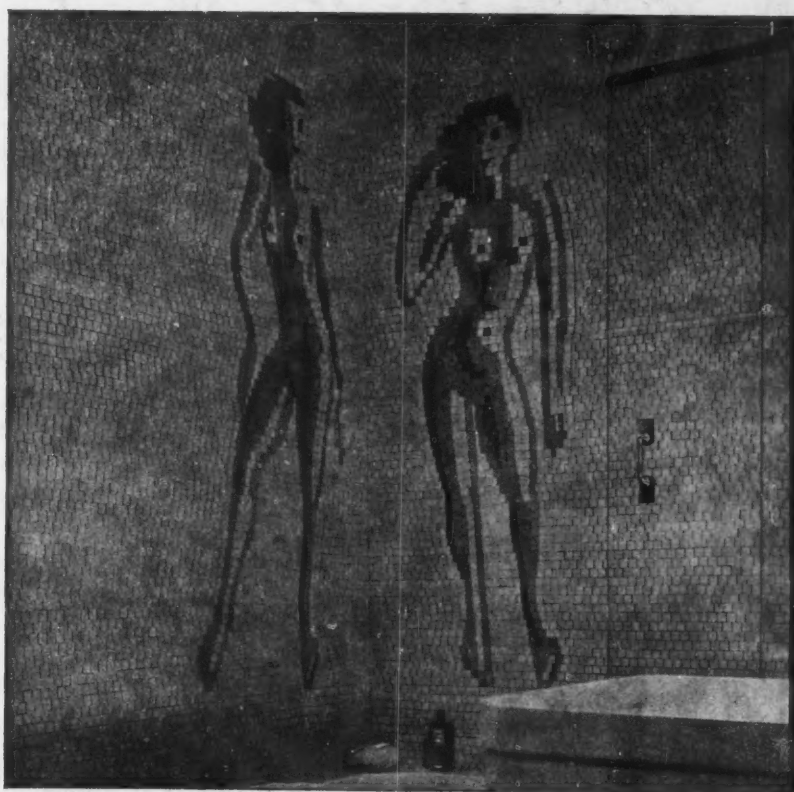


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A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration



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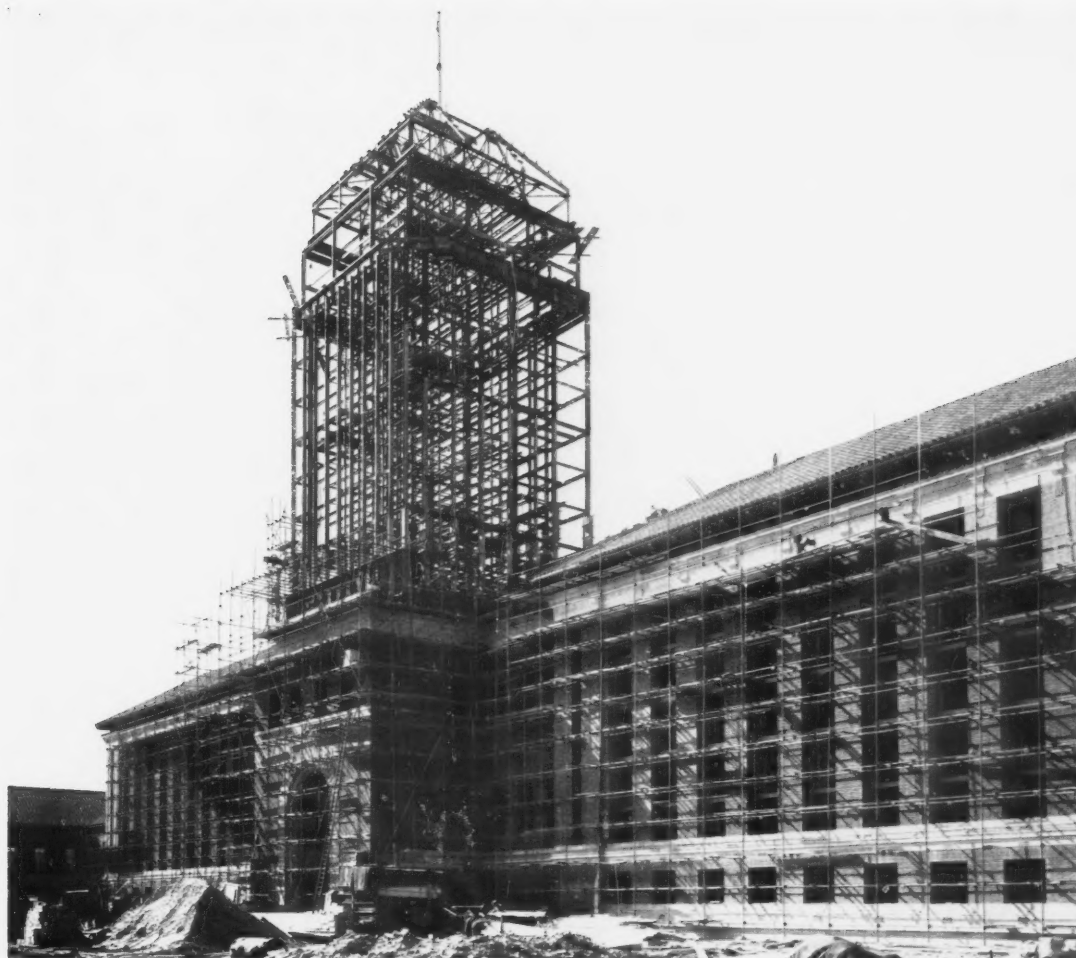
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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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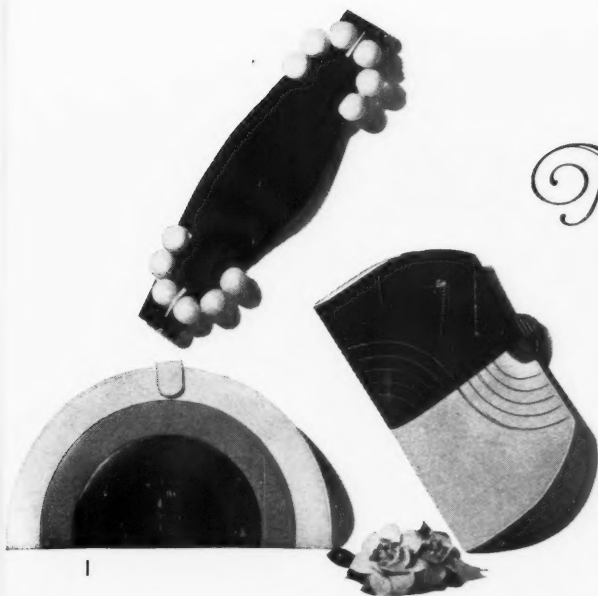


"Naturally, there will be criticism. Some manufacturers whose wares or whose exhibits have been rejected by the selection board will complain and criticize. I personally am very much relieved to think I was not on that committee. And then the public—as is always the public's right—will criticize some of the exhibits. But if those criticisms are well founded, they will serve the useful purpose of drawing attention to any deficiencies, and, knowing our manufacturers, they will hasten to make good these deficiencies."

From the opening speech by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales on January 4th last at the Royal Academy Exhibition of British Art in Industry at Burlington House. On his right is Sir William Llewellyn, Chairman of the Exhibition and President of the Royal Academy; on his left, Mr. J. A. Milne, Vice-Chairman of the Exhibition and President of the Royal Society of Arts.

PLATE I

February 1935



NOVELTIES

at

THE ROYAL ACADEMY

By Herbert Read

I APOLOGIZE immediately for introducing a new word into my title, but its relevance will, I hope, become apparent as we proceed. When, some time ago, the Royal Academy announced that in collaboration with the Royal Society of Arts it was to hold an exhibition of modern industrial art, it seemed possible that the chasm which gapes between that Institution and any contemporary realities was at long last to be bridged: not directly, but in such a way that the solemn face of officialdom might be saved. In other words, modern design, so long excluded from the majestic portals that open on Piccadilly, was to be let in through the kitchen and the boiler-house. As time went on, and the restrictions to be imposed on exhibitors became known, one grew more doubtful. Now we know that the idea was too good to be true, and that in fact the Exhibition opened by the Prince of Wales on January 4 will do far more harm than good unless it is ruthlessly criticized. It is possible that one should begin by exonerating the Royal Academy itself: their part in the scheme being mainly a gesture of hospitality, we must praise them for their good will. At the same time, it would be very pertinent to observe, that if they had been more fully acquainted with the progress of design

in the fine arts, more fully alive to the spirit of the age, they would not have been so helpless in the hands of those commercial interests which are actually responsible for this distressing display of ineptitude.

In a preliminary circular issued by the organizers of the Exhibition, the objectives in view were stated to be:

To impress upon the public the importance of good design in articles of everyday use;

To show, not only to our own people, but also to other nations, that British manufacturers, in co-operation with British artists, are capable of producing, in all branches of industry, articles which combine artistic form with utility and sound workmanship;

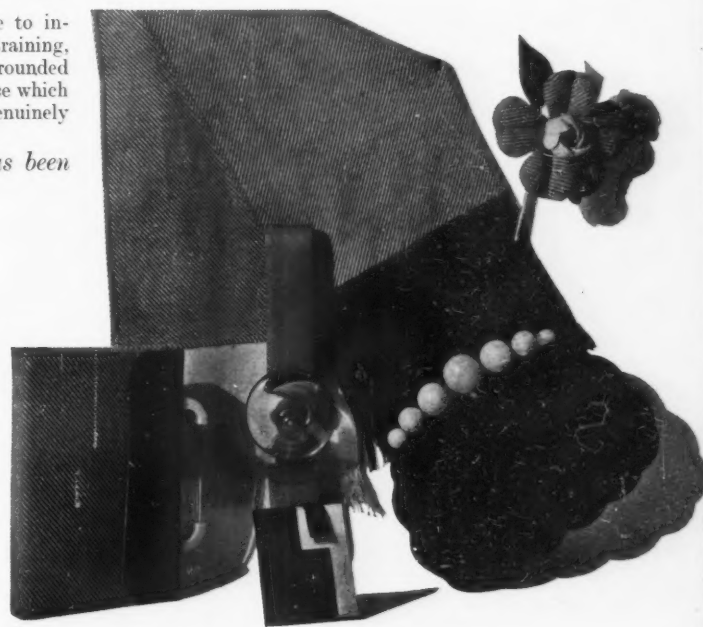
To encourage British artists to give to industry the benefit of their talent and training, so that the objects with which we are surrounded in our daily lives may have an appearance which is not only attractive, but is based on genuinely artistic principles.

Not one of these objectives has been

attained. That this is not merely a personal opinion, but rather a judgment deduced from the necessary principles, is what I shall now attempt to show.

Two terms are involved in the problem—*art* and *industry*. The first requisite for a successful demonstration of their actual and possible relationships is a definition of the meaning of these two terms. There is not the slightest evidence in the Exhibition that the organizers started with any such clear conception. Art is notoriously difficult to define, but as a

1. A belt in black suède, with a white buckle, designed by Beatrice Dawson. The calf thumb bag is by the Anglo-French Bag Company.
2. A black suède bag and belt designed by Beatrice Dawson. The other bag and flower are by Bemeron.





general term, conceived without the connotation of specific arts like painting, sculpture, pottery, or architecture, it means, and can only mean, the organization of materials into some form or shape that has an appeal to our sensory faculties of sight and touch (it being understood, of course, that we are dealing here with only the plastic arts). In so far as the work of art is an object of use, another faculty, and a very important one, comes into play—our sense of the appropriateness of the object. All other qualities, such as decoration and preciousness, are secondary to the fundamental qualities of form and appropriateness.

The term *industry*, one would have thought, should present less difficulty, but obviously the organizers of the Exhibition have again had no clear definition in mind. Industry, of course, is merely the process of making things, but we are particularly concerned with *modern industry*, whose characteristics are machinery and mass production.

We are also concerned, incidentally, with the mass of people for whom the machinery works with increasing capacity and fertility.

Looking at the objectives of the Exhibition in the light of these preliminary definitions, we can state that, as for the first, the determining factors should have been form and functional efficiency; for the second, good design irrespective of such an irrelevant consideration as nationality; and for the third, a type of object within reach of the great mass of people served by modern industry. "You must give consideration," said the Prince of Wales in his famous Guildhall speech, "to another greater and far more important ideal, designing and working for the majority instead of for the needs of the minority." What the Prince put forward as an ideal is also an inherent necessity of the economics of modern machine production.

Now let us turn to more particular criticisms. The Exhibition is arranged

mainly on a material basis, but some of the galleries are divided into specimen rooms which bring the materials together in a final unity. The first gallery is devoted to Ceramics. 3. The arrangement of this room is ill-considered, the pottery being set like nine-pins in shallow wall cases (what we might call the "pot-shot principle"). Some of the pieces are hand-made pots, meant to appeal as individual works of art; they seem to have no relevance to the purpose of the Exhibition. The majority of the exhibits are mass-produced wares—dinner-services and tea-services—and this is as it should be. But the way to show a service is *spread out*, as it is used on a table, an arrangement which may not have been possible owing to lack of space; but no one would exhibit a motor-car hung up by its front wheels on the same excuse. A drastic reduction of the number of exhibits would have been all to the good, for then the acceptable ones would have had a better chance to



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make their effect. In general this section shows a complete lack of life: there has been no improvement on the traditional forms which originate in the eighteenth century (and perhaps these forms cannot be improved on; why, then, lower the quality of design by excluding them from the Exhibition?). Decoration in general is timid and ineffectual. The old Rockingham and Spode services (which some of the exhibits are "faintly pursuing") with all their faults were generous and vital.

These remarks on pottery apply, with necessary modifications, to the glassware. Everywhere timidity, lack of inspiration, refusal to let the material have its way. There is a commendable absence of cut glass of the prickly variety, but no real exploitation of the crystalline quality of glass (comparable, for example, to the eighteenth century chandelier). The decorative possibilities of sandblasting are shown in the panels of black vitrolite with designs in this technique by Maurice Lambert

and Eric Ravilious. It is one of the few exhibits that tell us anything new: whether the process has any value for objects of common use is not apparent.

The main attraction of the Glassware gallery, 4, is its general arrangement, for which Mr. E. Maxwell Fry, A.R.I.B.A., is responsible. It is the only gallery which displays any specifically modern feeling in its construction and decoration. Most of the rooms look like Eastern bazaars, with gilded columns of faintly Egyptian flavour, and tented ceilings of billowy gauze. It was realized that the Academy galleries in themselves would not form an appropriate decorative background to the Exhibition, and vast sums of money have been spent on the structural adaptation of the interior. But why, for an exhibition of modern industrial art, replace a too, too solid and ornate but consistent background with a series of unco-ordinated and exotic pavilions? Here, clearly, was a case for unified control, and if someone like Mr. Fry



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3. The Ceramics Gallery, designed by H. S. Goodhart-Rendel. The colour scheme is gold. 4. The Glassware Gallery, designed by E. Maxwell Fry. 5. The kitchen, designed by Mrs. Darcy Braddell. The Monel metal sink unit is placed for day or artificial light. The kitchen fitment, designed by R. Fraser Reekie, comprises kitchen cabinet, store and china cupboards. The refrigerator is under the sink unit. 6. The Dining Room, designed by R. A. Duncan and made by Waring and Gillox. The walnut sideboard and table are combined. The table is in two pieces, hinged together, and the outer end, and the legs, fold under the inner end, and then the table drops to form the front of the sideboard.

had been entrusted with the arrangement of the whole Exhibition, we should have had at least a uniform background of modernity. Incredible as it may seem, the work was assigned to a panel of thirty-one "experts"! When one remembers the magnificent general effect of the comparable exhibition of industrial art in Stockholm a year or two ago, one can but accuse the Planning Committee of exposing our so-called practical genius to the ridicule of the whole world.

In this connection we might consider the general effect of the specimen rooms which occupy four of the galleries. Most of them are narrow platforms about 7 ft. wide and 12 ft. long. In what sense is this a room? It is true that the rooms in some modern flats are not much bigger, and if the object had been to show modern furniture adapted to confined spaces, such exiguous platforms might have been appropriate. To his great credit one architect, Mr. R. A. Duncan, saw his opportunity, and designed a dining-room embodying the most ingenious space-saving devices, 6. In the same gallery the kitchen designed by Mrs. Darcy Braddell, 5, makes a virtue

of necessity, and in her limited space she has ordered her numerous items to very good effect. But most of the specimen rooms are more like shop windows, and none of them gives the effect of a human habitation.

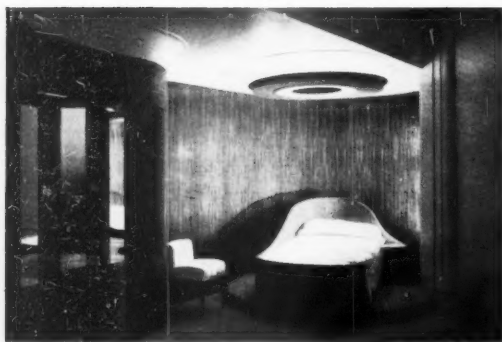
A more considerable objection, however, must be raised against the contents of most of these rooms. They are in no useful sense objects of industrial art. For the most part they are individual objects designed by individual architects or artists and made specially by individual craftsmen for the special purpose of this Exhibition. That, the organizers will hasten to explain, was the whole idea! To get famous architects and academicians to stoop to lowly things; to get well-known manufacturers to look with a friendly eye on their fancies, and from the designs produce a finished article. The result, in most cases, is literally fantastic, if we bear in mind the purpose of the Exhibition. For what we have assembled in these specimen rooms is not a series of prototypes which industry can, as it were, take over and reproduce in

quantities for the benefit of the majority, but a collection of arbitrary articles which, even if they could be adapted to the processes of modern machine production, would be useless and costly in most houses. How many people, for example, can afford a garden dining-room, 10, with marble walls sandblasted with elegant cartoons by John and Elsie Farleigh (incidentally, why use the process of sandblasting for the reproduction of an engraved linear design?), with table and stools in "marble-stucco," marble floor and ornaments to match? For the people such an Exhibition is supposed to benefit, this exhibit is a piece of heartless and extravagant snobbery. The same criticism is true of Mr. Edward Maufe's hall, with its balustrade in wrought iron with silver bronze handrail, etc., etc.; of Mr. Howard Robertson's dining-room with its goatskin dado and goatskin chair seats. Are goats so plentiful in this age of machinery that they too can contribute to our progress? There is a day nursery designed by Mr. Maufe,

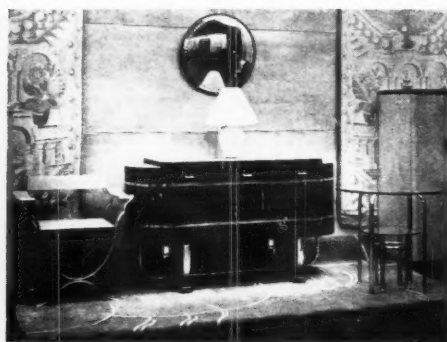
constructed and furnished by Messrs. Heal and Son. It has a metal window, sole concession to this age of steel, but no sets of Meccano—nothing so misleading for the young, but rather nicely painted wooden toys, everything in that folklore tradition which children, though not academicians, have left far behind.

Some of the individual pieces of furniture cry out for criticism, and will lead up to my general accusation of *novelism*. There is a bed, for example, designed by Betty Joel, 7. It is made of beautiful Queensland walnut and maple twisted and contorted into a shape which I can only compare to a dislocated hip-bath. I am prepared to admit that in the abstract a dislocated hip-bath may be a good shape; rather like a piece of sculpture by Arp. But why go to the enormous trouble of bending and cutting wood to such a form? Why, above all, make a bedstead in that shape? Does it conduce to better sleep, or serve any other function of a bed more effectively? The plain truth is that a bed from time immemorial has had a rectangular shape, and there is every good reason for retaining that shape: it is the shape that best fits the human figure, and which is best adapted to the natural shape of sheets and blankets. Such shapes are archetypal, fixed by unchanging necessities, and it is merely irrational to depart from them. A still worse example of misapplied ingenuity is to be seen in the library designed by Mr. Robert Lutyens, 8. In a window embrasure, hanging from the ceiling like a monstrous daddy-long-legs, is a tea-table. The reasoning is obvious—table-legs are awkward things that get in the way of human legs; and occasional tables are easily upset. But is it any better if we stand the table on its head and hang it, like a Babylonian garden, from the ceiling? To pass cups of tea and dishes of cake between the three suspension rods might be an amusing game, but not an aid to conversation. Besides, the virtue of an occasional table is that it can be easily moved about the room; this table is immovably fixed to one spot on the ceiling.

The underlying sentiment in such cases is not functional, and it is not specifically modern; it is merely novel. Brought up against an archetypal form, which calls for nothing but the right use of appropriate materials, the designer can only be original at the cost of efficiency. But the question is even subtler than this explanation would imply; for, incapable of direct thought in relation to material and function,



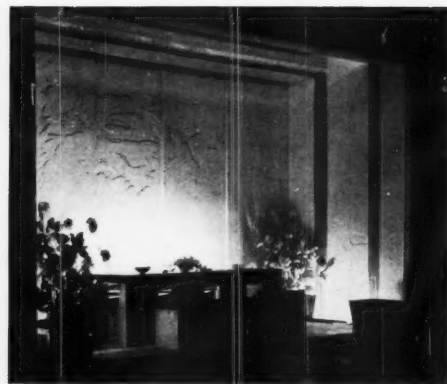
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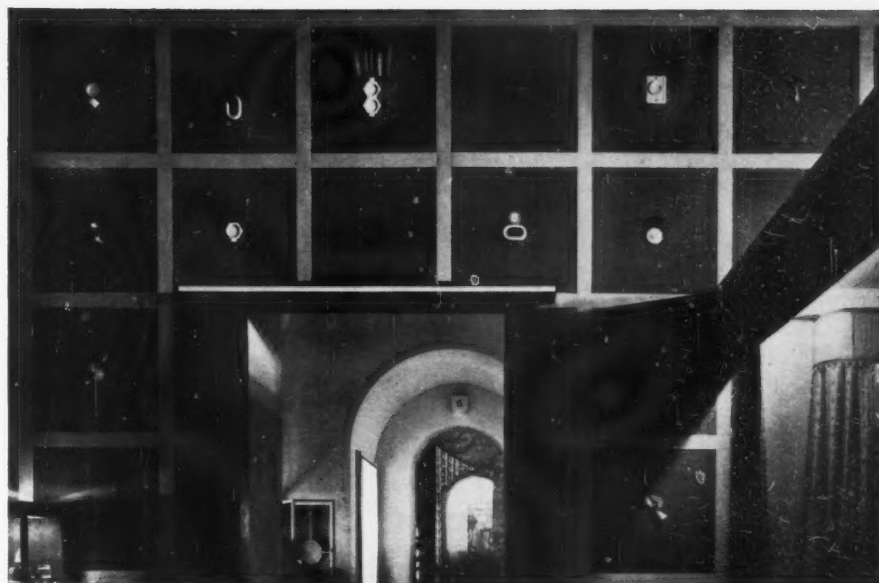


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7. A bedroom designed by H. C. Bradshaw. The walls and ceiling are pink, the carpet fawn. Betty Joel designed the furniture in Queensland walnut and maple. 8. The Library, designed by Robert Lutyens. The breakfast table is one glass disc over one oak disc, suspended from the ceiling by three metal rods. 9. A bay in the Furniture Gallery, designed by Sir Ambrose Heal. The lamp is by B. Powell. 10. The garden dining-room, designed by Oliver Hill. The table and eight stools are white terrazzo.

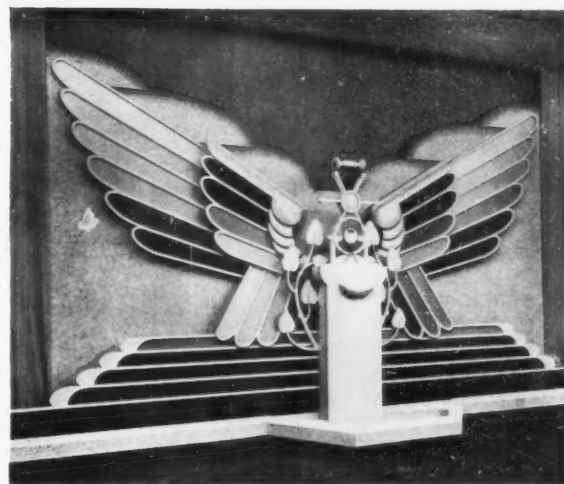
incapable, that is to say, of true modernity, but realizing at the same time that the public demands a change, demands novelty at any price, many designers seek everywhere for an *Ersatz*, a substitute modernity. This substitute modernity should be carefully distinguished from misunderstood and misapplied modernity (the so-called modernistic style); our designer is clever enough to see the weakness of that. He wants something that is quite distinct from the inevitably modern (inevitable because determined by the strict logic of material plus function); he therefore escapes into these arbitrary fantasies which I would call *novelism*. It will be seen at once that such a type of originality will appeal especially to those institutions like the Royal Academy, which are committed by privilege and prejudice to an uncompromising hostility to all forms of true modernism, but which nevertheless are forced to recognize (if only at the instance of the Prince of Wales) that "something must be done about it."

Asimilarescapist tendency characterizes some of the furniture exhibited by designers who ought to know better. I would draw particular attention to the sideboard and two chairs made by Sir Ambrose Heal, 9. In the past his firm has perhaps done as much as any single manufacturer in the country to improve and retail furniture of simple design and excellent workmanship. Recently, however, it has become more modish and Mayfairish, always at the sacrifice of logical design. Observe the armchair, for example, designed by Sir Ambrose Heal himself. It is a variation on the theme of the steel chair, first given its logical form in Germany by Marcel Breuer and Mies van der Rohe. This logical form is based on two considerations: economy of material and suitability for mass production. Manufactured and marketed in an efficient manner, it could be sold for much less than a bicycle—for £2, say. Now Sir Ambrose Heal comes along, takes the elements of this logical type (chromium steel tubing and leather) and produces the stylish object illustrated here. Fantasy has replaced logic, and with what gain? The beautiful curves of the Breuer chair, its simplicity and functional efficiency, are replaced by senselessly scalloped arms and bowed legs, sharp points, dust traps and more than a suggestion of antiquarianism; and the price has gone up to ten guineas. The same kind of criticism can be applied to the chromium and



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11. The walls of the Plastics Gallery, designed by G. Grey Wornum. Each square contains an article made from Phenolic or Urea Formaldehyde plastics showing what sort of things can be made in the material. 12. A decorative feature on the east wall of the Gallery for Dress Materials intended to show certain ranges of colours according to the British Colour Council's standard charts. Designed by Laurence Irving.



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glass table designed by Mr. E. Proctor, A.R.A.—a complete inability to see the rationale of design in these modern materials.

I refrain from criticizing the elegant design in icing sugar by Mr. Rex Whistler, which is one of the most notable features of the Exhibition: I should have thought it was an obvious example of very ancient craftsmanship, but possibly wedding-cakes are now moulded by machinery. Similar plastic conceptions, however, are a feature of the gallery devoted to new materials like bakelite. The general arrangement of the gallery, 11, for which Mr. G. Grey Wornum, F.R.I.B.A., is responsible, is intended to show some of the uses to which plastic materials are being put at the present time. The walls are lined with panels of laminated resinous materials upon which have been fixed groups of objects made of similar substances. The idea is not a new one: there are porcelain rooms at Munich and Dresden decorated with porcelain objects in a somewhat similar way. But there the objects themselves

have some charm—which is more than can be said for bakelite egg-spoons and cups of the same material sawn in two. It will be excused as an amusing stunt, but our situation is surely a little too desperate for jokes of this kind.

Nowhere is the lack of inspiration in the general arrangement of the Exhibition more evident than in the galleries devoted to dress materials. Here, if anywhere, was surely a chance to make a display of some magnificence. The "decorative feature," designed by Mr. Laurence Irving in Gallery VIII, 12, is an example of that tasteless imitation of modern geometrical art in general absent from the Exhibition; whilst the similar "feature" designed by Jan Juta, in the next gallery and carried out by the London Sand Blast Co. and Messrs. Pilkington Brothers, Ltd., is a recrudescence of *l'art nouveau* of forty years ago. The dress materials themselves, drab in colour and frumpish in design, are draped in stiff upright folds in a manner that a provincial milliner would be ashamed of.



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There is more *art nouveau* decoration in the book production gallery, which otherwise is fairly representative of the efficient but too modish attainments of this industry. Most of the books are of the precious type, and there is very little space given to the ordinary ubiquitous novel. Bill-headings, circulars and catalogues make a poor show in the gallery devoted to commercial printing. The posters are an outrageous misrepresentation of what is actually being done by artists in this country. The work of Mr. McKnight Kauffer, our most brilliant poster designer, an artist who has done more than anyone to raise the level of this important section of industrial design, is entirely unrepresented. Upon enquiry it seemed that his absence might be explained by the fact that although he has been working

in this country for a considerable number of years, he is actually of American nationality. Nothing could so openly reveal the abject futility of the Exhibition. The catalogue, as a matter of fact, is strewn with foreign names; are we to assume that these designers, having taken out papers of naturalization in time for the Exhibition, became mysteriously British? The mystery deepens, however, when we discover Mr. Kauffer's name in the book production gallery. Can an artist be British when he designs a bookplate, and foreign when he designs a poster?

The metalwork shows a little more evidence of modernity, but here, too, the escape to *novelism* takes place. Silver is slowly emancipating itself from baroque forms, but for every design relevant to modern methods of



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13. A bathroom designed by Oliver Hill demonstrating the use of standardized ceramic mosaic. The colour scheme is buff, yellow and green. The designs of the figures on the walls, executed in mosaic cubes of buff and yellow, were drawn by Rosemary and Clifford Ellis. 14. The Gallery of Dress Materials, designed by Lawrence Irving and Elsie Collier.

production there are a hundred still imitating the old handicraft forms. The jewelry is beyond redemption; there is better in Woolworth's, if design and not costliness is our aim. In the leatherwork section we again become conscious of opportunities missed, or deliberately evaded. There are scarcely any English sports goods (what a work of art, for example, is the common English football!); and leather trunks and saddlery (our unrivalled specialities) are dismissed for lack of space.

That must complete my indictment. If the real condition of design in British industry were as bad as it is represented to be in this Exhibition, then the situation would be hopeless. But actually it is very different. Our machine design, our engine design, our transport design, our electrical design, are among the best in the world, and slowly the influence of these dominant industries will filter down to pots and pans, to furniture and fabrics. For these larger industries are based on realities; their designers, working in the factories in the raw materials, design for function and efficiency, and for the reflection of these qualities in the finished product. They know nothing of the history of art, and will not visit the present Exhibition. They plan and they construct, always with a definite purpose in view; and the beauty they succeed in creating owes nothing, absolutely nothing, to the well-meaning but spurious activities of our art schools and academies.

HOUSE AT SYDENHAM HILL, LONDON

ANALYSIS

By Robert Townsend

This house is an attempt to design a contemporary dwelling place as an organic unity. Almost every architect would maintain that such a consideration has dominated his efforts, with the probable addition of a second, the consideration of "Neighbourliness." The house will certainly offend against the conventional application of this second factor as expressed in the surrounding houses.

In the design the aim has been to give it the spirit of the twentieth century, and to a large degree the architects have succeeded. The tradition of the latter half of the eighteenth century, which expressed itself in the use of good materials, especially yellow brick and stucco, is evident in Dulwich Village. This tradition came to an end about a century ago, amid a welter of hard red facings, but the simplicity and clarity of the late eighteenth-century houses has been recaptured in the new house at Sydenham Hill.

Here, as always, there are many absurdities that are forced upon the protesting architect by bye-laws, rules and regulations. Although authorities are becoming slightly more amenable about pipes, there is still much to be done in this direction, as can be clearly seen from this building. With regard to structural requirements, the concrete frame would carry a house four or five times the size.

The elevation to the road at first sight appears particularly attractive. The front, however, gives a false impression of the house. It looks as though the architects wished to plan the main rooms on the first floor. Examination of the plans will show, however, that this is not so. The living rooms are on the ground floor and suffer through the effort to make a fine front to the street. The planning of the ground floor is a little confused, though the kitchen is excellent.

Throughout the house there has been a serious attempt to make each part worthy of the whole, resulting sometimes in over-emphasis. The treatment of the hall is interesting and successful, though a little cramped.

The planning of the first floor is very successful, the wide corridor giving a feeling of spaciousness. The whole treatment of this floor is broader and cleaner in its lines. Particularly pleasant is the staircase wall, providing by its curve a contrast to the vertical and horizontal lines of the remainder.

A Roomy service arrangements very well fitted. The shape of the kitchen is, however, rather strange owing to the canting of the garage.

B The main rooms are pulled forward to bring them into closer connection with the garden. This effect is not achieved. Why were the windows not made to reach to the ground? If this were done, the intimacy between the house and garden would be nearer achievement.

C Why was this window carried round the corner? It appears to look directly on to the neighbour's plot.

D Pleasant open planning of the entrance hall and staircase.

E Why is this hall so narrow and cramped? Were the heavy concrete window frames necessary? They seem to increase the cramped feeling. Plate glass would have given a lighter character.

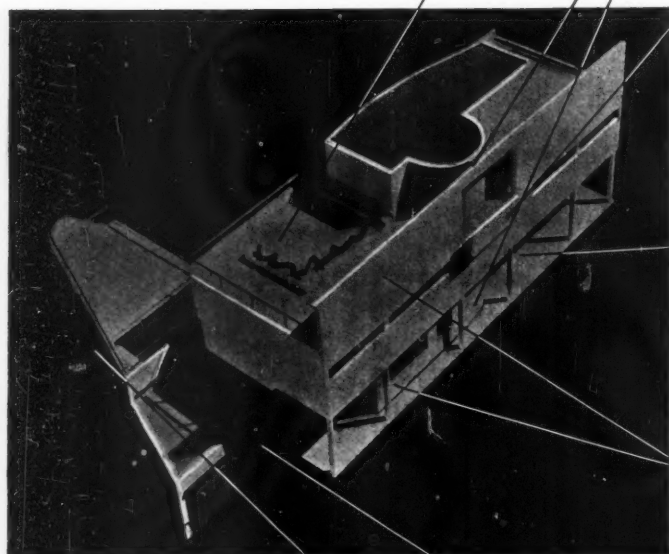
F Spacious corridors give a feeling of lightness and openness. They are very well lit.

G Good sized bedrooms with balconies outside, but why must the cill of the door be raised so high?

1. Living Room. 2. Hall. 3. Dining Room. 4. Maid's Room. 5. Lavatory. 6. Entrance. 7. Pantry. 8. Kitchen. 9. 11. Maids' Bedrooms. 10. Bathroom. 12. Coal Store. 13. Garage.

14. Bedrooms. 15. Balcony. 16. Corridor. 17. Bathroom. 18. Upper part of Hall. 19. Terrace.

THE ARCHITECTS' REPLY



H Why is the roof not made more interesting? The model shows flower boxes on the roof. In the job there is but a stretch of very unattractive grey cement roofing which would tempt nobody to sit out on it.

J The curved stock-brick wall to the staircase, appearing above and below the middle floor, clearly indicates the function of the staircase—vertical circulation.

K Why this reminiscence of the antique cyma for the balcony front? The shape makes the parapet less comfortable to lean upon, and cannot be defended on logical grounds, as, in a balcony, room for knees and feet is required.

L Note the openness of feeling of the entrance. The old structural wall idea is disappearing. In its place is the idea of concentration of load on a few isolated points, giving freedom in the interior.

M The yellow stock bricks and concrete finish recall the traditions of Dulwich village with its charming houses of brick and stucco. Though this in itself would not constitute sufficient reason for selecting these materials.

N Subsidiary structures built in brick, indicating their detachment from the main structural work of the house.

O Why this rather peculiar shape to the garage and service section, resulting in very awkward shapes?

A. The ceiling is dropped over the bay containing the working table and cooker. This causes the actual room to have a much cleaner shape than appears on the drawing. **B.** We agree that it might have been better to carry the windows down to the ground, although the effect of the rooms is, in our opinion, extremely light and open.

C. This window gives an additional period of sunshine to the living room. At present it is glazed with semi-obscured glass until the clients are able to purchase a piece of the adjoining land.

E. We should have preferred the hall to be wider but many other factors had to be taken into account, and it was considered better to have a narrow hall going through two storeys than a single storey hall, which was the only alternative. The reinforced concrete window gives scale and emphasizes the difference of function between the hall and the living and sleeping quarters.

G. The beam which supports the cantilevered slab in the living rooms is placed above the slab, thus giving a cill to the doors which open on to the balcony, and at the same time freeing the ground floor ceilings from beams.

H. As cost was cut to a minimum it was decided that flower boxes, etc., should be provided by the clients after the building was finished. The particular portion of roof shown is intended to be an exercising terrace and therefore does not require flower boxes.

K. When a person leans on a balcony his elbows will be found to be about 9 in. further forward than his toes. We have taken this into consideration when designing the balcony front. This shape also gives a feeling of spaciousness to the balcony.

M. The concrete was chosen by reason of its adaptability and giving freedom of planning and lightness. The brick was chosen for the single storey part of the building on account of its being more economical for a low building than concrete, and also to provide a contrast to the concrete. Yellow brick was chosen as this is the traditional London brick.

O. The shape was derived from the building line insisted upon by the adjoining owner, at the same time it forms a screen to the garden.

V. HARDING

HARDING AND TECTON, ARCHITECTS.

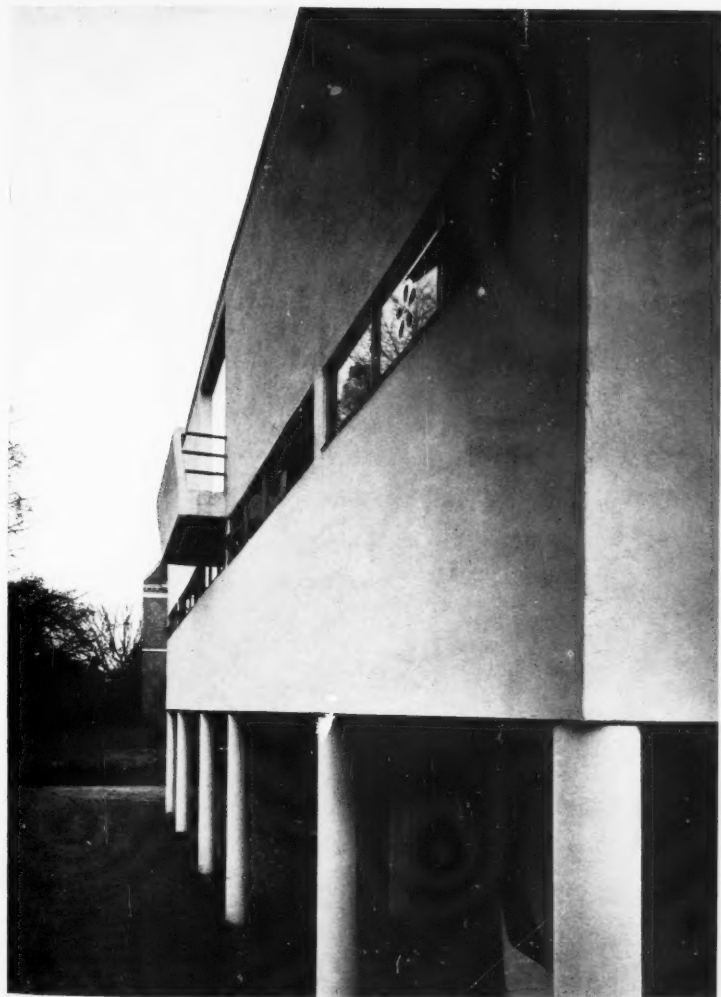
I. A typical house recently erected on the estate of Dulwich College which fulfils the Trustees' mandate that only houses "somewhat Georgian in style" would be permitted on this particular site. The clients for Messrs. Harding and Tecton's new house eventually found a site for it off Sydenham Hill.



H O U S E



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The house consists of two parts: a reinforced concrete framed main structure and a one storey yellow brick service wing. The service wing derives its shape from the building line insisted on by the late owner of the land, and at the same time forms a convenient terrace and screen from the neighbouring house. In order to link the two units together, the brickwork is continued freely through the concrete frame, and the wall of the semi-circular stair is made of brick.

The panel walls in the main structure are of 4 in. reinforced concrete lined with 2 in. cork applied in the shuttering. Externally the surface of the concrete has been rubbed down while "green" with a wood float and sprayed with a water-proof paint.

2. A garden view with the outside stair to the terrace in the foreground. 3. The front to the street showing the entrance loggia and curved brickwork enclosing the staircase. 4. The entrance porch, seen from the front door. 5. The first floor landing. Note the curve of the staircase and the linen cupboards.

A T S Y D E N H A M H I L L



6

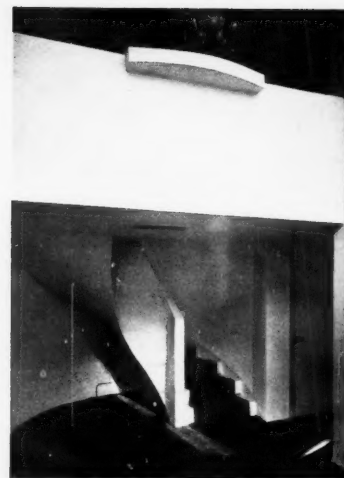
All the windows except those in the service quarters (which are standard steel casements) are specially made steel units : those in the main living and bedrooms are sliding. The windows in the hall, which goes through two floors, are of pre-cast vibrated concrete. The floor slabs are of hollow tile construction. The floors in the service quarters are finished with jointless magnesium composition. The drawing room floor is of polished oak parquetry. The remaining floors are finished with smooth cement and close covered with carpet.

The bulk of the heating in the house is by

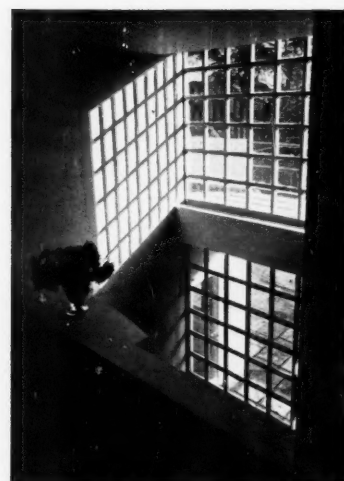
electricity, but three coal fires were insisted on by the clients. Thermal storage electric water heaters provide hot water at each draw-off point. Owing to the limited size of the garden, ample terraces have been provided on the house so that 100 per cent. of the original site area is usable as garden.

The external colours are: walls—light cream ; soffits and recesses—eau-de-nil ; window frames—brown ; railings—grey. In the brick walls the window frames are light cream.

The furnishing in the house was not in the hands of the architects.



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6. The entrance hall from the front door. The hall goes through two floors and the window frames are pre-cast reinforced concrete.

7. The hall and half-landing seen from the window.

8. The hall from the half-landing. Artificial light is obtained from concealed electric lamps fixed between the front of the ceiling and the reinforced concrete window.

9. Another example of the type of house now being erected on the Dulwich College Estate.

10. The house from the garden.

11. A view of the bedroom balcony from the terrace. The lower panels to the doors are painted the same colour as the walls, to avoid interruption of continuity.

H O U S E A T S Y D E N H A M



10

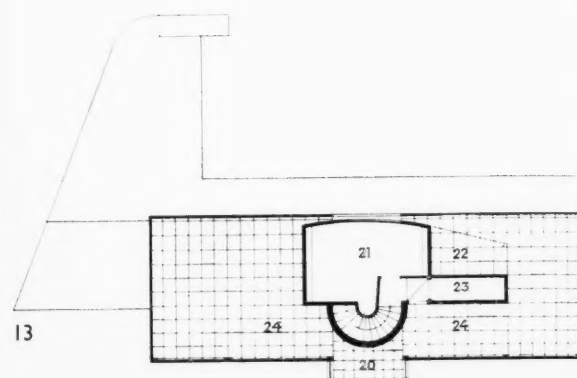


H I L L

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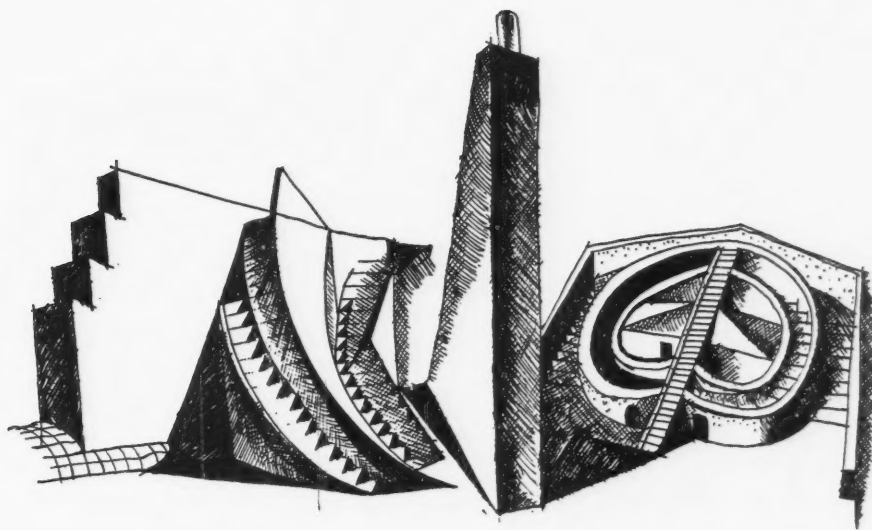
12. A view of the window in the living room looking through the loggia to the dining room. The terrace can be seen through the window. The windows are steel, horizontal sliding sashes and the cills

are of sawn slate on reinforced concrete.

13. Plan of the second floor. The key to the numbers is: 20, Terrace. 21, Balcony. 22, Study. 23, Shelter. 24, Boxrooms.

14. Elevation of the entrance front.

HOUSE AT SYDENHAM HILL



Delhi Observatory

The Paradise of an early Cubist

By Penelope Chetwode

COLD WEATHER visitors to India invariably spend a week in New Delhi. Not many of them, however, know about or bother to visit the "Newest Delhi." Yet this lies in the heart of the modern capital, a few paces off the road leading from the Government buildings to the shopping centre in Connaught Place. The occasional tourist who does visit it cannot but be bewildered. After passing the Regency revival Free Church he notices on his right a low wall enclosing some peculiar shaped pink structures. Drawn by extreme curiosity he stops his car and enters the enclosure. Before him stands a group of large masonry cylinders, hemispheres and gnomons, with gleaming sides of polished shell-pink plaster. What extravagant cubist fantasia is this, planted among the sober domes and colonnades of New Delhi? Is it a German film set of the early 'twenties which has never been removed? Or does it represent the latest and most theoretical designs of Gropius or le Corbusier who must lately have visited

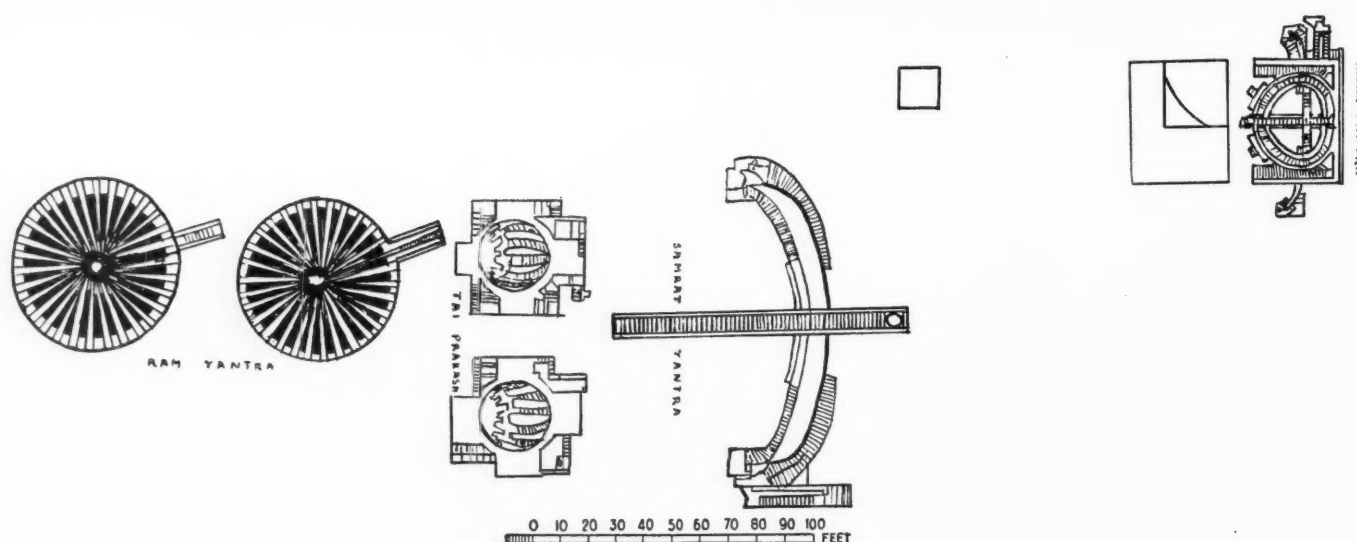
Delhi? Then the tourist advances a step further and his eye catches the marble tablet which tells him that he is standing in the Observatory built by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II of Jaipur in the year A.D. 1724.

"Praise be to God, such that the minutely discerning genius of the profoundest geometers in uttering the smallest particle of it, may open the mouth in confession of inability; and such adoration, that the study and accuracy of astronomers who measure the Heavens, on the first step towards expressing it may acknowledge their astonishment and utter insufficiency," opens the preface to Jai Singh's astronomical tables, and it goes on to explain that "finding brass instruments did not come up to the ideas which he had formed of accuracy, because of the smallness of their size . . . he concluded that the reason why the determinations of the ancients, such as Hipparchus and Ptolemy, proved inaccurate, must have been of this kind. Therefore he constructed in Delhi instruments of his own inven-

tion . . . of stone and lime of perfect stability, so that the inaccuracies from the shaking of the circles and the wearing of their axes and displacement of their centres and the inequality of the minutes might be corrected."

Born in 1686, Jai Singh succeeded to the Rajput principality of Amber at the age of 13, a few years before the death of Aurangzeb. The decline of the Moghul Empire was at hand, and the period in which he lived was one of constant warfare and anarchy. But he distinguished himself more as a statesman than as a soldier, and historians have called him the Machiavelli of his day. It is significant of his perseverance and strength of character that, in spite of difficult times, he founded and completed a new capital called after him, Jainagar or Jaipur.

And this capital was no ordinary Indian city with a central palace and narrow, straggling streets radiating confusedly from it; it was the first city in India built according to a definite town-planning scheme: or rather the first since those of the Indus valley



2. Plan of Jantar Mantar. (Reproduced from the late M. G. E. Kaye's "Treatise on the Observatories of Jai Singh.")

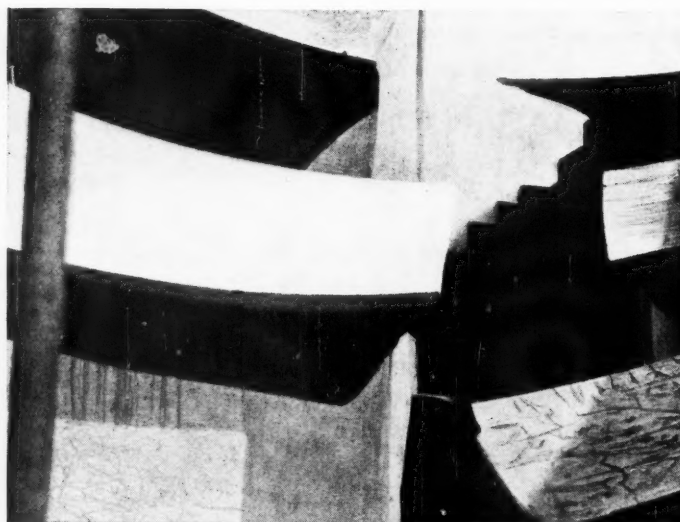
civilization founded some 4000 years earlier. Today no tourist is satisfied until he has visited the famous "pink city of Jaipur" (all the buildings are covered with the same shell-pink plaster as the Observatory), with its broad main street, its orderly side streets running parallel to one another, and on the outskirts, its magnificent Rajput palace and an observatory similar to the one at Delhi.

In addition to being a just ruler and an efficient town-planner Jai Singh was, "from the first dawning of reason in his mind, and during its progress towards maturity, entirely devoted to the study of mathematical science. The bent of his mind was constantly directed to the solution of its most difficult problems, and by the aid of the Supreme Artificer he obtained a thorough knowledge of its principles and rules." Although he was a high-caste Hindu, Jai Singh did not confine himself to Hindu scientific methods. He studied equally those of the Muslims and Europeans. His chief sources of information were Ptolemy's *Almagest*, Euclid's *Elements*, and the British astronomer Flamsteed's *Historia Cœlestis Britannica* (which appeared in 1712). But he did not depend upon books alone. He sent several expeditions to Europe to gather information: expeditions containing not only Hindu and Muslim scholars, but learned Jesuit fathers as well.

Hindus, and Orientals in general, have always set great store by astrology. Jai Singh had for long doubted the accuracy of the existing tables,

and therefore wished to revise them "seeing that very important affairs both regarding religion and the administration of empire depend upon these." Aurangzeb was now dead, and was succeeded by the Emperor Muhammad Shah, and Jai Singh, before proceeding with his work, thought it tactful to represent the necessity of revising the astronomical tables "to His Majesty of dignity and power, the sun of the firmament of felicity

and dominion, the splendour of the forehead of imperial magnificence, the unrivalled pearl of the sea of sovereignty, the incomparably brightest star of the Heaven of Empire, whose standard is the sun, whose retinue the moon, whose lance is Mars and whose pen is Mercury, with attendants like Venus, whose threshold is the sky, whose signet is Jupiter, whose sentinel is Saturn—the Emperor descended from a long race of kings, an Alexander in



3. Interior of the Jai Prakas. An instrument for ascertaining the position of the sun and other heavenly bodies. It consists of two complementary concave hemispheres across each of which wires were originally stretched N. to S. and E. to W., and the shadow of the intersection of these wires on the concave surface of the hemisphere indicated the position of the sun.

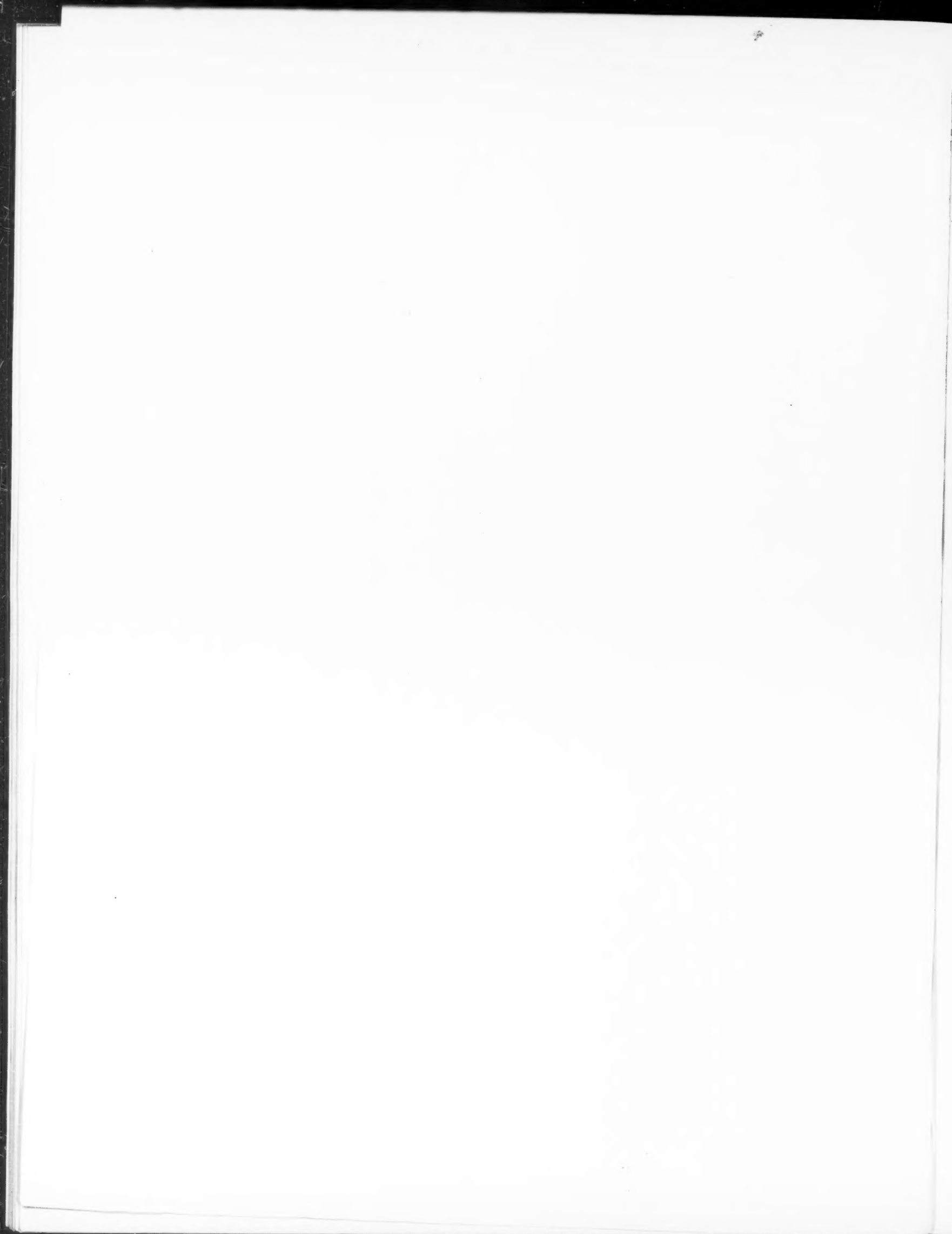


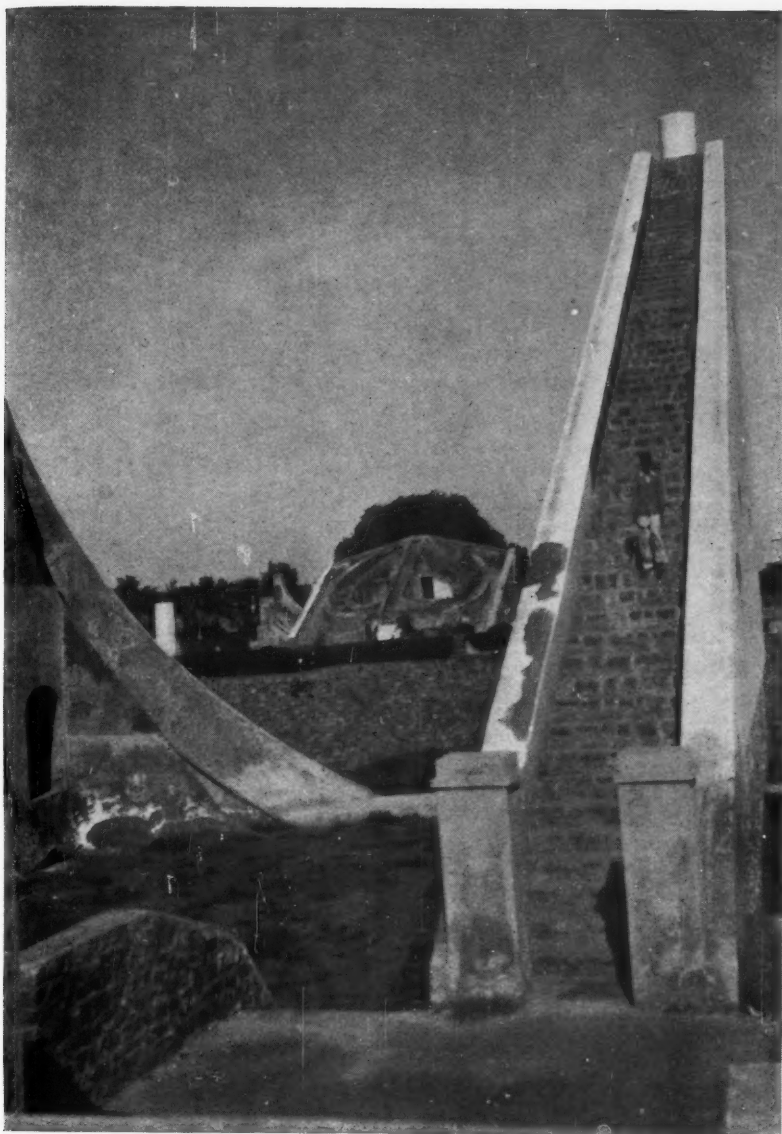
THE OBSERVATORY AT DELHI.

The Delhi Observatory, from an aquatint by T. and W. Daniell, 1804. (See also fig. 9.) To compare the recent photographs of the Observatory with the two aquatints published by the Daniells (uncle and nephew), proves the accuracy of their sketches. The only visible alteration lies in the formal gardens which were laid out before the war in place of the more romantic rocky desert. (Reproduced by courtesy of the India Office.)

PLATE ii

February 1935



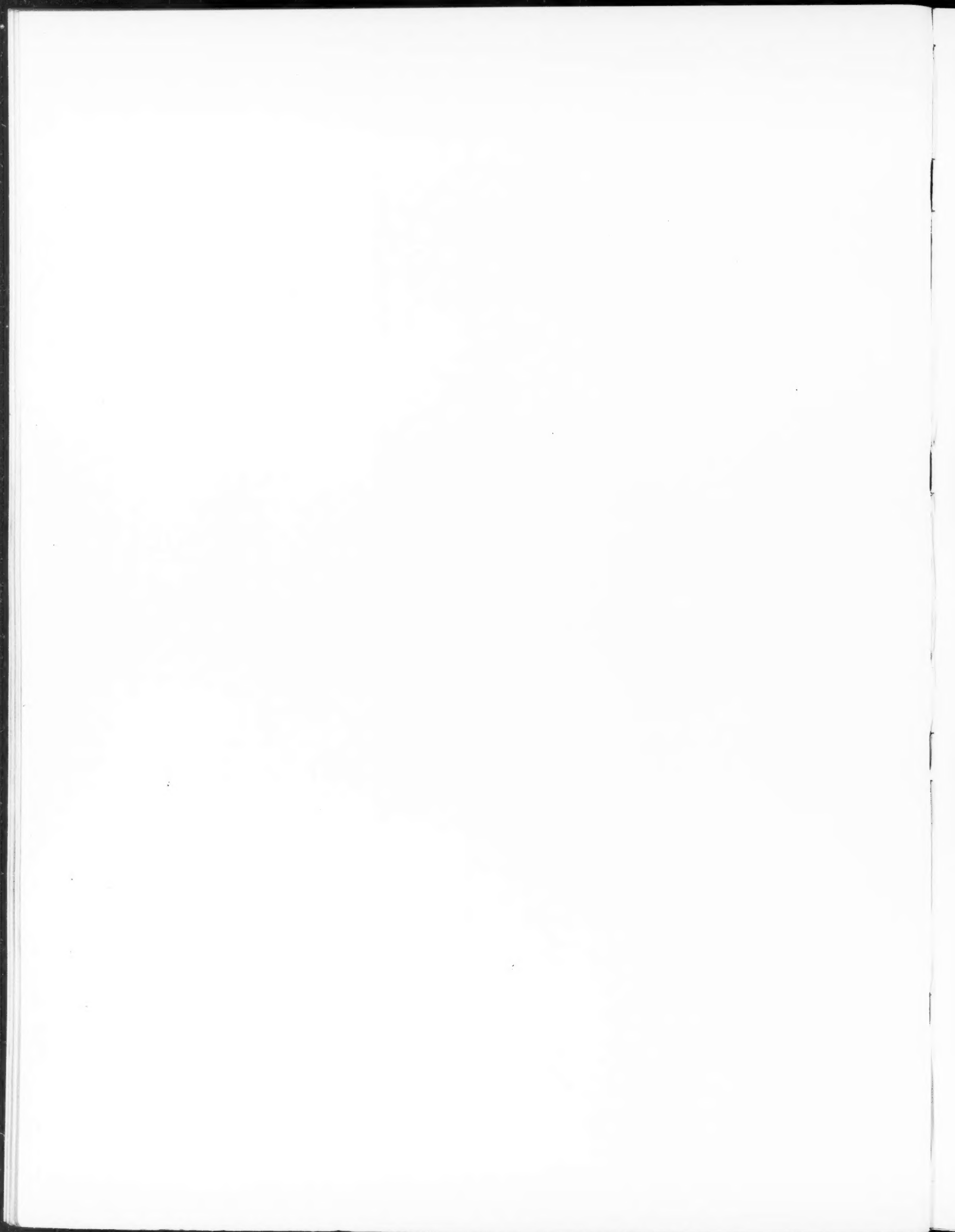


Left. The Giant Sundial known as the *Samrat Yantra*. It is built into a quadrangular excavation, 15 ft. deep, and consists of a central gnomon, 68 ft. high (with the hypotenuse parallel to the earth's axis), and the quadrant of a circle on either side, parallel to the plane of the equator. Beyond the *Samrat Yantra* lies the "mixed instrument." This view partly corresponds to that in the aquatint shown on Plate ii.

Right. The *Misra Yantra*, or "mixed instrument," so-called because it combines four separate instruments in one building. Its principal features are the two graduated semi-circles which comprise arcs for meridians at Greenwich and Zurich on the west, and Nothey (a village in Japan containing an observatory), and Serichew (a town in the Pic island in the Pacific ocean east of Russia) on the east.

PLATE iii

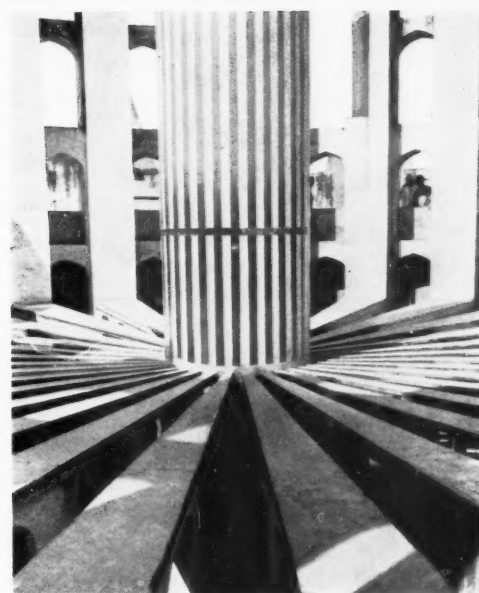
February 1935



4. The exterior of the Ram Yantra. 5. The interior of the Ram Yantra. This is an instrument for reading azimuths and altitudes. It consists of two complementary cylindrical buildings, 54 ft. in diameter and 24 ft. 6½ in. high. They are open at the top and each has a red and white striped pillar (5 ft. 3½ in. diameter) in its centre. To facilitate observation their floors and walls are broken into 30 sectors with angles of 6° between each. 6. This entrancing switchback erected in the early nineteenth century in the pleasure park at Neuilly, near Paris, was certainly designed from an illustration of the "Misra Yantra," Plate iii. A staircase at the back leads up to the pavilion and here the daring pleasure-seeker gets into his little wheeled carriage and is whirled round the wings of the transformed "Misra Yantra" at such speed that he is carried up the middle alley into the pavilion again. 7. The original "Promenade Aérienne" in the Delhi Observatory. (Photograph by Joan Eyres-Monsell.)



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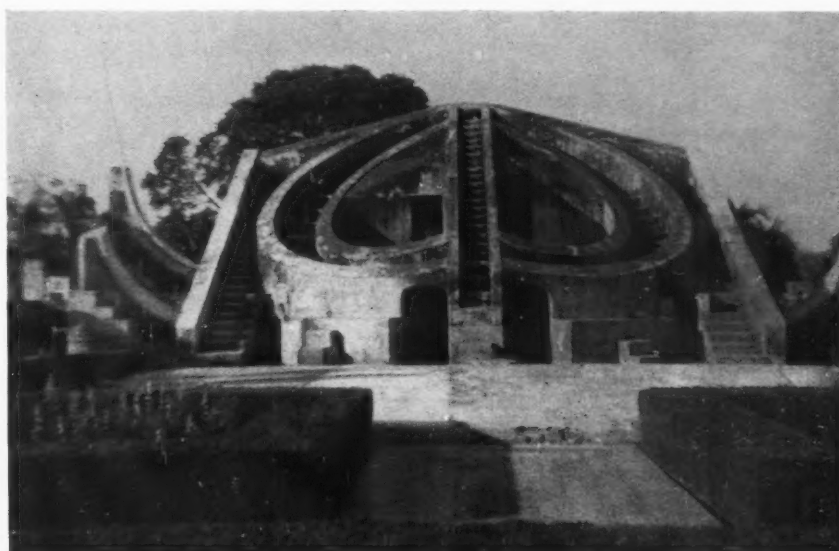
dignity, the shadow of God, the victorious King Muhammad Shah: may he ever be triumphant in battle."

Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) was actually the first of the really useless and decadent Moghul Emperors.

In the same flowery Persian, which was the court language of the Moghuls, His Majesty was pleased to reply: "Since you, who are learned in the mysteries of science, have a perfect



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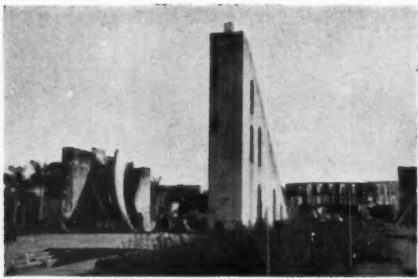
knowledge of this matter, having assembled the astronomers and geometers of the faith of Islam, and the Brahmins and Pandits, and the astronomers of Europe, and having prepared all the apparatus of an observatory, do you so labour for the ascertaining of the point in question, that the disagreement between the calculated times of those phenomena, and the times which they are observed to happen, may be rectified."

And so Jai Singh revised the tables, and these, together with his five observatories at Delhi, Jaipur, Muttra, Ujjain and Benares, are the principal results of his extensive studies. The observations which formed the basis of his new tables were made mostly at the *Jantar Mantar*, as the Delhi

Observatory was called. After his death in 1743 (exactly 200 years after Copernicus) his strange instruments fell into disuse, and it was not until 1910 that those at Delhi were completely restored, and the scales re-graduated, by His Highness the late Maharaja of Jaipur.

In its neglected state the observatory was visited by several eighteenth and nineteenth-century travellers. Many of these refer to the marble staircases which led to the summits of various quadrants and gnomons. But all traces of marble were removed by the Jat raiders (a tribe of marauding hillmen who ravaged all the finest buildings of northern India in the nineteenth century), and the present staircases, dating from the 1910 restoration, are of local stone. The most

DELHI OBSERVATORY



8. A recent photograph of the same subject as that shown in the aquatint reproduced below. (Photograph by Joan Eyres-Monsell.)

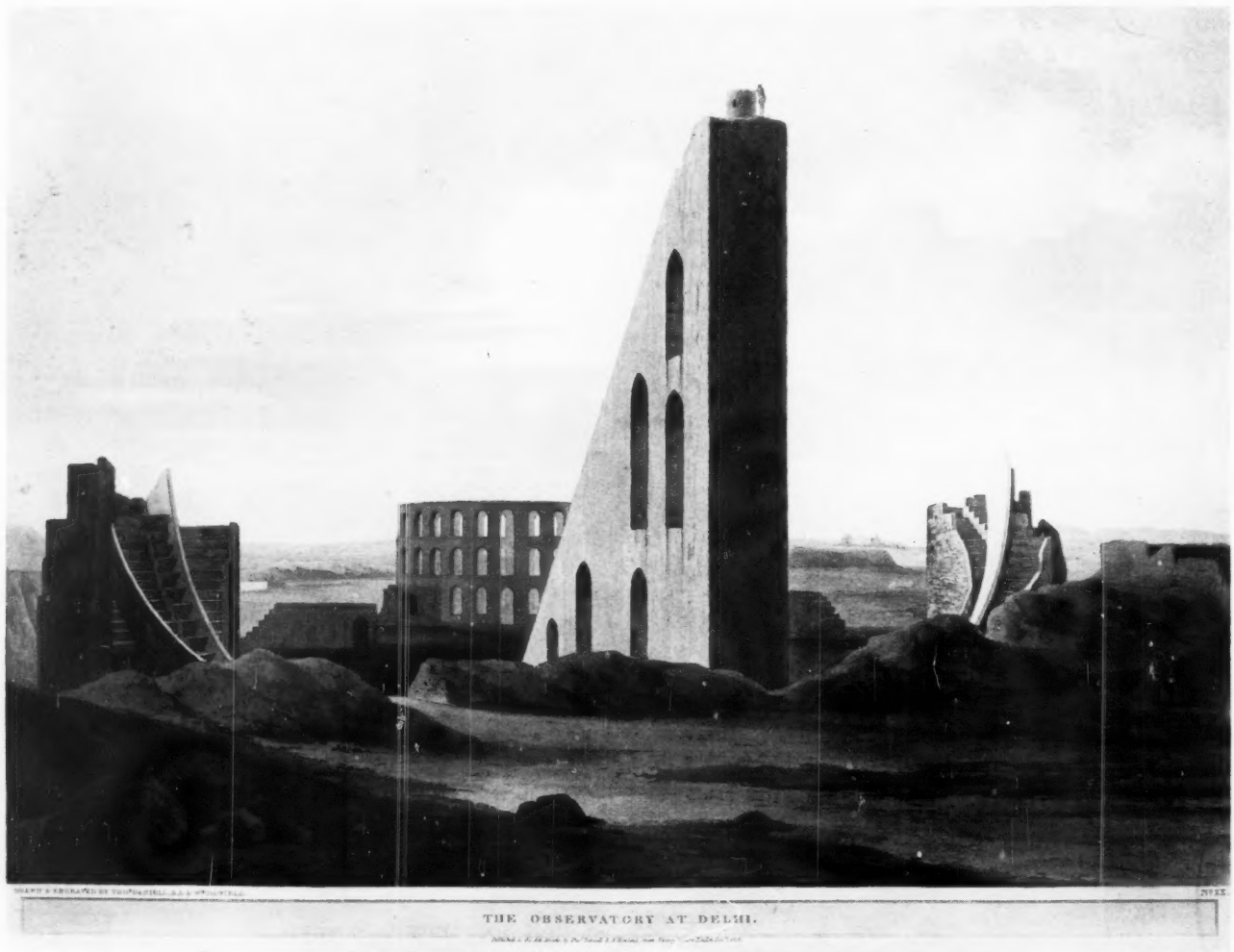
fruitful visit to the observatory was that of Thomas and William Daniell, who published in 1804 two aquatints of the chief instruments. Many other sketches were certainly made by dif-

ferent travellers and one of these was evidently the inspiration for the enthralling switchback "Promenade Aérienne" here reproduced, 6.

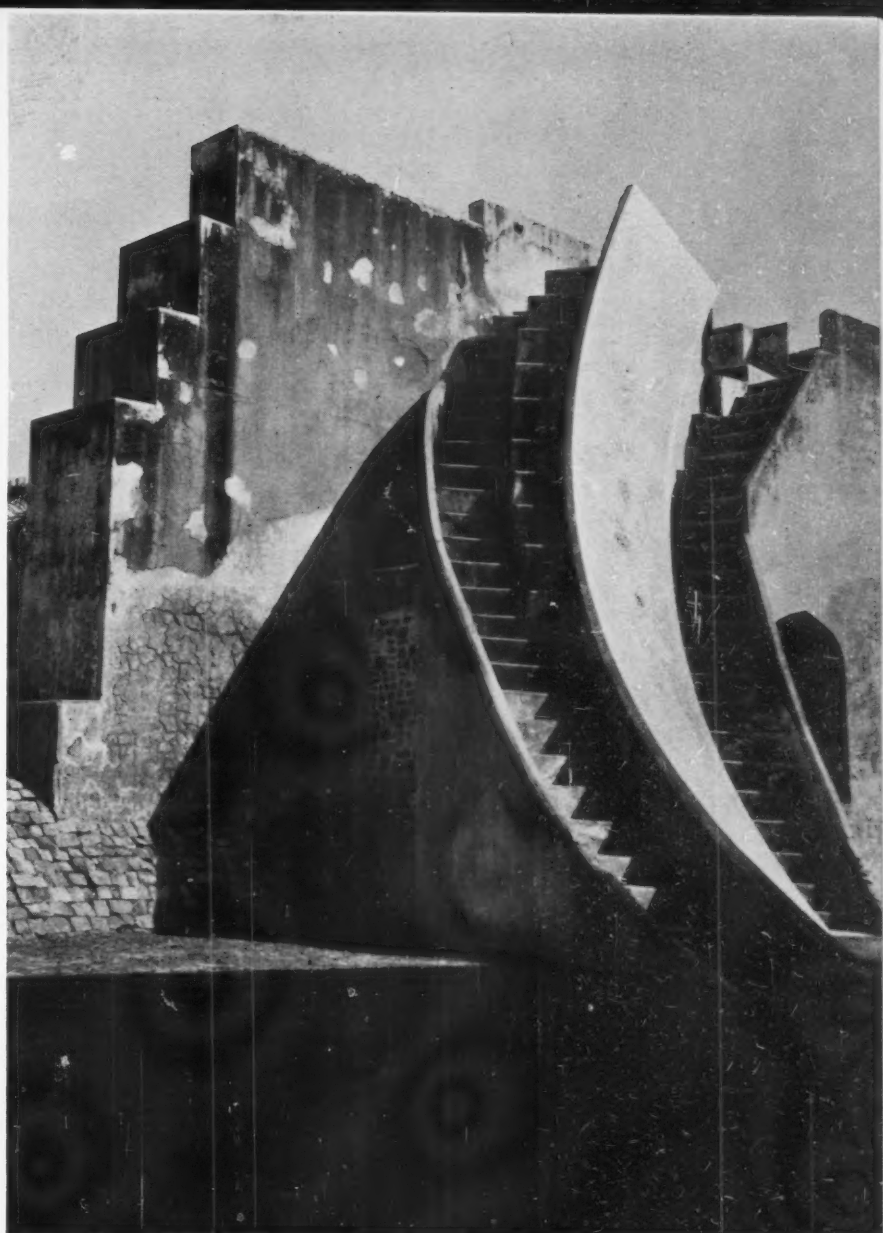
It is said that when the astronomer Prince died "his wives, concubines and science expired with him on his funeral pyre." Contrary to his belief and hopes his own special creations, the colossal masonry instruments, proved infinitely less accurate than diminutive metal ones. "Even a modern theodolite," writes the astronomer, Mr. G. R. Kaye,* "is worth more than all Jai Singh's large buildings."

* Author of a long contribution to Vol. XL of the *Archæological Survey of India* on Jai Singh's Observatories, to which I am indebted for much of the historical information contained in this article.

But although he contributed nothing of permanent value to science, he unconsciously contributed something significant to twentieth-century architecture. He was a forerunner of the builders in concrete and steel, just as Leonardo was a forerunner of the air mechanics. The buildings in his observatories are essentially twentieth century because they are purely functional. The simplest form of Moghul arch is used in their construction and there is no trace of contemporary decoration on any part of them. Today, the new capital of British India rises round Jai Singh's remarkable group of shell-pink cylinders and sundials, but it is unlikely that any future architect will supplant him as creator of the newest Delhi.



9. The second aquatint of the Observatory published by Thomas and William Daniell. It shows, in the foreground, the huge sundial with its flanking quadrants, and behind it part of the Ram Yantra. (Reproduced by courtesy of the India Office.)

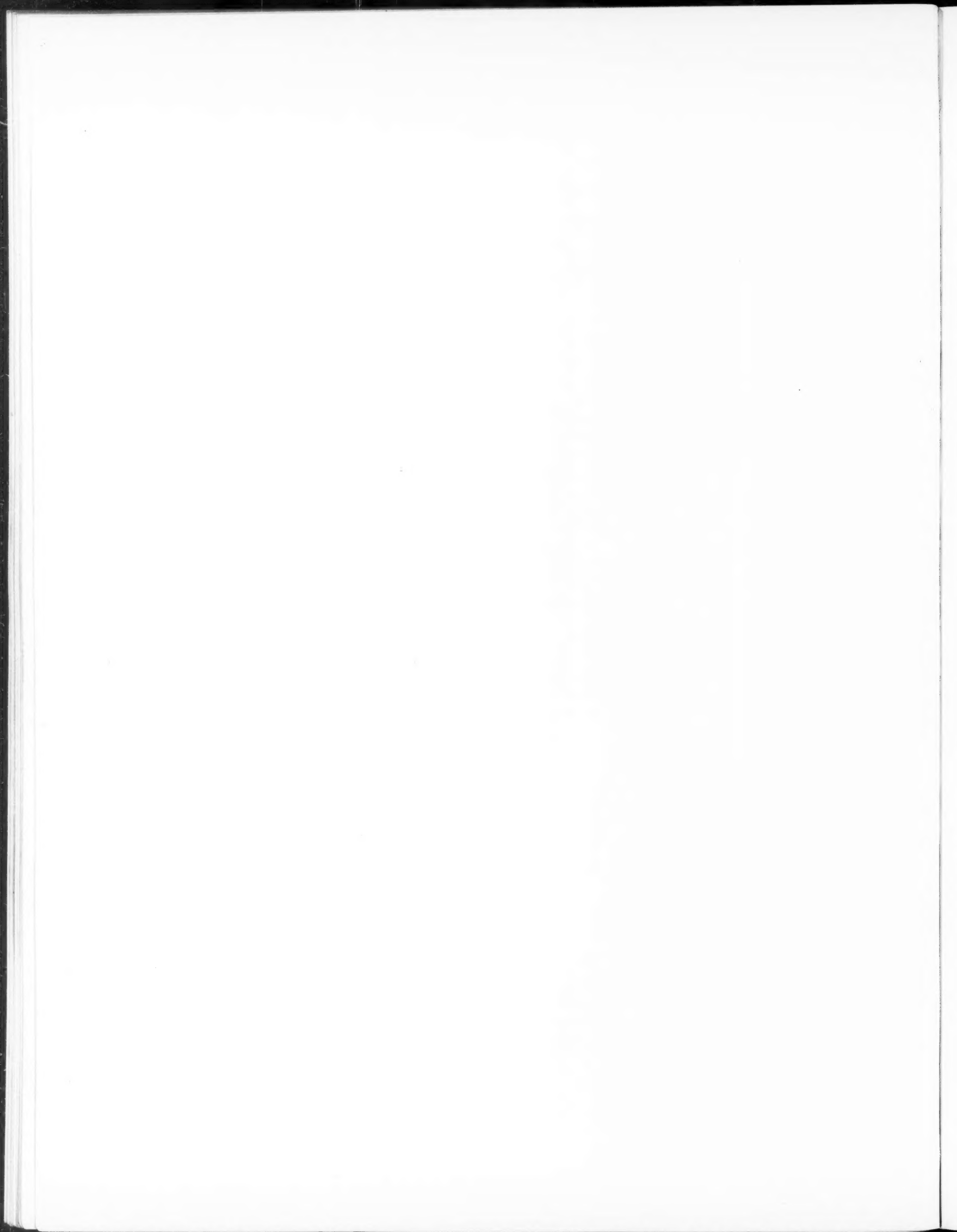


Left. Another interior view of the Jai Prakas. According to Jai Singh's assistant Jagannath, this was the "crest jewel of all instruments." If Jai Singh had lived today he would certainly have built all his instruments of concrete. As it is, brick and rubble covered with the smooth lime plaster he always used, was the nearest approach to it he could get. *Right.* The eastern quadrant of the Samrat Yantra. (The rough stonework is modern.)

PLATE iv

Februac / 1935





Scenario for a Human Drama

By P. Morton Shand

It is the purpose of this series of articles to bridge the gap that lies between the eighteenth-century English house and the modern house. Mr. Shand in doing this is working backwards from the present time to Soane. The following is a short summary of what has been described in the four preceding articles.

SYNOPSIS

Towards the end of the last century building technique and design were hopelessly out of date. Architects had ceased to plan or construct, and had become specialists in the reproduction of the antique. The war brought the machine into its own. Little more than a decade ago a new architecture appeared, based on a scientific approach to building through structural realities. Behrens and Loos were its outstanding pioneers. Behrens was the first architect to realize the architectural and sociological significance of what nineteenth-century engineers like Eiffel had achieved, and to preach the Industrialization of Building. His Turbine-Erecting Hall for the A.E.G. (1909) was the first modern building. Step by step Behrens cleared the road for the house of today. Loos stripped it of all ornament, *art nouveau* as traditional. The flat roof, plain walls and set-backs by storeys of his House for Dr. Scheu (1912) embodied the first immediate prototype of the modern house. We owe it to him that decoration ceased to be the chief concern of architects. Van de Velde, the "wall breaker," let air and light into rooms and reorganized their planning as living space. By retracing the steps which had led to the exaggerated individualism of *art nouveau* Hoffmann was able to achieve a simplified, semi-modernized classicism. Behind these four men was an older architect, Otto Wagner, who had paved the way for them by purging classical forms of their historical ornamentation.

Mackintosh, very much a reality abroad, has become a sort of myth at home. Though in no sense, as is often claimed, a conscious precursor of functionalism, he was undoubtedly the founder of Continental *art-nouveau* architecture. Far less of a constructor than a decorator, his famous "linearism" was an echo of the same salient characteristic in Aubrey Beardsley's graphic designs. The great service Mackintosh rendered was that he unconsciously prepared the ground for functionalism by exhausting the limited possibilities of the last alternative to it.

VI. La Machine-à-Habiter to the House of Character

The Dutch Contribution

BEFORE we finish with the Continent, and turn first to the United States, and thereafter almost exclusively to England, another once famous name must be considered; though it is that of an architect whose influence on housing was only indirect. Hendrik Petrus Berlage (1856-1934), the pupil of de Cuypers (in his way a minor Berlage) and the master of Dudok, is an important link in our chain, for the force of his example eventually made Holland the vanguard of the modern movement. Berlage defined his aesthetic as the sovereign

The previous articles were published in the July, August, September, October, and January issues.

necessity of getting back to the elemental truths of first principles; or, less theoretically, the simplification of architecture beyond the good and evil of tradition by a return to that almost forgotten structural honesty before the basic functions of load and support were hidden away under a mass of parasitic ornament. His half-gothicized brick and iron Amsterdam Bourse (1897-1904), one of the earliest landmarks of Modern Architecture, only partially realized these ideals; though its construction was sufficiently unveiled to encourage a demand for uncompromising structural sincerity in the uprising generation. But the more immediate importance of Berlage is that as a

result of his visit to America in 1912 he made Frank Lloyd Wright's work widely known in Europe.

During the war a number of Dutch artists and craftsmen joined together to form a group with the singularly inappropriate title of "Stijl." It included subsequently well-known "left-wing" architects like Oud, Mart Stam, Van Loghem, Van t'Hoff, Jan Wils, and that æsthetic Puritan Rietveld; but its dominating influences were the painter-architect Van Doesburg and the abstract painter Mondriaan. "Stijl's" positive achievement in architecture was slight, but it at least introduced the wholesome discipline of a 'self-denying' anti-representational ordinance derived from Cubist painting. That its purist plasticism soon degenerated into yet another stylistic mannerism was largely the result of the growing ascendancy of Frank Lloyd Wright among its members and emulators. Yet it was the accident of this mannerism's generalization which supplied the vital spark that fused the tentative theoretical beginnings of functionalism into a definite formal æsthetic. Even before the war was over "Stijl" architects were using sliding partitions and windows that let down into the wall like those in railway carriages. They also borrowed freely from naval engineering in intelligent anticipation of Corbusier. Rietveld, who had begun life as a carpenter, planned a house in Utrecht (apparently built rather later), 6, that is the first since Loos's which can unhesitatingly be called ideologically modern. That built in 1916 in the same city by Van t'Hoff [illustrated on page 41 of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW for August 1934] is more hybrid and hesitant. But though a less direct echo of Lloyd Wright than 8 it clearly marks the final transitional type from which can be plainly read that the next stage in evolution will be a still more destylized and impersonal design than Loos's villa for Dr. Scheu. The great service "Stijl" rendered was that it assimilated influences as heterogeneous as Lloyd Wright, Berlage, Loos, Mackintosh, Walton, Voysey, Baillie Scott, Ernest Newton, Ashbee, Perret, Garnier, Sauvage, Wagner, Behrens, Hoffmann, Van de Velde, and Olbrich; and then transmitted the rationalizing doctrine and geometric formalization into which it digested them to Gropius's original Weimar *Bauhaus* at a time when Germany was still culturally isolated from the rest of Europe.

In France, where progress in structural technique was far more advanced than anywhere else, there was as yet no echo of these Austrian, German and Dutch attempts to reintegrate architecture as construction. Auguste Perret and Tony Garnier were bent on trying to create what was really a modern historical style—vide 10. Paradoxical as it may sound, the revolution reinforced concrete was accomplishing there had very little influence on French architecture. Buildings that were entirely modern as engineering continued to be fronted with the same old historical façades: a "treat-



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Two distinct trends in design—the one of a theoretical European school, the other evolved by an intuitive American individualist—started to coalesce in Holland during the war years: a fusion which was the immediate genesis of Functionalism. The former, more or less directly inspired by abstract Cubism in painting, can be seen in its pure form in 1, *The Villa Allegonda*, at Katwijk (1917), by M. Kammerlingh Onnes. 2, *Oak Park*, Illinois (1901); 3, *The Robie House*, Chicago (1906); and 4, *The Coonley House*, Riverside (1908)—all designed by Frank Lloyd Wright—represent the latter. By the end of the war the Cubist style had begun to develop along lines suggested by marine engineering—5, the *Daal en Berg Housing Estate* at the Hague (1919), by Jan Wils; 6, a villa in the *Prins Hendriklaan* at Utrecht, by G. Rietveld; and 7, a villa at Haarlem (1922), by J. B. van Loghem. All show Wright's influence in some degree. In 8, an earlier villa at the Hague (1918), by D. Roosenburg, that influence was still sheer imitation. 9, a house at Pasadena, California (1923), illustrates the later decorative manner of Wright (yet, oddly enough, in a purely Cubist form); and 10 an unconscious and almost contemporary echo of it in Auguste Perret's "new historical style"—a studio-villa in Montparnasse, Paris.

ment" which has since become so common in England that we have only recently grown aware of the absurdity of such servile anachronisms. In one sense these Beaux-Arts shams proved a saving grace, because conscientious stylistic concealment of the new construction helped to keep it free from architectural titivation. At Königgrätz, in Bohemia, however, Josef Gočár had already evinced a premonitory inkling that a new synthetic material like concrete must postulate a wholly traditional aesthetic of its own.

As a licence that meant all things to all men, Modernism inevitably proved too individual and negative an impulse to crystallize into a definite school of design. By 1914 it had almost spent its strength. The outbreak of the war nipped another great traditional revival in the bud.

The Ideal of Organic Simplicity

There are two Frank Lloyd Wrights—the visionary architectural prophet and the dynamic architectural practitioner—and more

often than not they are at variance with one another, execution belying profession. And in much the same way there are two architects in Lloyd Wright, the local, regional; and the international, universal. Unfortunately Europe blunderingly confused them, which is presumably what Oud meant when he said that Wright's influence on the Continent had been a by no means happy one.

Wright was born in 1869, the son of a clergyman. He has given us a dramatic account of how, as a boy, while watching the building of the Wisconsin State Capitol he witnessed its sudden collapse; and the effect which the spectacle of a fallen length of sham cornice pinning down a wounded workman had on him at a time when his mind was enthralled by Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame*. That made him decide to give up civil engineering and become an architect. For seven years he remained in Chicago articulated to Louis Sullivan, whose domestic work he did out of office hours. Then he began to practice on his own, and soon

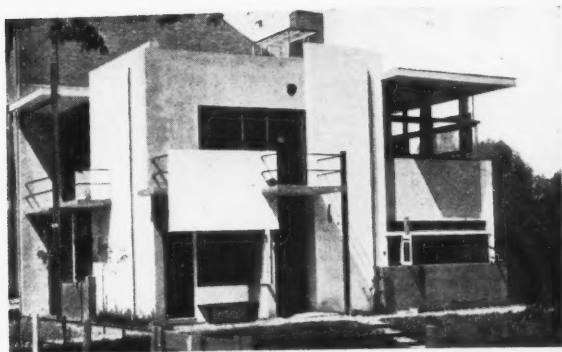
became known as the founder of what was variously called "The Dress-Reform House," "Temperance Architecture," and the School of the Middle West. The last seems the best description, for he has always admitted the influence of the Prairie. ("The horizontal line is the line of domesticity" rings curiously like Van de Velde's "fluid, harmonious line.")

His first independent building, the Winslow House, Illinois [2 in the last issue] ("brick wainscot, modelled freeze, tile roof, stone washes and water-table") dates from 1893. The next year he formulated nine "propositions" for his own guidance, inspired, he tells us, by Carlyle's "the ideal is within thyself, thy condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same ideal out of."

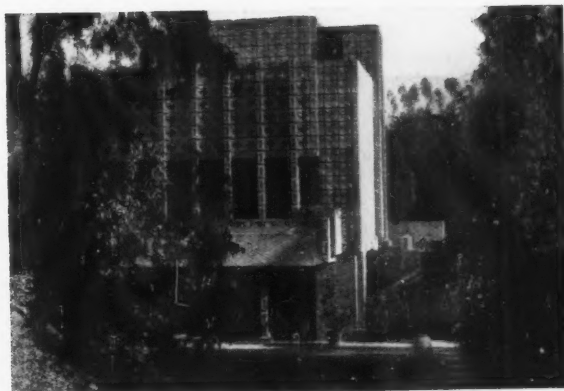
1. Reduction of the number of rooms and parts in a house to the minimum, so that "light, air and vista could permeate the whole."

2. The association of the building with its site by "extended level planes parallel to the ground," and by keeping the floors off the best part of the site.

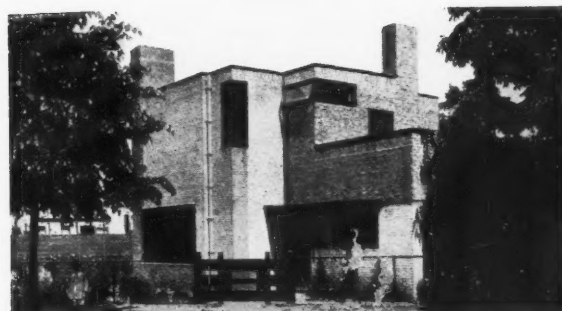
3. The remodelling of the then box-like appearance of American rooms by making ceilings, floors and



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walls flow into each other with only minor subdivisions; and by the more liberal and human proportions that were rendered possible owing to the reduction of structurally wasted space.

4. The raising of the basement floor above the ground as a "pedestal" by making the foundations into a visible masonry platform ("I liked to see the solidity of a projecting base").

5. The abolition of the kind of windows that were "holes cut in a box," because this was "unplastic."

6. Limitation to a single building material as far as possible.

7. That heating, lighting and plumbing must become "constituent parts of the building."

8. The incorporation in it of furniture (designed on simple rectilinear lines for machine production) as "Organic Architecture."

9. The elimination of the house decorator as being "all curves and efflorescence, if not all period."

At that time all material "looked pretty much alike" once it was worked up. Here, surely, was a democratic enough ideal. Yet he tried to give the exterior of his houses a still more "democratic appearance"—the ornamentation of a building should be constitutional"—by making their "grammar" as perfect as possible and simplifying their wall surfaces. (A lot of

this vague, and rather confused, Walt-Whitmanesque talk about democracy recurs in his writings.) "They stood upon their foundations to the eye as well as physically. There was good substantial preparation of the ground." He claimed that all his houses were designed on a unit system "as the pile of a rug is stitched into its warp."

What he aimed at, and what he achieved, was an "indigenous regional architecture," based on "the quiet level" of the flat boundless prairie, in a climate where great extremes of heat and cold, wet and drought prevail. This was the inspiration of that "broad protecting roof shelter," with flat, light-painted soffits, characteristic of his work, which he insisted made the upper rooms (till then simply "sleeping-boxes") "not dark, but delightful," by a glow of reflected light. He stopped his exterior walls at the second-storey eaves "to let the rooms above come through in continuous window series under the broad eaves of a gently-sloping overhanging roof. Here was true enclosure of space." The windows them-

selves be treated frankly as "light-screens."

Wright designed both doors and windows to the human scale, leaving only comfortable head clearance—American houses were even then characterized by many doorless apertures—in accordance with his theory that openings should be "the natural ornamentation of a structure." He also introduced casements opening outwards (English sash-windows being then universal in the United States) as "more natural in use and effect"; and lightened their wooden trim to simplify mass-production.

The first thing to do, Wright felt, was to get rid of the basement and the attic alike. To achieve the former he set the "studs" of the walls inside instead of outside the foundations, so as to leave the necessary support for the outer face; raising up the whole structure on to a plinth-like platform. Speculative builders assured the owners of his houses that their floors would cave into their cellars as a result! Notwithstanding, his plans were appreciated in a country where the servant problem had always been acute,

for they suppressed dozens of doors and partitions. "Interior spaciousness began to dawn, the house became freer as space and more liveable in." But his elevations profoundly shocked aesthetic susceptibilities, although he explained that what he did on the outside of the house "was because of what had happened to its inside."

Wright was also a precursor of the single living-room. As he puts it, "I declared the whole lower floor as one room, with the kitchen cut off as a laboratory (the servants' bedrooms being placed next to it!) "with requirements otherwise sequestered from it, or screened within it, by architectural contrivances." He gave his living-rooms a huge "integral" fireplace instead of yet another "piece of wooden furniture called a mantel." Wright was also the American pioneer of built-in cupboards, which the French had made part of the standard *appartement* plan as early as the end of the eighteenth century.

Among his more important buildings—the list, as the glosses on it are his own—were:—

Winslow House, 1893 (to which, though he does not include it, *Oak Park* (1901), 2, ought certainly to be added).

The Larkin Building, 1903 (a soap factory): "A conservative recognition of the element of the machine in modern life."

The University Temple, 1908: A transitional building in the form of a cast monolith. Here the reinforced-concrete slab is used as a new structural expression "for its own sake as Architecture."

The Coonley House, 4, 1908: "The quiet level of the *Prairie* as an influence. The horizontal line as the line of domesticity."

Taliesin, *Wisconsin* (1911). His own home.

Midway Gardens, *Chicago* (1914).

Imperial Hotel, *Tokio* (1916), "a romantic, epic building."

In 1908 Wright read his famous paper on *The Art and Craft of the Machine* at a Chicago institution known as Hull House. His proposals were, of course, voted down by sentimental followers of Morris and Ruskin; and instead of the sort of society he had proposed, they founded one "upon the same old basis as countless other 'art societies' of pounding one's fingers making useless things." In the light of this it seems rather paradoxical that Wright—*un grand homme manqué*, if ever there was one—should have attached so much importance to considerations such as "optimistic v. pessimistic colours," and "Nature's v. ribbon-counter tints." It is this side of him which prepares us for later anomalies like his use of standardized concrete blocks moulded with a uniform Neo-Mayan motif, 9.

It is not easy to assess Wright's contribution to the evolution of the modern house because of the inherent difference between American Middle West and average European conditions. Had he told us less about his often mutually contradictory principles and aims the task would be proportionately simpler. But the trouble with him, as with so many Americans, is an inability

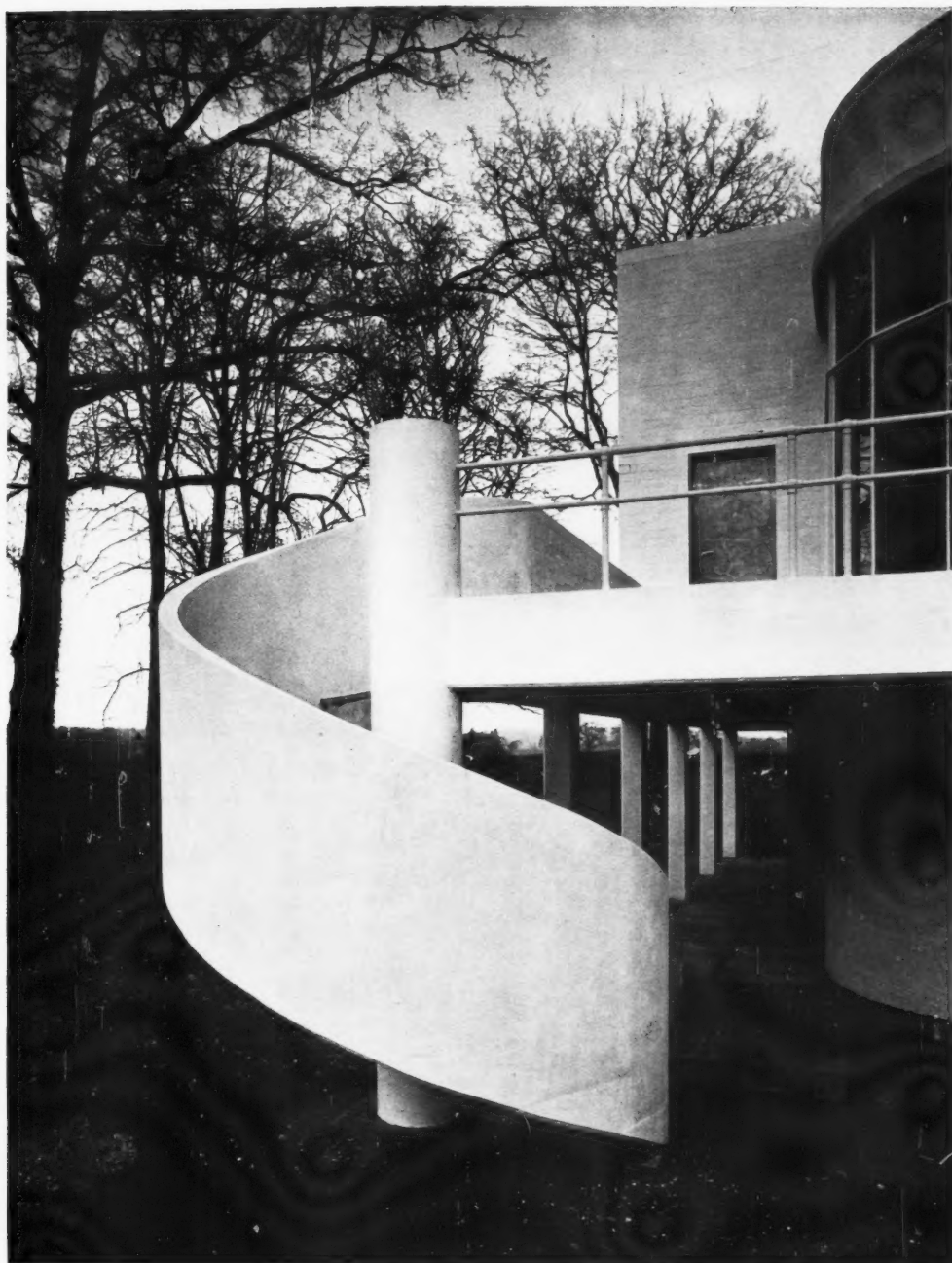
to achieve coherently sustained expression in a now half-foreign language; and a corresponding failure to evolve any better substitute than thinking in German and coercing English into the misty redundancy and agglutinative idiom of Teutonic *Satzbildung*. At times, however, he says magnificent things magnificently, for his is a mind of exceptional vigour; though many of these utterances are at variance with his own work. Only in an Anglo-Saxon country could the greatest architect of his generation remain without honour among his own people. His case lends fresh substance to a common designation which most of us had grown to regard as a sentimental myth.

What, then, are Wright's positive achievements? To start with they are in every case coincident with his earlier career. He helped to carry most previous rationalizing tendencies a step further: free-planning, *Raumgestaltung*, the elimination of ceremonial rooms, logical construction and equipment, built-in fixtures, the acceptance and architectonic control of machine production, and the use of reinforced concrete for things like roof-slabs and cantilevering. Moreover, he gave a powerful stimulus to making the world machine-conscious in the right sense, though it must not be forgotten that the predominant influence on Wright (as on Mackintosh) was Japanese. Against all this must be set his reactionary stylistic mannerisms, and his rooted opposition to standardization; and still more the decorative-structural bias he gave to European functionalism just as it was emerging from theoretical abstractions into rational forms. Oud has explained that though Cubism in Europe arose entirely independently of Wright, there was undoubtedly a latent affinity between them. Plastic three-dimensionality and classical rectangularity were common to both. In Cubism the conscience of architecture spoke for the first time since the Renaissance. The New Architecture, like the new freedom in art and letters, clearly spelt the dissolution of the old cultural world-order. In one sense Wright's work prepared the way for Cubism by smoothing away its initial difficulties. But in another it corrupted its primitive purity. For his dramatic personal mannerisms—like those long horizontal planes he interrupted and then continued again as fresh parallels, 3,—became grafted on to Cubism's abstract groping after a new formalism. As Berlage has pointed out, Wright became obsessed by the protective function of a widely projecting penthouse roof, and so a slave to an essentially Oriental motif, 4. The quality which crystallized into puritan renunciation in Cubism developed as an increasing plastic exuberance in Wright. While he was busy building for "high-life" America, Cubism was no better than a humble, and still all but unknown and disembodied theory. His wealth of fantasy debauched its needy imagination, for Wright was always an artist, and even more of an individualist and a law unto himself than

Van de Velde. Unfortunately, too, the dilettante followers who claimed to be "inspired" by him are usually confused with those who have carried on what was good in his work in a more fruitful and independent spirit. But if, as a pioneer in the use of reinforced concrete—"the cantilever is a free and romantic principle of construction"—is a revealing confession—he built roofs that were inaccessible, his magnificent imaginative gifts, and his clear perception of the difference between sentiment and sentimentality, enabled him to achieve volumes in space that are classic in their serenity and owe nothing to striving after the picturesque. Thus the *Barnsdall Residence* at Hollywood is immensely impressive in the serenity of its almost preordained relation to its (certainly luxuriant) natural surroundings. And it achieves this in spite of a wilfully complex eclecticism of exterior decoration—now Roman, now Japanese, now Neo-Mayan, and now "engineer-romantic"—by no means everywhere disciplined into subordination to his bold horizontal masses. Well might Oud say that "the process by which Wright's work came into being remains a perfect mystery to me."

In one respect, and one respect only, America was immensely in advance of Europe: American engineers had evolved the steel-framed multi-floored building in the late eighteen-eighties; and American architects were quick to exploit its more immediate possibilities. Sullivan, Wright's master, in many ways a remarkable architect, was the virtual father of the skyscraper. Thus Wright was the first definitely modern-minded architect to become familiar with a normed spatial unit. And as the first architectural visionary to see a windswept framework of skeleton boxes rising, like a new Tower of Babel in delicately pencilled geometric outline, he was obviously the first to grasp the nature of *Raumgestaltung* with a more immediate and revealing perception than the mind's eye. From the terrific stimulus of contemplating the room thus magically de-walled, he must have divined the immense implications of the wall's eventual supercession by the protraction of visible space without visible physical enclosure; and, further still, that the agency by which this could be realized was likewise machine fabrication of post and beam to exact engineering standards. But it must not be overlooked that in Wright's day the wooden frame-house was the commonest form of dwelling in the United States, and that in many structural essentials it had already become a standardized type. That type, as the earliest examples of American architecture show, was directly derived from timber-framed and barge-boarded English farm and cottage buildings of the sixteenth century. All Wright houses look like frame-construction houses, but thanks to their pronounced horizontalism and broad window-openings they immediately strike the beholder as direct precursors of the modern house.

[To be continued]



ANALYSIS

By J. M. Richards

The proportions of the building are entirely based on mathematical calculation. It is interesting that the resulting shapes and surfaces are completely satisfying; more interesting still, they are neither dull nor commonplace. The proportions of the interior in particular are noticeably pleasant, combining a sense of spaciousness with one of adequate enclosure. The adoption of such a system of proportion gives the building throughout a quality of homogeneity, allowing liveliness of formal conception to exist without producing restlessness in execution. The system was also, according to the architect's experience, a considerable help to the consistent progress of the design: it provided, in effect, a formula by which the inevitable adjustments were automatically given correct scale and continuity with the whole. The basic unit of proportion is the familiar one formed by a square and its diagonal. The plan of the building conforms to a grid composed of rectangles of this proportion, measuring 2 ft. by 2 ft. 10 ins. The grid is projected into the third dimension, the verticals of the elevation-grid rising from the plan-grid and the horizontals being of a new dimension, 1 ft. 5 ins., representing a side of the square of which the smaller of the plan-grid dimensions is the diagonal. In more concise form: if the elevation-grid is composed of rectangles of sides A and B (or A and C, according to aspect) and the plan-grid of rectangles of sides B and C, then $\frac{A}{B} = \frac{B}{C}$ (or $A \times C = B^2$).

In the case of the plan-grid (which exists in actual fact at ground level in the pattern of the paving) the thickness of the walls—9 ins. throughout—is not included in the regular grid, but responds to separate compartments in the grid, 9 ins. wide, interrupting it where walls or external beams occur above. The standard grid, that is to say, is projected vertically as void, solid portions being extraneous to it. The elevation-grid regulates the position of window divisions, etc., as well as the height-limits of the structure.

In contents the building is very simple; its accommodation is easily read from the exterior, and its more personally determined features, such as the spiral staircase and the faceted corner window, are kept subservient to, where not actually conditioned by, functional requirements. The curvature of the latter is useful as a variation of surface and also gives a feeling of direction to the approach to the studio

CHRISTOPHER NICHOLSON, ARCHITECT

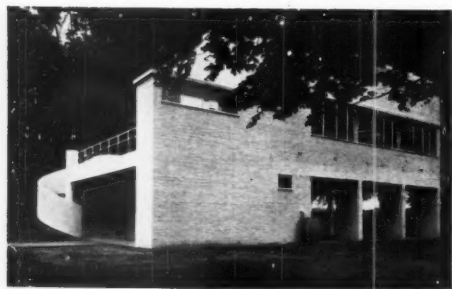
A setting for a famous painter could be designed with either of two alternative intentions, every solution to the programme being the result of one or the other approach undeviatingly adhered to, or of a compromise between them. The alternative intentions would be to provide a suitable working environment by unobtrusive attention to a painter's requirements, or to provide a character background in keeping with a painter's public personality. These typify the perpetual alternative between the formal and the romantic approach to design; in their extreme form, between pure structure and stage scenery. This studio emphatically belongs to the former category. The architect has concentrated on providing agreeable and adequate working space, together with the ancillary accommodation required, all with the greatest possible economy; relying for a satisfactory architectural character on careful study of proportion and on the pleasing precision that comes from good finish and accurate structural elimination. The result has a pleasant simplicity, clearly three-dimensional in conception, and is thoroughly economical both in appearance and fact. The studio stands in the grounds of the artist's house at Fordingbridge, Hampshire.

entrance. The fenestration generally is functional in disposition, but not restless, since it is dependent on the basic grid, both for regularity of spacing according to structural divisions, and for individual proportion of void and solid and division within the void.

Constructionally the building is equally simple. It consists of a reinforced concrete frame 9 ins. wide, with an infilling of 9 in. brickwork: so that no packing out is necessary and there are no projecting piers to be dealt with. Concrete and brick have the same face inside and out, being finished respectively with plaster and with waterproof paint surfacing, the latter in white for the structural skeleton and light pink for the brick infilling. Cross-beams in reinforced concrete, homogeneous with the rest of the skeleton, support wooden joists for floor and roof, the roof joists being lined on both sides with insulating board, plastered beneath and covered with boarding and asphalt. The parapet has a pre-cast concrete coping. The appearance of simplicity and the actual economy of the design (the contract price was less than £1,200) is accentuated by ingenious concentration of service functions in the same feature: the service duct above the windows in the long wall, for example, besides capping the deep window reveals, contains all the roof drainage and the supply pipes to the radiators beneath the windows: and the vertical shaft in the corner of the studio serves from floor level upwards as chimney to the built-in stove recess, and downwards as an ash-disposal chute.

The solid parapet wall forming one end of the terrace is logically continued as the external wall of the spiral staircase. This, by the contrast of its small-scale curve with the flat planes of the main structure, appropriately attracts the interest to the means of access, and serves also to connect the solid wall above to the ground below, mitigating any tendency to top-heaviness from this viewpoint that the otherwise engaging slightness of the lower structure might have produced.

It will be seen that the paving, which links the plan of the studio with the ground, is extended in two directions as approach paths, each being formed from the standard grid units. The wider of the two runs to a formal garden that already existed on the site.



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A Structure and infilling are differentiated externally by the surface colouring, produced by the waterproof paint surfacing: the reinforced concrete (structural skeleton) portion is coloured white and the brick (infilling) portion pink.

B All glazing proportions are multiples of the basic proportion units; i.e., an elevation-grid rises from the plan-grid, and vertical and horizontal divisions conform to the lines constituting it.

C The provision of window-seats and the position of the overhead duct prevents the deep window reveals from complicating the simplicity of floor or ceiling shapes.

D Enclosed service duct to take heating pipes (supplying radiators beneath window-seats) and roof drainage.

E The substantial width of these piers is not of structural origin (square piers similar to those on the other sides would have been sufficient for support), but is the result of two requirements: the provision of reflected instead of direct light from this side, the deep internal window reveals that the piers produce giving the right reflecting surface; and bearing for a large service duct above the windows.

F This shaft, rising from the ground to above the roof of the building, ingeniously combines two functions: from studio floor-level upwards it is the chimney to the built-in stove-recess; from the same level downwards it is an ash-chute, the aperture to which is found by lifting the lid of the fire-side seat. By means of a damper the two shafts can be made into one for cleaning purposes: the whole can be swept from the fuel store at ground level.

G The verticals of the handrail conform also to the elevation-grid, which responds to the plan-grid represented by the pattern of the terrace paving.

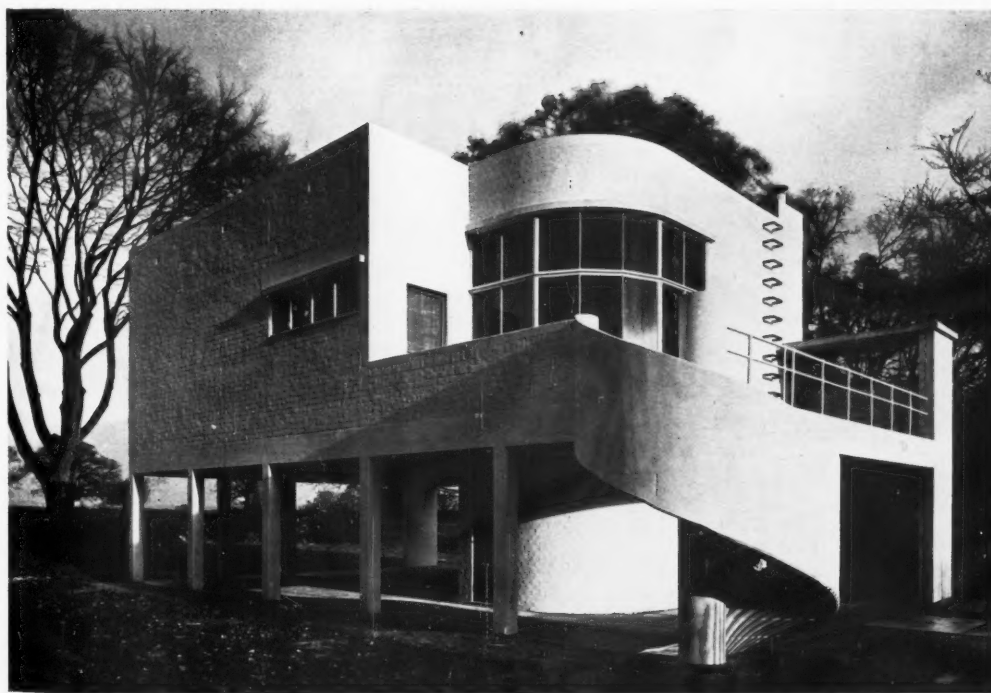
H The curvature of the corner in plan naturally directs the circulation from the open terrace towards the studio entrance.

J The mathematically devised system on which the proportions of the building are based is recorded in actual fact by the paving, the joints representing the grid with which the plan conforms.

AUGUSTUS JOHN'S



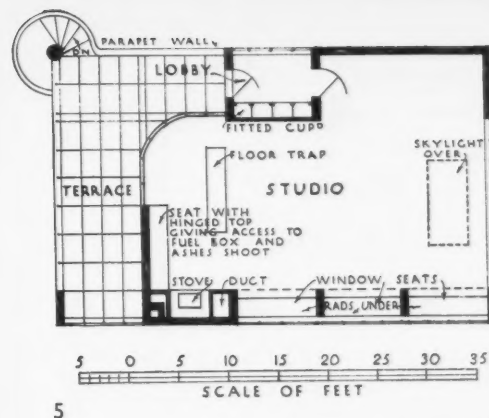
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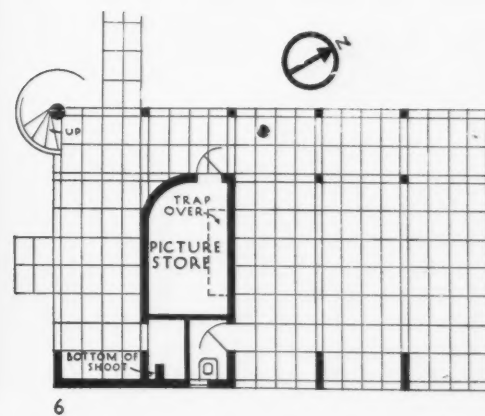
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S T U D I O

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The accommodation consists of one large room, the studio, with an outdoor extension of southern aspect, the terrace (on to which also gives the spiral staircase which is the studio's means of access); both raised on legs to elevate the studio to a level where plenty of light and air are available and the view visible, and to provide storage space beneath. The ground level is partly open and partly occupied by storage space. The studio is made slightly L-shaped by taking out of it an entrance lobby and recessing the outer door back from the terrace wall-face. The terrace, at the end away from the staircase, is terminated by an open shelter, backed with glass. The staircase, 1, is in reinforced concrete, designed by Mr. R. G. Robertson, of the Engineering Faculty of Nottingham University. It was constructed with a series of pre-cast concrete rings, homogeneous with each step, which, when in position, formed permanent shuttering for a central reinforced core. The outside shelter has a pre-cast concrete slab roof. It is seen in 2, as the solid termination to the terrace, with the studio on its open columns extended beyond it. 3 and 4 show the exterior of the building from the north and from the west, the latter view being approximately that from the house in whose grounds the studio stands. In contrast to the white and pale pink of the wall surfaces the doors are a rich dark blue in very glossy paint. 5 is the plan at the upper, or studio, level. The large trap-door in the studio floor gives access to a picture store at ground level, 6.

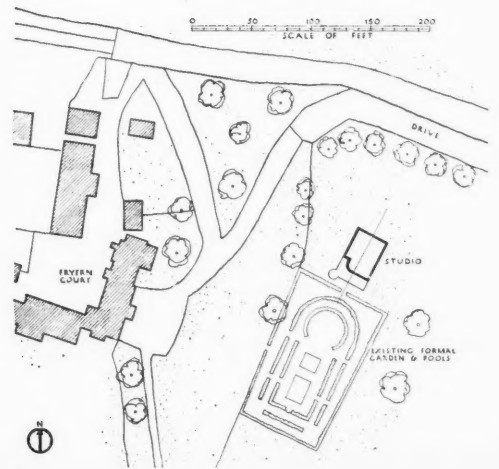




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The two views of the interior are taken looking down the studio, 7, towards the north-east range of windows, in front of which is the sitter's platform (this has a small roof-light overhead); and looking across towards the fireplace, 8, from just within the entrance. The studio has a floor of pine, and the walls and ceilings are plastered. The lay-out plan, 9, shows the studio's position in relation to the house and its station on the axis of an already existing formal garden. 10 is a view underneath, looking along the north-west side towards the entrance staircase. This shows clearly the way the structure springs from the plan-grid, represented by the concrete slab paving; also how a narrower unit in the grid responds to the thickness of the external walls, supported by the columns on the right.

AUGUSTUS JOHN'S STUDIO

Great Days in England

By R. P. Ross Williamson

EARLY VICTORIAN ENGLAND—1830-65. Edited by G. M. Young. London: Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford. Two volumes. Price 42s. net. the two volumes.

ON an age professing no faith, possessing no values, disillusioned enough to no longer boast of its disillusionment, it is impossible that this book will not make the most profound impression.

Its appearance comes at exactly the right moment; we have got—most of us—just far enough away from the Early Victorian epoch to understand the full greatness of the men in those days. The Late Victorians we still rather hate; we are frightened of them, too, if we are honest enough to admit it, due perhaps to an increasingly uneasy feeling among us that we have not got on too well since the passing of the old Queen.

There is an epic quality about the first part of the reign. The hope, the determination, and, above all, the faith in themselves born of the knowledge that God was on their side, are the distinguishing characteristics of those Early Victorians, born into a world "where mediæval prejudice, Tudor law, Stuart economics, and Hanoverian patronage still luxuriated in wild confusion." The Queen unpopular, the country thrice threatened with civil strife, our vast colonial possessions for the most part an embarrassment, are constituents of a very different picture to the one usually suggested by the word "Victorian," with its implication of Imperialism, security and a vast self-sufficiency.

Yet the great principle dominating the entire reign was there before the young Queen ascended the throne. It was to last until the Great War, and lingers on today with enough vitality left to break out and add to our confusion at any juncture. This was the principle of Evangelicalism. If the British people were not the sole recipient of the revelations of this doctrine, it certainly behaved as though it was, and it is this unfaltering belief of our forbears that they were the Lord's Elect that has made us what we are today. Once the idea of Evangelical theology is grasped Victorian England ceases to be a phenomenon and becomes the manifestation of a simple, logical process. It is the law of compensation: if you are good you will enjoy happiness, but if, on the other hand, you are wicked, then darkness will be your

desert. Goodness and badness, either bringing its just reward in exact ratio, are the two contrary states. It is so logical a belief that its appeal to a practically-minded people was irresistible. The Editor, in his brilliant epilogue, examines its far-reaching results.

"It pursued its argument into the recesses of the heart, and the details of daily life, giving to every action its individual value in this life, and its infinite consequences in the next. Nor could it escape the notice of a converted man, whose calling brought him into frequent contact with the world, that the virtues of a Christian after the Evangelical model were easily exchangeable with the virtues of a successful merchant or a rising manufacturer, and that a more than casual analogy could be established between Grace and Corruption and the Respectable and the

Low." Hence the salvation of the man who "got on." But the system worked very well for the employee, too, who for some reason or other failed to "get on." If you suffered abominably in this world, how great would be your reward in Heaven? In fact, you could calculate to a nicety the joys in store for you under the protection of so mathematically minded a God. It might even be argued that it was the mill-owner's duty to make a hell of his employees' lives here below for their own sakes. But if, through the intensities of physical suffering, the employee set fire to the mill, assaulted the mill-owner, and behaved in such a way that the Riot Act had to be read and the Militia called out, then he was showing a lamentable lack of faith in the Almighty, and exhibiting to those of his fellow men who had "got on," that truly "Corruption" was analogous with the "Low."

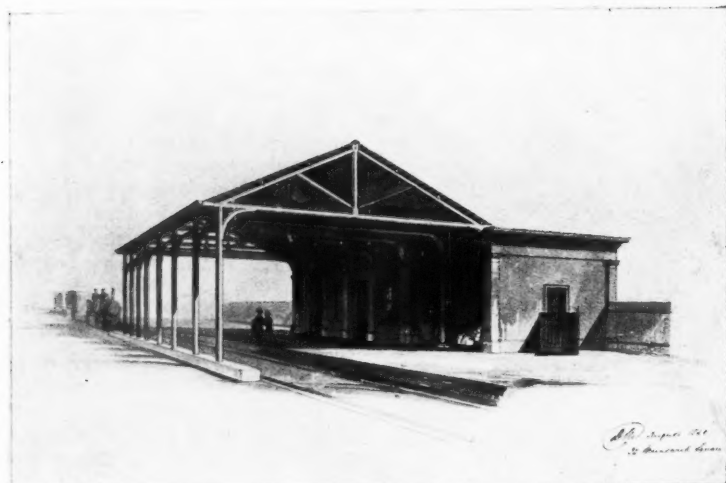
Thus, with the direct inspiration of the Deity, were engendered the snobbery and the belief in materialism, the two mediums through which Evangelicalism made the England of Victoria the greatest nation on the face of the earth and in the history of civilization.

Yet it is a paradox that Charity was one of the characteristic features of the age.

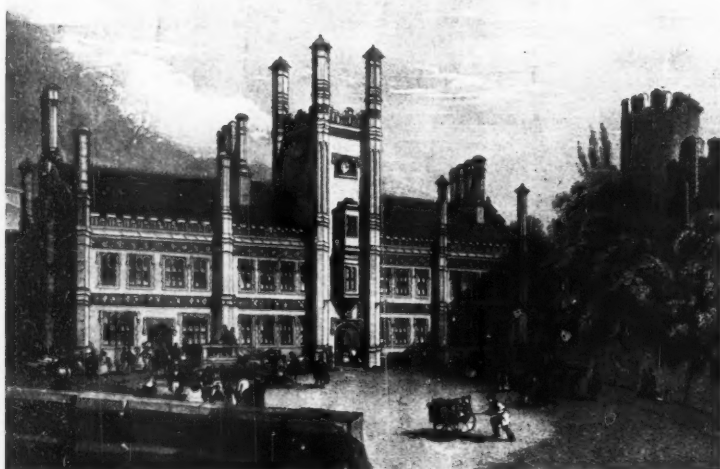
So much happened in those early days that it is obvious that a firm religious belief was the only thing that prevented our ancestors from entirely losing their perspective. The daily self-examination kept them humble, and the keeping of immense journals must have made them constantly aware of their responsibilities. But think



ART. *The Suffering Husband*. A painting by Augustus Egg in the National Gallery of British Art. From "Early Victorian England."



A



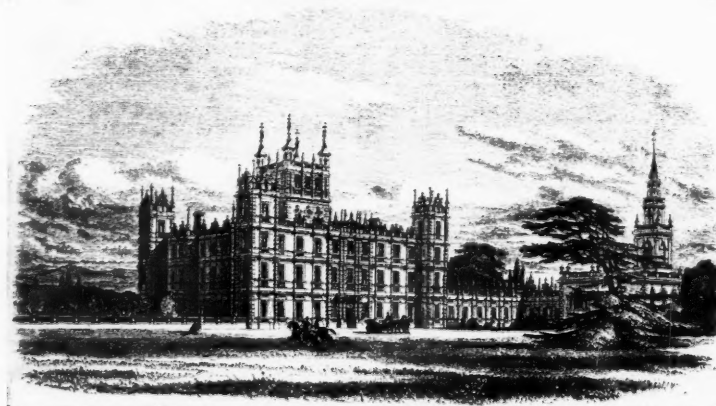
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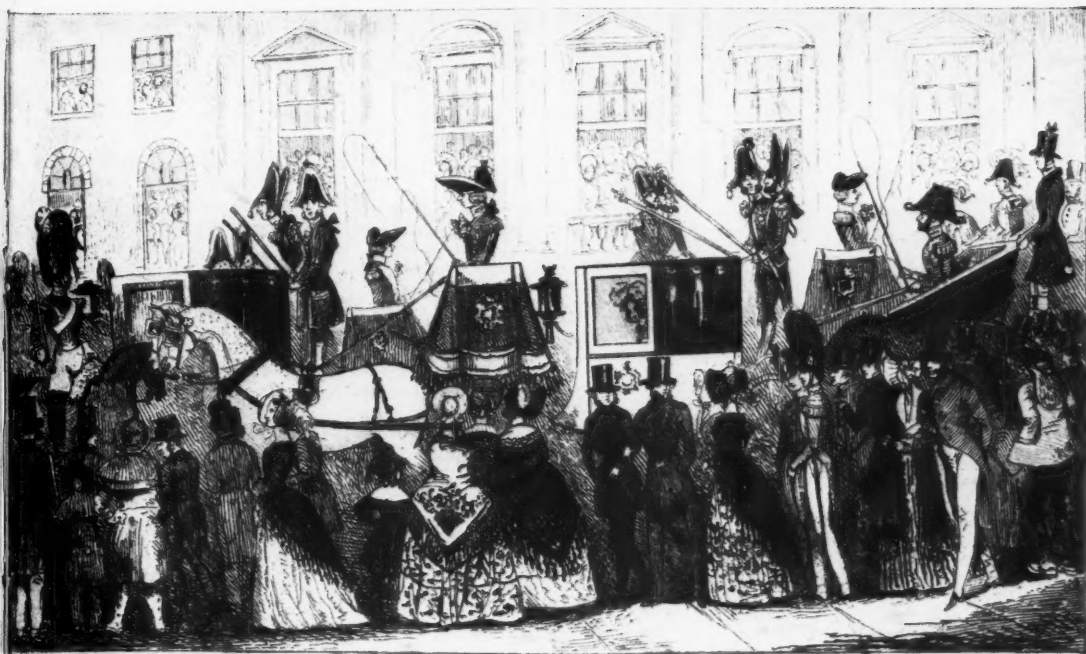
ARCHITECTURE. Above. Railway Stations. A. Functional, by Mocatta. B. Romantic (Shrewsbury). Below. Highclere House, Hampshire, before and after reconstruction by E. M. Barry. From "Early Victorian England."

of the excitement of those years! Think of the building of the railways, the electric telegraph, the Battle of the Styles, the Crimea and the Mutiny, the speeches of Palmerston, the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the Great Exhibition, "In Memoriam," "The Stones of Venice," and the "Origin of Species," the Oxford Movement, Penny Postage, and the advent of the first Public School Boy to consciously exist as such; and these are only a few of the things that happened in that tremendous period. There was another side to the age, of course. We all know how sordid conditions of life were in the big towns, yet still "the imagination can hardly apprehend the horror in which thousands of families were born, dragged out their ghastly lives, and died; the drinking water brown with faecal particles, the corpses kept unburied for a fortnight in a festering London August; mortified limbs quivering with maggots; courts where not a weed would grow, and sleeping-dens afloat with sewage." It was all due to the

accumulation of the rural population in the cities where the new industries were springing up. It was so sudden and so at variance with the traditional structure of English society and culture that a death blow was dealt to the old rural system of gentleman, yeoman and cottager, which had lasted since we were a nation at all. Unfortunately it was to this tradition that the town-dwellers still clung, and to which they still cling in a half-hearted way today. That is why our towns are such a mess, and why they will go on being in a mess until we can make up our minds that we are no longer countrymen in captivity, instead of a product of four generations of urbanity. We cannot blame the Early Victorians for this, although we have tried to long enough. We are just as much to blame ourselves.

There are over nine hundred pages in these two volumes in which practically every aspect of the life, arts, and environment of the English people between 1830 and 1865 is dealt with by its particular authority. How far away these strangely inexplicable people seem to us now, and how profound the unworthiness of a generation bred in cynicism and superciliousness! What would they have thought of us, those earlier Victorians, who, "in their exuberance and facility, with their flowing and scented hair, gleaming jewellery and resplendent waistcoats, were nearer to the later Elizabethans; they were not ashamed; and like the Elizabethans, their sense of the worthwhileness of every-





HAS DEATH

(IN A RAGE)

Been invited by the Commissioners of Common Sewers to take up his abode in Lambeth? or, from what other villanous cause proceeds the frightful Mortality by which we are surrounded?

In this Pest-House of the Metropolis, and disgrace to the Nation, the main thoroughfares are still without Common Sewers, although the Inhabitants have paid exorbitant Rates from time immemorial!!!

"O Heaven! that such companions thou'dst unfold,
"And put in every honest hand, a whip,
"To lash the rascals naked through the world."

Unless something be speedily done to allay the growing discontent of the people, retributive justice in her salutary vengeance will commence her operations with the *Lamp-Iron* and the *Halter*.

SALUS POPULI.

Lambeth, August, 1832.

J. W. FEEL, Printer, 9, New Cut, Lambeth.

Top left. *TOWN LIFE*. St. James's Street, 1840. From "Comic Novels." By J. Johnson. Bottom left. *COUNTRY LIFE AND SPORT*. A country house group, c. 1860. Top right. *EARLY VICTORIAN MUSIC*. A cottage piano at the Great Exhibition, 1851. Bottom right. *TOWN LIFE*. A sanitary handbill, 1832. By J. Johnson. From "Early Victorian England."

thing—their selves, their age, and their country; what the Evangelicals called seriousness; the Arnoldians, earnestness; Bagehot, most happily, eagerness—overflowed in sentiment and invective, loud laughter, and sudden reproof." We are looking at an age "when, if brides sometimes swooned at the altar, Ministers sometimes wept at the Table; when the

sight of an infant school could reduce a civil servant to a passion of tears; and one undergraduate has to prepare another undergraduate for the news that a third undergraduate has doubts about the Blessed Trinity—an age of flashing eyes and curling lips, more easily touched, more easily shocked, more ready to spurn, to flaunt, to admire, and, above all, to preach."

A Free Commentary

By Junius

HAVING in another place effected a catharsis by giving vent with some violence to indignation about what seemed to me the impudent misdirection of the R.A.-R.S.A. affair, I have since suffered from certain qualms of conscience. It is the primary business of a critic not to see faults but positive achievements; fault-finding is, or should be, entirely secondary. I have come to the conclusion, not reluctantly but gladly, because I am happier out of a quarrel than in one, that those of us who are most vehement about this business are judging the organizers and condemning them for failing to do what they never intended to do.

It is true beyond cavil that they have themselves to blame. It was reasonable in us to suppose that an attempt would be made to relate the things commissioned and selected to the needs of the time and to the spirit of the time. When the organizers quoted the Prince of Wales's admirable and sincerely felt statement that the important thing now was to look to the needs of the majority, not the minority, in this matter of the production of aesthetically tolerable things, it was inevitable that we should expect—something very different from what we have got.

I hope it is not *lèse-majesté* to suggest that it would be well if the Prince were to take the first public occasion available to protest against this unhitching of his Royal Highness's star from his adventurous modern plane and re-hitching it to the decorous, solid ceremonial coach of the R.A. and its ancient colleague.

Not, if rumour can be credited, for the first time within these last few months have words which the Prince had said deliberately and *ex intimo corde* been twisted or blanketed. But of these delicate matters we had best perhaps not speak . . .

The R.A.-R.S.A. have then sadly misused the Prince's text: but this may not be a piece of deliberate manipulation, it is indeed surely too transparent for that, but it is perhaps rather an effect of muddleheadedness. That (I would submit in parenthesis) is not meant to be insulting. Muddleheadedness is not a crime but a misfortune; we are not here dealing with a subject of which the issues are clear:

we are troubled, we moderns, quite as much as the ancients by traditions, prejudices, the opinions of our set, the natural desire not to be outstripped and despised by the *Zeitgeist*. It is not an easy business to see straight.

And it seems to me, and I speak without irony, that we are bound to assume what in the first moments of disappointment and anger we were disposed to deny, namely, an honest desire, on the part of the organizers of this Exhibition, to contribute something positive to this business of what they call the *Conquest of Ugliness*. I further find, on reflection and examination of the relevant documents, that no explicit claim has been made that the Exhibition is to be a modern exhibition, approached in the modern, or adventurous spirit.

I am enough of a traditionalist—that is, I find enough difficulty in accepting much of the really adventurous modern stuff to be able to understand that the R.A.-R.S.A. may have quite sincerely felt that it was their business deliberately to state their problem in terms of respect for tradition in explicit protest against *Modernismus*. Possibly Sir Reginald had his vigorous words to say about it all.

Moreover, their use of the term *Art in Industry* may not have been an accident or merely dictated by the fact that what seems the more suitable term to most of us "*Design*" had already been adopted and had perhaps uncomfortable associations! The word *Art* was a term deliberately chosen because *Art* was a very solid and solemn thing. The work of very solemn and solid people—Artists. It was not as Lethaby, that heretic, used to say, dealing with one aspect, "thoughtful workmanship": nor what he used also to say, dealing with another, "the cooking not the sauce."

But here, I see, I am slipping into an irony I wish to avoid. Perhaps the fairest thing is to take an admirable group of exhibits, the work of the silversmiths—both the craftsmen and the manufacturing traders—and see in this the significance of the R.A.-R.S.A. endeavour. Here is an old, honourable and laborious craft. It does not progress by leaps but by degrees. Craftsmen no doubt will put into their work something of the spirit of their

time, but they will respect tradition: the work of today will not be so vastly different from the work of yesterday, as violent young men assert. And when the machines take over the job of cheapening production it is right that much of the traditional feeling and many of the traditional forms should be conserved. Else we shall be shocked and discomfited . . . and that I take it was the organizers' quite sane idea.

They might indeed honestly feel and honestly strive to express in their exhibition that the fact that a whole range of articles of use, of which the function remained substantially the same, were suddenly and conspicuously, indeed violently, different from those which had immediately preceded them; they might feel, I suggest, that this was a proof not of their being modern and good but only modernistic (that is, consciously and provocatively modern, modern by deliberation not by inspiration) and therefore bad.

I found visiting the Exhibition with the exhibits arranged and with an orderly catalogue in my hand, a very different ordeal from the first muddled, hectic inflaming day!

Those stainless steel turnstiles were a concession but the steel letters announcing retiring places for visitors were notably unfunctional, as they were quite invisible till the light struck them at a certain angle. . . . I thought the fabrics from which I had hoped much were just flung together in a manner least calculated to show their merits: and floodlighting the ceiling doesn't seem to me the best way to judge colour and textures near the floor.

Some designs for the backs of playing cards, ingenious enough, seemed to me unsuited to their purpose, which is to provide a symmetrical all-over pattern which makes recognition of a card by accidental marks upon it less easy. . . . "But hush, Junius, you show yourself strangely insensitive. These cards are designed by gentlemen for gentlemen, who scorn to use such aids to luck and, besides, don't use the same cards twice."

The traditionalist in me was gratified by Macdonald Gill's painted board showing the plan of the Exhibition. I was glad it was not all in his brother's Sans-serif and not chromium-plated in every bowl.

A pleasant simple waxed pine wardrobe by Johnson of Heal's took my eye among the more elaborate pieces, and the attribution of this design to the individual instead of to the firm is a practice that should be universal—and is not. I wondered if it was Mr. Tootal or Mr. Broadhurst or Mr. Lee that designed the excellent display of handkerchiefs.

One exhibit claimed to show "how mass-produced furniture of reasonable cost can be successfully employed in planned schemes of decoration." But we were not told the cost. And, in general, prices were withheld over much too large a portion of the Exhibition.

I should hate not to put on record that Mr. Oliver Hill, pricked by his conscience, has designed a pretty tiny blue and white room for a poor and virtuous maiden.

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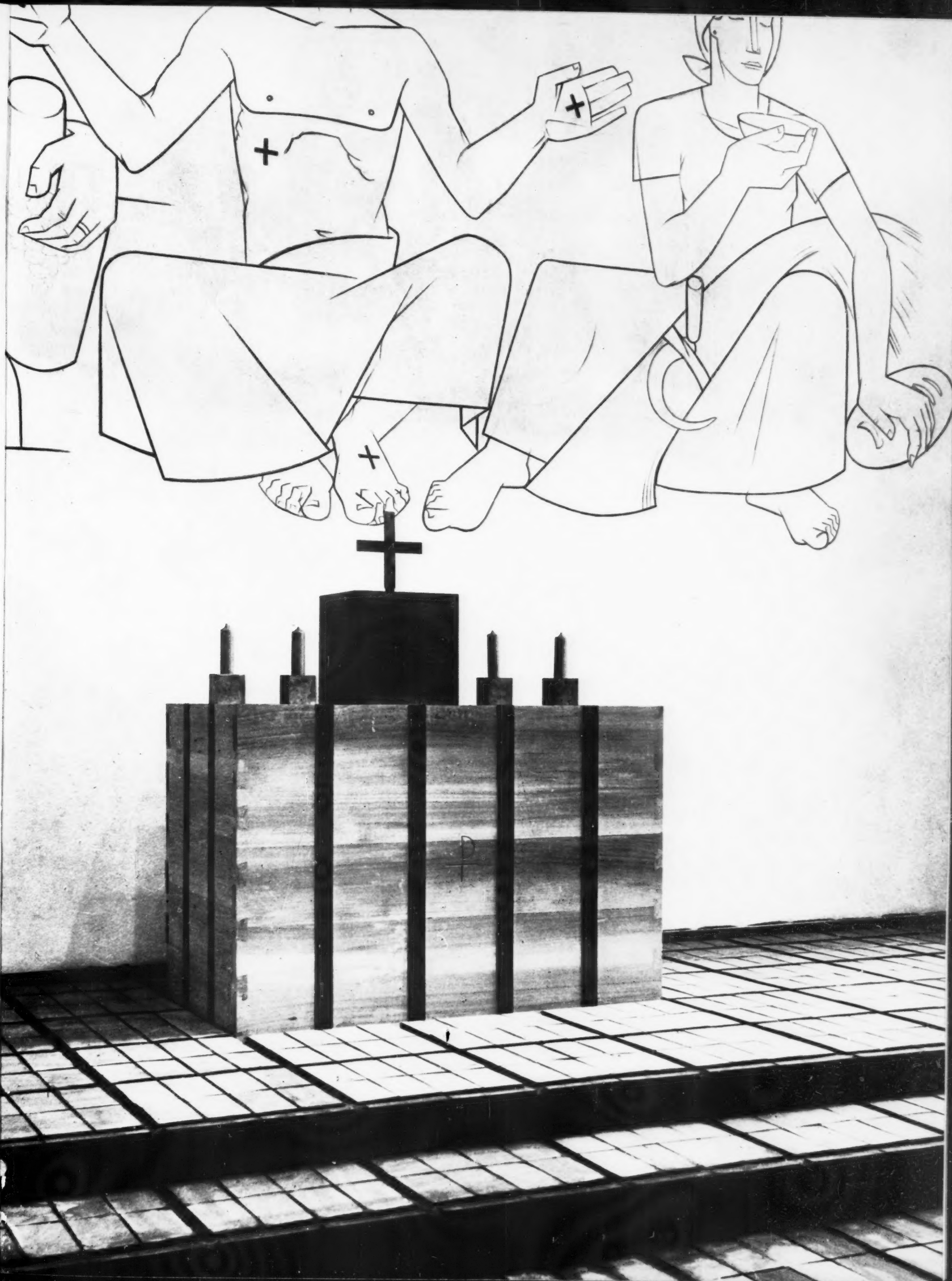
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OVERLEAF, AT CLOSE RANGE

THE DIGNITY OF POVERTY

In spite of the use of the simplest and cheapest materials handled in the simplest and cheapest way—the communion-table of the altar of the house chapel in the Roman Catholic Y.M.C.A.'s School for Peasants in the Diaspora rural settlement at Matgendorf, Mecklenburg, is really only a finely dovetailed packing-case of bare, well-planed boards—the direct religious appeal of this austere design is undeniable. It also symbolizes the great importance attached to the peasantry and their local cultural traditions in the Germany of the Third Reich.

Hans Schwippert, architect.

PLATE v

February 1935



DECORATION

2

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW SUPPLEMENT

A FIRST INSTALMENT OF THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

Flat of the Parc des Princes, Paris

by Le Corbusier and Jeanneret

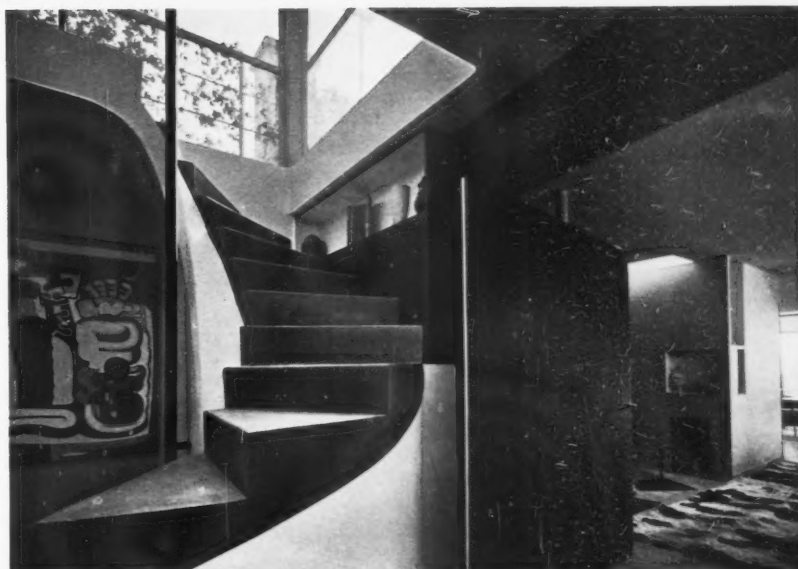
This seventh-storey 'attic' in a new block of flats at the Porte Maillot, Paris, is occupied by Corbusier and his wife. The plan, 5, explains its 'zones' and those of the roof-garden above it, where the guest-room is placed. 1—an ethereal 'still' of two spidery iron chairs (Champs Elysées 1867 model), delicately charcoaled on to a lozenge of blindingly white light, which could have been 'directed' by no one but Corbusier—and 2 show the head of what is really the safety staircase used for access to the grass- and shrub-planted 'leads.'

The building must, however, first be considered as a whole, for it shows Corbusier in a new rôle. The site was certainly exceptional: a 12 metres breadth on each front by double that depth. To the east it faces a 200 metres belt of playing-grounds, known as the Parc des Princes, which was till recently part of the old fortifications; to the west the view sweeps the Bois de Boulogne and the heights of St. Cloud and Suresnes beyond. Corbusier has said that the elements of a rational urbanism are sky, trees, steel and concrete—in that order; and that the inhabitants of a town planned on a proper co-ordination of these simple elements would be assured of "the essential joys." Here he had a unique chance to realize a miniature "Pizgah sight" of his *ville radiuse* and has succeeded with a *maestria* that almost takes one's breath away.

Between the two existing party-walls Corbusier has swung his concrete floors 2.50 metres apart (2.05

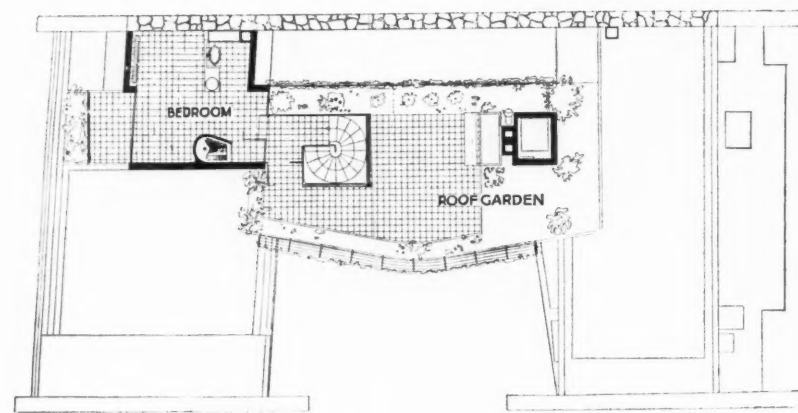
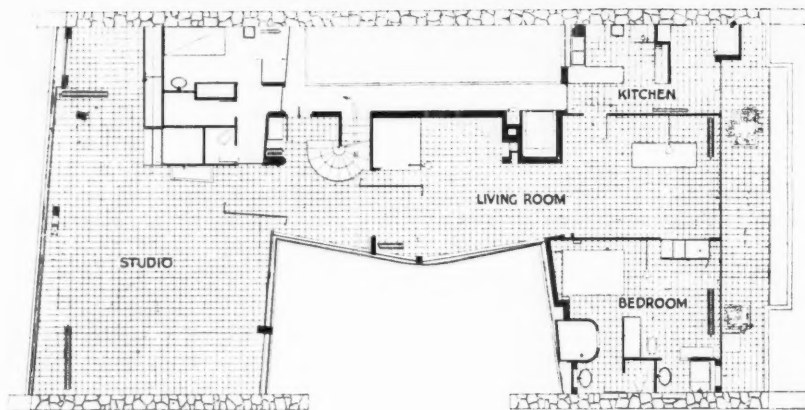
on the seventh floor), like a series of hammocks. The intermediate spaces are faced on each side with continuous walls of glass, stretching from the footings to the ceilings, set well in front of the five slender supporting members. (Proper means are provided for diminishing the full intensity of light that results.) The floors are therefore entirely unobstructed, their only "solid blocks" being the standardized kitchen and washing units. Corbusier believes that the wall of glass is one of the outstanding architectural resources of our day, which of itself can 'make' a flat. "Once you let in the full degree of sunshine," he says, "half the battle against the academic styles is won." It is sad that so few educated people can read a plan's international language! Tenants were invited to choose from several different dispositions for their flats, very much as though each was so much office space. One and all insisted on a maximum of subdivisions. Once these were erected they demanded their removal, and reverted to the architect's original proposals—or rather to imitation of the first tenant who had the courage to adopt them. They now unanimously declare that a new way of living has begun for them.

There is no staircase except the emergency one. The ground floor is set back a metre behind the building line, so that even the concierge's den is flooded with light. An innovation for Paris is that, instead of being grouped under the eaves, the servants' bedrooms are on the ground and basement floors. They have a





4

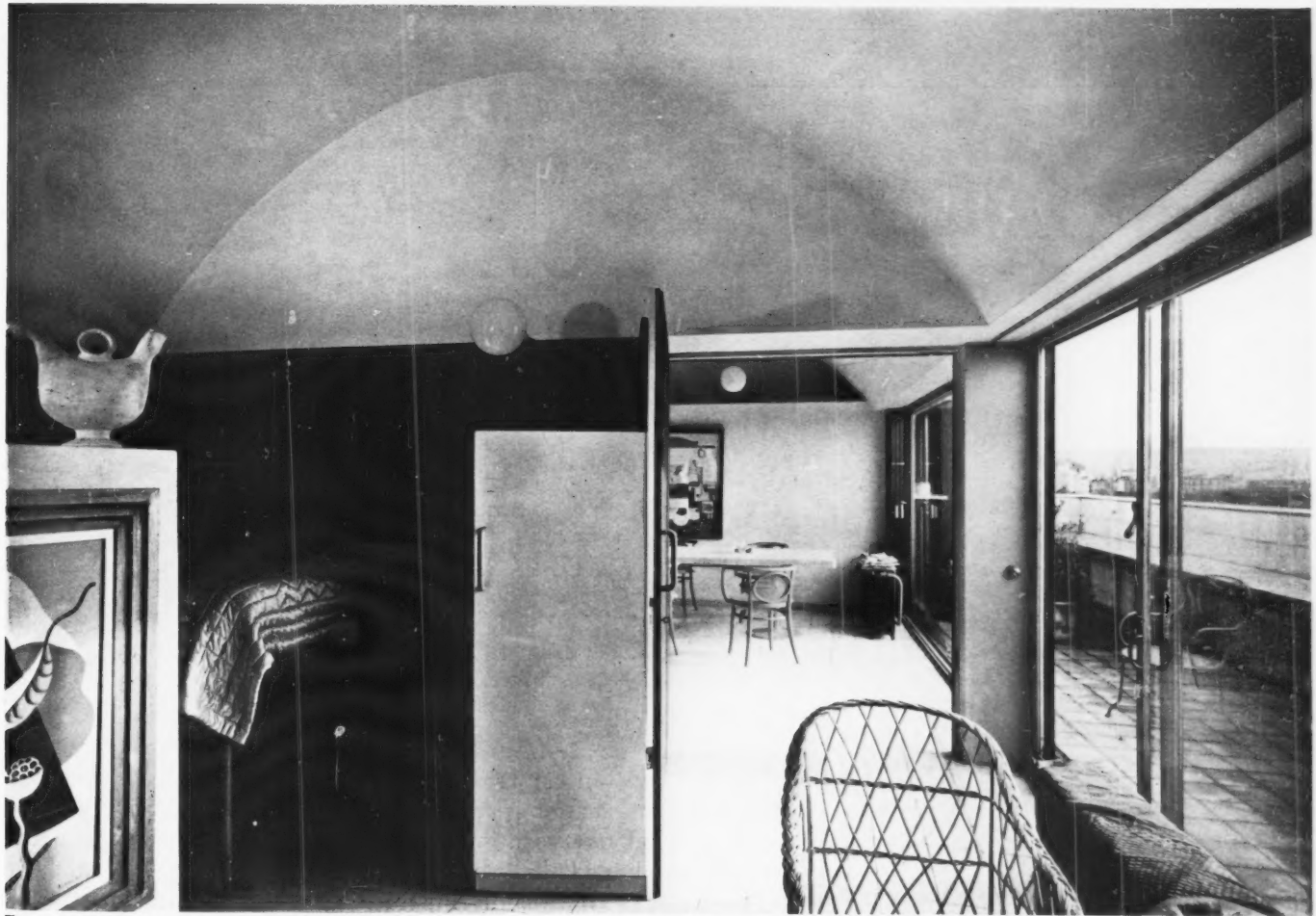


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full west light and a view over a planted courtyard. Each negative impediment in the way of municipal regulations regarding balconies, bow-windows, etc., has been triumphantly turned to positive advantage. The most illogical of all, now that steel and concrete have superseded timber roofs, were those that still compel every Parisian top floor to be built as a *gabarit*, or attic (which explains the necessity for the double vault of the ceiling visible in 3, 6, 7, 8). This also made it necessary to stop the lift at the sixth floor unless valuable space was to be wasted by its shaft on the roof.

To resume: 3 is a corner of Corbusier's own *atelier*. Who, once again, but Corbusier would have left the rough rubble party-wall of the neighbouring building unplastered as a decorative element? Yet its subtle affinity to one of his own paintings (set forth like a packing-case) is undeniable. In 4 we see the living-room zone of the *appartement*, with an unexpected skylight over the fireplace; and the glass-brick parapet of the balcony beyond. The dining-room, 6, dominated by two abstract pictures of Fernand Léger, is of a shape dictated by the vaulting of the ceiling.

7 (in which a cupboard forms the back of the door) and 8 are different views of the bedroom. The relation established 'accidentally' between the exposed plumbing, the painting, the wall, and the basket chair (the tip of which is reflected—with what art—in the dressing-table mirror),





8

is typical of the 'poet' in Corbusier, and his uncanny gift of extracting ever-fresh aesthetic values from old and new materials alike. (It was characteristic of him that having noticed "very vivid, expressive and eloquent corrugations" left by the form-work on one of the concrete columns in the hall, he decided to preserve it in that state. The reason, he explained, was that the tamping had not been particularly well done . . . "but this has no particular importance.") Husband and wife have separate chests-of-drawers and *toilettes*. There is also a shower-cabinet and an enclosed w.c. All the electric light fittings are of the extensible pivot-swinging type.

Corbusier sums up these flats as being designed for the requirements of human existence instead of human exploitation. "I did not envisage such considerations as the Paris of today. I built into the future."

P. MORTON SHAND.

THE OPPOSITE PAGE. The aim of the article which follows, as we explained last month, is to elaborate a theory of design by a method that might be called *visual argument*. The illustrations are in fact the story, and the letterpress is added merely to emphasize and correlate arguments implicit in the illustrations. The text is set in different sizes to distinguish the main statements from the passages where the author breaks off to develop—in an aside, as it were—his arguments in greater detail and smaller type. The third column in large type gives the thread of the argument. This technique is experimental, but it is hoped that the advantage gained by close contact between letterpress and illustration may make it worth while.

DECORATION

2. Hollywood Party

By Geoffrey Boumphrey

LET me confess that I am feeling a little bewildered—rather out of my element. Not only am I no connoisseur of the ancient, or antique, in furniture, but I must plead an even deeper ignorance of the modern, as exemplified by life in Hollywood today. There is, I find, a close connection between the two. You picture me, then, very much the country cousin, surveying all these magnificent interiors, dimly conscious that a film star has her duty to her publicity agent no less than to her public: off the screen as well as on it, she must never cease to impress. What she lightly calls a “cottage” would be to me (and, I think, to most of my readers) a very fair-sized house.

I retain my powers of observation sufficiently to realize that the décor of these spacious apartments is the result, in some cases, of a comprehensive order to a furnishing house to “do me that room in Empire style” (or Spanish—or Elizabethan—or anything else), in others, of a series of lucky finds in the several antique shops which, no doubt, have survived in Hollywood and the Beverly Hills since before the district was inhabited at all. But I am unable, at least in a photograph, to detect the fake from the improbable genuine piece; I am unable, even, to criticize the authenticity of the various

en-sembles—or indeed to name every style correctly. However, it need hardly matter. I came to Hollywood not to study period furnishing, but to try and find out how the man-in-the-street and his wife would furnish if money were no object—to ferret out, if possible, the trend of modern taste in furnishing and interior decoration. There will be plenty of scope for retrospection and historical reference when I come to examine in detail the work of modern designers and decorators.

There was just one other factor, beyond that of the overflowing purse, which led me to hope for something from Hollywood—its cosmopolitanism. The film star may be of any nationality. The Swede rubs shoulders with—or shrugs shoulders at—the Pole. Modern transport, too, has made meaningless the term “local materials”; modern ways of living approach more and more closely to a mean, except where climatic conditions forbid; modern education, journalism and wireless tend daily towards a common mode of thought—only politicians and diplomats, with their attendant trains, work in the opposite direction: it seems only reasonable to suppose that we shall find a corresponding narrowing of differences in national styles of decoration and design.

Let me say at once that I failed.

But let us glance at the material. We begin with Miss Mae West. By way of lightening the turgidity of my own style, I give the official description of this apartment. “AT THE HEAD OF THE TABLE—just like she is at the head of the Hollywood star list, Mae West, the world’s most famous blonde, is head of the table in her Hollywood apartment. Although Mae has surmised that ‘a man in the house is worth two on the street,’ there seldom are any around. Here’s the first picture peek into where and how Mae lives. This is the famous Westian dining table in the apartment Mae has finished [*sic*] in a Louis XV motif . . . Mae seldom goes out—mainly because she’s too busy—but she has a good time at home.”

Here is a room well beyond the means of the man-in-the-street—though not, perhaps, beyond his wife’s dreams. I wish I had been able to show a dinner-party in progress at this table on one of the rare occasions when a man or two was around. We should then have seen how a Louis Quinze interior accorded with mankind as it appears today. A tuxedo on those chairs? And would Versailles have countenanced the swaddling of that elegant carving with those satin covers? I feel conscious of a certain antagonism, too, between those electric candles and their trifurcated prototypes below—but keener than this, I must admit, is a wholly childish curiosity to know what would happen if these latter were lighted and allowed to burn down to the junction. No doubt a fresh set would be brought from the ice-box before this could happen.



In an attempt to find out how the man-in-the-street would furnish his home, were money no object, I seek the crystallization of his dreams—in Hollywood.

Its cosmopolitanism would appear to favour the emergence of an international style well suited to modern conditions of life which yearly grow more similar all over the civilized world.

But I am disappointed. Hollywood has Mae West and Mae West has Louis, and

what has Louis to do with life as lived by Mae West—except that it costs a lot of money?

But Louis Quinze is just a little remote from the English interior of today. Let us see if we cannot find something more homely. Ah—I thought so.



Here we have it—Ye Olde Worlde Interior. “Miss Miriam Hopkins in her lovely home in Beverly Hills, Calif.”

It is well that the bye-laws of Calif. enforce an adequate structural strength in mantelpieces, otherwise disaster might befall the fair head beneath the beam. The exquisite ironwork should be studied by our architects, for it could be happily allied with the over-

plain expanses that concrete gives us. The coffee pot is doubtless a memento of the Crusades. The contrivance behind the kettle is not a relic of the Inquisition, but it may serve for keeping the fire in order, thus neatly combining utility with decorative effect.

But let us step back a few paces, if the lady will be good enough to accompany us.



Thank you!

We now get a better idea of the room as a whole. And we realize that the fireplace is, in fact, merely a decorative feature: the rest of the room, except for the old-world beams, has little to do with it. If only another warming-pan or two could have been

hung on that vacant bit of wall to the left—and perhaps something done to that table in the foreground, whose period puzzles me a little. But, on the whole, not a bad room—I have seen far worse in the homes of our own artistic intelligentsia.

I look around for a more homely style than Louis Quinze and find it. Miss Miriam Hopkins favours an Olde Worlde effect and shows us some iron- and copper-work.

But what a little iron- and what a little copper-work. A few more warming-pans hung on the walls might have helped.



Here we have Victorianism unashamed—though far from naked. Our youngest film star has had the courage to cover it with an Olde Worlde roof with a Scandinavian flavour, and to decorate the piano with an exquisite example of Italian art.

It needs our youngest star (for such, I am credibly informed, is Miss Ida Lupino—or nearly) to dare Victorianism. And she has allied it, even more courageously, with an old-world roof which seems to me to have a Scandinavian look about it. Observe the adze marks on the beams—that is how they worked the wood in those days. I like, too, the bold way in which the lights on the chandeliers make only the faintest pretence of being candles (though the standards show a deplorable lapse into naturalism). However, most of the room is unashamedly Victorian. I had always thought, in my simplicity, that,

except for the Sitwells, rooms like the lower portion of this one only occurred as accidents in these days—that they were survivals of the past, so to speak. I was evidently wrong. I would call the attention of connoisseurs in Italian art to the exquisite figure with the tree-trunk on the piano. I only wish I could distinguish the bust in the background; it seems to me to resemble Emily Brontë—but I may be wrong. Above all, this room must be commended for its cosiness. But it helps us no further on our way.

I come next to an interior where Victorianism has evidently been modified by the teachings of Morris



Here is another example of Victorianism, a modified version, evidently influenced by the ideas of William Morris. It is a pity the opportunity of putting patterns on the carpet and the lamp shades was not accepted.

—the “rest room” of Miss Sylvia Sydney. It says much for the stamina of our stars that they are able to rest in such a room. Most of us, I fancy, would tire our egos to exhaustion by sending them climbing Jack-and-the-Beanstalkwise along the pattern of the wallpaper; and I, personally, should wait in a state of perpetual apprehension for the appearance

of that unnaturally-coloured pheasant which I know lurks among the begonias on the central chair. As a student of decoration, too, I must regret the lost opportunity for introducing yet another interesting pattern on the carpet, while the plainness of the lamp in the left foreground might offend anyone of less austere taste.

But as a “rest room,” which it is intended to be, I should find it rather exhausting.



Miss Sydney favours the Babe in the Wood style of decoration.

The verisimilitude of this mock-cottage interior is belied only by the presence of that cante-loupe—a fruit found but rarely in cottages. The chairs look so pleasant (to say nothing of their owner, Miss Sylvia Sydney again) that it seems a pity all must so soon be covered up like

the Babes in the Wood—robins or no robins!

Finally, a period piece; an Empire-cum-Hepple-white, which, while eluding my powers of exact description, seems to me vaguely French—though this may be simply the result of a wrong association of ideas: Home of Miss Claudette Colbert:



And here is something French again, but post-Mae West.

sole Colbert: French. Of this last it can be said that it has at least unity, which is lacking in most of the other interiors we have looked at—though this would, no doubt, be shattered by the entrance of its owner in anything but fancy dress. But stop! This brings me to the verge of a discovery which had better wait for a later article. For the moment, I will gather up what scattered clues we have found in this one. We have examined what I believe to be a representa-

tive selection of Hollywood homes, trusting to discover therefrom what the woman-in-the-film or, through her, what the man-in-the-street wants in interior decoration and furnishing. We have discovered nothing definable or even comprehensible—no one style, that is, nor set of principles on which a style might eventually be founded. We can only assume that neither she nor he knows what they do want, or, at least, that their wants are at present purely fanciful.

Stop again! That phrase “purely fanciful” may mean more than at first appears. They have, I see after all, something in common, these women-in-the-film; they have in common a desire to be “purely fanciful.” Our time has not been wasted. Here is an important clue which may lead to interesting developments—in our next.

[To be continued]

What is the result of our search? I make a discovery which may have interesting results.

ANTHOLOGY

The Architecture of the Future

The architecture of the day has become powerless. Our aim must be a style of our own. The peculiar characteristic of the present, as compared with all former periods, is this—that we are acquainted with the history of art. It is reserved to us, alone of all the generations of the human race, to know perfectly our own standing-point. This is amazingly interesting as a matter of erudition, but I fear a hindrance rather than a help to us as artists. In all periods of genuine art no one thought much of the past—each devoted his energies wholly to the present. The first natural effect of working with this vivid panorama of the past constantly in view is to induce a capriciousness of eclecticism—building now in this style, now in that—content to pluck the flowers of history without cultivating any of our own. This is not, however, the part of wisdom. We have to lay down a plan for the future—to choose a distinct course and to follow it with determination.

Knowing all forms we are at liberty to reject any which may be contrary to the principles of sound construction. We are not at liberty to proscribe any which are free from these objections. We have no right to limit the legitimate elements of construction—nor could we do so if we tried. . . . Curves like the ellipse, the cycloid, etc., always seem to satisfy the eye where they are demanded by mechanical laws. A simply and naturally constructed cast-iron railway bridge has almost always a certain degree of beauty; a suspension bridge would puzzle the most ingenious bungler to render it unpleasing; and there can be no doubt that the iron roof is susceptible of infinite beauty.

All the changes in the state and feeling of society which have taken place, or are yet to arise (unless, they be vicious) must be provided for. All inventions and discoveries must be brought under tribute, and every new material or mode of applying it made subservient to the one great end. Our architecture must unite within itself all that can be learned from the past, all that is demanded by the present, and all which will be developed by the future. It must be unlimited in its comprehensiveness and universal in its applicability, embracing also engineering works. Metallic construction is the great development of our age, and it speaks ill for the taste of our architects that they should have done so little to render it beautiful. . . . Our Classicists use all kinds of petty contrivances and architectural legerdemain to hide it or make it look like something else. . . . Let us earnestly press upon all inventors of new material to put it forth boldly as a legitimate new element, a thing not to be ashamed of. . . . Are we, as Englishmen, satisfied with the state of domestic architecture amongst us, or ought we to be

so? If we wish our structures to rank as the residences of rational beings, for goodness sake let us treat them as such, and not enshrine ourselves in temples of falsehood on the plea that we are only at sport!

It would be superfluous to argue that one of the characteristics of the style of the future must be *truthfulness*. The very existence of a living style presupposes this. . . . Yet with many the thought of truthfulness as an element of architecture serves only to promote low and silly sarcasm. The same unsoundness and want of principle which leads to frauds and wholesale forgeries among commercial men—to the manufacture of spurious articles of every possible description—revels unchecked in architecture, because this is considered a fair and open field for the free exercise of our deeply-rooted taste for counterfeits. Against this deliberate and utter degradation of our art many protests have been made. It might have been anticipated that the entire swarm of speculating house builders, and all the intermediate race who practically view architecture as a trade, should rise in indignation at such an invasion of their liberties. But it was *not* to have been imagined that the same would be the case with men professing a respect for their profession, who attend the meetings of the Royal Institute of British Architects, visit the classic shores of Italy and Greece, write books on the principles of architecture and are correspondents of architectural journals!

The architecture of the future must be pre-eminently practical and *straightforward*. It must not strive unduly after artistic effects. It must have a simple primary aim at utility; at, in the first place, thoroughly and in the best way providing perfect fitness for the object for which the building is erected, both in fact and in expression.

The rising style must be capable of meeting all wants, of using all materials, and of adopting all legitimate constructive processes. . . . I do not mean that it is to be capable of uniting in itself arts which have characterized different ages and countries. I would claim the gradual relinquishment of all *merely* conventional forms of ornament in ancient styles and the working out of all such as we may require fresh for ourselves. . . . The perpetual *ad infinitum* imitation of the details used in ancient Rome is, on the very face of it, absurd.

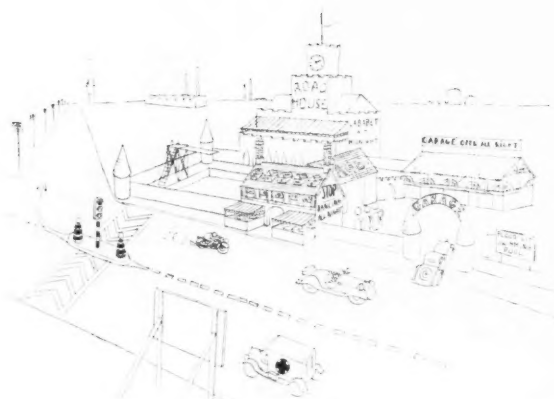
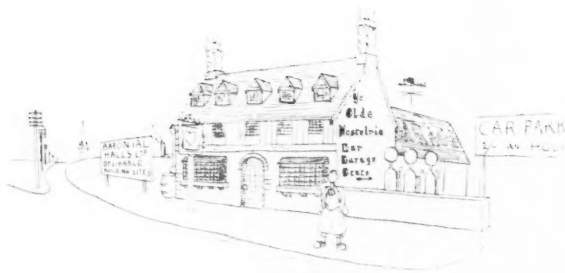
What hinders that we should commence the attainment of this noble and long-desired object? Is it that we await the advent of some mighty genius to set us at once in the right path? If so, we may wait long in vain. Does it require that some great catastrophe should demolish our social system and that another should rise from its ruins? No; our hindrance is our want of unity and steadiness of aim and purpose. "A rolling stone gathers no moss." We want our nucleus of a great and catholic system—of which my imagined architectural style would be the leading exponent—to be overlaid with successive growths arising from the necessities, inventions and feelings of our time; but if it is to gather such moss we must unite, one and all, in one steady unflinching effort—constant, untiring, and in the same direction.

SIR GEORGE GILBERT SCOTT, R.A.

Passages selected from "*Remarks on Secular and Domestic Architecture, Present and Future*" (1858).

A SHORT HISTORY OF PELVIS BAY BY OSBERT LANCASTER

3*



Drawings by Osbert Lancaster

Many of the thousands who, during the summer, motor down to Pelvis Bay by the new Flushbrook By-pass, must be familiar with the castellated tower of the "Hearts Are Trumps" roadhouse, but few, we suspect, are acquainted with the interesting history of the old place. The older portion of the present structure goes back to the early nineteenth century, or possibly even earlier. At all events, by the middle of the last century it was a well-known local farm, belonging to a farmer named Bloodworthy. In those far-off days there was little or no traffic, the road indeed being little better than a winding cart-track, and so there was nothing for the Bloodworthy family to do but farm their land.

At the end of the century, however, with the invention of the bicycle, came a change, and the Widow Bloodworthy found that she could make an acceptable addition to her income (she was the mother of seventeen children, and farming was not what it was) by providing passing cyclists with tea. This soon became so profitable that she was enabled to invest in a Rustic porch and a quantity of window-boxes, thus lending a picturesque air to the gaunt old farm-house, which proved an inspiration to many a water-colour painter of the time.

After the war, during which old Mother Bloodworthy, as she was affectionately known in the neighbourhood, gladdened the heart of many a Tommy *en route* for France with a tankard of foaming milk and a Marie biscuit, a great change took place. Her second son, Herbert Bloodworthy, returned home from the war and determined to use the money which had been obtained from the sale of a large portion of the farm-lands to a chemical syndicate for the erection of a poison-gas factory in 1918, in building an up-to-date garage. The fifteenth-century barn at the back of the house proved easily convertible, and all the alteration necessary was to widen the door and replace the old tiles with corrugated iron.

Herbert's daring and foresight were speedily justified, and so profitable did the business prove that in 1925, when the old road was widened, straightened, and generally improved, it was decided to expand on a large scale. With the aid of a local firm, Elizabethan Enterprises, Limited, the old house was entirely reconstructed in Tudor style, seven lock-ups were built, and with considerable difficulty, a licence obtained.

The next few years were ones of increasing prosperity, and when in 1930 the new Flushbrook By-pass was opened, the vastly increased volume of traffic found ample accommodation in the palatial new premises of "Hearts Are Trumps," for so the old Bloodworthy farm-house was now christened. The garage had been increased in size and ten new petrol pumps installed. The Olde Englishe Grille and the Restaurant Fleuris catered for all tastes and supplied every species of fresh farm and dairy produce straight from the Argentine. The American Bar provided refreshment for those who could not tarry long, and finally in the beautiful new dance-hall, with its modernistic sofas and lalique panels, Ed. Sugarprong and his 27 White-Hot Tub-Thumpers played the hottest jazz to be heard between Hammersmith Broadway and Pelvis Bay and, finally, last year the Pompeian swimming-pool was opened by the Pelvis Bay Tramway Queen of 1931, in person.

Alas that every English village has not a Bloodworthy!

* The previous instalments were published in the issues for November 1934 and January 1935.

MARGINALIA

THE REVIVAL OF VICTORIAN AESTHETICISM

Manchester Today—

Recent issues of the *Manchester Evening Chronicle* have been full of the spirited fight which local residents are putting up against the erection of what is variously described as "a cotton mill" and "a laboratory for research into cotton-weaving problems" in the grounds of the Shirley Institute at Didsbury. Hundreds of small houses have gone up within 600 yards of the site during the last few years. Councillor White declares that if the laboratory is built their owner-occupiers will demand concessions in rating; and Councillor Dawson quotes a letter from one of them saying "They are turning our front doors into a sort of back street."

After the Manchester Town-Planning Committee had approved the plans under its bye-laws and disapproved them under the Town-Planning Act, it appointed a sub-committee which induced the Institute "to alter the elevations considerably in so far as the chimney-stack, originally a separate feature, was to be put up against the building in such a way that no one would recognize it as a factory chimney at all." But this architectural embellishment failed to satisfy Alderman T. S. Williams, the chairman, "because it was against the view of the Committee to accept a building of such a nature in a residential district." Fresh negotiations then ensued, which have resulted in the Institute making further modifications that meet all but one of the Committee's objections. In moving the acceptance of these amended plans Alderman T. S. Williams protested against a statement that a three-storey factory was to be erected. "It was nothing of the kind. The three-storey building had been reduced by 6 feet in height and brought down to 32 feet; and only research work would be carried on in it. The chimney was camouflaged and only 7 feet higher than the building itself, and made in the shape of a tower."

—Pisa Tomorrow

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW'S Italian correspondent reports a rumour that the Didsbury agitation has encouraged the inhabitants of Pisa to petition the Duce, through their Podesta, for the removal of a well-known local eyesore. They ask that the Leaning Tower shall be put up against the Baptistery by means of a camouflaged screen-wall, or some other

suitable architectural device, in such a way that it may no longer be mistaken for a separate feature.

SLUMP IN EXCELSIORS

It is an open secret that the most shameless snobbery has long been on the ascendant in the skyscraping world. The Great Crash in the United States is apparently putting an end to this particular form of Gate Crash. In a recent report to the American Institute of Architects, Mr. William Orr Ludlow, chairman of that body's Industrial Relations Committee, was careful to draw a simple faith *v.* Norman blood distinction between honest little bourgeois cottage skyscrapers and the overweening feudal arrogance of the cloud-crashing castles he denounces as "sky-piercers." According to Mr. Ludlow it is improbable that any more "super-tall" climbers will be built—or perhaps one should say socially tolerated. On the other hand he thinks it likely that, with the return of better times, the modest democratic 20-30 storeyed building may eventually be able to lift up its head again. But this cannot be until "present vacant rental space is occupied," which now varies from 38.1 per cent. in Detroit to 21.3 per cent. in New York.

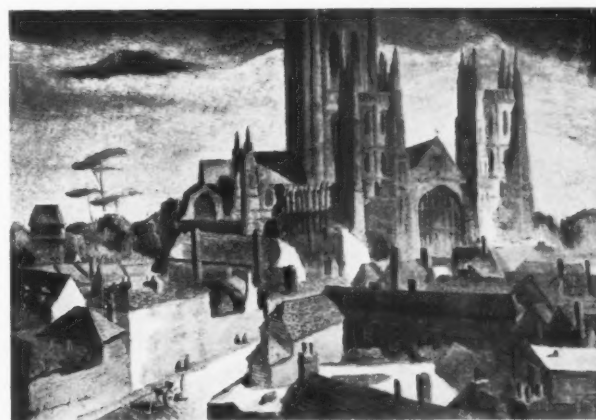
CIVIC CENTRES

There are signs of a minor boom in civic centres nowadays, Gloucester being the latest convert. This is all to the good so far as it goes, though more of these centres than not seem civic in the sense of yesterday rather than today. Those who have had to struggle through Euclid will remember that one was never told to take a given centre for tracing a circle without a clear definition of its circumference, and what it had to enclose and exclude. Apparently the net practical effect of successions of Town-Planning Acts is that our town-planners are obliged to ignore such purely logical considerations; and must content themselves with providing new hearts for old, worn-out bodies.

... BUT WHICH IS IT?

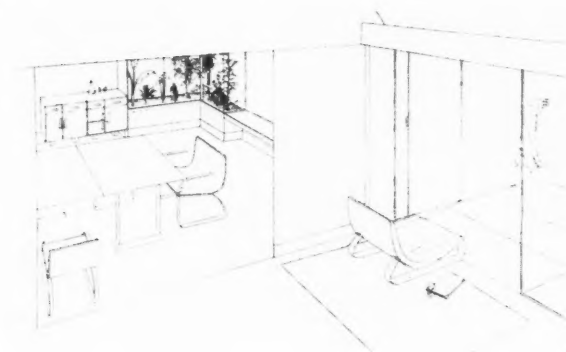
Sir Charles C. Allom, speaking at the eighth annual dinner of the Faculty of Architects and Surveyors, said that architecture was becoming so abstruse today that it was becoming more a science than an art. Eminent men were erecting—for fear of being thought out of date—some of the most ghastly buildings the world had ever seen. He was thankful

EXHIBITION



Canterbury Cathedral, an oil painting by R. Myerscough Walker. One of the works to be shown at an exhibition of the artist's paintings in oil and water colour, monotone drawings, and of his more important perspective drawings, to be held early this month at No. 13 Russell Square, London, W.C. The private view is on February 4, and the Exhibition, which will be opened by Mr. G. Grey Wornum, F.R.I.B.A., will continue for a fortnight. Admission is free.

C O M P E T I T I O N



LARRY WILSON



In the recent competition for modern furniture suitable for a home supported by an annual income of £800 to £1,500, which was organized by Messrs. B. Cohen and Sons, the winner of the first premium of £50 was Mr. Patrick Gwynne, architect, of 14 Palmer Street, Westminster, S.W.1. The winning design is reproduced above. The assessors were Messrs. E. Maxwell Fry, A.R.I.B.A., John Gloag, H. de C. Hastings, Editor of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, and J. M. Cohen.

that the B.B.C. broadcast sound, for he very much regretted that in its building it broadcast hideousness. He hoped there would be success in fostering again the really fine type of architecture.

SACKCLOTH AND ASHES

"The painter who started with the flesh and worked back to the bone would be looked upon as a bit of an idiot. And yet this is precisely what most of us do in architecture today. . . . Architects only do about 5 per cent. of the building work of our country."

Mr. Francis Lorne, F.R.I.B.A., in a Paper read to the Manchester Society of Architects on January 9.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor,

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

SIR,—In your January issue, you have devoted many pages to reviews of books on the subject of the form or style of industrial goods. In these reviews, a great deal of beating up of controversy for its own sake seems to occur.

The poor misused word "Art" is, as always, the irritant, and various associations and societies come in for the usual ridicule and slatings popular with critics.

The main thing is that all thinking people with an optical consciousness want manufactured goods to be planned with thought, knowledge and feeling.

Does it matter what we call the function of arranging what shapes, textures and colours manufactured things shall have? I think it does, because a right use of words might save much needless negative verbiage in an effort that even your reviewers are probably quite in favour of—namely, the improvement in the looks of British goods.

In all "isms" there are leaders who know what they are aiming at, and a mass of followers who have no firm conviction, and do not understand what it is all about. The first frequently do good work because they are being true to themselves.

But ART is a rare and elusive thing, and has very little to do with the shape of a settee, however good, although it may need something of an artist to conceive of a good shape. All that an artist does is not art. In industry, he would prefer to be graded as a workman.

Design in Industry or Form in Industry are sufficiently high nomenclature for what is intended, but the important thing is to push along and get to some stage at which we may feel that our manufacturers are training themselves to perceive what type of men and women have the ability and character necessary to plan the appearance of their goods, in a live and pleasant way, and that they are learning, too, to give such constructive brains a reasonable remuneration.

Your obedient servant,

HAROLD CURWEN.



THE SECRET

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Trade News and Reviews

By Brian Grant

"Artiness in Industry"

I will, with noble restraint, refrain from saying more than a few words about Burlington House, the present centre of artiness in industry. Much is being written about it, I believe, elsewhere in this number of the REVIEW.

To say that the Exhibition disappointed me is putting it mildly. To be truthful, I had not fostered great expectations—I went prepared for an occasional shudder, but, alas! I wandered from gallery to gallery in a state of abject mortification.

It was exceedingly tiresome having to refer to the catalogue for the price of every exhibit, and as I gave up this practice after a very short while it is possible that I missed the low and medium priced specimens.

In Gallery 1—Ceramics—the pots are a dreary, unoriginal, over-priced collection. The dinner services and tea services are better, but here, again, the prices seem to be on the high side. Not very many weeks

ago I purchased a breakfast set from Lawleys of Regent Street which cost me fifteen shillings and sixpence. I chose it not merely because I happen to be a poor man, but because I found it good to look upon and cheerful of colour. Breakfast sets, I think, should be cheery—it is part of their job to help dispel the gloom of chill grey

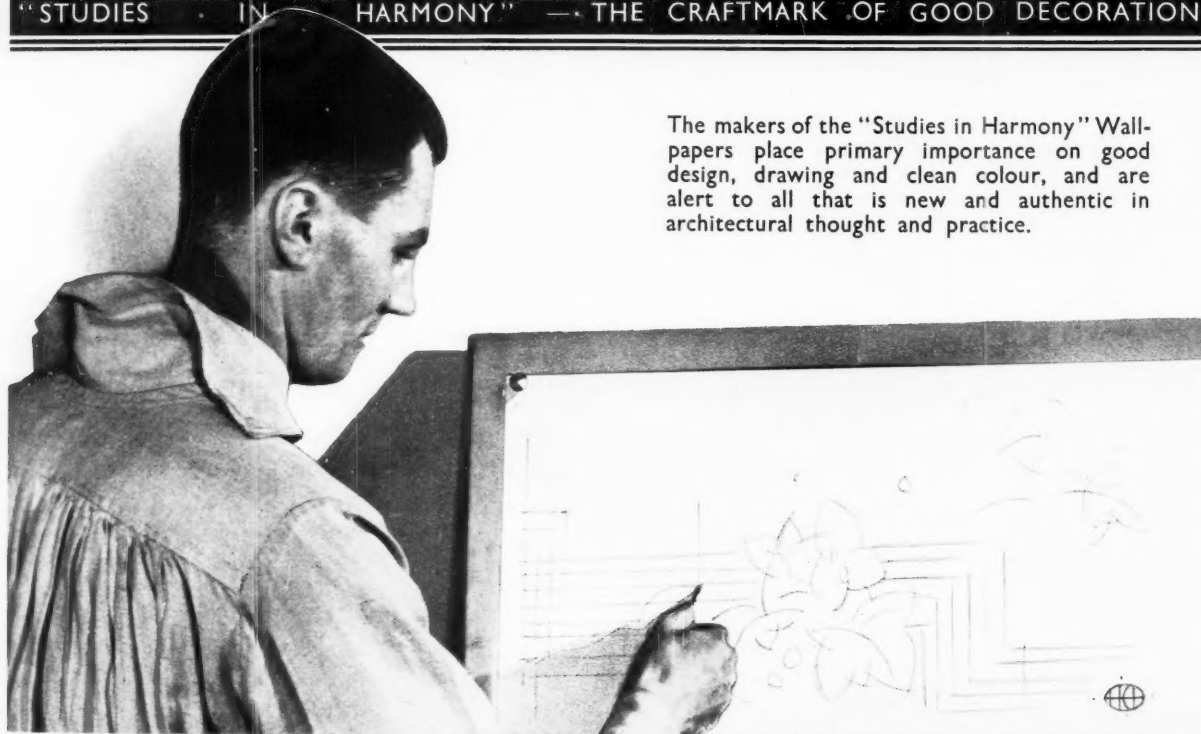
Pieces from tea and dinner sets made by Pountney and Company. Designer of the shape: J. F. Price; pattern, P. B. G. Johnston. Approximate cost of tea service for six persons is 12s. 6d. and of a dinner service for six persons £3 3s. Colour range, King's blue, April green or orange, on ivory ware.

dawn and to detract a little from the depression created by those deplorable muddy-coloured O.H.M.S. envelopes.

It is for the likes of me that this exhibition should have been devised and organized, persons blessed with little money and average good taste. We do not need an exhibition to show us that with a lot of money one can buy a whole lot of terribly "amusing" things—a dressing table made of glass for 39 guineas, a marble fireplace for £35, a writing table in sycamore for £68 5s., a sideboard (walnut, on chromium stand) for £70, and furniture for a garden dining room in ivory and green "Marblestuc" for heaven knows what sum of money! We need an exhibition to show that in this machine age, in this age of mass production through the proper collaboration of designer and manufacturer, good design need add little, if anything, to retail cost. I wonder will we ever get it!



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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, February 1935.

Royal Academy
Exhibition of British Art



*Executed to the design of
Oliver Hill, Esq., F.R.I.B.A.*

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CRAFTSMEN IN MARBLE

IMPERIAL WORKS, KENNINGTON OVAL, LONDON, S.E.11

Decorative lighting with economy

Undoubtedly one of the most advanced systems of lighting is that provided by G.V.D. Illuminators, Ltd. The system is based upon the scientific control and reflection of light from its source, and I have witnessed one or two most excellent demonstrations of its efficiency. I have seen a 12 ft. by 6 ft. lay-light illuminated with a single 500-watt lamp: the light from this single lamp is projected along one side of the lay-light and by means of a number of specially designed parabolic reflectors is distributed evenly over the whole surface. The use of only one lamp for lighting a lay-light of this area seems to have many advantages. In the first place the actual source of light is not apparent and there is a complete absence of that patchiness which is so often noticeable in installations where a number of small lamps have been employed. The foremost advantage is the consequent saving in current consumption, and this is claimed to be considerable. In the case of lay-lighting, cornice lighting and all forms of built-in lighting, the reduction of current provides attendant advantages—less heat is created and correspondingly less provision is necessary for ventilation, and, further, the wiring is considerably simplified.

The lighting of the Balmoral Rooms at the New Connaught Rooms in Great Queen Street is a good example of the simplicity, efficiency and economy of G.V.D. decorative lighting. There are in this room (a photo-



By courtesy of Architecture Illustrated

Eighteen lay-lights at the New Connaught Rooms, London. Each lay-light is provided with a full colour changing effect—only one lamp per colour per lay-light being used. It is the first installation of its kind in the country. Architects: Messrs. H. V. Ashley & Winton Newman, F.F.R.I.B.A.

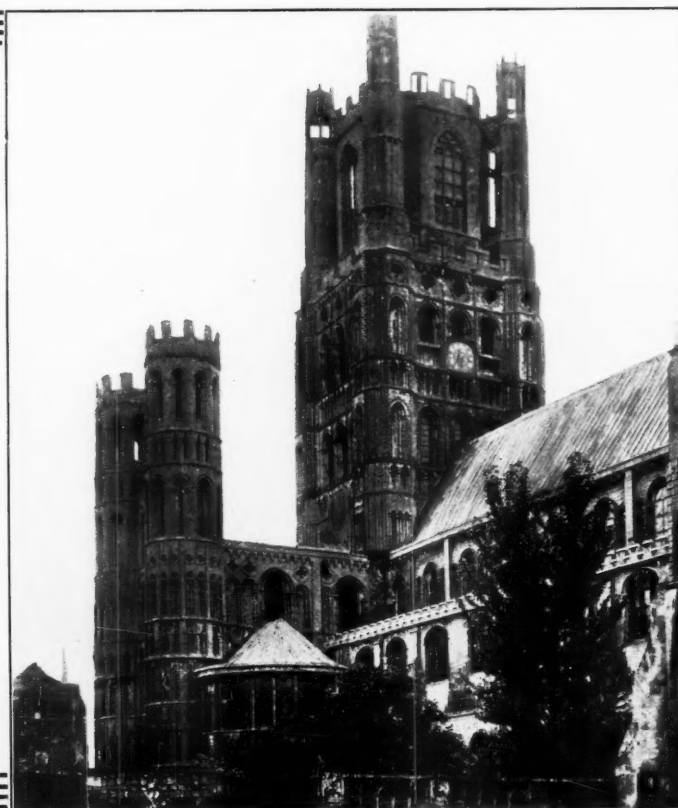
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graph of which I reproduce) 18 lay-lights, each being 6 ft. 4 in. by 5 ft., and in each lay-light there are four lamps—one 300-watt white lamp, one 300-watt blue lamp, one 200-watt red lamp and one 200-watt green lamp. The reflectors are so arranged that any one lamp will light the lay-light evenly or, when the dimmers are operated, a great variety of constantly changing colour effects may be obtained. This installation was carried out to the instructions of Messrs. H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, F.F.R.I.B.A., and the consulting engineers were Messrs. Ridge and Aldred. Demonstrations of the different applications of G.V.D. lighting may be seen at the company's showrooms at Aldwych House, Aldwych.

When Villas were Built for £160

I am told that a most interesting book* has just been published outlining the history of the Building Society movement.

Its author, Mr. George Elkington, is an architect and chairman of the National Building Society. The N.B.S. was first formed in 1849 as a land society, and it was not until the beginning of 1854 that it concerned itself seriously with the development of building on its own purchased estates. The earliest houses erected by the Society for its members (even in those far off days, nearly a hundred years ago, these

* *The National Building Society, 1849-1934.* By George Elkington, J.P., F.R.I.B.A. Publishers: Heffer and Sons, Ltd., of Cambridge.

houses were referred to in the society's circulars as "modern villas") consisted of a front and back parlour, hall and kitchen on the ground floor and three bedrooms on the first floor, and the building cost was approximately £160!

John Bright and Richard Cobden were interested in the early development of the movement, Cobden in particular being a very enthusiastic pioneer; but with all their enthusiasm and imagination, those early founders can hardly have visualized that the venture they were embarking upon was destined to play so influential a part in the housing of a nation's people. The building societies have performed a great work of national benefit. They have been the power behind the throne of the speculative

builder. I would be shirking the dictates of my conscience if I were not to refer to one aspect of building society development which has been sadly neglected: little consideration has been given to the aesthetics of housing estate development, and the architect, the only trained man competent to plan and control such building operations, has been almost entirely excluded from the vast building programme of post war England—a programme made possible only by the financial support afforded by the societies.

Had the building societies insisted upon proper supervision by architects of the estates either directly or indirectly under their control, how much greater would have been their service to civilization.

Through the Letter Box

Arens Window Controls

The opening of a window is often very far from being a simple operation. In churches, schools, banks, indeed, in most large buildings where the windows are six, seven, or many more feet from floor level, the selection of efficient control gear must

have presented the architect with a pretty problem. A long pole with a hook on its end had at one time to do the job, but that was a very long time ago. Amongst modern systems is the Arens Control System, a method of transmitting a push and pull movement round bends and corners over considerable distances, providing a means of



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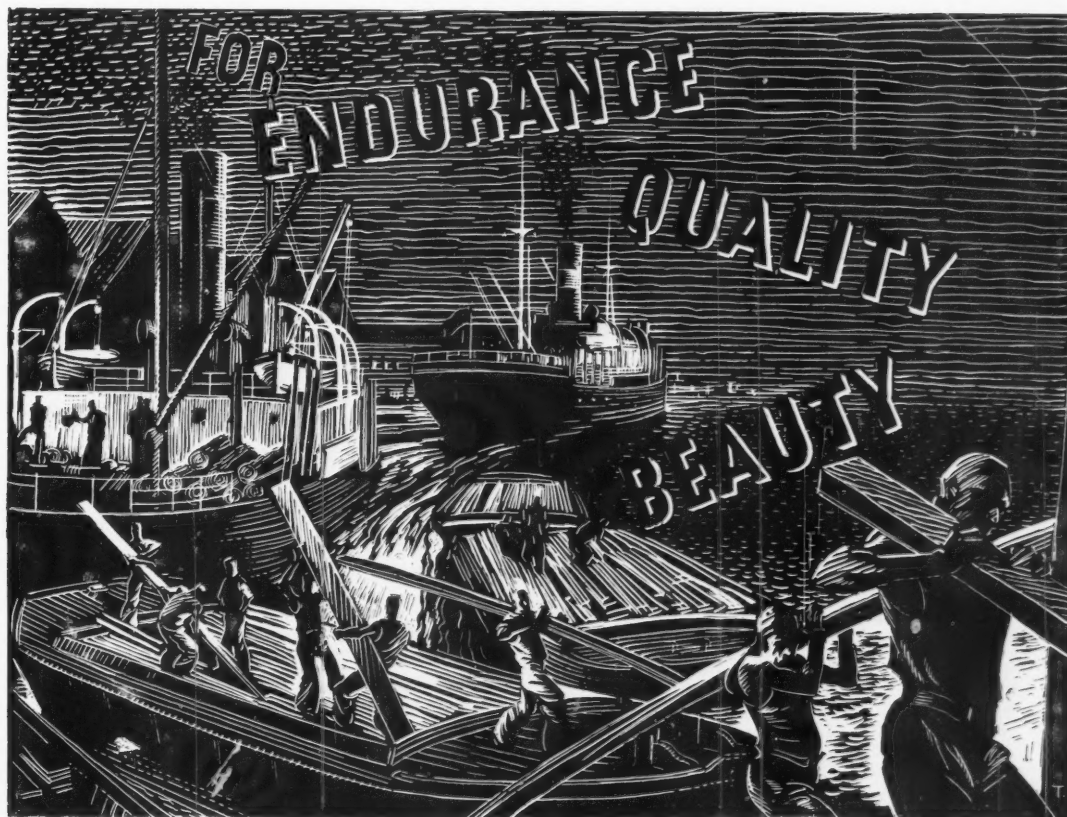
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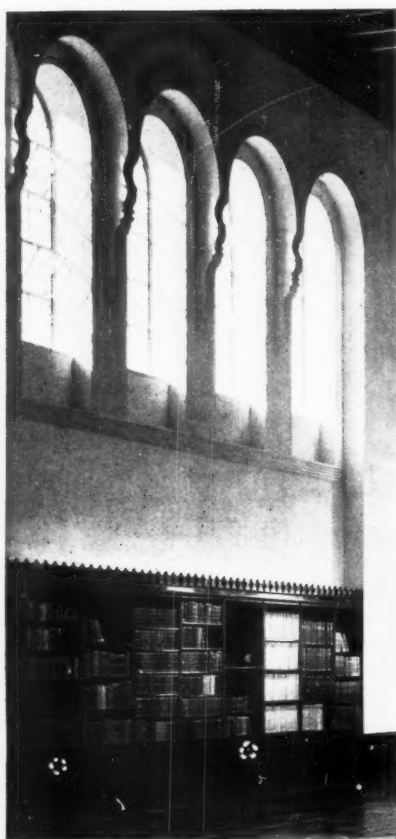
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operating windows and ventilators that are out of reach without spoiling the appearance of the window with unsightly rods, levers or cords. The construction of the control consists of a flexible steel cable assembled under tension, which is surrounded by a tightly wound steel spring under compression, connected at the operating end by a sliding steel tube member, the whole sliding through an outer brass tube. Windows are operated by a bronze bow handle operating in a slide. The controls are of two classes, rigid and flexible. The rigid control having a rigid outer casing which has to be bent and made up to meet the particular requirement; the flexible control having a flexible outer casing can be fitted and adjusted almost at will. The controls are neat in appearance or, if complete invisibility be preferred, they can be concealed in the wall structure. These controls are not restricted to bottom hung windows, but will operate any type of casement, also dampers in duct work. Most of the windows at the new R.I.B.A. headquarters are operated by these controls and amongst other notable buildings in which this type of gear has been adopted by the architect are the University library at Cambridge, Royal Plymouth Hospital, St. Alban's Church, Becontree, and Bentalls' New Store, Kingston.

A brochure fully descriptive of the system has recently been published by Arens Controls, Ltd., and copies may be obtained upon application to their London office at 2 South Wharf, Praed Street, Paddington. (Telephone: Paddington 9958/9.)



Windows in the reading room, University Library, Cambridge. Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, architect. Each pair of H.C.H. Vents is operated from the point marked with a white circle, the Arens Controls being entirely concealed.

Structural Steelwork Handbook

It is probable that the majority of architects have a copy of the *Structural Steel Handbook* published by Redpath, Brown and Company, Ltd. The revision of the British Standard Steel Sections for structural purposes has necessitated the production of a supplement to this handbook containing selected tables of safe loads and properties for the revised sections. This supplement is now ready for distribution and Messrs. Redpath Brown ask me to notify architects that if they have not already received their copies a telephone call to the company's head office or to any of their branch offices (or a postcard) will immediately remedy the omission. It is an invaluable technical compilation produced to facilitate the design and detailing of structural steelwork.



BOLTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL.
Photograph by courtesy of the
Architects, Messrs. Adshead,
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CHRISTOPHER WREN

Architect and...

The name of Christopher Wren is always associated with his finest masterpiece—St. Paul's Cathedral. Few people realise that besides being a brilliant architect, he was also a clever astronomer, a talented mathematician and chemist.

Similarly with Stuarts—Architects have long known them for their famous Granolithic Pavings but some are as yet unaware that Stuarts have specialised for over 40 years in the manufacture of

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Illumination cum Ventilation

The Crittall Ventilator Company send me their brochure describing the "Stylovent" system of ventilation. The "Stylovent" is an air diffuser designed to work in conjunction with the mechanical ventilation or air conditioning of buildings, ships, trains, etc., permitting the noiseless admission or extraction and equable distribution of large volumes of air. It consists of a number of flat, co-axial rings, scientifically proportioned, and so spaced that air, either discharged or exhausted, is distributed equally in the directions required.

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"Stylovent" lighting fittings have been



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designed to provide a ceiling fitting which shall perform a double function, and the design which I reproduce here is, I think, a particularly happy one.

Application for copies of this brochure should be addressed to the company at 43, Bloomsbury Square, London, W.C.1.

Aluminium Facts and Figures

is the title of a brochure just issued by the British Aluminium Company.

I have remarked before in these columns

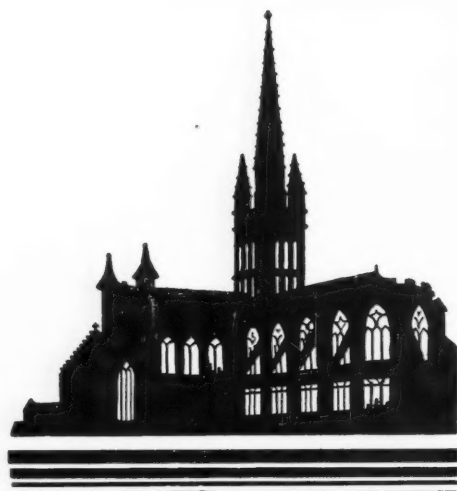
on the excellence of the technical publications of this company—the responsible person or persons is (or are) deserving of high praise. *Facts and Figures* is full of invaluable data compiled and presented in a thoroughly workmanlike manner.

The Electrical Warming of Buildings

Unity Heating, Ltd., of Unity Works, Welwyn Garden City, have recently published an illustrated brochure describing the different systems of electric heating carried out by them and will be glad to send copies to architects and other interested readers of the REVIEW. Application may be made to the head office or to the company's London office at Vincent House, Vincent Square, Westminster, W.1 (Telephone: Victoria 3118/3119).

Wylie & Lochhead and Scott Morton

Architects will be interested to learn that a co-operative working agreement has just been arranged between Messrs. Wylie & Lochhead of Glasgow and Messrs. Scott Morton of Edinburgh. Under the new arrangement the two firms, whilst still retaining their separate identities, will co-operate in the execution of decoration contracts where such co-operation will clearly result in greater efficiency and economy.



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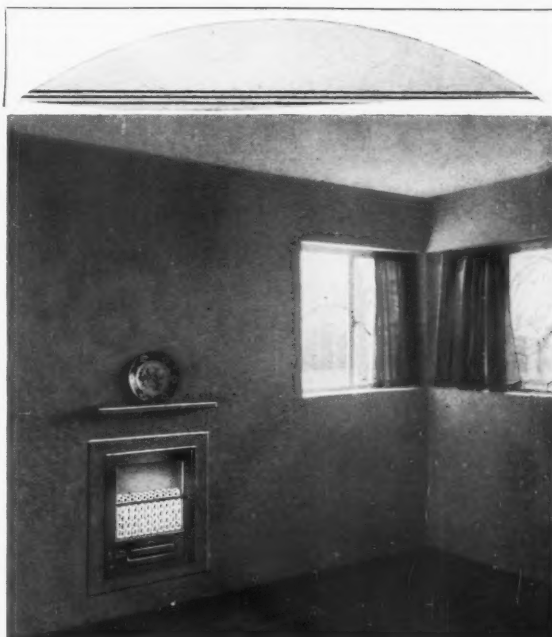
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Radiation

The Building Centre Programme of Lectures for February

Thursday, February 7.—"DIVINING FOR WATER, OIL AND COAL," by P. Gatward, Esq.
Chairman—Maurice E. Webb, Esq., D.S.O., F.R.I.B.A.

Thursday, February 14.—"Consideration of the Home Office 'MANUAL OF SAFETY REQUIREMENTS in THEATRES AND OTHER PLACES OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT,'" by Lt.-Col. Guy Simons, D.S.O.

Chairman—R. E. Stradling, Esq., C.B., M.C., D.Sc., Ph.D., M.Inst. C.E., Director Building Research Station.

Thursday, February 21.—"THE APPLICATION OF COAL AND COAL BURNING APPLIANCES TO MODERN BUILDINGS," by H. L. Pirie, Esq., M.I.Mech.E., Chief Engineer Coal Utilisation Council.
Chairman—Oscar Faber, O.B.E.,

D.Sc., M.Inst.C.E., Consulting Engineer.

Thursday, February 28.—"PROPERTIES OF BRICKS IN RELATION TO PROCESSES OF MANUFACTURE," by A. Zaiman, Esq.
Chairman—J. R. Leathart, Esq., F.R.I.B.A.

After each lecture an open discussion has been arranged in which architects and technicians will take part.

Admission to each lecture will be by ticket which may be obtained free on application.

The lectures will be held in the Building Centre at 158, New Bond Street, W.1, and will commence at 8 p.m.

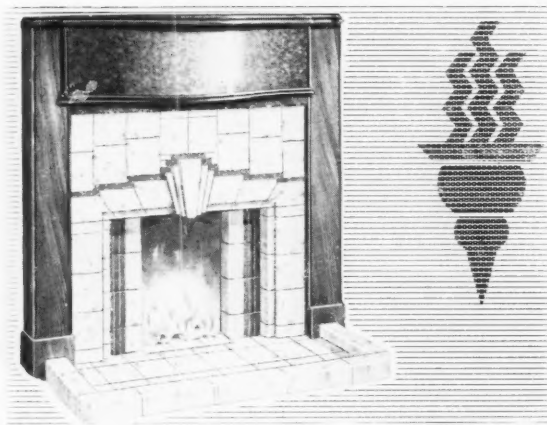
The Buildings Illustrated

The general contractors for a studio at Fordingbridge, Hants, designed by Christopher Nicholson, were Messrs. C. H. Boyd and Son, Ltd. Among the sub-contractors were the following: Smith Walker, Ltd. (reinforcement), Standard Flat Roofing Co., Ltd. (special roofings), Pither's Radiant Stoves, Ltd. (combined stove and boiler serving Ideal window radiators), Stanley Cooper & Co., Ltd. (electric wiring), Merchant Adventurers of London, Ltd., and Oswald Hollmann

(electric light fixtures), Elsen Manufacturing Co., Ltd. (sanitary fixtures), James Gibbons, Ltd. (door furniture), Morris Singer, Ltd. (casements), Venesta, Ltd. (joinery—doors), Tentest Fibre Board Co., Ltd. (insulation to floor and ceiling).

The general contractors for a house at Sydenham Hill, designed by Harding and Tecton, were Messrs. Pell and Clayton, Ltd. Among the sub-contractors were the following: C. J. Pell & Co. (consulting engineers

and steel reinforcement), Williams and Williams, Ltd. (metal windows), A. A. Diment (electrical installation), Troughton and Young, Ltd. (electrical fittings), Ferranti, Ltd. (electric fires), J. A. King & Co. ("Glascote" windows), Dennison, Kett & Co., Ltd. (rolling shutters), British Dolumet Co., Ltd. (jointless floors), Hollis Brothers & Co., Ltd. (parquet), Gordon Russell, Ltd. (door furniture), Easiwork, Ltd. (kitchen equipment), James Latham, Ltd. (flush doors), Frazzi, Ltd. ("Paropa" roofing), Light Steelwork (1925) Ltd. (railings), Spraytextures, Ltd. ("Castex" external paint), Alfred Goslett & Co., Ltd. (sanitary fittings), Waring Tube Heating Co., Ltd. (electric hot towel rail).



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