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A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration.



General View showing Laing's Custom-House in 1816.
From an Aquarelle by T. G. Roberts

JULY 1917

27-29, Tothill St., Westminster. London. S.W.

VOL. XLII

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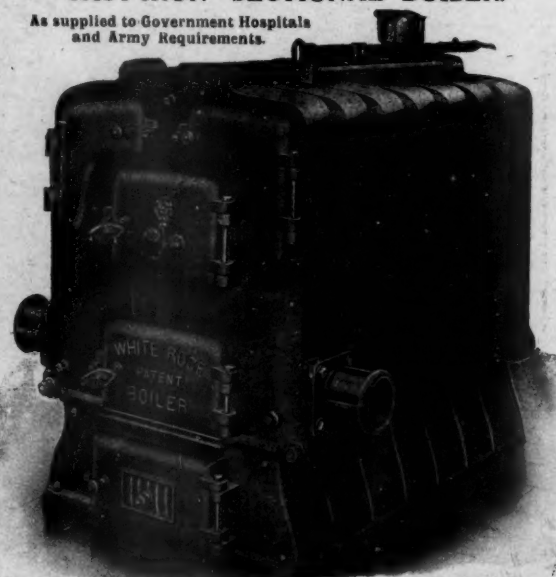
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Plate I.

SOUTH VIEW OF THE CUSTOM-HOUSE, LONDON, IN 1817, AS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED BY DAVID LAING.
From an Aquatint by J. C. Stadler.

July 1917.

THE CUSTOM-HOUSE, LONDON.

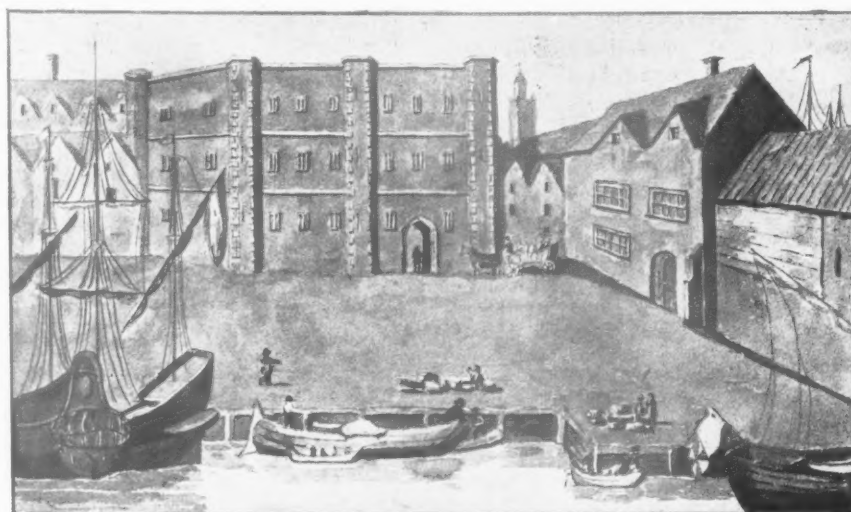
By ARTHUR STRATTON, F.R.I.B.A.

THE reputation of more than one architect has been made or marred by the measure of skill he has evinced in handling the design and construction of a custom-house. From the nature of the problem it is one that tests his powers to the uttermost. Without breadth of vision and a grasp of the principles governing the disposition of masses he will fail to impart a certain austerity which is expressive of the uses to which such a building is put, and without sound constructive ability he will be likely to be caught in one of the pitfalls which make the erection of buildings on sites adjacent to waterways more than ordinarily difficult.

The usual position for a custom-house is on a quay beside a busy waterway, and its uses and situation are such that it can hardly fail to be seen by travellers and foreigners. It is associated with shipping and merchandise, with dues and tolls, and, in days gone by, with the bustling throng of travellers

attributes of the design of an Exchange—from James Gandon's stately building beside the Liffey at Dublin saw a marked development in architectural expression; but both these buildings were the outcome of the conditions under which they were built, and both are masterpieces, albeit of very different types. Henry Bell and James Gandon are more widely known for their successes on the quay-sides of their respective towns than for anything else they achieved. Every traveller recognizes their skill—the eye can appreciate their handiwork, though the ear has never heard their names.

The Custom-house standing to-day beside the Thames is the last of a succession of buildings dating from early times and erected to meet the requirements of the Port of London. Records do not seem to substantiate the existence of a separate building for this purpose earlier than the reign of Richard II, when a certain John le Chirchman, mercer and



VIEW OF ORIGINAL CUSTOM-HOUSE.

From a Water-colour Drawing in the Fauntleroy-Pennant Collection in Sir John Soane's Museum

from many parts who passed through its portals on arrival and departure. Modern conditions have in some respects robbed it of its more picturesque associations, but there is no better index to the present or past prosperity of a port than the magnitude and character of its custom-house; in it will be reflected the high-water mark of architectural thought current at the period of its erection. A well-designed and well-placed custom-house impresses the traveller at first glance with the wealth and dignity of a port, and is, moreover, a symbol of its commercial relations with countries in various parts of the globe. Fortunately, the period of prosperity which many British maritime cities enjoyed in the latter half of the eighteenth century, as a result of the expansion of overseas trade, coincided with a period of high architectural achievement. It was reflected in the monumental qualities of the design for the custom-house erected in more than one capital city.

The century which separates Henry Bell's delightful custom-house at King's Lynn—possessing, as it does, many of the

Sheriff of London, "for the quiet of merchants"—that is to say, to prevent disputes about weight—built a house upon a quay called Woolewharf in the Tower Ward. As Maitland says, "though the Antiquity of the Duties of Import and Export in this City cannot be ascertain'd, yet that they are almost coeval with the commerce thereof, I think will not be controverted." * Doubtless a wharf for shipping wool and other commodities was established from the earliest time when merchandise was subject to customs. In very early times we had trade with France, for mention is made of ships from Rouen which brought cargoes of wine and freed them from toll, i.e. paid their duties. In those early days the amount brought in by customs was absurdly small. The present system of collecting duties seems to date from the first years of the reign of Elizabeth, and Stow refers to Wool Wharfe or Customer's Quay, which "is now of late most beautifully enlarged and built." About 1559 the loss to the revenue from an imperfectly

* William Maitland, "History of London," 1739.

organized system of collecting dues was first realized, and an Act was passed to compel people to land their goods in such places as were appointed by the Commissioners, and this was the spot chosen.* If this first serious attempt to provide London with a building especially erected for the purpose may be judged from the accompanying illustration (page 1), it was neither very large nor expressive of its purpose; but it seems to have sufficed, in spite of the yearly increase in foreign trade, till destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. By that time the trade of the country had increased enormously; a fine site facing the river to the west of the Tower of London was made available, and Sir Christopher Wren was entrusted with the erection of an entirely new structure.

In his plan for rebuilding London, Wren isolated the Custom-house and made it a focal point for one of his main streets from the Royal Exchange, showing that he realized the importance of such a building, and the part that it should play in the general scheme of the city. Frustrated in the realization of his fine conception, he developed the south or river front by throwing wings well forward at the east and west ends of a long block, the central three bays of which were slightly projected and surmounted by a pediment. From the view of this building reproduced on Plate II, it is evident that it was a good example of the "Wren manner," and without doubt it was a building that looked far more impressive in reality than in any contemporary engraving. Such obvious defects as the top-heavy appearance of the central pediment and the stunted proportion of the lower story may be safely attributed to shortcomings on the part of the engraver. A vivid word picture of it is preserved in an English traveller's description †:—"This office is a Noble Pile of Buildings, built on the River Side below the Bridge, to whose Kay Ships of the greatest Burthen come up. The necessary Offices of the several Branches of this extensive Revenue are disposed in this great Building with the greatest Regularity and Order imaginable. Here is no Confusion, notwithstanding the Vast Affluence of People that come every Day to make the Reports and the Entries of Ships Outward and Inward Bound; and in the Long Room it's a pretty Pleasure to see the Multitude of Payments that are made there in a Morning." This building did not have a long life, for fire has wrought nearly as much havoc with London's Custom-house as with some of her theatres. On 13 January 1714, Wren's building and some hundred and twenty houses adjoining it in Thames Street were burnt to the ground; but no time was lost in setting about the erection of another building, seeing that such a large revenue-collecting office necessitated adequate accommodation.

The architect chosen for the new building was Thomas Ripley, one of the least distinguished of Wren's followers, though one who was held much in favour in official circles. His building stood for almost exactly a hundred years, and from careful drawings, made before another devastating fire swept the site clear in 1814, it is possible to obtain a very good idea of its architectural character. It will be seen from the exterior view reproduced on Plate II, and the interior reproduced on page 3, that Ripley was content to follow his master's lead as regards the main disposition of a long central block with deep projecting wings, the principal departures from Wren's building being occasioned by the need for additional office and warehouse accommodation. It was a brick and stone building about 190 ft. long with attached orders on the river front,

Tuscan below and Ionic above, the central pediment rising in front of a lofty attic story. The increase in mass, as compared with that of the building it replaced, might in some hands have produced a corresponding increase in grandeur of effect. Ripley was too commonplace in his ideas to achieve this, or to shake himself free from the trivialities of the everyday conventions of his time. Pleasing though his river front may have been with a motley crowd on the quay and shipping moored beside it, there was lacking that particular note which characterizes the successful Custom-house and prevents any likelihood of its being mistaken for anything else.

Ralph must have felt this when he wrote: "I could have wished . . . that this building had been more costly and magnificent; it would make a seasonable impression on foreigners, even at their landing, of the majesty and wealth of the British nation; to which let me add that its situation, by the water-side, gives it a still further claim to grandeur and decoration, and 'tis pity so publick a building should want what is so remarkably mist."* But the principal room on the first floor, known as the "Long-room," impressed every one as much on account of its dimensions as of the scenes for which it made such an excellent setting. It was the whole length of the main block, lighted by a row of nine lofty semicircular-headed windows on the river front, and covered by a flat ceiling, in the centre of which an octagonal opening marked the position of the turret which was a feature of the exterior. Here were offices partitioned off for the commissioners and officers, and it was the usual place of sale by auction for contraband and other goods. Owing to the constantly increasing revenue derived from foreign trade during the eighteenth century, and the inadequacy of the accommodation provided in Ripley's building, it had been decided, several years before fire turned it into a heap of ruins, to abandon it and to build entirely anew on another site.

The new site, immediately east of Billingsgate Dock, and consequently a few hundred yards westward of the old one, is commanding, and offered fine opportunity for architectural display, especially on the river frontage. David Laing, a pupil of Sir John Soane, realized this, and, had not an unfortunate accident wrecked his reputation, he would for all time have stood foremost amongst the great architects of the early nineteenth century. As it is, nothing can detract from his merit as a designer and his grasp of the principles which govern the setting-out of a great public building. His design for the river front of the new Custom-house embodies all the attributes that such a building in the capital of a great maritime power should possess; but it is known to-day, as originally erected, only from drawings published in his large folio,† or from sketches made before the catastrophe happened. The beautiful aquatint by J. C. Stadler (Frontispiece) records sufficiently well the magnificent grouping of this great façade, on which architect and sculptor combined in perfect unison to supplement the work of each other; while the general view by T. G. Roberts, reproduced on Plate III, shows the building as a whole in relation to the waterway and its immediate surroundings.

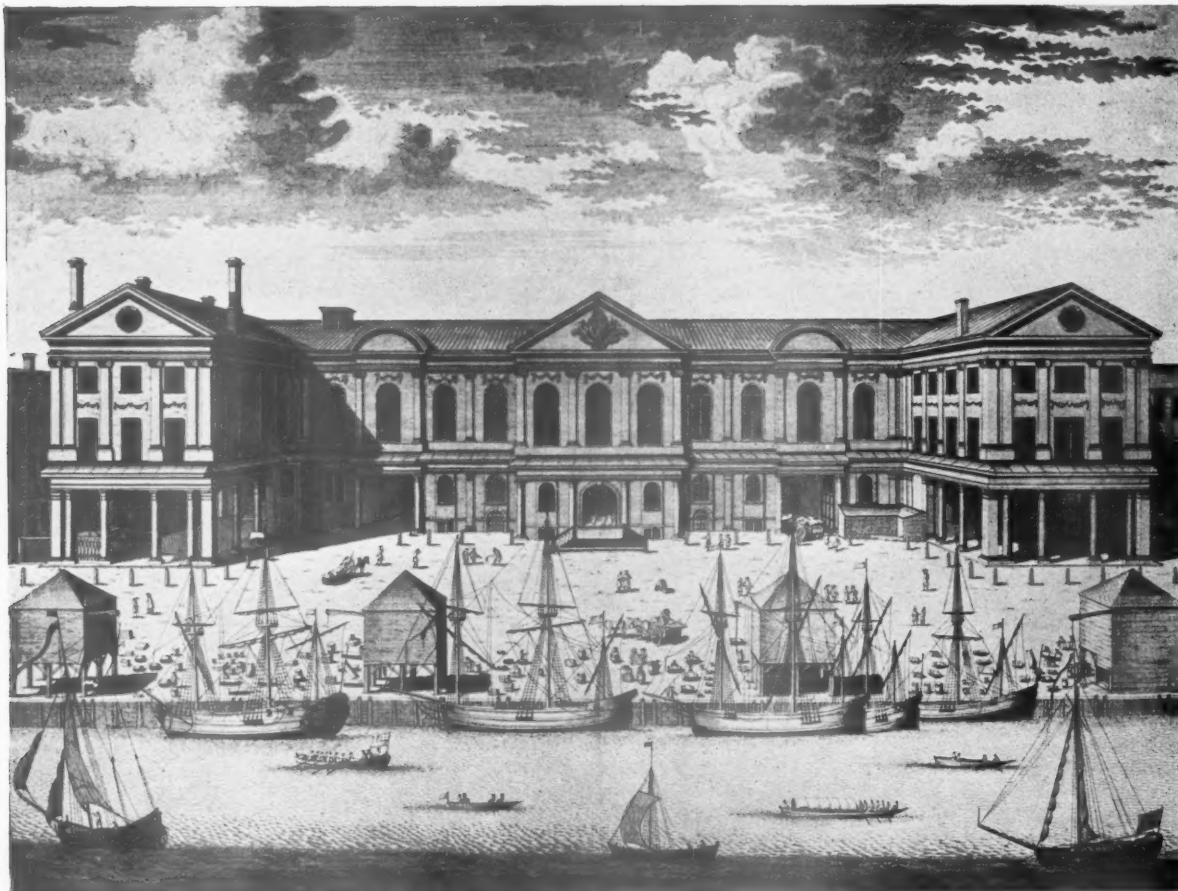
In 1810 Laing obtained the appointment of Architect and Surveyor of Buildings to the Board of Customs, and his final design received the approval of the Lords of the Treasury in

* Thomas Pennant, "Some Account of London," 1793.

† John Macky, "A Journey through England," 1714.

* James Ralph, "A Critical Review of the Public Buildings, Statues, and Ornaments in and about London and Westminster," 1734.

† David Laing, F.S.A. Plans, Elevations, and Sections of Buildings, Public and Private, executed in various parts of England, including the New Custom-House. London. 1818.



VIEW OF SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN'S CUSTOM-HOUSE IN 1714.

From an Engraving by John Harris.

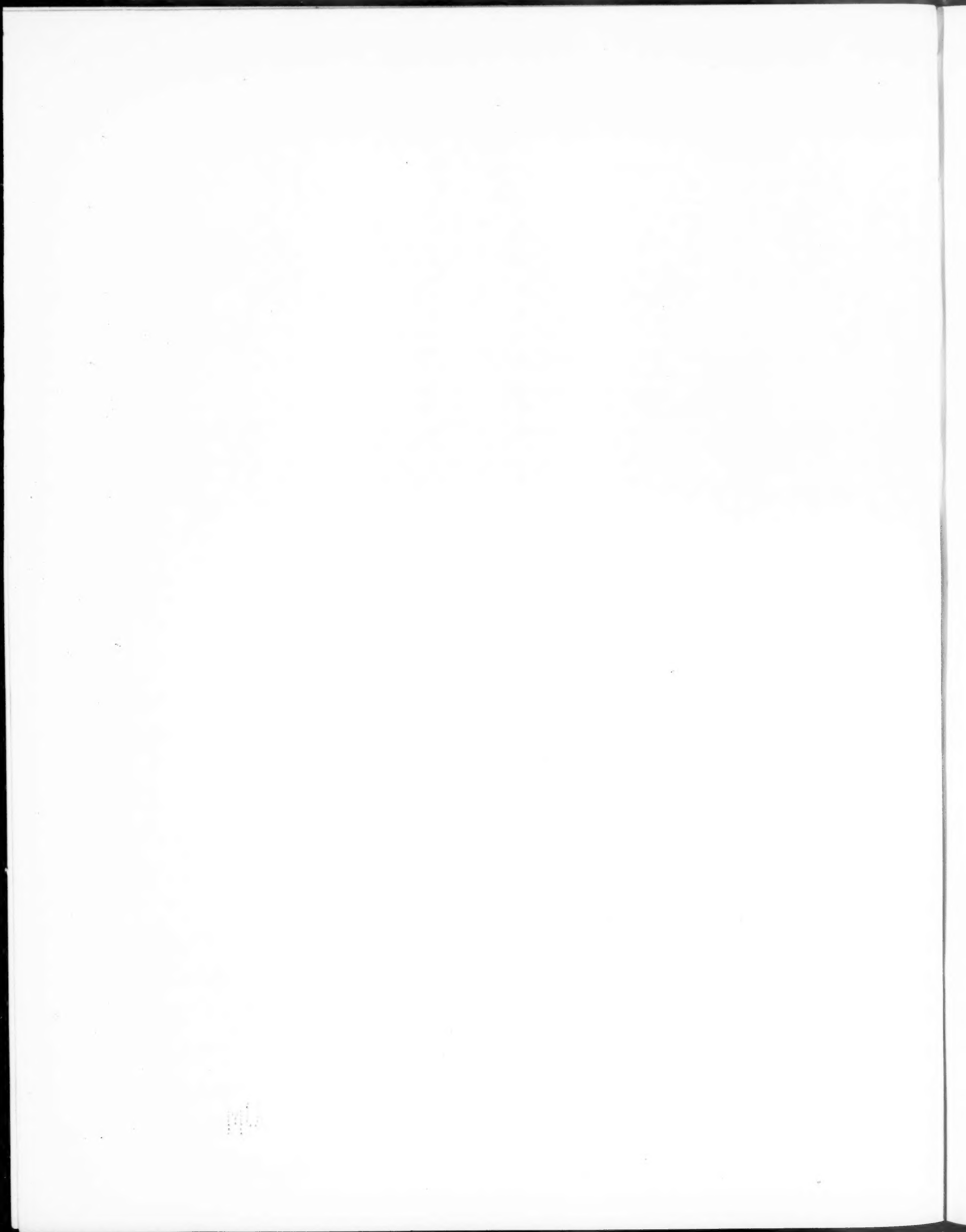


Plate II.

VIEW OF THE CUSTOM-HOUSE AS REBUILT BY THOMAS RIPLEY.

From an Aquatint by J. Bluck.

July 1917.





THE "LONG-ROOM" IN THE CUSTOM-HOUSE AS REBUILT BY THOMAS RIPLEY.

From an Aquatint by J. C. Stadler.

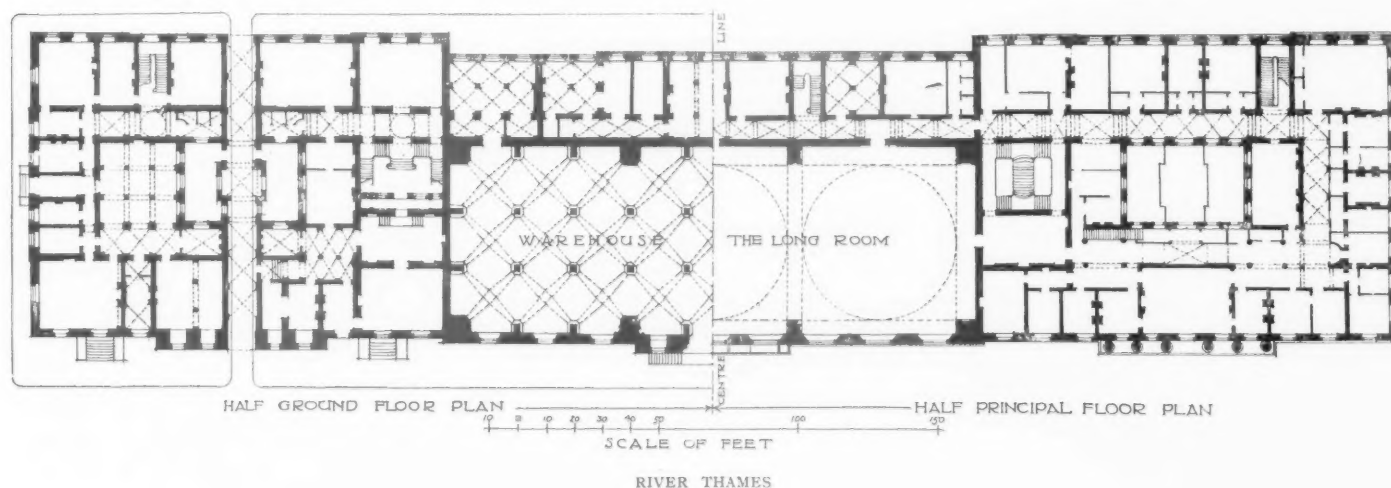
May 1812. The site was at that time lying waste, in consequence of a fire which had consumed several extensive warehouses a few years earlier. Hasty building on such a site was peculiarly ill-advised; but the first stone was laid in the autumn of 1813, and the official opening took place on 12 May 1817.

The great dimensions of the new Custom-house—no less than 488 ft. long, or some thirty feet more than the National Gallery—point to the growth of the revenue from this source. Nothing was spared to make it worthy of the capital. Portland stone was selected for the front, and with an astylar treatment for the central mass, flanked by appendages the centres of

fronts, but they are of stone throughout.

It was on the river front that sculpture was most appropriate; the slight projection of the centre part up to the principal floor level allowed of the royal arms over the main entrance, flanked by recumbent figures of Ocean and Commerce. The sculptor, Bubb, continued the allegory in a frieze about six feet in depth and two hundred feet in length along the principal attic, in which he represented on the western half the commercial alliances of Great Britain, and on the eastern half those arts and sciences which may be regarded as indispensable to the prosperity of an insular power. Above this, seen clear against the

THAMES STREET.



THE CUSTOM-HOUSE, LONDON: PLANS OF DAVID LAING'S BUILDING.

sky, were figures of Industry and Plenty supporting a large circular dial.

No precautions were spared to protect the fabric from fire, and two stories of vaults formed with an extensive series of stone and granite piers carrying brick arches were provided beneath the principal floor. The traditional "Long Room" was approximately 195 ft. long and 66 ft. wide—probably the largest apartment of its kind in Europe. Divided in its length into three square bays by means of large piers carrying segmental arches, the domical system was complete, the central saucer dome rising to a height of about fifty-five feet above the stone-paved floor. This impressive apartment was lighted, as in Ripley's building, by a range of nine great semicircular-headed windows on the river front, and the plans (page 3) show the approaches by means of staircases at either end so as to avoid possible congestion from crowds mounting and descending a single central staircase.

Within a few years of completion, serious signs of failure began to show themselves beneath the "Long-room," occasioned not by defective design or workmanship in the structure itself, but by defective arrangements in the preparation of the foundations—the site was a confused mass of old walls, sewers,

careful to carry through. The whole of the sculptures were swept away, and a high attic pierced with windows took the place of the original crowning feature. A bold design was robbed of half its power by these changes. Why Smirke was not content to consolidate the structure and leave Laing's façade unaltered is not clear, neither is it evident why he was permitted to tamper with one of the finest frontispieces of the kind in Europe. A comparison of the photograph of the river front as existing (Plate III) with the reproduction of Stadler's aquatint (Frontispiece) makes it clear that these alterations have detracted very considerably from the architectural qualities of the building. Most critics have agreed on this point from the day the changes were made visible. Britton and Pugin in 1827 wrote: "However sound and scientific may be the present design, we cannot approve of the substitution of two series of sash windows for the lofty arched ones that before occupied the centre, and which in fact gave it almost all the character it possessed."

Laing's retirement following the collapse of his *chef d'œuvre* is one of the most pathetic incidents that the biographer of modern architects has to chronicle. Little did he suspect that danger was lurking underground when, at the height of his



THE NORTH FRONT OF THE CUSTOM-HOUSE, FACING THAMES STREET.

From an Engraving by T. H. Shepherd.

ancient quays, and rubbish, the débris of numerous works that had been formed there in successive ages. It was through and amongst this chaos that a foundation of wood piles was unwisely driven.* Each pier stood, or was intended to stand, upon nine whole-timber piles, forming a square covered with planking. Through careless setting-out, which was not detected at the time, the centre line of one of these groups of piles was mistaken for a boundary line, with the result that half of one of the piers was built without any solid foundation at all. The inevitable settlement of this pier was followed by the failure of those adjoining it, and in 1825 Laing suffered the humility of seeing Sir Robert Smirke called in to save a monument which should have crowned his career with honours instead of bringing it to an untimely end. Smirke remodelled the central block, adding the range of Ionic columns with which one is familiar to-day; these stand well forward on a rusticated basement, and the crowning balustrade returns against the main attic. Secondary breaks introduced at either end of the central mass with pilasters at the angles interrupt the horizontal lines of the appendages, which Laing had been

fame, he published his scholarly account of the building in 1818. It is not as though he were a dreamy idealist: on the contrary, he was fully alive to the urgency of giving attention to every practical aspect of his problem, and was careful to include in his preface "such observations as naturally arose from the difficulties of execution; which could be discovered and ascertained only as the undertaking proceeded in its various parts." Such observations, he wrote, "may be of use to artists engaged on the construction of massy and elevated edifices; they may forewarn the judicious of embarrassments not always adequately contemplated and never willingly anticipated." But if by falling a victim to "embarrassments," against which he was so anxious to safeguard others, he lost his reputation as a "practical" man, it can never be urged that he failed as a designer; and while the practical side of architecture demands the efficient combination of dexterity, intelligence, and experience, it is equally vital to success to remember that the foundations of the art must be laid on accurate and well-studied theory. Laing put into practice what he preached, and the lessons to be learned from a study of his masterpiece are amongst the greatest that the architect is called upon to learn.

* Paper by Edwin Nash in the Transactions of the R.I.B.A., 1867.



GENERAL VIEW SHOWING LAING'S CUSTOM-HOUSE IN 1816.

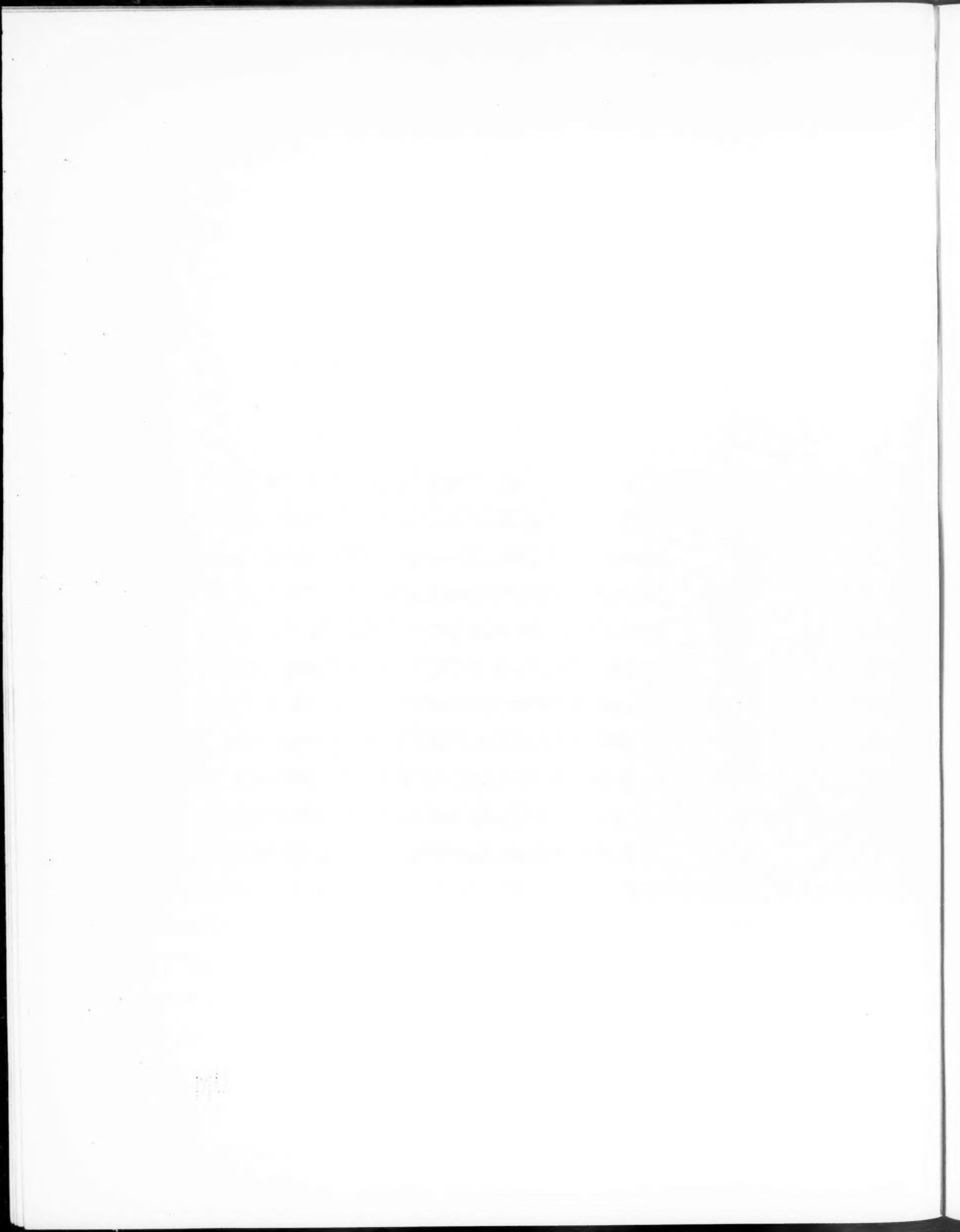
From an Aquatint by T. G. Roberts



Plate III. July 1917.

Photo: Photochrom.

SOUTH VIEW OF THE CUSTOM-HOUSE AT THE PRESENT DAY AS REMODELLED BY
SIR ROBERT SMIRKE, CIRCA 1825.



HENRI PAUL NÉNOT, ROYAL GOLD MEDALLIST, 1917.

M. HENRI PAUL NÉNOT, the recipient of this year's Royal Gold Medal, is the twelfth representative of France to win the distinction; the others being—J. I. Hittorff, 1855; J. B. Lesueur, 1861; E. Viollet-le-Duc, 1864; Charles Texier, 1867; Joseph Louis Duc, 1876; the Marquis de Vogüé, 1879; Charles Garnier, 1886; César Daly, 1892; Auguste Choisy, 1904; Honoré Daumet, 1908; Jean Louis Pascal, 1914. On the day of the presentation M. Nénot

the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture given by His Majesty the King.

"It is customary on these occasions to give an outline of the career of the recipient of this medal, and although most of us know M. Nénot's history, there may be some to whom his interesting and strenuous career is not so familiar.

"It is not often that a taste for the austere and difficult art of architecture manifests itself at a very early age; but we



H. Nénot

was unfortunately indisposed, and the medal was received on his behalf by M. Adrien Thierry, Secretary of the French Embassy.

In making the presentation, Mr. Ernest Newton, A.R.A., P.R.I.B.A., said:

"It is my privilege, as President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and thus representing the architects of the United Kingdom, to present to M. Henri Paul Nénot

find M. Nénot, when only nine years old, already showing a marked predilection, not, as we might expect, for its external and more naturally attractive aspects, but by making a detailed and accurate plan of the 'pension' at Villiers-le-Bel. Fortunately, this tendency was encouraged by those responsible for his education, and he was placed at the age of thirteen in the atelier of M. Lequeux. Surely the youngest architecture pupil on record! At fifteen he entered the École des Beaux-



SHOP-FRONT TO PREMISES OF THE COMPAGNIE GÉNÉRALE TRANSATLANTIQUE,
RUE AUBER, PARIS.

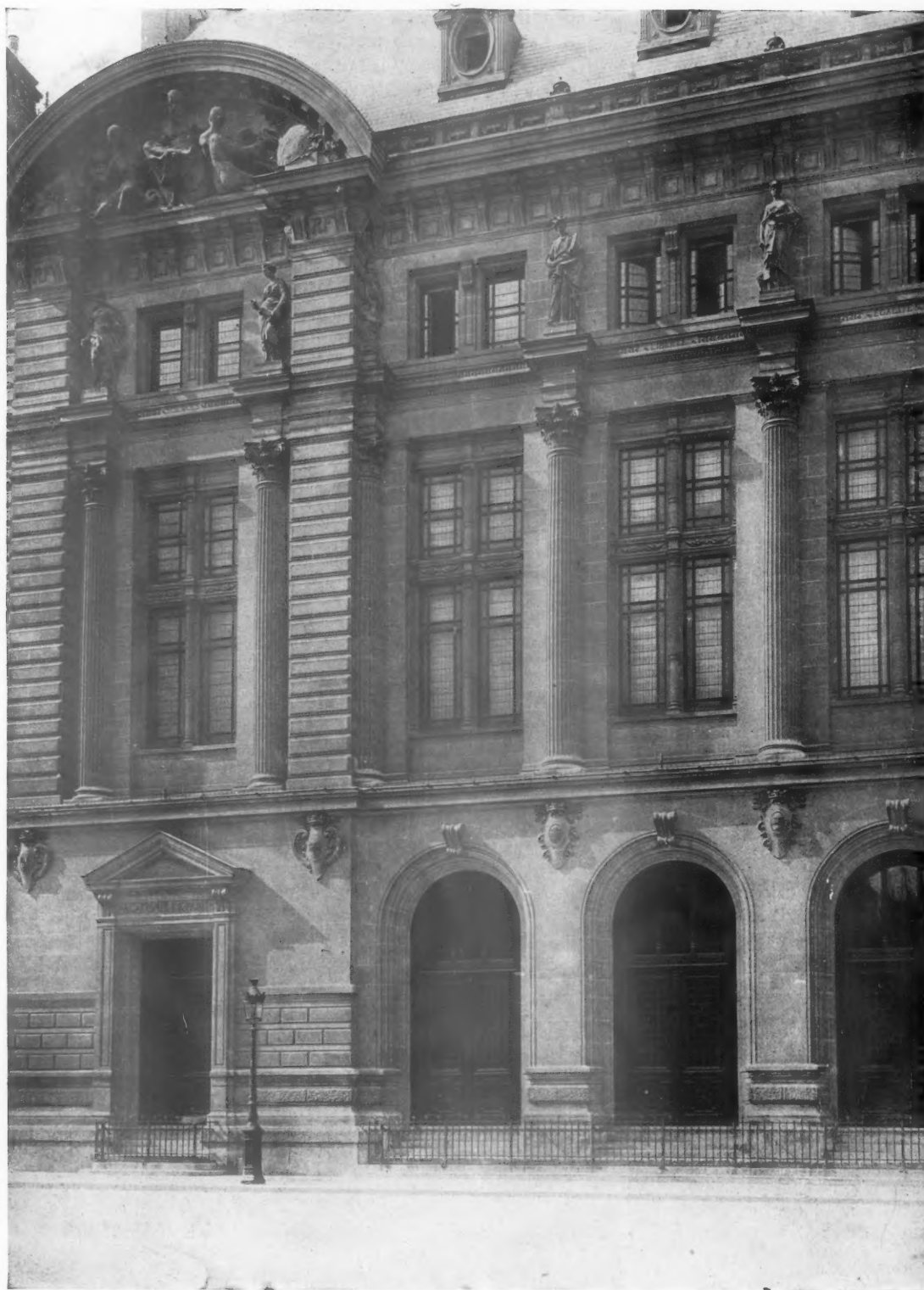
Arts. His studies were abruptly interrupted in 1870, when, immediately on the outbreak of war, he enlisted, fought valiantly, and received, as his first decoration, the Military Medal. After the war he served his term in the artillery, and

so great was his patriotism that it required all the persuasion of his former masters to prevent him from re-engaging in the army, and to bring him back in the paths of architecture and a resumption of his studies at the École des Beaux-Arts. Here he continued to work until 1877, when, at the age of twenty-four, he gained the Grand Prix de Rome. During these years M. Nénot worked in the atelier of M. de Questel and in the office of Charles Garnier, competed in collaboration with M. Oudiné for some important buildings in Belgium, won the competition, and was entrusted with the execution of the work.

"Many of us would think that after these strenuous years of study, crowned by the Grand Prix, M. Nénot might have considered himself fully equipped to settle down to the practice of architecture; but he wisely looked on all these years of work as preliminary, and, being persuaded that it was only by a profound study of the ancient masterpieces of architecture that a complete mastery of his art was to be gained, he visited in turn the principal towns of Italy and Greece, as well as Constantinople and Jerusalem,



THE SORBONNE, PARIS: FAÇADE TO RUE DES ÉCOLES.



THE SORBONNE, PARIS: DETAIL OF FAÇADE TO RUE DES ÉCOLES.

Henri Paul Nénot, Architect.

and finished his tour of study by a visit to Egypt. During his last year at the Villa Medici, M. Nénot competed amongst 240 architects for the National Monument at Rome to King Victor Emmanuel, being impelled to compete by the laughing taunt of a very young architect that Italian architects were certainly superior to all foreigners. The prize of 50,000 francs was awarded to him, but the execution of the work was entrusted to an Italian.

"M. Nénot then undertook a tour of study in France and a critical and careful examination of buildings designed for every purpose, and with all these years of careful preparation behind him, and equipped with this well-digested knowledge, he entered for the great competition for the rebuilding of the Sorbonne, won it, and after some hesitation on account of his age, he being then only twenty-nine, the execution of the work was placed in his hands, but was not begun until after he had visited the Universities of Germany, Austria, Belgium, and Holland.

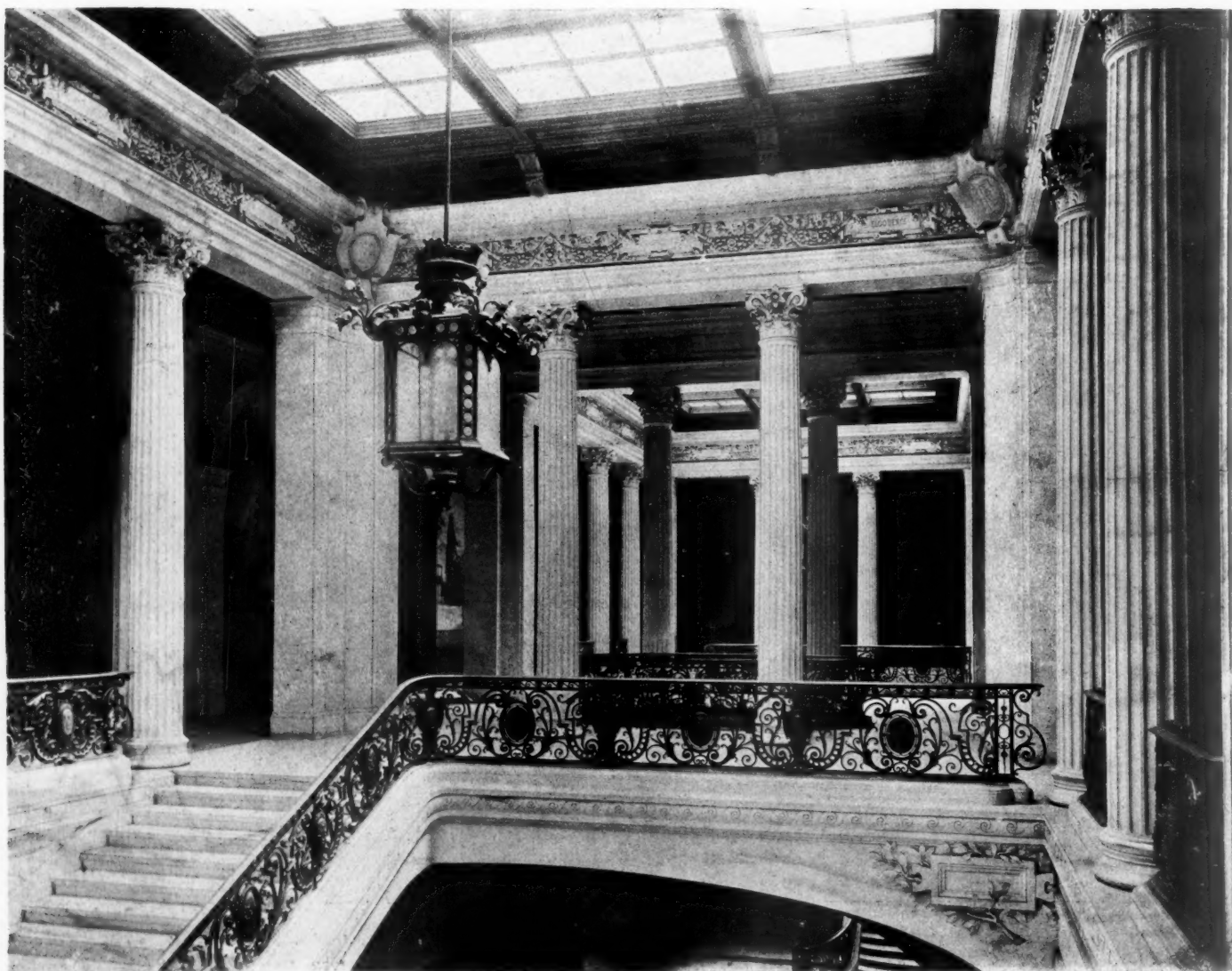
"I will not attempt to describe this great work, which took seventeen years to complete; it is well known to all visitors to Paris, and is the subject of a fine monograph by M. Nénot, a copy of which is in our library.

"M. Nénot has carried out numerous other works of importance, but it is with the Sorbonne that his name will always be specially associated.

"I know it is expected that the President when he presents the Gold Medal shall efface himself as soon as he has delivered a brief introductory address, but I cannot at a time like this hand to a distinguished Frenchman this token of our respect and admiration without telling him, and through him his own compatriots, something of what his great country is to us.

"It is a tradition that English people do not understand the French, and we may be almost grateful to the War for having revealed France to many who did not know her well. To architects the history and masterpieces of French architecture are of absorbing interest. Its unique Gothic architecture—the picturesque transition from Gothic to the matured and ordered Renaissance—modern work—all in turn claim our admiration, and show us achievements not only of the highest intellectual attainment, but containing always that something more than talent, that touch of personal and national genius so particularly characteristic of French architecture. France can boast of a long succession of highly distinguished architects who have gained their reputation by a profound study and complete mastery of the principles and technique of their art.

"All this splendid work can only have been done by a fine people. The very name France conjures up visions of a



THE SORBONNE, PARIS: GRAND STAIRCASE.

nation with as many facets as a diamond. Every period of its history is brilliant, but the France of to-day is perhaps the most impressive of all. Devoted to peace, although nursing a dignified determination to efface the memory of 1870, when the time came to put that determination into action there was at once manifest in every class and degree a quiet and serene determination to suffer everything, to endure everything, and to conquer. Never in the whole history of the world have such battles been fought as during this War. Never have more heroic deeds been performed; and yet, amidst all these gigantic happenings, the steadfast and unbreakable resistance at Verdun stands out in lurid relief, and will be told so long as the world endures. It is impossible to believe that our two nations, having fought shoulder to shoulder throughout these long terrible years, can ever again break a bond cemented by the blood of our sons; for all time, we shall be united by the tie of friendship based on mutual understanding, affection, and respect. This alliance should be proof against the insidious propaganda of that nation which has, to its eternal shame, brought to such perfection the truly devilish arts of lying, false witness, and sowing discord.

"I can only regret that it is not my pleasant duty to-day to decorate, as well as M. Nénot, a distinguished architect representative of the other Allies. We have already on our list of Royal Gold Medallists the names of famous Italian and American architects, and we may hope, when peace again allows us to pursue our art unhindered, to add to that

list names from the allied nations not yet represented on our Roll."

For the guidance of future students of the annals of the Royal Institute, it should be mentioned that the medal placed in the hands of M. Thierry was a replica or token of the actual medal which will be delivered to M. Nénot when there is no necessity to reserve gold for more urgent uses than that of casting decorative medals. No doubt M. Nénot will cherish the "token" as an interesting memento of the exigencies of a tremendous epoch in history.

It is the Sorbonne, the strenuous work of seventeen years, that has secured for M. Nénot a permanent place in the history of French architecture. The contracts for the building were allotted in August 1884, and the foundations were dug in the following November. The first stone was laid on 5 August 1885, the work of construction was finished in August 1889, and the building was completed in July 1901. The grand amphitheatre had been inaugurated by President Carnot on 5 August 1889, but there was no further official ceremony.

A few figures will serve to indicate the magnitude of the task the young architect had undertaken. The total cost of the work was estimated at twenty-two million francs, and was not exceeded. The total area of the site was 21,000 square metres, the space occupied by buildings being less by 1,700 metres, representing the area of the principal courtyard. The four façades have a total length of 666 metres—namely, 83 metres on the Rue des Écoles, which comprises the principal entrance;



OCEANOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE, PARIS: DETAIL OF LARGE AMPHITHEATRE.

87 metres at the rear, on the Rue Cujas; 264 metres flanking the Rue Saint-Jacques; and 232 facing the Rue de la Sorbonne and its extension the Rue de Victor-Cousin. The sharp slope of the side streets offered serious difficulties, the difference between the level of the Rue des Écoles and that of the Rue Cujas amounting to the height of two stories.

The new Sorbonne contains twenty-two amphitheatres, five libraries, two art museums, sixteen examination rooms, thirty-seven private rooms for the professors, and two hundred and forty laboratories. These numerous apartments serve various learned societies—the School of Charts, the Faculty of Letters, and the Faculty of Sciences, the last-named comprehending the chairs of chemistry, geology, mineralogy, physiology, and physics. The physics department alone occupies a superficial area of 9,200 square metres.

M. Louis Aigoin, to whose sketch in "La France Contemporaine" (tome iii; Clement Deltour et Cie., 173-5 Boulevard Murat, Paris) this notice is much indebted, claims for Nénot all the natural gifts necessary to success in the career of his choice. His wide brow reveals a fine intelligence; his broad shoulders denote a robust constitution; and his countenance, while radiating geniality, indicates an energetic temperament. The honours bestowed upon him (to which the Royal Gold Medal has now been added) include the French Military Medal; he is Officier de l'Instruction publique; he was named Chevalier of the Legion of Honour in 1885, Officer in 1895, and Commander in 1901. He was elected member of the Beaux-Arts Academy in 1895. He married on 4 November 1886, Mlle. Isabella Mathias, daughter of Ferdinand Mathias, engineer-in-chief of the Nord Railway, and has four daughters.

Concerning the Sorbonne, Mr. A. E. Richardson, F.R.I.B.A. (who is now serving with the Forces), has written, in the "A.A. Journal" of April 1917: "M. Nénot's great opportunity as an architect came when he was appointed to remodel the old Sorbonne, which was originally built with the church of

that name in 1629 by Le Mercier, it is understood at the instigation of Richelieu. The character of the old building determined the style of the additions, but this did not prevent the exclusion of modern requirements, neither did it oppose the incorporation into the new scheme of the best points of M. Nénot's Grand Prix design of 1877. The rejuvenated University not only expresses the sentiment of 1629, but it

represents both in conception and detail the aspirations of the 1830 school of Louis Duc (Joseph Louis Duc was the R.I.B.A. Gold Medallist of 1876), and reflects in a marked degree the highly original detail evolved by the latter architect for the additions to the Palais de Justice facing the Place Dauphin. In this is to be seen the value of sequence in national tradition, in so far as architecture is concerned. Attention must be given to the design of the grand amphitheatre at the Sorbonne, which is the most recent, as well as the most complete, development of the D plan with public tribunes, initiated by Gisors in the Napoleonic period for the Chambre des Pairs at the Luxembourg. M. Nénot for this work collaborated with eminent sculptors and artists, among whom the name of Puvis de Chavannes outstands. Both in conception and execution the new Sorbonne ranks among the noblest achievements of French building and logical development."

M. Henri Paul Nénot is the author of several important works in Paris. These, in order, comprise the Institut Océanographique, the Banque Dreyfus, the Bureaux de la Compagnie Générale Transatlantique, the Administration de la Compagnie d'Assurance, la Nationale, and the Administration de la Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits.

The Transatlantique building is a remarkably dignified treatment of a commercial theme. The framework of the window is of bronze, the two figures in the central group symbolizing respectively commerce and the genius of the French Maritime Service; the decorations throughout comprising marine objects. The dolphins on the cornice are also in bronze.



ENTRANCE TO BANK: RUE LAFITTE AND PILLET-WILL, PARIS.

THE NEW PREMISES OF THE COMPTOIR NATIONAL D'ESCOMPTE DE PARIS.

IF there is one thoroughfare in the City that has undergone more changes than any other during the past few years it is King William Street. Though less than a hundred years old—it was built in 1831 in commemoration of the opening of the new London Bridge by King William—it possesses to-day little more than a trace of its original appearance. It is apparently a peculiarity of early nineteenth-century buildings that they should outrun their term of usefulness well within the century. In Regent Street, of course, we have the Classic example (in more senses than one); little of the work of Nash and his compeers remaining to mark the glory that was once the Regency. King William Street, though of a somewhat later period, has sunk even more quickly to its close. The original buildings with which the street was lined were designed by the three official architects to the Board of Works, one of whom was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Robert Smirke—an architect who, it may be recalled, has been unfortunate elsewhere in London, notably at St. Martin's le Grand, where the site of the old G.P.O. still remains in a state of pathetic desolation.

But the buildings of King William Street were of the type that inevitably come to demolition. The architects had somehow contrived to make them unutterably gloomy; and it was no doubt this handicap, combined with an obvious unsuitability to modern requirements, that finally determined their fate.

At the present time there is merely a vestige of the old work remaining on the west side of the street, and only a little more than that on the east. All the rest has been rebuilt within recent times. At the end of the street which is nearest the Bank we have first of all the great Scottish Provident Institution Buildings designed by Messrs. Dunn and Watson. Next is the big block which constitutes the headquarters of the Phoenix Assurance Company, completed only last year from the designs of Messrs. J. Macvicar Anderson and H. L. Anderson

(illustrated in *THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW* for April 1916). Beyond this are the fine new premises of the Comptoir National d'Escompte de Paris, which, just completed from the designs of Messrs. H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, F.F.R.I.B.A., form the subject of our present illustrations.

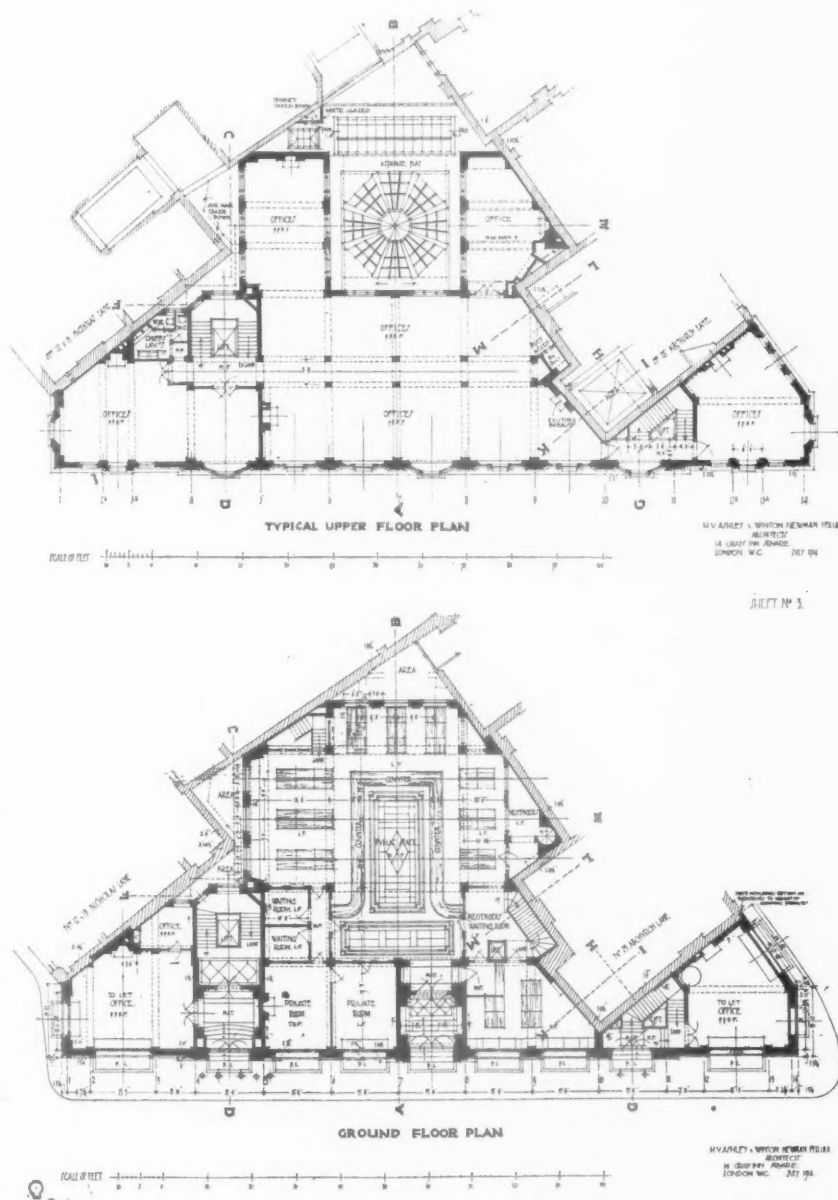
In this case the architects were confronted by a problem

of more than ordinary perplexity. The site, as will be seen from the accompanying plans, is of very irregular formation—at one point the adjoining property is only 4 ft. from the main front. The architects, however, have overcome all difficulties in a masterly manner, producing, out of one of the most awkward sites that could possibly be imagined, a remarkable effect of formality and regularity.

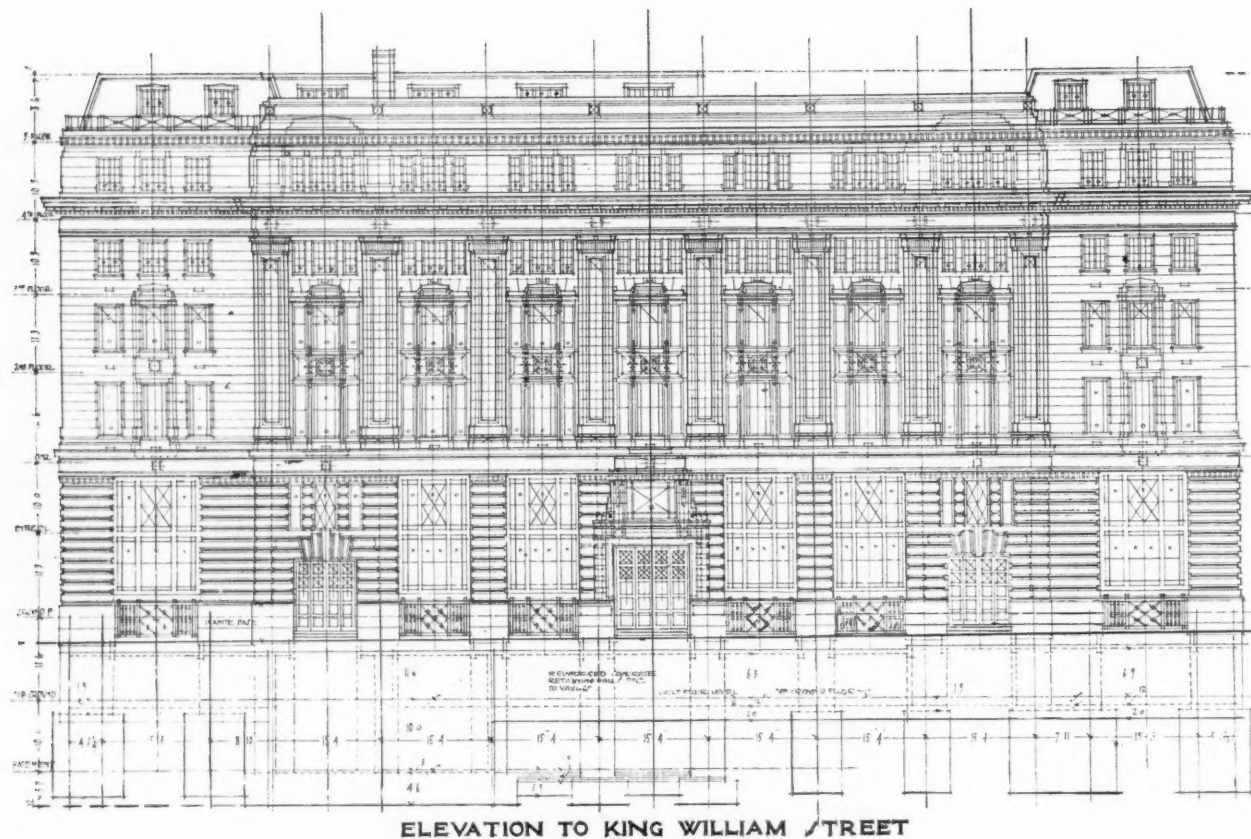
The greater part of the frontage to King William Street, and the interior of the site on the ground floor and under, is allocated to the bank, while the two corner sites by Abchurch Lane and Nicholas Lane provide admirable positions for smaller companies; the first floor and over are given up to offices for letting.

The planning of the banking premises has received chief consideration, the architects' endeavour having been to embody the particular requirements that were laid down by the directors. The large banking hall is placed centrally on the site, with the main entrance

in the centre of the King William Street frontage. Managers' rooms and waiting-rooms are to the left of this entrance, and to the right are the stock department, messengers' rooms, and main staircase to boardroom, balcony, and sub-ground floors, etc. The banking hall is a fine lofty apartment over 20 ft. high, with a large dome light and with ample public space. Accommodation is provided for ninety-one clerks on the floor of the hall and for forty-three clerks on the entresol or balcony overlooking the hall. A secondary staircase at the far end of the bank gives additional access to the sub-ground floor; this latter floor is occupied, as to the front part, with desks for seventy clerks, and as to the back part, with ample cloakroom



NEW PREMISES OF THE COMPTOIR NATIONAL D'ESCOMPTE DE PARIS.



SCALE OF FEET 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85 90 95 100

and lavatory accommodation for managers and staff, and, in addition, a second messengers' room, which can be reached by a circular stair from their room over on the ground floor. Below are placed the bookrooms and strongrooms, the latter

being properly isolated and under the sole control of the strongroom clerks, who have their own lift down.

The strongrooms consist of four spacious vaults, each about 28 ft. by 14 ft., and satisfy all the requirements of the bank for protecting its securities and books. Each vault is provided with an independent steel door opening into a corridor, which itself is covered by an exceptionally heavy "Treasury" door weighing upwards of five tons. An alternative entrance to the series of inner vaults is provided by a special emergency door corresponding in design and strength to the main entrance door. Every conceivable form of attack is provided against. The doors have a total thickness of about 14 in., and are secured by three independent locks of the finest description, their operation being dependent upon a quadruple movement time-lock.

The boardroom is on the first floor, and is approached from the banking hall.

Particular attention has been given to the daylight lighting of the whole of the premises, which are remarkably well lighted, heated, and ventilated throughout.

If, in years to come, it should be found necessary to increase the accommodation for clerks or for other purposes, the first floor could be taken over, and the staircase now leading to the balcony could be continued up to this floor without difficulty.

In addition to the ground- and sub-ground-floor premises at the two corners of the site, the upper floors, commencing at the first floor, are available for letting. The arrangement of these floors has been left as open as possible, so as to be capable of subdivision as required by prospective tenants. Ample staircases and lifts, separate from the bank, are provided, and the top floor is given over to lavatory accommodation for the several suites of offices and to caretakers' quarters.

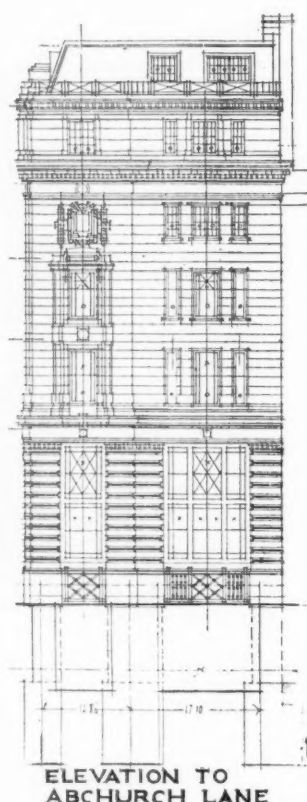
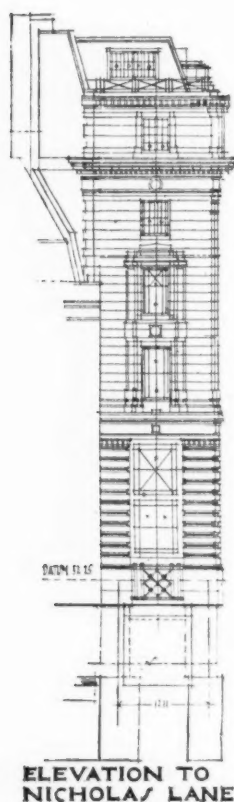




Plate IV. July 1917.

Photo: Bedford Lemere.

NEW PREMISES OF THE COMPTOIR NATIONAL D'ESCOMPTE DE PARIS,
KING WILLIAM STREET, LONDON: GENERAL VIEW.

H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, F.F.R.I.B.A., Architects.



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Plate V. July 1917.

Photo: Bedford Lemere.

NEW PREMISES OF THE COMPTOIR NATIONAL D'ESCOMPTE DE PARIS, KING WILLIAM STREET,
LONDON: DETAIL OF MAIN ENTRANCE.

H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, F.F.R.I.B.A., Architects.

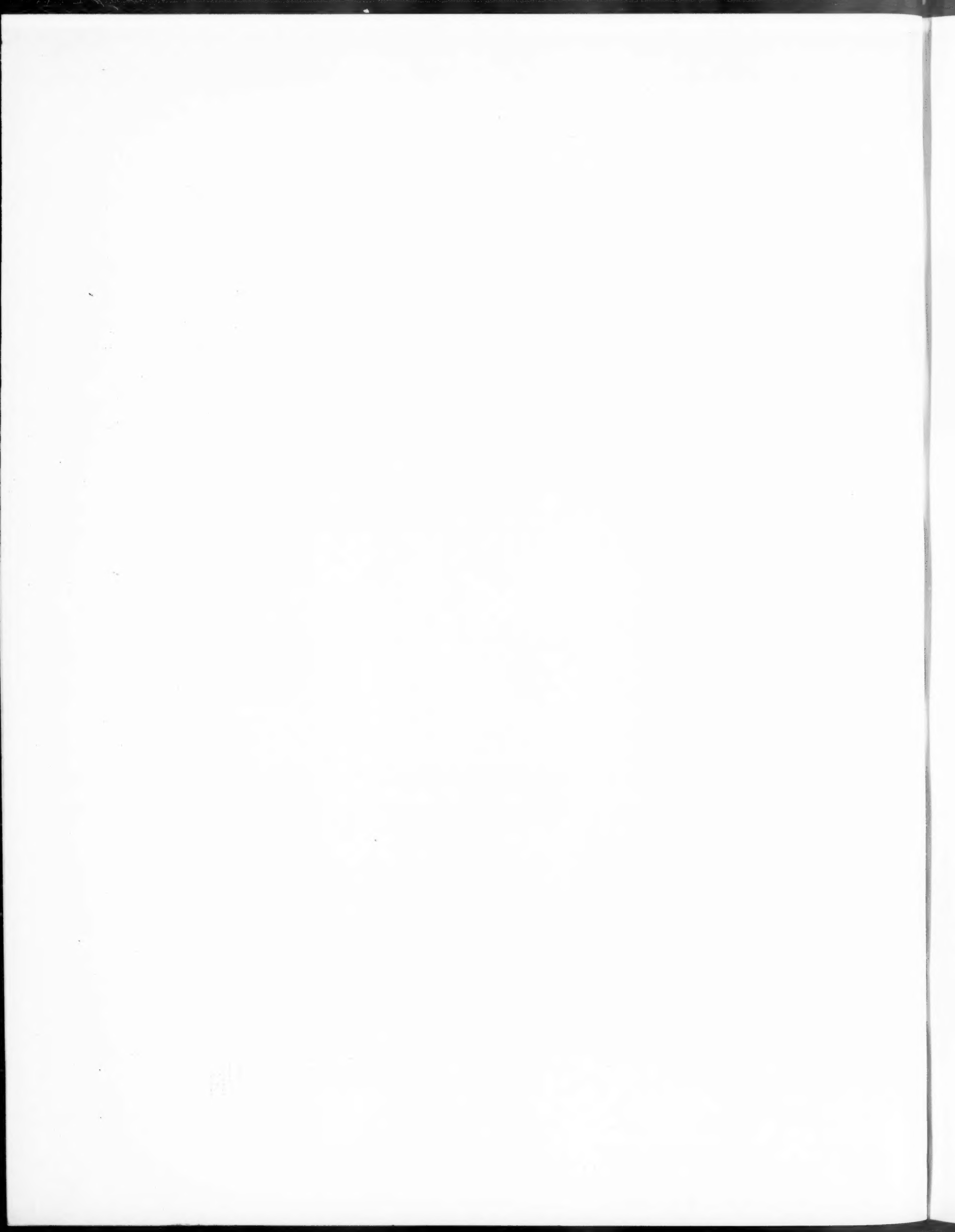


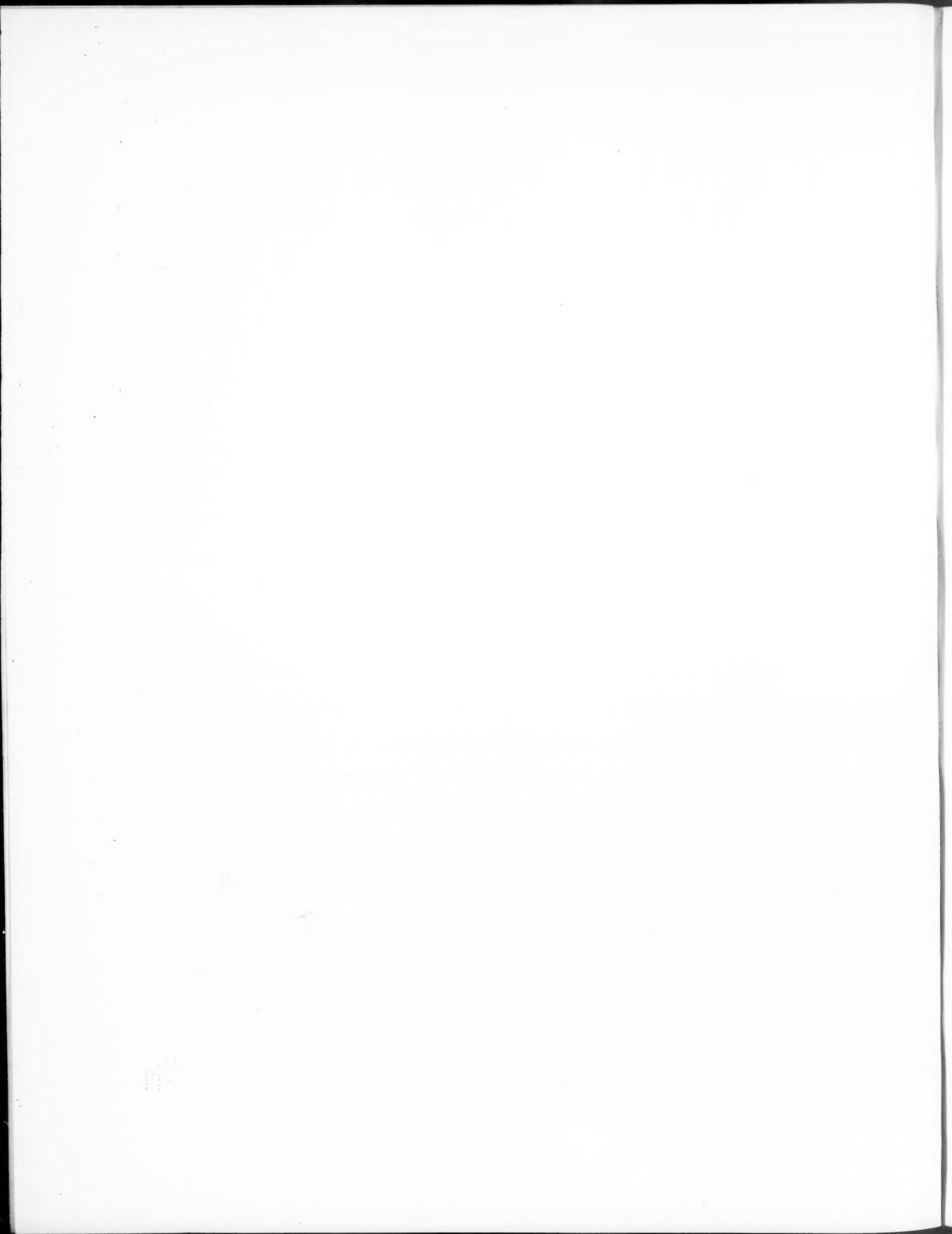


Plate VI. July 1917.

NEW PREMISES OF THE COMPTOIR NATIONAL D'ESCOMPTE DE PARIS, KING WILLIAM STREET, LONDON: THE BANKING HALL.

H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, F.F.R.I.B.A., Architects.

Photo: Belford Lemere.



The building is a steel-framed structure, fire-resisting throughout. The frontages to the streets are faced with Portland stone with a granite base, and the open courts in the interior of the site are faced with white glazed bricks. Internally the upper floors are very simply treated; but the banking hall and managers' room are finished in a more elaborate manner, with marble and decorative plaster ceilings.

The building contains a quantity of fine marble-work. In the main entrance brecciated Sienna is used for the column shafts, with black marble caps and bases, the walls having Piastraccia quartered panels with bands of "second statuary," statuary vein, and black. Skirtings are also in black marble. Cornices are in second statuary and black, and the architraves to doorways are in Ashburton (Devon) marble. Paving and steps are in Piastraccia. In the lobby to the banking hall second statuary is used for column shafts, and black marble for bases, caps, and skirtings. Wall linings are in Piastraccia and second statuary, and the cornice is in second statuary and black. In the banking hall itself the pier shafts are in brecciated Sienna marble. Skirtings and bases are in black marble, also the dado rail. The dado filling is in brecciated Sienna. The pilasters are in Piastraccia, and pier caps and main cornices are in second statuary and black, the wall linings generally being in second statuary. The treatment of the screens is in similar marbles, but the cornices are in second statuary only. Pavings to the banking hall and entrance are to geometrical designs, the marbles being light and dark Swedish green, Coombe Rosa, second statuary, Piastraccia, and black. In the main staircase entrance Ashburton marble is used for the column shafts, with black and Ashburton marble bases and skirtings. The column caps are in black marble. The walls are in second statuary, dove

and black bands, with statuary vein panels. The architraves to the main doorways are in Ashburton. Pavings and steps are in Piastraccia. In the main staircase Ashburton skirtings are used, with wall linings in statuary vein with dove marble bands. There are light Hopton stone margins to the paving on the landings. The subsidiary staircase is executed in similar marbles. The external facings to the principal windows on the lower floors are executed in black marble, the interior linings being in second statuary.

The whole of the site is tanked in asphalt. On account of its position this work required a great deal of special attention. The whole of the flat and sloping roofs, dormer tops and vertical cheeks, also the reveals to the windows, are lined in asphalt; the gutters are also formed in the same way. A rather remarkable piece of work, and one that was very difficult to carry out, was the covering of the reinforced concrete ribs of the spherical light in the area.

One interesting feature of the work is the provision that has been made for the use of gas for heating purposes. The building has been carcassed throughout with a gas supply, points running to every fireplace, so that when each room comes to be occupied the installation of gas heating stoves will be accomplished with a minimum of trouble and expense to tenants. The gas arrangements are such that any subdivision of the floors can have a separate supply for heating if required.

All the necessary conveniences of a modern banking institution have been installed—heating, mechanical ventilation (inlet and extract), telephones, autophones, synchronized clocks, vacuum cleaners, mechanical carriers, and many devices for the watchman and for the strongroom departments, all the latter being separately and ingeniously ventilated.



VIEW IN BANKING HALL, SHOWING BALCONY.

Photo: Bedford Lemere.



View of Main Entrance from Banking Hall.

NEW PREMISES OF THE COMPTOIR NATIONAL D'ESCOMPTE DE PARIS, KING WILLIAM STREET, LONDON.
H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, F.F.R.I.B.A., Architects.



Detail of Board Room.

Photos: Belford Levere.



Signatures Room.

NEW PREMISES OF THE COMPTOIR NATIONAL D'ESCOMPTE DE PARIS, KING WILLIAM STREET, LONDON.
H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, F.F.R.I.B.A., Architects.



Private Room.

Photos: Bedford Lemere.

The building being for one of the premier banking institutions of France, the intention of the architects was to impart some French feeling to the architecture, and yet to maintain dignity and restraint. In this they have succeeded admirably. The strong lines and simple character of the two end portions act as an excellent foil to the centre portion, with its vertical lines and bay windows, and further accentuate the banking premises.

We are glad to note that the architects have departed from ordinary practice in the treatment of their elevations. The colonnade motif, under suitable conditions, makes an imposing front; and columns and overhanging entablatures and recesses lend so much to light and shade that it is difficult to dispense with such assistance. But the opportunities for the use of the colonnade are by no means unlimited, and within recent years it has been often inappropriately and clumsily employed. In London and all old cities with narrow streets a flat treatment is really the only sane solution, though it requires very detailed thought and study. Messrs. Ashley and Newman are to be congratulated upon the success which they have achieved.

The general contractors for the building were Messrs. Higgs and Hill, Ltd., who were also responsible for the whole of the stonework, joinery, bank fittings, and plumbing, all this work having been prepared at Crown Works, Lambeth. Granite for the exterior, flooring mosaic, and various kinds of marble for interior decoration, were supplied by Messrs. H. T. Jenkins and Son, of Torquay. The asphalt used throughout the building was supplied by Messrs. Thomas Faldo & Co., Ltd., of London. The gasfitting work was executed by Messrs. The

Gas Light and Coke Company, of Westminster. Strongroom doors, etc., were supplied by Messrs. Hobbs, Hart & Co., Ltd., of London. Lifts and cranes were supplied by Messrs. Waygood-Otis, Ltd., of London. Staircases were supplied by Messrs. Haywards, Ltd., of London. Tiles were supplied by Messrs. Carter & Co., Ltd., of London, and slates by Messrs. The Old Delabole Slate Company, of Cornwall. Metal casements and fittings were supplied by Messrs. The Crittall Manufacturing Company, Ltd., of Braintree and London. The consulting engineers were Messrs. Whitaker Hall and Owen, and Mr. Theodore Stevens was the electrical engineer.

Other sub-contractors were: Messrs. The Bath Stone Firms, Ltd., Messrs. Ames and Hunter, Messrs. Dorman Long & Co., Ltd., Messrs. Diespeker & Co., Ltd., Messrs. Luxfer Prisms, Messrs. Thomas Elsley, Ltd., Messrs. Shanks & Co., Ltd., Messrs. Goddard and Sons, Mr. F. Geere Howard, Mr. L. A. Turner, Messrs. Hart Son, Peard & Co., Ltd., Messrs. Walker and Worsey, Messrs. J. Jeffreys & Co., Messrs. J. W. Gray & Co., Messrs. Alfred Williams & Co., Messrs. Chas. Winn & Co., Messrs. Lampson Pneumatic Tube Co., Ltd., and Messrs. Stuart's Granolithic Co., Ltd.

MESSRS. HEAL & SON'S BUILDING.

WE regret that two inaccuracies occurred in our notice of the above building, illustrated in our last issue. The hanging signs and all the special electric light fittings were designed by Messrs. Smith and Brewer, though Mr. Horace Talbot executed the actual painting of the former; and the latter were made and painted in Messrs. Heal & Son's workshops under the direction of the architects.



THE WHITELEY HOMES, BURHILL, WALTON-ON-THAMES.

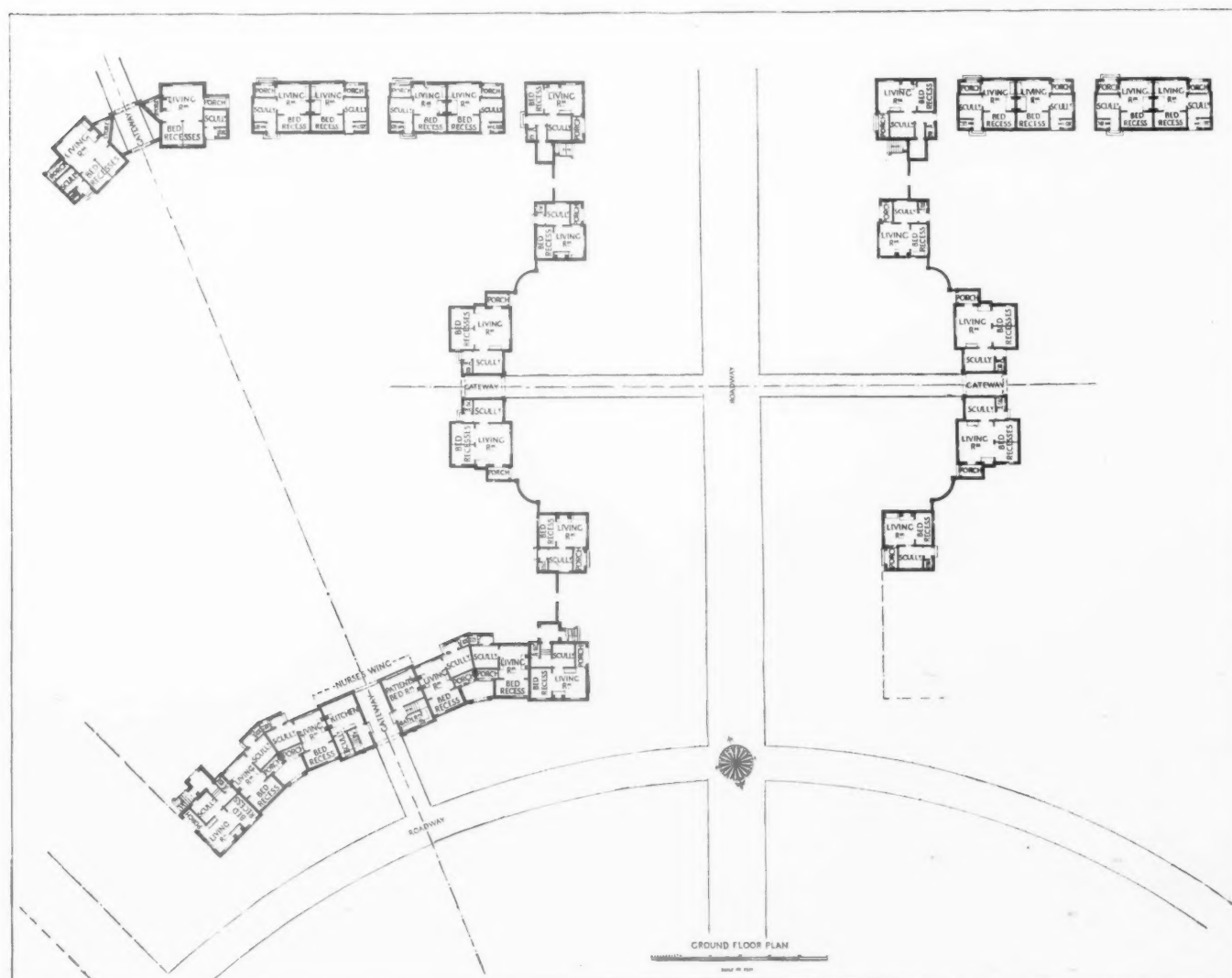
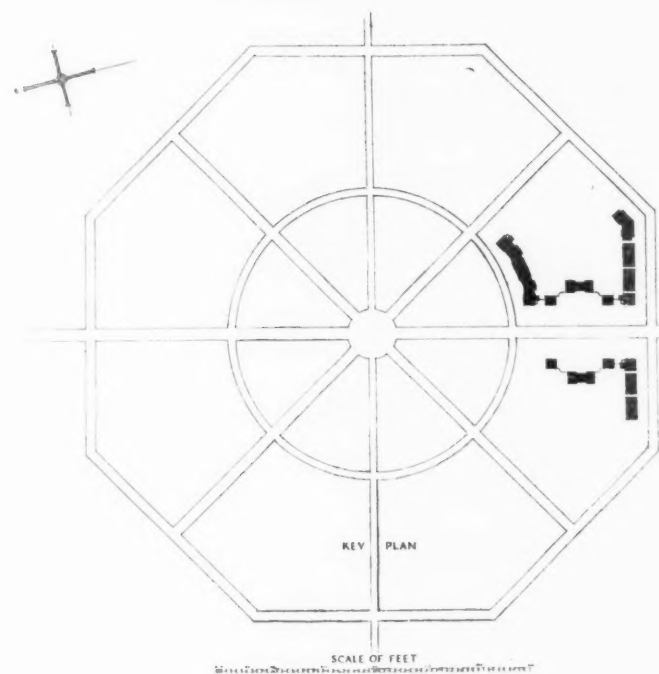
Mervyn E. Macartney, F.R.I.B.A., Architect.

THE WHITELEY HOMES, BURHILL, WALTON-ON-THAMES.

THE Whiteley Homes, Burhill, Walton-on-Thames, are being erected from the designs of several architects, one of whom is Mr. Mervyn E. Macartney, whose portion of the scheme, Section No. 5 of the Octagon, is shown by the accompanying illustrations. This section, which will be found indicated on the block plan, is one of those having the disadvantage of a steep fall in the ground, from west to east. Unfortunately the levels were not taken into consideration sufficiently when these buildings were designed. At a later date they gave rise to a considerable readjustment of the elevations. The interlocking of the work of the various architects in each section of the Octagon has militated against their work in an unexpected way, hardly realized in the original setting out.

It is interesting to note that a diversity of designs has been secured on a standardized plan, and the practice is one which will in all probability be greatly developed as time goes on.

The principal contractors were Messrs. H. Martin, Ltd., of Northampton, who, in spite of war-time difficulties, have carried out the work in a most satisfactory manner, so far as this section of the scheme is concerned. Mr. Frank Comport was the resident clerk of works.



THE WHITELEY HOMES, BURHILL, WALTON-ON-THAMES: KEY PLAN AND GROUND-FLOOR PLANS.

Mervyn E. Macartney, F.R.I.B.A., Architect.



THE WHITELEY HOMES, BURHILL, WALTON-ON-THAMES.

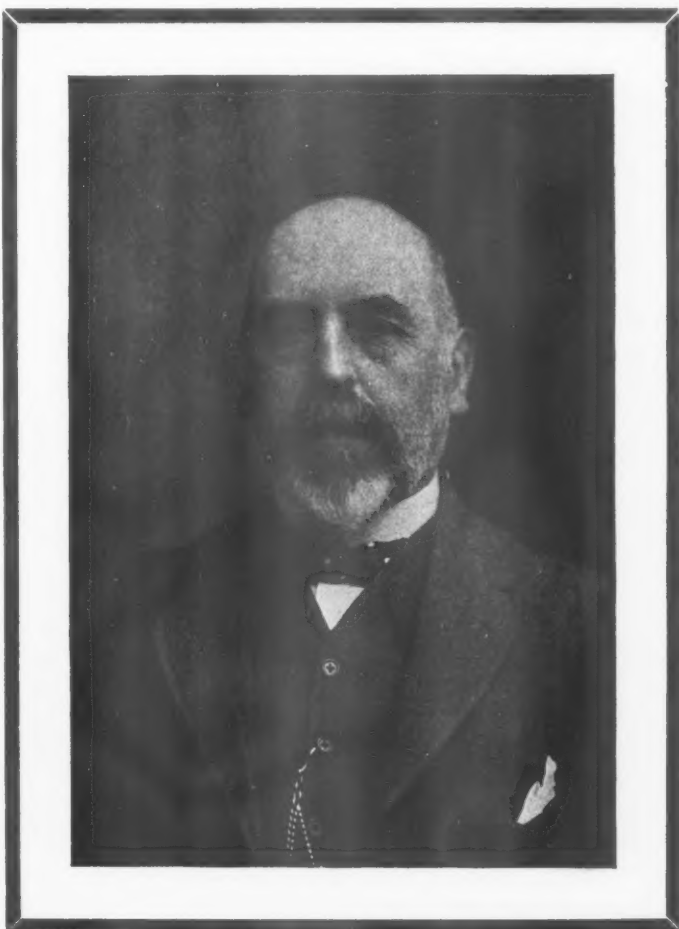
Mervyn E. Macartney, F.R.I.B.A., Architect.

THE LATE MR. WALTER LEWIS SPIERS.

WE greatly regret to note the death of Mr. Walter L. Spiers, which took place at Sir John Soane's Museum on 28 May. Mr. Spiers, of whom a portrait is given below, was born at Oxford in July 1848. On his election to a choristership at Magdalen College he entered Magdalen College School, and continued his education in the engineering department at King's College, London, in 1864.

He was articled to his brother, Mr. R. Phené Spiers, in 1866, in which year he joined the Architectural Association. During his studentship there he obtained first prize in the Class of Design and Sir William Tite's prize for a design for a town church. He also served the offices of President of the Class of Design and Vice-President of the Association, and was for some years Librarian. He became a student of the Royal Academy in 1868, and from 1870 to 1880 was in the office of Mr. Thomas Henry Wyatt, and of his son, Mr. Matthew Wyatt, with whom he afterwards went into partnership.

In connexion with the Royal Institute of British Architects Mr. Spiers passed the voluntary examination in architecture in 1870, obtained a silver medal for measured drawings of Eastbury Manor House in 1873, and in 1875 was elected an Associate. In 1887 he was appointed District Surveyor for Charlton, Lee, and Kidbrooke, under the Metropolitan Board of Works, and held this post also under the London County Council till his appointment as Curator of Sir John Soane's Museum, in succession to the late Mr. G. H. Birch, F.S.A., in 1904.



THE LATE MR. WALTER LEWIS SPIERS.

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All who had occasion to consult Mr. Spiers in his official capacity found him invariably courteous and obliging. He was always unsparing in his efforts to elucidate a difficulty for a troubled inquirer. It will be no easy task to supply the vacancy which he leaves at the Soane Museum.

Mr. Spiers had been for many years an enthusiastic student of London topography, and did very useful work as a member of the London Topographical Society, of which he was for some time a member of council. He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in January 1916.

Mr. Spiers was also an enthusiastic volunteer, and was for many years a member of the Artists' Corps, in which he rose to be captain of his company, and for four years held the post of musketry instructor, retiring with the honorary rank of major.

A devoted Churchman, with a considerable knowledge of church music, he was connected for many years with St. Andrew's Church, Wells Street, and for the last two years acted as honorary church treasurer.

NOTES OF THE MONTH.

War Memorials in York Minster.

The following memorandum with respect to war memorials has been issued by the Dean and Chapter of York Minster:— It is most natural that in these sad days of bereavement and loss, lit up as they are by daily deeds of splendid courage and heroism, numbers of parents and friends of those who fall in battle should desire some memorial to be erected in the Minster whenever it is possible to show any claim to that great distinction. It is obvious that this raises questions of a serious nature and of great difficulty, as well as situations of considerable delicacy. On the one hand there is the desire to meet with every effort of sympathy the wishes of the bereaved. On the other hand there are plain facts to be faced, as: 1. The Minster walls have already been so generally utilized for the erection of monuments and tablets that there is comparatively little space left, and this must be jealously safeguarded and conserved. 2. In so glorious a church nothing but the very best that contemporary art can produce should be allowed, and this means that any worthy monument will be very costly. 3. Intensely interesting as the individual heroic acts of our men at the Front are to ourselves and to the present generation, it is doubtful whether anything should be publicly commemorated in the Minster which is not of sufficient importance to deserve and to evoke permanent and national interest. 4. The Minster is not only the pride of the city of York and the cathedral of the diocese, but it is also the metropolitan church of the Northern Province and a great national treasure-house, and therefore something far more than mere local connexion with the Minster would seem to be required before a proposal to make a permanent commemoration within its walls is made. 5. The War is not yet at an end, and it is obviously unwise to be filling up space piecemeal before we are in a position to take a comprehensive view of what will be required by way of commemoration of the thousands of officers and men of the North who have given their lives for their country. The Dean and Chapter are therefore not prepared as a rule to come to any decision about mural tablets or monuments till the War is over. In view of these considerations and facts the Dean and Chapter have laid down certain regulations which will be available for the guidance of those who may be contemplating the proposal of memorials.

The Victoria and Albert Museum as Education Offices.

Presumably the conversion, or perversion, of the Victoria and Albert Museum into Education Offices is only a temporary expedient. It is nevertheless regrettable. Government has set a very bad example in the misuse of buildings; and where the Government leads, the municipalities will follow. To wrest a building from the purpose for which it was erected is to defy one of the fundamental principles of architecture, and, indirectly, to encourage designs that are insipid and soulless. An architect would lose much of his inspirational force if at every step he was daunted by the knowledge that his museum might be used as an education office, his college chapel as a chemical laboratory, his town mansion as a motor garage. Like the water-demon who, in one of R. L. Stevenson's South Seas stories, exclaimed, "I grow bulky!" and sank the boat into which he had climbed in the semblance of a man of ordinary weight and stature, the education question has suddenly swollen to gigantic dimensions, and demands proportionate accommodation. That it should have taken lodgings in the Victoria and Albert Museum is particularly unfortunate, seeing that the public must consequently be denied access to the educational exhibits—those illustrating the applications of art to industry—which, at the present juncture, it is most essential to study.

* * *

The Institute of Scottish Architects.

A hearty welcome will be extended to the newly formed Institute of Scottish Architects, which has just held in Edinburgh its first annual convention. Those who have wondered why Scotland should have been so laggard in this matter will be somewhat reassured by the statement that an Architectural Institute was founded in Scotland in 1850. That it lasted rather less than a score of years is perhaps explicable on the ground that it was not a purely professional body. Of its first list of 170 members only thirty-three were architects, and its activities seemed mainly confined to the collection of topographical records. Societies so constituted are not remarkable for longevity, and may be said to contain within themselves from the outset the elements of disruption—a word of might in Scotland, where, according to the ancient jest, there are not only frequent splits, but split splits, and split-split splits. From that fate we trust that the new Institute will be always immune. It has in it all the elements of stability. Its first president, Sir Rowand Anderson, was an ideal selection; and he could have had no more worthy successor than Sir John J. Burnet. With a decidedly strong council, and with the benediction of the R.I.B.A., the Scottish Institute makes a most auspicious commencement, and we very cordially wish it all possible success.

* * *

Charing Cross Railway Bridge.

Last month the House of Lords passed the second reading of the Bill empowering the South-Eastern and Chatham Railway Company to strengthen the Charing Cross Bridge at a cost of £167,000. Fifty-three noble lords voted for the Bill and nineteen against it. No more favourable result was to be expected. Viscount Chilston, in moving the second reading, argued in the strain with which we are already too familiar; nor was there anything very fresh in the pleadings of the opposition, which, however, was very ably conducted by the Earl of Plymouth, the Marquis of Crewe, Earl Curzon, and Lord Courtney. The Earl of Plymouth thought it was not too much to ask the company to hold their hands for two

years after the War, to enable persons who were deeply interested in this subject to arrange a scheme for the improvement of London at this spot. He meant, of course, that time was required, not to devise a scheme, but to raise the necessary funds and to obtain the necessary authority for putting it into execution. An argument that has had more weight than its intrinsic value warrants is that the opposition could and should have been ready long ago with its plans and its money for the replanning which it urges as an alternative to the bolstering up of this ugly and decayed old bridge. There can be but little sincerity in such a contention, for those who put it forward must know right well how difficult it is, and how long a time it takes, to overcome the inveterate apathy upon which they have somewhat cynically relied for their present inglorious success.

* * *

North Wales Heroes Memorial.

A meeting representative of all the public bodies in Wrexham and East Denbighshire has been held at the Guildhall, Wrexham, to stimulate interest in the movement initiated by Mr. R. J. Thomas, of Holyhead, to commemorate the men of North Wales who have fallen in the war by erecting new science buildings in connexion with the University College of North Wales, Bangor. Mr. R. J. Thomas opened the fund with a subscription of £20,000, and is giving his whole time and energy to the campaign as honorary secretary. An executive committee representative of each county in North Wales and of London, Liverpool, and Manchester has been appointed, and the meeting at Wrexham was one of a series of county meetings called with the object of inaugurating a movement to raise £20,000 towards the scheme as a county contribution. Of this sum East Denbighshire is expected to raise £10,000.

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The Amenities of Golden Square.

Upon the announcement of an intention to build a theatre of varieties in Golden Square, the inhabitants have sent a formal protest to Westminster City Council. They are perhaps all the more jealous for the amenities of the square because, in accordance with a special Act of Parliament passed in the reign of George IV, the tenants are empowered to elect trustees to levy a small rate for the upkeep of the garden, for the painting and repair of its railings, and for the preservation of the insignificant statue of George II which stands in the middle of the garden, and is said to have been brought from the seat of Lord Chandos at Canons, near Edgware. It would be rather an exceptional statue if it had not been ejected from some former site; and, regarding it quite candidly, one suspects in the Chandos family a vehement desire to send it away as far as possible from Canons. Golden Square, which lies just off Regent Street, was built in 1684, and possibly the houses which would have to be cleared away to make room for the theatre are of that date. Although the square is now mainly occupied by wool-merchants, it was at first a "residential" quarter, and the list of its distinguished inhabitants includes Lord Bolingbroke (when he was Secretary-at-War), Mrs. Cibber the vocalist, and Angelica Kauffmann, the first lady member of the Royal Academy. Possibly it was while she was living here that Reynolds painted her portrait, which Bartolozzi engraved. Childs, who had been valet to Lord Byron, was beadle of the square as late as 1875. The square is mentioned in Smollett's "Humphrey Clinker," James and Horace Smith's "Rejected Addresses," and Dickens's "Nicholas Nickleby."