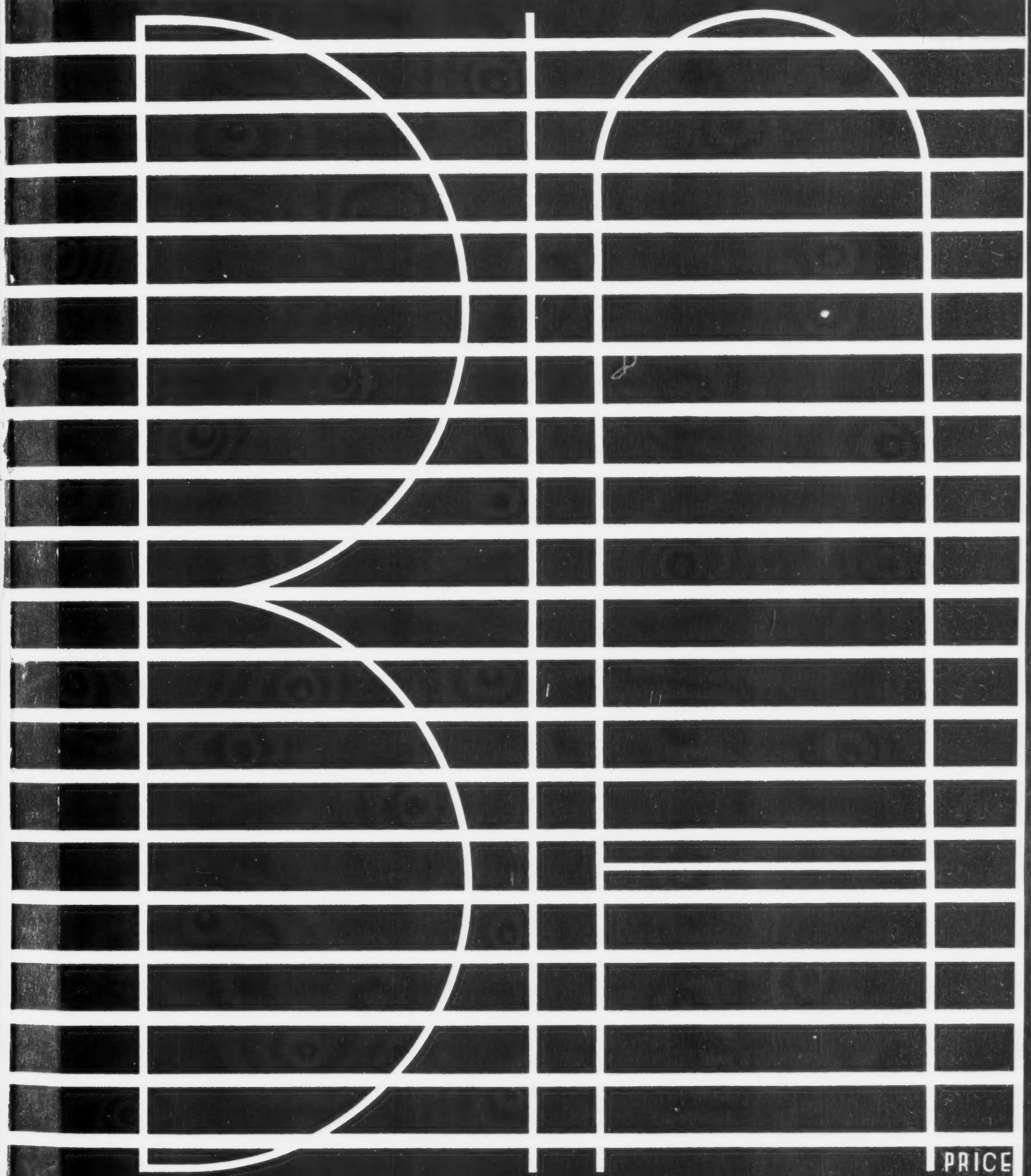


THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW



PRICE

BRITISH INDUSTRIAL AR



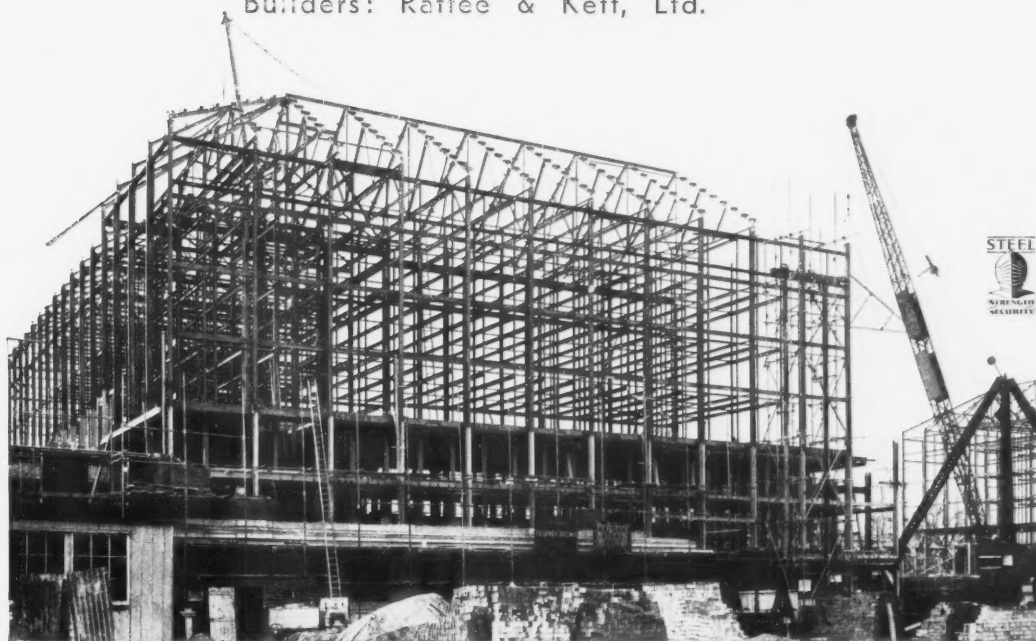
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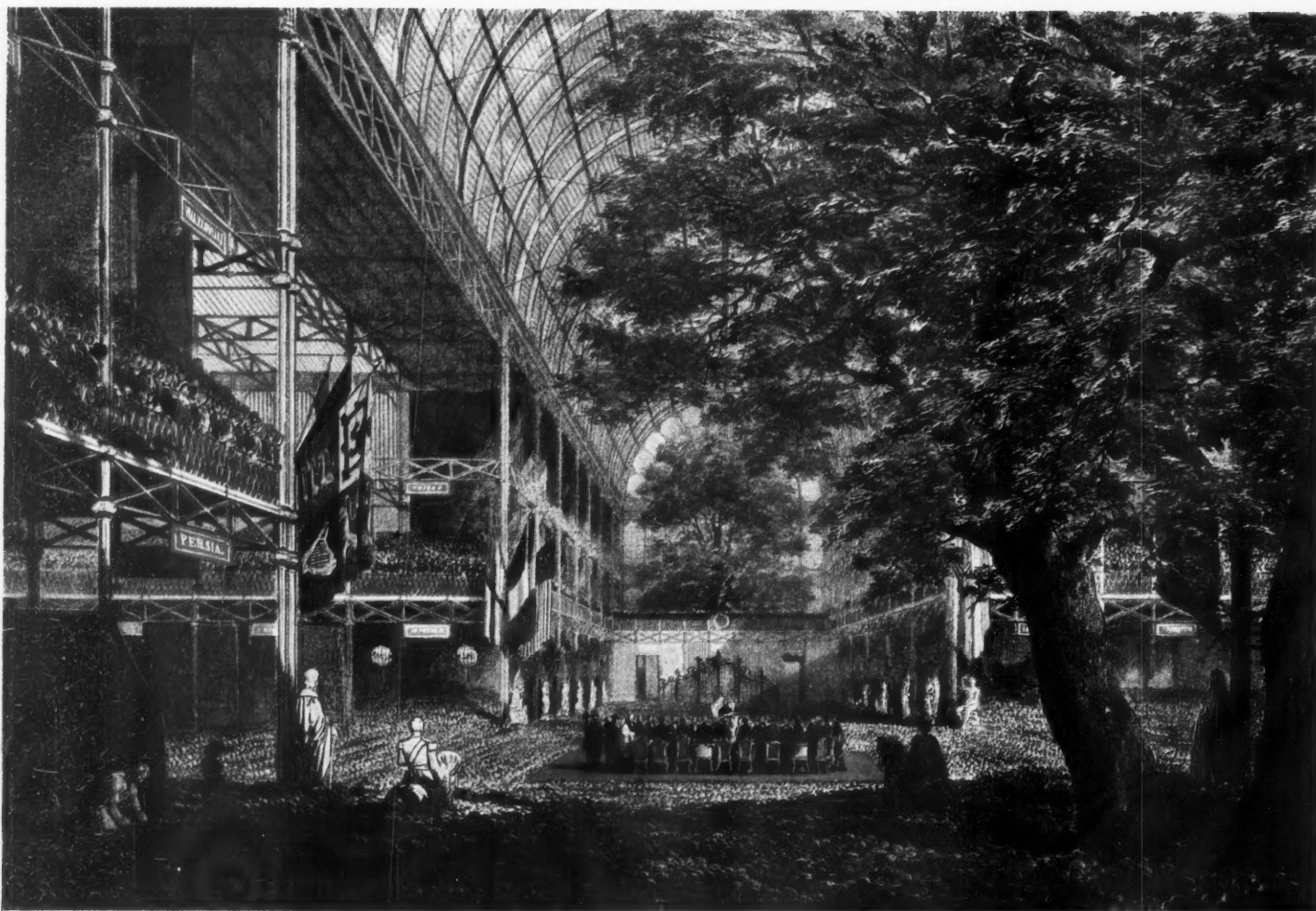
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THE END OF AN EPOCH

THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF 1851

reproduced from

Dickinson's Comprehensive Pictures of the Great Exhibition

from the Originals Painted for His Royal Highness Prince Albert

BY MESSRS. NASH, HAGHE AND ROBERTS, R.A.

In the centre of the picture, sitting on a throne raised above the table, will be seen H.R.H. Prince Albert. He is about to deliver the famous speech with which he closed the CRYSTAL PALACE EXHIBITION. He had seen the union of Industry and Art gathered together in this ambitious and successful project of his imagination. He hoped that friendly rivalry between nation and nation, and co-operation of artist with manufacturer would make his Exhibition the beginning of a new epoch. But where he thought he was standing in the dawn, he was actually witnessing the sunset of the Georgian tradition, of the

time when, in the words of Lord Gorell in his article on the opposite page, "art and industry walked harmoniously hand in hand: the greatest artists of their times were often quite simply and naturally designers also: the lesser folk took pride in their handicraft."

But this was not to last. Perhaps in the DORLAND HALL EXHIBITION, of which the pages that follow are an illustration, we are witnessing the dawn Prince Albert looked upon as a certainty and which Lord Gorell predicts. [*The illustration is printed from "Suntone" four-colour blocks made at Watford by The Sun Engraving Company.*]

DESIGN AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVIVAL

BY the date when these words of mine appear in print the Exhibition of British Industrial Art in Relation to the Home—to give it its complete title—at Dorland Hall will be an established fact, for all who are either genuinely interested in the movement it represents and its particular line of attack upon the problems, or merely curious to see, commend or criticize. It is necessary for me therefore, evidently, to project myself into the future as I write, but all men, writers especially, are perverse, and I choose rather to begin this article by turning my thoughts to the past. After all, without the past there could be no present, and the future would be unimaginable—a truth which in all things is too frequently ignored and in art is sometimes treated with contempt.

Happily, it is not essential to my purpose to go back very far: the Editor's letter to me inviting me to write will suffice for a starting point. Editors, especially when they are engaged upon a Special Number, require not only imagination and zeal, but tact also: accordingly, I have been asked to write of industrial art from the aspect, I am flatteringly told, that I alone can—and that set me thinking. I thought of Malvolio and the three catagories of greatness, only to come immediately to the conclusion that it was the third which was all that could be applicable to the case, greatness neither born nor achieved but momentarily thrust upon one. But that is no cause for discouragement, just the reverse. If the view I hold and desire to see widely accepted chanced to be mine alone, it would have neither interest nor influence. Today it has both and to a rapidly increasing degree, because there is nothing individual to me in it: by a fortunate chance I happen to have been made the mouthpiece and to have my name associated with the Report of a Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Board of Trade. I can think of few documents which could have a description more damning to their circulation than that: everything about it suggests that it must be a ponderous, annotated official booklet, the obvious place for which should be—in its unread state—the wastepaper basket. But for once at any rate it has been proved that the suggestion would be wrong: the Report on art and industry published last summer has made its way not spectacularly but with a persistence that is of great encouragement for the future. Though I have still to hear what the person to whom it was of necessity first presented, namely the President of the Board of Trade, thinks of it and of any one of its recommendations, abundant evidence is forthcoming that it has been not merely read, but studied and cordially approved both in this country and across on the other side of the Atlantic—and it may be, indeed it must be, that the day will shortly come when the Government will bestir itself, or be bestirred, about it. In that document were formulated views that have been strongly influencing manufacturing and artistic circles throughout the intervening months.

In the United States, from an extensive tour of which I have lately returned, I found on my arrival in January two words that crept with unfailing regularity into every conversation. They were not wholly unconnected: they were “depression” and “technocracy.” The first word was still the most frequent on people's lips when I left in April, the second, like a favourite

fallen from grace, was no longer much accounted of. We are not in this country quite so quick as the Americans to turn our minds unitedly and dramatically in one direction: perhaps that is as well, both in art and industry, the movements of which to achieve prosperity must rest upon a broad and solidly built foundation. I should have distrusted the staying power of the movement, to which the Report associated with my name lent impetus, if it had swept the Press and through the Press the public like a patent medicine. I say "lent impetus" and not originated, and that is the truth. We of the Committee were able to gather up and put forward as a coherent policy the closing of the divergencies and the strengthening of co-operation between art and industry, but we were in no sense pioneers. Even before we had been appointed, a small body of enthusiastic and public-spirited men were meeting together to discuss the possibilities of furthering these very same ideas: when the fact of the Government Committee was announced, they decided to wait until they knew what would be forthcoming in the shape of its Report; when it reported on the lines hoped they waited yet a little while longer to see what action the Government would take by way of implementing the recommendations; when it became apparent that the Government did not propose, at present at all events, to take any action, either positive or negative, they very wisely decided to go ahead on the basis of their original discussions—with this one difference, that they had the moral support of the Committee's recommendations and the goodwill of the Government, which was quite pleased to see private individuals actively doing what it had been urged itself to do.

As a consequence, it is with that goodwill that I was able to link up publicly the basic idea of the Committee's Report with the Dorland Hall Exhibition by becoming President of the latter, and as Vice Patrons the two Ministries primarily concerned, the Boards of Trade and of Education, lent the names of their political heads. Still more, H.R.H. Prince George, who had made a most valuable contribution to the forces strengthening the ties between art and industry in his speech at the Royal Academy banquet last year, has been graciously pleased to become Patron. The Exhibition therefore, now in being for all to see, has a powerful body of opinion behind it, of which, as a forerunner, it obviously stands in need. Let none think that this is just an isolated endeavour on the part of a few to show the public what industrial art is and may become: as that it might have a significance, but its significance would have a distressing side. No: it is the beginning of a big general movement. As has already been announced, in 1935 the Royal Academy in co-operation with the Royal Society of Arts is planning to have a big Exhibition of Art in Industry: the title, no doubt, has been chosen deliberately, and yet is not entirely happy: it has a suggestion that it is possible and even desirable to embody art, like a fly in amber, in industry, or at least to let it be viewed as some quality superimposed upon industry; but nevertheless the fact is of immense importance. It is a recognition that the subject is one that demands not only the attention of the recognised and established artists of the day but also a continuous exposition. Upon the organisers, with the great prestige of Burlington House behind them, will fall a particularly onerous responsibility: they will have it in their power vastly to retard the movement if their selections are not severely judged, or, alternatively as we may hope, to give it that wide publicity which is now all that it requires to carry it into a reality of active life.

We are coming, in fact, to a turning point. In the old days of the master-craftsmen, art and industry walked harmoniously hand in hand: the greatest artists of their times were often quite

simply and naturally designers also: the lesser folk took a pride in their handicraft. Then came the age of the machine and the separation between art and industry: the artist scorned the manufacturer, the manufacturer had little or no use for the artist. William Morris and others of his mind saw and deplored the separation, and endeavoured zealously to span the widening rift: but no man can set back the hands of the clock, and with mass production the old conditions were gone. So has arisen a new movement to meet new conditions, a gathering body of opinion to emphasize the great truth, that the need both artistically and industrially today is for the full recognition of the fundamental importance of design—for the artist to understand the requirements of the manufacturer in this machine age and for the manufacturer to appreciate that without the brain of the artist, he is fatally handicapped in the race for commercial success.

We of the Committee envisaged and recommended the end of piecemeal and spasmodic attacks upon the problem of good design linked to the products of industry. We asked for a permanent central body responsible for exhibitions of industrial art: we looked forward to the establishment in some central situation in London of a building specially devoted to such exhibitions. These things will come: Governments, particularly in days of such financial difficulties as those in which we live, move slowly and only when compelled. It is gratifying to note the increasing pressure, not merely this Dorland Hall Exhibition and the move by the Royal Academy to follow, but the signs in many directions that the movement is really taking hold. Artists, who a while ago were thinking only in terms, let us say, of landscape, are beginning to recognize that there is a future for them also—and perhaps of even greater value in terms of art whilst being immediately remunerative—in decorative work: manufacturers are beginning to realize that it is after all not only common sense, but also good business, if one wishes to sell an article widely to ensure that it is made to the best procurable design. We shall see, I feel confident, a revival of a dual character, a revival in a new form to suit the requirements of the new age of decorative art underlying and making possible a revival of industrial prosperity. But easy optimism, never desirable, would in this movement be disastrous. In the Exhibition of British Industrial Art at Dorland Hall, the utmost pains have been taken to include only the best: it is very greatly to be hoped that in mistaken generosity Burlington House in its turn will not be tempted to exercise a more lenient judgment.

And thereafter, by the end of 1935 at latest, what? Is it too much to expect that by that time, with the amount of public interest aroused and the benefits to British trade made obvious, the Government will come out boldly with its mind made up, not merely to carry on the movement, but to establish it firmly upon a permanent and a national basis? After all, everybody in their different ways and from their different spheres has eagerly been scanning the horizon for some break in the clouds of financial depression: this movement, important as it would be at any time, is of vital significance now. It offers a path along which we may tread hopefully: it is a linking of the old truths with modern methods and needs, and science has placed today in the hands of the designer opportunities denied to his predecessor, facilities formerly undreamt of. It is for the living artist and the living manufacturer now to take advantage of them. As the Prince of Wales has said, "There is always scope for new ideas, provided that the motto 'Fitness for purpose' is borne in mind, and no wildly exaggerated style is introduced merely in order to cause a sensation."

GORELL



E. W. GIMSON'S GRAVE IN SAPPERTON CHURCHYARD. BY F. L. GRIGGS.

THERE AND BACK 1851 A.D. TO 1933 A.D. A HISTORY OF THE REVIVAL OF GOOD CRAFTSMANSHIP

IN October 15, 1851, the Great Exhibition was brought to an end and with it an epoch too. "Let us all earnestly pray that that Divine Providence," said H.R.H. Prince Albert, on the day when he saw the undertaking which his own genius had so brilliantly carried out, brought to a happy close, "which has so benignantly watched over and shielded this illustration of nature's productions, conceived by human intellect and fashioned by human skill, may still protect us, and may grant that this interchange of knowledge, resulting from the uniting of enlightened people in friendly rivalry, may be dispersed far and wide over distant lands; and thus by showing our mutual dependance upon each other, be a happy means of promoting unity among nations, and peace and goodwill among the various races of mankind." As the Prince spoke those words, bathed in the golden sunset of an era that shone through crystal walls on to the trees and crowds inside the Palace, he little realized that the end of his Exhibition was also the end of friendly relationships. For it had been purely a Georgian affair. It was conceived by Royalty, it was a risk, and a poetic dream. Manufacturing was still largely in the

hands of the enlightened, or rather there was still an aristocracy of class which laid claim to an authority in taste. Commerce was still a splendid new pet which had not yet grown dangerous.

There have been other Exhibitions in England since then; but they have been commercial undertakings. Commerce has displayed its taste and it has been found unpleasant. It has shown its claws and the Prince Alberts have been massacred. Commerce put its smelly paw on the objects of the Great Exhibition. It broke those objects in two: one half it smelled out as "Art" and the other as "Use." The question then arose as to how much "Art" was needed to make the "Use" a paying or commercial proposition. Sometimes more and sometimes less; but always the object, after being broken in two, turned out to be neither, for the cracks showed badly. Certain objects escaped the paws of commerce. They were beneath its consideration. Saucepans, pots, kettles, mattresses—those things which are *paying propositions* without the aid of art, have remained purely useful and recently have been rediscovered as the only art left to us by commerce.

Perhaps the high water mark of good old Victorian commercial vulgarity was reached in 1873 and 1875 with the Exhibition at the Alexandra Palace, Wood Green. The hideousness of the exhibits there was downright, like the dropped h of a cockney magnate: it was not until 1925 that a "refained accent," no less unpleasant, crept in with the pseudo-Swedish International-Beaux-Arts-Jazz-Modern with which commercial architects and manufacturers tried to appease the awakening public consciousness.

The business dunces have held the board ever since the 'sixties. Now that the foundations of their fabric are trembling they turn to educated people for help and there are no educated people. Those with sensibility about design have fled to the Cotswolds: those who are educated in the rules of commerce know nothing about design. They have been brought up blind.

Let us see why this has happened and whether the Dorland Hall Exhibition, to which this article is a preface, may be looked upon as the dawn of another era such as that which the Great Exhibition of 1851 brought to a close.

This is the Message of the March Wind:

Of the rich men it telleth, and strange is the story
How they have and they hanker, and grip far and wide;
And they live and they die, and the earth and its glory
Has been but a burden they scarce might abide.

William Morris, with a foresight which would be more readily recognised now than in the "eighties," saw nothing but chaos in the artistic and economic progress of such commercialism. He went back to mediævalism before we will—to beer and the plough and the walled-in calm of Kelmscott Manor, to the craftsman delighting in his work, his objects made with the subtle differences and gay colours of those who worked for the church. Christina Rossetti expressed in song the new art which Morris, Philip Webb, and their followers were to create, in wood, metal and fabric.

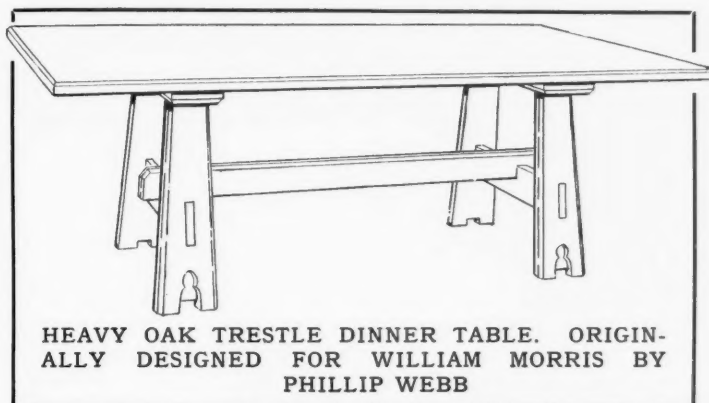
"Raise me a dais of silk and down,
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleur-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love, is come to me."

The birthday had hardly come, but how they worked for it. The influence was even felt in London. Ambrose (now Sir Ambrose) Heal was sent down as an apprentice to a country workshop. He

transformed his father's cabinet works and shops from what they were in 1897 to what they are now. A look at the two types of catalogue with a year between them will cause you to breathe the fresh wind from that little village high up by the source of the Thames and feel it blowing over the Tottenham Court Road.

Back to the land; *work of each for weal of all*, as the Bedales' school motto runs. A group of skilful craftsmen working hard away from the smoke and the half-educated knights of business; and when the Cotswold sun sunk over the stone cottages, off to sleep in a bed:

Of gold and ivory, and precious wood,
Some island bears where never man has stood;
And round about hung curtains of delight,
Wherein were interwoven Day and Night,
Join'd by the hands of Love, and round their wings
Knots of fair flowers no earthly May-time brings,
Strange for its beauty was the coverlet,
With birds and beasts and flowers wrought over it.



HEAVY OAK TRESTLE DINNER TABLE. ORIGINALLY DESIGNED FOR WILLIAM MORRIS BY PHILLIP WEBB

Such mediævalism lost in a past that a grandsire triple recalls, was only possible with those who had some capital to spare. In fact, Morris guild-socialism was practicable in agricultural communities but not in a country which, even at the inception of the movement, had become largely urban. Much less so, today. Yet, however much we may object to the arty-craftiness by which it has been travestied, and however much we may disagree with the escapist attitude of its opponents, we have the Morris movement alone to thank for re-awakening appreciation of simplicity of form in the design of such objects as had for some years been Louis Seize, Jacobean or Italian Gothic. But mediævalism was not enough.

In 1884 C. F. A. Voysey was a practising architect, and in that year Ernest Gimson met William Morris. Gimson and Voysey are the initial cause of modern decoration. "Simplicity," said Gleeson White, opening in fine 1890 style an introduction to Heal's catalogue for 1898, "has been said to be the last refuge of the complex." And it was simplicity after which Voysey strove in his famous houses with their low horizontal lines of window and their pronounced batter, heavy eaves, and gay colours, and after which Gimson strove in his furniture with its lack of cornice and experimentation with material. These two struck out of the Jacobean Revival which Jackson and Eden Nesfield had made so popular, and created a simple traditional style. Though they both would acknowledge Morris, they would both, or certainly Voysey (for Gimson is dead and his friends are mute), affirm that they had gone a step further than Morris and Philip Webb. They carried the principles of the individual craftsman making useful objects characterized by his own individuality, to the enlightened business man. Voysey built homes for North Country and Birmingham manufacturers and for Mr. H. G. Wells; in these homes, he designed everything down to the coal scuttle and the mud scraper; Gimson designed furniture for Quaker industrialists. Almost contemporaneous with Voysey came the revolutionary work of George Walton in 1888. He was followed by Mackintosh in carrying such simplicity beyond the bounds of reverential mediævalism into the vaster field of *L'Art Nouveau*. Mackintosh designed the famous Willow Tea Rooms for Miss Granston at Glasgow. But individual craftsmanship was expensive

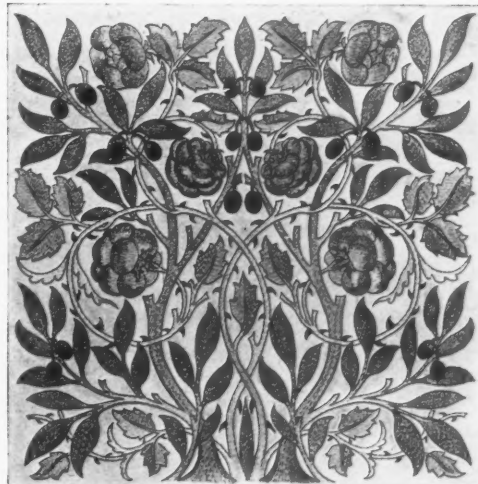
in an age when mass-production catered for the millions. Houses and furniture by Voysey, Mackintosh, C. R. Ashbee, Baillie Scott, Lutyens, E. Guy Dawber, Edgar Wood, F. W. Troup, E. S. Prior, George Walton and other pioneers of the time catered for the rich. Now the rich are rare, and these great men have either had to turn to building offices and shops, or else to submit to a declining practice or premature retirement. Individual craftsmanship and the loving thoroughness of the Morris tradition was not popular with most of the monied magnates of the 'nineties. They had not room for it, they thought they got more for their money in Jacobean or Viennese Baroque. Thus were simple architecture and simple craftsmanship banished to those Cotswold cottages, whence they had sprung. To this day you will find in southern counties of England educated people working away in country cottages at the handicrafts in the Morris tradition. They are escapists, and before the war they were certainly given their chance to escape.

But there were some people, young men in the "nineties," who saw a chance of founding an entirely new style. The houses of Voysey and of Baillie Scott were peculiar from those of their day, only in their logic. The heavy buttresses of Voysey's houses were needed because the walls they supported were thin. The new architecture and furniture looked so bare and useful because it all showed why it was designed and because it gloried in the fundamentals of craftsmanship. Its roots were in the English soil. The fame of the style spread across the Channel, where it is still rightly admired. The French saw it and rejoiced. They uprooted the roots from the English soil and twisted them about in the air and made a new and useless structure. This was *L'Art Nouveau* (so named by M. Bing, the Parisian dealer) whose curious lines, tenuous streaks and wriggling tendrils are inlaid in wood and enamel, let into silver, twisted into iron, beaten into copper, leaded into glass, painted over cupboards. Actually the idea of exploiting form for form's sake was the result of Voysey, Baillie Scott and Gimson laying objects bare, in their impressive nakedness.

In England the excesses of *L'Art Nouveau* were less pronounced than elsewhere. The colour schemes, instead of being derived from Spenser, Keats and Morris, seem to have been suggested by Tennysonian pallor:

And round the cool, green courts there ran a row
Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,
Echoing all night to the sonorous flow
Of spouted fountain floods.

Much as we may laugh at *L'Art Nouveau*, there was more common sense in it than its wilder decorative efforts would lead one to believe. George Walton and Charles Rennie Mackintosh, whose furniture and wall decorations were known at the time by the Art Worker's Guild as products of "The Spook School," had as great an influence in the rationalization and simplification of furniture as they did in architecture. The exponents of *L'Art Nouveau* in England did not hate urban life, like the escapists of the Morris tradition. They



AN EMBROIDERED CUSHION COVER FROM A DESIGN BY WILLIAM MORRIS. (Both illustrations on this page are reproduced by permission of Morris & Co. and that on the previous page by permission of The Shakespeare Head Press.)

PIONEERS

ASHBEE • BAILLIE
SCOTT • BARNESLEY
• GIMSON • GREEN
• HEAL • MACKIN-
TOSH • MORRIS •
PEACH • STABLER
• SELLARS • TROUP
• VOYSEY • WAALS
• WALTON • WEBB
• WYBURD • TO
THESE AND MANY
OTHER SUCH MEN
ALL HONOUR

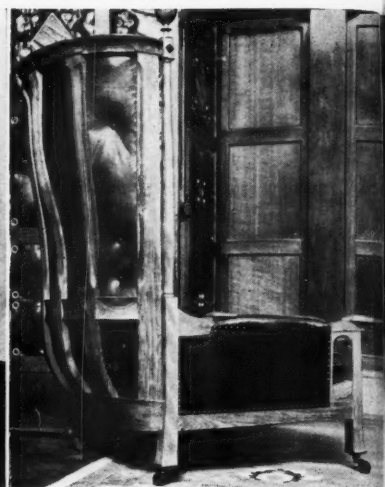
NOTE. Wherever possible the date or approximate date of designs is given.



c. 1900 GEORGE WALTON. A chair with a cane seat.



1901 E. W. GIMSON. Two oak chairs with curved backs on plan.



1902 GEORGE WALTON. An oak arm chair with leather upholstery.

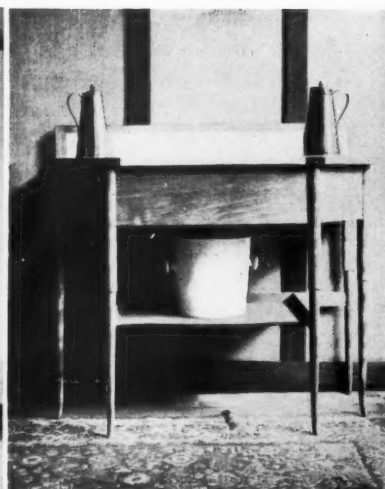
H. H. P. chair n
Furnitu



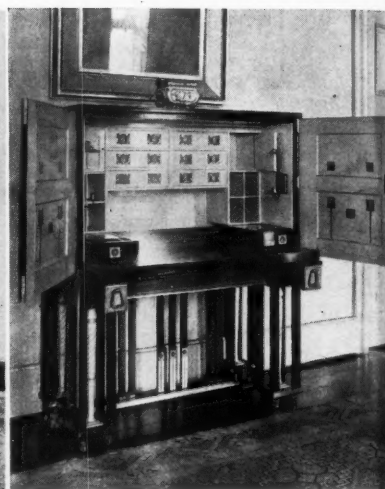
1895 BAILLIE SCOTT. A specially made writing table and chair to fit into a round bay window.



1900 F. W. TROUP. A china cupboard in the drawing room of a house at Witley.



c. 1900 GEORGE WALTON. A washstand with specially made copper jugs.



c. 1900 C. R. ASHBEE. A writing desk in inlaid woods.

EDWARD
desk
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with s



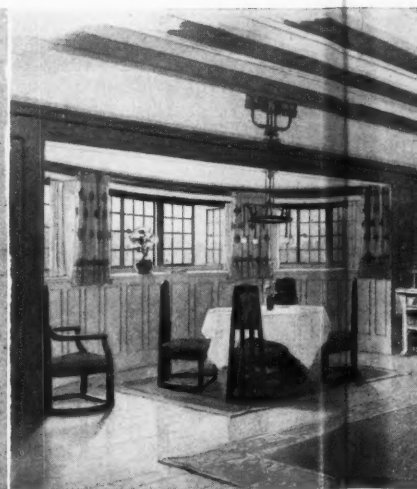
c. 1900 C. R. ASHBEE. Ironwork railing designed for houses on the Chelsea Embankment.



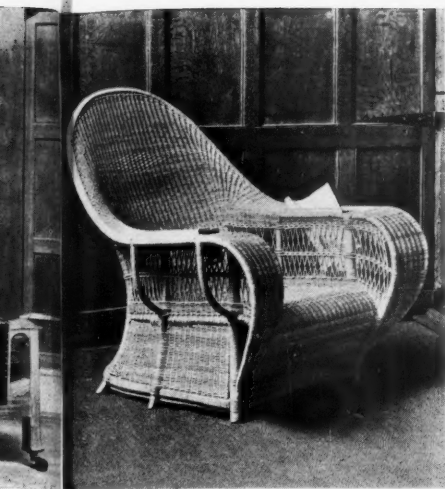
c. 1900 C. R. ASHBEE. A double branched candlestick in silver.



c. 1900 C. F. A. VOYSEY. A toast rack in silver.



1906 LEONARD F. WYBURD, former period interior. Please examine it closely.



oak H. H. PEACH. The 'Abundance' chair made by Dryad Cane Furniture.



A. ROMNEY GREEN. A small easy chair in Indian laurel and shell with tapestry by Edmund Hunter. Property of Miss Thayer, Bedford.



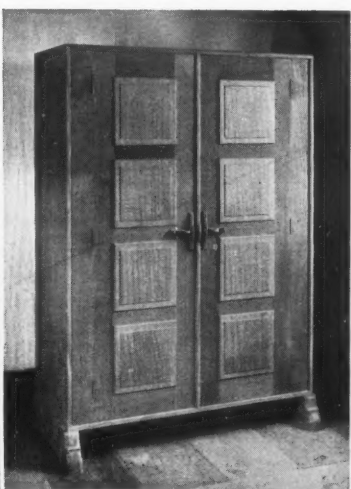
1904 E. W. GIMSON. A linen chest of walnut with ebony and ivory, and silver candlesticks executed by *Peter Waals*.



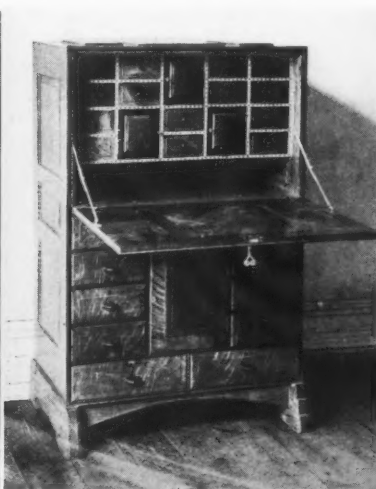
1906 E. W. GIMSON. A writing cabinet in burr oak and ebony and veneered all over, laid in hardwood mahogany.



writing EDWARD BARNESLEY. A cabinet desk in burr oak with small drawers of figured brown oak with silver handles.



1921 PETER WAALS. An oak hanging cupboard.



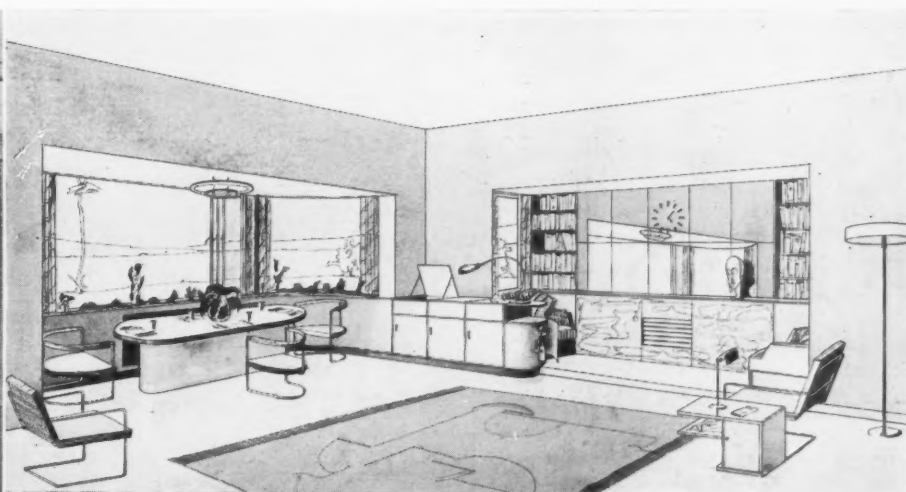
1924 EDWARD BARNESLEY. A bureau in English walnut and ebony.



c. 1925 SIR AMBROSE HEAL. An unstained oak chest.



WYBURD, formerly chief designer of Liberty's. A typical room. Examine it closely.



1933 ANONYMOUS. The same room as before, done in the modern style, the proportions remaining the same and only the details changed. Which do you prefer?

battled with it and designed in it; George Walton, Alexander Fisher, Harold Stabler, Leonard Wyburd (Baillie Scott and Mackintosh combined *L'Art Nouveau* with the Morris tradition) and many others were infected with the style. It started in England in 1888. In 1901 there was an Exhibition of the work of French *Art Nouveau* craftsmen such as Gallé and Farago, Marjorelle, Lalique and Bing, at the South Kensington Museum. "Our readers will join with us in wondering how the authorities can have been brought to admit pre-tentious trash like this to the hospitality of a national museum," wrote THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW in that year. *L'Art Nouveau* died the death of over-exuberance.

The trail of artful simplicity that it left behind, strewn with shot silks and satins, leather-work blotters, woollen embroidery and attenuated lamp stands, was hotly followed by Liberty's. In fact, the artistic who still wanted *L'Art Nouveau* and Morris designs went to Liberty's before the war. But though Liberty's may have done well out of the "artistic" people, Waring and Gillow's and Maples did even better out of the others. The simplicity and new style of the nineteen-hundreds carried a violent reaction in favour of period stuff. In 1908 THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW cried out in the wilderness: "When, if ever, the public ceases to be obsessed by its indiscriminate 'chase' of the antique (or generally pseudo-antique), designers and makers of sober characteristically modern furniture will perhaps come into their own. People will then realize that there is a serious school of modern furniture, and that Mr. Gimson has done not a little to create it, and we trust, make it durable." Still the chase went on. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society showed the work of its members every three years. In the 1900's and earlier, these exhibitions at the New Galleries rivalled the Academy in importance. By 1912 it was a failure, even unfashionable. "Arty-craftiness" became an expensive joke. In 1913 Raymond Unwin and E. S. Prior, as architects, Barry Parker, Hamilton Smith, Ambrose Heal and Grove as furniture makers and Graily Hewitt, Harold Stabler, Christopher Wall and Vigors as craftsmen in other branches, put forward a proposition to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition.

They realized that the lily hands of gentle folk, however skilful in carpentry or metal work, could not hope to compete with factory hands and earn either subsistence or recognition. They suggested that a permanent shop in a place like Bond Street should be rented by the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. This would be competing with commerce on its own ground. The idea was rejected. Gentle folk can have nothing to do with trade.

In June, 1914, the *Deutsche Werkbund*, under Julius Hoffman, held its successful Exhibition of well-designed German manufactures in Cologne. This Exhibition had been subsidized by business men. In England no business man, with the exception of Ambrose Heal, had conceived the idea of the English equivalent of the *Deutsche Werkbund*. It happened that over at the Exhibition, numerous thwarted Englishmen met. Later in 1914 a meeting was held in



1926 A.D. AN INTERIOR BY C. R. MACKINTOSH FOR W. J. BASSETT-LOWKE, ESQ.

Brewer (Smith and Brewer), the architect's office, consisting of Ambrose Heal, Hamilton Smith, Lethaby, H. H. Peach, B. J. Fletcher, Harold Stabler, Clough Williams-Ellis, Peter Thorp and Brewer himself. They decided instead of attempting to rival mass production, to co-operate with it and suggest designs to manufacturers, and to hold an English exhibition of objects like kitchen utensils and garden implements, and of cloth for natives in the far-flung Empire that was too simple for the mother country, in fact of all items that had survived the commercial impositions of "Art" in the later nineteenth century. Thus was the Design and Industry Association founded.

By way of stimulating public interest an Exhibition of good German manufactures was held in 1915. Despite the anti-German feeling at the time the Exhibition was a success, and there was a similar Exhibition of British Goods, held at the Academy of 1916. Bloomsbury was delighted. Roger Fry and D. S. MacColl thought well of it. The Exhibition consisted of garden pots, Sixsmith's hangings, bottles and purely utilitarian objects; each had a well-designed label printed by Harold Curwen. The Academy did not allow such an Exhibition again.

Thereafter the D.I.A. arranged travelling Exhibitions. Now its work has materialized in Dorland Hall, the first Exhibition to be held in Great Britain since 1851 to show the co-operation of artist with manufacturer. In fact, it is another 1851 Exhibition.

What has this brief history shown? It has explained the sharp division between gentlefolk craftsmen who prefer to hide from commerce in the Cotswolds and pioneer in design alone, and those artists who wish to co-operate with the manufacturers. "Roar, Gloucestershire, do yourself proud"—let us see those escapists who remain, out in the open, lending their experience and sense of design to manufacturers and let us see the efforts of the D.I.A. rewarded. Already there are signs. The Underground Group, Shell Publicity and many publishers have woken up, the railways and some few big shops are awakening. Perhaps England will justify her now far distant past. Where the Prince Consort stood in the Sunset, perhaps we stand in the Dawn. Perhaps the Big Beast, which was such an exciting pet in 1851, was killed during the intervening night. JOHN BETJEMAN.

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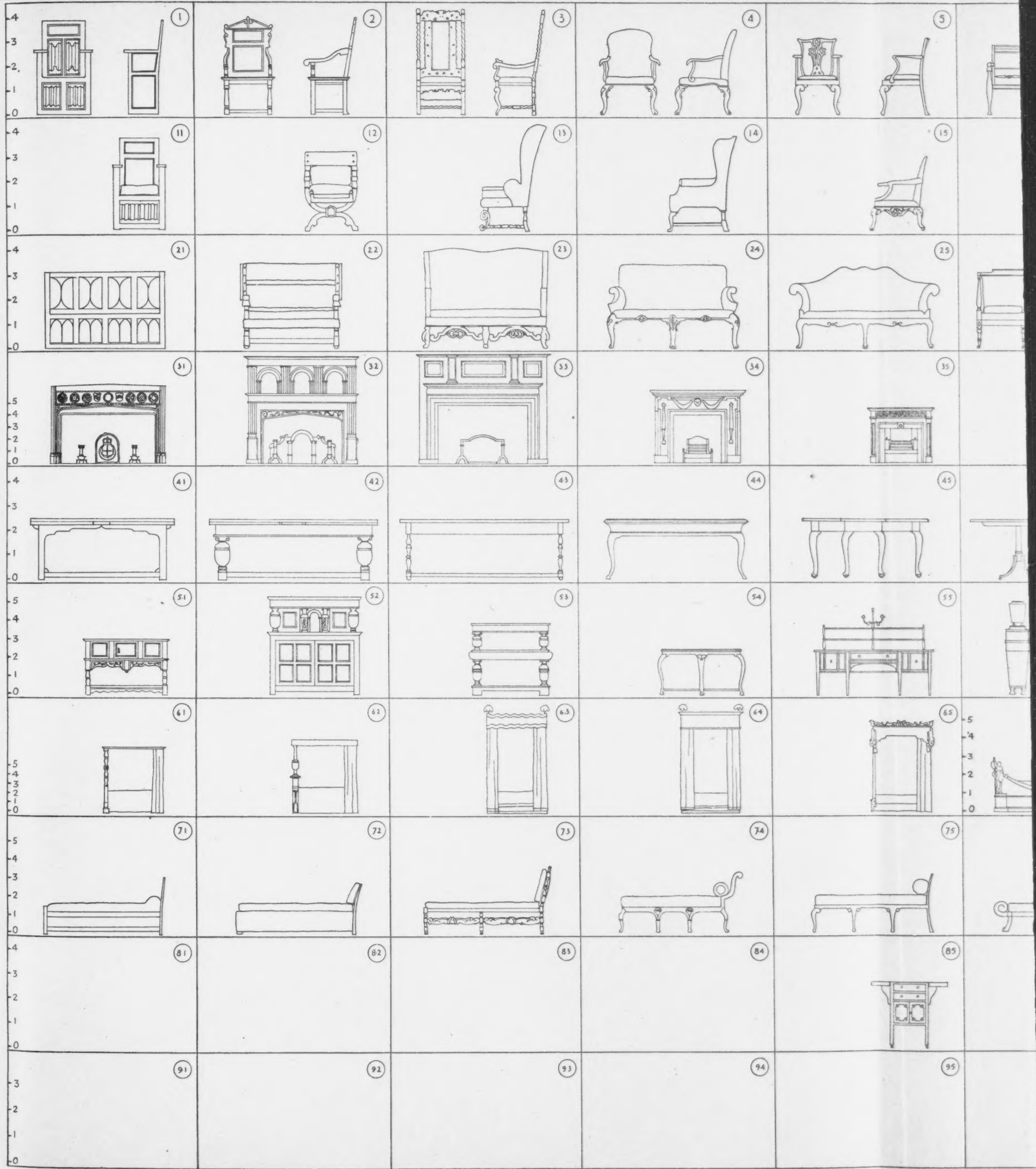
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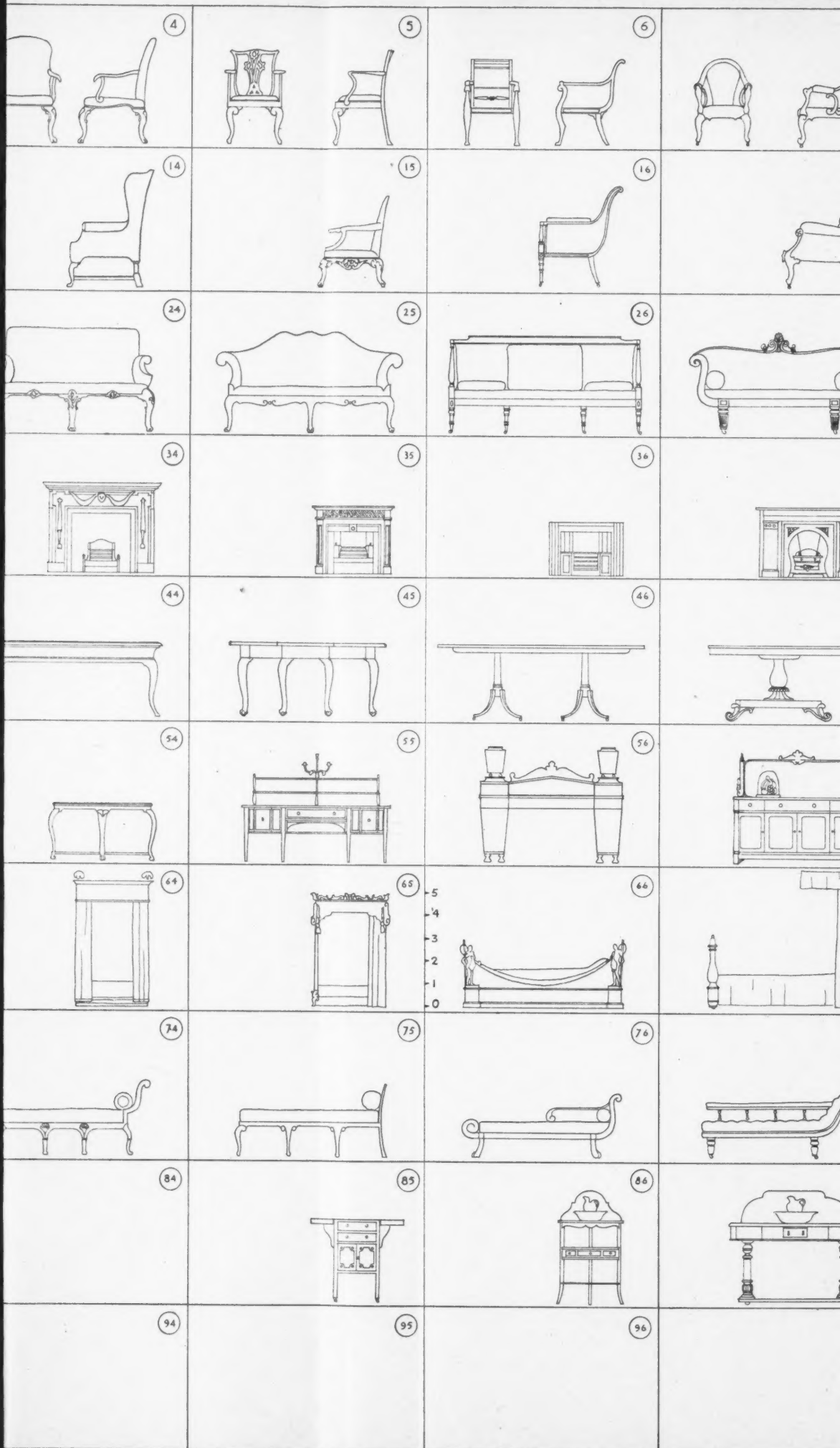
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PROGRESS AND PERIOD CHART OF ENGLISH DESIGN BY RAYMO

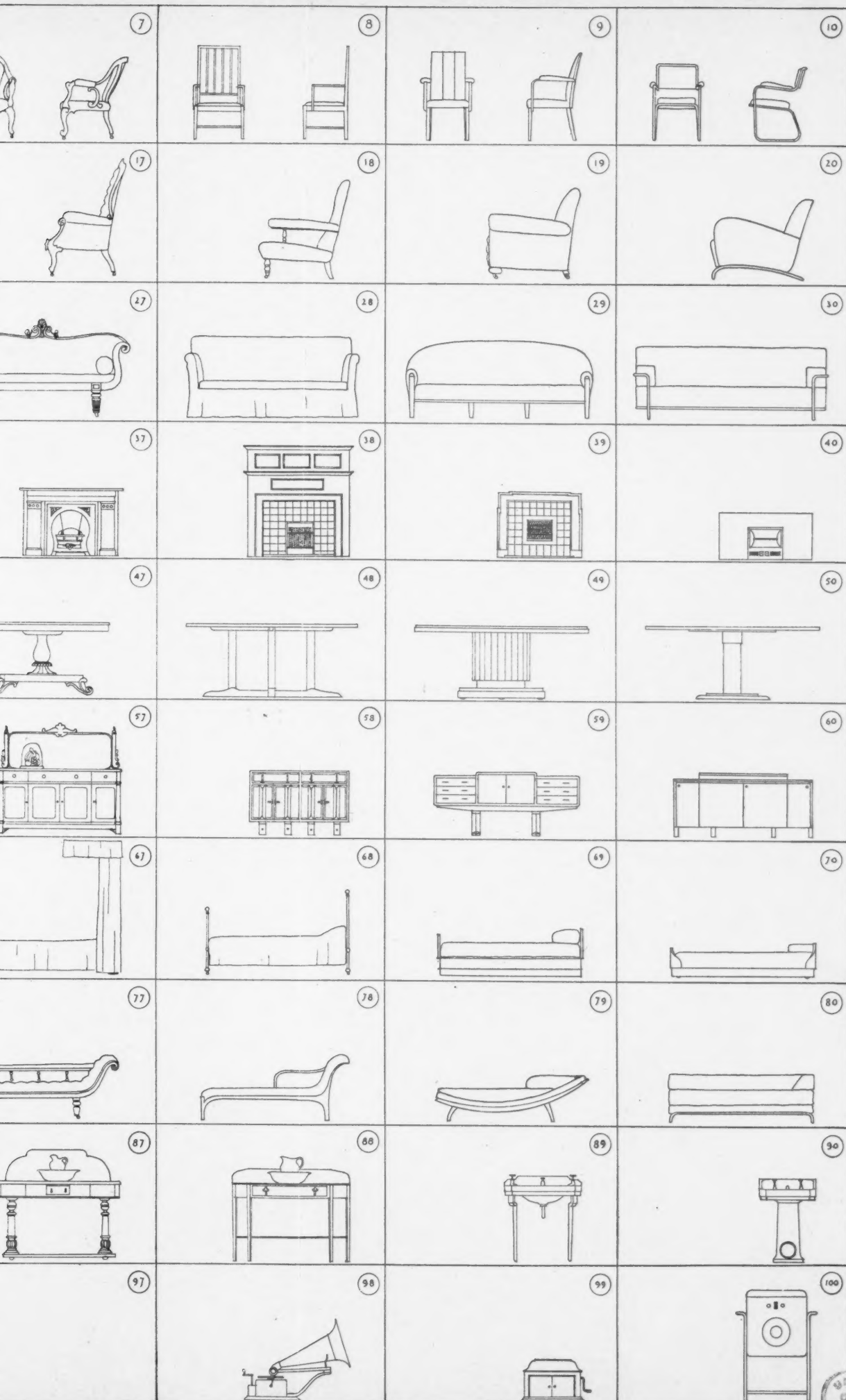
WILLIAM MARY • ANNE • GEORGE I • GEORGE II • GEORGE III • GEORGE IV • WILLIAM IV • VICTORIA

1700 1750 1800 1850

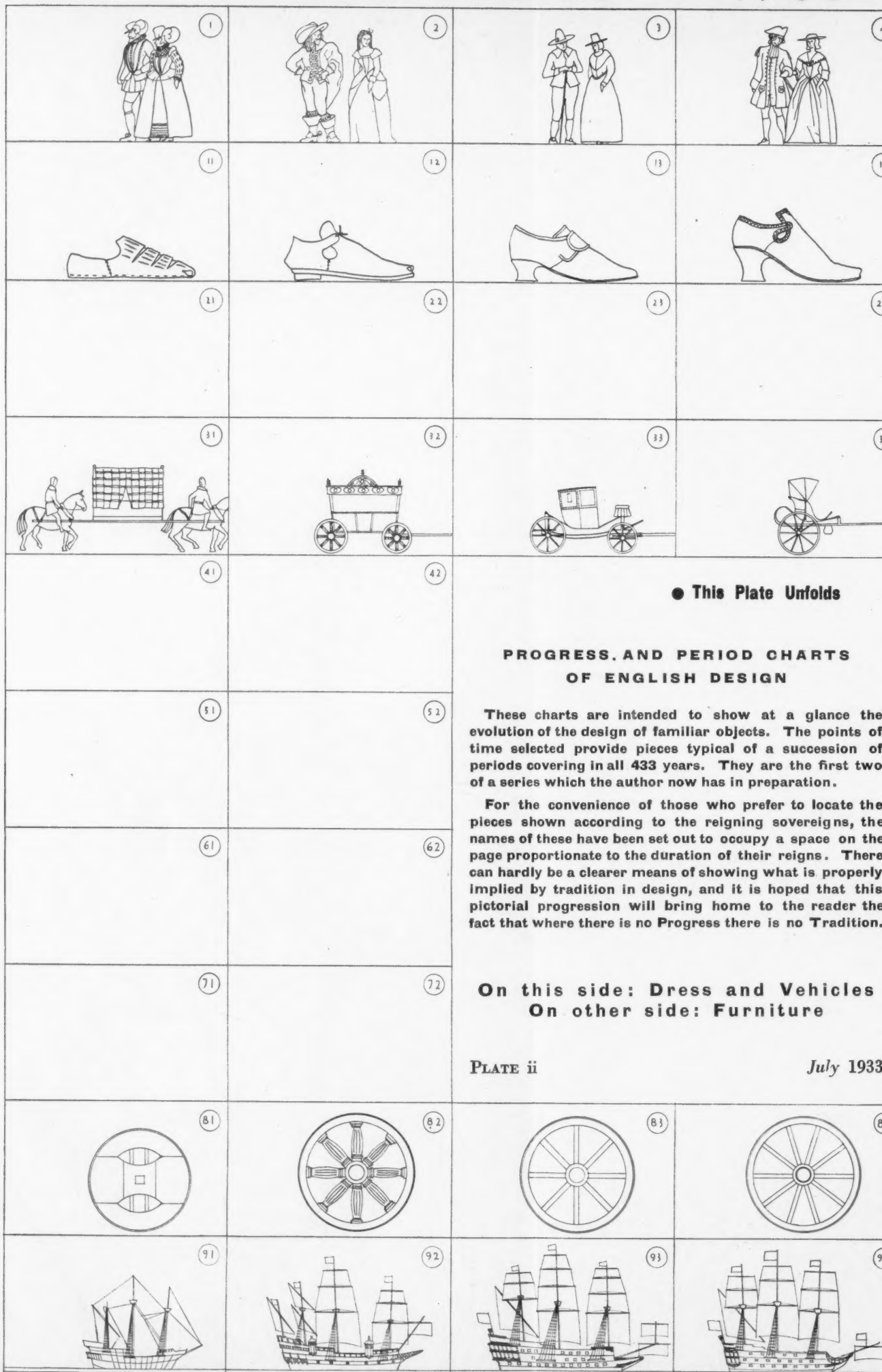


ENGLISH DESIGN BY RAYMOND McGRATH CO

VICTORIA • EDWD VII • GEORGE THE FIFTH
 850 1900 1925 1933



HENRY VIII • ELIZABETH • JAMES I • CHARLES I • CHARLES II • WILLIAM & MARY • ANNE
 1500 1600 1650 1700



● This Plate Unfolds

PROGRESS AND PERIOD CHARTS OF ENGLISH DESIGN

These charts are intended to show at a glance the evolution of the design of familiar objects. The points of time selected provide pieces typical of a succession of periods covering in all 433 years. They are the first two of a series which the author now has in preparation.

For the convenience of those who prefer to locate the pieces shown according to the reigning sovereigns, the names of these have been set out to occupy a space on the page proportionate to the duration of their reigns. There can hardly be a clearer means of showing what is properly implied by tradition in design, and it is hoped that this pictorial progression will bring home to the reader the fact that where there is no Progress there is no Tradition.

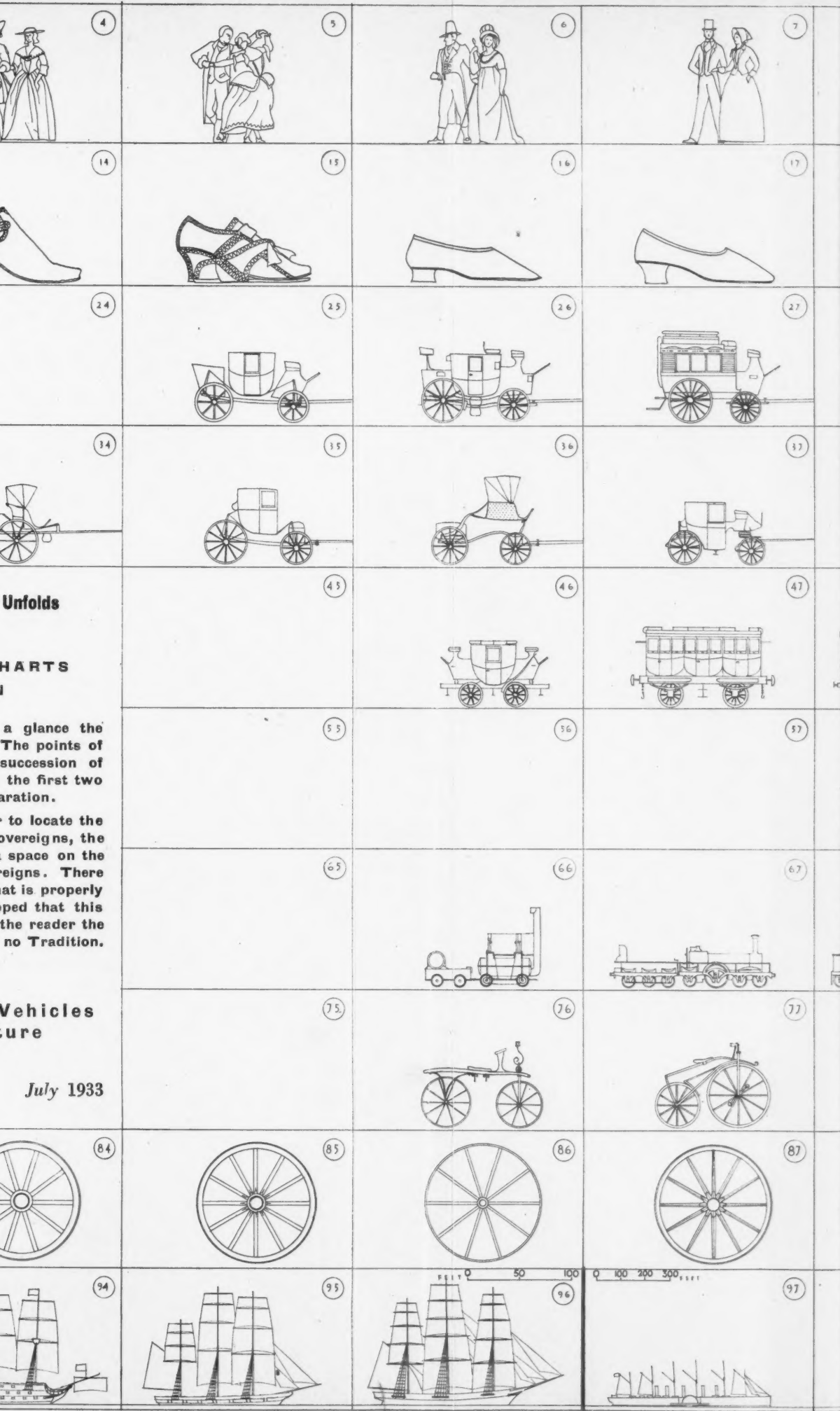
On this side: Dress and Vehicles
 On other side: Furniture

PLATE ii

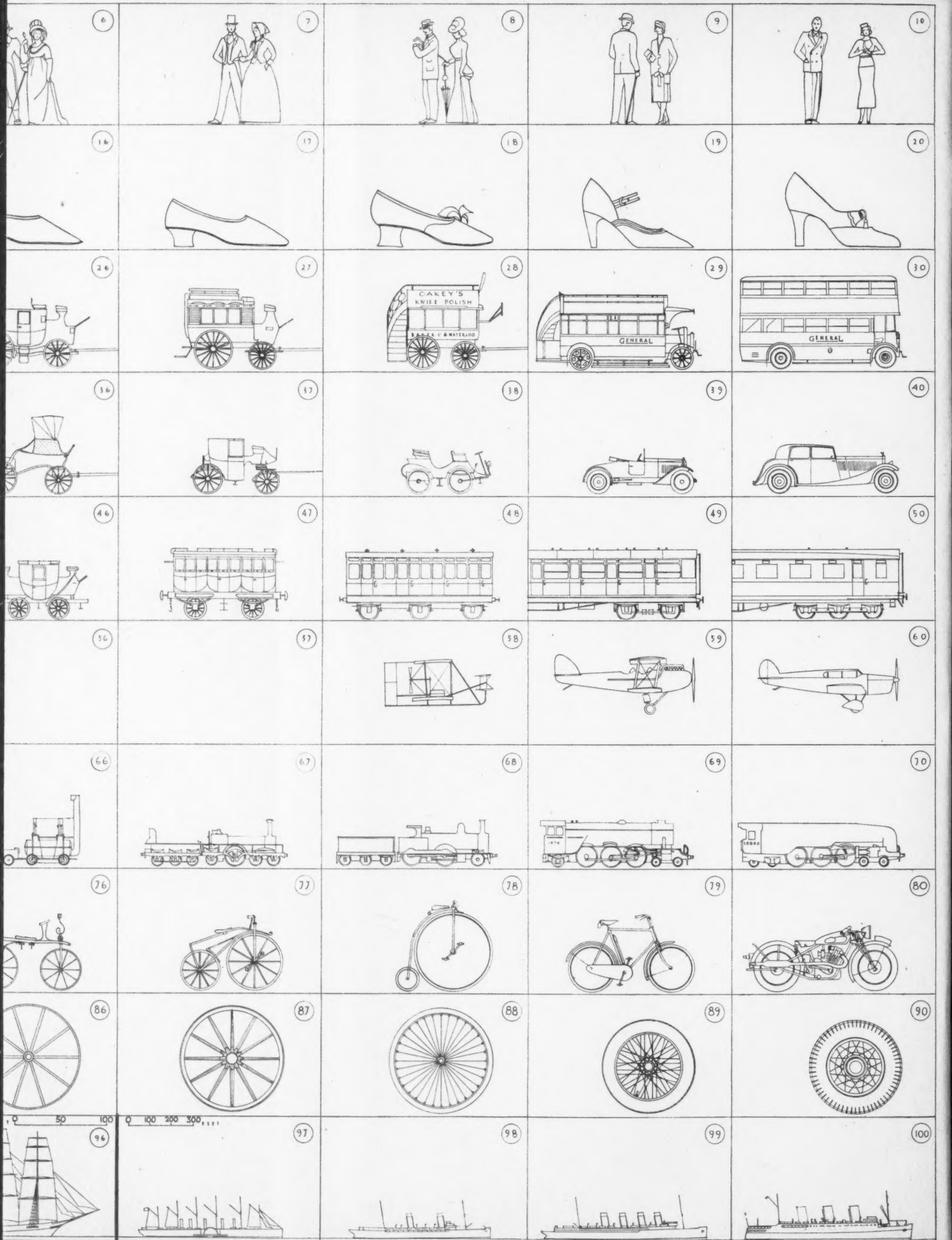
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PROGRESS AND PERIOD CHART OF ENGLISH D

ANNE • GEORGE I • GEORGE II • GEORGE III • GEORGE IV • VICTORIA
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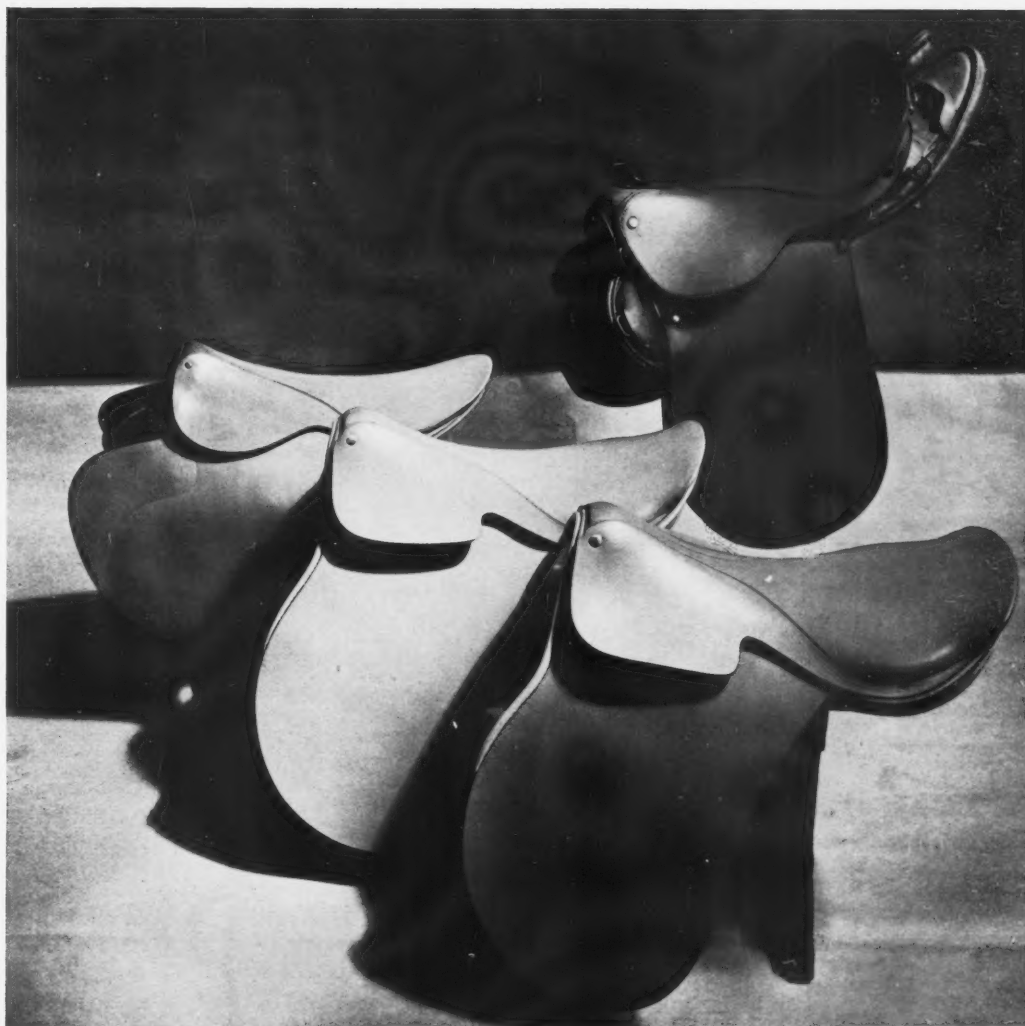
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"Art in the true sense of the word has got so thoroughly into the bones of large sections of the English people that it is no longer recognized as such." "The Englishman . . . is an artist in things in which he has no idea that 'art' is involved at all . . ." "... If you tried to maintain, what is very true, that the tweed of his suits, the silk of his ties, and the linen of his shirts are artistic . . . he would assume that you were making fun of him or that you had a screw slightly loose." From *England, The Unknown Isle*, by P. Cohen Portheim.

"The first thing in the arts which we should learn from Germany," wrote W. R. Lethaby, "is to appreciate English originality."



The Englishman's Art

Above are four riding saddles made by Messrs. Champion and Wilton, of 457, Oxford Street, and illustrated by courtesy of Mr. W. P. Wilton, of that firm. The upper saddle is of the military type, and the others were specially designed for the following purposes: (left to right), steeple-chasing, polo, hunting. Each of these designs has its own functional variation of form which distinguishes it from the others. Below are two bottles of sherry as put up for English and Latin American consumers respectively. The bottle on the left is used

for Messrs. J. Harvey and Sons' Bristol Cream. The design, which is a local one, probably dates back to 1810, when moulds were first introduced in the Bristol bottle works. The Bristol local style was unusually good and Bristol bottles for export always fetched a dollar a gross more than any others. The bottle on the right is illustrated by the kindness of the Army and Navy Stores. The whole bottle is covered with gold foil; the labels are black and gold and red and gold, and the silk tassel is scarlet in colour.

Elements of Snob Design

Genteelisms



Ale

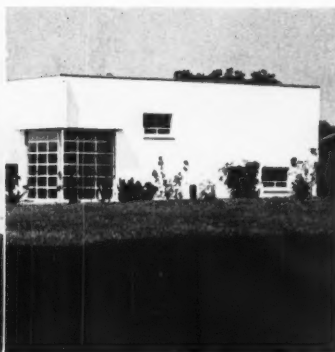
Normal Things



Beer



College



School



Couch



Sofa

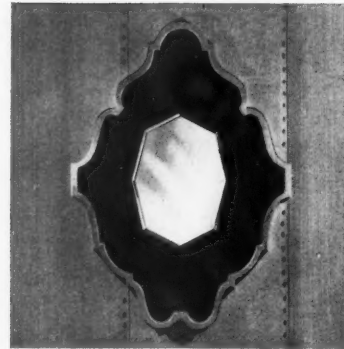


Edifice



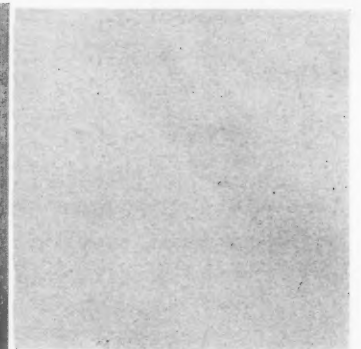
Building

Genteelisms

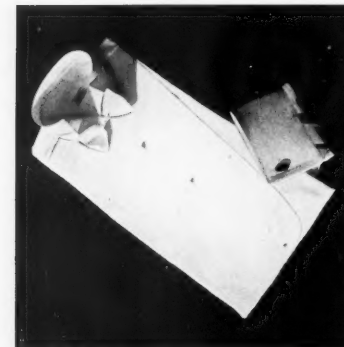


Mirror

Normal Things



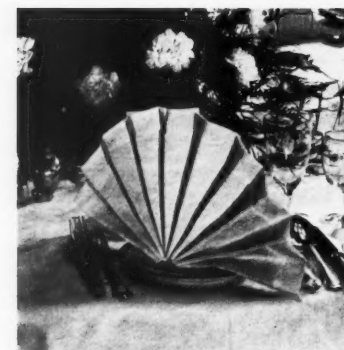
Looking Glass



Recreation



Amusement



Serviette



Napkin

"By Genteelism is here to be understood the substituting, for the ordinary natural word [design] that first suggests itself to the mind, of a synonym [arted-up version] that is thought to be less soiled by the lips [suburban villas; suburban lives] of the common herd, less familiar, less plebeian, less vulgar, less improper, less apt to come unhandsomely betwixt the wind and our nobility The reader may now be left to the specimen list of genteelisms, which he will easily increase for himself." This quotation is from "A Dictionary of Modern English Usage," by H. W. Fowler (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pages 212 and 213. The words in square brackets have been inserted by the Editor of "The Architectural Review."

We are indebted to Messrs. Gaskell & Chambers for the illustration of the beer machine, to Messrs. Austin Reed for the dress shirt, to the Trocadero Restaurant for the serviette, to Messrs. Mappin & Webb for the napkin, and to Messrs. Webb's Crystal Glass Co., Ltd., for the ale jug. Also to the Management of the London Underground for permission to use, as a headpiece to the facing page, a portion of Mr. McKnight Kauffer's poster for the London Safety First Week.

A Letter to Robinson



Apprendre à voir est le plus long apprentissage
de tous les arts. *Goncourt Journal.*

... this is why blind people ... are usually so
peaceful and satisfied.

Renier: *The English: Are They Human?*

Yes, I agree with all you say about furniture and everything else about the home being human, companionable, fit to live with. Does anybody want it to be otherwise? But you will see the modern point of view at once if you recall what happens to you sometimes as you stretch yourself in the barber's chair. These are days when you do not in the least object to a little conversation; his small talk, perhaps, is quite neat in its way; but at other times, you know, you are in a very different mood. Without the excuse of being unwell or worried, or in any way out of sorts, you yet feel exasperated at his talkativeness, so exasperated that you could almost get up and walk out of his shop. You have come to have your hair cut, and you wonder what in heaven's name can be wrong with the man to make him chatter so when he ought to be getting on with his work. You yourself are not a hypochondriac; one would not even call you taciturn; yet today you are convinced that chattering, babbling barbers are a confounded pest, and determined never again to submit to this torture. Well, it is not usual to refer to a barber as a servant, but he is a sort of servant all the same. And so are all the things we use in ordinary daily life, whether at our work or at play: our motor-cars, our saucepans, our cigarette lighters: man-made, inanimate servants all. It is true that these servants cannot all talk to our ears, but they talk in signs to our eyes instead. Some of them are simply bubbling over the whole time with an incessant cackle of visual talk. Simply eye-splitting; you cannot get a look in edgeways. And the world today is not in the mood for it at all, no more than you are when you feel like getting up and striking the man who shaves you.

People today really are keen on their furniture, utensils and such like "cutting the cackle"; quick, silent service is what we want, and no mistake. The causes of this mood in us are many and various, but I will give you three that are more than enough by themselves to account for it.

1. During the past generation or two these inanimate servants (or objects of daily use) did in fact grow steadily more and more garrulous. More and more talk every day.
2. At the same time, their back-chat became less and less intelligent, less and less interesting. Much of it was incredibly silly. They also began to tell a lot of stupid lies for no apparent reason.
3. At the same time, also, the growth of machine-industry caused an enormous increase in the number of these servants. New ones were being invented every day. Instead of having one barber to put up with, you had fifteen or twenty. Imagine it!

Put these three happenings together and you will see how important it was that something should be done. The servants talked and talked and some of them were frankly hopeless at their job. Gabble, gabble, gabble from morning to night. What did they talk about? Mostly about their owners or masters or

employers; about the fellows' origins, habits, predilections, personalities in general. If a man were a classical scholar, his tea-cups or his hall chair would inform you of the fact. If he were a keen rider to hounds, a glance at his wall-barometer would be enough. Did he subscribe to the religion of ancestor worship? You need look no further than his foot-scraper or his bell-pull. Whatever you wanted to know about a man, his furnishings and effects would be sure to tell you, and they would also tell you a great many things you had no particular wish to know. Worst of all, they would tell you much that was demonstrably untrue; chiefly about the owner's social position. They were so full of this social position business that a great many people began to buy their furniture, their china, carpets and clocks, their travelling goods, watches and many other things, simply on the strength of the suggestions of social position conveyed by these objects. And of all the nonsense and all the falsehoods so unendingly uttered by man's surrounding objects, none were more nauseating than the nonsense and the falsehoods about social rank. It was this sort of talk more than any other that made reform unavoidable.

During the last century there were great multitudes in this land whose way of living was arranged with only one object, namely, to express the standards of a social class higher than their own. Cobbett, some of whose books you have read, tells us that in his day there were more suicides in England than in any other country in the world. That is no doubt exaggerated. He goes on to say that nine out of ten of these suicides were caused by "the dread of what is called falling in the scale in society; a dread which is prevalent hardly in any country but this." Do you think that too is exaggerated? Do you think Cobbett was just being provocative? But what about the following: "At the very moment I am writing this, there are thousands of families in and near London who daily have wine upon their tables, and who drink it too" (actually *drink* it, mark you) "merely because their own servants should not suspect them to be poor." That strikes home, does it not? Yes, and there is heroism for you; but heroism hardly equal to that which enabled the children of these families to fence themselves round with furniture and other belongings designed with only one end in view: to make false statements about their social standing. Heroism that is as nothing to that which flung itself in the path of the juggernaut-pantechnicon of Victorian snob design. *That* was a test, if you like.

But there is no need to laugh at this heroism. No need to get excited about the old juggernaut. Many decent people may not want to tell lies about themselves socially, but they do want to better themselves, to get on in the world. "Unless above himself he can erect himself, how poor a thing is Man." This is Wordsworth. I heard a lot about the will-to-rise the other day

from the head of a firm employing many thousands of workers, It is, he said, an important and an honourable human motive. It encourages the virtues. It makes a man sober, thrifty, industrious. It keeps his wife and children clean and neat. And in one or two cases in a thousand the will-to-rise may even positively lead to a rise. That is of course the most remarkable thing about it. It is like the will-to-win of the habitual punter. There, I am being ironical again. I am not out to condemn the will-to-rise. Let us assume that its effect on the person who has this ambition is all to the good. What I am concerned about is not its effect on that person, anyway; what I want to look into is the way it affects *you*. Yes, how do you, Robinson, respond to the will-to-rise that is always present among your best and worthiest customers? That is a most vital question.

Here is William, a specimen. He is a worker, a bus-driver, shall we say. Let us inoculate him with the will-to-rise bug. There! at once he blossoms out, a picture of physical fitness, of neatness, of happy energy. Or let us assume that this is so. But you, Robinson, are a tradesman. You are equipped with machines that can produce anything you care to ask of them. Every week friend William comes to you and empties his pockets into your till. He is getting on in the world so that every week there is a little more in his pockets. The will-to-rise is strong in him and you, of course, have to minister to it. It is your duty and also your opportunity. The things you make for William must not be just like the things you make for Tom, Dick and Harry: William is a will-to-rise man and you must give him something that will stand for all that, something that will tell people he is the rising man. Come! Will is better than his fellow: what are you going to do for him? When he walks into your shop for a new fender, or a cabinet gramophone, or a stair-carpet, what have you got that will look right for him? How will you make him feel the grand fellow he is?

This is where you begin to find things a little difficult. For Will, poor man, does not know a great deal about the life of those above him. Will would be distinctly awkward in a snob dinner-crowd. He is not a good judge really of the smartest fashions. Nor, for that matter, are you. We may as well face the truth. It is quite on the cards (is it not?) that you yourself may not be any too great a swell. Perhaps it is some years since you bought a new carpet for your stairs. Perhaps your wife has long since given up the attempt to give smart, classy little dinner parties. What do you really know about the ways and the signs of social distinction? When did you last shake hands with a first-class hostess, a leader of fashion? O, come, you say, what does it matter? Will does not know and it's true you don't know, but so long as you give him something that answers, something that helps his will-to-rise feeling, no one can honestly say you have let him down. Vaguely you remember things you have seen, plays, films, picture-postcards, junk-shops, bric-à-brac, museum stuff. Something a bit old, a bit shabby, but with quite a touch of class about it, somehow. And so you set to work, and, really, the result does not look too bad. Will is content, his wife is content, your instalments are paid, and, dear fellow, of course you have no reason to worry.

Nor do I blame you: honestly I do not. You may feel in your heart of hearts that you have treated poor William badly. You have done nothing of the sort. No man can be blamed for going off on a wild-goose chase with the nicest possible intentions. Your only fault is that you have tried to do something for Will that did not need doing and that in any case

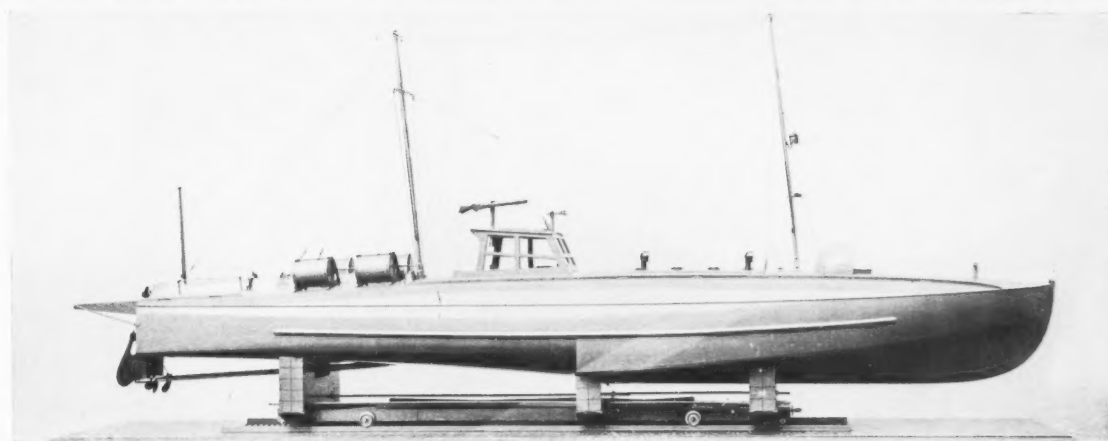
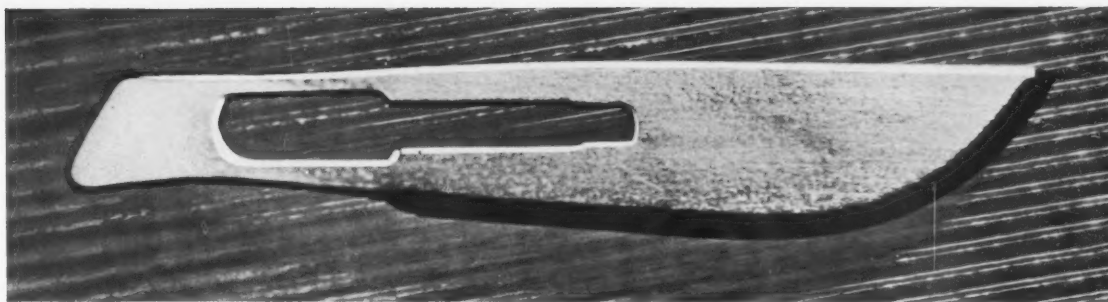
is impossible. You have tried to supply the chap with symbols of class without knowing that today there are no symbols of class. You have tried to pay an imaginary debt in a non-existent currency. Not an easy job! As you know, we still have a ruling class, or aristocracy, call it what you like: but the remarkable thing about this class today is its fixed determination to get rid of all outward symbols of social position. The last thing it wants to do is to express itself in *that* way. Its hatred of class symbols is such that it would sooner walk naked than make a display of traditional aristocratic forms. It still has its schools, its speech, its manners, and to these things it clings as perhaps never before. But the visual trappings of class, the descriptive class *décor*, these things do not go down at all with our new smart lot. Class art is quite taboo. When you see Dukes living in old coachmen's lodgings and Prime Ministers in converted barns, don't you go and think these particular people are simply a bit eccentric. They all feel the same way. Their furniture began by aping the simplicity of the labourer's cot: the multiple teashop is now its model. Their beds are a mattress on four stumps; instead of brocade they have washable American cloth for their drawing room curtains, the sort of stuff your wife is rather ashamed of having tacked to her pantry shelves. They still employ a few servants, but the powdered wig is left to the suburban Palais-de-Danse and the hotel for Babbit commercials. Their dress is imitated from that of the stockbroker's clerk and, beside a motor salesman from Great Portland Street, a newspaper Lord looks positively drab. They aspire after a style that will be socially expressionless and void of all "distinction," and by now they have very nearly got it.

Plotinus used to say that human souls were sent down to earth to see evil and so be liberated from any desire for it. Something of the same sort has happened to the people of this country. They have watched the nineteenth-century deluge of mass-produced class-art till they have become liberated from all desire for the stuff. The names of our places of amusement will suggest to you what has happened in all the popular arts: our Regals and Imperials could be bettered only by borrowing from religion, and that our Balkan-born film grinders, luckily, would not know how to do. Fabulous, incredible, this flood of false art, of mock nobility; social eminence in every shop, the unique repeated for all! What a bore, what a sickener, all that greatness that wasn't great, that gentry that wasn't a gent! How deadeningly tiresome, those mansions that weren't mansions, drawing-rooms that weren't drawing-rooms, gilding that wasn't gold, everything that wasn't, always wasn't; can you wonder the real thing ceased to signify, ceased to have any value for the people who owned it? Can you wonder that the great liberation had to come?

Well, it's here now, and there is a lot to be said for the things we are going back to, but the best that can be said for them is that they are so much more English. The English have had their class-art like other nations, but they have never cared for it like some. Always it has gone against the grain. It has been produced with a feeling of compulsion. No man can dress up better than an Englishman, and no man more loathes doing it—the remark has been made by foreigners not once but a hundred times. "In a handsome apartment," said Goethe to his friend Ackermann, "like the one I had at Carlsbad, I become lazy and inactive. On the other hand a smaller residence, such as that in which we now are, and where a kind of disorderly order—a sort of gipsy-fashion—prevails,

THE CUTTING TOOL— IN FLESH AND WATER.

Top picture, a modern surgical knife, enlarged. Length about 2½ in. Below, a Thornycroft CMB model coastal motor (Torpedo) boat as supplied to the leading naval powers. It is built in four lengths, 40 ft., 45 ft., 55 ft. and 70 ft. Note that the principal difference between the two profiles is in the curve of the cutting edge, which is determined by the angle of attack. The fact that the boat has "thickness" does not appreciably affect its profile.



suits me exactly. It allows my inner nature full liberty to act and to create from itself alone." This statement is remarkable because it reflects an attitude that was learnt from the English and

that would have appealed to few of Goethe's contemporaries in France or Germany. Still more the Englishman of today, oppressed with too much counterfeit class-art, wishes for a place where his inner self may "feel at liberty to act and to create from itself alone." Or shall we say, the all too difficult business of coming to our spontaneous-creative fullness of being? These words are modern and were written by D. H. Lawrence, but the business they describe is the same. It is a business to which the English have always attached considerable importance, and you had better realize that they do not by any means intend giving it up just yet.

And now look at the tradition of simple, straightforward, honest, reticent design still existing in England today. Its artistry is magnificent, unrivalled. The English potter who first stuck a handle on a teacup, gave a new thing to the world that we find it so hard to appreciate at its full worth, simply because it is a possession common to all of us, like the sky, or the grass in English fields. Have you ever looked at ships? Has the immortal beauty of the bat and ball been revealed to you? Do you notice such things as carpenters' tools, or saddlery? Here are utility objects that bear no labels of class, that speak no language but the language of use, and so tell us nothing, true or false, about the social status of their owners. No idle

chatter about them. Complete absence of the old, Victorian, lying, gabble, gabble, gabble. No fear of being thought poor by the servants; no dread of falling in the scale of society. Nothing but sound sense and absolutely first-class taste applied to the problem before you. Not a style, in other words, but *style* pure and simple; the doing of the job, not indifferently, but "in fine style," as the sporting writers say about the rowing of a University crew. Granted that your Englishman was not much good at the gold and grandeur business. Granted that when the Victorians thought they needed it they had to look for it elsewhere. That is how the nineteenth century with us became so depressingly cosmopolitan. From Venice to Versailles our manufacturers ranged in their quest of "needless Pomp and Gaudy Furniture." They travelled everywhere. You can still see the slop left over from it all if you visit our great Exhibitions at Olympia and elsewhere, and what is called The British Industries Fair. But if the Englishman was a bit unhandy with grand fellow stuff, he was a real master in his own field, and that field is the one in which you will have to get moving today—unless you want to keep on your business as a private indulgence and can afford to.

Just let me mention William once more. William is a good fellow. He wants to better himself, and to better himself means to learn from his betters. Not to pretend to be as good as his betters; that is a game we do not want to play any more. But it is every man's right to admire, and it is every man's right to learn. Of course William does not know what sort of furniture he wants. He has not the remotest idea. He simply wants to follow the best people. Be the best people, Robinson. William is on the look out for leadership. Robinson, can you be a leader? It seems ages now since that gloomy pair of French comedians, the brothers Goncourt, first complained that the so-called leaders of public taste were really its servants and its panders. Come on, let us see which of these you are going to be. Let us see what sort of stuff you are made of. There are a good many of us who believe in you and who will back you to win through.

CHRISTIAN BARMAN

The typography of some of the pages in this issue will seem unfamiliar to readers of *The Architectural Review*. The reason is that an attempt has been made to give our typography a documentary interest which links it up with the pictorial records of British industrial design. We have been enabled to do this through the kindness of the Monotype Corporation, who have not only lent us the types used on pp. 1—8 and 11—13, but also assisted us in the setting up of some of the matter contained therein. Lord Gorell's article is set in Solus, the new display type designed by Mr. Eric Gill. Mr. John Betjeman's article is in a familiar late Victorian face known as Old Style Antique. Mr. Christian Barman's article is set in Old Face, No. 43, a type showing traces of continental influence. The following two articles are set in the Baskerville type which is already well known to readers of *The Architectural Review*. This type, in its modern form, is also a product of the Monotype Corporation.

Recently the Editors of *The Architectural Review* and *The Week-end Review* drew up a set of questions covering some of the chief practical aspects of industrial design from the point of view of the manufacturer. They wanted to discover just what the best types of English manufacturing firms felt about design, and how in general, they set about it. In order to give as many people as possible a chance of expressing a variety of views, a comparatively large number of questions was put down and a certain amount of overlapping was allowed for. The questions as sent out are printed on pages 16 and 17. A list of just over two hundred names was then compiled. The firms chosen ranged over practically the whole of that section of industry which supplies goods for the consumption of ordinary people, with the important exceptions of articles of dress, and of furniture and house furnishing goods generally. Of the first, it was felt that the pre-eminence of design was so outstanding

INDUSTRY'S CHANGING FRONT:

A Survey

IT is common ground amongst all competent observers that there is too much ugliness in the modern world, and ever since the days of Ruskin the stream of vehement criticism of our æsthetic shortcomings has grown and spread. Many critics damn the machine as the sire of most of the drab and ugly things in the world. Others, ranging farther afield, condemn the economic system in which so much that is ugly is also profitable. Both criticisms, though plausible at first sight, are at bottom specious. Since machines make what they are designed to make they are not responsible for the ugly things they produce; and criticism of the economic system because it yields profits to perpetrators of hideousness is beside the mark, since economics is concerned with social structure and the provident use of resources, but not with the individual and social valuations which in the final analysis determine how resources are used and what social structures shall be developed.

The real causes of existing ugliness, whether in the things we use or in the houses and cities we inhabit, are deep lying, complex and ill-understood. Luckily, improvement does not wait on understanding; and the past decade or so has fortunately seen a movement towards better design, which is highly encouraging. The results of this tendency can be marked by close observers almost on every hand. And though enough and too much is still produced which is flatly hideous, the number of improvements and their growing volume are heartening.

Hitherto, students of this movement have been obliged to content themselves with general observations, and although the views of individual producers have been not infrequently voiced in favour of improvements in design, no collective expression of the attitude of progressive business on this vital topic has previously been available. Now, thanks to an investigation undertaken by THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW in association with the *Week-end Review*, it is possible to sum-

marize the attitude towards design of some fifty well-known firms.

Design as a Selling Point

The first question which the investigation sought to answer was related to the marketability of well-designed goods. "In your experience" the question runs, "does a well-designed article find a readier market than an ill-designed one, other things (e.g., efficiency and reliability) being equal?" For the most part the answer was affirmative. Thus, manufacturers of three kinds of motor cars replied "Of course," "Definitely, yes," "Yes, certainly," while a fourth motor manufacturer commented that "certainly elegance in design is a great factor in promoting the sales of motor cars." Two motor cycle manufacturers were equally definite. Manufacturers of wireless sets, carpets sweepers, brushes, binoculars and optical instruments, lamps, gas stoves, electrical heating apparatus, glass, tents, saddles, toys, silverware, and petroleum products, concurred in the same view. Some of the affirmative comments are particularly interesting. Thus, one glass manufacturer replied "Yes, always and invariably." A maker of gardening equipment and tools, where design might be expected to be relatively unimportant, answered "Yes, always." A head of a well-known firm of drapers replied "Emphatically, yes." A firm manufacturing vacuum cleaners commented that "women are very much attracted by the outside appearance of the things they buy, whether it be a bottle of lime juice, a hat, or an engineering product such as a vacuum cleaner." Makers of aluminium hollow ware, chiefly pots and pans specially designed for use on electric cookers, remarked that "a well-designed article is always the best, but design has to be in conformity with utility, and utility has to be understood from a woman's point of view." A firm of biscuit manufacturers whose products are well known to connois-

seurs, though not common on the general market, stated with regard to their attractive and beautifully labelled containers that "a well-designed container certainly attracts interest and promotes sales." A craftsman in toys observes that "a well-designed toy does sell where a poorly designed one does not, and this applies even to these hard times." A department store chief voices the same opinion: "The well-designed article, especially if it is up to date, is apt to sell better than badly designed merchandise. It is very possible that an article may be well designed in itself, but out of date or unfashionable." Manufacturers of men's and women's clothing comment similarly on the improvement in public taste. Thus, a nationally known firm manufacturing and retailing men's clothing say that well-designed clothes are much more possible now than a few years ago and that "the standard of public taste seems to be improving steadily;" while manufacturers of women's fashion clothing note an improvement "in London very definitely and to an increasing degree in the Provinces."

Trade Buyers and Other Problems

On the other hand, it is not all beer and skittles, even with the basic factor of good design. Thus, a national firm of gramophone and radio manufacturers replied to the question whether a well-designed article markets more easily than an ill-designed one: "From past experience, no! But today there does seem to be a more critical faculty displayed by the public in respect of good cabinet design." A second manufacturer of toys finds public taste better than that of many trade buyers; while a manufacturer of watches comments rather bitterly: "When selling to the retail trade a well-designed article does not distinguish itself very clearly from the article of more common design as far as selling is concerned owing to the inability in 75 per cent. of the cases of the buyer to appreciate a well-designed article. Unfortunately, buyers of retail depart-



How it strikes the Foreigner

In November, 1932, there was an exhibition of British Industrial Art in Copenhagen. Here is a selection of those exhibits which impressed Swedish visitors most. The selection was made for the Journal of the Swedish Design and Industries Association (Svenska Slöjdföreningen) by Gregor Paulsson, the President, a contributor to *The Architectural Review*, well known in this country. "The English" writes Dr. Paulsson, "have been hiding their light under a bushel . . . here are design types that are modern, not modernistic: classical, not classicist." Of the book-production exhibit he says: "I absolutely assert that no other country today could put forward anything approaching the collection shown at Copenhagen." The following is from W. R. Lethaby's *Form in Civilization*, published ten years ago:—"We ought to obtain far greater results from our own originality and initiative than we have done in the past. We must learn to see the value of our own ideas before they are reflected back on us from the Continent."

ments are too often selected from a class which is not able to appreciate smartness in design to the same extent as their public. When selling to the public, smartness in design makes an enormous difference."

Another group of firms finds design of varying importance according to the grade of customer with whom they are dealing. This is true in the case of a manufacturer of electrical goods whose experience is confirmed by a creator of handbags who says that in "his very high-class trade design is important; otherwise, no." Manufacturers of toilet requisites comment that "in highly priced articles design is important, but in low-priced goods, where price is all-important, design does not matter, providing the article is fitted for its purpose." Makers of vacuum flasks find design useful for increased sales, "but price is an important factor and, if a vacuum flask is cheap enough, the public seem prepared to waive their artistic tastes." A maker of cutlery is quite definite that design is not favourable to selling articles "if the price is against it."

What is Good Design?

The net upshot of these replies is encouraging. It suggests that a substantial number of well-known firms find by experience that good design facilitates their

"colourful without being jazzy, compactly and symmetrically arranged." Two further manufacturers of toys stress "simplicity and an absence of excrescences" and attention "to proportion, colour, texture and general character." A third group base their judgment on a combination of good materials and good workmanship. A manufacturer and retailer of men's clothing regards his products as good because "they are made of good material. They are well made and simply designed; they are very well finished. They are also judged by people with a sense of colour." Makers of toilet requisites are satisfied with their products because they "make them from attractive material and pay attention to details of finish."

Initiative and "Taking Trouble"

The inevitable personal element in taste, as guided to a greater or lesser extent by experience, is explicitly recognized by a number of firms. Thus, a radio manufacturer gives as the reason for thinking his products good, "that it has been their policy always to produce the best possible from all points of view"; a famous motor car manufacturer replies frankly, "my own and others' opinions."

Similar attention to what the public wants as determined by more or less scientific enquiries is paid by two firms of motor manufacturers, by a brush manufacturer, and by a manufacturer of petroleum products. A manufacturer of fancy goods and handbags remarks that, "we study the public taste while we try to originate." Makers of lamps, fountain-pens, tents and gardening equipment also try to give the public what it wants. Similarly, firms manufacturing motor cycles and motor cars try to give the public what they will like, based upon the opinions of the sales department or departmental chiefs and subject, in the case of a well-known motor car firm, to the condition that what customers desire shall be provided "if it does not interfere with efficiency and the cost is not too extravagant." The same close attention to the taste of the public is displayed by a firm manufacturing and retailing men's clothing, as well as by a large firm of multiple drapers, who state that "our principle is that our manufacturers shall make what our public most demands. Our public chooses design."

Ahead of the Public

On the other hand, a number of firms definitely give the public what they think

THE QUESTIONS

1 In your experience does a well-designed article find a readier market than an ill designed one, other things (e.g., efficiency and reliability) being equal?

2 Why do you consider the appearance of your products to be good?

3 Of what kind, generally speaking, are the improvements in the appearance of your products that have taken place during the past few years?

4 Has your attention to appearance caused any increase in cost of production?

5 Is the design of your products based upon what you think is good, or upon what you (or your sales department) think the public will like?

6 When you are shown a new design, how do you decide whether it is suitable or not for your product?

7 What part does shape, finish, colour or ornamentation play in this decision?

sales. But immediately the question arises, what do they mean by good design? by what criteria do they judge their products? and what is the authority to which they appeal? Two questions in the enquiry were designed to elicit information on these matters. The problem of criteria is covered by answers to the question, "Why do you consider the appearance of your products to be good?" while the problem of the authority to whom appeal is made is dealt with by the question, "Is the design of your products based on what you think is good or upon what you (or your sales department) think the public will like?"

Firms feel their designs to be good in the first place because of fitness for purpose. Thus, makers of motor cycles value their designs highly "because they efficiently fulfil their function"; and makers of products as different as glass, shoes and toys employ the same test. The manufacturer of toys just referred to, in addition to fitness for purpose, points out that his products are also designed "with proper regard for drawing, colour and the nature of the material."

Another group of manufacturers find their criteria in the qualities of the design themselves. A maker of carpet sweepers observes that his design is now "lighter and improved"; a maker of electrical goods refers to the "clean engineering qualities of his design"; a maker of gardening equipment judges by the "contrast with the old style models; streamline effect; clean finish." In the case of picnic outfits, the design must be

Manufacturers of petroleum products are satisfied because their goods "are the best we are capable of producing with our unlimited resources." Two firms base their opinion largely on the effort involved. Thus, the firm of biscuit manufacturers say, "we take great pains to give a good appearance to our containers and much trouble to secure good design. The opinions we receive from many quarters indicate that our view of our products is shared by the public"; while makers of women's fashion clothing bluntly justify their goods "because we take a hell of a lot of trouble over them."

Some firms have not found it possible to distinguish between the criteria which they apply and the authority to which they appeal. That authority can, of course, only be the judgment of themselves and their associates or public opinion. Thus, manufacturers of vacuum flasks, optical instruments and toilet requisites consider their products to be good because they sell; a fountain-pen manufacturer comes to the same conclusion because his goods are frequently copied; while a manufacturer of gas stoves bases his opinion on the approval of architects as expressed personally in the showrooms and by frequent specifications. Manufacturers of aluminium hollow-ware have consciously tried to obtain guidance from the public and their judgment of design is based upon consultation with representative women upon the appearance of their articles; "easy to wash inside and out is an important feature these days" with their goods.

is good. This is true in the case of firms manufacturing carpet sweepers and vacuum cleaners, gas stoves, and toys. The vacuum cleaner firm observes very pertinently that "efficiency from the user's point of view is a first consideration. We with our research department are the best judges of this." Quite a number of firms compromise and endeavour to produce both what they think is good and also what they think the public will like. This is true of glass manufacturers, ladies' handbag makers, electrical goods manufacturers, makers of vacuum flasks, of toilet articles, and of art products. A firm manufacturing picnic outfits say explicitly that they try to satisfy both themselves and the public, "but the sales department's verdict is usually final. We sometimes succeed in marketing a good article despite the sales department's bad opinion, but this is always a slow job." Some firms, whilst trying to satisfy themselves and the public, definitely aim at raising the level of public taste. Thus a firm of gramophone and wireless manufacturers say that "the latest designs are primarily based upon what we believe to be good designs, but are then deliberately modified to what we think the general public will like, plus a lining up with production limitations." A firm manufacturing products made of gold and silver say that "our designs are mainly based on what we think the public needs—will buy; we recognize a responsibility to try and lead the public to an appreciation of better design."

Another firm of wireless manufacturers

recognizes that a compromise must be made, but incline towards a continual lead towards "what we know is best for the public and radio generally." A firm of glass manufacturers say definitely that their design is based "upon what we think is good, bearing in mind, however, the trend of the best public taste." The selection of a department store is based upon what "we think good, but we must always take into consideration what we think the public will like." A firm of women's fashion clothing manufacturers definitely give the public what they think is good, qualified by what the public will like. But they assert that they "are always ahead of their public." Finally, a few firms, recognizing the difficulty of distinguishing sharply between what they like and what their public likes, admit that the distinction is not always as important as might at first sight appear. Thus, the biscuit manufacturers already mentioned say that "our products are expensive and therefore appeal to an educated public. We endeavour to appeal to that public through design." A firm of boot and shoe retailers say frankly "we try to get the best of both worlds. Fortunately they merge as often as not." Manufacturers of toilet requisites, whilst primarily aiming at supplying the public

the size and shape of containers," but they nevertheless felt that there remained "a sufficient latitude for a fairly wide choice in the design of labels." Mechanical factors imposed the sole or main limitation in the case of makers of electrical apparatus, who considered "mechanical design as the most important factor," of vacuum cleaners and of glass products. Surprisingly enough, one firm producing toys was also limited primarily by considerations of mechanical design. Manufacturers of watches naturally laid considerable stress on this factor. "The mechanical design," this firm remarked, "often renders it impossible to adopt the original design submitted by the artist. For this reason, the artists have to have a thorough technical knowledge in order to comply with any restrictions which mechanical construction might impose."

In a number of cases in which both factors came into play the mechanical limitations were the more important. Thus a firm of glass craftsmen were "limited to a great extent by the possibilities of the material and to a much less extent by custom and convention." A boot and shoe retailer remarked that "footwear is very considerably conditioned by the three dimensional features of a foot, etc., and by the mechanical

use to us to have design outrun convention too far. There is a 'rate of assimilation' beyond which things become dangerous and commercially a gamble." Yet another firm of motor manufacturers producing an expensive car states "that mechanical design must be the governing factor in the production of an efficient motor car; in a British community custom and convention must also be considered." A wireless firm states that it is "to some extent bound by custom and convention and mechanical design must be made to conform within limits to the size and shape of a saleable article." A manufacturer of lamps states that he is influenced by both factors, though he invariably endeavours to over-ride custom and convention if he feels them to be "the product of bad taste."

Still another group of firms is much more bound by custom and convention than by mechanical considerations. Thus, a firm of fancy goods manufacturers says explicitly "we study fashion and we innovate." A department store remarks that they are free "but must keep in touch with fashion and demand." A firm manufacturing motor cycles say that "custom and convention guide us as to colour but not otherwise." A firm manufacturing

8 What, roughly speaking, is the machinery existing in your firm to link up the design personnel with A, the production and buying executives, and B, the sales department?

9 Do you, as managing director, have the final word in

any question of design, or does it lie with one of the three departments mentioned in the preceding question, i.e., A, design, B, production, C, sales. If so, with which?

10 Do purchasers display any interest when the name

of a designer is disclosed by the manufacturer or distributor?

11 Are you more or less free in determining the appearance of your products, or are you obliged to consider: A, mechanical design, B, custom and convention, or any other

such factors?

12 Can you quote examples (with or without specimens) of recent designs which have been: A, rejected; B, accepted and carried out, but subsequently proved unpopular?

what it likes, find it hard to separate the public taste from their own; while the reply of a manufacturer of toys contains a great deal of wisdom when he says that they shape their design "on our experience of public taste, which in our opinion is in the long run correct."

The Technique of Production

The answers just given suggest that the producer is comparatively free to make his designs in accordance with his own or with public taste. In fact, of course, his freedom is more restricted than this. On the one hand, he may be subjected to considerations of a mechanical or material character; on the other hand, even if he tries to give the public what it wants, he may be limited to the framework laid down and accepted by custom and convention. In order to elicit the extent of these limitations, the following question was framed: "Are you more or less free in determining the appearance of your products, or are you obliged to consider: (a) mechanical design, (b) custom and convention or any other such factors?" The answers to this question obviously must be borne in mind in interpreting the present position with regard to design.

Comparatively few firms felt themselves to be completely free, but in this group were included a harness and saddle manufacturer, a tent maker, a manufacturer of petroleum products, a maker of garden implements and a maker of ladies' handbags. A biscuit manufacturer commented that "mechanical considerations play a considerable part in determining

limitations of design. To a lesser extent custom and convention play their part." A firm manufacturing gas stoves said that "mechanical design is the most important factor to be considered. Custom and convention are much less important." A firm of gramophone manufacturers are "obliged to consider (a) mechanical design (in large measure), (b) custom and convention (to a lesser degree)." A firm making vacuum flasks state that mechanical construction has to be considered, and give various technical details. In their case, though custom and convention are not such important factors, "consideration must also be shown for the picnic case manufacturers who will usually not accept a new design of flask unless the dimensions are approximately the same as an old design. The reason for this, of course, is that any such alteration would probably involve a complete re-designing and reconstruction of their own articles."

"The Conservative Public"

This group of firms shades into a group which feels obliged to consider both factors more or less equally. In this category naturally fall three motor car manufacturers. One of them, who manufactures a fast sports car, states "that both mechanical design and its limitations as well as the somewhat conservative attitude of the buying public preclude any radical departure from conservative design." A manufacturer of a medium high-priced car states that they are obliged to consider both factors and observes that "it is no

gold and silver products say that they "have to consider custom and convention very definitely. Our public appears to respond but slowly to original designs, and is much affected by traditional styles." A firm manufacturing hearth furniture and similar products say that "convention is most important. It demands a big struggle to market anything unconventional. To overcome in turn the conservatism of (a) our salesmen, (b) the shop buyer, (c) his salesman, (d) the public, is a slow process. We believe (c) is often the cause of a good article proving a poor seller." A firm manufacturing aluminium hollow-ware felt the effect of local variations in taste. "We are free," they say, "to determine the appearance of our products, but custom and fashion play a very big part. An article might sell in Scotland while it would not sell in England, and vice versa. A certain shaped article might sell in the South of England but not in the North." In the case of men's clothing, as might be expected, custom and convention play a very large part in determining appearance.

Against this background it is of particular interest to see the nature of the improvements which have recently been made. Information on this point was elicited by the following question: "Of what kind, generally speaking, are the improvements in the appearance of your products that have taken place during the past few years?"

Broadly speaking, the answers show that the modern tendency is towards simplicity and cleanness of design, brighter

colour and the elimination of pointless ornament. Thus, makers of picnic outfits commented on "neatness in design of part and whole; much more colour; smaller size." The same firm also make hearth furniture, where again the tendency, though perhaps weaker, is towards "smaller sizes, slightly less decoration, and better finish." In gold and silver plate the tendency is to reduce the "almost overwhelming decoration, often meaningless and unsuitable to the use of the article" which characterized old-fashioned products, and, especially in the case of domestic silver, to develop plainer styles. In glassware, effects tend to be achieved "by form and texture rather than by applied decoration"; redundant ornamentation—or to coin a not inappropriate term, what may be called redundancy—is being eliminated, and there is greater use of colour. In gramophone cabinets no improvements were made until a few years ago, but now the cabinets are being cleaned up and "frills" are being eliminated. In cars the tendency is towards more simplicity, improvements in body colour and in upholstery, and towards changes in design which give a stream line effect, flowing lines and better proportions. There is also "steady elimination of such errors as conflicting lines and the recognition that the design must be viewed and developed as a complete unity." In motor cycles "cleanliness in use and consequently in appearance coupled with finish and colouring have been the key notes." In lamps the new products are characterised by "simplicity, clean line and absence of superfluous detail"; in gas stoves changes are mostly "in the direction of increased simplicity and in dependence upon line rather than upon ornament for effect." In cutlery the movement is definitely "from the ornate to the plain."

Colour and Material

The introduction of greater variety in colour appears in fountain pens, toilet requisites and, curiously enough, in vacuum cleaners "where practicable." In saddlery the trend is toward "a lighter design to suit modern requirements." In gardening equipment care is taken to avoid "rough effect in finish," while in watering pots novelty is sought. In toys there is a tendency towards "harmony of line combined with strength, utility and colour"; while in drapery there is greater "appreciation of a quieter and more refined style, design and colour."

As might be expected, technical and material improvements are noted in a number of cases. Thus, makers of toilet requisites comment on the increasing variety of plastics; in vacuum flasks, new materials and finishes are used and chromium plating has been introduced, as is notably the case with motor cars. In optical instruments more enamel has been used. In aluminium hollow-ware "chromium-plated aluminium has been the greatest improvement in recent years, and it has come to stay. Such articles require no cleaning at all outside." Design, however, is in this case "somewhat limited owing to what can be achieved in chromium plating." In carpet sweepers chromium plating again has been introduced, and there is also a tendency towards greater use of colour.

Since it is often alleged that closer

attention to design increases costs, particular interest attaches to the question which dealt with this point. A very large number of firms quite definitely stated that their increasing concern with appearance did not cause any increase in production costs. This was notably the case with manufacturers of men's and women's clothing, vacuum cleaners, toys, gas stoves, glassware, petroleum products, and saddles and harness. To the question "Has your attention to appearance caused any increase in cost of production?" makers of vacuum flasks replied, "generally speaking, no. Many of our models are retailing today at lower prices than those ruling a few years ago." Manufacturers of aluminium ware said that "in the main attention to appearance does not increase the cost of production." A firm of motor car manufacturers commented "generally, no. It is just as economical to make a thing right as it is to make it wrong." A firm of fancy goods manufacturers said that the difference was "not enough to trouble about."

A few firms actually found costs reduced. This was true in the case of a motor manufacturer and a cutlery firm. A firm of glass manufacturers attributed a reduction in costs to the very fact of greater attention to design, for "in some cases," they commented, "shapes which owe their charm to simplicity are if anything cheaper to produce." Similarly, manufacturers of toilet requisites said that increases were generally slight and were usually "over-compensated by increased business." An important firm of multiple drapers said that owing to the improvements in design which had been effected "the volume of sales had increased, so that the better article, which under static conditions would have meant higher costs, had actually been produced at very much lower costs."

On the other hand, a certain number of firms have found that greater concern with design has led to higher costs. In one case the increase took place only in the transition stage; in two cases, where firms manufactured brushes and electrical equipment, the increases were very slight. In other cases the increases were definite. The latter category includes firms manufacturing gramophones, lamps, gardening equipment, tents, toilet articles, carpet sweepers and motor cars. One firm of motor manufacturers is quite definite on the point. "The present demand for more beautiful wings and bodies on motor cars increases the cost of production." A similar tendency is found by manufacturers of motor cycles who comment on the fact that "chromium plate, for instance, is more expensive than nickel plate. Plain surfaces without decoration need finer finish."

Organizing for Design

A further set of questions dealt with the important problem of the machinery by which designs are selected, and the co-ordination between production, buying and sales departments, and attempted to locate the people responsible for a final decision. Space prevents a full summary of the extremely interesting answers to these questions. Broadly speaking, however, apart from those who judge new designs by the unanalysed processes of experience, the tendency was for firms either to try to secure the objective

opinions of selected consumers for whom the product in question was designed, or else, taking account of the general qualities of design in relation to manufacturing problems, to make their decision on the basis of personal judgment and individual taste. So far as the machinery of consultation and co-ordination was concerned, welcome emphasis was laid by many firms on the importance of the sales department. Other concerns placed the bulk of responsibility for design with a definite design department; in many cases co-ordination was effected by the managing director or proprietor, and, where definite arrangements were not made for frequent formal meetings of the departments concerned, the problem was largely solved by means of the personal touch. Again, final decisions were taken in different places in different concerns. In many cases the managing director was definitely responsible; in other cases the sales department exercised a predominating influence; in still other cases—notably, of course, in retail establishments—buyers played the main rôle of selection; while in a further group decisions were taken by a committee, whether formally constituted or working through informal consultation. The answers to these questions about machinery are obviously very difficult to interpret, for the same names can easily be given to individuals and departments whose functions, though nominally alike, are, in fact, different; while personality and the interplay of personal relations must exert a much greater influence in each firm where the problem of co-ordination exists than can possibly be set down in a short statement. Nevertheless, these replies taken in conjunction with the answers to the other questions, may also be regarded as encouraging.

The Result

How then may the position be summarized? An investigation into a large number of well-known firms manufacturing or retailing goods to the final consumer shows an increasing attention to design and a growing and welcome movement in the direction of simplicity and practicality, real and apparent. The force of this movement manifests itself not merely in changes in the form of products, but also in adaptation of the machinery of co-ordination and control. On the whole, firms who attend to design find that discrimination pays, even in hard times. It is true that these firms are only a few out of the vast number of producers and retailers; and it is also only too true that the flood of ugly things which are still produced every year tends to maintain and preserve a material environment much of which is still all too ugly, banal and drab. Nevertheless, the example of the firms who have participated in this enquiry shows that a new leaven is at work. Their influence may reasonably be expected to spread. The world today is richer than ever before and therefore has the time and resources to desire and enjoy not merely things but lovely things. The results of the present enquiry show that the needs of the time are being widely realized and they hold out hope that the future battles of trade will be fought and won by those whose strength is drawn at least in part from the bottomless well-springs of beauty. JULES MENKEN.

THE DIVIDING WALL

A Problem of Patronage

THE RETAIL BUYER—OLD STYLE

He began the job when people bought what the shopkeepers chose to give them, without complaining. It was a nice, passive shut-eyed public in those days; it wanted things homely and comfortable and durable, and the poorer parts of it were quite happy with imitations of things that were homely and comfortable and durable. None of this art tosh: people who wanted that went and hunted in the rubbish heaps of the old curiosity shops.

But that habit spread, and people got to wanting old shapes and patterns; touch of the antique in their chairs and something a bit chintzy in the curtains, so he gave 'em good reproduction stuff in all prices, from highclass down to medium-class goods. They knew where they were with the old things, and so did the makers, and if you wanted a bit of variety, well, you could always order something original, a Jaco hall-stand in mahogany instead of oak, or a coffin stool in walnut, or you could let yourself out with new colours in art pottery.

Of course there were little bits of fashion, but what went well in one year was generally good, with a few variations, for three or four years. The public wants the old English fireside comfort, and plenty of cushions, and they like things smartened up with a bit of ornament. That's why Jacobean was always more popular than the Louis styles: too foreign, that was, rich, of course, but the English home likes its richness solid. A little of what you're used to does you good. Everyone starts keeping house with something they've got from Auntie or Dad, and they want something like they've started with. He knows what the public wants, and he never shows 'em anything else.

THE RETAIL BUYER—NEW STYLE

Ever since the war he has been trying to make people feel that they haven't got to go to Paris or Berlin or Vienna for every new idea. But when he goes abroad and gets well-designed things for his enterprising London shops his customers say: "But everything's foreign in here—it's a scandal that you don't sell British goods." He would if he could get them; but the manufacturers say, "Well, if you'll guarantee to take a 1,000, we don't mind, just this once, putting down the money for the experiment!" And when the experiments are made, often enough the results are far more expensive than imported things of the same kind, in spite of tariffs.

He wants to give people a feeling that there's always something new and exciting to be found in his shop, and there is, but the bulk of it isn't British made. Things are brought over from the Continent—glass, pottery, light furniture, fabrics, fancy goods; and English manufacturers who can't or won't design, are set the unseemly job of copying them. Meanwhile they go on offering the old, old goods; the stuff their fathers made so proudly and sold so easily; and it looks as dowdy and incongruous in a really modern shop surrounded by things of twentieth century design, as a 1900 motor-car looks in present-day traffic. He doesn't pretend to exact knowledge of what the public wants, but he does know they'll always come to see something new, no matter how unusual, no matter what its price.

THE MANUFACTURER—NEW STYLE

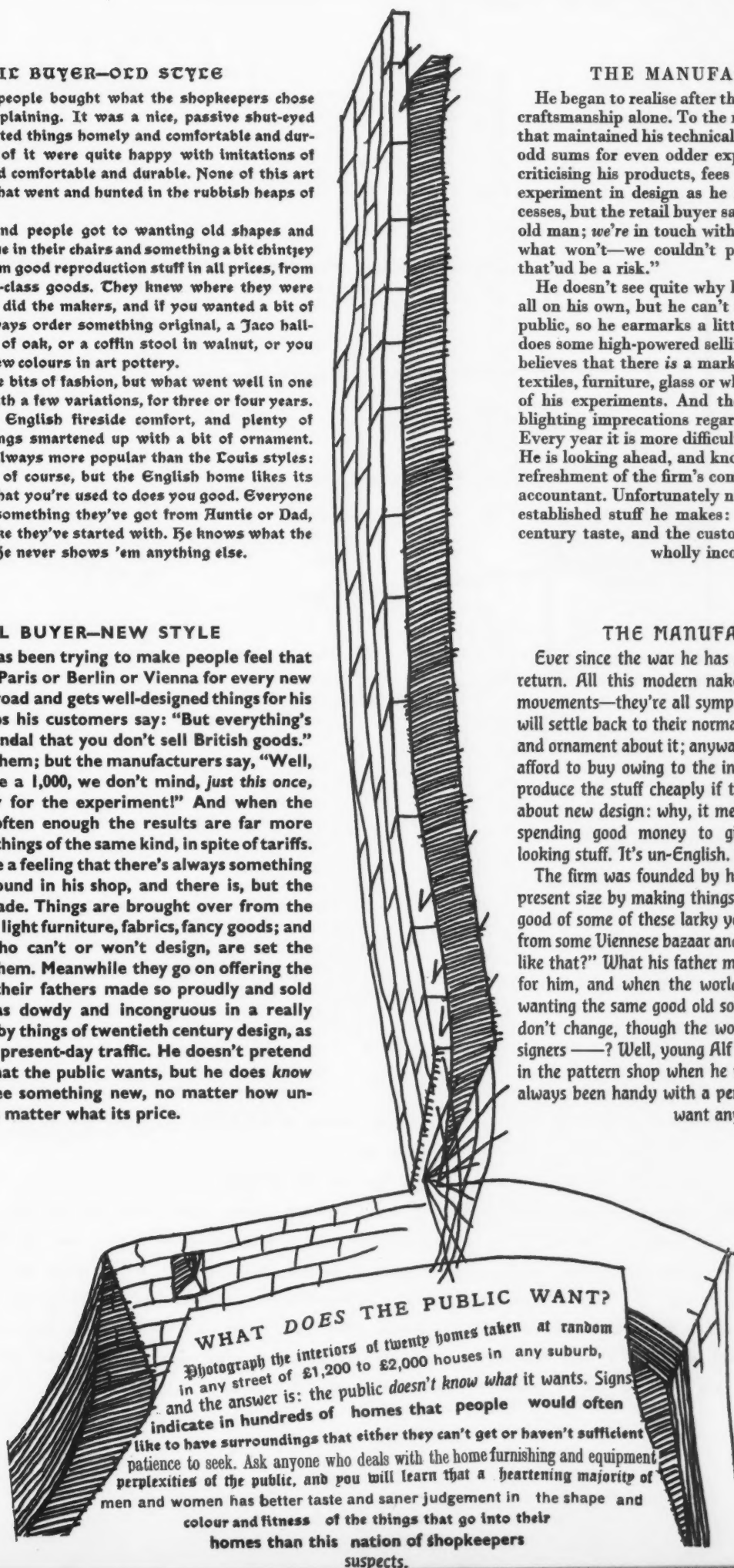
He began to realise after the war that British Industry can't live by craftsmanship alone. To the reserves he set aside for the experiments that maintained his technical integrity as a producer, he began to add odd sums for even odder experiments, fees to experts in design for criticising his products, fees at last to designers. He is as willing to experiment in design as he is to experiment in new technical processes, but the retail buyer says: "Don't go and make things difficult, old man; we're in touch with the public and we *know* what'll go and what won't—we couldn't possibly take more than a dozen, and that'd be a risk."

He doesn't see quite why he should be expected to carry the baby all on his own, but he can't ruin his business by going direct to the public, so he earmarks a little of the budget for these experiments, does some high-powered selling himself on a few retailers, because he believes that there is a market for the new stuff (it may be pottery, textiles, furniture, glass or whatnot), and perhaps just covers the cost of his experiments. And the old men on his board use the most blighting imprecations regarding his activities, such as: "Idealist!" Every year it is more difficult to get those sums passed by the board. He is looking ahead, and knows that they are vital injections for the refreshment of the firm's commercial life, but he is obstructed by the accountant. Unfortunately none of his new stuff helps to sell the old-established stuff he makes: his experimental designs for twentieth century taste, and the customary products of his factory belong to wholly incompatible civilisations.

THE MANUFACTURER—OLD STYLE

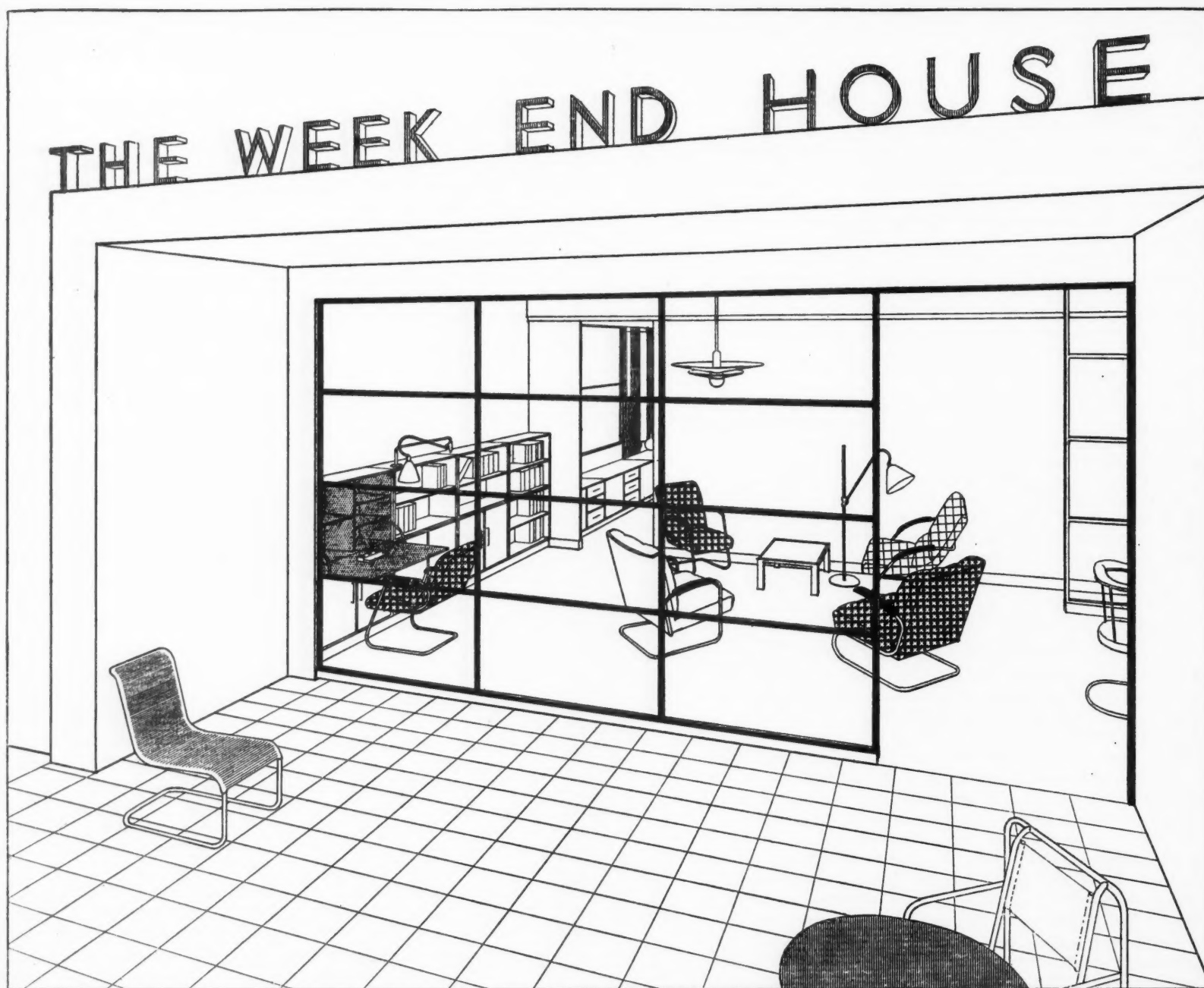
Ever since the war he has been hoping that pre-war conditions will return. All this modern naked stuff, bare walls, bare rooms, nudist movements—they're all symptoms of social upheaval. Presently people will settle back to their normal ways and want stuff that has some skill and ornament about it; anyway, most people want it still, but they can't afford to buy owing to the insane wages Labour has to be paid; can't produce the stuff cheaply if there's to be any profit. All this nonsense about new design: why, it means laying down thousands in new plant, spending good money to give people gim-crack made-in-Germany looking stuff. It's un-English. Worse. It's un-practical.

The firm was founded by his great-grandfather, and its grown to its present size by making things solid, not making 'em flashy. What's the good of some of these larky young buyers showing him glittering affairs from some Viennese bazaar and saying: "Why don't you make something like that?" What his father made and sold thousands of is good enough for him, and when the world gets back to normal then people'll be wanting the same good old solid stuff again. People, the British public, don't change, though the world gets out of joint now and then. Designers —? Well, young Alf (though he's nearly sixty now) who began in the pattern shop when he was a lad knows what we want, and he's always been handy with a pencil—got an eye for colour too. We don't want any art in our business.



WHAT DOES THE PUBLIC WANT?

Photograph the interiors of twenty homes taken at random in any street of £1,200 to £2,000 houses in any suburb, and the answer is: the public doesn't know what it wants. Signs indicate in hundreds of homes that people would often like to have surroundings that either they can't get or haven't sufficient patience to seek. Ask anyone who deals with the home furnishing and equipment perplexities of the public, and you will learn that a heartening majority of men and women has better taste and saner judgement in the shape and colour and fitness of the things that go into their homes than this nation of shopkeepers suspects.



Serge Chermayeff's drawing room for a week-end house exhibited at Dorland Hall (ground floor). The exhibit is part of a projected structural unit which includes an entrance hall and kitchen in addition to the living-dining room, two bedrooms and bathroom shown. This unit bungalow dwelling is the basis of further structural elaborations. The view is from the garden side of the house, through the large living-room window which slides in two sections into a cavity in the wall. The opening in the rear wall leads into a large bedroom. The dimensions throughout are designed for a uniform,

economical method of construction including the use of 'Plan' furniture units.

The frames to all the windows and to the screen to the dining recess are of anodised stainless steel. The partition facing the large window is faced with walnut ply with a clear wax finish. The desk, cupboards and bookcases are of dark oak. The interior of the desk is cellulosed red. The chairs have chromium plated tube frames and detachable cushions. The floors throughout are covered with white linoleum and the terrace is paved with 8 in. by 12 in. buff tiles.

Scenario for a National Exhibition

THE heading for this report of the "Exhibition of British Industrial Art in Relation to the Home" at the Dorland Hall is not chosen in derision. On the very contrary, for this comes nearest to the realization of the dream of what such things should be, of any that we have yet had. It is in sum an excellent, intelligent and stimulating show.

In the first place every exhibit has passed the scrutiny and won the approval of a selection committee—nothing is here merely because its maker or seller is willing and able to pay for it. In the second, this Exhibition is not a money-making venture (should there be any surplus from the contributions of exhibitors and from the shillings of the public it will form the nucleus of an Exhibition Fund). And both these points are vital if we are to have exhibitions worthy of the name, representative of what is really significant in our design and manufacture, and valuable as honourable and effective advertisements in the foreign as well as in the home markets.

Some attempt must in justice be made to give the credit for this venture where it is due. A large share of it must go to Mr. Oliver Hill and to the Editor and Proprietors of *Country Life*. All appear on the list of financial guarantors; but they must also be credited with the ideas and much of the energetic work which has gone to the making of the show. Others no doubt have contributed indirectly, for the plan of such an Exhibition has been long in the minds of many—of both the pioneer and the younger members of the D.I.A., who have indeed organized and financed much smaller sectional exhibitions on the same essential model; of Sir William Crawford, who has frequently urged the necessity of this approach and policy; of Mr. Mansfield Forbes and others.

And yet with all its virtues and its significant measure of substantial achievement it is rather scenario than finished script. Not a little of it is irrelevant and needs blue-pencilling. If we are thinking in National terms the scale is inadequate and can only be enlarged sufficiently when there is official Government backing and financing, after the example of all the civilized nations of Europe. It happens

to be the English method to break the hearts and empty the purses of the pioneers by way of testing the validity of their ideas. It was not always so. "Back to Prince Albert," in spirit though not in detail, would make a suitable slogan for the movement.

The names of the members of the selection and executive committees of the Exhibition should be on record *honoris causa*, and will besides be an excellent shorthand summary of the general scope, spirit and direction of the Exhibition.

Display and Design: Messrs. Oswald Milne, Wells Coates, Gordon Forsyth, Oliver Hill (the official architect to the Exhibition), H. Trethowan and S. Chermayeff. *Furniture and Equipment*: Messrs. John Gloag, Raymond McGrath, J. C. Rogers and P. A. Wells. *Kitchens*: Messrs. Wells Coates and Raymond McGrath and Mrs. Darcy Braddell. *Pottery and Glass*: Messrs. Gordon Forsyth, W. A. Thorpe, H. Trethowan, Raymond McGrath. *Silver and Metal*: Messrs. G. R. Hughes, Harold Stabler, J. J. Hodges and P. H. Jowett. *Textiles and Furnishing*: The

Misses Dorothy Todd and Muriel Harris and Messrs. E. McK. Kauffer and R. F. Wilson. *Books and Book Production*: Messrs. A. J. A. Symons, Philip James and Lionel McColvin.

It is an admirable thing that the talented younger forward-looking men like Wells Coates, McGrath and Chermayeff should have been given so free a hand (we regret the absence of Mr. Joseph Emberton) and it reflects a liberal outlook in the chief begetters of the Exhibition who cannot be supposed altogether to share their views and temper.

The Exhibition is indeed entirely in a contemporary or forward-regarding mood. There is nothing in the way of reproduction of period pieces or moods. The modernity is sane; and nothing or, perhaps here one should in candour say, little has been passed in merely because it is odd or angular or violent. The modern note has had for the first time the opportunity of explaining itself to the reasonably intelligent, both to those with a traditional bias like the present reporter, and to those with open minds who yet are not going to be stampeded by mere fashion and alert *réclame*.

The very excellence of the Exhibition in general in its setting and in its detail, makes any comprehensive enumeration of the good things in it impossible in any other than a perfunctory way which would be to do injustice. One notes honoured names of firms who have been long in the forward movement and helping to form the conditions and temper which have made this Exhibition possible—such firms as Heals, Carter's, Gordon Russell, Carter Stabler



1. Living-room "kernel" of Type A House, designed by Serge Chermayeff, looking towards the dining corner—a view continuing the drawing opposite, on the extreme right edge of which can be seen one of the Pel tubular steel chairs of the dinner-table.

and Adams, Wedgwood, Curwen Press (here showing Edward Bawden's delicate-toned wallpapers), Dryad, Foxton. One notes, with the greater joy reserved not for the just but the hitherto less just, Doulton's of Lambeth, Booth's of Tunstall, Spode's, Stevens and Williams, Thomas Webb's and Corbett, Tibbenham's, Trollope's in the list of converts.

The furnishing of the various model rooms makes it once for all clear that maybe Queen Anne is definitely dead. Severity and functionalism are the order of the new day. We miss a certain graciousness, experience a certain chill maybe—but that only fogeyism. It is interesting to note that new and technically satisfactory joints have been devised, or copied from continental pioneers, for the plywoods that are so clearly come to take a permanent place in the new furniture: and that increasing production bids fair to lower the costs of what has hitherto been a too expensive simplicity. But such generalisations are unilluminating and tedious.

A criticism that must be voiced is that there is much in this Exhibition which is too obviously expensive to be of practical interest to the ordinary man, or to be in the least in harmony with the general drift of the Gorell Report or according to the mind of its inspirer, Mr. William Graham. As the Gorell Report is claimed as a sort of sponsor and Lord Gorell himself contributes a preface to the catalogue, the point is worth making. Mr. Oliver Hill's glass ensemble—a bedroom with floor of heavy glass tesserae (about 6 in. by 6 in. by 1½ in.), glass dressing table, glass couch or bed, panelled wall of dull-silvered plate-glass—is obviously not presented seriously as a bedroom, not even as a lark for the millionairesses, but rather, one supposes, as an exercise in their craft for the glass-makers of Messrs. Pilkington's; but it would have been better by way of practical propaganda, both for them and for the Exhibition, that they should have exercised it on something more to the point. It gives the hostile a handle. Of this whole exhibit only the glass panel with the brilliant-cut (that is engraved with emery wheel) figure had real beauty or conceivable application, and then only for the very rich, or for the decoration of public places of entertainment. The interesting experiments by several firms under the direction of Mr. Raymond McGrath, towards the effective treatment of walls with engraved and coloured glass have a similar air of expensiveness and of irrelevance so far as the ordinary



home is concerned. For gay wall coverings in haunts of pleasure they have already proved themselves. The engraved "Ascent of Lunardi's Balloon," framed in plates of plate and black opal glass, and the exceedingly interesting engraving, "sandblasted and acid-edged on Cambridge blue plate, 'A Balcony in Cordova'" will repay careful study and induce intelligent questions to the technicians in attendance. Mr. Hills' "white" bedroom—obviously calculated to make the ordinary poor bourgeois gasp and stretch his eyes—is another irrelevance so charming in detail as to deserve forgiveness and extort admiration. Messrs. Cohen's furniture in veneered sycamore, the beautiful hand-quilted bedspread by home-workers organized under the Rural Industries Bureau, the luxurious white rug by Marion Dorn are all admirable; and various

2. The Entrance Vestibule, floored in imitation marble, inlaid in red and silver glass mosaics. Man and Woman—Genesis and Gestation—by Charles Wheeler, are flanked by symbolic trophies of the implements of husbandry and handicrafts, ranging from the simplest to the most complex, to represent the ultimate cunning of the human hand. The curved wall on the left is panelled with different Empire timber veneers.

pranks in the way of flower fantasies harp on a deliberate note of gay irresponsibility. Messrs. Arundell Clarke, a firm which has made its own distinguished place in a very short time in the modern movement, unhampered by tradition, presents "The Study of a Ruling Prince," a "modern office of a present-day monarch or even of a professional business man" to add a dash of envy or discouragement to the burdened taxpayer in a day of economic depression. The Prince will be comfortable.



This bedroom at the Exhibition of British Industrial Art has been planned to show the relationship of natural and artificial lighting to the disposition of the furnishing. It is a bedroom in a modern building, in which built-in furniture has been made possible by conceiving the building and its furniture as one unit. The bedroom suite has disappeared and the whole floor-space of the room has been planned for usefulness. The incorporation of the writing-desk makes the bedroom a double-purpose room. The colour-scheme is lemon-yellow and chartreuse, with a carpet in black and vermillion. The wall covering is an embossed lincrusta designed by the architect. The upholstery fabric (ECLIPSE) is also the architect's design. The furniture is in English ash, with black bakelite knobs on vermillion discs. Features of the room are the double-sided revolving mirror in a bronze frame and the adjustable reading desk (for the bed) on an extending arm.

Architect : Raymond McGrath.
Craftsmen : Trollope & Sons.

PLATE iii

July 1933



Mr Wells Coates has conscientiously addressed himself to a modern problem—accommodation for forward-regarding persons of culture with orderly minds and modest purses. He has designed for Isokon Limited a block of flats—"Minimum Flats" single unit for the single and double for the mated—and a replica of an actual flat for a single person of either sex is reproduced in the Exhibition complete with the Isokon unit furniture also designed by Mr. Coates. It is a brilliant feat of intelligent compression, intelligent because the problem—harmony of wide views and narrow means—has been kept consistently in mind, and ideas are carried to a logical conclusion. A highly satisfactory æsthetic effect is the result, not of conscious attention to æsthetic problems, but flows from an entirely practical plan for the compact provision of the available modern apparatus for living. The dead rent of this minimum flat is but £52 a year—welcome harbinger of a new way of life.

No one who has seen this will be content with the unhandiness and drab squalor of the usual bed-sitting-room method of living.

Mr. Chermayeff presents a solution on radically similar lines of a comely week-end cottage (at one and three-

pence a cubic foot). Compression does not here take so heroic or austere a form—one supposes that the modern young man, having moved from a Coates single flat with his charming wife into a double flat in the Isokon block, has now graduated (and collected the modest means necessary) for the possession of the Chermayeff retreat, and clearly a new race will obviously be evolved in this stimulating environment. The standard furniture and the remarkably comfortable, practical, cleanable spring chairs are worth detailed examination in this attractive exhibit; housewives should not miss the solution of bed-making in the Chermayeff bed. All are products of a modernist organization trading under the style of *Plan Ltd.*

The attractive collection of china, set out in a well-designed and well-lighted room forms a pleasing contrast to the mournful acres of the British Industries Fair. Perhaps the selectors might have set a stricter standard. No one should miss the excellent little Folk-jokes invented by children of the Burslem School of Art, with their charming spontaneity and really vigorous movement. And in this room, particularly worth detailed examination, is the silversmith's work. The enlightened policy of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths in its efforts to improve the standard products of mass production in the trade through the encouragement of craftsmen designers, is seen to have borne excellent fruit. It should serve as an example to other trade organizations.

Electric light fittings show too consistent a preference for chromium plating to interest the economically depressed. It is a great pity that we cannot here take a leaf out of the continental book.

The short purse, not the long, should be more in the minds of both organizers and exhibitors.

One remarkable exhibit which should certainly not be missed, is the surprisingly fine wall decoration in polished Portland stone (rivaling Travertine or Hopton Wood) used to decorate the walls of the austere trillionaire's dining-room designed by Mr. Oliver Hill. Mr. Eric Gill has incised, with a brilliant certainty of execution no other craftsmen can rival, a very jolly design of men and maidens. Whereby hangs an edifying tale. This was originally intended for the decoration of a railway hotel in a northern sea-side town. But certain projections incident to the human figure would, so the directors thought, unduly disturb the northern breast, and the design was accordingly jettisoned. "Oh, God; Oh, Montreal!" as Butler commented in similar circumstances now many years ago.

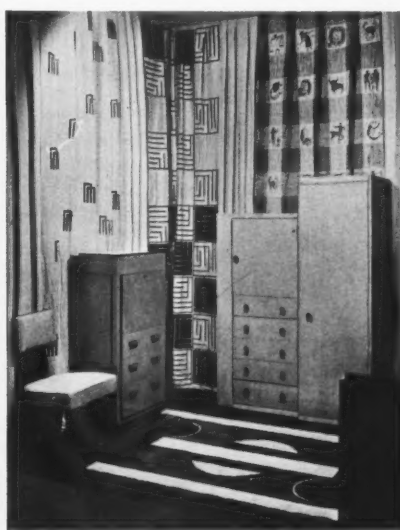
It is much to be hoped that when the R.A. and the R.S.A. in association make their contribution to the general problem here so promisingly attacked, they will in no way let down the standard here set but raise it, and will take occasion from the one serious defect in this admirable Exhibition, the appeal to the long purse, to give their show a direction more in accord with the economic conditions of the time. They might further profitably use their influence to make some breach in the defences of antiquated building laws which stand in the way of modern building—defences of which the strength lies in British conservatism and inertia, and in a complex of ugly forces, two of which can be given a name—vested interests and (if we go deep enough) corruption.

JOSEPH PETER THORP

3. The Main Hall—miscellaneous laminated and casing materials, ligneous, lithic and metallic, etc., dominated by a triangular stainless steel pylon, and two daffodil-headed indirect-lighting columns of the type used in the newer Underground stations. The furniture on the left consists of a chest and pairs of hall tables veneered in padauk, macassar ebony and sycamore. An otherwise satisfactory vista is spoilt by a very incongruous display of door-fittings. 4 shows the stand of Hartigan hand-printed bolton sheetings, linen and satins from designs by Riette Sturge Moore. 5. The Textile Gallery. This is undoubtedly the best collective exhibit of all, though the draping might be better; and one which could not be equalled on the Continent.



3



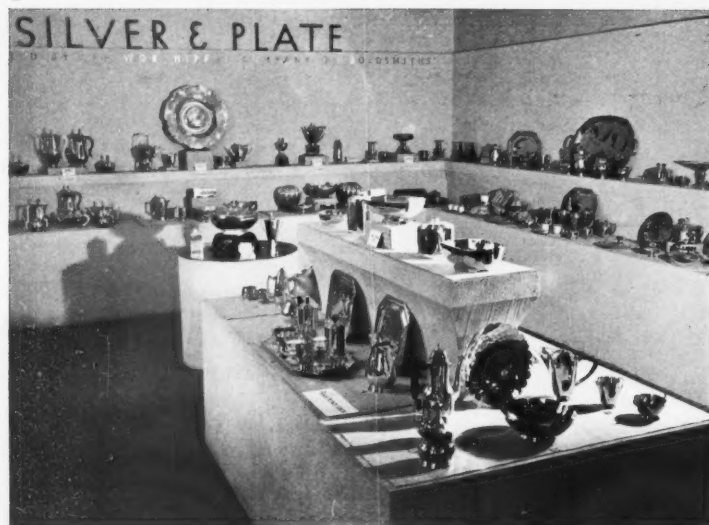
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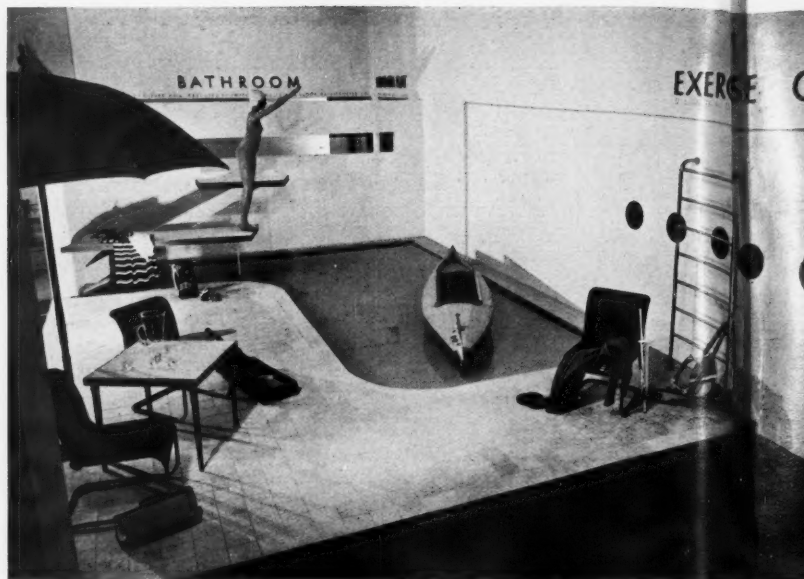
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The Glass Section, 6, deserves all the higher praise because so little industrial glass could be included. What this admirably sparing display does show is the really astonishing progress made by British glass in every field, and especially in design, during the last few years. In the background is the convex "Planetarium Structure" mirror: an illuminated sand-blasted design, based on the inter-woven reinforcement of a Dywidag concrete dome, by Walter Goodesmith. Right, Orlak ovenware, by Harold Stabler, and above sheets of various figured, rolled and cathedral glasses. 7. The Silver Section, if of high quality as regards workmanship, is not particularly exciting. Here familiar traditional or semi-traditional forms predominate overwhelmingly, and departure from "the usual thing" is indeed the exception. The presence of some of the ladies' enamelled toilet sets is to be specially regretted. British craftsmanship in silver seems to be a Pirandello character, still in search of an author. Here, as in the Pottery Section, the stands and lighting deserve the warmest praise. 8. The Exercise Court presents a sort of isometric synthesis of modern physical culture and outdoor life—swimming pool, spring-boards, collapsible canoe, a very springy permanent hard tennis-court of a most grassy green, etc.—with one wall to suggest "cruising" with a liner's portholed bulkhead. 9. The Minimum Flat by Wells Coates—a miracle of "Multum in parvo"

compactness without constriction—looking over the bed-settee (with zip-coverlet) to the window forming the opposite wall. The sliding doors lead to a fitted kitchenette and a dressing-room subdivided from an adjacent bathroom-lavatory. The top set of louvres of the copper-cased electric fire accommodates the loud speaker of the radio-set built into the side of it. Identical one-person flats, designed by the same architect, are now under construction in Hampstead. 10. Oliver Hill's "Glass Ensemble"—a room paved with clear glass bricks, in part silvered on the underside. The couch (a very lovely form), small table, ladies' dressing-table and stool are all made of bent bottle-green polished plate glass, 1 to 1½ inches thick. The coved background is faced with ¼ inch matt silvered plate glass of a gunmetal tint, finely stippled on the face. This particular exhibit is not likely to be forgotten, if only as a masterly piece of showmanship. 11. Dining-room table and stools in polished Perrycot Portland stone—a beautiful slabbing material—pay almost lover-like homage to the Josef Hoffman of the Palais Stoclet and the Austrian pavilion in the Paris Exhibition of 1925. The walls, which are faced with the same material, have incised drawings—"High Jinks in Paradise," and "The King Receives His Guests,"—by Eric Gill. In the foreground stands Frank Dobson's now famous "modern mannequin," designed for an enterprising firm of



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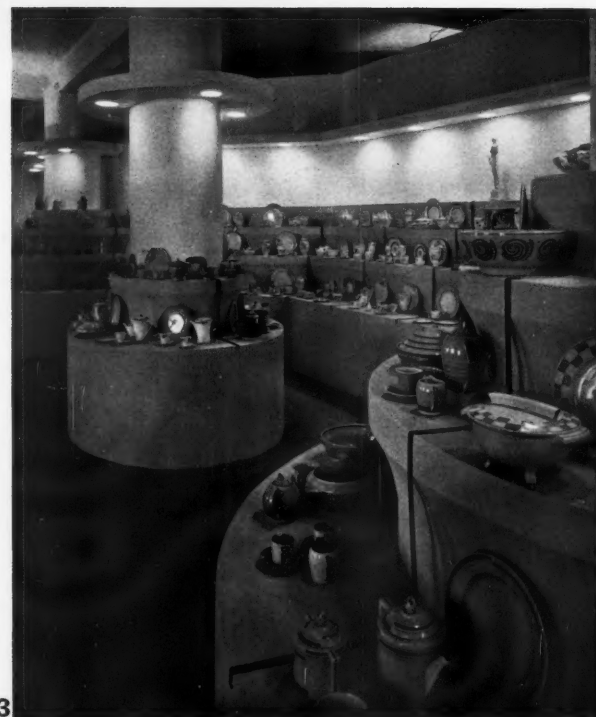
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12

corset manufacturers. 12 shows the charming little Aga Kitchen—a light fawn and scarlet colour scheme—designed by Mrs. Darcy Braddell, with some very well shaped Vitreosel quartz ovenware (right), flat-bottomed Aga cooking utensils (centre), and wire-mesh pot and saucepan racks (left). The Pottery Section, 13 and 14, is representative rather than strictly selective, table-ware predominating. The stoneware is of outstanding merit. There is an encouraging exhibit of studio-potters' work, including several examples sent by the Burslem School of Art. The general effect might have been better had it been possible to group certain undoubtedly "representative" exhibits in a "cautionary corner." Scattered about the shelves they merely destroy all sense, not only of display-unity, but of the very principle which is supposed to have dictated their inclusion. Which is not to say that some of the best crockery in the world does not find a place. Only in form as in colouring there is still far more evidence of hesitancy than of conscious direction: a hesitancy all the more to be regretted because it has caused needless, and sometimes disastrous, modifications of traditional English shapes that no one can ever hope to better.

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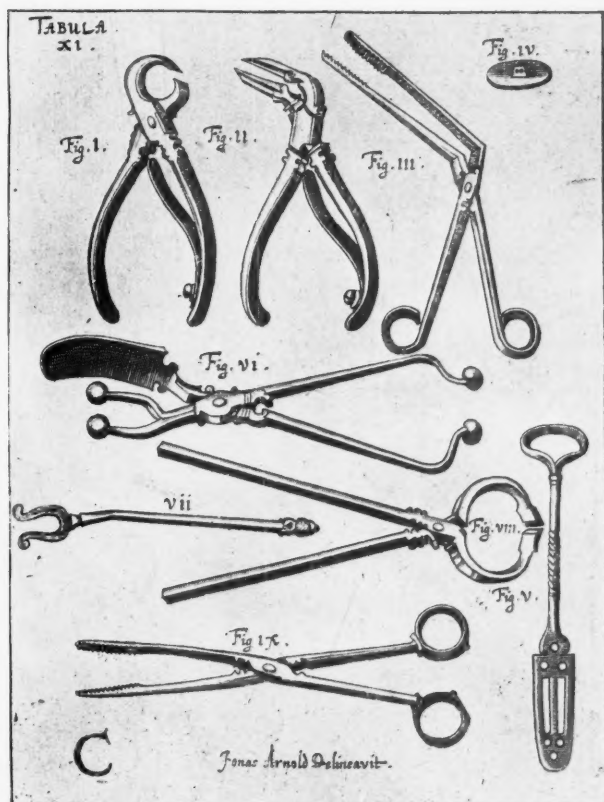
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One of the important problems before us to-day is to discover how art—by which I mean the great potential artistic resources of this country—can best assist industry and the revival of our trade . . . It is not as though we lacked those who have within them the power of design, it is not as though we lacked able and efficient manufacturers. We have both, though it is a British failing to pretend to be less skilful and less intelligent than we are. How best can Art serve industry? There are some who hold that the union can only be fruitful in times of prosperity; for myself, I regard that view as incorrect. I believe that it is in times of difficulty like these that men can most usefully bend their minds to the production of good design.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE GEORGE
at the Royal Academy Banquet, 2nd May, 1932.



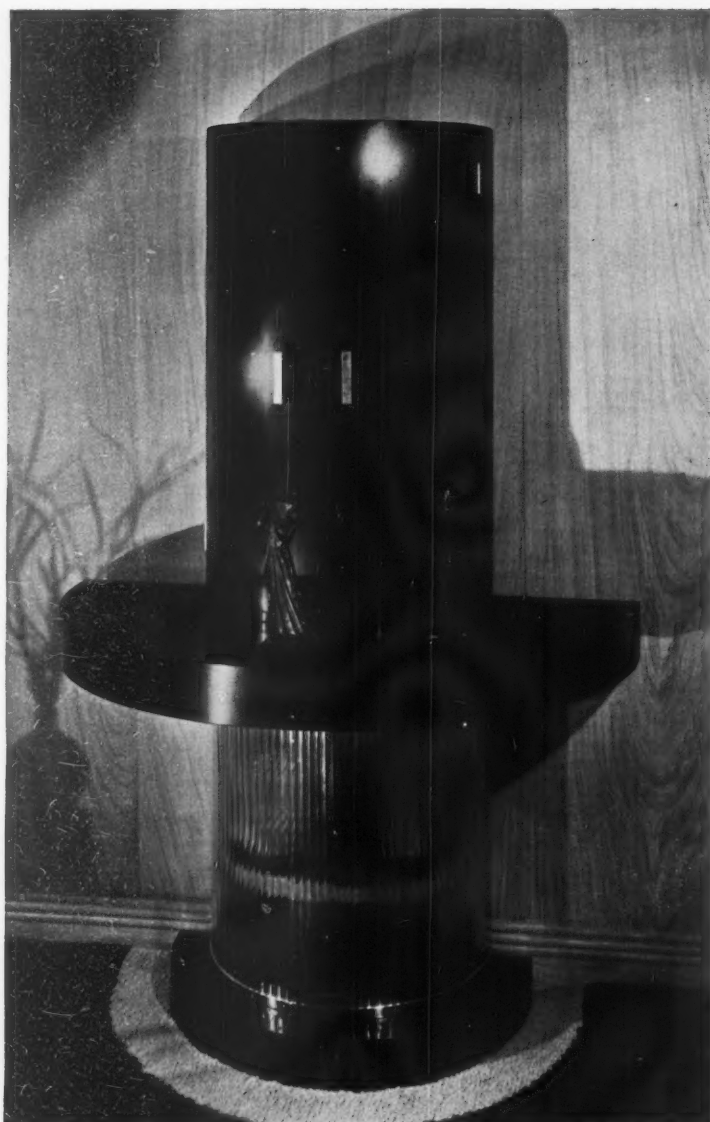
The top picture shows a collection of modern surgical instruments—a needle-holder and different kinds of forceps—photographed by Mr. H. Stevens and reproduced through the kindness of the makers, Messrs. Thomas Arnold. The lower illustration is from D. Joannis Sculteti's "Armamentarium Chirurgicum" (Frankfurt, 1666). Our thanks are due to Mr. Ivor Back for lending us his copy of this exceedingly scarce work. Note the following characteristics in the modern group: simplified one-piece construction; springs omitted, their functions being discharged by the structural members themselves; smooth, streamlined surfaces for greater cleanliness; absence of the earlier almost hierarchical ornament descriptive of the surgeon's position in society.



Towards a Style

● Discussion by

John Gloag
Dorothy Todd
M. L. Anderson
Harry Trethowan
G. R. Hughes
P. Morton Shand



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1. A cocktail cabinet measuring 4 ft. wide by 5 ft. 6 in. high, in ebonized mahogany, dull finish, with chromium mounts. The cabinet comprises a half-circle table or stand supporting the cocktail cabinet proper. Dimensions are so arranged that when the doors of the cabinet are open, their width is the same as that of the table below. Each door carries four glass galleries, while bottles and decanters

are accommodated on shelves inside the cupboard. The projecting portion of the stand serves as a table for drinks when in use. Designer: Maurice Adams. 2. One of a pair of hall tables in weathered sycamore, with padauk inlays. Designer: Oliver Hill. 3. A combined open and closed bookcase made up of "Plan" standard furniture units. The standard finishes are light and dark oak and five stan-

dard colours. Designer: Serge Chermayeff. 4. A radio-gramophone with a case of Nigerian cherry, and a writing chair of the same wood, upholstered in hide. Designer: R. W. Symonds. 5. A walnut desk with a shaded tubular light and silver and ivory handles. On the left is a sunk stationery box. The walnut mirror depicts "the flight of birds." Designer: Michael Dawn. 6. A nest of

JOHN GLOAG: Few periods have been richer in potential influences for distinguished design than our own; and few periods have mishandled their opportunities with such repellent diversity. We have emerged from a phase of rather frightened dependence on tradition in which designers were reluctant to acknowledge the mechanics or the altered scale of their own age, and the procrustean technique they evolved for the solution of contemporary problems of design prevented them from understanding the new methods of production, and the new materials that had been invented. The result was that uncouth exaggerations of familiar architectural forms reduced human beings to the proportions of ants, as if all new buildings had been given a dose of H. G. Wells's "Food of the Gods," and cheap imitations of the most showy objects of the eighteenth century squire's drawing room were crammed into the parlours of semi-detached England, where they gradually disintegrated as the final instalments for their purchase became due.

But although we are saying good-bye to

all that, we have only exchanged tyrants. Tradition has been dethroned, but the dictatorship of the *New Materials* has fastened down any little freedoms designers were hoping to indulge. A sympathetic understanding of the nature and limitations of material has in the past endowed English design with the most agreeable character; but we have exchanged that discerning mastery of materials for the most spineless servitude. Again, "fitness for purpose," which began as a piece of good, basic common sense, has changed into a liturgical formula, which is chanted whenever imagination is exorcised from design.

The struggle to evolve a new technique of design, which will regain the command of materials, is shown very vividly at the Exhibition of British Industrial Art. The furniture exhibits show spirited progress; but it is disheartening to realize that those exhibits represent the exceptions to the ordinary output of the furniture industry. The furniture trade is not quite out of the Jacobean wood, and ever since the 1925 Paris Exhibition it has tried, with the aid

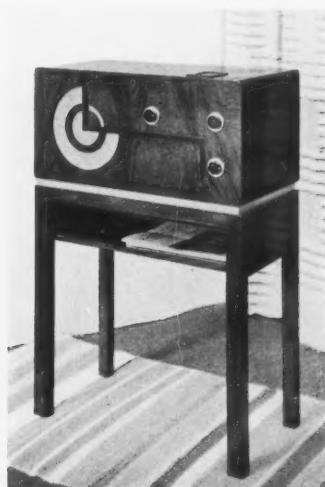
of its hack draughtsmen, to associate the butterfly gaiety of French ornament with the sort of timber nudism practised by such artist-craftsmen as Ernest Gimson and Sidney Barnsley.

Clean surfaces of oak and walnut, innocent of staining, or maybe just limed: that's English, that was! A bit plain? Well, shove in a bit of art! Strip of coloured inlay, or some bosses or swags in fruit salad motifs (so French!), and it's all nicely art-ed up. That is industrial design as interpreted by the bulk of the furniture industry.

Most of the inspiration in furniture design comes from without. From the independent research workers in design. Frequently from architects, who are, of course, the only class in the whole community trained in design, and trained to think logically about materials. The influence of the architect upon the Dorland Hall Exhibition is immense. There are a few individual firms in the furniture trade, controlled by men of taste and aesthetic discretion, who understand how to employ



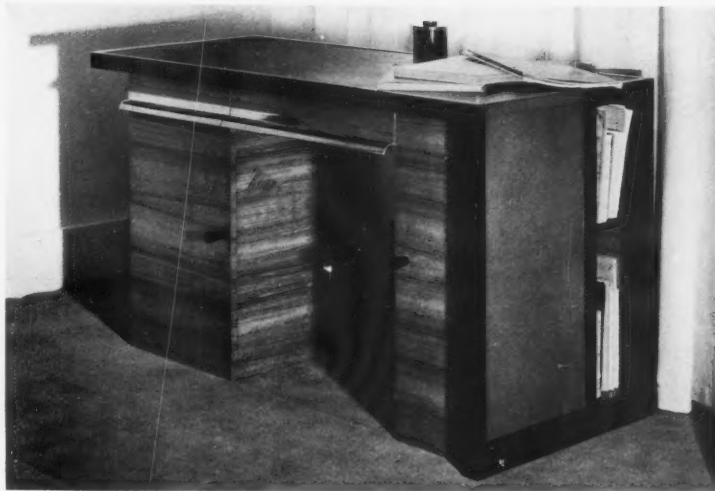
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12

tables in walnut with tops in plate glass. Designer: Charles A. Richter. **7.** A writing table in rosewood and Indian laurel, waxed. The top is panelled with blue celluline. Designers: Pakington, Enthoven and Grey. **8.** A wireless cabinet with a black walnut plinth. The opening over the loudspeaker is grey and blue check silk. Designers: Gordon Russell. **9.** A writing desk and chair in

chromium-plated steel. The top of the desk is black cellulose and the seat of the chair black hide. Designers: Heal's. **10.** A desk in straight-grained walnut with edges of ebony. The top and end are in morocco finished leather, the colour of terra cotta. The door handles are ebony and the drawer handles stainless steel. Designer: Rodney Thomas. **11.** A telephone stand, 28 in. high, in Nigerian

cherry. Designer: R. W. Symonds. **12.** A secretaire in sycamore, with applied top and sides in macassar ebony, standing on square macassar ebony feet. The interior is also macassar ebony. The front is pulled down by means of a special hinge so that no ratchet or chain is necessary. Designers: Hartigans.



13

designers or who are designers themselves. (They can be counted on the fingers of a one-handed man.)

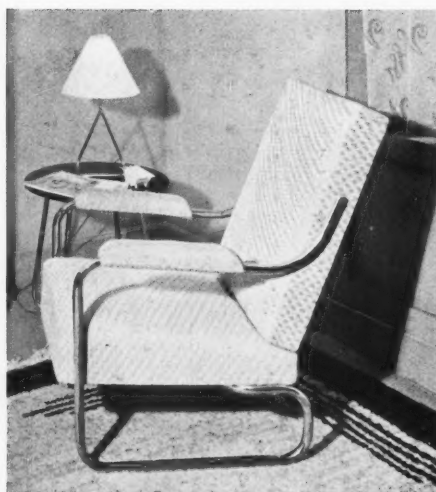
In any glance at contemporary furniture, we can usually find three broad classifications. The rustic school, or wood, dear wood, naked and unashamed. The mechanistic robotesque school, softened by a few concessions to coarse, commonplace ideas of comfort. And the people who use imagination and not creeds for the shaping of their designs. In this last category most of the accompanying illustrations find a place, notably the table and cocktail cabinet, designed by Maurice Adams, 1. Another example of the urbane control of materials and the attainment of good proportion is the carving table in cellulosed white wood, designed by Messrs. Pakington, Enthoven and Gray, 7. Another

bland and wholly admirable solution to the problem of seating is illustrated by the chair designed by Serge Chermayeff, 16.

In quite another category is the chair made of steel tubing and bent plywood. This represents the simplest adjustment of two malleable materials to accommodate a human posture, as intelligent in its sleek functionalism as that almost perfect traditional design, the Windsor chair. Many of the chair designs that have tubular frames are slender descendants of a wood-framed prototype. The early eighteenth century easy chair is manifestly the ancestor of the easy chair by Pel, 17.

Most periods have produced not only distinctive styles of furniture, but some distinctive pieces of furniture related to some new invention in comfort or manners. Our opportunity has been the gramophone and the radio cabinet; and how we have used it! Disguise has been allowed to run amok! The radio cabinet designed by Gordon Russell, 8, is a cheering exception.

Where design is approached from the point of view of knuckling under to materials, something sub-human is usually produced; but, as the examples on these pages suggest and the Exhibition of British Industrial Art demonstrates, gracious and exciting and fine things may be designed when adventurous and intelligent use is made of the abundant new materials, and modern processes of production are understood.



14



15

13. A low easy chair covered in "vaumol" hide and cream tapestry. Designers: Heal's. 14. An easy chair with a frame of chromium-plated steel tube, upholstered in linen damask in lemon and beige colours. The small table has a chromium-plated steel tube frame and wood top, cellulosed black. The table lamp has a chromium-plated steel tube frame, and parchment lampshade. Designers: Bowman Brothers. 15. A tubular steel chair which is upholstered in either hide, rexine or fabric. Designers: Pel. 16. An armchair sprung on patent steel band suspension. The upholstery is easily removable on the motor car press-button principle. Designer: Serge Chermayeff. 17. An easy chair with a frame of mild steel tubing, chromium plated, and upholstered in fabric. Designers: Pel.



16

REGISTERED DESIGN



17

DOROTHY TODD: Your remarks, Mr. Gloag, bring to my mind the classic advice to a man who was learning to ride a bicycle: Look where you are going, John, and not where you aren't!

All this vague indictment of the period is trailing not so much a herring as a whale across the path of the average man.

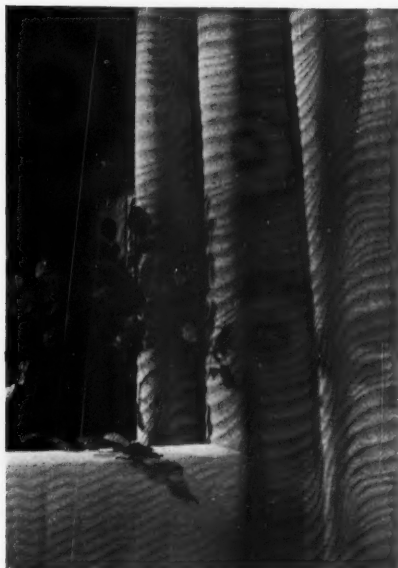
For our period has already produced a style, and a style of considerable beauty (and of this there are certain recognized modifications). You may not like it, Mr. Gloag, I suspect that you don't . . . indeed, I seem to read between your lines that utterly damnable heresy, an *English* style. Sadly, I note as I read, Mr. Gloag, our opinions differ. . . . we have here no space at our disposal to argue æsthetic directions . . . *partie remise*, I hope, Mr. Gloag, merely *partie remise*! But in one particular, we appear to agree. If I understand you rightly, it is not so much the *period* which grieves you (for that, admittedly, has produced some master minds), as that confusion which is the inevitable concomitant of Democracy.

Art, like manners, cannot be acquired in a day. Its cultivation demands a long and arduous training. Its successful application in our field will be dependent on its previous absorption into the very fibre of the individual. We shall not, then (with rare exceptions), expect our manufacturer to be an artist. He will aim rather at the point of view of the enlightened (cultured!) amateur. And this will enable him to select wisely, from the offerings of persons (presumably) creatively endowed. Notions of art too rapidly acquired, and ill digested, render little service. Your manufacturer wears them uncomfortably, as a garment in which he does not yet feel at home. They have led him, in the past, if I may say so, into something perilously akin to *social faux pas*. And from such a dilemma as that, some life-buoy other than art is required to save him.

Now, it is my contention, Mr. Gloag, that what at present gives the foreign manufacturer an advantage is his wider horizon, his saner and more civilized approach to the problem of living. He has, in short, more often made an effort to cultivate that special art known as "being a man of the world." Whereas we, for



18



19



20

18. A hand-printed artificial silk curtain fabric printed in lengths to suit the varying heights of rooms. The stool is upholstered in a printed cotton. Both designs are by H. J. Bull. 19. The fabric shown at the right-hand side of this picture is called **WASDALE**. It is a covering or hanging cloth made of heavy cotton warp and worsted weft, and is made in beige and natural white wool. The other fabric is a ripple-waved hanging cloth called **AILSA**, of mercerised cotton warp and wool weft. It is made in white on beige, blue on white and yellow on white. Designers: The Edinburgh Weavers. 20. Two fabrics. The one in the foreground is a python skin pattern—



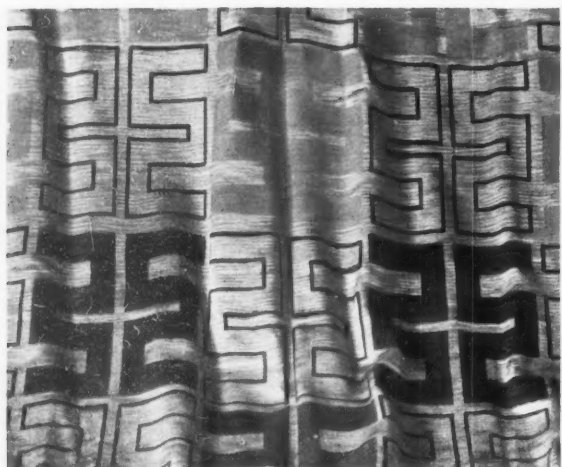
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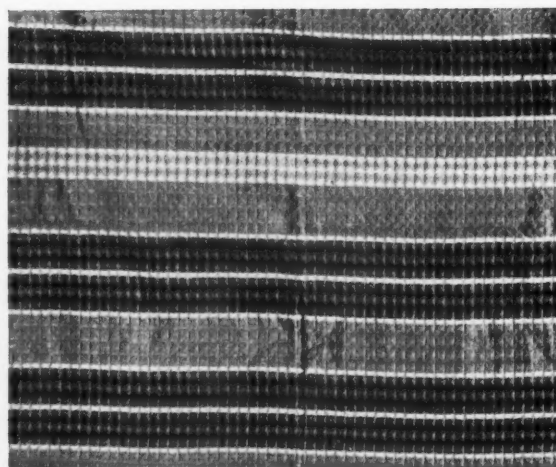
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Plate iv. Top. IBEX.
A hand-blocked printed glazed chintz, designed by Professor Aufseesser. **Bottom. CRANE.**
A screen printed glazed chintz. Designer: R. A. Silver. Craftsmen: Warner and Sons.

Plate v. One of the PLAIS-TOW wallpapers. Designer: Edward Bawden. Craftsmen: The Curwen Press.



23



24

many years, in England have been all too willing to sink into provincialism. I am not using that word in its strictly topographical sense. In my meaning, London has been, and often still is, as provincial as Seattle or Marseilles. And that, for the centre of the Empire, is not as it should be!

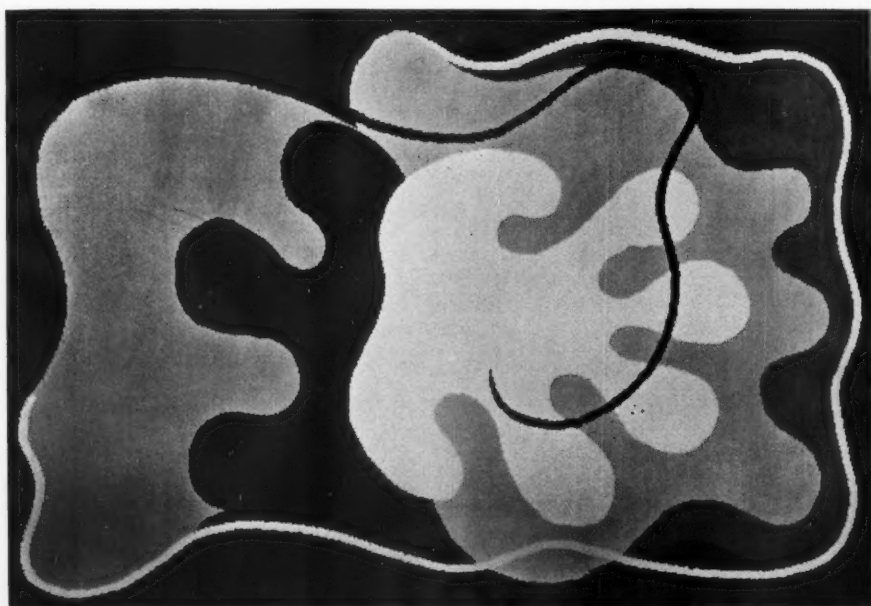
Yes, yes . . . as far as smartness is concerned, I recognize an ever present conflict in the British spirit. But persistently to swim against the current inevitably makes for stagnation. And however delightful our arcadian day dreams may prove to be in the country, the life of a city today, even in England, demands an unflinching recognition of the twentieth century spirit.

It is not for us, now, to assess the final measure of the age in which we live. It is for us to analyse and exploit its essential characteristics along the lines of their logical development. Only so can we hope to avoid that most tiresome of vulgarities, *pastiche*. Only so can we hope to achieve something of value and vitality for all time.

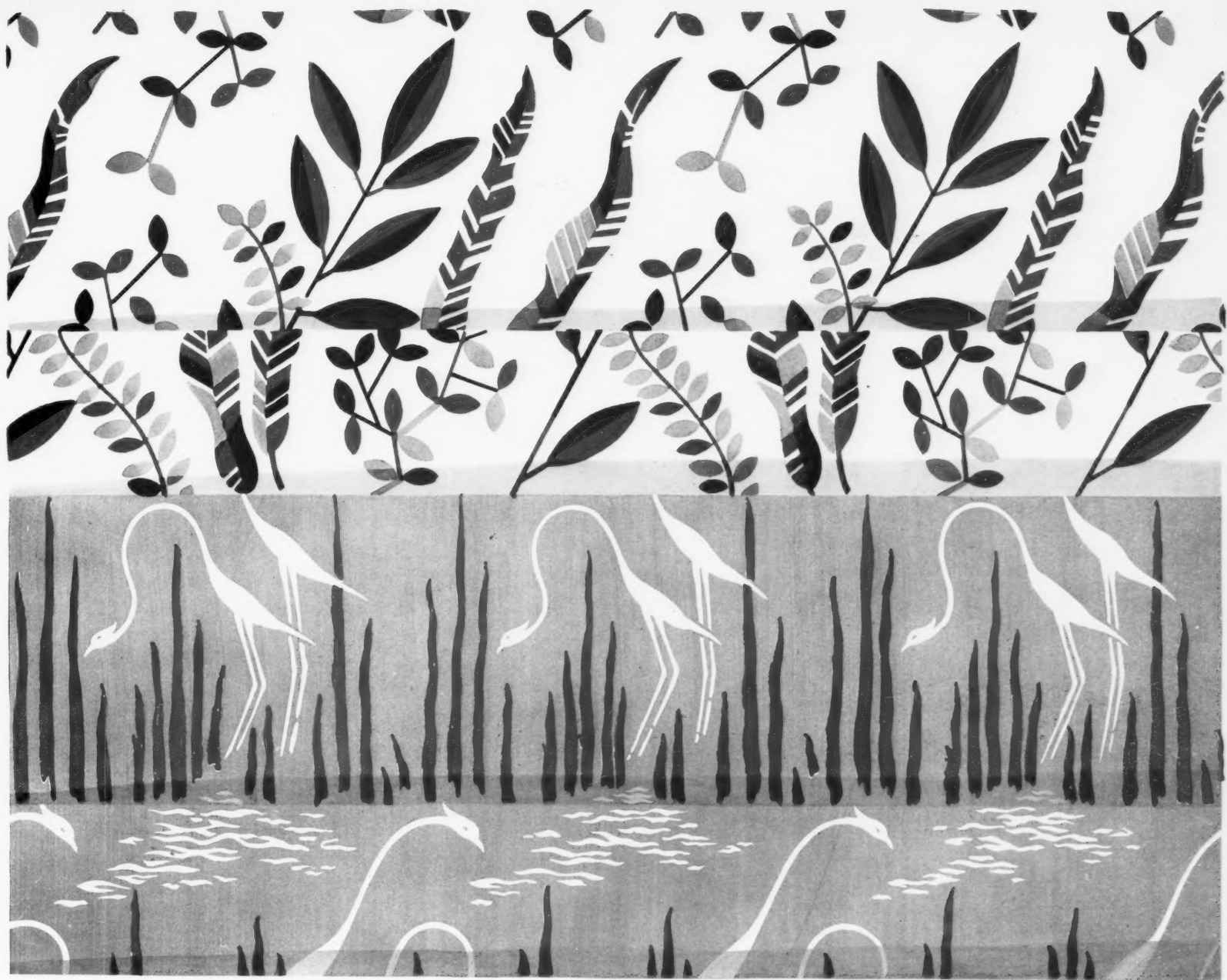
Among those who intelligently have studied the spirit of the age, Donald Bros. and The Edinburgh Weavers stand out, with Allan Walton (in a different *genre*). Certain of the latter's productions Dufy himself has not surpassed. Old Bleach, a newer arrival in this field, has made an admirable contribution. Among designers especial praise is due to Elspeth Little, to Riette Sturge Moore, to E. McKnight Kauffer and to Marion Dorn. I would also draw everybody's attention to Messrs. Sanderson's Finella wall-paper, designed by Raymond McGrath, and to the unique and distinguished output of the Royal Wilton Carpet Factory.

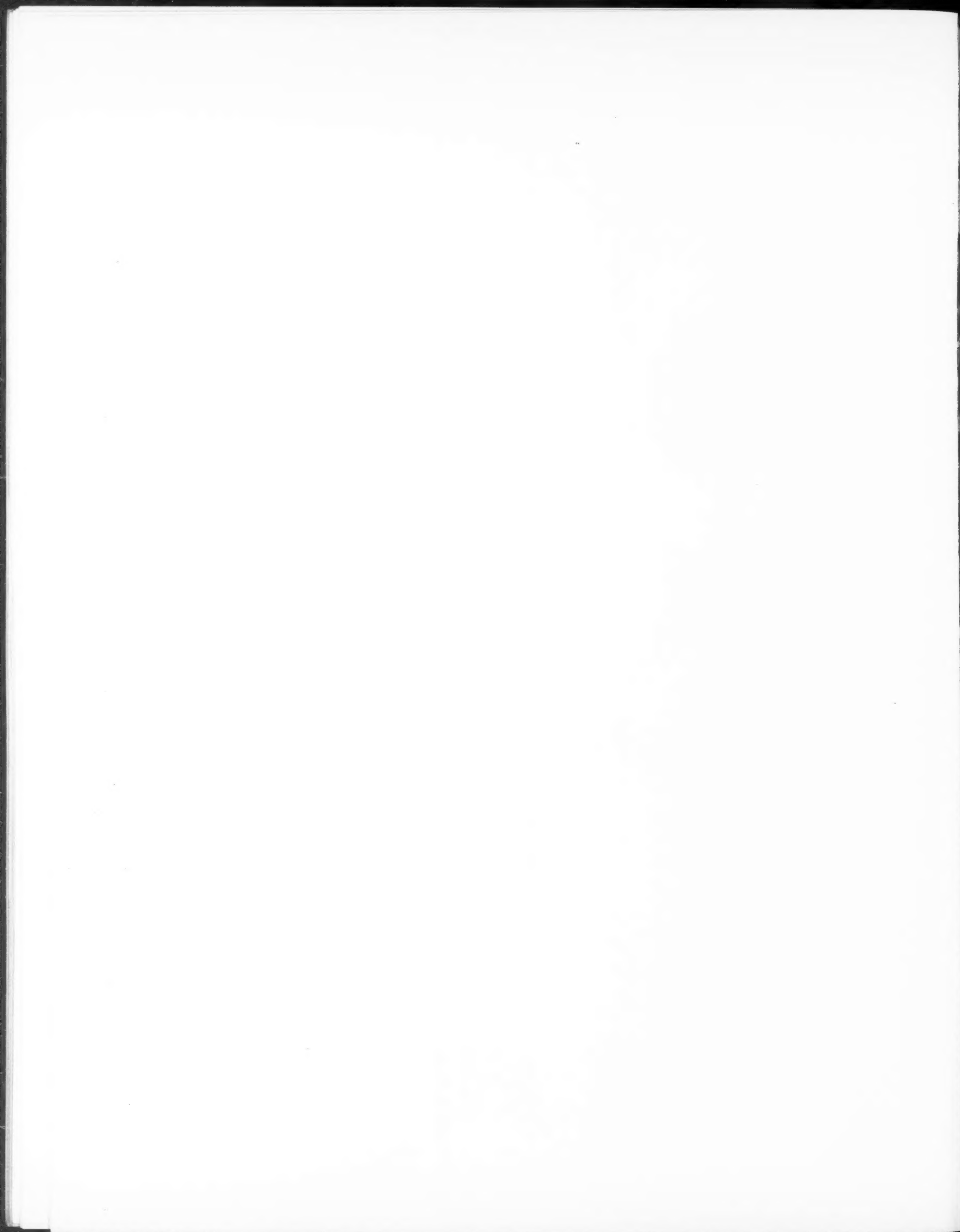
—and the other an adaptation of the old Italian flame stitch. Both fabrics are made in a variety of colours, including black and white, coral and white, and green and white. Designers: The Old Bleach Linen Company. **21. THE MULBERRY.** A pure, rough silk curtain material woven in a coarse twill effect. The colour is the pale cream of natural undyed silk. Designers: Warner Brothers. **22.** Part of a hand-printed cotton fabric designed by Duncan Grant.

23. Hand-blocked satin, designed in red and white squares on a silver ground, by Riette Sturge Moore. **24.** A honeycomb linen hanging cloth in a black, white and natural design. It is also made in black, yellow and natural, green, natural and orange, and rust, natural and green. Designers: W. Foxton. **25.** A hand-tufted rug in brown, black, cream, brick-red and three shades of grey. Designer: E. McKnight Kauffer.



25





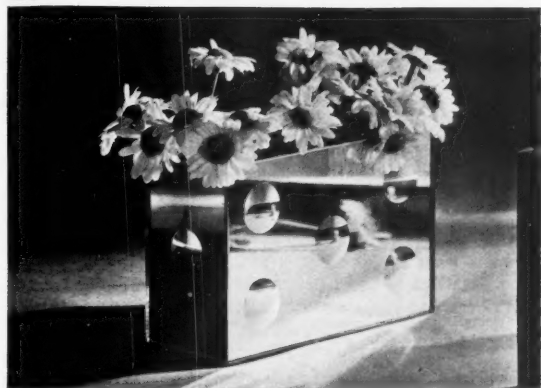


THE JOURNAL OF THE

26. Heat-resisting laboratory glassware. From left to right : A special Pattern Conical Flask ; Conical Flask ; Globular Flask ; Extraction Flask ; Globular Flask. The pleasing shapes of these pieces are accidental, being produced purely and simply out of long experience and by careful consideration of purpose of use, material and method of manufacture. Designers : Chance Brothers. 27. A deep tank for flowers or plants in mirror silver, with small mirrors inset. The length is 9 in. by 6 in. by 3½ in. across. This is a French model copied by Hetley and Sons. 28. Simple cylinder vases. Designers : Fortnum and Mason



26



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28



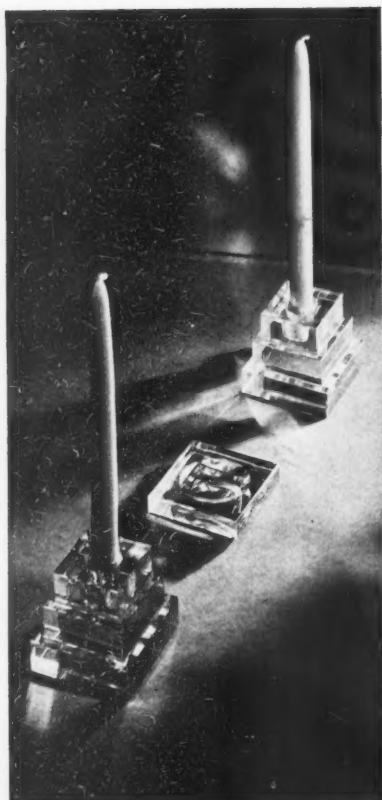
M. L. ANDERSON : "A sympathetic understanding of the nature and limitations of material has in the past endowed English design with the most agreeable character," says Mr. Gloag, very properly. But later : "Where design is approached from the point of view of *knuckling under to materials* something sub-human is usually produced." (The italics are mine.)

I am confident, Mr. Gloag, that you do not yourself really believe what you say in that latter sentence, which is a dangerous one to have uttered! So many *soi-disant* industrial designers do believe it ; which largely accounts for our standard of design today. And where a fine æsthetic quality is found it can be traced, in great part, to just such a "knuckling under" by the designer, not only to his materials, but to the manufacturing process as well. Even architects, who, as Mr. Gloag says, are "trained to think logically about materials," have been known to let an ambition get the

better of their understanding of the material in which they happened to be working. I myself have more than once seen the results of this ; many manufacturers, even, are familiar with it. "Materials" should be able to sue designers for criminal libel, for no human being would allow himself to be so publicly and so basely abused.

When the designer of taste and sensibility does truly understand the nature of his medium and the manner of its making, he seldom produces anything but likeable (if not scholarly) objects. And the most that we can expect is that the manufacturer shall be able to select such designers ; that, as you, Miss Todd, have said, without being himself an artist, he shall appreciate the view-point of the "enlightened amateur."

In all this matter of the understanding of material and process, there is no better example than glass. It is *possible* (God knows, it is more than that !) to do queer



29

29. Candlesticks of plain clear glass, 4 in. high and 3½ in. across the base. The ash-tray is mirror. These designs are a French model. 30. A hand-made liqueur set in clear flint glass, with milk white stopper, feet and stems. Designer: Barnaby Powell. 31. Glass bowl and jug designed by Frank Brogen. 32. A heavy, cut crystal vase designed by Keith Murray. 33. A new mirror plateau with an irregular silvered back. It is 21 in. long and 13 in. wide. The design is a French model. 34. Thin sherry decanters and glasses designed by Keith Murray. 35. Bowl, vase, and lamp vase in hand-made blown glass of pale



30

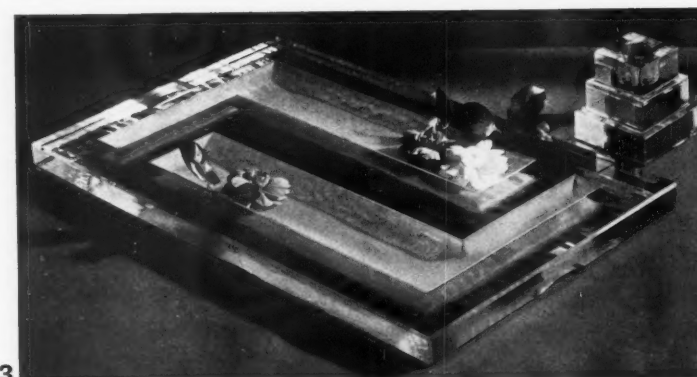
tints of seagreen, blue and gold amber, with applied ribbon decoration of self colours: Designer: Barnaby Powell. 36. Sixpence each at Woolworth's! At such a price elaboration is out of the question; and yet somebody has been unable to resist the temptation to interfere in two cases with pure form, and the decorated lips are the ruination of otherwise harmless shapes. The second and fourth glasses from the left show a brilliant appreciation of the natural character of glass, and narrowly miss real scholarship of design. 37. An engraved crystal bowl designed by Keith Murray.



31



32



33

things with glass: to start with a good shape and to ruin it with superficial ornament; or, more commonly, to start with no shape at all (to call a shape) and smother it with brilliant cutting so that it looks no worse. But does that suggest *understanding* of anything very much?

Glass in itself is invisible, in that it is transparent. In itself it has no aesthetic quality; clear glass in a window is without intrinsic beauty. But glass is capable of producing beauty when it is properly handled and its true nature is understood; when, that is to say, the peculiar qualities of the material are all taken into account, studied and used in partnership with the purpose of the object to be made and the manner of its making.

Laboratory ware in glass, 26, is the sim-

34

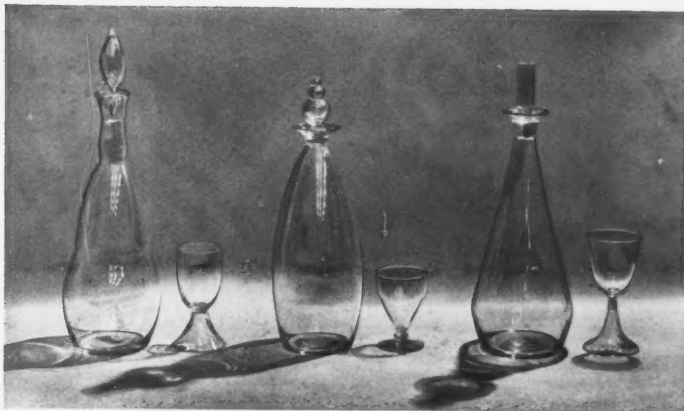
plest illustration of this point. The pieces are all blown in iron moulds which produce the exterior forms of the flasks; the æsthetic quality is accidental, and arises from the simplest and most direct partnership of material, manufacture and use. By contrast with this glass which is thin, are the pieces shown in 28, which are made by a similar process; the metal is thicker and gives an intentional "quality" to the design. The designer who comes to work for the first time in glass finds that it is the transparency of the material which makes his difficulties; the form is not governed only by the external contour, but by the relationship of this to the inner surface; by locally thickening the walls, 31 and 35, a certain character is given, but it is only the man of experience and imagination who can control the varying reflective surfaces. (This probably accounts for the heavily cut glass which is so common—it's much easier to "get away with.")

With one exception, all the glasses illustrated here depend for their beauty on pure form—internal and external shape, properly correlated. 32 achieves its result by a different technique from that of the others, by combining the fluid shape natural to glass on the inner surface of the vessel with applied wheel-cut (and therefore almost mechanically rigid) flutes on the outside. The fundamental difference in effect is well illustrated.

Mr. Keith Murray governs his design with several precepts; one is that "Decoration, if used at all, must be organized to express the form of the object, not to destroy it." This could not be better exemplified than by 37.

These illustrations of glass (and the exhibition of the material itself at Dorland Hall) although one cannot claim ultimate perfection for all the pieces, form an indication of the direction in which modern thought is leading. The manufacturers who (eagerly or reluctantly) are producing "modern glass" are, even if unconsciously, getting back to a proper "knuckling under to material," Mr. Gloag, and away from the sadism which led to the torture of that unfortunate glass in the "glass shop" just round the corner.

34



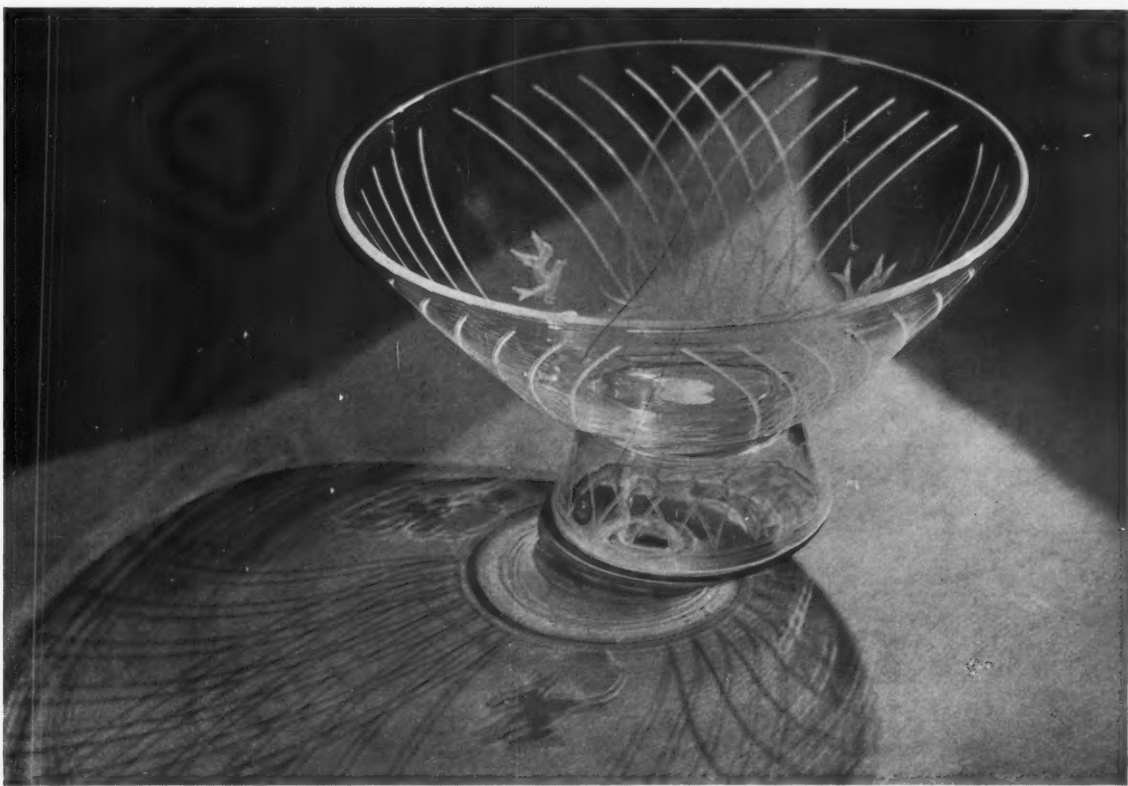
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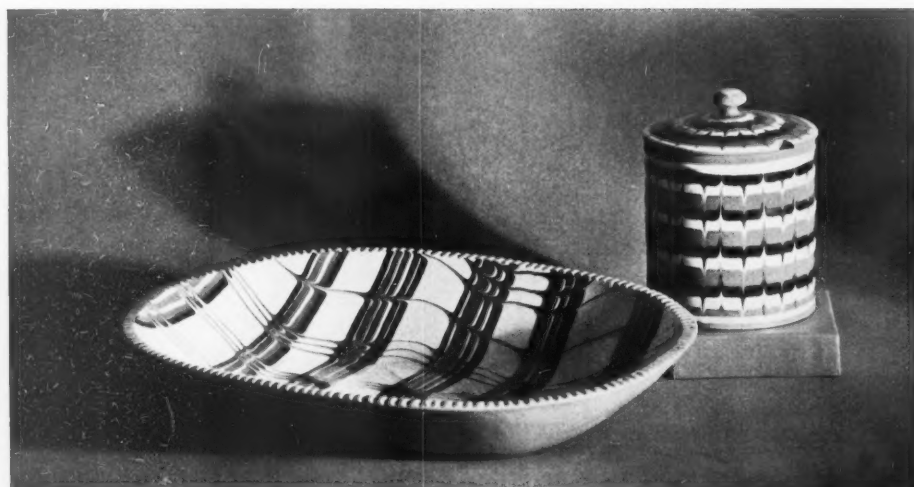
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38. Table earthenware. The external colour is deep yellow and the handles and interiors of the pieces are cream. Designer: J. F. Price. 39. A salad bowl, salad plate and vegetable dish. The printed underglaze is in magazine blue, applied in two strengths, with a translucent blue glaze. Designer: Susie V. Cooper. 40. Ship-ware. The dish is in cream, buff and black and the jar is in cream, blue and black. The body was a salmon colour clay, glazed in traditional English glaze as used in Thomas Toft's ware in the seventeenth century. Designer: John

Adams. 41. SOMERSET. A new Wedgwood design in green, shaded with black. Designer: L. H. Bucknell. 42. Table earthenware. The colour scheme is blue bands and orange lines on cream, and grey and orange bands on cream. Designer: J. F. Price. 43. A new shape in English china. The ground colour is soft white and the decoration pure gold. Designer: J. F. Price. 44. PICOTEE. A dinner service in green and grey on a cream semi-matt ground. Designer: John Adams. 45. Wedgwood ware designed by Keith Murray.

HARRY TRETHOWAN:

Friend Gloag seems to have incited two people to something in the nature of the retort courteous. I only wish to remark that he always reminds me of a reformer who really hates reformation, because it robs him of his pet hobby, that of preaching reform.

Personally, I do not consider the industrialists of this country entirely beyond salvation. If there were no signs of penitence, Dorland Hall, 1933, would be impossible.

It is easy to criticize, but if you are in any sense related to the distribution of the manufactured commodity, you may be called upon to eat your words. Having to discuss a more or less commonplace article, I use commonplace language and leave the subtleties to those best able to juggle with them. At some time or another most amateur artists and critics have a shot at playing potter, the craft is considered an easy target; significantly enough you rarely find the potter himself rushing into print.

The story of pottery in its essential ingredients and the tests to which it is subjected, is so like the story of human life and experience that it makes a fascinating subject for the pen.

Let it be remembered, when looking at any pot, that its final test is a fierce heat. Like humans, it is "tried though as by fire."

Hence fundamentals in fabric and basic shape have to be adhered to; otherwise, the test of fire being applied, the pot may be found wanting.

It would be too much to say that every piece of pottery shown in the pottery section at Dorland Hall is worthy of a place as a selective exhibit, but I am quite sure, notwithstanding Mr. Gloag, that it is miles better than 1925. Remember, all you critics, that the space allotted to pottery had to be filled to raise the required revenue! To make this possible it was impossible not to compromise. A smaller space and a freer hand would have resulted in a better show.

One thing is certain, whatever the result, the potters cannot be accused of indifference. They may not know how quite to set about putting their house in order



41



42



43



44

in certain particulars, but there is ample evidence in the selection that has been made, that they are alive to a need to meet today's demands.

The Society of Industrial Artists in no uncertain manner claim that the artist has not yet fully found his place; the fact that they are banded together in the potteries and not imposed upon from without is sufficient guarantee that there is an awakening. "Fitness for purpose," and here I am in complete agreement with John Gloag, has outlived its vitality as a slogan. Economy of design is alright when you do not know how to decorate, but decoration has to be considered, if from no other point of view, at least in so far as it affects employment. If a Windsor chair represents "almost perfection" in the furniture world, it is safe to say that when form and shape are considered in pottery, our acceptance of good or bad form is based on the primitive.

In our attempts to be modern we are apt to lose sight of the fact that clay in its natural tendencies on the wheel under the potter's hand, either turns inward or falls outward.

Apart from the result of pressing clay into moulds, there seems to be no new development that calls for any other conception of a good pot. Possibly it will be noted that most of the accepted good shapes of today, in articles of utility, have not escaped contact with the earliest Staffordshire shapes. Can they be improved upon? "Ah, that's good"! "Yes, but Josiah Wedgwood was responsible for that."

I am bound to remind my friends who have had their say that I have to sell pots, and in making selection it has been irksome to insist that, when the manufacturer proposed his best seller, it was necessary almost invariably to turn it down.

Not in the exact words, the Gorell Report suggested that exhibitions should be capable of educating the purchasing public, and of informing them that there are beautiful things to be found in the shops.

Without going into detail, I am convinced that such education will be possible, if only in a limited way, at Dorland Hall. To end as I began, possibly the "optimist," who says his glass is half full, may be more helpful than the "pessimist," who says it is half empty.



45



46



47

46. TREBARUM WARE. These are hand-thrown pieces on the wheel. The glaze is white on the red body of Devonshire clay. Designer : Harry Trethowan. **47. EPIC WARE.** Articles for oven and table use. They are myrtle green outside and cream

inside. Designer : Donald Gilbert. **48.** The bowl is Lambeth stoneware in blue and white ; the large jar is in smoked amber over ochred brown and the glaze of the small one is yellow crackle. Designer : W. Rowe. **49.** High temperature stoneware in tones

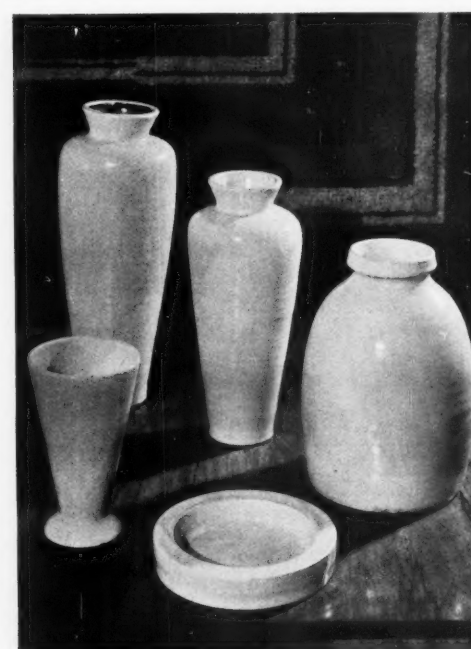
of brown, black and grey-white, with fine gradation and surface quality. Designers : John Adams and Harold Stabler. **50. ROYAL BARHAM WARE.** Jars and a dish "off white" in colour, finished in the designer's special glaze. Designer : Arundell Clarke.



49



48



50



51

51. Sea Trophy, designed by R. Y. Gleadowe. 52. An alms dish designed by Eric Gill for the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths.



52

53. Coffee pot, teapot and sugar bowl designed by H. G. Murphy. 54. A condiment set designed by W. E. Bennett, L.C.C. Central School of Arts and Crafts.



53



54

G. R. HUGHES: You will sympathize, Mr. Trethowan, with anyone who wants to sell things. Frankly, my object in writing this is to incite the rich architects or, better still, their rich clients to give patronage to the poor silversmith. For that is what he needs today. The architect holds the silver key.

Think what he could do. Through the Church alone he could restore the fortunes of the craftsmen—no mass-produced work here. The Church should call for symbolism and poetry, not for machinery and price per ounce. But I forgot, we are dealing with the home. Did you say there is no religion in the home?

Well, turn to something we understand better—sporting cups and trophies. Recently architects held a competition for the design of their own golf trophy. Why not many more? The exhibition at Shell-Mex House this summer has given us such a jolt that we are getting up a competition ourselves in the silver trade for sports cups and trophies that will give the architects a great chance of designing.

After all, there is no reason why a trophy for the home should be large and ugly. Think, for instance, of a sea trophy and all that it should symbolize. The sea shanty is full of suggestion and atmosphere, and if a designer of the calibre of Constant Lambert turned his attention to this neglected subject he could fill our homes with beautiful thoughts. Mr. Trethowan might say "Yes, but would any committee select a small symbolic trophy out of a series of drawings?" Probably not, committees like size and their pound of flesh and a silver man balancing a boat on his head, and that is why the silversmith is crying out for intelligent patronage.

51 shows a sea trophy which combines the thought of the designer with the art of

the chaser and engraver and provokes controversy on how to design.

You, Mr. Gloag, say that inspiration in furniture design comes from without—from the independent research workers and the architects. Mr. Anderson says that a designer who understands his medium seldom produces anything but likeable objects. The devil-may-care adventure comes from without, safety from within the industry, so perhaps both are essential to the present day. Anyhow, our illustrations are designed to show a few experiments in joint efforts organized by the Goldsmiths' Company.

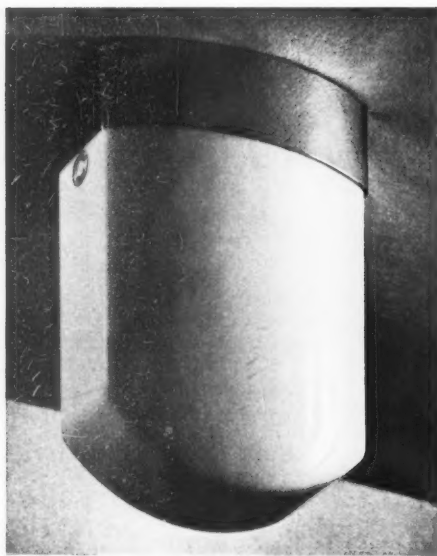
52 is an alms plate designed by Eric Gill and carried out by a student at the Royal College of Art. This immediately suggests how the engraver or chaser may decorate a flat surface of silver.

All my argument up to the present has been to show how to make the most of each individual job that comes along. That is the function of the craftsman, who all too seldom gets his chance, because the mass-production advocate is always stepping over his garden wall and depriving him of his proper birthright.

What, then, of mass-production? It becomes a curse when it forces down the price of a precious metal like silver to a level at which it can no longer be regarded as precious; but for the non-precious metals, obviously, the cheaper the better. Designers for mass-production in the silver trade tend to drift away into electric light fittings and other kindred industries as, for various reasons, it is difficult for them at the moment to find enough work in the silver and plate factories. But a man who can design a modern electric light stand obviously understands metal design generally, and isn't this an opportunity, Mr. Shand, for a little sensible co-operation?

55. The corridor-light, designed for use on walls or ceilings where directional illumination is required. Room numbers, direction signs, etc., may be worked on the glass. Designer: Christian Barman. 56 and 61. These ceiling and wall light fittings are specially interesting because the glasses screw into metal galleries, thus keeping the fittings free from dust and preventing condensation. Designer: A. B. Reed. 57. A lamp designed for the Prudential Assurance Company's building extension in Holborn, London, for use on the staircases. It is fitted with a chromium-plated back which acts as a reflector. To-

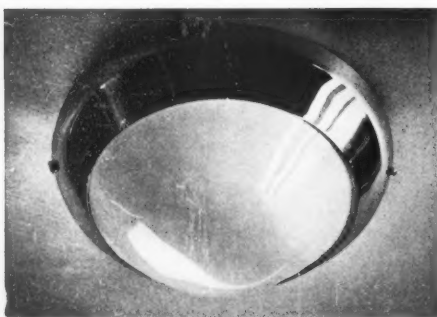
gether with the glass globe this gives a perfect distribution of light. Designer: Antoinette Boissvain. 58. An electric light ceiling fitting, 10 in. in diameter, with an opal glass globe. In 59, which is 12 in. in diameter, the globe is obscured glass. Designers: Best and Lloyd. 60. A chromium-plated reading and colour matching lamp. The reflector unit has an enclosed bulb and the light is thrown through a blue daylight filter. Designer: G. V. Downer. 62. A ceiling pendant in opal glass. The suspension rod hangs from a movable joint in the ceiling rose. Designer: Christian Barman.



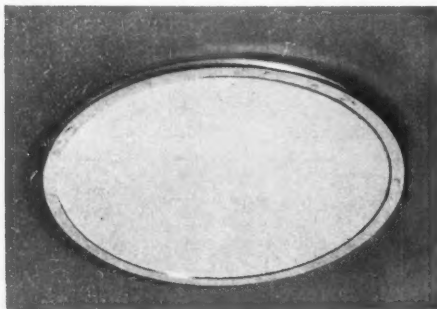
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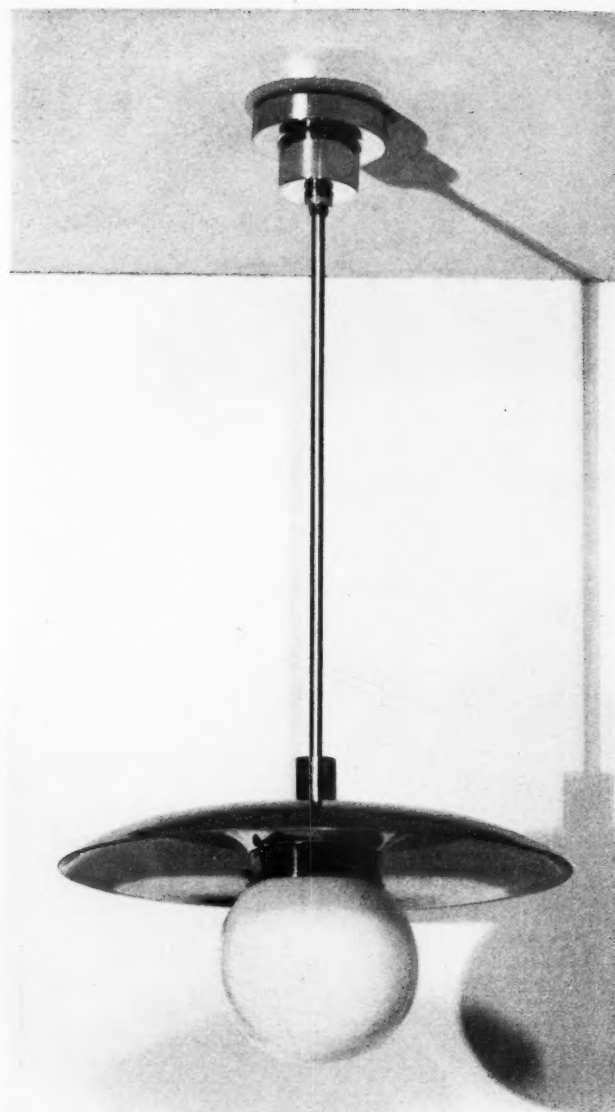
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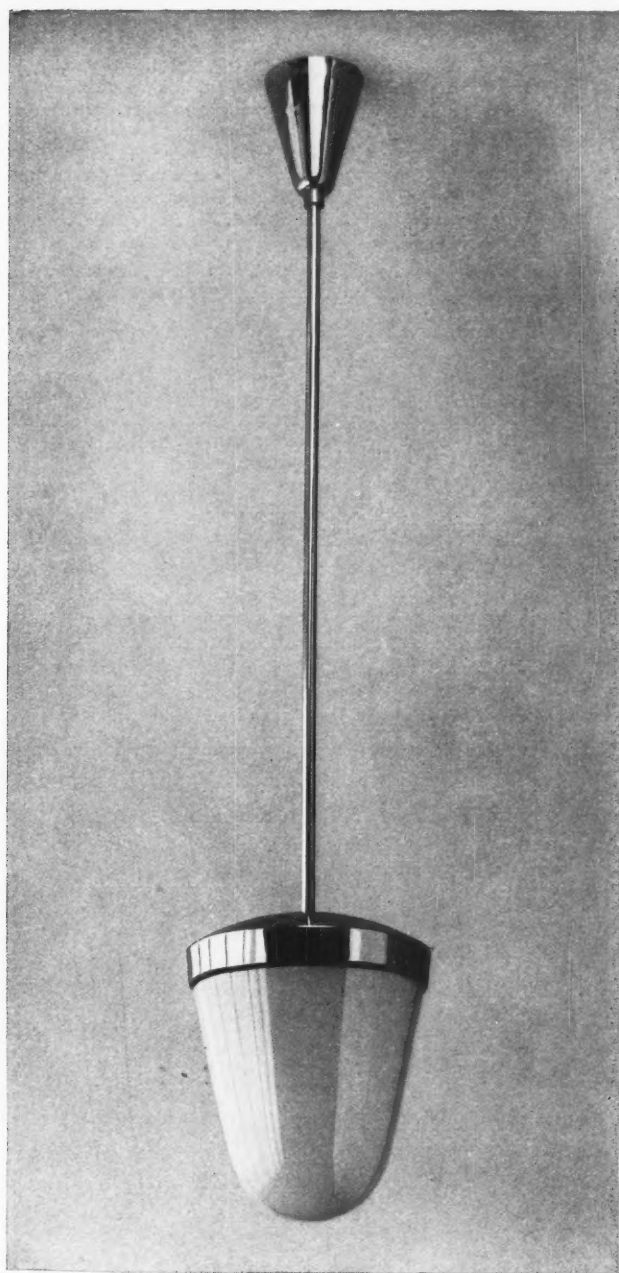


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P. MORTON SHAND: When you remarked, Hughes, that "mass-production is forcing down the price of a precious metal like silver to a level at which it can no longer be regarded as precious" I take it you included mass-produced silver ware. You remember its enormous development before the war—the cheap standardised photograph-frames, napkin-rings, trinkets, "ladies' solid-silver toilet-sets," and those smaller "athletic trophies." Silver candlesticks were common then; silver lamps not unknown. In fact, silver was so cheap, and so much in use, that it was even ceasing to be what jewellers call stones like zircons: "semi-precious." Silver tarnishes quicker than iron rusts, and people no longer have enough servants for that weekly domestic *corvée*, "the plate-cleaning day." That is why it, and that beautiful alloy brass, are now rather under a cloud. So it is only natural that silver craftsmen turn to electric-light and other fittings in chromium-plating, stainless steel, etc., which only need an occasional rub over to keep them bright as generals' medals. I only hope their valuable co-operation may lead to a revival of Britannia metal, which I believe is a mixture of



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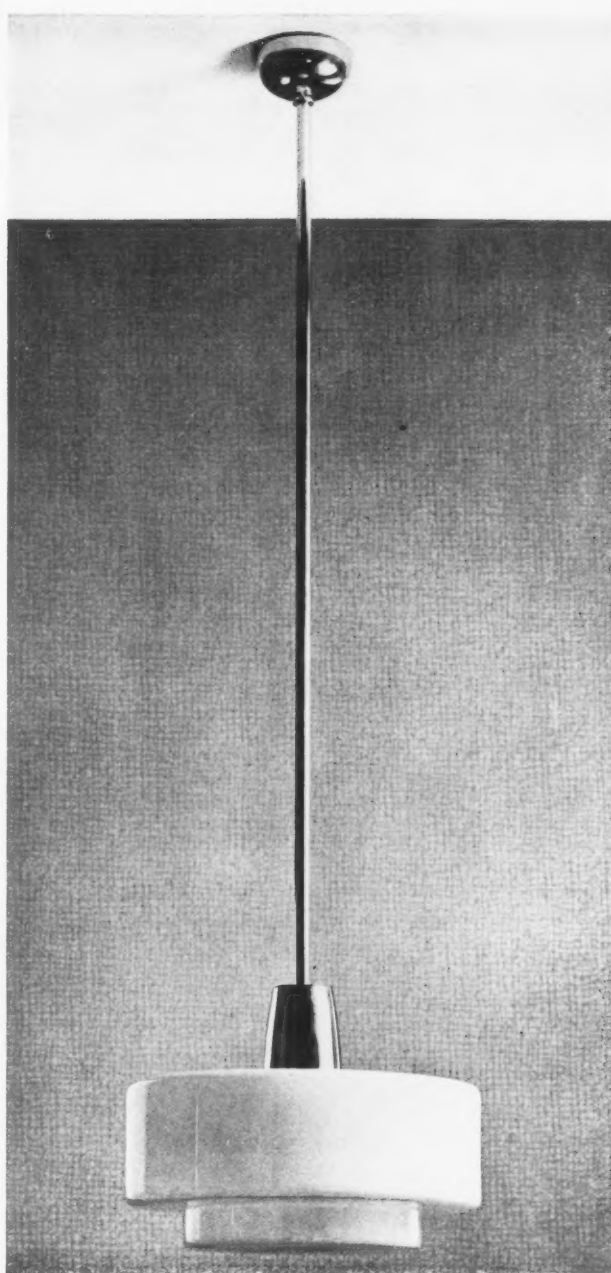
antimony and tin, for it has a beautiful non-corroding surface that gleams but does not glitter.

You say, Gloag, that most of the inspiration in modern English furniture design "comes from without." In these electric-light fittings both inspiration and form come straight from abroad. This may be necessary, and under present conditions is certainly salutary, but I had imagined that an Exhibition of British Industrial Art would show something more than how faithfully and well we are reproducing contemporary Continental models—where we not only differ from, but surpass them. Identical designs, or as like as no matter, to 55, 56 57, 58 59 and 61 (all of which are excellent of their kind), have been in general use on the Continent for the past two years. I agree that the influence of architects at Dorland House is "immense," but it is the influence of *foreign*, not English, architects. And this prompts me to ask: are English architects really trained to think about and use new materials logically, or even at all? Does not the virtual non-existence of English design in concrete, for instance, seem to gainsay it?

You maintain that we have merely

exchanged the dictatorship of tradition for that of the new materials. I am glad you put it that way, for so many people nowadays represent materials as defenceless victims in the hands of ignorant or unscrupulous designers; and we all know how mercilessly any material can avenge itself on a designer who abuses it. Haven't new materials always exercised a despotism over designers until they learned enough about their tyrants to master them in turn? There cannot be "little freedoms" with new materials, or scope for imagination in handling them, as long as they, instead of the designer, are top dog. Once mastered, they automatically fall into their proper sphere, neither unnaturally neglected for, nor as unnaturally preferred to, others. As most of these electric-light fittings prove, we are now passing through a phase of Chromium Dictatorship. But I fancy it is almost spent. By the time the last Paris 1925 crushed-nosegay motif in art-antique bronze has been screwed on to the last "Modernistic" shop-front, it will have found its *juste milieu*.

I can understand why the metal threads and sockets of electric-light fittings should be rustless, but not why they must in-



62

variably be dazzlingly shiny. The result, in combination with opaque white glass or faience, is to make them look like lavatory ware. I cannot see, Mr. Anderson, that 55 and 62 are in any sense "fluid shapes." What you said about the invisibility of glass and the relation of its external contours to inner surfaces would not seem to apply to opaque glass. Here transparency creates no difficulties. Though no longer invisible, opaque glass, like clear, has "no aesthetic quality in itself." Being uniform in colour and surface it can hardly be expected to express anything more than "fitness for purpose" of this rather aggressively sanitary kind. The reading-lamp is one of the unsolved problems of modern design. It is either too small and light, or too big and heavy; and there is always that trip-wire of flex for clumsy people like myself to fall over. Why cannot we have wall-lamps with "Zip" brackets, or wired sofas and book-cases into which an upright lamp-shaft can be plugged? 60 is almost perfect for reading, and a beautifully finished piece of work. 62, which looks well enough as used abroad clamped straight on to the ceiling, is not such a happy shape when seen hanging free from a pendant.

JOHN GLOAG: A kitchen may be a studio, where works of art are created; it may be an efficient workshop where nourishment is assembled; it may be a laboratory where experiments are conducted in a spirit of resolute optimism, or it may be a mere crematorium for the produce of our far-flung Empire. As most English cooking is done with a tin-opener and there is a shortage of domestic labour, the labour-saving theme has been exploited vigorously and the kitchen has become the preserve of the gadgeteer.

It is only when the architect addresses himself to the intelligent selection and accommodation of cooking apparatus, that kitchens can be made into easy places for the cook's work. Even so, many a kitchen plan has been wrecked by the subsequent introduction of gadgets great and small. But there is such an abundance of efficient kitchen equipment that when all the aesthetic misconceptions peculiar to our time have been forgotten together with the barbarous furniture, textiles, glass, pottery and metal work they have produced, the refrigerators, the stoves and utensils which help thousands of housewives and cooks to live easier lives may be regarded by future historians as the only branch of design that contributed anything to civilization.

Most people, except perhaps cooks in English inns and hotels, know where they are with a kitchen. They know that a stove designed today, no matter by what power it is operated, is infinitely more convenient than the coal-devouring ranges that used to be stoked in dank basements

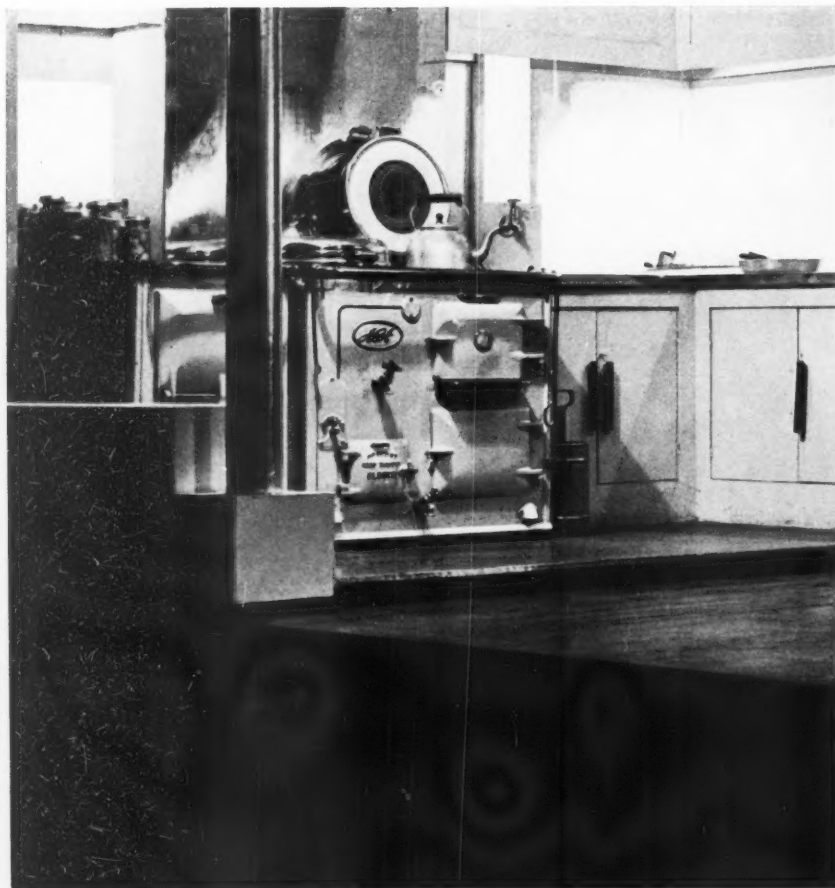
fifty years ago. Improvement in the design of sinks and taps and draining boards is indisputable. But the disputatiousness engendered by my introduction on furniture shows how very uncertain even intelligent critics are concerning the present state of industrial design in other directions.

I am tempted to paraphrase the splendid ass in *Arms and the Man* and say instead of: "I never apologize!" "I never reply!" but I must thank Miss Todd for endorsing everything I said, and for isolating our national trouble, the costive provincialism not only of the English manufacturer but of most retail buyers. As for Messrs. Anderson, Trethowan and Hughes: they approached their respective subjects as though they were oppressed by the duty of what Mark Twain called: "Doing unto others somehow!" Not one of them suggested that we are anywhere near the beginning of the new Renaissance of design that Mr. Shand expects will blossom soon. Unless the next war comes first, that Renaissance may only begin in the seventies and eighties of this century, when improved industrial production has given to art the same sturdy foundations for inspired growth that craftsmanship, perfected in the middle ages, provided for the artistic achievements of the last Renaissance. As so many non-English terms have embellished the arguments of my critics, I, too, will lug something out of the dictionary (words and phrases from foreign tongues section) and say of industrial design and these concluding notes: *omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci*.

63. A gas cooker and hot cupboard for warming plates, invented by Dr. Gustaf Dalen, the Swedish physicist and Nobel prize-winner. It only burns 25 cwt. of anthracite or coke a year, and an attachment is now made for supplying service hot water with an increase in fuel consumption of only 10 cwt. **64.** An enclosed grill, which enables a grill, falling little short of one cooked over charcoal (which is, of course, the ideal method) to be cooked. Designers: Bell's Heating Appliances. **65.** An electric cooker in grey and white enamel, shown in the kitchen of the Electrical Development Association's exhibit at the Ideal Homes Exhibition, 1933. Designer: Raymond McGrath. **66.** A typical gas-operated built-in refrigerator installed under the draining board. Designers: Electrolux.



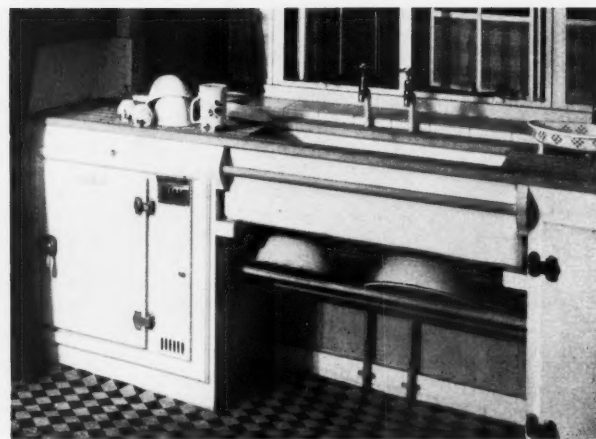
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ANTHOLOGY WHAT CRAFTSMEN HAVE TO SAY ABOUT CRAFTSMANSHIP

Being extracts from letters received by The Architectural Review, in the course of the compilation of the article "There and Back," printed on page 4 of this issue, which deals with the Revival of Good Craftsmanship.

EDWARD BARNESLEY ••••
PETERSFIELD · HANTS ••••

THERE could and should be more co-operation between the craftsman producer and the designer and worker in the machine shop and drawing office. With great benefit to both. At present, generally speaking, the craft worker looks down his nose at the commercial man and damns his work, and the feeling on the other side is one of mild amusement and toleration, as of something of very little moment and decades behind the times. All this is obvious but it has not, I feel, been sufficiently stressed. Clearly the craftsman can learn a great deal from a study of factory methods and conditions, and the factory designer and director improve his articles (as well as the appearance of his sales chart) by co-operation with and an understanding of the craft side.

At the same time a very clear distinction must be drawn as to what is craftsmanship and what commercial art. The two streams can help each other and cannot survive healthily in a position of antagonism, but any attempt to make them coalesce is fatal.

Costs, too. The almost universally held opinion that all craft work is prohibitive in price is wrong, and much could be done to give the craftsman a leg up if it was shown that he does produce sound stuff at a cost competitive with the articles in the better class stores.

A. ROMNEY GREEN ••••
CHRISTCHURCH · HANTS ••••

A CRAFTSMAN should always have at least three good reasons for everything he does (as I learnt many years ago from Mr. Edward Johnston). In a work of applied art, one of these three good reasons will relate, of course, to its utility, another will be that which an artist often calls by another name—instinct, perhaps, or intuition:—"I feel that to be right"; "I happen to like it like that." And a third reason will presumably relate to the nature of the material: in the case of woodwork at all events this is, or has been, of such immense importance that no healthy intuition will ever run counter to the laws of design which are thus imposed; no woodworker who had any sense of his material would ever dream, for example, of making a door (more than 10 in. or 12 in. wide) of a single board of oak or walnut, or a door which even appeared to be thus made: he knows that his doors must be more or less visibly ledger doors, or more or less visibly framed and panelled.

The recent introduction of laminated wood is rapidly destroying this sense of the material in our designers of furniture, together with the traditional methods of con-

struction. Thirty years, or more, ago Sidney Barnsley and Ernest Gimson were making wardrobes and cabinets without cornices, and to that extent in the modern manner; but whereas the moderns can offer no reason for dropping the cornice except that they don't happen to like it, their great predecessors, without casting any aspersion on the cornice, could drop it for the very good reason that they preferred to show the beautifully cut dovetailing which takes its place as a matter of course if you are working in the solid wood. The next step to dropping the cornice is clearly to drop the plinth, and design some sort of stand which shows the dovetailing at the bottom as well as the top of the cabinet.

In thus emphasizing the decorative value of structural features, Barnsley, Gimson, and their disciples are clearly picking up an earlier tradition than that of the eighteenth century, which they considered decadent: but their work is too original and too elegant to be regarded as a revival of the Gothic or any other known style of woodwork: it is just a perfect adaptation of one of the most beautiful of natural materials to domestic uses.

PETER WAALS ••••
CHALFORD · GLOS. ••••

IN the early days of the revival of craftsmanship we were told that the work was of no use to democracy, with its demand for greater comfort for all, as it was designed for careful and thoughtful individual execution. The answer to this objection given at the time was: that however much craftsmen would wish to see their work in every home, the means to bring this about was not their part of the bargain, and if the demand could only be satisfied by mass-production, design would have to be based on the processes of such production. This is now obvious to all, and the Exhibition of British Industrial Art has been planned, I understand, to stimulate such design, rather than call in the aid of the artist and the craftsman.

GEORGE WALTON ••••
HYTHE · KENT ••••

I BEGAN in Glasgow, 1888, and was working among the founders of the Glasgow School of Painters. The architectural work, etc., was influenced considerably by Whistler. His exhibitions were being held in London about that time and in arrangement and colour were the most remarkable events of the time and brought a gaiety into all contemporary decoration by the use of white paint and simple light colours on walls, etc.

About 1892, while in Glasgow, C. R. Mackintosh followed and our work was interesting the Dutch and later the Austrian architects, and the type of work we were then doing would, I think, even today have been looked upon as modern, but unfortunately the movement, after being distorted and twisted, returned from Austria through Paris and finished in "l'art nouveau."

MARGINALIA

A SPECIAL ISSUE ON SLUMS

Though much that is picturesque or otherwise has been written about the SLUMS, no attempt has yet been made to carry out a national slum survey.

This, with such figures and material as are available, *The Architects' Journal* is now attempting to do, in the belief that the onus of providing the nation with actual data regarding slum conditions and housing needs lies with the architectural profession.

The first results of the survey, dealing with the six biggest towns of Great Britain (excluding London, which needs an issue to itself) was published on Thursday, June 22, the opening day of the R.I.B.A. Conference, in a special issue on the SLUM PROBLEM—thus developing one of the main suggestions put forward in the New Year issue of *The Architects' Journal* on National Planning.

POLITE TO THE ARCHITECT

The following cutting from a Gothenburg daily paper, shows the Swedish workman as "quite the little gentleman."

"All artisans without exception, beg herewith to be allowed to offer our respectful thanks to Mr. Wholesaledealer Ahlen and to Architect Bergvall as the representatives of Tempo A.-B. for the pleasing and festive completion ceremony which we have all enjoyed on the opening day, 7/4/33. At the same time we all wish to offer special thanks to our 'topping' architect, Mr. Bergvall, for his happy co-operation, which, in spite of intense 'hustle,' brought the work to conclusion without undue strain."

The English equivalent is usually: "Bill—

'ere comes the architect. Let's 'eave 'alf a 'odd of mortar on 'im."

No doubt this is the spirit that has made the Empire what it is!

THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE R.I.B.A.

Sir Giles Gilbert Scott has been elected as the new President of the Royal Institute of British Architects. From the days of his winning the competition for Liverpool Cathedral, in 1897, to the present day, he has met with the great success he deserves. Our warmest congratulations are due to him on his new honour.

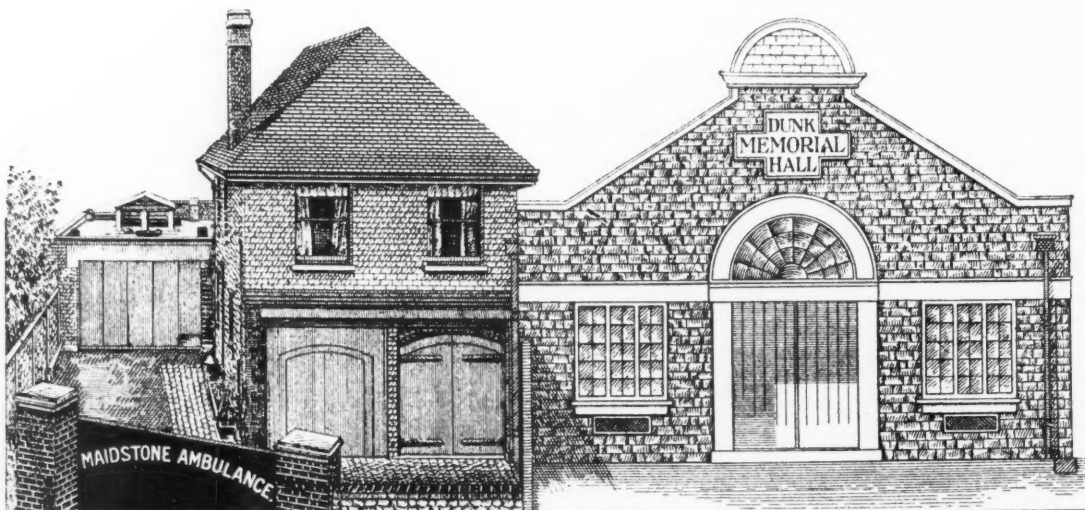
UGLY GEORGIAN

The Cornish Church Guide (3s. 6d. net) should certainly be possessed by all who want a useful history of Cornish churches. It is published by the Diocese, and it is strange that other diocesan committees do not undertake similar guides for their own particular areas. One of Norfolk would be particularly useful. *The Cornish Church Guide*, however, commits the inevitable sins of modern ecclesiastical taste. It is scarcely believable that a book published in recent years should remark as follows on Redruth Church: "The church was pulled down, excepting the fine fifteenth century tower, in 1768, to make room for the present ugly Georgian building." And not even the most anti-Protestant prejudice can justify this remark on the interior of Launcells church. "It is... one of the most interesting in Cornwall, in spite of whitewash and high pews."

UGLY IVY



Hardenhuish (pronounced "Harnish") Church, near Chippenham, Wilts, which is illustrated here, is the work of J. Wood, Junior, of Bath. It was built in 1770. The previous paragraph shows the attitude of ecclesiastical authorities to Georgian architecture, so that it is hardly surprising to find this dignified building, whose beauty is enhanced by cornices, niches and mouldings, smothered in ivy. The tomb on the right of the photograph is that of Ricardo, the economist. It is to be noticed that in 1823 the architecture of the church was taken into account by the designer of the tomb.



WHAT THE "JOE" DUNK MEMORIAL HALL, at Maidstone, will look like, is shown in the above drawing. It will adjoin the present St. John Ambulance garage, in Church Street, and is being erected on a site given to the borough by Councillor Wm. Day and Mr. J. H. Day, in honour of their parents, Alderman Wm. Day, J.P., and Mrs. Day.

From *The Kent Messenger*.

ART IN WILTON



The eighteenth-century town hall in Wilton, Wilts, is surmounted by a Victoria Jubilee clock tower as you will see, while in a private



garden the original cupola serves as a summerhouse. The owners of the latter can hardly be blamed for not wanting the former.

BOUND VOLUMES

The Title Page and Index for THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, covering January to June, 1933, is now ready, and will be supplied post free on application to the Publisher, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, S.W. 1.

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO DR. UPHAM POPE

The illustrations of Persian examples in Mr. Stanley Casson's article on "Persian Architecture and the West," which appeared in the June issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, were photographs taken by Dr. Upham Pope. No acknowledgment appeared with the article and the Editor wishes to take this opportunity of expressing his indebtedness to Dr. Upham Pope.

CORRESPONDENCE POLPERRO VINDICATED

The Editor,

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—As a reader of your excellent Journal I feel that a criticism is called for in reference to Plate i depicting a view between old cottages at Polperro, Cornwall, and entitled "Celtic Masonry."

I have been a visitor to Polperro for a number of years, and have made something of a study of the village, architecturally and otherwise, and it is the second paragraph of your article to which I have taken exception.

You state, "It should be noted that this picture, though it depicts *tumbledown* houses over an *open drain*, is not to be considered a *slum*."

To begin with, "tumbledown" is an incorrect word to use; the houses shown are not ruinous at all, in fact the reverse is the case, as they are quite habitable and the occupants happen to be known to me. "Ancient" or "very old" houses, but definitely not "tumbledown."

Secondly, the "open drain" referred to is the River Pol from which the village derives its name, a beautiful little stream of several miles in length having its source in the hills and being quite well known for its trout; on the outskirts of the village the stream has been recently divided, one part serving to drive the small turbines for the electric supply of the village, the other part continuing its way down through the village to the sea. In the summer months this latter part of the stream is sometimes only a mere trickle, but there is never any question of smell either from stagnant water or possible refuse on the watercourse, as by means of a small lock gate a proportion of the water is held in check; this lock gate is opened twice a day and the consequent flood effectively keeps the bed of the stream fresh and clean. I would add that during the winter months use of this lock is quite unnecessary as the stream becomes a raging torrent fed by heavy rains from the surrounding hills. From this descrip-

tion you will gather that the term "open drain" is again definitely incorrect.

We now come to where your correspondent appears to endeavour to ameliorate his previous remarks by stating that the view shown "is not to be considered a slum." The word "slum" applied to any part of the village of Polperro whatsoever is nothing less than an insult.

For your information it would seem necessary for me to acquaint you that a "slum" is generally interpreted as a low, dirty back street or lane of a city, a low neighbourhood, etc.

The inhabitants of Polperro, who are mostly fisher folk, are certainly poor in worldly goods and rents of 2s. per week for cottages are not uncommon, but they are brave, clean and God-fearing people who at this time are passing through the greatest crisis of any of their lifetimes, for the fish upon which they depend for everything are being driven away by modern oil-burning craft of all kinds. Their dwellings, some hundreds of years old, are kept spotlessly clean both inside and out, the exterior walls of the cottages being lime washed once every year.

To conclude, you mention that "Polperro is now a great artistic centre"; I would again inform you that Polperro is one of the oldest and most famous of smuggling villages in Cornwall, its history having been written by the eminent Dr. Jonathan Couch as far back as 1871, and it has been a Mecca of artists for many years. Many famous and wealthy retired people live in and near the village and I trust that you will see your way clear to publishing an apologetic correction in this matter—Your obedient servant,
Kensington, W.14. E. B. PERRY.

THE ARCHITECTURAL
REVIEW SERIAL,
THIRD INSTALMENT
(See the next column)

WHAT A LIFE!

The Dorland Hall Exhibition of British Industrial Art, illustrated in this number, will be enhanced in value for readers of the serial which has been appearing in these pages. It will be remembered that the illustrations which make up the autobiographical sketch of which this story is composed, are taken from Whiteley's General Catalogue of 1910. Messrs. E. V. Lucas and George Morrow saw that "one man searching the pages of the catalogue will find only facts and prices"; but by using the scissors and paste pot "another will find what we think we have found—a deeply moving human drama."

Once again we must acknowledge our indebtedness to E. V. L. and G. M., to Whiteley's, and to Methuen's, who caused the book, which has long been out of print, to be published in 1911.

WHAT A LIFE!—3

Everyone was kind to me. Our Dutch gardener adored me.



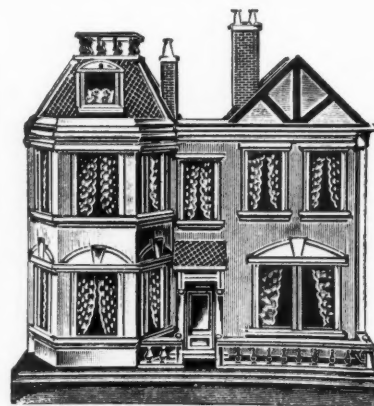
But my happiest hours were spent with the little daughter of our neighbour, Sir Easton West. She was a pretty child, and boy-like, I did my best to attract her attention.



I was a prime favourite with our old housekeeper.



Incidentally, the Easton Wests, the parents of my little playmate, lived in a Tudor manor that was reported to be haunted.



According to the legend whispered by the retainers and villagers, no sooner did the clock strike twelve



than a headless apparition was seen to move slowly across the moonlit hall.



THE END.



ARCHITECTS: SIR HERBERT BAKER, R.A., F.R.I.B.A.; A. T. SCOTT, ESQ., F.R.I.B.A.

South Africa House, showing entrance hall in South African Marbles, worked by

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Plain Words from the Other Side

By A Manufacturer

IT is a healthy sign that at the present moment more and more interest is being taken in the manufacturer, in his doings and in his attitude to life. As time goes on he comes up against more and more criticism, not only of his methods of manufacture, but also of the things which he produces, and of his method of selling them. There is no doubt at all—and let us all admit it at once—that manufacturers as a whole must shoulder some part of the blame for the beastliness that one normally sees, not only in shop windows, but wherever goods are bought and sold.

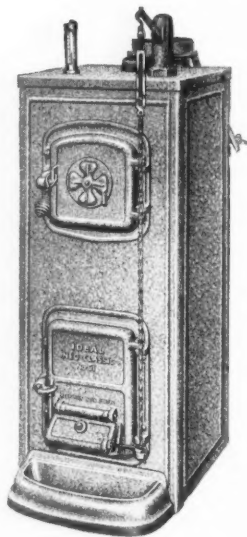
The architect is not the least important of those who complain of what they call the manufacturers' idiocy. The manufacturer is more blamed than is the craftsman because he uses mass production to an extent to which the craftsman's output does not take him. (Incidentally it would be strange if architects blamed craftsmen, because normally the craftsman produces what the architect has designed, and to blame him would be to blame the designer as well.)

Admitting, then, that the manufacturer is partly to blame for the present situation in design and production, it is desirable to discover, first, just how far he is to blame, and, second, who else must share the blame with him.

FIRST of all, it is not commonly realized that, broadly speaking, the British manufacturer is neither better nor worse than his foreign confrère. During the Swedish Exhibition (when we all heard much of the British paucity of design as compared with the brilliance of the Swedes) it occurred to me to ask a member of the staff of the Exhibition whether the goods shown there truly represented daily life in Sweden. He roared with laughter; he went on to explain that from what he had seen of shops and houses in London, there was very little to choose between the two countries from the point of view of well-designed goods. As against this, one must admit that, to some extent at least, the Swedes have come to a better realization of good design than we have, taking relative populations into account.

Another thing that has to be remembered is that the manufacturer is not his own master, in England or anywhere else. He makes for a definite demand which is stimulated by the people who buy directly from him. In ordinary life this man is the wholesalers' or retailers' buyer—in the building world it is the builder's merchant or the builder himself. For brevity's sake it is proposed here to deal mainly with the building trade. It must be remembered that by no means all of the buildings erected in this country are supervised by architects, which is another way of saying that it is not only on architectural sales that the manu-

IDEAL NEO-CLASSIC



The new Sectional Boiler for residential heating and hot water supply. Combines highest efficiency with neat appearance and simplicity.

A small compact Sectional Boiler which can be enlarged for subsequent extensions to installation. Fitted with loose grate bars—the most efficient for this type of boiler. Waterway extends under ashpit—no fire risk. Interchangeable smokehood. Insulating jacket finished in durable and attractive Ideal Vitreous Enamel. No. 1 Series—five sizes for 165 to 425 sq. ft. of direct radiation. No. 2 Series—with greater capacities, ready shortly.

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LISBURN CATHEDRAL



RE-DECORATED
WITH

PIETRUMITE IMITATION STONE PAINT



The interior of Lisburn Cathedral has recently been repainted and redecorated throughout with "Petrumite." As may be seen from the illustration, the material has been applied to give the appearance of stonework and it requires close examination to discover that the surface is not actual stone. "Petrumite" is a prepared Oil Paint that is applied in the usual manner. When it is dry it not only looks like stone, but feels like stone and wears as well as many stones and should outlast four or five coats of paint. It is made in six shades to match natural stones. During the redecoration all the seats were refinished with

NAYLOR'S HARD CHURCH OAK VARNISH

Full particulars of these two products may be obtained from the manufacturers —

NOBEL CHEMICAL FINISHES LIMITED
SLOUGH (Associated with Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd.) BUCKS

D.D. 94

facturer relies ; however much one might like him to become a pioneer of design, he cannot make unduly revolutionary experiments, because he lives (like other people) with the shadow of his accountant always in front of him. Consequently, where the demand exists it is the manufacturers' duty and object to satisfy it. In addition, he rarely deals direct with his public, so that some of the blame must go either to his public or to the intermediary.

THE ARCHITECT'S EXAMPLE TO MANUFACTURERS

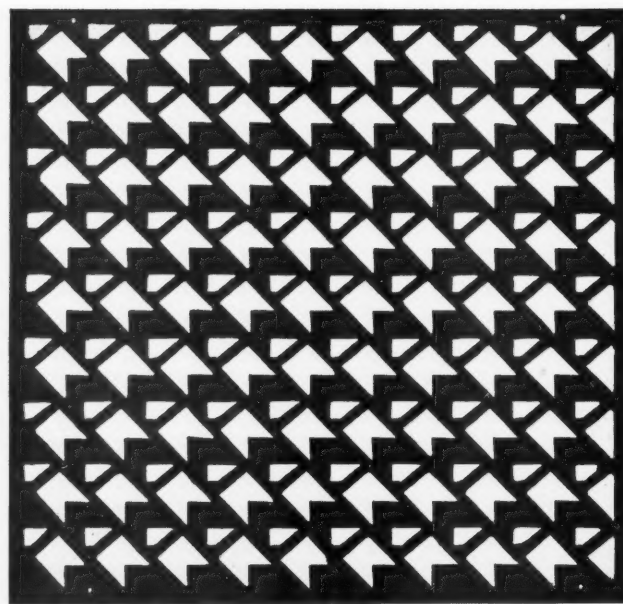
In all walks of life the people of discernment and trained minds are in the minority. If architects had the control of building which they ought to have, they would not only be in a position to dictate to the manufacturer according to their own needs, but in addition would find the manufacturer to be a more than willing co-operator. It should be remembered that although the manufacturer makes mistakes, these never come to light until they have been perpetuated in buildings—possibly designed by architects. Architects, however, by their own buildings, immortalize their *own* mistakes.

The manufacturer may well wonder what is all this talk of his bad designs, when he sees a glorious opportunity

for architectural accomplishment thrown away—and that, apparently, with the full approval of the Government. I refer, of course, to the British Pavilion (designed by an architect) at the Buenos Aires Exhibition. Well may he wonder what right architects have to lecture him on worthy and appropriate design.

GOOD SALES FOR BAD DESIGNS

Another point which is often forgotten is that bad designs do sell. I can think of three cases where manufacturers produce different designs these being generally good, the other (even by the



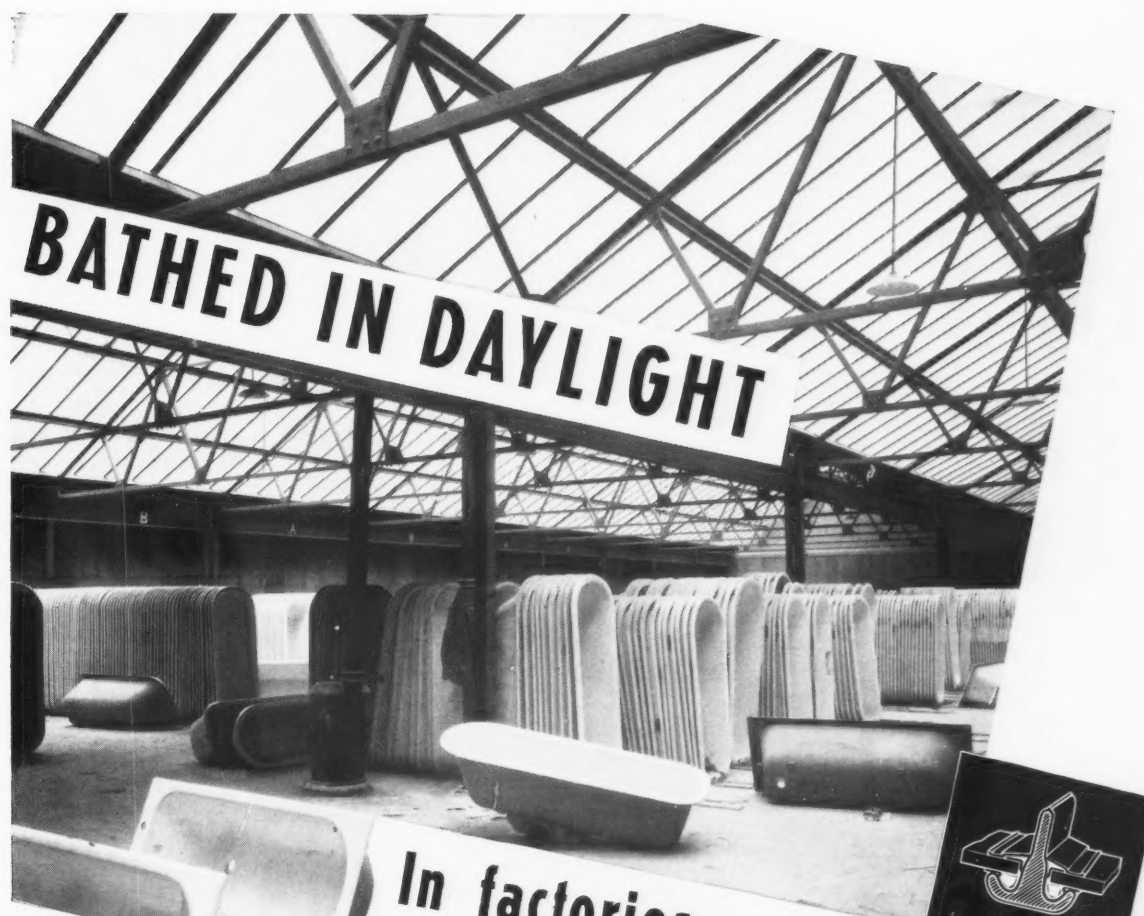
A cast iron screen of pleasing design, which is worthy of mass production and wide use. But most architects would be reluctant to use it because it has a character which they themselves have not given to it. Designed by H. L. Curtis and made by Thomas Elsley.

to be abominable. In one of these cases, a particularly bad product not only sells better than any of the good products, but in addition has the greatest sale *in the world* of any material in that

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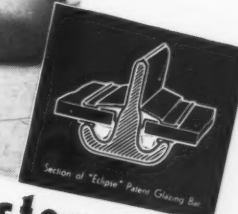
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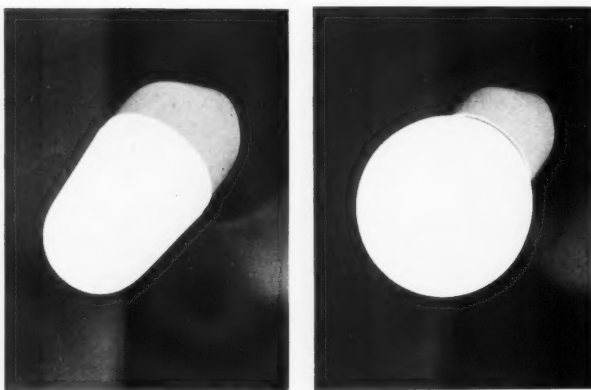
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category! Admittedly no architect would dream of using the material, but he cannot for that reason deny the manufacturer the right to make it, more especially as by doing so he puts himself in a better position to carry on with the good designs. (Incidentally, this particular bad design has more than half of its sale in foreign—and, therefore, presumably enlightened—countries).

When architects have ordered themselves as a body in such a way as to be able, not necessarily to dictate, but to suggest, *as a corporation*, the materials which they will be content to use, then manufacturers will—not only will but must—co-operate. Meanwhile, every building which goes up is as much a monument to the architects' as to the manufacturers' ineptitude. If the Royal Institute of British Architects—to name but one body—would seriously get down to the question of examining all building products, eliminating as many types of design as is reasonably possible, and publishing the results of their deliberations, there would be, even among the comparatively small body of architects, great enough weight of opinion to encourage manufacturers to scrap their plant and turn to better ways. Meanwhile, in the experience of most manufacturers



Two mass produced light fittings made by Troughton and Young. Such designs are less used than they deserve to be because of their individual and novel character.

no two architects agree about any one design.

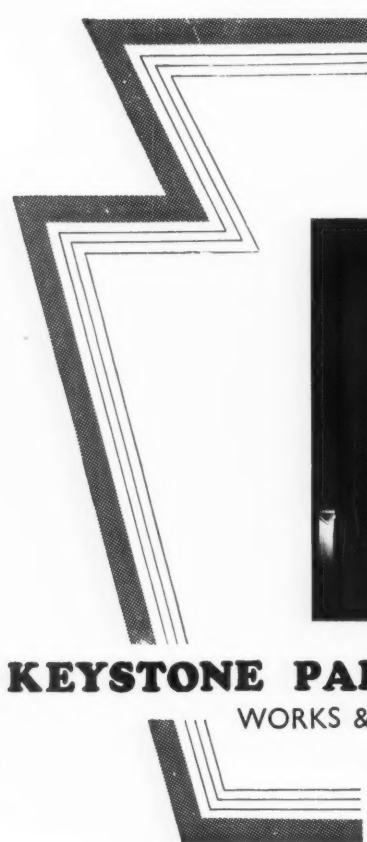
More than 300 years ago Sir Christopher Wren sat with a Royal Commission, which, unlike modern Royal Commissions, decided something—decided the best size for a brick.

No one better than Wren understood the value of standardized production, and nobody since Wren has been better capable of using standard units to fine purpose, but even today, in Great Britain, there is no real standard size of brick; there is, of course, the commonly accepted 9 in. by 4½ in. by 3 in., but all *real* architects like to vary their sizes a

little now and again, hence 2 in. bricks, etc.; and meanwhile standard sizes vary from district to district. When the manufacturer considers the inability of the profession to agree on the matter of a brick, he despairs of ever getting agreement on the matter of mouldings, and, therefore, takes the line of least resistance, produces mouldings which at least sell, and, therefore, presumably give satisfaction to a large section of the public.

ARE ALL STANDARD MATERIALS UNSUITABLE?

Be it said that many manufacturers (and Associations of Manufacturers, too) have tried their level best to eliminate a number of mediocre designs in order to concentrate on better ones. Architectural opinion has been taken, in some cases from half a dozen sources. The manufacturer goes ahead, but finds the profession at large will not accept his designs, and as these have been sponsored by architects it is only possible to assume that the architect dislikes using anything which bears the stamp of any individuality whatever, unless he himself has imparted it. I do not know how many standard colours of paint and distemper there are, but I do know that architects are very



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reluctant to use them. I do not profess to be an expert on colour, but I should be surprised to be told that of all the hundreds, some in each sphere are not satisfactory both in themselves and in relation to some others. The variety of tiles manufactured, both in colour and size and shape, must be vast, but tile manufacturers will tell you that they are always being asked for a special section—as though it could be produced for a pound or two. I repeat that if paint and tiles are not at present what architects *as a body* require, all that is necessary is for the architects themselves to agree, after which the manufacturers will be found very ready to co-operate.

MASS PRODUCTION AND THE ARCHITECT

Architects as a race appear not to have the vaguest understanding of what mass production is, and of the specialized organization which it demands. The interchangeability of small units which Wren advocated should receive the full enthusiasm of anybody who has to build in these days. The fact is that architects are far too keen to design, far too reluctant to "assemble." It would, I imagine, be impossible, or almost so, to produce even one hundred different types of door handles which would be admitted by architects to give as wide a selection as they could ever need. Building materials are today required in such quantity and at such short

notice that only an efficient system of mass production can solve the problem. Mass production involves special plant, which of necessity must have certain limitations of its own. A manufactured material such as plywood or linoleum must necessarily have its maximum size, and this will be laid down according to weight, ease of handling, economic transport, technicalities of manufacture, and many other points which, taken altogether, produce by logic a definite economic and appropriate size; but how often is a manufacturer of such materials invited to supply, say, carpeting, two or three inches wider than the maximum? But no manufacturer *expects* the architect to understand technicalities of production, and, therefore, to some extent he is himself to blame for his own troubles in this direction. From my own experience I am bound to admit that, generally speaking, when an architect does understand means of production, he is far more ready to sympathize with the manufacturer when he states blandly that an increase of size or change of colour is impracticable. Incidentally, allowance should also be made for certain intelligence on the manufacturer's part. It is common to hear architects discussing, say, rubber flooring and complaining jocularly of the manufacturer's idiocy in having "marbled" designs. These are produced by the maker with his eyes open, because he knows that rubber flooring is liable to show footmarks and dirt, and in the name of common sense

he produces an appearance which will camouflage this defect, however much he regrets the necessity to deviate from plain colours.

ARCHITECTS AS INDUSTRIAL DESIGNERS.

Manufacturers are often blamed for their reluctance to employ architects as designers. It is the greatest possible fallacy to suppose that an architect "knows what architects want." It is physically impossible that he should know this, as no two architects wholly agree on what they want. All the architect knows is, rather vaguely, what he himself wants. If he is asked *exactly* what he wants it will be necessary for him to design it himself, probably by trial and error. Many manufacturers have made experiments in the way of inviting architects to design for them. The firm with which I happen to be connected has several times done this, choosing, not necessarily architects of wide repute, but architects of acknowledged designing ability and interested in the idea of production; the firm has also taken the precaution of familiarizing each designer with the minutiae of his problem. In two cases the designs produced, though quite good in themselves, were absolutely incapable of sale, purely and simply for reasons of economics—that is to say, the builders' merchant found that the designs produced such waste when they were cut up for sale that he could be assured

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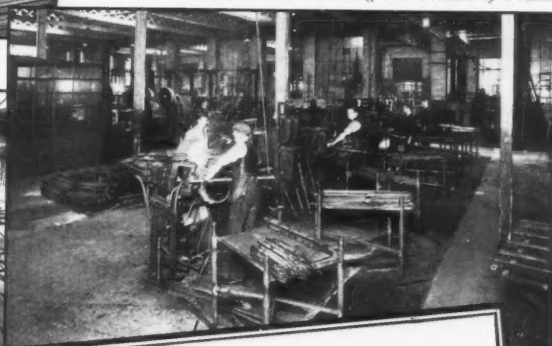
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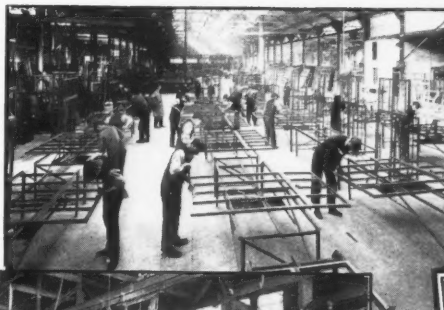


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of no profit and, therefore, declined to keep stocks of them. Having learnt its lesson over these two experiments, the firm made a special point in all subsequent cases that the designer should understand that aspect of the problem. The designs produced later are generally admitted to be admirable, but architects as a whole are most reluctant to use them, frankly, in most cases, because there is too much individuality or scholarship about them. In other words, "one man's mark is another man's shyness." In proof of this I may add that to my own knowledge manufacturers in several spheres of operations have invited architects to design for them, making it a definite condition that there should be texture rather than actual design, so that the result would be quite impersonal. The result has been comparatively successful in all cases. But it is the public, not architects, who are using the material.

CONSCIOUS AND UN-
CONSCIOUS BEAUTY

I was talking recently to a designer of repute and ability. He is a man who is accustomed to put himself in the manufacturer's position, with the result that his designs, without exception, are not only of high quality, but of high sales value as well. I asked him how far he worked for conscious beauty, and his reply was interesting. He said, "I am not conscious of it at all. I set myself

purely and simply to solve every one of the manufacturer's conditions (which, of course, take account of the salesman as well), and I suppose that if you think the stuff is beautiful, that has arisen out of my own sub-conscious personality, just in the same way that, whether a novelist is describing a love scene or a battle, his own literary style will show through everything he writes."

The need for reformation in this matter of design is urgent; many good things are produced abroad but British manufacturers are slow to start making them here. Let it be borne in mind that architectural individualism and caprice can very quickly lead the too eager and progressive firm into financial difficulties; while the more ready acceptance of the standard product by architects abroad gives wide scope and reasonably certain success to the foreign pioneer firm.

Let me give my assurance that manufacturers as a whole (and I know many of them in the building trade) are not reluctant to co-operate with architects in the matter of design or production. All that they ask is that their mode of procedure should be agreed upon. It should be remembered that by their aloofness and apathy during the last 100 years architects have themselves largely contributed towards the manufacturer's divorce from design. It is therefore incumbent upon architects to come to a truer and saner understanding with manufacturers and so arrest the damage before it goes any further.

NOTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MARBLE. A handbook by Ian Cater. Art Pavements & Decorations, Ltd. London, 1933.

"Spend a day in Venice with eyes on the ground." That is the advice of Mr. Adrian Stokes in his monumental work on the Quattro Cento. "You will note, when you finally sink exhausted at Florian's, that the second step of the Procuratie Nuove, under whose portico you sit, is made of white Istrian alternating with Verona marble—or is it reflection of the sunset, so faint are the salmon-pink veins, just a glitter, a confused warning, or is it somebody to the right reading the pink *bazzettino del Sport* which comes out at this hour? . . . If you have wondered where the rich light comes from in those great barns, the Frari and San Zanipolo, know then that it is faintly reflected from the floors, as is most of the light in Italy."

I do not expect it is his advice in London, for the English climate does not admit of the extensive external use of marble. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that because it does not suit the climate, marble is an unsuitable material for English architecture. The inappropriate use of it on the gaudy outskirts of public houses or in the interiors of the more garish London restaurants has brought the exquisite decorative qualities of marble into disrepute. In restrained English architecture, with its love of blank, unadorned spaces and where decoration serves merely to emphasize pro-

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portion or lines of construction, a sudden flutter from dead white to, say, the deeper, fuller white of White Carrara marble, is satisfying and correct; the Brothers Adam knew how to use marble sparingly and well: most of us have a vision of a pale circular entrance hall with delicate Ionic Columns in Verde Antico. And in classical churches in the City of London what an excellent plinth the black and white marble pavement makes for the carved woodwork and plaster work above it.

Mr. Cater's handbook on Marble is invaluable to those who need reminding of the excellent uses to which this material can be put. When Wren, the Adam Brothers and Soane were alive, marbles were thoroughly appreciated in this country—and dearly paid for. Cheaper transport has put marble into wider use. Mr. Cater's book will help architects to discriminate in this use. Each of the many coloured illustrations is so perfect that it looks almost as though a piece of the stone itself were lying on the page, neatly cut, cool and ready to handle. The architect will have his preference, and what his preference is will remain until the building he puts up is pulled down or bombed. Let him take care. There is every colour for him to choose from in this book and, further back than this book, in quarries all over Europe. Let him remember Ruskin "Consider what marble seems to have been made for. It is exactly of the consistence which is best adapted for sculpture; that is to say, neither hard nor brittle, nor flakey nor

splintery, but uniformly and delicately, yet not ignobly, soft—exactly soft enough to allow the sculptor to work it without force, and trace on it the finest lines of finished form; and yet so hard as never to betray the touch or moulder away beneath the steel; and so admirably crystallized, and of such permanent elements, that no rain dissolves it, no time changes it, no atmosphere decomposes it; once shaped, it is shaped for ever, unless subjected to actual violence or uttrition."

We have recently received from Messrs. Harris and Sheldon, Ltd., a copy of their latest catalogue of Architectural Metalwork and Joinery executed by them to the designs of eminent architects in all parts of the world.

The main body of the catalogue is devoted to photographic illustrations, and the last few pages contain a brief and useful summary of the characteristics of some of the better known materials.

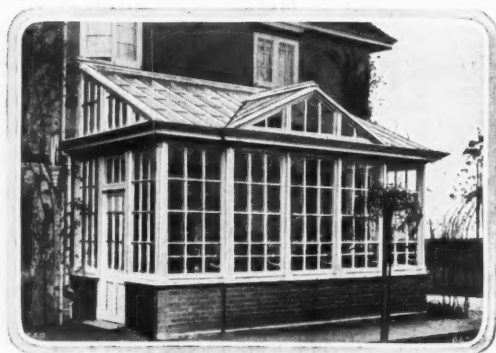
A pleasing departure from the format of most trade catalogues is the rejection of the impulse to crowd the pages with large numbers of small blocks, in favour of the display of a smaller number of selected examples of Messrs. Harris and Sheldon's craftsmanship, reproduced to a size large enough for the detail to be studied with ease.

If a minor criticism of an otherwise pleasing production may be made, it is that not a few of the illustrations have received the attentions of a rather un-

sympathetic "retouching" artist, and in consequence the appearance of some of the photographs has been rendered artificial. We realize, of course, that the natural aim has been to emphasize the beauty of the metalwork, but, in our opinion, the untouched photograph, with, perhaps, its slight loss of detail, would have made a more pleasing record.

The light fittings in Studio No. 1, at Broadcasting House, Leeds, illustrated in Fig. 9, page 233, of the June issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, incorporate the new Holophane heavy duty units No. A6551, using 300 watt gas-filled lamps in an efficient and original manner. It demonstrates conclusively how fittings from an entirely original and ascetic design can be rendered efficient from an illumination standpoint, by the incorporation of Holophane reflectors of a scientific design.

We much regret to announce the death of Mr. Thomas Sanderson, who was associated with the firm of Messrs. Sidney Flavel and Co., Ltd., for 65 years. Mr. Sanderson, who was 88 years of age, was at work until within three days of his death. During his long period of activity he was in turn Works Clerk, Traveller, General Manager, Secretary and Director, and it is noteworthy that he actually served during four generations of the Flavel family.



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