena Street, the Arsakeion, Varvakeion, and several schools and academies in different parts of the city. Almost without exception these are well-designed structures of white marble, limestone, and stucco; adorned with impressive porticoes, and conceived on so fine a scale that they give distinction to a whole neighbourhood of poor or mediocre buildings.

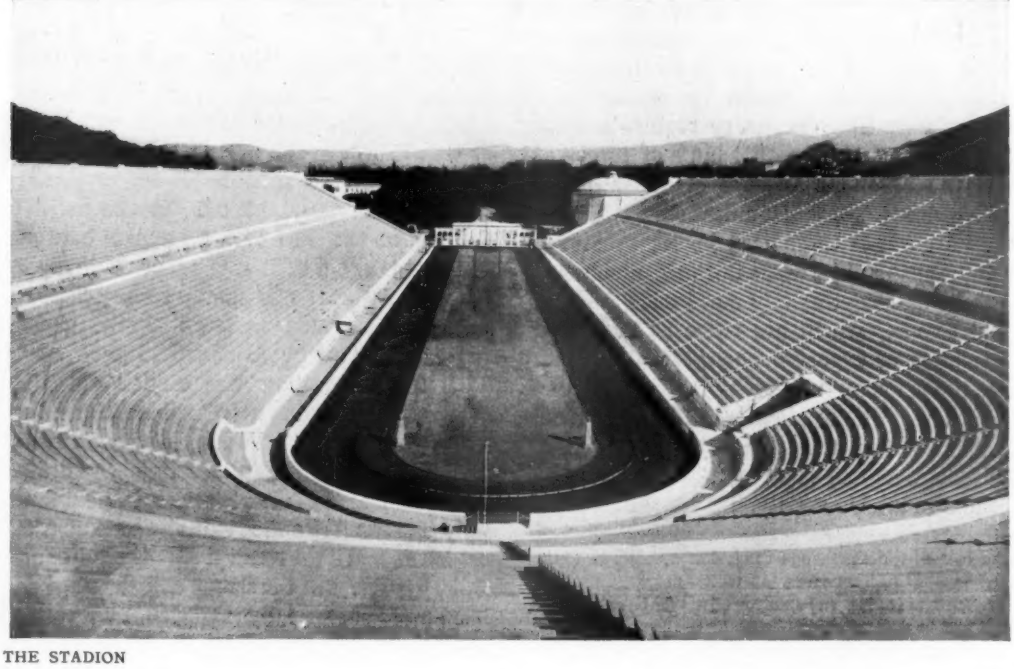
Lastly, having no influence upon the architecture of other buildings, but profoundly indicative of the spirit animating many, there is the Panathenaic Stadion—the athletic theatre across the Ilissos, in which the first of the modern series of Olympic Games was held. It was originally built under Lykourgos, 330 B.C., in the usual Greek fashion, on the sides of a depression between two hills. In 140 B.C. it was renewed in marble by Herodes Atticus; and finally reconstructed 1895–1905 in the same material at the expense of Averoff, a wealthy Athenian tobacco merchant. This last restoration was carried out in strict conformity with extant remains under the supervision of Hansen of Vienna, who worked on the amended basis of a plan originally drafted by General Metaxas. The clean workmanship and carefully preserved simplicity of the scheme are above criticism, and if the resolution of the major and subsidiary portions of the screen colonnade could have been more successfully managed, its general effect and appropriateness more than atone for the error.

* In the case of the Parthenon some doubt exists as to the origin of the yellow and brown patina, which may be due either to the presence of iron in the marble, that has become more apparent through exposure; or to a sizing of calcareous matter applied to the surface of the marble.

THE STADION

To come now to Athenian city architecture as a whole—in which operate the influences of the works we have been considering. Whereas in proportion to its size Athens has to show as many buildings of individual merit as any other capital in Europe, its street and *place* architecture is undeniably lacking in formal cohesion. Progressive interest is sought rather than effect through symmetrical grouping. There are few continuous façade treatments—nothing in the spirit of the Rue de Rivoli or of the Place de la Concorde. Homonoia Square, sufficiently small and regular in form for the enclosing buildings to have received a consistent treatment, conveys no impression of definite arrangement. The character of the façades overlooking it, their shapes and surface modelling, is so varied that only a confused sense of picturesque composition is derivable from them. So complete is the lack of relation between their parts that the very form of the square itself appears irregular, a delusion to which materially contributes the presence of innumerable telegraph, tramway, and electric-light standards, newspaper kiosks, advertisement pillars, and gas lamps connected by jet pipes (for illumination on festival nights).

Syntagma Square is, in this respect, considerably superior. The buildings, though unrelated, approximate to each other in height tolerably



THE STADION

well, and their composition does not present conflicting contrasts. The *place* itself is unencumbered, and its larger area can be definitely realised as a regular geometric form. Moreover, it is in direct relation to the Royal Palace, which, whatever may be its faults of design, is in size at least able to sustain the demands of its position, giving finality to the space that slopes down in front of it.

But in most cases individual considerations have prevailed over general in design, with results that are the more to be regretted since the lines of the streets, and of the squares especially, lend themselves to purely formal and regular treatments. The latter are not complex nor greatly broken, for the systematic intersection of streets

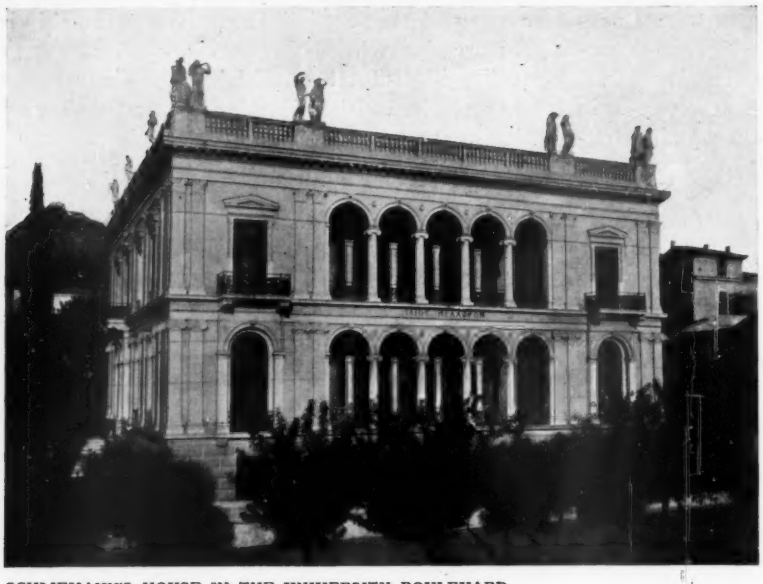
SYNTAGMA SQUARE

at right angles has made the provision of spaces a simple affair. To obtain a clear area either for the purposes of providing a fresh-air space, or to obtain a proper setting for a building, it has merely been necessary to omit construction on one or more of the island sites, or, if this decision has been arrived at after the development of the district, to remove property already existing. In consequence, almost all the *places* throughout the city are rectangular, and only the differences of their relative dimensions prevent their appearing monotonously recurrent forms.

If in general the absence of extensive architectectural arrangements, both in squares and streets, is unfortunate, the level of individual performance is remarkably high, and the theory of "progressive interest" finds frequent justification. In the Academy and University Boulevards, in Stadion, Athena, Eolus, and Hermes Streets, are a vast number of excellent buildings whose authorship is obscure, but whose character has no uncertain quality of distinction, The bulk of these works are conceived either in néo-Grec or the Second Empire manner refined and Hellenised.* Simplicity of composition, purity of line, and a delicate technique in detail, are their general characteristics, and there are frequent successful experiments in broad polychromy — white marble columns against blue stucco surfaces, gilded panels, etc. In addition there are many charming late French and Italian designs, in whose evolution the same refining, monumental process is also directly traceable to the influence of the large public buildings. Of the Italian type the most remarkable is the house erected in the University Boulevard by Dr. Schliemann, the discoverer of Troy. The private residences in the wealthy East End quarter beyond the Royal Palace are for the most part Italian or néo-Grec in style. Their designs are usually of considerable elegance, comprising always the inevitable well-proportioned entrance portico and bracket-supported balconies. Along Cephisia Road, and behind the Palace gardens in Herodes Atticus Street, most of these houses, including the residence of the Crown Prince, are to be found, each one set well back from the road, its white marble walls and columns showing through the foliage of pepper and orange trees, or half-hidden by cypresses.

Excluding the squalid mediæval quarter, Athens is, in a sense, one of the most homogeneous

* Certain forms have undergone special development—notably the Second Empire bracket, which is largely employed for the support of balconies.



SCHLIEMANN'S HOUSE IN THE UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD

cities in Europe. It has not the homogeneity of Bordeaux or Paris, whose completeness is the result of large symmetrical schemes of architecture, nor that of Bath, where the inspiration of a single architect predominates. Though Schaubert's plan is fitted and no doubt was intended for both, yet these conditions have not obtained. The origin of the architectural character of Athens is to be found in the forces peculiar to the period and circumstances of its development. On its selection in 1834 as the site of the permanent capital of modern Greece, and on the adoption of Schaubert's scheme, the actual erection of the new city—or rather of the public buildings which have had so profound an influence on all other design—fell to the architects already engaged in archæological research on the Acropolis, and to those whom the Bavarian monarchy had attracted on its establishment. The majority of both sections were Germans—Schaubert himself, Gärtner, Hansen, Lange, etc.—and their inspiration was Greek. Since that time the néo-Grec tradition in modern Athenian architecture has been well maintained and developed in all types of building. This is as much due to national sentiment as to the local persistence of the German element in the architectural profession. Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, in spite of French influence being continually in the ascendant, and of a great part of the residential and commercial practice passing into the hands of Parisian-trained architects, both Greek and French, the néo-Grec style emerged triumphant. If designs were not conceived in the letter of the style, they were in its spirit. Second Empire and Italian Renaissance were translated with an unfailing facility that would be remarkable in any other artistic atmosphere, but which, under the influence of the new Athenian tradition, was natural and inevitable.

Of almost equal force in contributing to the total effect was the limitation of material—a limitation still fortunately preserved in most cases. Marble, limestone, and stucco alone are employed for façades. (The ease with which marble * can be obtained, and its consequent cheapness, account for the lavish introduction of the material in all but the poorest work.) Thus the prevailing tone of the buildings varies only between a light grey and white. The dull red pantile roofs being always too low in pitch to be visible, do not affect the general colour impression, which is reinforced by occasional polychromatic examples. Not even Rome or Paris approach this uniformity of tone in their architecture.

It is, then, the absolute supremacy of the spirit of one style and of the tone of certain materials that gives to them a homogeneity peculiar to itself. Here and there are to be found exceptions, such as Schliemann's house, which retains a strong Italian feeling, and a few Byzantine structures real and imitative, which have strayed from their proper setting—the old mediæval quarter—and which are suffered to remain through defective taste or a misguided enthusiasm for archæology. The very conspicuousness of these exceptions invokes the contrast of London or Berlin, where in many large areas scarcely two adjoining buildings are to be found even superficially similar in spirit or composition, in the forms, details, or materials employed, where the confusion of Mediæval, Jacobean, Renaissance, and Greek Revival styles is only excelled by the conflict of terra-cotta, plaster, bricks, and endless varieties of stone.

Concerning the future development of Athens some few prophecies may be indulged with fair safety. Taking, as some indication of what may be immediately anticipated, the most recent architectural efforts of any pretension, two academies,

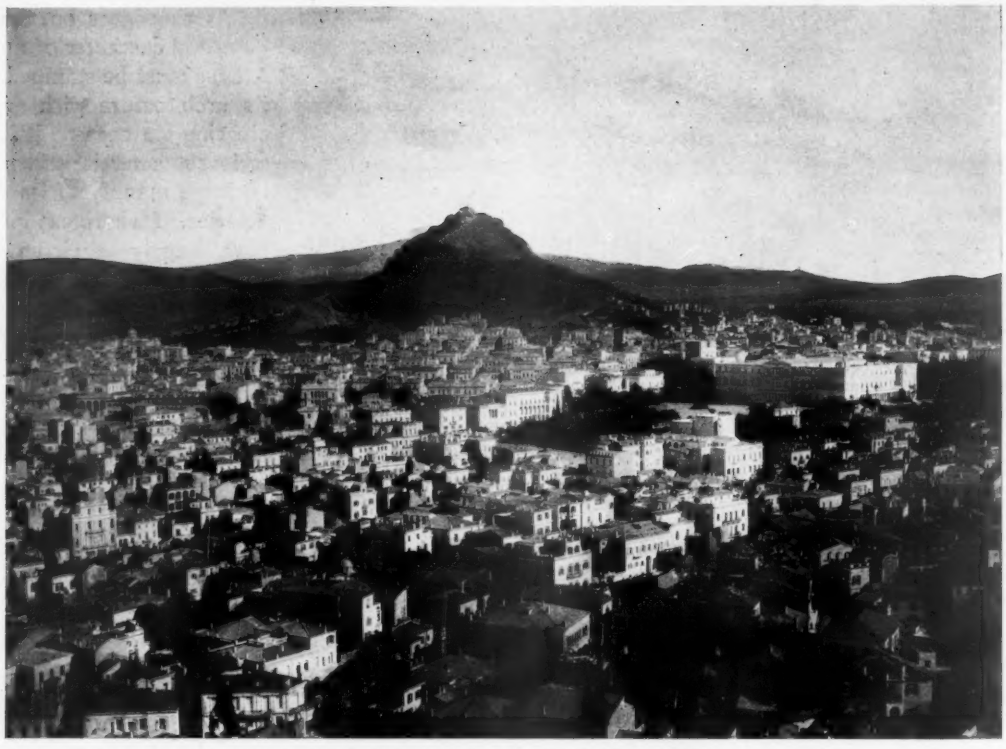
* The marble is quarried seven miles to the north-east of Athens from the same mountain, Pentelicus, which originally supplied the material for the buildings on the Acropolis. Latterly the enormous demand of American architects for Pentelic marble for interior work has caused a rise in prices owing to the quarries not being able to maintain the necessary rate of output.

EOLUS STREET, WITH RUINS OF ERECHTHEION ON THE ACROPOLIS TERMINATING THE VISTA

As time goes on, the purpose and character of modern Athens must be stamped upon its architecture with ever-increasing clearness. It has no serious commercial *raison d'être*, no large manufactories or industries. Its harbour, Piraeus, now, largely in virtue of its situation on the Corinthian canal route, the first port in Greece, monopolises the entire export trade of Attica, consisting of Pentelic marble, olives and olive oil, and possesses cotton mills, machinery, factories, and ship-repairing yards. The phenomenally rapid growth of Athens, whose population is now approximately 150,000, is only an incidental result of the business prosperity of Piraeus. No agricultural support could be drawn from the barren soil of its environment, which, like the greater part of Greece today, has been denuded of trees by the negligence of generations of goatherds. Modern Athens exists because Greece requires a capital and a centre where the means of an enlightened education may be obtained, and because all that is finest in Greek sentiment is concentrated on its site. It is an assemblage of archæological schools and musea, of Government and Municipal respectively—the former erected outside the city a mile or more along Cephisia Road, the latter near the British and American Schools of Archæology—it would appear that monumental architecture is in no imminent danger of declining from the level maintained during the last century, whilst in the sphere of commercial and residential practice progress is being made which must ultimately react on European and American city architecture.

HOMONOIA SQUARE

ATHENA STREET, WITH RUINS OF PROPYLAEA TERMINATING VISTA



VIEW OF ATHENS FROM THE ACROPOLIS (LYCABETTOS IN THE BACKGROUND)

hotels, embassies, and Government buildings, a university, a parliament house, and a palace. Its boulevards, squares, and gardens are bordered by these buildings, by the houses of politicians and residents whose wealth has been made in Piraeus or outside the country, and by the shops and offices which their presence necessitates and creates. Its growth is essentially artificial. With the depopulation of Greece itself, a process that is being accelerated by the generous assistance of emigrants who have already acquired wealth in the United States, and whose pressing anxiety is to assist all their relatives to exchange the misery of poverty in a Greek village for the happiness of affluence in an American town, a process so systematically carried through that it is possible to walk twenty miles in Attica and pass through none but deserted villages—with that process there is a reactive tendency to increase the pretensions of Athens, and this principally by the erection of large public buildings, their cost being defrayed by the subscriptions of money raised abroad. For the cultured American-Greek does not usually lose his patriotism. If his country be too poor to support him on tolerable terms, he nevertheless, provided that his exile has enabled him to afford it, frequently revisits Athens and contributes what he can to her adornment.

It is true that this process of beautifying Athens is still far from complete, that a vast amount of rebuilding has still to be undertaken. The ultimate realisation of Schaubert's plan involves the carrying through of large-scale monumental schemes uniformly and consistently. Such a policy alone is in harmony with the intention of his plan. The breadth of its conception and the precision of its lines ill accords with the mob of inferior stucco dwellings, glass-roofed cafés, and dingy shop-fronts that in many parts spreads itself unchecked. Where there should be grouping and massing there is too often indifference to any principle of composition in a large sense; great opportunities are more than half wasted, and the most carefully preserved vistas are sometimes rendered ineffective, as in Hermes Street, by the preservation of some Byzantine relic whose removal would be of real benefit.

But in spite of so many blunders and of much poor and bad building, Classic, Mediæval, and Nondescript, in spite of the existence of unmade roads, broken pavements, and squalid property, before which an unclean population sprawls in the sun, there is ample evidence that the character of the better part of the city will finally be imposed on the remainder. Each year sees the process of absorption carried a step further. More and more is Athens tending to become a show-place, a city of fine architectural works and gardens grouped about the Acropolis, a city as modern as Washington, but whose indissoluble connection with antiquity is typified in its Stadion and whose citadel is crowned by the ruins of the Parthenon.

THE ART OF THE DELLA ROBBIA

BY J. EDGCUMBE STALEY

I.

IT was on a brilliant morning of the Florentine *Risorgimento* that there appeared on Ghiberti's splendid new bronze doors of the Duomo a notice, issued by the cathedral authorities, announcing a competition among sculptors for two marble *Cantorie*, or singing-lofts, which were to be placed under Brunelleschi's mighty dome. The competition was confined, with an admirable sense of patriotism, to native-born Florentines, and among the first to give in his name as a competitor was Donatello, just home from his labours in Rome, and full of classical ideas.

That he would be the successful one seemed to be a foregone conclusion to the members of the great Guild of "Masters in Wood and Stone" and to the citizens generally, for no sculptor quite reached his measure. Then as now, however, the unexpected came to pass. Fortune coquetted along, leading a young man from the *contado*, known hardly more than by his name, and raised his hand to add "Luca Della Robbia" to the list of competitors.

The Della Robbia came of a goodly stock, and stood well in the estimation of their family-proud contemporaries. Ser Marco, Luca's grandfather, had prospered greatly as a sheep farmer in the Tuscan hills, and as a sapient importer of foreign fleeces. A member of the great Guilds of Lana and Calimala, he left the bulk of his property in and about Florence to his only son Simone. Ser Marco never saw his little grandson, born one happy day in St. Luke's summer in the memorable year 1400. It was quite natural that the Christian name, given him at the great font in San Giovanni, should be that of his patron saint, but little did his simple-minded parents imagine what a splendid future was in store for their child as a devout follower of the artist-evangelist.

With his two elder brothers, Marco and Simone, Luca Della Robbia was reared at Ser Simone's *podere* at Bagno-a-Ripoli; but when the boys were big enough for school the family removed to their town house in the Via di San Egidio. Upon his fourteenth birthday Luca was placed with a leading Florentine goldsmith, Leonardo di Ser Giovanni by name, who, according to the craft rules of the period, set him to work to draw from life. He showed so much aptitude with his chalks and leads that he soon gained a seat at the designer's table, where he learnt to model in wax and paste. No less a celebrated master than Lorenzo Ghiberti was struck with the young apprentice's enthusiasm and skill, and he bestowed upon the lad much kindness.

Fired as he was with the artistic spirit of the time, it is not surprising to find Luca, of his own accord, attacking marble and metal in emulation of his betters. The day long he worked with spatula and chisel: his nights were spent in drawing—in winter with his feet buried in straw and shavings to keep them warm! Years came and years went, whilst many of his fellow students rose to eminence, but Luca was content to bide his time. He had no pecuniary need, as the majority had, to tout early for commissions. What spare time he had he spent at one or other of his father's *poderi* and in excursions in the pursuance of his art to Siena, Rimini, and other neighbouring towns—after the prevalent fashion of well-to-do young Florentines. Not till the year 1431 did Luca Della Robbia emerge from his retreat: then it was he entered the *Cantoria* competition. The theme was the 150th Psalm—*Laudate Dominum*.

The progress of the competitors was watched with the keenest interest. Criticism of the skill of the master, Donatello, was in everybody's

DETAIL OF PANEL ON SINGING-LOFT, FROM THE DUOMO, FLORENCE, BY LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

SINGING-LOFT FROM THE DUOMO, FLORENCE

mouth; but, as the work advanced, one other name was linked with his for premier honours —Luca Della Robbia—and wagers were freely laid upon the result. Luca's *Cantoria* was finished in 1433, well ahead of Donatello's. It was a splendid achievement. The technique of the composition is classical, but it displays as well an absolute sense of freedom; indeed, the singing boys and girls and the dancing children are so natural that the Fine Arts have no composition in any way comparable. Luca sculptured sound and step! Comparing the two *Cantorie*, Luca's and Donatello's, now side by side in the Museo del Duomo, one is struck with the superior grace and resonance of the former, whilst for spontaneity and finish they are on a par. Thus Luca Della Robbia won the guerdon and took his place with Donatello and Ghiberti—"the three brightest stars of the *Risorgimento*."

Commissions flowed in upon the new master-sculptor: five panels in relief in Giotto's Campanile, an altar and reliefs within the Duomo, and, in a new medium (bronze), the great doors of the new Sacristy. In the last Luca was associated with Donatello, Masaccio, and Michelozzo; but the first and last retired, and Masaccio died in

DETAIL OF PANEL

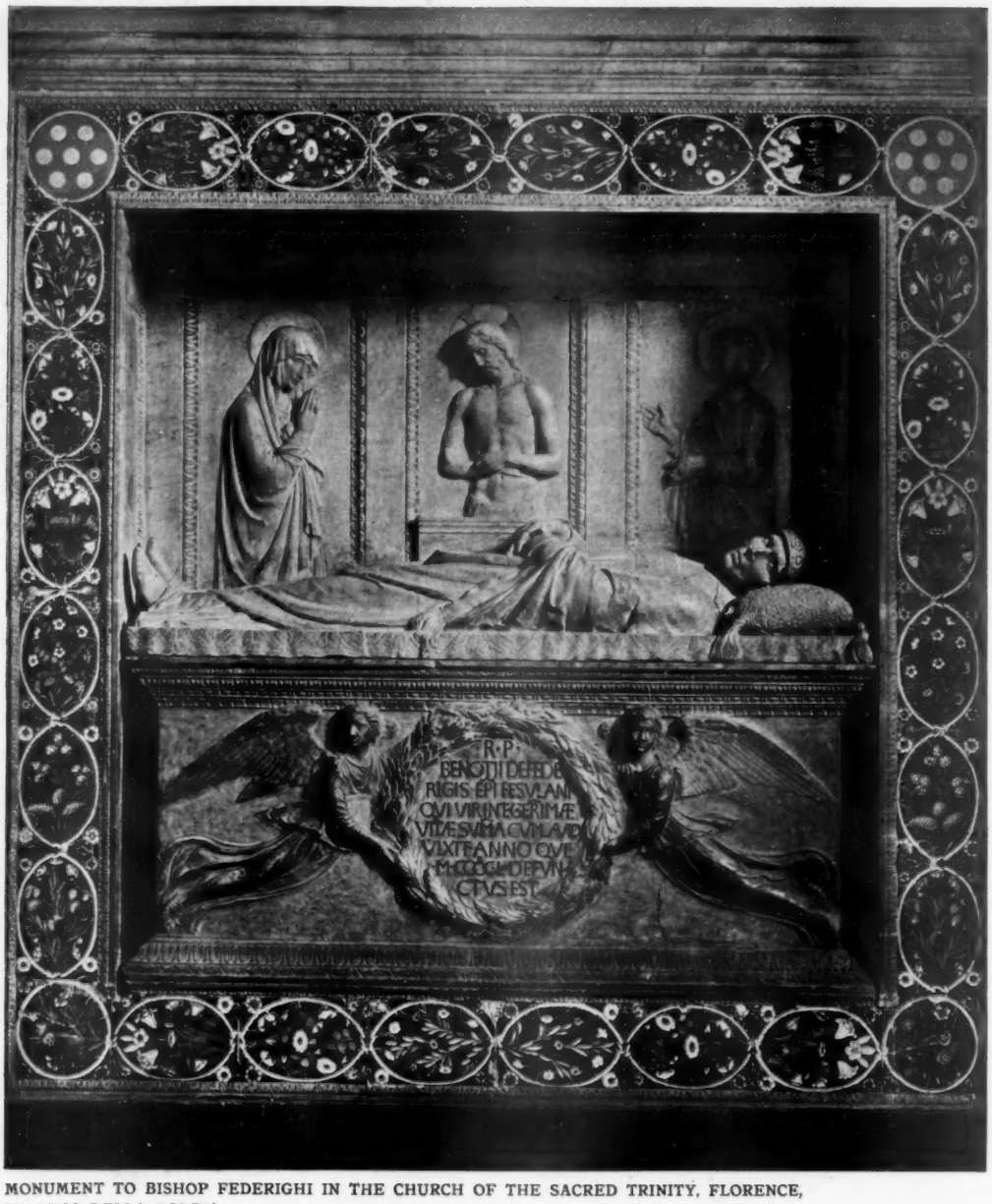
1450, leaving the work to Della Robbia. How he succeeded may be noted by comparing the marvellous lace-like creations of Ghiberti with the stateliness and distinction of the new sculptor's work.

It is said that this enterprise determined Luca to abandon chisel-work and metal-carving that he might devote himself to modelling in terra-cotta and enamelling. For years he had been experimenting quietly and patiently at Bagno-a-Ripoli, and at his father's other farms, in a direction little suspected by his brother sculptors. The potter's art was as familiar to Florentines as any other. It was a common enough practice to fashion figures out of the tenacious subsoil of the Arno valley. Some of these were of ambitious dimensions, and were finished with colours in the city workshops.

Luca's busy eyes noted the shapeliness and brilliancy of the utensils in everyday use. And one day there came to him the idea of dipping his big models of paste, clay, and wool-fluff in the same mixture that gave to pots their lustre. He encountered considerable technical difficulties for want of proper apparatus. The dangers of expansion, brittleness, cracks, and bubbles were increased in proportion to the bulk dealt with. However, after admirable perseverance, his efforts were crowned with success.

LAVABO IN THE SACRISTY, CHURCH OF S. M. NOVELLA, FLORENCE, BY LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

For the finest pottery, white opaque clay from Siena—commonly called St. John's Earth—was used. This, when half baked, was coloured with



MONUMENT TO BISHOP FEDERIGHI IN THE CHURCH OF THE SACRED TRINITY, FLORENCE, BY LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

a substance called "Marzacotta," composed of 30 parts of pure silicate of potash from pure sand and the alkali of tartar deposited by red wine, to 12 parts of oxide of tin. The object so covered was then returned to the furnace, where it gained its gloss or lustre. This stanniferous enamel Luca used, varying his quantities and adding ingredients experimentally known only to himself.

The result was startling. Luca's sculpture in clay acquired the brilliancy and durability of the finest marble. The whole artistic and commercial world foregathered at his studio: for everyone at once understood that a new and magnificent epoch in decoration had dawned. The value of Luca Della Robbia's adaptation of pottery to architecture was self-evident. His earliest achievements in the new medium came out as a Tabernacle in the Church of Peretola, near Florence, in 1442, and two lunettes for Santa Maria del Fiore (the Duomo), the "Resurrection" (1443) and the "Ascension" (1446). The two first were composed by white figures on a blue ground, the third has brown rocks and green trees—the four primal colours of glazed terra-cotta.

Luca Della Robbia's sculpture-palette was not a very generous one in the early days of his art. It was limited by the exigencies of materials and methods. Many a tint which he wished to give

his clay-fatted models was dissipated or transfigured in the fire. His first tone was white, grading from coldest chalk to warmest cream: here he met little or no difficulty. Then blue, cobalt and opaque, the blue of the serene Tuscan sky, followed: blue because it came through the furnace best, a fact to be noted in the pottery of all nations and periods. To blue he added tentatively other hues, at first faint and unassured. Gradually we note, in studying the range of his creations, delicate shades of violet, quiet greens, and subdued browns for backgrounds, with drabby yellows, coppery reds, and pine-needle greens; for accessories, flowers, foliage, and fruit, etc.

Unexpected, and at first unsurmountable, difficulties were encountered in the treatment of faces, hands, and feet. To begin with, Luca left these uncoloured, because flesh tints were unattainable in vitrified enamel. Later he left these details altogether free of glaze, and painted them naturally in distemper after the first firing.

In 1450 commenced a period unique in the annals of Art, a period marked by a fascinating series of "Madonnas," and by them Luca Della Robbia is best known to fame—"the Raffaelle of sculpture." He did the "Mother and Child" thirty-one times. Each is a remarkable example of inventive manipulation, both as regards modelling in clay and enamelling in paint. The "Bertello Madonna" is regarded in Florence as one of the great sculptor-painter's best examples; its simplicity of treatment and naturalness are delightful. It has been said that Andrea Della Robbia, Luca's nephew, added the hands of the Father and the Dove.

THE BERTELLO MADONNA, BY LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

The application of the new art to sepulchral monuments was an early development: Bishop Federighi's is perhaps the finest token. The whole design is simple and noble. The recumbent figure of the prelate is so wonderfully modelled and coloured that the beholder starts back involuntarily at what he imagines to be an actual corpse. Rarely has the sleep of death been so naturally portrayed. Of the exquisite floral border Vasari wrote: "The fruit and flowers are so life-like and natural that, with oils upon a panel, they could not be better done." The architectural adjuncts and framework form a model for all such monumental works.

THE RESURRECTION IN THE DUOMO, FLORENCE, BY LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

Luca Della Robbia died on February 22nd, 1482, and his body was buried in the church of San Pietro Maggiore in Florence.

His gentle loving nature, and his sweet attractive art, were magnets which drew with irresistible force all the young people of Florence. He devoted himself in particular to his brother Marco's family, and especially to his nephew Andrea, who developed a genius for modelling like his own.

(To be concluded.)

THE ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT OF SEA-FRONTS

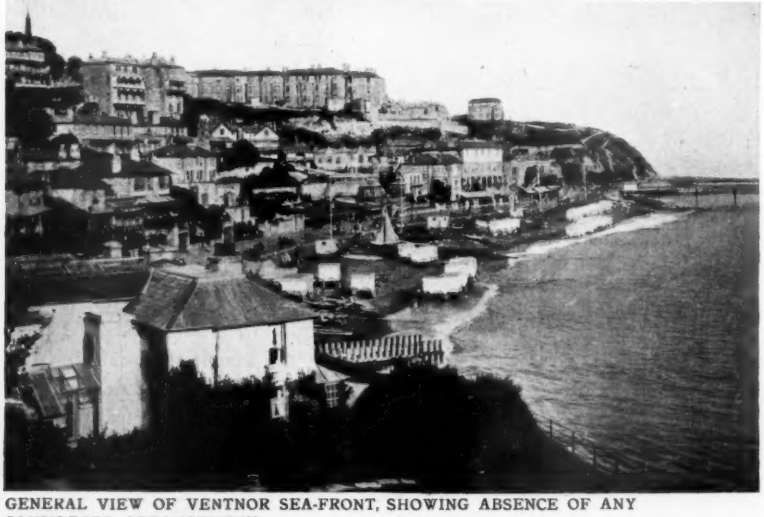
BY BROOK KITCHIN, F.R.I.B.A.

TO a person afflicted with an architectural or natural sense of beauty one of the most depressing sensations is the destruction and degradation of our beautiful seashores. We seem to have touched the lowest depths of architectural baseness in catering for a pleasure-seeking, holiday-making public. There are, happily, exceptions to what must be a general condemnation of sea-front treatment, but, taken as a whole, the opportunities which the average sea-front affords for a harmonious and effective treatment of "recreational" and domestic architecture combined with natural beauties have been lamentably neglected.

It is not necessary to seek very far for the causes that have produced the failure of our sea-frontages. The people who go to the sea do not really care so long as they are amused; the railway companies, who largely exploit the seaside towns, do not care so long as there are attractions that will fill their trains; the residents do not care so long as business flourishes: so that unless the public, consciously or unconsciously, can be led to appreciate the architectural surroundings in which they may be placed, to the extent of creating a commercial value in the best amenities of the sea-front, improvement in this respect will necessarily be slow. The fact that the "season" is short and that profits have to be made in a limited space of time produces a cheap and showy type of architecture, the main object of which is to draw attention to itself and to shout down everything near it. Nor does the exposed and wind-swept position of the sea-front, frequently preventing the growth of trees and shrubs, encourage the production of "garden" effects. The efforts in this direction are usually confined to creating a wilderness of asphalt paths and stunted shrubs and occasional ill-designed shelters. In the few South-country towns, such as Cowes, Ryde, Ventnor, or Bournemouth, where some natural shelter exists, or where climatic influences are favourable, the presence of trees in close proximity to the sea-front produces admirable results from every point of view.

It is, however, satisfactory to be able to record that a great advance in recent years has been made in this respect, and efforts to form an attractive garden lay-out, in spite of difficulties of exposure to wind and sea, between the building frontages and the sea, have been rewarded with success in many of the larger towns. Southport, St. Annes-on-the-Sea, Eastbourne, West Cowes, and many other towns have in their way developed the garden lay-out greatly to the attraction of the fronts, though the character of the gardens frequently leaves the impression of the engineer rather than of the artist gardener.

THE ITALIAN TERRACES, SCARBOROUGH



GENERAL VIEW OF VENTNOR SEA-FRONT, SHOWING ABSENCE OF ANY CONSIDERED ARRANGEMENT

The growth of our more important seaside towns has always been governed by the feverish necessity of getting things ready for the season, and in consequence schemes for development are usually hurriedly conceived and carelessly carried out. The modern methods of advertising seaside towns which have no attraction for summer visitors, and the exceptional railway facilities for getting there, are producing a marked development in the growth of these towns, and until local authorities and

KING'S ROAD, BRIGHTON, LOOKING TOWARDS HOVE

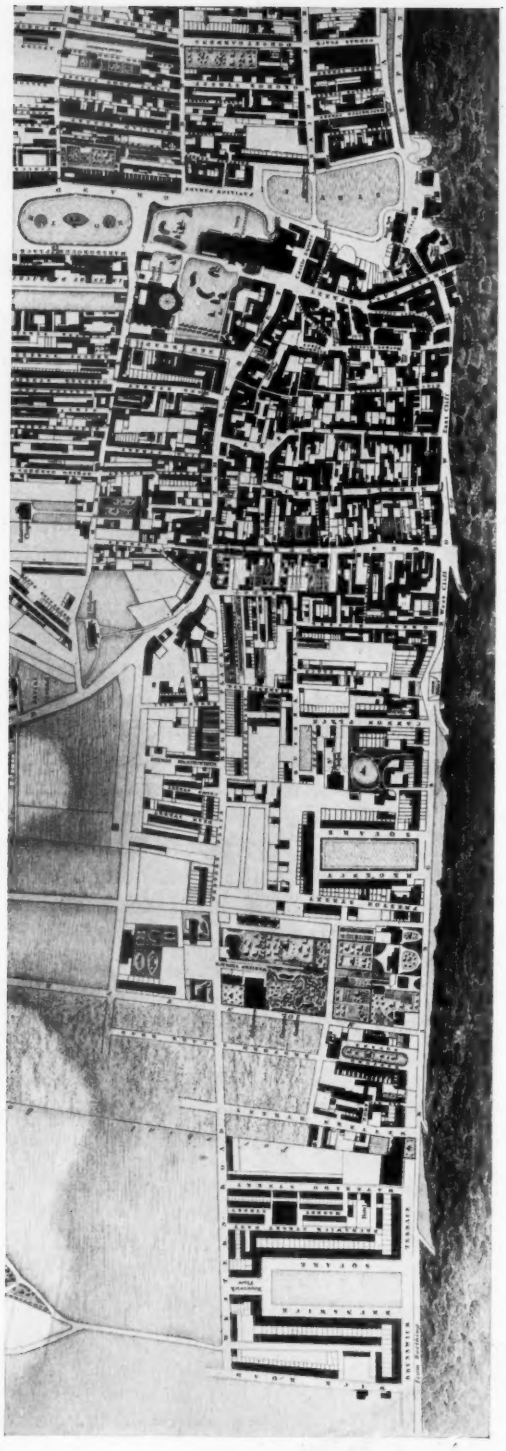
the residents will earnestly take in hand the better control of such development by means of town-planning schemes and by the co-operation of the best architectural and horticultural advice, our seaside towns, with their magnificent opportunities, will continue to spread themselves out in a haphazard fashion under the hands of speculative development companies and commercially interested property-owners.

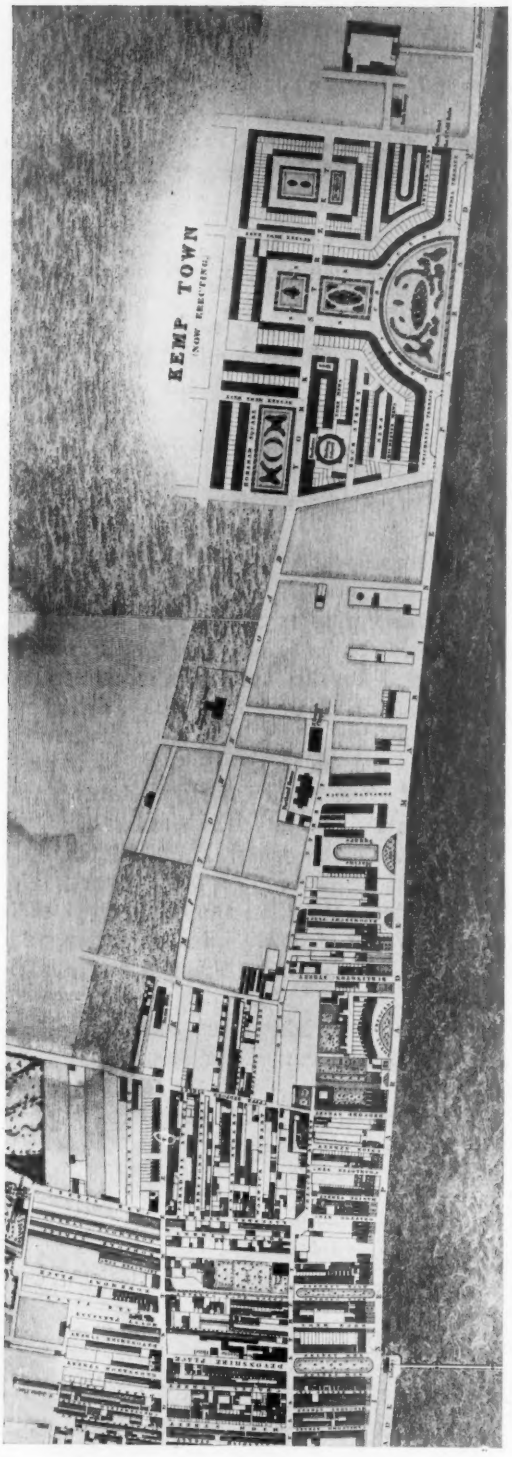
Brighton, whose history is perhaps more bound up with aristocratic recreation than any other seaside town in England, affords us an illustration of a distinct effort to secure an architectural aspect consistent with its importance. The plan of the town in 1820, when Brighton was thriving under royal patronage, shows local efforts to give some kind of effect to architectural street-planning, though clearly no definite idea of an effective sea-frontage was ever seriously contemplated, and the sea-front as we now know it is a comparatively modern concern. Hove, on the other hand, still retains a good deal of its Georgian character, and possesses an altogether more dignified and restful sea-front.

The planning of Brighton has been influenced considerably by the contours, and probably also by the climatic conditions, with the result that the sea-front is broken up by an exceptionally large number of streets and squares running north and south, all tending to compress the frontages of the buildings which face the sea, and the commercial value of these frontages has interfered with the best development of the squares on the sea-front. With the exception of Kemp Town, these have been pushed back into the town with their longer sides facing east and west, and having only a short frontage to the sea. In seaside towns where the contour of the land is not favourable to a sea aspect, the centralisation of building-site values on the sea-front will always be a determining and a difficult factor in the planning of sea-frontages, and, notwithstanding its popularity, Brighton probably has relatively fewer houses with a sea view than any other town in England.

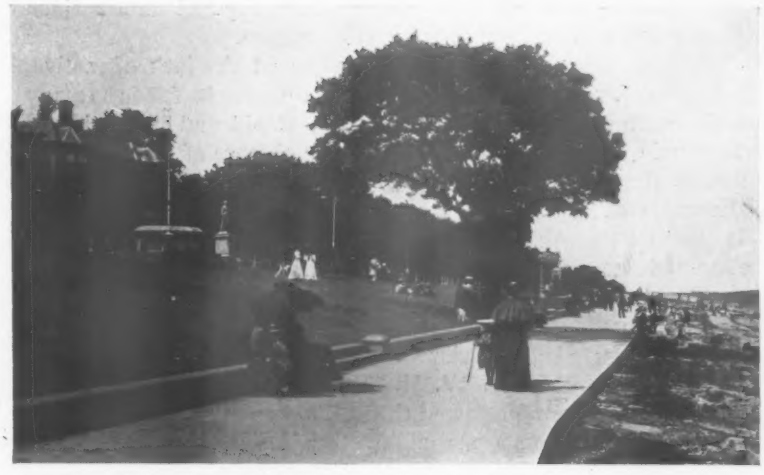
Ventnor, on the other hand, presents perhaps the maximum opportunity for a sea and south aspect in its buildings, and advantage has been taken of this opportunity, though not with the architectural effect which the opportunity offered, the actual effect produced being confused and spasmodic. The treatment of the sea-front of two such extreme instances as Brighton and Ventnor must necessarily vary accordingly. Brighton, with its fine sea-line, depends on its single tier of high buildings and the lay-out of the area between these and the sea for an effect which is somewhat imposing, whereas Ventnor with its natural advantages depends on the groups

VIEW OF BRIGHTON FROM THE BEACH





PLAN OF BRIGHTON, 1826



THE GREEN, COWES: SHOWING EFFECT OF GRASS, TREES, AND SCULPTURE ON SEA-FRONT

of buildings scattered somewhat aimlessly on its steep contour lines.

So far as architectural treatment is concerned, our well-established seaside resorts are now beyond reach; but so long as our population and our wealth continue to increase, our younger seaside places will continue to develop into popular resorts, and the opportunities afforded by the Town Planning Act remove the excuse that may be made in the case of older towns, that no one had any power to control their development. The new powers granted under the Act enable a Council to determine in advance the street-lines and the line of sea-frontage, and no Council having the prosperity of its town at heart can afford to neglect the opportunity which it now possesses of laying out the future lines of its sea-frontage to the best advantage.

There are no hard and fast rules that can be applied to the treatment of a sea-front. Every site will have its own characteristics which will largely assist in determining the right method of development.

Some general principles may perhaps be suggested for consideration in all cases. The careful preservation of all natural or architectural features, and the need for a sincere effort to secure a sense of harmony between buildings, promenades, gardens, and the natural features, are perhaps the most obvious and important objects to aim at. The introduction of trees, shrubs, grass, flowers, and even statuary (if of the proper kind), wherever such things have any prospect of success, is especially

PALERMO: THE APPROACH FROM THE SEA

(From "Civic Art," by Thomas H. Mawson)

desirable, giving, as it invariably does, an atmosphere of repose to what is naturally a somewhat restless scene.

Points of view should be specially marked for the erection of shelters, which in themselves afford an opportunity for good architectural design, and deserve a better treatment than is usually given. Buildings for amusement, pavilions, theatres, etc., should not be allowed to be erected in prominent positions on the space between the sea and the frontage line of buildings; this space should be kept as clear of buildings or erections of any sort as is possible. Even railings around grass plots or garden spaces detract considerably from the effect, and the risk of a little damage to grass and plants is worth taking in order to avoid the sense of restraint between humanity and nature which railings so frequently produce.

In general we must avoid the lack of motive, other than commercial, that can be felt in so many of our seaside towns. Rapid and ill-considered development leads to an absence of attractiveness which is essential to seaside prosperity; but so long as we allow our seaside towns to be exploited for the benefit of railway companies and hotel proprietors the tendency will be to produce the results which have spoilt so many opportunities in the past.

[The illustration of Ventnor is taken from the book of views of the Isle of Wight published by Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son, and the views of Brighton and the Italian terraces at Scarborough from books published by Messrs. Rock Bros., Ltd.]

THE PRACTICAL EXEMPLAR OF ARCHITECTURE—LXXI

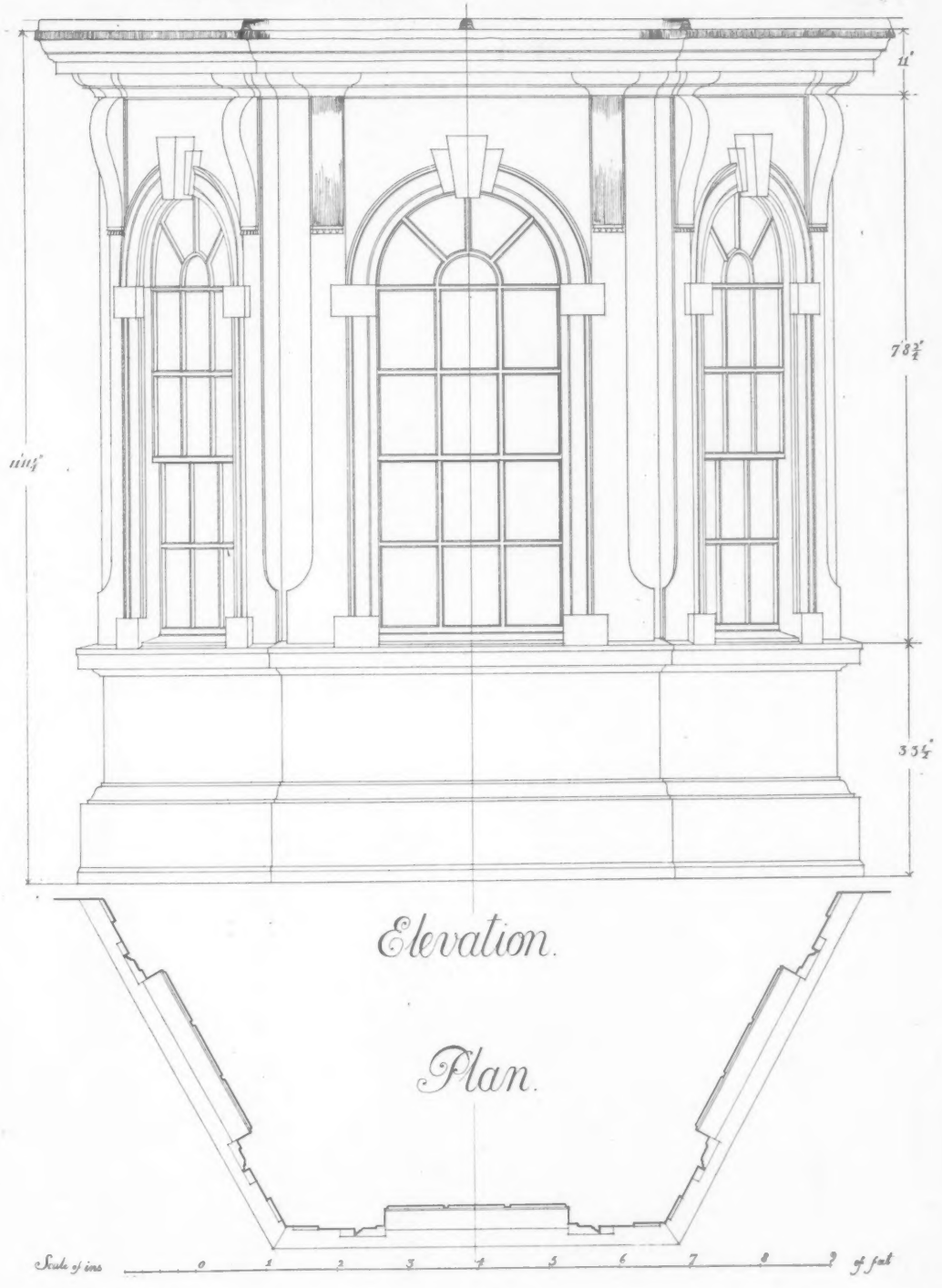
It is curious to think of Hogarth, beaming with kindness, clad in that red roquelaure of Leicester Fields, standing in his oriel window, watching the stranger children whom he loved gathering the fruit from his mulberry-tree, or waiting there with his handsome wife, Jane, to receive the guests who came to taste the hospitality of the "little country box at Chiswick." The latter remains, although the chief actors are gone. The *mise en scène* of so much that was best in the eighteenth century, the background in front of which some of its most distinguished actors played their parts, still stands unchanged. Although the garden is much abridged from what it was in Hogarth's day, its chief glory—the mulberry-tree, its trunk now scarred and blackened—is still alive; and the house, thanks to the generosity of Colonel Shipway, has been handed over to the Middlesex County Council "in trust for the benefit of the public."

Besides Hogarth's, the house enshrines another, though a lesser, memory, for during the early part of the nineteenth century it was occupied by the Rev. H. F. Cary, the translator of Dante.

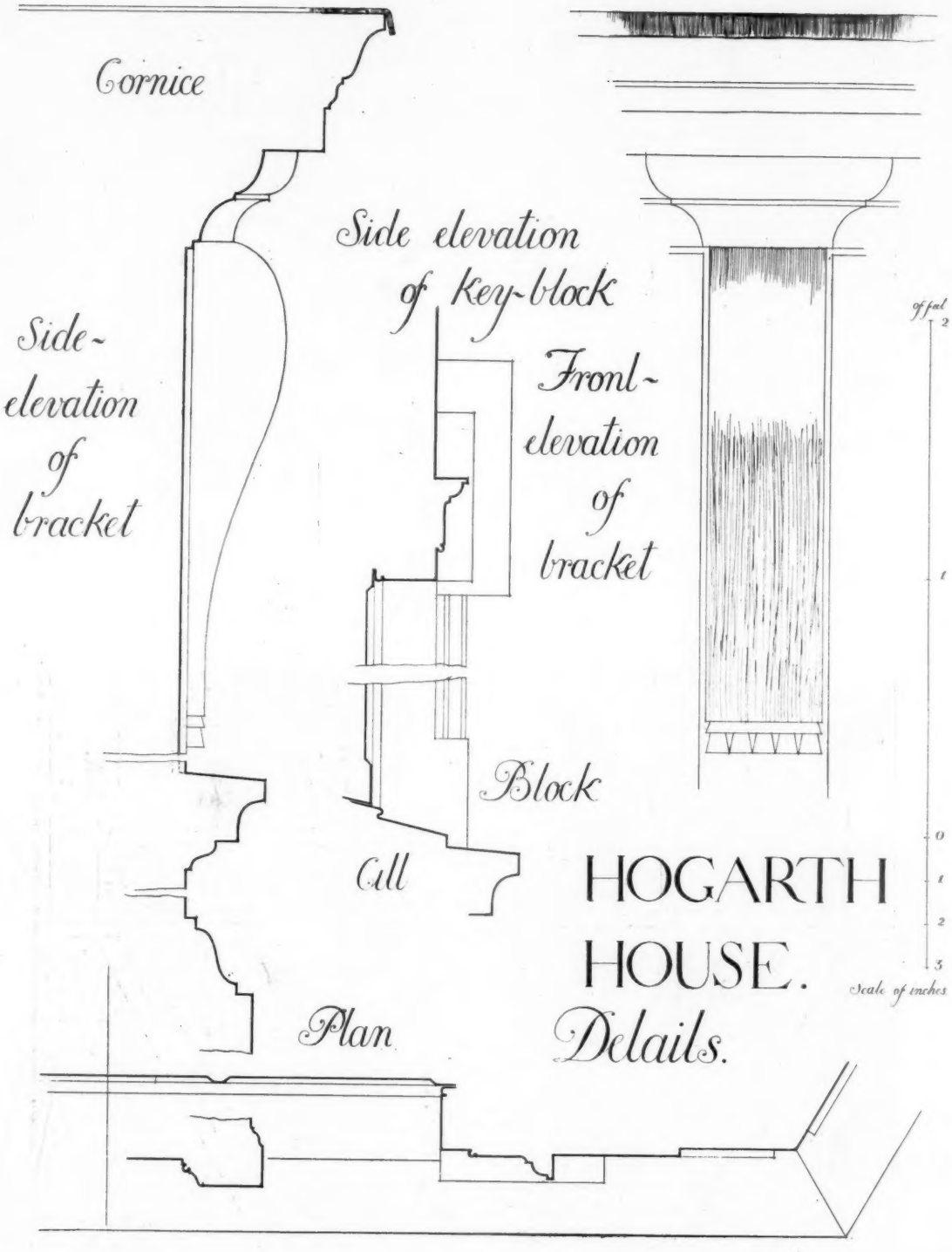
To the architect the house stands for a type of much that is most delightful in domestic architecture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. With its charming setting, it is like many of the old English brick houses in the plainness, the repose, of its dusty old red walls. The oriel window is, however, a very unusual feature. It is entirely made of wood, and is built on the projecting joists of the first floor. The design has been very carefully considered, and results in some distinction. Not only such simple things as the sub-division of the panes into beautiful shapes, but the plain brackets which help the shape of the spandrels, the cornice, the base-moulding, have all been thought over to make them delightful to the eye. It seems a pity that this feature should have been so much neglected in Renaissance architecture. We have from time to time illustrated examples of bays and oriels, but they have always belonged to earlier periods. Its form gives it so many advantages, from the point of view of the interior, that it is surprising it should have been allowed to drop out of practice. In the modern revival its advantages are recognised, and we find it now used to excess, so that the front of a house is often nothing but bays which look out upon nothing.

BAY WINDOW ON HOGARTH'S HOUSE, CHISWICK

HOGARTH HOUSE.
CHISWICK.



MEASURED AND DRAWN BY BERNARD R. PENDEREL-BRODHURST



MEASURED AND DRAWN BY BERNARD R. PENDEREL-BRODHURST

WROXTON ABBEY

THE name "Abbey" is not entirely a misnomer in the case of Wroxton, for a religious house formerly stood on the site, though to-day there is little but the chapel of the ancient priory above ground. The priory buildings have disappeared, except for two or three Early English doorways in the basement, which shows that the early-seventeenth-century mansion was built upon the site of the religious house. The Wroxton property came into the hands of Sir Thomas Pope,* a person who acquired considerable wealth under Henry VIII, and could "have rode in his owne lands from Cogges (by Witney) to Banbury, about eighteen miles," according to Aubrey. Pope was not a regular commissioner for the suppression of monasteries, but as second officer and treasurer of the Court of Augmentations he had facilities for obtaining grants of the abbey lands disposed of; and on February 11th, 1537, the site and demesne of Wroxton Priory and other lands in Oxfordshire were conveyed to him. He endowed his new foundation of Trinity College with the manor of Wroxton, subject to a lease, which has been renewed from time to time down to the present day, to the descendants of his brother John. The house was built by Sir William Pope,* and finished in 1618; and one of the earliest guests must have been James I, who left his gloves and hawking-pouch at Wroxton, and certainly proposed to visit Sir William on his way from Warwick to Woodstock in August 1619, though no actual record of his visit exists. The bed known as King James the First's is of the type associated with the reign of William III.

The west front shows the characteristic simple treatment of the date, with its symmetrical arrangement of gables and large chimney-stacks—a symmetry to some extent dependent on the addition of a wing in 1859. The fine porch presents the only opportunity for display of ornament in its flanking niches, its entablature crowned by finials. As was usual in external doorways, the door was originally set back inside the semi-circular archway. The present door has been added in recent times.

Within there are many spacious rooms, and Wroxton has still the "fine hall and vast dining-room below, and as large a drawing-room above," that Horace Walpole saw in his visit. But the drawing-room has entirely, and the hall partially, changed its character. Of the hall with its dais end lighted by a bay window, we are fortunate in

* Died 1559.

* 1573-1631.

Photo: "Architectural Review"

1.—THE PORCH

2.—THE GALLERY

Photo: "Architectural Review"

having a record in Nash's delightful sketch, where the most accurate architectural drawing is relieved by the introduction of historic figure-groups that make the scene actual and vivid. The chimney-piece and panelling have been transformed since Nash sketched here about 1839, the former being an exercise in nineteenth-century Elizabethan but retaining the original carved frieze, while the plain ceiling of Nash's time has been covered with ornamental ribwork in plaster. The screen which divides the hall from the passage is often more richly decorated than the rest of the panelling, but here the woodwork is a later addition. A separate feature from the screen is the so-called minstrels' gallery, which forms a passage leading to some of the bedchambers. This is supported by very ornamental columns, and remains very much as Sir William Pope left it and as Nash sketched it, though the open space above the cornice has been filled in, while some of the fan-headed lights have been replaced by late-eighteenth-century tracery.* It is fortunate that the nineteenth-century additions to the hall have respected this interesting gallery.

The dining-room and garden parlour are both wainscoted, the former with plain panelling,

* The four central lights had already suffered alteration in 1823, as we see by the view of the hall in Skelton, though Nash puts them back in his sketch.

3.—PANELLING IN THE GARDEN PARLOUR

Photo: "Architectural Review"

Photo: "Architectural Review"

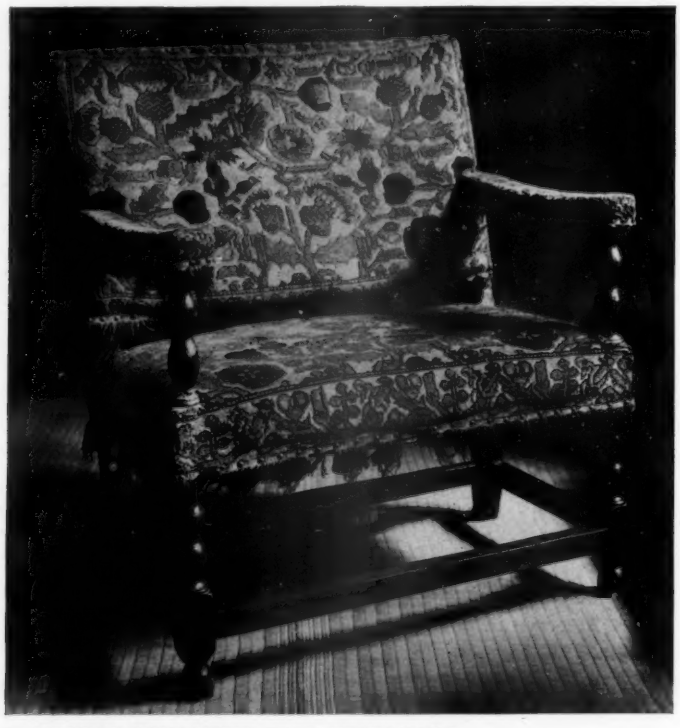
4.—THE WEST FRONT

giving a continuous and uniform background, the parlour more elaborately with panelling divided by fancifully decorated pilasters.

After the Popes had lived here for more than a century, Wroxton passed to the Norths by the marriage, in 1672, of one of the daughters of the third and last Earl of Downe, to Francis, second son of the fourth Baron North, who became Lord Keeper, and was created Baron Guilford.

The succession to the Wroxton estate was contested between the three Pope daughters and coheiresses and their cousin, Lady Elizabeth Lee, but a compromise was effected in 1680–1, when Francis North, Lord Guilford, bought out the others. A taste for building and for the study of architecture seems to have been a leading characteristic of the three North brothers, Francis, Dudley, and Roger. Roger rebuilt his house of Rougham in Norfolk, and the Lord Keeper is reported to have spent large sums on Wroxton. He was a friend of the architect Hugh May, and of Evelyn, and "covetous of nothing more than the society of the virtuosos of his time." One would expect to find his mark on Wroxton, but there is nothing to-day that recalls the eminent lawyer who passed much of his leisure time at his great house. He was, says Roger, afraid of building, "lest he should find himself engaged in over-expensive undertakings"; but he "built from the ground a withdrawing room and backstairs, and finished up the rooms of state, as they were called, and shaped the windows, which before had made the rooms like bird-cages"—an echo of Bacon's complaint of the excess of light and cold in some fair houses with more glass than wall. But the Lord Keeper's windows (still visible in the engraving of Skelton) have given way to the "shaping" of the mid-nineteenth century, when the sashes of the west front were replaced by mullions in which large panes of glass were used instead of small quarries.

After the Lord Keeper's death in 1685 there is no record of changes at Wroxton until Francis, the seventh Lord North, who was created Earl of Guilford in 1752. A year later Walpole visited Wroxton and reported that this lord had added a library * which was "a pleasant chamber," and had set up in the garden several paltry Chinese buildings and bridges which had the merit or demerit of being the first in the kingdom. A friend of the amateur Sanderson Miller of Radway not many miles away, Lord North asked his neighbour, in 1747, to design a window for the chapel at Wroxton, to fit some ancient glass in his possession; in which connection we may recall that the insertion of stained-glass windows was one of the most frequent exercises of the amateurs of the revived Gothic of the day, both



5.—ARMCHAIR UPHOLSTERED WITH TURKEY-WORK, MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

* The present library was built by Francis, fourth Earl of Guilford, after a plan by Smirke.

in churches and houses. Sometimes, as we see by Lord North's letter, the "munnions," as he calls them, were arranged to fit the glass, but more often the glass was fitted to the window. The collapse of Miller's tower at Wroxton Church during its first winter apparently made no difference in Lord North's estimate of his friend and architect; but though we hear of a projected ceiling at Wroxton,* the mid-nineteenth century alterations have effaced Sanderson Miller's work, as the Chinese buildings have disappeared from the gardens. What is memorable at Wroxton to-day is the work of Sir William Pope in the last years of the reign of James I.

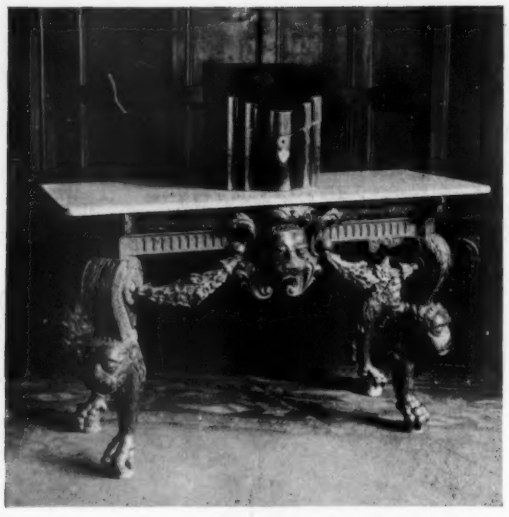
7.—MAHOGANY SETTEE (GEORGE I)

The Furniture

In the hall still stands the long shovel-board which Nash sketched, but a quantity of the furniture now in the house may have been contributed by another place of the Norths—Kirtling, in Cambridgeshire, which was partly demolished in the early years of the nineteenth century. The earliest of the pieces here illustrated is a wide armchair with ball-turned legs and arm supports (Fig. 5). Armchairs of extreme width appear to have been in use in the early seventeenth century, and may have been affected by the farthingale, those monstrous gowns in which King James I forbade ladies, in 1613, to appear at the masque owing to the amount of space they occupied. But, if so, it is difficult to see why the same proportions should have persisted in some armchairs of the succeeding reign, when dress was freed from the farthingale and not unreasonably bombasted. A walnut chair of this latter date, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which has for arm supports female figures in the dress of Charles I's reign, is of the same wide proportions. The chief interest of the Wroxton armchair is its covering of Turkey-work, a canvas worked with a pattern of coloured wools, knotted and cut, forming a surface like the Oriental carpets imitated. This was a very durable covering, except for its attraction for moths, which have left very few pieces in perfect condition. The chair upholstered in Turkey-work in the Victoria and Albert Museum, dated 1649, is considerably the worse for wear. The chair covering here illustrated is in perfect order; the design is a haphazard arrangement of rose and thistle "sprigs," as they were called, sheets of which were sold by the print-sellers of the day. The original fringe, which is much worn, trims the seat, the arm-cushions, and the lower edge of the back. Turkey-work does not seem to have flourished after the Restoration for the upholstering of chairs, its place having been taken by the

* November 10th, 1751, quoted in "An Eighteenth-century Correspondence."

6.—SINGLE CHAIR, UPHOLSTERED IN NEEDLEWORK, EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY



9.—CARVED SIDE-TABLE (GEORGE II)

cross-stitch and petit-point stimulated by the industry of Queen Mary.

The early eighteenth-century walnut chair (Fig. 6) has a favourite design of flowers piled high in an ornamental vase—an arrangement frequently met with in the chimney and overdoor pictures produced in large quantities by the flower painters of this time. The frame is of the plain type, the cabriole legs receiving only a small **V**-shaped ornament on the knee.

The settee (Fig. 7) shows a fuller decorative treatment in the low-relief carving of the claw and ball and **S**-shaped arms.

The two side-tables (8 and 9) are interesting as a provincial rendering of the rich and florid style which was at its height during the reign of George II. There is a fine quality of execution in the best examples of this period, and the ornament, though so rich, is scholarly and well proportioned to the structure. The two side-tables repeat the favourite forms and ornament, the broken scroll legs carved with leaf and guilloche ornament and enriched at the sides by scaling, the swags of oak leaves; but the provincial quality is traceable in the exaggerated width of the legs of Fig. 8, and the summary carving of the female head in the pendant; while the interposition of the grotesque lions' heads midway on the legs of Fig. 9 breaks the line in a most unusual and unfortunate manner; the legs indeed are thus made very ugly and cumbersome; if the lions' heads were absent and the pendant were smaller, this would be a very pleasing little table.

TOWN-PLANNING NOTES

Progress of the Movement

There has recently been considerable activity in connection with town planning. Inquiries were held by the Local Government Board in respect of six schemes between April 30th and June 11th, as follows:—Middleton, Lancs.; Ellesmere Port, Cheshire; Southport; Halifax (two schemes); and Walthamstow. Other authorities in the neighbourhood of London are on the eve of making application to the Board. Developments of an interesting and perhaps very extensive character are pending in connection with great coal-bearing areas around Doncaster, and official conferences have been taking place between representatives of the Government and the local authorities. Another Inquiry was held at Bournemouth on June 28th, and Warrington is reported to have sent in its application to the Board.

* * *

The three conferences recently held under the auspices of the National Housing and Town Planning Council in London, Manchester, and Glasgow have been remarkably successful, both in regard to the numbers of representatives who attended and the practical discussions that took place. Nothing was more evident at these meetings than the widespread desire among members of local authorities and their officials to take advantage of Part II of the Housing and Town Planning Act. They showed this in the enthusiasm with which they entered into the discussion of practical administrative points, and their desire to learn from one another's experience.

* * *

Town planning continues to be a favoured subject for discussion at public health and other conferences. Lecturing courses and summer schools in the subject are also being organised.

8.—CARVED SIDE-TABLE (GEORGE II), WROXTON ABBEY

A very successful course of lectures was arranged by the Garden City and Town Planning Association during May. Town planning is also one of the chief subjects for discussion in connection with the Congress of the Royal Institute of Public Health to be held in Berlin this month.

* * *

Points of Interest in Recent Schemes

The Local Government Board authorised the preparation of the scheme for 53 acres at Newcastle. It will be remembered that we drew attention to the interesting fact that this scheme comprised as much land outside as inside the city. The inclusion of the outside area was hotly contested by the authority concerned (Gosforth U.D.C.), but the fact that the Board has granted the application of Newcastle shows that there is apparently no limit to the extent to which one authority may include in the area of a scheme part of the district of another authority, subject to such inclusion being in the interests of the scheme. In such cases it is probable that the Board will require proof that some important objects are to be served by linking up the two districts with one scheme, in addition to the evidence that has usually to be given to establish a *prima facie* case. It is not unlikely, also, that the Board will prefer two authorities to co-operate in preparing separate but properly linked-up schemes rather than to encourage the overlapping of the control of one area by two authorities. Hence, when one authority desires to prevent another authority from encroaching upon its territory for town-planning purposes, the best thing it can do is to make application for permission to prepare its own town plan.

* * *

The Ellesmere Port scheme is also interesting because of its inclusion of large outside areas. Out of a total area of over 7,000 acres, about half is in the Wirral and Cheshire districts. This is rather an ambitious scheme for an Urban District in which 1*d.* in the £ produces less than £200. The scheme also includes the whole of the built-upon portion of the town of over 10,000 inhabitants. If permission is granted for preparing so extensive a scheme, and the Ellesmere Port Council rise to their responsibilities and do not shirk meeting the immediate cost of a proper scheme, they have a rare opportunity to provide a model industrial town. If that consummation is to be realised, expert advice must be employed, and in such a case as Ellesmere Port it is as much an architectural problem as any other. The needs of the case might be met in the first instance by a public competition for planning the area. The town is not too large and many of its buildings are not sufficiently permanent to prevent consideration being given to existing conditions and the inclusion of a judicious amount of demolishing of obstructive and unsightly structures. On the other hand, the growth of the town has been so rapid and is likely to continue so, and its undeveloped area is so large, that there is ample scope for a bold and comprehensive scheme. The opportunity is here presented for planning a new industrial town. We hope that full advantage will be taken of the chances thus provided, and that the courage of the authority will rise to the occasion. At the Ellesmere Port Inquiry the Council agreed to petition the Local Government Board to exclude the Wirral part of the area from the scheme if the Wirral authority applied for a scheme for their own area, which the latter agreed to do. If this is agreed to it will considerably reduce the area of the scheme, but it will not lessen the importance of the problem which has to be dealt with by the Ellesmere Port Council.

* * *

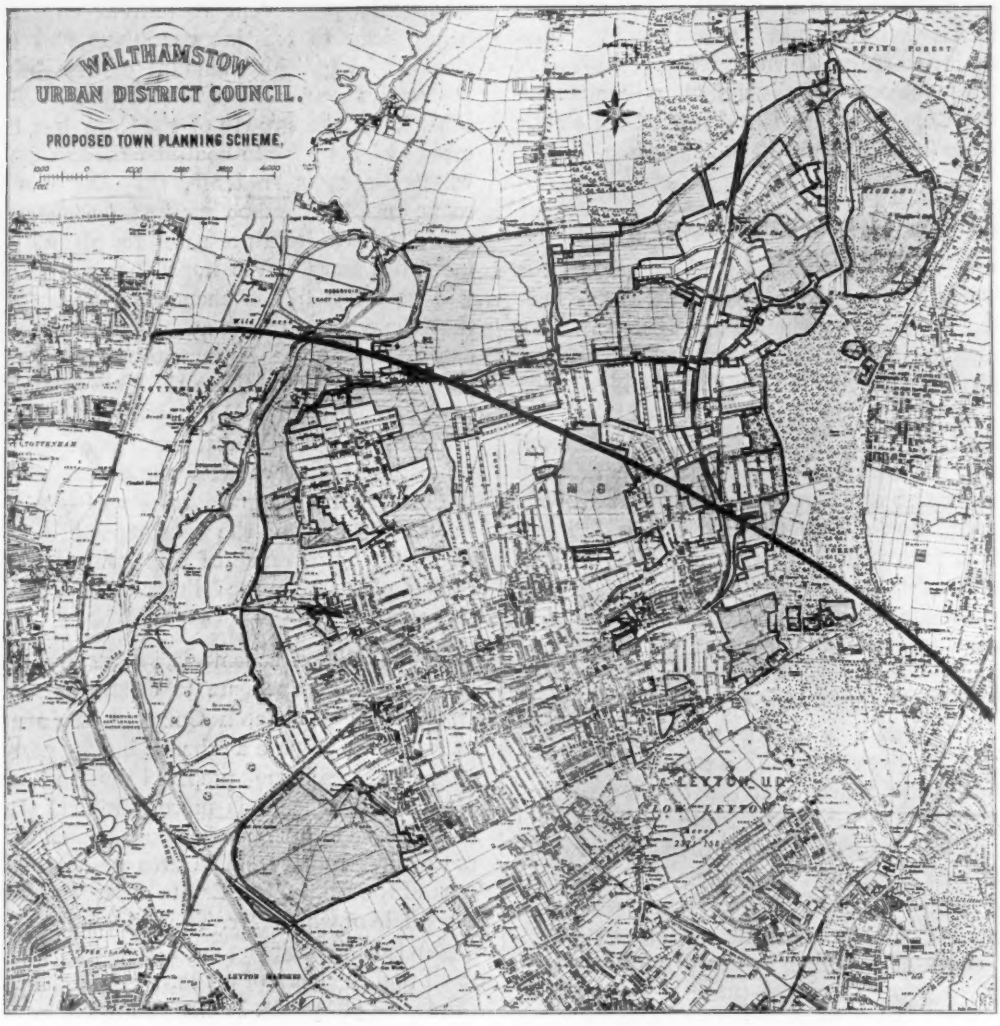
The Middleton scheme is interesting as being the first adoptive scheme to be submitted to the Board. The Middleton Corporation do not ask authority to prepare a scheme, but for permission to adopt a scheme prepared by the owners. Hence this scheme is more advanced than the others, even although it has only passed the stage of the first Inquiry. The area of the scheme is part of the Alkrington Estate of Messrs. Lees, for the whole of which Mr. Thomas Adams prepared a plan several years ago. The detailed development and the work of preparing the scheme are in the hands of Messrs. Pepler and Allen, architects. We hear that one result of the proposed scheme is to stimulate the letting of land on the estate for building purposes, as a result of the security thus given to lessees, which is evidence of the value of town planning to owners.

* * *

The proposed Southport scheme covers an area of about 2,800 acres, and consists of a great expanse of sand-dunes on which the corporation wishes to secure large open spaces, and through which they are endeavouring to arrange with the owners to secure wide arterial roads. One of these is proposed as 75 ft. wide, and will continue for miles parallel with the coast in continuation of Lord Street.

* * *

The enterprise of Halifax is apparently the result of the initiative of Mr. Whitley's competition, which was illustrated in the March issue of The Architectural Review. The two areas chosen are those in respect of which the competition was held.



The areas enclosed by a black line include the whole of the undeveloped land in the district, comprising about 1,543 acres, in regard to which application has been made to prepare a scheme. More than fifty plots are proposed to be planned under one scheme. The solid black line which intersects the area from south-east to north-west is approximately in the position of one of the main traffic routes proposed by the Traffic Department of the Board of Trade. How this road is to be made and at whose expense is one of the problems to be solved.

The Inquiry at Walthamstow dealt with a scheme which proposed to include nearly all the undeveloped pieces of land in the district in numerous sections of various size. In this respect the scheme seems more comprehensive than any other, and has encountered considerable opposition, because of the numerous interests involved. The opposition brought forward at the Inquiry was on the ground that the owners had not been consulted about details of the proposed scheme, but the inspector pointed out that it was no part of the duties of the authority to submit details to owners before the *prima facie* case for preparing a scheme was established. The misunderstanding appears to be due to the construction placed on the words "proposed scheme" in the Procedure Regulations. These words are intended to relate to the area of the scheme, and not to the details of planning.

* * *

Some outside criticism has been directed against the Local Government Board in the House of Commons and elsewhere with regard to its housing and town-planning administration. Some of the criticism has arisen as a result of the treatment which the department has accorded to the Boscawen Housing Bill, a private measure which has recently been discussed in Grand Committee. As the outcome of this discussion, Mr. Burns has promised to appoint additional housing inspectors. It seems unlikely that the Bill will become law.

* * *

It was stated in the *Daily Telegraph* of May 13th that the Government intended to bring in a drastic

measure of housing reform next year which had for one of its objects the transfer of housing administration from the Local Government Board to a special housing department. Whether this may be proposed or not, it is apparent that a good deal of pressure is being brought to bear on the Government to speed up the working of the Housing and Town Planning Act. We can hardly imagine that the local authorities will appreciate this speeding up, as they probably prefer to act on their own initiative rather than to be under any form of compulsion.

* * *

The Birmingham and Ruislip schemes should now be nearing completion in their final form, and the steps to be taken in connection with the approval of the detailed schemes should not be long delayed. It is at this stage that architectural and other societies interested have a voice in making suggestions for the modification of the plans, and it is hoped that advantage will be taken of this opening.

Apart from the Ruislip scheme and that of Walthamstow many other Greater London authorities are at work, but the London County Council still shows no activity. At the invitation of the Acton Urban District Council representatives of the London County Council had a conference with that body, with a view to considering joint action in connexion with a West London scheme. We notice that, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, the President of the Local Government Board said that he did not think that a special town-planning body, representative of the numerous existing authorities, should be appointed, but that he looked for greater activity and a better lead on the part of the London County Council. If this lead is to be given in the near future and is to be backed up by proper zeal and an intelligent understanding of the problems involved, it will require the appointment of a special town-planning committee of the County Council. The matter is too important and involves too much labour to be dealt with adequately in the rare intervals of discussion that can be given to it by the Building Acts Committee. A special committee and one or two special staff officers with expert knowledge would seem to be necessary to deal properly with the matter. The question is made more urgent as a result of the recent revelations of the loss of life due to the increased motor traffic on the congested streets.

* * *

Proposed Amendments of Procedure Regulations

The resolutions moved at the conferences in London and Manchester included one asking the Local Government Board to alter the regulation requiring notice to be served on owners and occupiers prior to the stage of asking the Board for permission to prepare a scheme. It is thought that an advertisement of the intention to make application, and the publicity given to it at a conference with owners and at the public Inquiry, should be sufficient at the first stage. Then, when the scheme was prepared and the details ready, notice should be served on every person interested, and opportunity given to raise objections, negotiate terms, and suggest modifications. Another resolution invited the Board to consider the preparation of some regulations to govern any development within the area of a scheme between the first stage, when permission is given to prepare, and the second, when the scheme is finally approved. This interval may be from two to three years, and it is a matter of real difficulty to authorities and owners that during this interval nothing can be legally done to start working the scheme unless such work conforms to the by-laws, even although an important part of the scheme may involve infringement of the latter.

* * *

Delhi

It is reported that the town-planning experts deputed to prepare the preliminary plan of Delhi have decided on changing the proposed site of the new part of the city, in view of the difficulties which the first suggested site presented in regard to drainage. Mr. H. V. Lanchester, F.R.I.B.A., recently left for India to join the committee, which now consists of two architects, one engineer, and a layman.

* * *

The Competition for Designing the Federal Capital of Australia

It is very unfortunate that the competition for the new Australian capital was not so arranged that the best men could have submitted designs. In a competition in which the prizes amounted to £3,000 it should have been possible to arrange matters so as to secure the best available skill. As it was, the Royal Institute of British Architects and other responsible bodies were unable to allow their members to compete. The assessors were an engineer, an architect, and a surveyor, and they had 200 plans, received from all parts of the world, to consider. Mr. W. B. Griffin, of Chicago, obtained the first award of £1,750; M. E. Saarinen, of Helsingfors, the second award; and M. Alfred Agache, of Paris, the third. We understand that the plans most favoured were those showing a radial treatment. We hope to produce one or two of the designs when they are available for publication.

CURRENT ARCHITECTURE

THE BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION

BIRMINGHAM possesses very little in the way of civic architecture that can lay claim to being of a high standard; the mid-nineteenth century is too much in evidence with cumbersome stone, and the brick and terra-cotta products of later years are bizarre: the more fortunate, therefore, that the extension of the Council House, just completed from designs by Messrs. H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, FF.R.I.B.A., should be so satisfactory. It is indeed a building of considerable merit, more particularly inside, the vistas being effective, and the enrichments of the rooms robust and scholarly.

The building occupies an island site, about 320 ft. by 270 ft., to the north of the Council House and Corporation Art Galleries, and is bordered by Congreve Street, Great Charles Street, Margaret Street, and Edmund Street; the last-named thoroughfare being spanned by a masonry bridge that connects the old galleries with the new. Unfortunately, the surrounding streets are somewhat narrow, so that, with the exception of the angle view of the building from Chamberlain Square, it is difficult to fully realise the extent and scale of the work. In this connection we recall that the perspective view of the building exhibited a few years ago, when the design was selected in competition, gave a more favourable representation of the main façade to Congreve Street than it is possible to obtain in reality, for the artist's view-point was not embarrassed by taking account of the block of office premises on the opposite side of the street.

Accommodation had to be provided in the building for four municipal departments and a series of art galleries and museums, the cost of the latter having been covered by a bequest of the late Mr. John Feeney. In the disposition of the plan the art galleries and the large rates office in the Gas Department were the governing factors. The former were required at the level of the art galleries in the old building, with a connecting bridge across Edmund Street of sufficient width and internal size to form a gallery in itself; while the large rates office had of necessity to be easily accessible from the street. These two conditions have been met by placing the rates office towards the centre of the block and grouping the galleries around and partially over it, lighting the office from internal courtyards some 40 ft. wide and by a large central top light in addition. This, in execution, has worked out most satisfactorily. Another factor of considerable influence on the plan was the fall in the site from west to east. This necessitated very careful consideration of floor levels, a solution having been found by taking the old art gallery floor as a datum for the new galleries and also as the first-floor level throughout the building, taking the centre of the Margaret Street frontage as the datum of the lower ground floor, and dividing the height

Photo: Thomas Lewis

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION: ENTRANCE ON CONGREVE STREET FRONT

Photo: Thomas Lewis

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION: GENERAL VIEW FROM CHAMBERLAIN SQUARE

H. V. ASHLEY AND WINTON NEWMAN, FF.R.I.B.A., ARCHITECTS

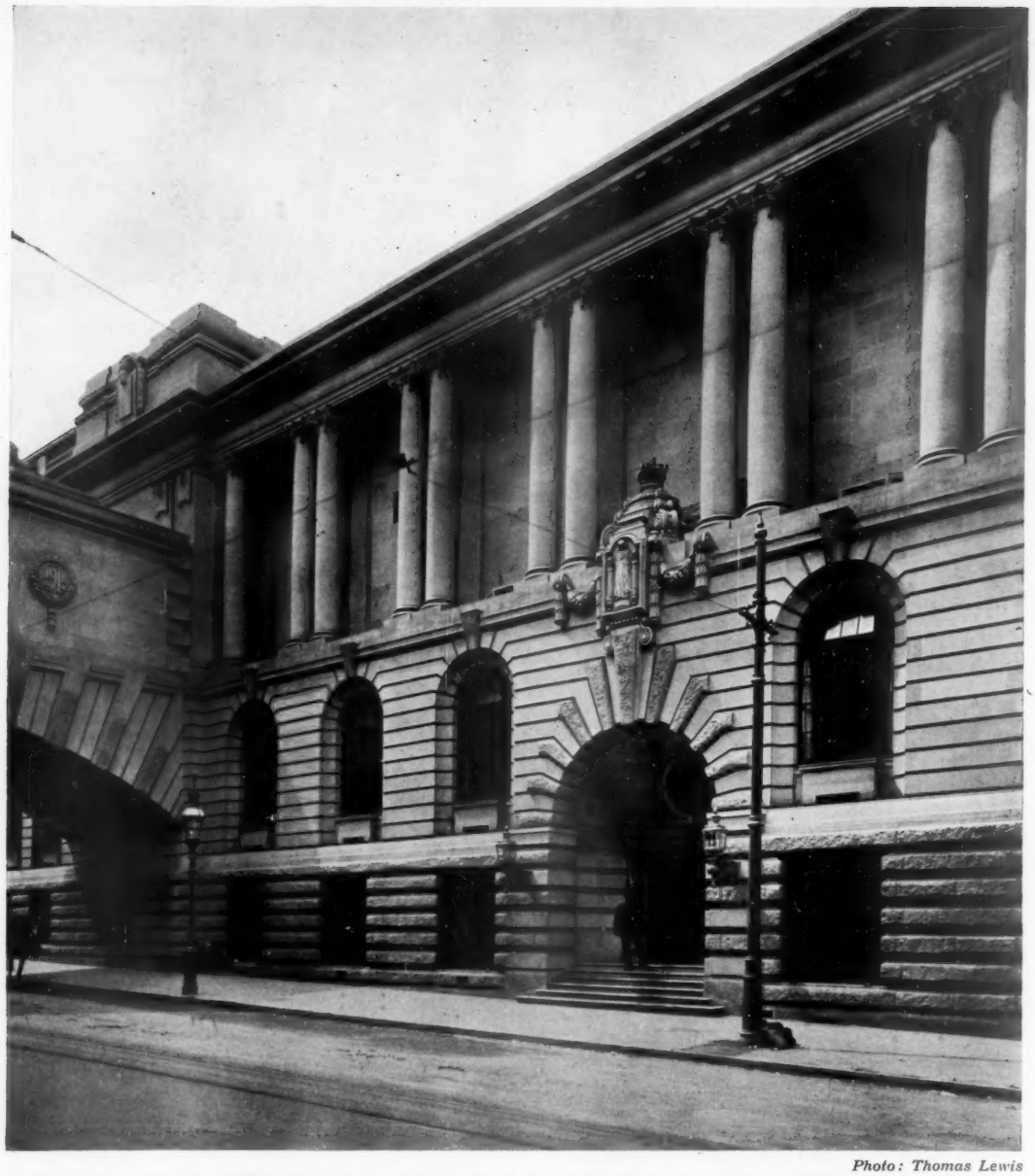


Photo: Thomas Lewis

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION: ENTRANCE TO GAS DEPARTMENT, EDMUND STREET

between these two levels into two floors, thus obtaining a lower ground and an upper ground floor. The level of the upper ground floor on the Congreve Street side finishes about 6 ft. above pavement level, on account of the fall in the site, and consequently the entrance porches on that front come at the half-landing level.

Minor influences on the plan have been the disposition of future extensions and the planning of departments as complete in themselves; that is to say, each department has its own entrance from the street, and its only access to other departments is by means of pass doors in the corridors, which are kept locked, and are only used by head officials holding master-keys.

The municipal departments accommodated in the building are, in addition to the art galleries and Gas Department already mentioned, the Education Department, which occupies the whole of the Margaret Street frontage on all four floors; the Tramways Department, which occupies three floors on the northern half of the Congreve Street frontage; and the Health Department, which occupies three floors on the southern half of the same frontage. The remainder of the building is occupied by the art galleries and museums on the first and second floors, and by the Gas Department on the upper ground and lower ground floors.

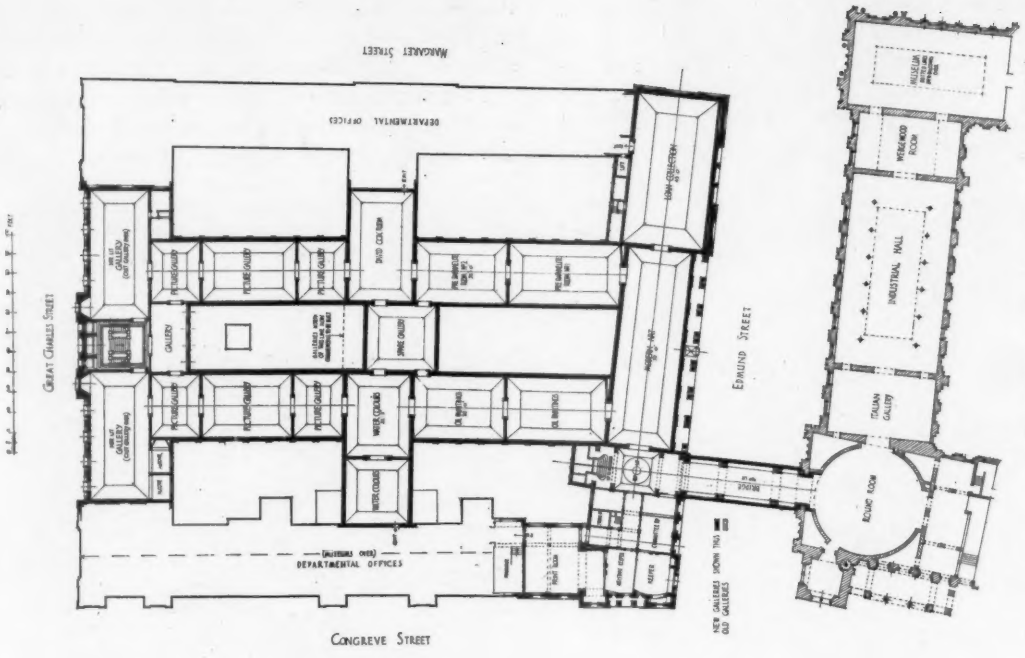
In addition, there is a second extension, now

about to be commenced, which provides for the completion of the series of art galleries as shown on the plans, with a connecting link at the northern end in the form of galleries for casts, with balconies around, and a principal staircase and entrance from Great Charles Street; otherwise the only entrance to the galleries at present is by the staircase on the other side of Edmund Street, through the old galleries, and over the new bridge. Cast galleries also connect at the north-west end with the series of natural history museums that will extend the whole length of the Congreve Street frontage on the second floor. At the southern end these museums are connected by a marble staircase with the new art gallery hall.

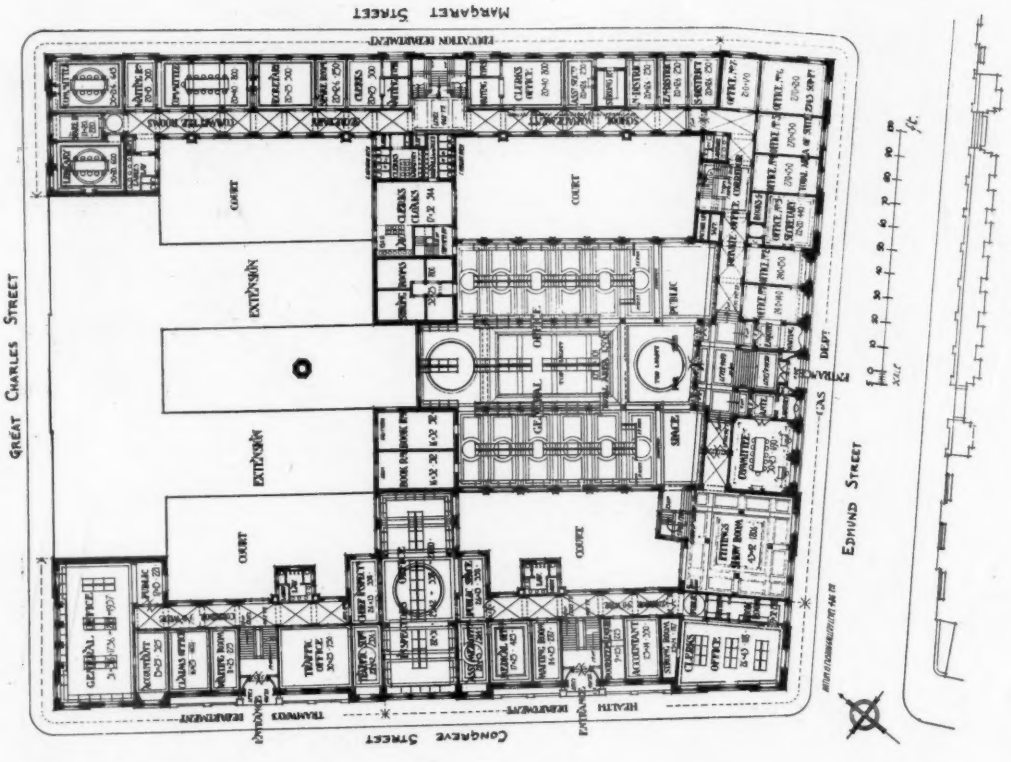
The second extension also provides additional accommodation (rendered necessary by the Greater Birmingham scheme) for the Tramways, Health,

Photo: "Architectural Review"

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION:
ENTRANCE TO EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, MARGARET STREET



First-floor Plan showing Art Galleries



Upper Ground-floor Plan.

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION

and Gas Departments on the lower and upper ground floors, as well as a patent library at the northern end, with entrance from Great Charles Street.

Access to the various courtyards within the building is obtained through one large gateway in Margaret Street, under close supervision from the gate-keeper's office adjoining.

In the general construction of the building no special reinforced concrete methods have been adopted, but the steel joists and stanchions throughout are encased in concrete.

The walling has been built with Black Country bricks in cement, with Birmingham bricks internally where plastering occurs, and the whole of the internal courtyards have been faced with white glazed bricks, relieved with salt glazed dado and dressings and green bands. The external frontages to the streets have been finished with a heavily rusticated base of Aberdeen granite to the level of the upper ground floor, and above this level in Darley Dale stone. This stone was used in the present Council House, and in selecting the same material the architects worked under definite instructions.

It may be mentioned that no great difficulties were encountered with the foundations, which are taken down to below the level of the foundations of the old houses that originally occupied the site. Numerous disused wells were discovered, which necessitated in many cases steel grillages and concrete, but otherwise the concrete foundations rest upon a good gravelly loam.

The heating of the building is effected by means of ventilating radiators and low-pressure hot water (accelerated by motor-driven pumps) supplied from two large boilers. The boiler house is situated below the ground level in the centre of the site, occupying the greater portion of the courtyard at the northern end of the large rates offices, and accommodation has been provided for a third boiler required for the second extension. Ventilation is effected by means of exhaust ducts above the barrel ceilings of the corridors, with connections to the various rooms and upcast shafts leading to powerful fans that discharge above the roof levels. The art galleries have separate fans in the gable ends above the inner lights, and the large rates office also has a separate system of vertical and horizontal exhaust ducts connecting with a central fan which drives the foul air up the shaft surrounding the smoke stack from the boilers. The art galleries are heated by radiators placed in the centre between the seats, fresh air being brought to them by means of horizonal ducts in the floors.

Photo: "Architectural Review"

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION:
CORRIDOR AND STAIRCASE, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Photos: Thomas Lewis

Education Department: Margaret Street Staircase

Medical Officer's Department: Corridor at Head of Staircase, First Floor.

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION

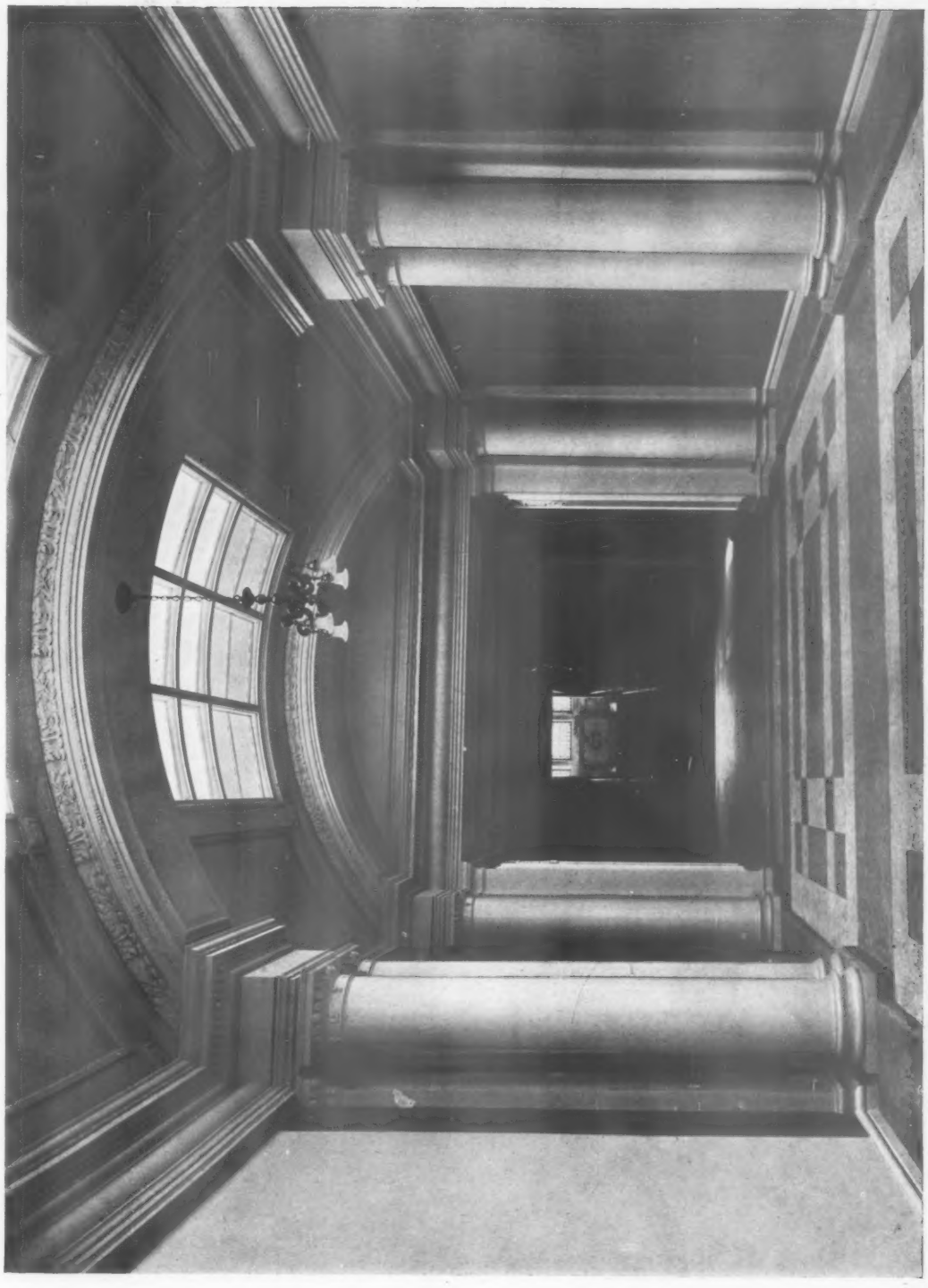


Photo: "Architectural Review"

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION: VIEW LOOKING ACROSS BRIDGE TOWARDS ART GALLERY HALL
H. V. ASHLEY AND WINTON NEWMAN, FF.R.I.B.A., ARCHITECTS

View looking towards Entrance to Large Rates Office

Photos: Thomas Lewis

View looking towards Private Corridor

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION: ENTRANCE HALL, GAS DEPARTMENT

Large Rates Office, Gas Department

Photos: "Architectural Review"

Natural History Museum

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION

The interior finishings and fittings may next be described.

Apart from the art galleries and approaches, the departmental entrance hall and staircases, the large rates office and various committee rooms, the building is made up of a series of large and small offices requiring nothing more than plain and simple finishings. Naturally the art galleries have received very careful attention, particularly as regards lighting, both natural and artificial. This question of lighting is one upon which hardly any two architects think alike, and space would not permit of the inclusion of even the most "salient points" of the problem. In the present case the method adopted comprises an outer roof light of as large an area as possible, and an inner glazed light, both in proper and scientific relation to one another and the picture plane. The ceiling is coved all round, finishing at the walls with cornice, frieze, and architrave, and horizontal sun-blinds are fitted above the inner grids.

For the artificial electric lighting of the galleries a system of metallic filament lamps enclosed in ground-glass bowls with mirror reflectors over, contained and carried by a bronze rim and chains, has been adopted, and the resulting illumination is most pleasing and satisfactory. This system was arrived at after many different experiments of an expensive nature.

All the gallery floors are of oak, with gangways around in brown linoleum, 4 ft. wide, and about 5 ft. away from the walls. This method of deadening the sound of the constant traffic has been found most successful at the Glasgow galleries, and is of special use in the present instance on account of the rooms below being used as offices; it also gives visitors a guide as to the position for properly examining pictures of ordinary size hung at about eye level.

The galleries have been finished in as restrained a manner as possible, with little architectural treatment beyond the cove and cornice, etc., already mentioned, a low mahogany dado all round, and Ashburton marble architraves to the doorways, thus confining the interest to the pictures, and leaving them to provide a general decorative effect.

The new bridge and art gallery hall have been treated with rather more freedom. The floors are finished in marble, Hopton Wood stone, and mosaic, and Swedish green marble columns support the ceiling of the hall, while an alabaster staircase leads to the natural history museums on the top floor. The columns and entablature and the ceiling to the bridge are all finished white, providing an excellent foil to the Burne-Jones tapestries which hang in the spaces between the columns.

DETAIL OF DOME OVER CENTRAL MUSEUM

Photo: "Architectural Review"

The natural history museums are carried out very simply in white and grey with a curved top-lighted ceiling over the main span. The central museum beneath the dome on the Congreve Street frontage has been treated as a domed room, with supporting Ionic columns, all in creamy white. It may be noted that this series of museums has been constructed so as to be easily convertible into additional departmental offices should they be ultimately required.

Apart from the art galleries the department providing most scope for effect has been the Gas Department with its entrance hall, large rates

STAIRCASE FROM ART GALLERY HALL TO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUMS

office, and committee rooms. The entrance hall has been finished in Hopton Wood stone and marble, with plaster panels and columns and enriched plaster cornices and ceiling panels. Leading direct out of the entrance hall to the right is the private corridor with its suites of private rooms, to the left the large fittings showroom, and straight ahead the main rates office. The last-named has been panelled and fitted in oak throughout, with wall surfaces above in plaster, and a decorative plaster treatment for the ceiling panels and the large barrel top-light in the centre of the office; the floor of the public space being laid with marble and mosaic.

The principal rooms leading out of the private corridor are the committee room, chairman's room, and secretary's room, all of which have been finished with oak panelling, marble fireplaces, and decorative plaster ceilings.

The floor areas below these offices are occupied by stores and additional offices in connection with the departments, access to the stores yard being obtained from the cartway entrance in Margaret Street already mentioned.

The whole of the lighting of the Gas Department is by low-pressure gas, with the exception of the large pendants in the rates office and the entrance hall, for which high-pressure gas has been adopted. All the fittings are executed in bronze from designs by the architects in conjunction with the Gas Department, and some measure of success has been obtained in embodying the latest methods of lighting control by pneumatic tube, etc., without the unsightliness usually associated with such fittings. The external lighting of the building on the street frontages is also by means of high-pressure gas burners; otherwise the building internally is electrically lighted.

The rooms of the remaining departments do not call for special notice beyond the statement that the committee rooms in connection with them have been finished with oak dados and plaster panels and decorative plaster ceilings.

The principal staircases have Echaillon treads and risers, marble dados with large panels over, and wrought-iron balustrades.

It is worth noting that the floors of the main corridors throughout the building have been finished with linoleum panels with Echaillon marble surrounds, in order to deaden the noise and reverberation usually so noticeable in a building of this character. The majority of the ordinary offices are also finished with linoleum laid on a cement screed direct on the concrete.

The whole of the fittings and furniture, including

Photo: "Architectural Review"

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE EXTENSION:
CHIMNEYPIECE IN COMMITTEE-ROOM, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
H. V. ASHLEY AND WINTON NEWMAN, FF.R.I.B.A., ARCHITECTS

the chairs, have been executed in Austrian oak, with the exception of the plainer fittings in stores and similar rooms, where deal has been employed, and in special cases in the Gas Department stores, where wrought-iron racks and hangers have been rendered necessary by reason of the heavy materials to be accommodated. These fittings have all been executed from designs by the architects to the special requirements of the departments concerned, and in this way an effect of fitness and uniformity has been secured throughout the building.

The general contractors were Mr. Thomas Rowbotham for the first portion of the contract and The Building Construction Co., Ltd., for the remainder. The steelwork engineers were Messrs. Whitaker, Hall & Owen, and the consulting engineer was Mr. W. M. Binney. The plasterwork was executed by G. P. Bankart, L. A. Turner, and A. & S. Wheater, and the stone carving by W. B. Fagan and The Bromsgrove Guild. Darley Dale stone was supplied by The Stancliffe Estates Co., Ltd.; wall and floor tiles by Carter & Co., Ltd.; sanitary fittings by Doulton & Co. and Shanks & Co.; marblework by H. T. Jenkins & Son; exterior iron balconies, standard and bracket lamps, interior iron balustrading, bronze window grilles and door furniture, and bronze electric-light fittings by The Birmingham Guild, Ltd.; lifts by R. Waygood & Co., Ltd.; permanent furniture by Wm. Cubitt & Co. and John Barnsley & Son.

Messrs. Chance Brothers & Co., Ltd., specially manufactured the glass for the skylights, which is extra white double-rolled cast glass, and about 30,000 superficial feet of this was glazed by Messrs. Mellowes & Co., Ltd., on their "Eclipse" patent system, which ensures the roof being absolutely water-tight. The particular feature of this glass is the superlative clearness and brightness of the light obtained, owing to the special ingredients used to make the glass as far as possible colourless. This renders it specially suitable for such positions as the one under notice.

Among other sub-contractors were the following:—

Asphalt, The Val de Travers Asphalte Co., Ltd.; glazed bricks, Stourbridge Brick Co.; granite, John Fyfe, Ltd.; steelwork, Charles Wade & Co.; fire-resisting partitions, Ames & Hunter; slates, Roberts, Adlard & Co.; casements, William Pearce, Ltd.; grates, Thomas Elsley, Ltd.; drainage fittings, Dent & Hellyer, Ltd.; wood-block flooring, T. Boys & Son, Goddard & Co., and Hollis Bros. & Co.; mosaic flooring, Rust's Vitreous Mosaic Co.; electric wiring, W. S. Vaughton; joiners' work, Samuel Elliott & Sons, Ltd.; stained glass, J. Jennings and Harvey & Ashby; electric-light fittings, Peyton & Peyton, bronze Georgian gas fittings, Ingram & Kemp, Ltd.; door furniture, Charles Smith, Sons & Co.; railings, etc., Hart, Son, Peard & Co., Ltd; bronze capitals and bases in entrances, Thomas Brawn & Co.; folding gates, Bostwick Gate Co, Ltd.; marblework, Lee Bros.; stairs, Stuart's Granolithic Co., Ltd.; heating and ventilation, J. Jeffreys & Co.; telephones, National Telephone Co., Ltd.; blinds, W. Hopkins & Son; strong-room doors, etc., George Price & Sons; lightning conductors, G. Cross & Sons; linoleums, T. A. Evans; wallpapers and hangings, Donald Bros. and Essex & Co.; fireproof doors, Mather & Platt, Ltd.; permanent furniture, John Barnsley & Son; movable furniture, Kingfisher & Co.; chairs Frederick Restall.

THE SHOP-FRONT PROBLEM

PERIODICALLY attention gets drawn to certain matters in architectural practice about which there can be plenty of discussion. When it is a matter on which no finality can be reached, as some phase of art, the end leaves everybody very much as they were at the commencement, both sides having gone at length into their own views without having convinced one another. Where, however, the matter in question is governed largely by practical considerations, the result is more profitable, for in the putting forward of various aspects of the question a series of facts is brought out which, even though known before, may not have received the attention they deserve. The problem of the modern shop-front is a case very much like this. It is a problem about which a great deal of discussion has taken place in former years, and the increasing perplexity in solving it has once more brought it up for discussion, more particularly in regard to Regent Street. From the architectural side the case has been stated with much emphasis. It has been shown that if we are to accept as a good standard the examples which the shop-keepers have produced when left to their own devices, then all hope of securing a result satisfactory to the architectural sense may be abandoned. On the other hand the shop-keepers have not been wanting in scorn for architects who have insisted that it is something more than an affair of every available inch of space being given up to plate glass. And in this condition of extremes the case stands at present. To an impartial observer, however, there are some considerations which seem to merit fully adequate recognition. Thus, taking the shop-keepers' claim first, one must certainly not overlook the fact that primarily a shop is a place of business, and that shop-windows have to be so designed that they serve

Photo: "Architectural Review"

SHOP-FRONT. LOWER REGENT STREET

Photo: "Architectural Review"

SHOP-FRONT, DOVER STREET, W.
BANNAN AND ROWE, ARCHITECTS

the requirements of business. There are, of course, some businesses which, either because of the exclusive patronage they receive or on account of the nature of the goods sold, do not demand a large window-space, and in these cases the problem is comparatively easy of solution. But the majority of businesses do not come within this category. Shop-keepers secure their custom largely by the display of their goods in the window, and it is reasonable therefore for them to insist upon an adequate amount of unbroken window-space being provided. On the other hand, it is a fact that effective architectural treatment of the shop-front is almost as large a factor as the area of glass, for the reason that an attractive architectural shop-front is in itself a business asset. It is, however, on this very question that discussion centres. Architects, for example, wholly condemn the customary method of carrying the glass to within a few inches of the pavement, with spindle-like beading at the angles, and the essential means of support cloaked by mirrors or other coverings. This is, indeed, a wrong method, from the architectural standpoint, for the simple reason that shops are in the lower portion of façades, and unless the design gives one the impression that there is some adequate support for the superstructure, the eye is deceived and unsatisfied. Instances of this may be seen on every hand.

With large new buildings like the Selfridge Store and Whiteley's new premises (both of which have been illustrated in former issues of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW) the need of giving an effect of support to the superstructure has been frankly recognised from the commencement, and in both these buildings the architects have carried piers down to pavement level, with a good deep fascia above; and in this way the window is well framed in. For a large store the design adopted for Selfridge's is an admirable solution of the problem, and while referring to it we may express the views of Mr. Selfridge himself. He says: "The man who pays the rent must have something to say as to the building itself, otherwise he may refrain from occupying it; but I hope that while he is making his requirements known he will feel that architectural excellence supplies an asset to his business, and gives it an addition of dignity and character which a simple show-case of a shop cannot possess."

With the big store the problem is difficult enough, but it is even more difficult in the case of separate shops of comparatively small frontage.

As illustrating some recent examples in the West End, we give a few photographs. It will be seen that they represent a number of treatments, varying according to the character of the businesses which they serve. As two wholly different from one another, the shop-fronts of Messrs. Mellier and Machinka may be compared, the one presenting an arcaded treatment and a comparatively small amount of window area, the other a trabeated design enclosing a very large amount of plate glass. Considering them purely

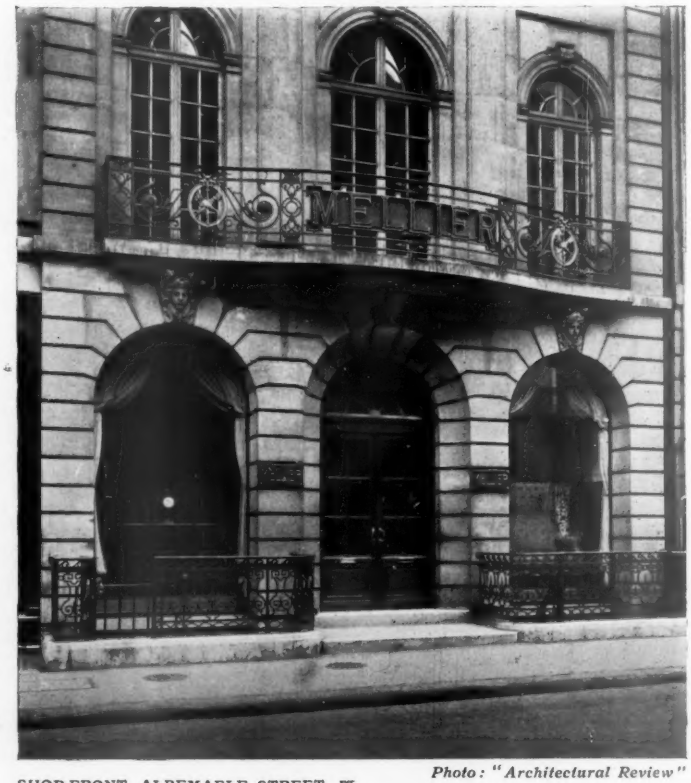


Photo: "Architectural Review"

SHOP-FRONT, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
GALE, DURLACHER AND EMMETT, ARCHITECTS

as designs, and setting aside the purposes of business, Messrs. Mellier's is far the preferable of the two; but it is obvious that in this case there is no demand for extended window area, but rather a demand for the display only of a few special pieces of furniture and, withal, an indication of a high-class business which is conducted by repute rather than by a window display. The other design, Messrs. Machinka's, is similarly restricted in the number of articles displayed, and, in view of that fact, we hardly see the need for so large a window as that provided, which has its *raison d'être* only in the demand for a large display such as we see in some of the ladies' shops in Regent Street. The details of the enrichment are very delicate, and French in feeling, and the twin pilasters at either side are well placed; but the centre pier seems to need more emphasis, the span between the pilasters being so long.

Photo: "Architectural Review"

SHOP-FRONTS, OLD BOND STREET, W.
G. B. CARVILL, ARCHITECT (NO. 14)
H. PERCY ADAMS AND CHARLES HOLDEN, ARCHITECTS (NO. 15)

Messrs. Lyle's shop-front is another interesting example. In this, metalwork has been largely employed, and we see a still further use of it in the shop-front of Messrs. Terisa in New Bond Street (p. 51). The latter is of a French type now very popular. It is quite a departure from the usually accepted treatment of a shop-front, being more in the nature of a show-case. It has, nevertheless, many points of interest, and when well framed in, as in the example shown, is quite satisfactory from the architectural standpoint; at the same time it provides excellent opportunity of display for a jewellery business. Two other shop-fronts devoted to silversmiths' work and jewellery which may be considered as satisfactory treatments are Messrs. Mappin & Webb's in Oxford Street and Messrs. Elkington's in Lower Regent Street. In both of these there is a solid-looking enclosing frame of marble which, even though it must inevitably hide the steel construction behind it, is nevertheless justifiable. In the case of Messrs. Mappin & Webb's, however, the inclusion of a mezzanine above the shop windows is to be regretted, as it makes the supports elongated, and

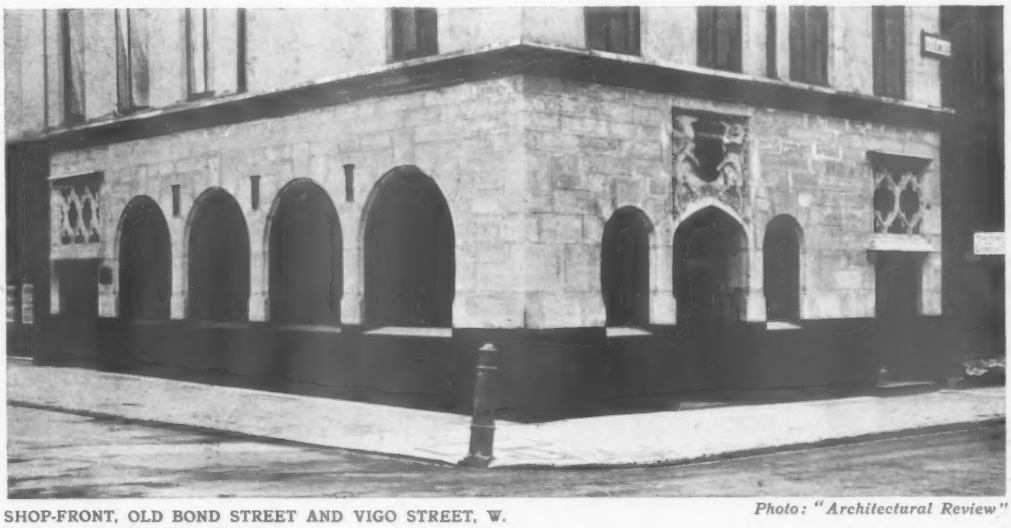


Photo: "Architectural Review"

SHOP-FRONT, OLD BOND STREET AND VIGO STREET, W.
C. F. A. VOYSEY, ARCHITECT

Photo: "Architectural Review"

SHOP-FRONT, NEW BOND STREET, W.
F. COLLINSON AND CO., ARCHITECTS

takes away from the framing-in of the glass area, which is so important.

With regard to Messrs. Atkinson & Co.'s shop in Old Bond Street (p. 49), the architect points out that "the design was intended for a scent shop, and show-cases large enough to exhibit one bowl of rose leaves and one vase were provided, so that the shop should not resemble a chemist's." This arrangement, however, was altered subsequently without his consent. It is certainly an unusual shop-front, but as so small a space is left for display, we do not think it contributes much to the solution of the main difficulty.

A criticism somewhat similar, so far as window-space is concerned, may be made in regard to Mr. Fabergé's shop-front in New Bond Street, though it may well be pointed out that window area was not a requirement in this design. As an architectural composition it is certainly good, the triple division of the space being excellent, and the enrichment very pleasing.

As to which of all these methods should be adopted for a street like Regent Street, it is difficult to say, for the simple reason that the businesses there carried on are themselves so varied. We must confess that we do not think the Piccadilly Hotel shops are a fair treatment from the shop-keepers' point of view; too much space is occupied by the piers, and the window area is too much restricted; and while we may set aside the flippant criticism that labels this design "a series of railway arches," we consider that a trabeated design would have met the conditions far more satisfactorily. In fact, we think that a design on trabeated lines, with metal frames enclosing the windows, and a fair depth of plinth between the bottom of the window and the pavement (cer-

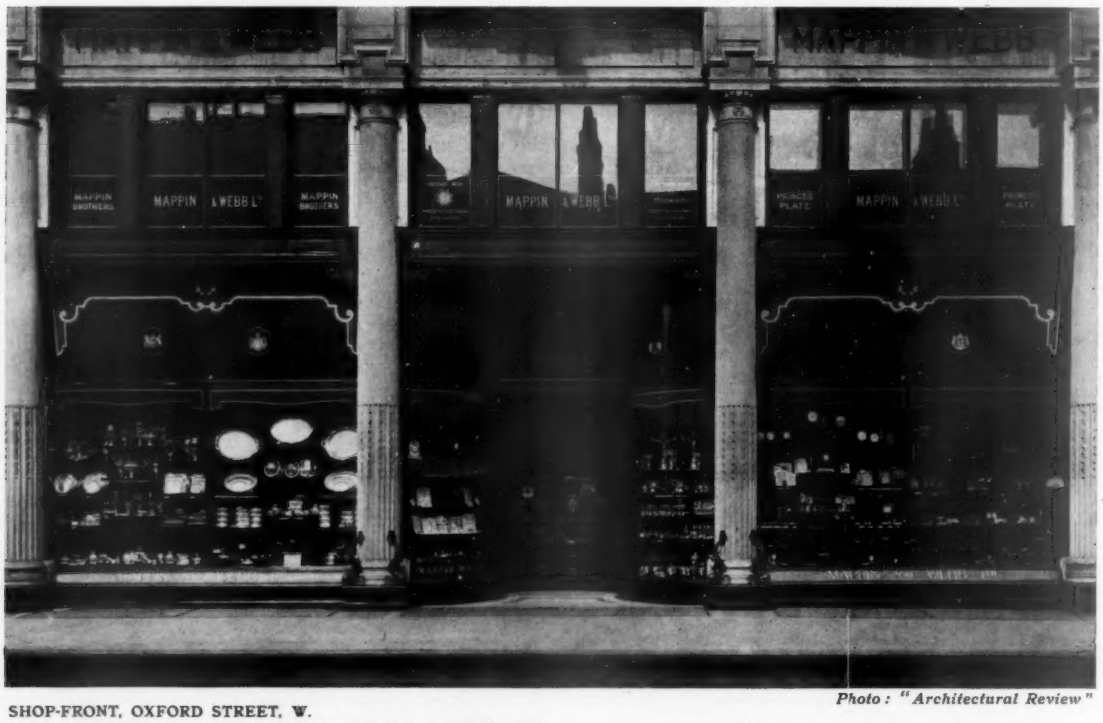


Photo: "Architectural Review"

SHOP-FRONT, OXFORD STREET, W.
JOHN BELCHER, R.A., AND J. J. JOASS, F.R.I.B.A., ARCHITECTS

tainly not less than 1 ft. 6 in.), offers the most hopeful means of solution. At the same time we do not overlook the fact that the arcaded treatment has been very successfully adopted in some cases, in none more successfully than the design for Messrs. Debenham & Freebody's shop in Wigmore Street, of which the architects were Mr. William Wallace and Mr. James S. Gibson, associated.

SHOP-FRONT NEW BOND STREET. W. *Photo: "Architectural Review"*

Of course, in a case like Regent Street, the great desire should be to secure some sort of uniformity. It was this that gave such character to Nash's design, now so sadly cut up, and unless the Crown authorities insisted that new designs should be considered as part of a general scheme, no good result could be achieved. In view of the fact, however, that the rebuildings which have already taken place are of such a diverse character, there seems very little hope that Regent Street will ever have again the appearance which it possessed before the modern alterations were made. But even at this late day the Crown authorities should insist that the further rebuildings which must inevitably take place within the next few years shall form part of a harmonious scheme, and not be detached and opposing units.

[Referring to the accompanying illustrations, the architects of Messrs. Mellier & Co.'s shop-front in Albemarle Street are Messrs. Gale, Durlacher, and Emmett, the entrance doors and fronts having been carried out by Messrs. Mellier's own workmen from the architects' design. Messrs. Lyle & Co.'s shop in Old Bond Street was designed by Messrs. H. Percy Adams and Charles Holden, the bronze work having been executed by the Birmingham Guild from the architects' design. The architects of Mr. Fabergé's shop-front in New Bond Street were Messrs. F. Collinson & Co., and the architects of Messrs. Machinka's in Dover Street were Messrs. Bannan & Rowe. The shop of Messrs. J. & E. Atkinson, Ltd., at the corner of Old Bond Street and Vigo Street, was designed by Mr. C. F. A. Voysey, and executed by Messrs. Howell J. Williams, Ltd. Messrs. Stanley, Jones & Co., Ltd., designed and executed the shop-front of Messrs. Terisa in New Bond Street, and Messrs. Fredk. Sage & Co. executed (from the design of Messrs. John Belcher and J. J. Joass) the shop-front of Messrs. Mappin & Webb in Oxford Street.

THE COMMITTEE FOR THE SURVEY OF THE MEMORIALS OF GREATER LONDON

A JOINT Committee of the two Houses of Parliament is now sitting upon that vexed question: how are we to protect and ensure the preservation of the historical monuments of our country? Every subject such as this which touches the rights of private property is justly approached with extreme caution and with an almost exaggerated fear of compromising individual liberty. Yet it is a question the answer to which must involve some modification of the literal interpretation of the right of each person to dispose of his property as he thinks fit. The destruction of our national monuments has proceeded unchecked for too long, and public opinion is slowly realising that it is time for something to be done.

Our Survey Committee, whose primary object is to *record* rather than preserve the memorials of London, yet takes an active interest in all efforts towards preservation, and, indeed, its record work has already, in many instances, been instrumental in persuading the destroyer to hold his hand. One or two practical considerations, therefore, will not be out of place if we discuss them here.

The first thing that should be recognised in approaching the problem of our ancient buildings is that such buildings are not in themselves useless, or to be regarded merely as inconvenient survivals from a past age. A wardrobe of garments from a century or two back is certainly a somewhat harassing heirloom, if space is limited. No one can use these clothes, and we should soon have an unenviable mass of useless material if

everybody kept their past raiment. Buildings, however, are in an altogether different class, and, like furniture, they retain their capacity for useful service. In fact, it may be said, with perfect truth, that a building, while it is being used and inhabited, is kept in repair, and, with judicious strengthening and renewal, it may continue its existence to an indefinite period of time. Neglect, the forerunner of decay in old buildings, generally originates from an inability on the part of their owners to adapt them to new conditions—an inability which is simply the result of ignorance, so that, even when such adaptation is attempted, a most lamentable result is obtained. This idea, that an ancient building has served its purpose and is really fit for nothing but demolition, is at the root of the grotesque proposals which have been put forward for the so-called open-air museums, which are to be the last resting-place of derelict homes. It must be the prayer of every self-respecting thing which has been manufactured by man, that it be never consigned to the soulless corridors of the museum, nor ever be considered as beyond all useful service. The cracked blue bowl that has been hidden away in the cupboard must sing for joy when it is brought out again to hold tobacco or dried rose-leaves. And why should any building be relegated to a museum? If the public were only in the architect's secret, it would be known that no condition into which a building can get is really hopeless, but that with proper treatment it can obtain a new lease of life, and can retain much of the form and beauty given to it at its first building. And if the structure is in such a position as necessitates its removal, it is still possible, in the vast majority of cases, to save the fabric, and re-erect it—not in a museum for the tourist to gaze at indifferently, but in some place where it can take up its task again where it left it, and continue the useful life for which it was designed.

This view should appeal to those who have hitherto regarded the work of preservation as a somewhat hopeless battle with time, as an attempt to put back the clock, and to arrest the natural process of decay. If a building is beautiful, if it is a product of an age of artists and of skilful designers, it is worth preserving for a hundred reasons, and it ought never to be difficult to make its preservation *pay*. This is the crux of the question—a preserved and properly restored building is of *use*, and very numerous instances could be adduced from every part of the world to prove that this is true.

But, while so much ignorance is abroad, both as to the value and as to the possibilities of these ancient buildings, the risk of destruction becomes every day more serious. To secure the object required most easily there should be some central society, or Government department, which has power to take over, repair, and dispose of buildings in all localities. Such a society or department should not be large, nor should it provide work for its own officials only. It should not necessarily hold much property permanently, but should encourage private persons to buy old houses which had been given back their life, and to look after them. It should have powers of inspection and powers of interference wherever a monument is shamelessly neglected, giving the owner the option of doing his duty (and thereby serving his own interest), or of allowing the authority to arrange for the proper repairs, with the right to the proceeds of letting to recoup the expense. Practising architects should be encouraged to fall in with a recognised conservative method of treating old fabrics, without in ordinary cases putting further restraint on their freedom to add to the usefulness of the building in a legitimate way; and, as far as possible, the idea of an official architect should be avoided. The chief usefulness of such an authority would lie in its being able to negotiate a large number of buildings of every class, and so assure the maximum degree of usefulness, as well as the largest amount of profit, to each undertaking. Then it would be possible for every town and village to feel a pride in its historical buildings, and a satisfaction unmixed with the uneasy feeling that it was simply preserving a relic of the past which had no organic relationship with the present. We are fortunately passing from that curious phase of sentiment which preferred ruins to well-preserved works of art, and which loved to weave impossible romances over the sad desolation of formless stones. If we are to have museums, let us have them with as little of the appearance of artificiality as it is possible. The pictures and the sculpture in the Palace of the Louvre look at their best, because everyone feels that such things are fitting occupants of a royal dwelling. The same principle can be applied to every class of building, and it would be easy to compile a long list of threatened monuments in and around London alone for which an enlightened and powerful authority could find much excellent use, and in which it could provide Londoners with a new pleasure and a new interest. Let the practical usefulness of the old building be recognised at the same time as its historical value and its intrinsic beauty, and we shall soon have a working scheme for preventing the appalling losses with which we are daily threatened.

WALTER H. GODFREY.

GARGOYLES

BY SIDNEY HEATH

THE grotesque element in ecclesiastical ornament is mostly found on the tympana, gargoyles, and corbels of the exterior of our churches, and on the capitals, misereres, and bosses of the interior; but it is in gargoyles that the grotesque and the ludicrous elements are most pronounced. Many people must have been puzzled as to why these humorous and sometimes coarse carvings should have been allowed to figure so prominently on buildings primarily set apart for the contemplation of the sublime and the divine. That the grotesque element was intentionally introduced is certain, and it has been suggested that it may have been intended as a basis for comparison between the earthly and the heavenly ideals.

Be that as it may, a visit to any old church will speedily convince us that the mediæval craftsmen, with a marvellous grasp of the moods that go to the making of character, considered that in their lesser ornaments they should minister to man in all his varying moods, instead of making their art the exclusive handmaid of religion or of morals. Humour is as much an attribute of our nature as is love, and, like it, varies in intensity with different individuals. This feeling for humour is ministered to in ornament by what we call the grotesque, and the grotesque element occurs in the work of all ages and of all peoples. Just as nothing is worse than a feeble joke, so few things are more annoying than a weak grotesque. The amusing must be convincing, for if the startling or ludicrous is weakly expressed it cannot achieve its object, and may, indeed, be only repulsive and revolting.

Much of the religion of our pre-Reformation ancestors was based on a recognition of the facility with which the grotesque may be recalled in the mind, although we have not here to decide how far such a custom was beneficial or injurious, nor to consider to what extent this burdening of the mind with a host of distorted conceptions went to counterbalance the immediate advantages that were sought.

Gargoyles unquestionably offer the best field for the student of the grotesque, and it was in the fashioning of these appendages that the old craftsmen found a fine opportunity for the representation of those weird and forbidding creatures which seemed to have formed so strong an article of their faith. The word gargoyle is generally derived from the French *gargouille*, which, in its turn, comes from the Latin *gurgulio*, a waterspout. The word occurs in French manuscripts of the fourteenth century as *gargale*, the name of a disease peculiar to swine which causes a gurgling sound in their throats.

The earliest gargoyles are little more than orifices with a tile or lip to shoot the water well away from the building, and we should remember that whatever symbolism their ornamental portions may possess, their primary function was a purely utilitarian one, and it was late in their career that they developed a symbolical significance. From the primitive form it was an easy step to the true gargoyle, which consists of two portions, the lower one forming the channel, the

upper one being its cover. With the recognition of these appendages as a decorative and symbolical asset of church architecture, they began to be added to buildings in ever-increasing numbers, and the masons lavished an extraordinary amount of skill and care in fashioning them; so much is this the case that of all our really old gargoyles it would be difficult to find two exactly alike, while

a comparison between an old and a modern gargoyle will prove that when science destroyed the belief in evil spirits and dragons it robbed the sculptor of the only incentive he had to fashion them.

In England gargoyles are rarely met with before the Early English style, during which they were usually made with a very considerable projection. They are generally found on the cornices, but were not infrequently placed on the fronts of the buttresses. Although they were originally designed to serve a utilitarian purpose they were quickly associated with symbolism. The scowling and grinning faces; the half human, half animal

forms, the gorgons, griffens, and winged dragons of legendary folklore, were considered to be invested with the power of driving away evil spirits, and were used as charms against witchcraft. Among our best examples of gargoyles are those adorning the colleges of Oxford, and the lovely set on the roof of Henry VII's Chapel at Westminster.

It is doubtful if we have in England a piece of building on which there are so many gargoyles as on the bas-reliefs of the north door of Rouen Cathedral, where no fewer than two hundred and eighty grotesque animals appear.

The examples that illustrate this paper are to be seen on the interesting church of Winchcombe, in Gloucestershire, one of the best of the fine group of Perpendicular churches that give an architectural distinction to that charming district of rural England called the Cotswolds.

The illustrations are from photographs by Messrs. Tovey and Son, of Winchcombe.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE DRAWINGS OF WHITEHALL PALACE

To the Editor of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

SIR,

All students of architecture and of the history of London will be grateful to Mr. Gotch for publishing his paper on Whitehall, which appeared in your June issue, and for the liberal illustrations which accompanied it. The collation of the various drawings is of the utmost value, and their publication is no small event in the unfolding of the history of English architecture.

Many readers, however, will be sorry that Mr. Gotch has been somewhat led away from the supremely interesting subject of the architecture of the Palace and has devoted his chief remarks to the vexed question of authorship. Is it not rather dangerous to rebut what seems to be a very well-founded tradition by anything but unmistakable proof?

No one will, I think, suggest that the authorship of a design can be deduced from the authorship of the actual draft. If it is proved—and we take Mr. Gotch's word for this—that Webb was the draughtsman, it by no means follows that he was the designer. And if we are to take the evidence of the signed drawing—the only point upon which there can be no mistake—it seems clear that if Webb were capable of such a poor caricature of architecture, he was just as incapable of the beautiful rhythm and proportion which is seen in the more important sets of plans. I am of opinion that in the seventeenth century, and during the early part of it, there were a large number of draughtsmen highly skilled in the technical art of drawing. But the general evidence which has come down to us from traditional and other sources seems to point to the fact that Webb was a useful lieutenant of Inigo Jones, and probably not unskilful in interpreting his master's work, when under his inspiration; but there is no direct evidence of his capacity as an artist or as a designer of the first order.

Indeed, the more one considers the matter, the clearer it seems that, as even "A Brief of Mr. Webb's Case" admits, he was "Mr. Jones' Deputy," and he could scarcely in that capacity have done any serious designing while Inigo Jones was in England. It seems unlikely that when Charles I's fate was hanging in the balance even so callous a being as an architect would have been preparing elaborate designs for a new palace. But what does seem probable—although Mr. Gotch thinks otherwise—is that when Inigo Jones heard first of the destruction of the Banqueting House in January 1619 he was struck with the idea of the possibility of a great rebuilding of the Palace in the style of the Renaissance. It would take the great architect only a few days to have the main lines of his scheme defined and committed to paper, and even if circumstances compelled him to put up the Banqueting Hall as a building complete in itself, it seems to bear no less the mark of its purpose as a unit in a larger scheme—the unit which it afterwards became in many of those beautiful drawings that Mr. Gotch has published for us to see. That we may not have Inigo Jones's original sketches is not surprising, but the high standard of these designs is eloquent testimony of the fact that they must have emanated from the mind of one whose greatness belongs to all time, and who, if he had been permitted, would have given us the greatest building of the century.

WALTER H. GODFREY.

Westminster.

A LONDON RELIC

To the Editor of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

SIR,

May I be allowed to add a few remarks to the illustrated note on the column from Blackfriars Bridge which appeared in your issue for May.

The picture of George Mylne walking off with a column from the bridge which he had himself built, to add to his collection of relics, is certainly amusing, but it lacks accuracy.

This column stands in the grounds of Leigh Court, at Great Amwell, which is about a mile and a half from Ware. It originally formed a portion of the first Blackfriars Bridge, which was erected by Robert Mylne in 1760. An engraving by Piranesi shows columns of this character surmounting the stone fenders of the pier bases. When the bridge was demolished in 1864 and replaced by the present structure, designed by Joseph Cubitt, the contractors, Messrs. Mowlem & Birt, disposed of its fragments in various ways. This column was brought to Great Amwell, and erected to the memory of George Mylne in the grounds of the house where he had lived. Another column and the capital of a third one are now at Swanage in the grounds of the Grosvenor Hotel. Their presence there is easily explained. The quarries from which Messrs. Mowlem & Birt drew stone for the buildings which they erected in London and elsewhere were situated at Swanage, and still remain as the Tilly Whim Caves. The stone was brought to London by sea, and on the return voyages the boats carried as ballast any material from buildings which the contractors were demolishing, which might be useful in the development and laying out of the town of Swanage. Hence to-day many remains of London are to be found there, and on lamp-post, pillar, and seat may be read such incongruous legends as "Borough of Southwark."

HERBERT C. ANDREWS.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

BOOKS

ARCHITECTURAL RAMBLES IN THE PYRENEES

MR. HAMILTON JACKSON, in his "Shores of the Adriatic," has already contributed two interesting volumes to architectural literature, and the book now under notice, "Rambles in the Pyrenees," follows very closely the scope and general character of his former works. Mr. Jackson originally proposed to describe both sides of the Pyrenees, but this undertaking was found to be so extensive a task that the itinerary had to be limited to the country on the French side only. The author has wisely avoided the more familiar portions of the district he is concerned with, and has deviated into parts practically unknown to the traveller. His tour extends from Bordeaux on the west to Perpignan and Béziers on the east, including the districts of Gascony, Pays de Foix, and Roussillon.

It is obvious that Mr. Jackson did not start out with the object of writing a guide-book in the sense in which that term has come to be used. Rather has he set off without any fixed intention, and has rambled along until arrested by something particularly striking—be it a church, a bridge, a crumbling ruin, a piece of archaic carving, or a wandering beggar. All these things and a hundred others he has recorded in a series of sketches, the accompaning text being flavoured with a relish of light literary discursiveness. His descriptions of buildings are always clear, exhaustive, and precise; and these, together with a number of carefully drawn plans, give the book a strong practical character. Mr. Jackson's drawings of purely architectural subjects have the merit of being very exact; indeed, a number of them, both in treatment and perspective, seem to possess almost a photographic quality that rather tends to deprive them of pictorial value. A number of excellent photographs by Mr. J. C. Ashton are also included. The bridge at Orthez, of which we give an illustration, is a fourteenth-century structure, which, though restored, is still picturesque. It has four unequal pointed arches, the roadway passing beneath a tower, from the window of which the Capuchins, who, in 1569, had assisted in the defence of the town, were forced to throw themselves into the river.

THE BRIDGE AT ORTHEZ, DRAWN BY F. HAMILTON JACKSON, R.B.A.
(From "Rambles in the Pyrenees")

The book has a plan of the area over which the author has travelled, and there is also an index, the latter, however, being somewhat meagre and insufficient for so large a book.

"Rambles in the Pyrenees and the Adjacent Districts." By Hamilton Jackson. London: John Murray, 50a Albemarle Street. Price 21s. net. pp. 414. 9¼ in. by 7 in.