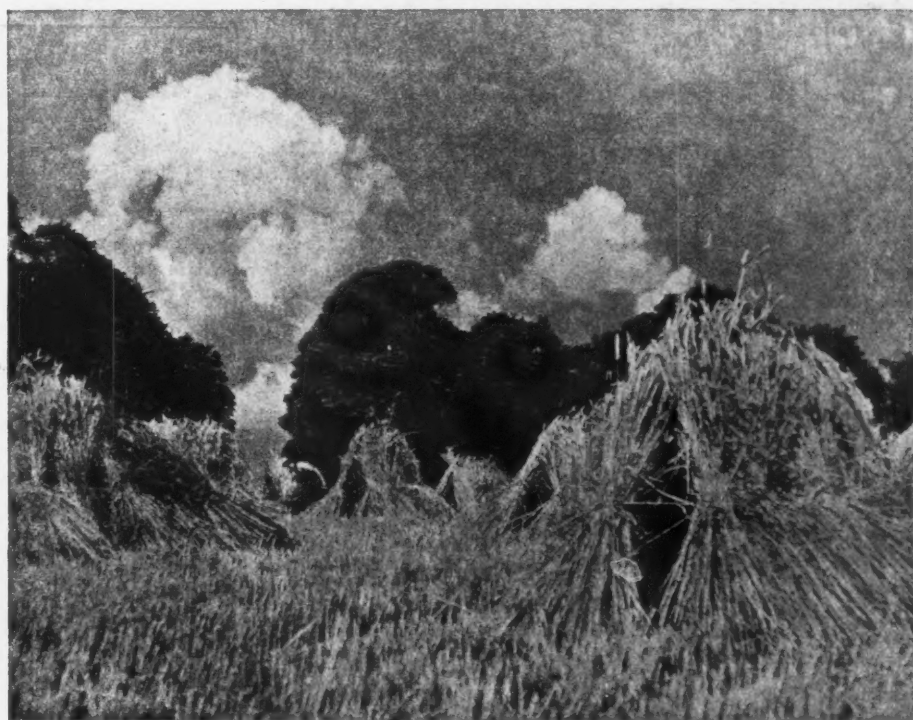


THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration



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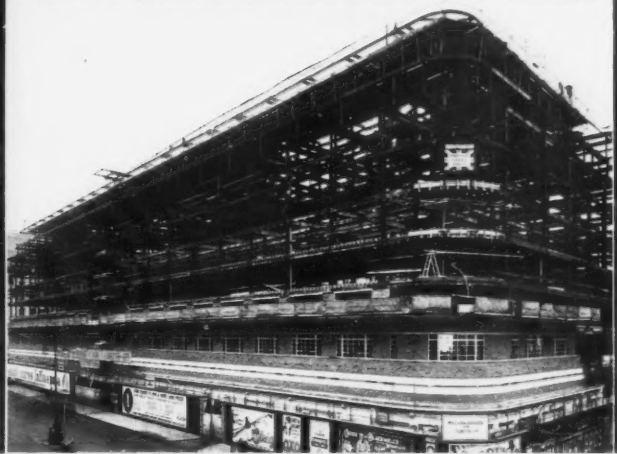
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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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Vol. LXXVII, No. 460

March 1935

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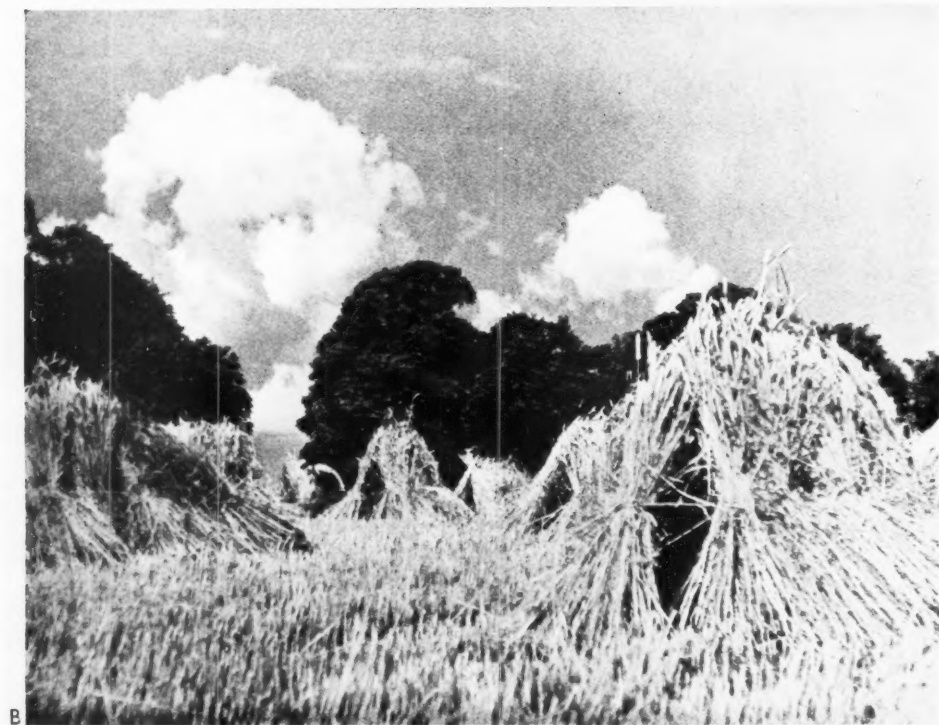
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The reaped corn



The planted trees



The corn, the trees—and the village.

Food, Shelter and Clothing—out of the provision of these necessities man creates the humanized landscape. *From the film The Face of Britain by Paul Rotha.*

The English Tradition

THE writer of this article was at a quick lunch counter. At the same lunch counter, for it was not yet three o'clock, sat a flushed looking man who kept his eyes glued on the clock. Just before it struck, he ordered the last of many glasses of white port and winking at the bartender said, "When I get back to the office my name's going to be mud."

The thought did not seem to embitter him, for he took the top off the white port with some urbanity and added with a good humoured air, "Still it's not the first time."

When he said it was not the first time the gentleman at the lunch counter did not mean simply that he had overstayed his lunch hour before. He meant not only that he had done it before, but he had done it so often that he had created a precedent with his firm for overstaying the lunch hour. He had created a precedent, had won a kind of sanction, by which it was generally agreed that his name was entitled to be mud as often as he liked.

This, as we see it, is one kind of tradition: the sort which is built up on precedent and by which a particular course of action—even a course which leads to one's name being mud—becomes sanctified by continual repetition.

Implicit in this interpretation of tradition is an attitude towards the past which can be called *Ye Olde*—which invests the forms and precedents of history with an absolute validity. The historical panorama is seen as a sort of formal garden studded with the topiary work of tradition, but how the

formal patterns were created, how the topiary work "happened" is discussed only in general terms of evolution. It is taken for granted that evolution "happens," too, and if it happens all you've got to do is to sit back and let it happen—in a severely constitutional way. Which is, of course, absurd. Evolution doesn't "happen." What in perspective is seen to be evolution—and is hoped to be Development—appears in the dimension of the present to be the iconoclasm of wicked men. "This is a new development," said the worried general, meaning that "this" was to him an unexpected and indecently unconventional move on the part of the enemy. In that sense the introduction of stone was a development, and so was the introduction of brick. The pointed arch was not less unconventional than the cantilevered beam; to contemporary eyes the Arcades of Brown, the bald façades of Kent, the stucco frivolities of Nash, the weird simplifications of Soane, were each and all new developments, equally shocking, disconcerting and irreconcilable with a respectable past.

Though to us, who see them in the perspective of an epoch, they do not seem so revolutionary, these men, whose art we now regard as topiary work in the traditional garden, were in fact the *avant-garde* of their day. Whenever we take the trouble to move back into their present, we see that to contemporary eyes they appeared to be outraging something precious to the ordinary man, something *olde*, something already made that was

good enough for him, so why alter it? The reaction is always the same: the hatred of "new developments" which seem to show either an ignorance or a contempt for the good things that have been handed down.

This attitude was illustrated in a recent broadcast discussion (marred for those who prefer their vendettas to be carried on with the sawn-off shot gun by an unrehearsed finale which ran somewhat as follows:

Sir Reginald Blomfield: Am I on time?

Mr. Amyas Connell: On the tick.

Sir R. B. Was it all right?

Mr. A. C. Very good)

—a broadcast discussion *For and Against Modern Architecture* in which Sir Reginald, posing as a traditionalist, hurled the bogey "modernismus" at his rival's head. But it is not wise to clap anarchist tags on to new movements because they appear to break sequence; for if we reject the formal garden or lunch-counter interpretation of evolution, and the outlook on the past, which inevitably accompanies it—if we see evolution as a series of new developments, a series of Gilbertian short sharp shocks, apparently unrelated to what has gone before, it follows that what appear to be revolutionary movements may in the end turn out not to have broken the sequence of tradition; that, though invisible today, the traditions of which Sir Reginald is justly proud, may turn out to have been operative in them after all.

If evolution—the sequence of development—is not and cannot be visible to contemporary eyes, every new development is bound to be seen as *change*. But change is the *sine qua non* of all activity, and because all activity involves change it does not follow that all change is in the line of tradition. How then are we to distinguish those changes which are in the line of tradition from those that are in fact anarchistic? Obviously by understanding what our traditions are.

Once tradition is regarded as working in the medium of change, it is seen to have nothing to do with the preservation of forms. Because he built the Regent Street Quadrant in a Louis style Sir Reginald Blomfield is not a traditionalist. In so far as he artificially resurrected forms proper to another time and place, he is an anarchist. Period revivalism is a pure, though often delightful, form of anarchism. It is not

in form survival, but in continuity of *motive*, operating through—and on—change, that a true tradition has its being. And seeking it, we must look under the arbitrary and changing forms which are simply the product of specific conditions at specific times for some integrating motive common to all. As Mr. Eden says in the article which follows, this broader interpretation "finds in tradition a guiding principle which has nothing to do with the repetition of historic forms. It looks on historic forms as the expression of tradition at a given time and in a given place, and it recognizes that this expression is always changing. It sees the present not only in relation to the past, but also as the threshold of the future. In this way, paradoxical though it may seem, tradition implies a forward looking attitude, and without such a spirit of movement it is dead. At the same time the study of the past is the only way in which we can become acquainted with the workings of tradition. We must, however, be prepared to look for motives rather than to collect unrelated facts, and we must look at each period in the light of what went before and of what came after. We may then arrive at some understanding of how we ourselves stand with regard to the past and the future, and realize that, inevitably, we must hand on as well as receive."

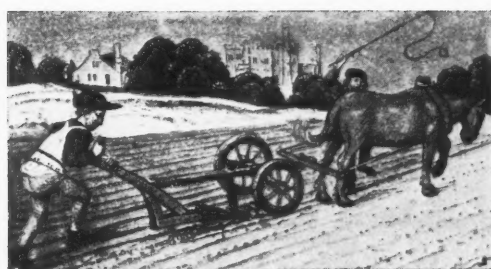
The time has come when the twentieth century—out of its teens now—should try to see itself in relation to its surroundings: as a product of its past: as the bringer into being of its future. Many people today are dimly aware of that inner necessity which seeks to relate immediate activities to a greater context. Under the title "The English Tradition," this journal intends to present a series of historical studies on certain aspects of English life, starting in this issue, as is fit, with the countryside. For some reason only the drearier British virtues, the dull unlovely obstinacies, the Dogged Does It, have ever been effectively publicized; yet England has had great traditions submerged though they may have been under the industrial revolution, and some of these it is our object to rediscover: in the belief that, just as they are the key to whatever has been well directed in our past, so they may give direction to the present and coherence to our aims for the future, though clothed inevitably in forms that appear to be new and strange.

THE EDITOR.

The English Tradition in the Countryside

By W. A. Eden

I. Making of the Tradition



1. Ploughing a common field in the fifteenth century.
From *Horæ*, British Museum MS. Add. 17012.

BEFORE we attempt to discuss the subject of tradition in the English countryside it will be well to inquire what we really mean when we speak of tradition. That definition of the word is obviously inadequate which can be used in defence of individual predilections, be they for Gothic or Georgian architecture, romantic or formal poetry, or, in the countryside, for high hedges and winding lanes or for clean open downland. Yet such a definition is often put forward, or at least implied, by the so-called traditionalist, who, in the name of tradition, continues to pretend that he is living in the fourteenth, or the sixteenth, or the eighteenth centuries, in England, in France, or in Italy. According to his way of thinking the true symbol of tradition is the Tower of Babel. If he is enamoured of the work of the eighteenth century he denies the value of that of the sixteenth, apparently forgetful of the fact that if there is such a thing as an English tradition it must include both.

The purpose of the following survey of the principal changes which have taken place in the English landscape is to suggest that there is a broader interpretation of the meaning of tradition. This broader interpretation finds in tradition a guiding principle which has nothing to do with the repetition of historic forms. It looks on historic forms as the expression of tradition at a given time and in a given place, and it recognizes that this expression is always changing. It sees the present not only in relation to the past, but also as the threshold of the future. In this way, paradoxical though it may seem, tradition implies a forward looking attitude, and without such a spirit of movement it is dead. At the same time the study of the past is the only way in which we can become acquainted with the workings of tradition. We must, however, be prepared to look for motives rather than to collect unrelated facts, and we must look at each period in the light of what went before and of what came after. We may then arrive at some understanding of how we ourselves stand with regard to the past and the future, and realize that, inevitably, we must hand on as well as receive.

And if thou wouldst play Creator and Ordinator of things,
be Nature then thy Chaos and be thou her God!

On those lines of Bridges a whole theory of landscape might be based, and the history of the English landscape up to the end of the eighteenth century might be offered as an illustration of the theory. Throughout the centuries the work of man in the landscape has been a process of bringing under control and reducing to a human order the apparently chaotic manifestations of the non-human world. It is true that in the process man has discovered also a non-human order in the material world around him. The recognition of such an order has aided him in his work, but its existence has never until recently provided an excuse for the abandonment of human effort. To primitive man the material world must indeed have seemed chaotic, and were we able to catch a glimpse of that world and contrast it with our own pleasantly ordered landscape, we might ourselves feel something of the bewilderment engendered by the contemplation of chaos, and be more ready to recognize the god-like influence which has made our landscape what it is. It will be the aim of the following brief survey to show that one aspect of the true tradition of the English countryside lies in this recognition of the value of man's contributions to the landscape.

These human contributions have generally been prompted by one of two motives. In the first place man's effort to provide himself with food, shelter and clothing, **Plate 1**, has brought about manifest changes in his visible environment, changes which have proceeded step by step with changes in the social and economic structure of society. The hunter's landscape, **2**, was different from that of the shepherd, and the farmer's landscape clearly differed from both. Various agricultural systems have been reflected in the appearance of the land, whilst an industrialized society has in its turn created an industrialized landscape. Such changes in the landscape may be designated economic. The second motive which may be responsible for the changes in the landscape is the desire for ornament, and in England this factor assumes great importance. Ornament and use are not always easily separable, since what is done for the sake of its usefulness may have value as ornament, and conversely, what is intended primarily for ornament may have a practical significance. Nevertheless it is easy to enumerate, for instance, many types of trees which are planted, not for any utilitarian quality, but for the sake of the pleasure which may be had from looking at them. The arrangement also of the useful elements in a landscape, such as buildings and plantations, may be governed by a desire to give a pleasing appearance to what is primarily useful. Thus there can be no hard and fast dividing line between the two categories. It is a truism, however, that the first concern of any society is to provide the material necessities of life. The desire for ornament can only be indulged when these necessities are

easily procurable, at least to a large section of the community; that is, when an advanced stage of civilization has been reached. Such was the condition of society in the eighteenth century in England, and it was at this period that the potentialities for ornament in the English landscape were exploited to a superlative degree.

Having recognized the existence of this dual motive behind all man's work in the landscape we may now proceed to examine the various stages of the work itself, attempting if possible to discover those features which render it distinctive, those guiding principles in its execution which constitute a tradition. For the sake of convenience we may consider the subject under the two headings of economic and ornamental contributions to the landscape.

Some time in the first half of the second millennium B.C. the coastline of our island had assumed something like its present shape, and after various changes in vegetation subsequent to the passing of the Great Ice Age, the southern and eastern part of the British Isles was covered with deciduous forest of oak, ash, birch and thorn, varying in density according to the nature of the soil. Large areas of land in the east, round the Wash and the Humber, in Lancashire and in Somerset consisted of more or less impassable swamp, where sedge and reed constituted the principal vegetation, with alder and perhaps willow on the islands of harder ground. The river valleys generally were in a similarly swampy condition, and it was only on the chalk lands radiating from Salisbury Plain, on the summits of the Pennines, and among the highlands of the north and west, that any considerable areas of open dry land were to be found. Here the principal vegetation consisted of grasses, and it was here that primitive man established himself first as a hunter, and then as a shepherd.

The history of the English landscape is the history of the gradual winning to man's use of the richer lands of the river valleys, and of their conversion into highly productive arable and pasture farms. The first stage in the process may be called the age of settlement. As we know, the progress of this first great revolutionary movement was slow, since primitive man was dependent on inadequate tools for the clearing of the forest and the draining of the marshes, **B, page 90**. Even under Roman rule the area under cultivation was surprisingly small, and with the coming of the Saxons it is more than likely that much good agricultural land was allowed to revert to a wilderness. It was left to the Saxons of the Christian period to undertake the settlement of the heavily forested districts, and the process was not altogether completed at the time of the Domesday Survey. The general aspect of the country must then have been that of a vast tangle of woodland, heath and marshland, dotted with innumerable clearings of agricultural land, in the midst of which stood the clusters of dwellings which developed into the villages and towns of today.

Meanwhile Roman rule had brought about great improvements in communications; and the Roman road system, which was constructed as an aid to military conquest, and continued in use as a commercial asset, has had a permanent influence on the subsequent development of the country. The roads themselves might, through lack of skill in repairing them, be allowed to crumble into decay in Saxon and later mediæval times, but not before they had impressed themselves, as main routes of communication, on the consciousness of Englishmen. Indeed, although the English landscape is not rich in Romano-British remains, many of its more purposeful characteristics are due to the changes that were brought about during that period.

Following the age of settlement came a period when the work of settlement was being consolidated, when institutions were in the process of formation, and the laws governing relationship of man to man were being evolved out of experience. It is hardly to be wondered at, therefore, that the mediæval contributions to the landscape are for the most part buildings connected with government and institutions. Castles and churches, city walls and guildhalls will be readily called to mind as the more important of these. One has only to compare such monuments with the flimsy hovels which served to house the greater part of the population to realize the importance of the institution in mediæval life, as opposed to the individual on the one hand and the community on the other.

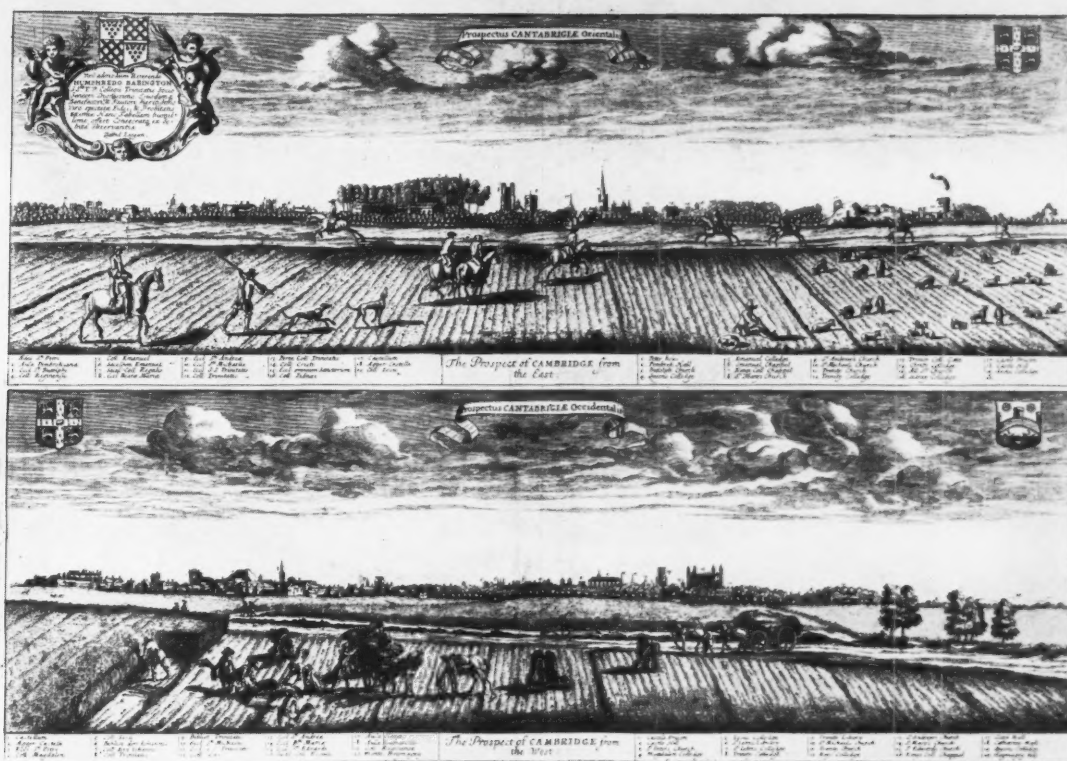
Improvements were, nevertheless, taking place in the agricultural system which would benefit both the individual and the community. The threefold division of the land of a mediæval township into arable, meadow and pasture, and of the arable again into two, three or four great open common fields where each of the tenants had a certain number of scattered acre or half-acre strips, has been often enough described, and need not be detailed here. This system did not, however, remain static until it was done away with at the enclosure of the common fields, **D, page 91**. Change was taking place in the arrangement of the fields long before the enclosure of whole townships brought about a sudden transformation in the landscape. There was a definite tendency, particularly in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, for townships which were originally laid out on the most primitive arrangement, consisting of two large arable fields sown in alternate years, to change to a three- or four-field system, in which more land was under cultivation each year. Outside the belt of country, stretching from the Tees to the Bristol Channel, and from north-west Norfolk to Hampshire, occupied by the two- and three-field system of agriculture, various other systems prevailed; common to all, however, was the fact that whether in the form of moorland, heathland, marshland or woodland, the greater part of the land remained uncultivated. That is to say, pasture predominated over arable. In such districts the process of improving land by en-

closing it from the waste, or assarting as it was called, was going on from a very early time, and the procedure was legalized by the Statute of Merton in 1235. Between that date and the beginning of the sixteenth century, when John Leland made his famous journeys, much of the land outside the central belt of two- and three-field townships had been enclosed.

As is well known, the enclosure of the central belt came later, and was mainly carried out through the instrument of Acts of Parliament in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this region the comparative scarcity of pasture rendered the tenants' right of pasturing on the fallow field of great importance, so that the movement for enclosure and conversion to pasture due to the increased demand for wool in Tudor times was largely abortive. Enclosure was, in fact, successfully resisted until such time as the improvement of pasture by the cultivation of new grasses in the seventeenth century had lessened its evils to the poorer members of the community. When it did come, mainly between 1730 and 1850, the neat square fields into which hundreds of parishes were divided by the Enclosure Commissioners, differing from the earlier enclosures in being larger, more regular, and in having less smooth wood in the hedges, had the effect of reducing the landscape to a more human scale. It is this human scale which is one of its most valuable characteristics.

Side by side with the enclosure movement, and to a large extent bound up with it, the clearing of the woodlands was going on apace. As has already been suggested, mediæval assarting accounted for a considerable amount of clearance, whilst the increase of ironworking and shipbuilding in Tudor and Stuart times greatly accelerated the process. So great was the destruction of timber in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that it could be said, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, that not a single timber tree was left standing within reach of any navigable river. The Tudor legislation which had been intended to ensure a good supply of timber for shipbuilding was inadequate, since it was preservationist rather than constructive in effect. As a result of the Statute of 35 Hen. VIII, c. 17, the average age of many English woodlands must have been stabilized at about twenty years, and probably few trees were allowed to reach a greater age than forty-four years, or a greater diameter than 10 inches. Thus the scarcity of timber became more and more acute as the seventeenth century drew to a close, until scarcity sowed the seeds of apparent plenty, and Evelyn headed the reaction in favour of planting by the publication of his *Sylva*.

One other economic change which must be mentioned was the draining of the fens and marshlands, **3**. It is probable that during the Roman occupation the district round the shores of the Wash was drained and converted into a rich corn-producing region. Throughout the greater part of the Middle Ages, however, the drainage works were allowed to deteriorate, until in the four-



A



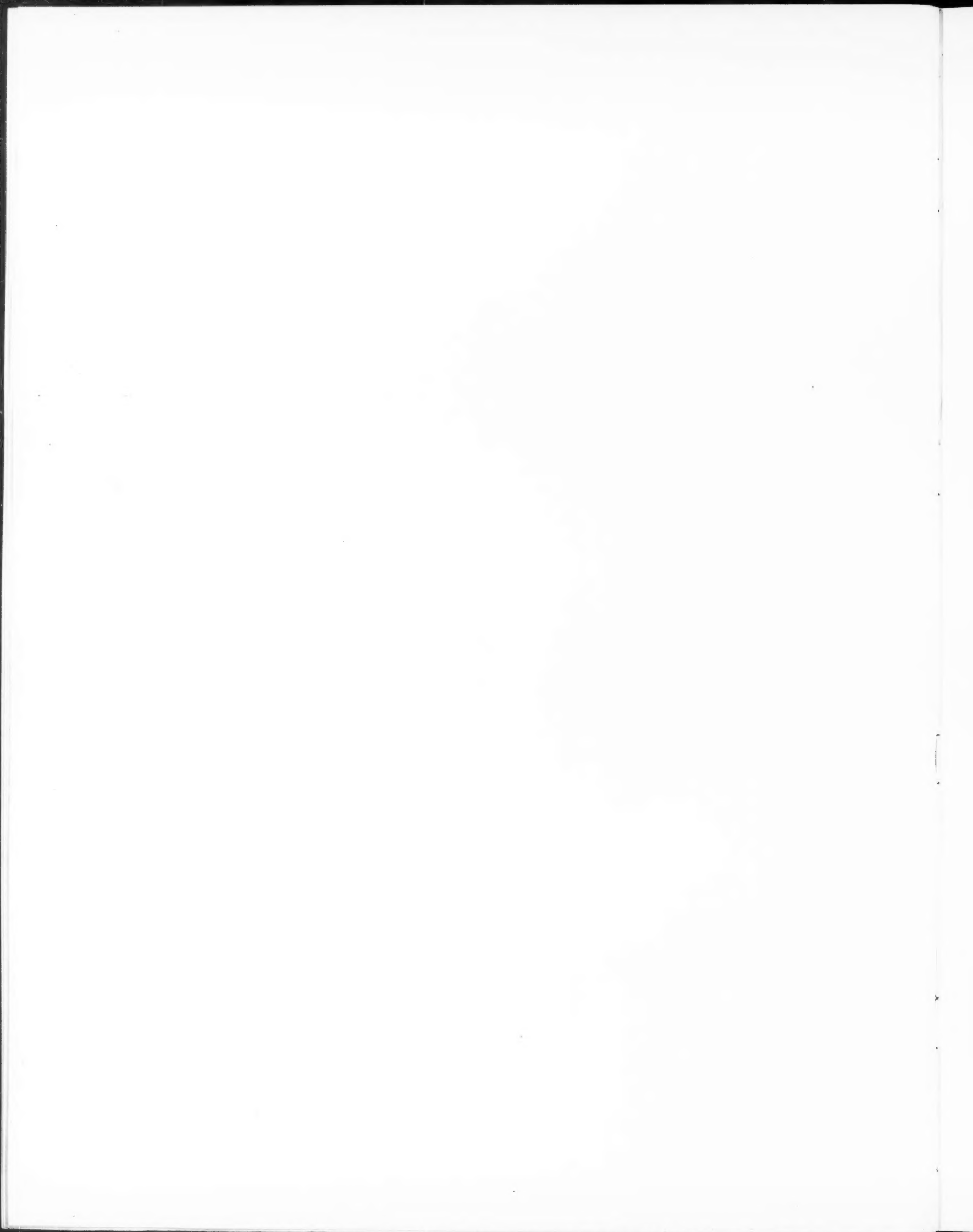
B

- A. Cambridge Common Fields in the Seventeenth Century. From Loggan's *Cantabrigia Illustrata*. (British Museum.)
- B. Chipping Campden from the air. Notice the old common field ridges still visible running across hedges and grouped in "furlongs."
- C. No longer held in common but still cultivated in strips. A view of Epworth, Lincolnshire, which gives an idea of the appearance of the countryside under the common field system.

PLATE II, March 1935



C





2

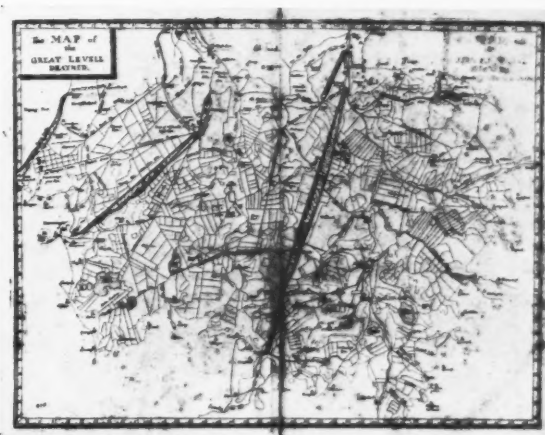
2. **THE DOWN.** Cub hunting on the South Downs. During the classic days of fox hunting in the early nineteenth century the countryside was widely planted with fox coverts. Shooting was also responsible for much planting. ("The Times".)

3. **THE FEN.** Deeping Fen—completely man-made landscape.

4. Vermuiden's scheme for draining the Bedford level, carried out in the seventeenth century and, though far from satisfactory, still the basis of the drainage system of the district. From Dugdale's "Imbanking." (British Museum.)



3



4

teenth and fifteenth centuries, the Fens being in a thoroughly waterlogged condition, a movement arose for the greater care of the banks, dykes and watercourses, under the supervision of Commissioners of Sewers. Towards the end of the sixteenth century the question of complete drainage began to be mooted, and various schemes of drainage were carried through. The classic instance was, of course, the drainage of the Bedford Level, 4, in the seventeenth century by a company of Adventurers headed by Francis, 1st Earl of Bedford, and advised by the Dutchman, Vermuiden. The extra-

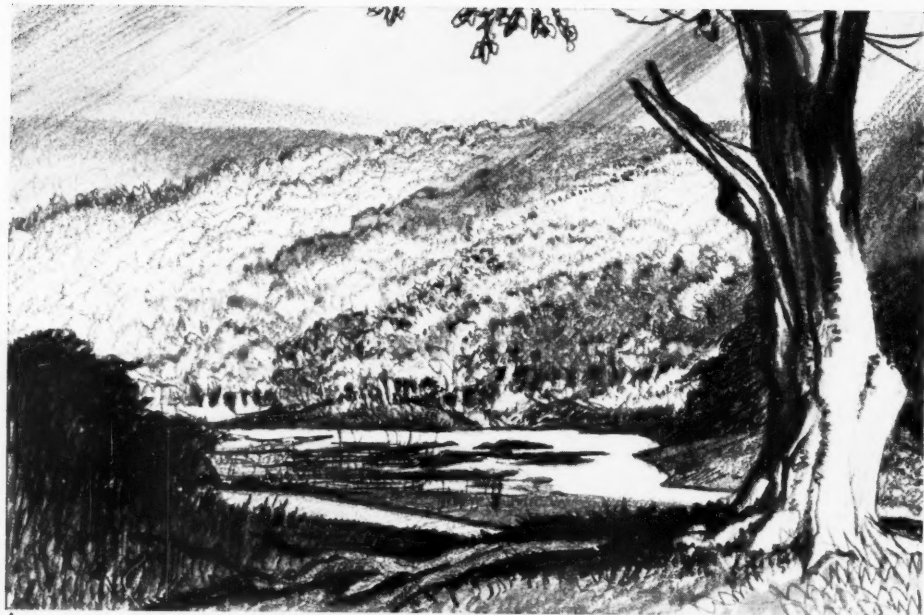
ordinary system of banks and artificial rivers which Vermuiden devised was far from satisfactory, but to this day it constitutes the basis of the drainage scheme of the district. Anyone who knows the Bedford rivers, running for twenty miles in parallel straight lines between their high banks, must realize the magnitude of the undertaking which changed this part of England from a dreary waste of waterlogged fen into the rich agricultural land we see today.

There is no space here to do more than mention some of the other changes in the

landscape which were brought about with the object of increasing the economic value of the land. The introduction of new crops in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries added a greater variety to the pattern of the fields; and the canalization of the rivers and the improvement of the roads aided the distribution of produce, especially wool, and gave an added neatness to the general appearance of the country. Mention of wool is a reminder that most English country towns achieved importance in the past through their share in the wool trade, and that the typically English

A. Primeval Forest

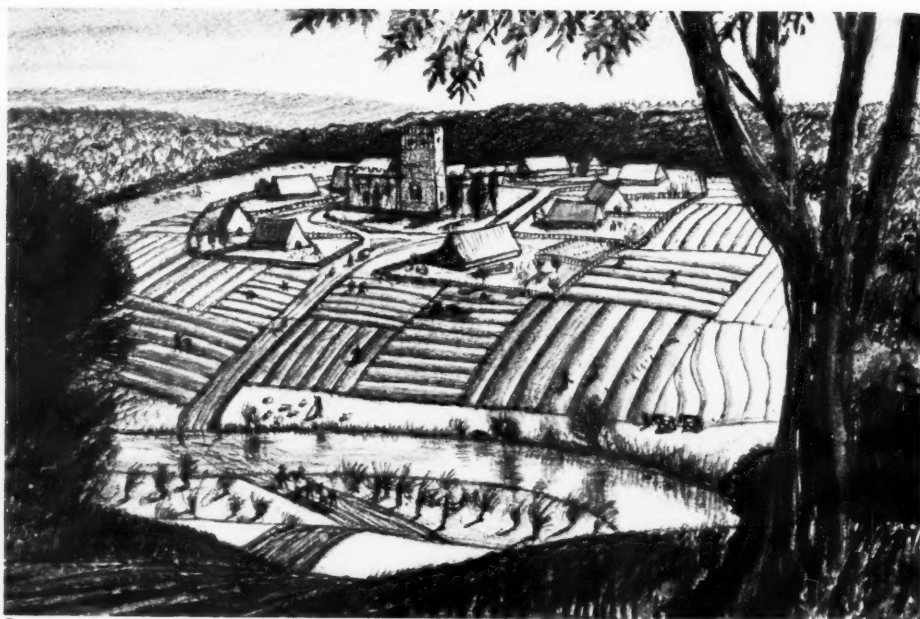
- Foreground. The hill, the only open ground.
- Middle distance. The river swamp.
- Background. The forest.



A

B. 1000. The Clearing

- Clearing in the forest.
- The village built above flood level.
- Common fields cultivated in strips by the villagers.
- Common pasture for cattle.
- Ford across the river.
- Willows for basket making.



B

C. 1600. Common Land

- The forest pushed back to the horizon.
- Common where forest stood.
- Common fields under cultivation enlarged.
- Church rebuilt.
- Manor House in the village.
- Its garden laid out formally.
- Chimneys have come into use.
- Bridge over the river.



C

D. 1700. Enclosure

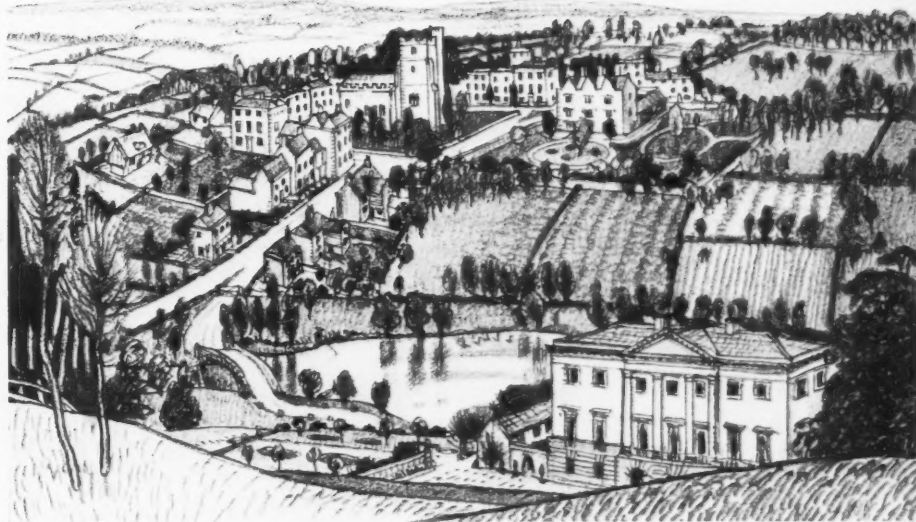
- The fields no longer held in common.
- Private owners enclose them with fences.
- Extension of farming.
- The forest has been cut down for house building, ship building, and fuel.
- Few trees over forty years old.
- Avenues planted at the Manor.



D

E. 1800. The Age of Planting

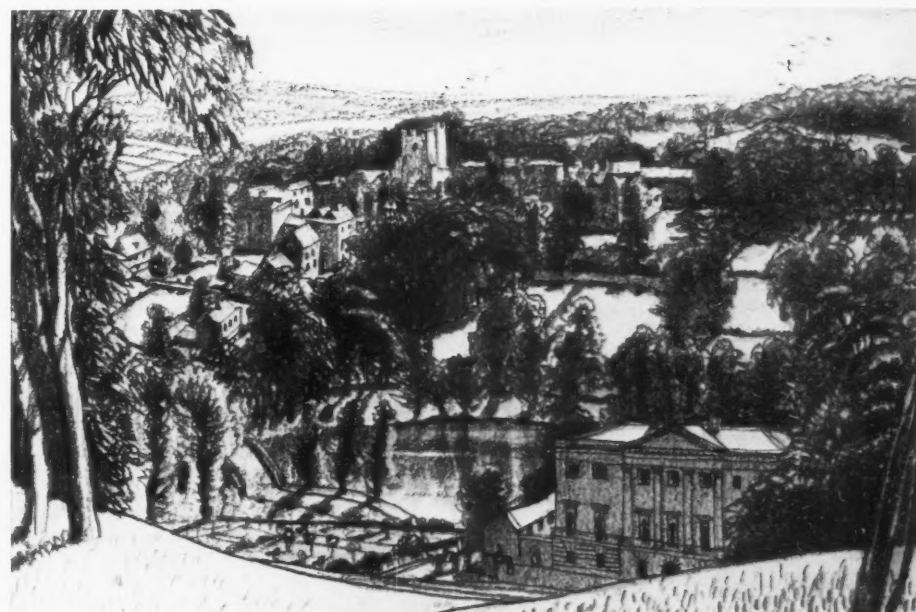
- The big landowner builds a country seat.
- The hill becomes a park.
- The road becomes a drive.
- The river becomes an ornamental lake.
- The manor garden has been landscaped.
- By tree planting the landscape has been laid out as a garden.



E

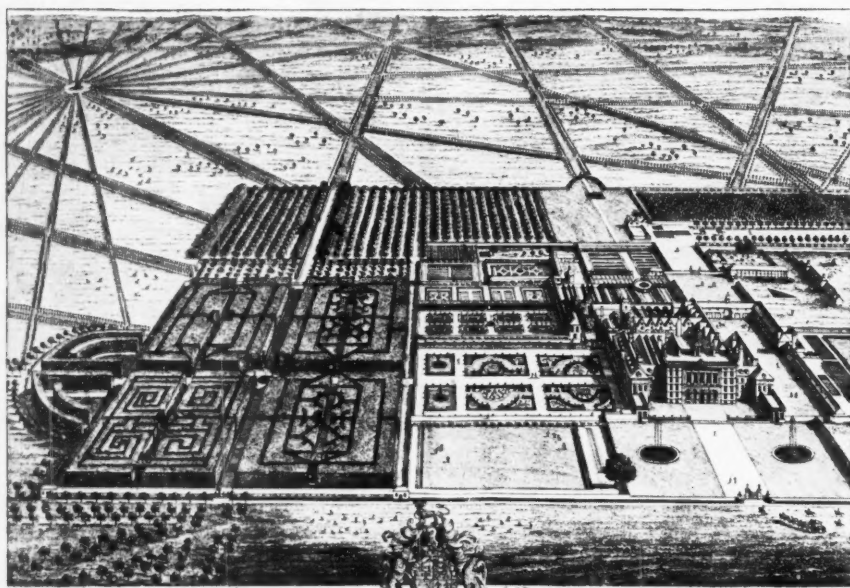
F. 1900. The Humanized Landscape.

- First appearance of the "typical" English countryside.
- The trees have grown up.
- The vision of the eighteenth century is realized.
- The humanized landscape.



F

Specially drawn for THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW by ROBERT AUSTIN.



5. *Avenues ad nauseam—Badminton Park early in the eighteenth century. From Kip's "Britannia Illustrata." (British Museum.)*

lack of a sharp distinction between town and village is, in some measure, a result of the special circumstances which, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, tended to drive the weaving industry out of the ancient corporate towns into the surrounding country districts, where the industry could develop unhampered by the restrictions imposed by the guilds. Finally, the towns and villages were themselves changing in character as production increased and the standard of living of the population was raised. The mean hovels of the mediæval village gave place gradually to more substantial timber-framed buildings, which in their turn were replaced by the stone, or, from the sixteenth century onwards, brick houses of the wealthier members of the community. Regional building traditions were developed, though it must not be supposed that regional building materials were ordained by "nature." A navigable river would bring brick to a stone district, whilst stone was transported for great distances up and down the country. Thus, wherever one turns, one sees that some change has been taking place in the face of the land as man has grasped each opportunity to improve his lot. If it were not so we should still be living on the bare hilltops, surrounded in the valleys below by vast expanses of impenetrable forest and swamp.

The period in which the ornamental possibilities of the landscape were realized and developed corresponds with the period of the Renaissance in England. If one considers the true meaning of the Renaissance it will be seen that this was inevitable,

since the Renaissance marked a stage in civilization when men had arrived collectively at a full consciousness of their material surroundings. This in turn implied a judgment of those surroundings, of the relationship of one part to another, and of the parts to the whole, according as the sensations produced in the mind were pleasant or unpleasant; and the recognition of pleasing qualities in a man's environment would naturally produce a desire to increase that pleasure wherever possible. It was thus that the Renaissance in England gave rise to the art of landscaping, since for economic and political reasons the environment of the most powerful class was mainly rural. That the Renaissance also meant a turning for inspiration to the works of ancient Rome was incidental to its true nature. The Romans themselves had arrived at the stage of being fully conscious of their visible environment, and it was natural that the men of the sixteenth century, groping their way into the light of a similar consciousness, should benefit by the ancient example. Rome was in advance of sixteenth-century Europe, so that the Renaissance, although in a sense a revival, was also an advance, as the revivals of the nineteenth century were not.

One of the earliest expressions of the new outlook on landscape occurs in the *Dye-tary* of Andrew Boorde, published in 1542. Writing on the choice of a site for a house, Boorde advises that the building owner should "have a forecast in his mynde, that the prospect to and fro the place be pleasaunt, fayre, and good to the eye, to beholde the woodes, the waters, the felde,

the vales, the hylles, & the playne groundes . . .". Historically the making of the "prospect to and fro the place . . ." was at first confined to the garden. The idea that a building was something to be looked at consciously, implied in the word "prospect," was beginning to find expression in Boorde's time in a symmetrical arrangement of the façade. This symmetrical arrangement obviously affected the lay-out of the garden, especially as the garden in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was logically regarded as an extension of the house. It is possible to see here the first stage in the process by which, as time went on, the influence of the great house was reflected first in the garden, then in the park, and finally over the countryside at large.

The most obvious form of prospect is one in which the view is framed definitely and precisely, and the advantages of the avenue for this purpose were discovered as soon as the full significance of the Renaissance ideal became appreciated in this country. Soon after the Restoration the formal school of landscape gardening, employing ideas which had already been developed in France, came into prominence. The lack of trees in the countryside at this time has already been noticed, and, when Evelyn's appeal for the planting of trees was taken to heart by his countrymen, one of the most general ways in which his advice was followed was in the planting of great avenues of chestnut (at this time a newcomer in the landscape) elm, or beech. Now an avenue of trees is a fine thing, and can be used to great effect in emphasizing an axis on to some important building such as a palace or a country house of the first order of size, but the planting of avenues for the sake of avenues, here, there and everywhere about the countryside, can become a tiresome form of diversion. That is exactly what happened in England in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and nowhere is the futility of the fashion more strongly brought out than in Kip's drawing of Badminton, 5, which shows avenues, some several miles long, crossing and re-crossing in the park, framing no vista, and leading up to no important focal point. It is no wonder that a strong reaction very soon set in.

Before "Kent leapt the fence and saw that all Nature was a garden" it was necessary for "all Nature" to have been made into a garden. The conditions necessary for the appreciation of the more informal type of landscape did not exist in England until the beginning of the eighteenth century. Nor were the paintings of Claude, 6, which formed part of Kent's inspiration any more "natural" than the English landscape of the day. The important fact about the English school of landscape gardening is that it developed at a time when the English countryside was already acquiring a thoroughly lived-in character, when, in fact, it was no longer necessary for man to express his lordship over the earth in the unequivocal terms of the Tudor garden or even the Restoration

It was not until the passion for avenues and formal gardens had gone to extreme lengths that the English school of landscape gardening began to feel its way towards a less frigid formalism in design. Influenced largely by the paintings of Claude, the English school set out to create an idealized landscape in which farm lands, village, park, garden and house would be integrated in a harmonious yet informal way.

6. *Cephalus and Procris* (National Gallery), a landscape by Claude, shows the inspiration. 7 shows Wembley Park before Repton's suggested improvements. 8. The same scene "landscaped" by the judicious manipulation of trees into an ideal scene such as Claude might have painted. (British Museum.)



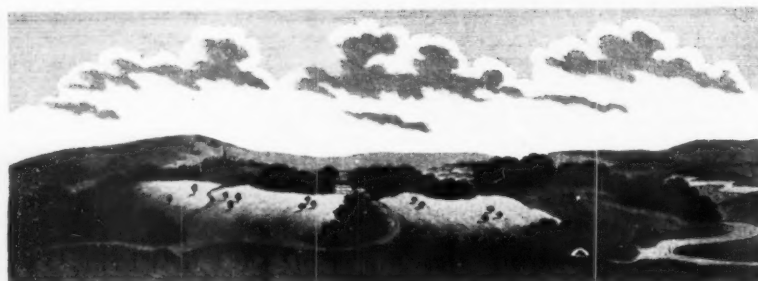
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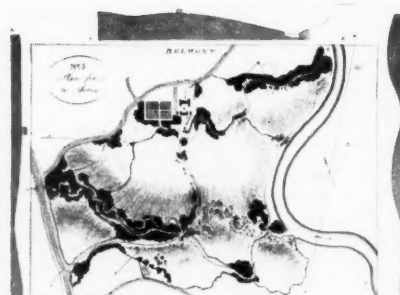
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8

Sectional
Geometrical
(Landscape)

BELMONT, No. 3



10

9 and 10. A landscape scheme for a 60-acre park, by an amateur. Although the result is in the highest degree "natural," there is no question of it being allowed to "happen." The park is as carefully planned as the house itself.

park. Whatever we may think of their theories, and however we may regret their ruthlessness with regard to some of the formal gardens of the earlier period, we must recognize the essential soundness of the instinct which prompted men like Kent, Shenstone, Capability Brown, and hundreds of amateur gardeners, 9 and 10, among the country gentry to cultivate a less rigid form of order in the parks they "improved" from the second quarter of the eighteenth century onwards. The arrangement of clumps, belts and artificial lakes popularized by Brown might develop in time into a stereotyped prescription for the laying out of a park, but even this was preferable to the boredom of the interminable pomposities of the earlier period.

The large class of country gentry, made newly rich through enclosures and improved methods of agriculture, and imbued with a taste for the arts through emulation of the greater landowners, were quick to catch the new fashion. The "spirit of planting" as it was characteristically called, spread rapidly throughout the country, and there was hardly a parish in England where some work of improvement was not carried out in the hundred years which ended with the period of the Reform Bill. The idea was in the air, and if a gentleman's purse would not admit of his employing Brown or Repton, 7 and 8, there were many like Jane Austen's Henry Crawford who knew how to set about the work themselves. Even so, it was not always that the immediate surroundings of the family seat were large enough for any great essays in landscape gardening. The small squire, whose park

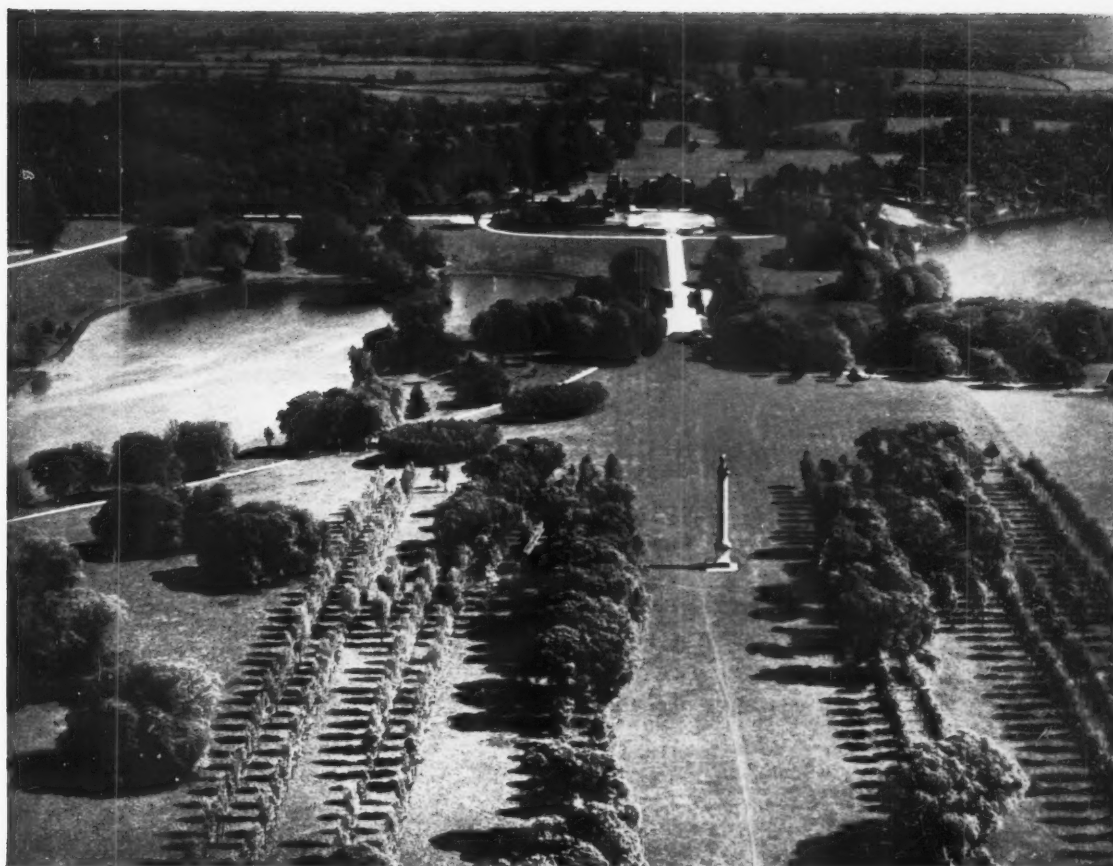
covered no more than a paltry five acres might, however, remember the advice of Addison and set to work, by promoting hedgerow planting on his estate, "to make a pretty landskip of his own possessions." In fact, hedgerow planting was at one period as much in fashion as the improvement of parks, and was carried out in many districts simultaneously with enclosure. Later, however, there was a reaction against this form of rural ornament, especially in corn growing districts, on account of the damage done to crops by the trees, and it is a characteristic of later enclosures that they are largely devoid of hedgerow trees.

Tree planting was not the only form of rural ornament indulged in by the landowners of the eighteenth century. The importance of buildings in the landscape was fully appreciated, and improvements were made not only in their country houses, but in the cottages of their tenants in the villages. It is no exaggeration to say that a large part of the villages of England were rebuilt between 1750 and 1850. The motives prompting this great "slum clearance" movement were no doubt numerous, but one motive at least was rarely absent, and that was the desire on the part of the landowner to give a pleasing appearance to everything about his estate. Sometimes a whole village, most inconveniently situated so as to destroy the prospect from the house, was swept away, and a new village built on a regular plan in a more discreet situation. Such was the spirit of the men who made the English landscape.

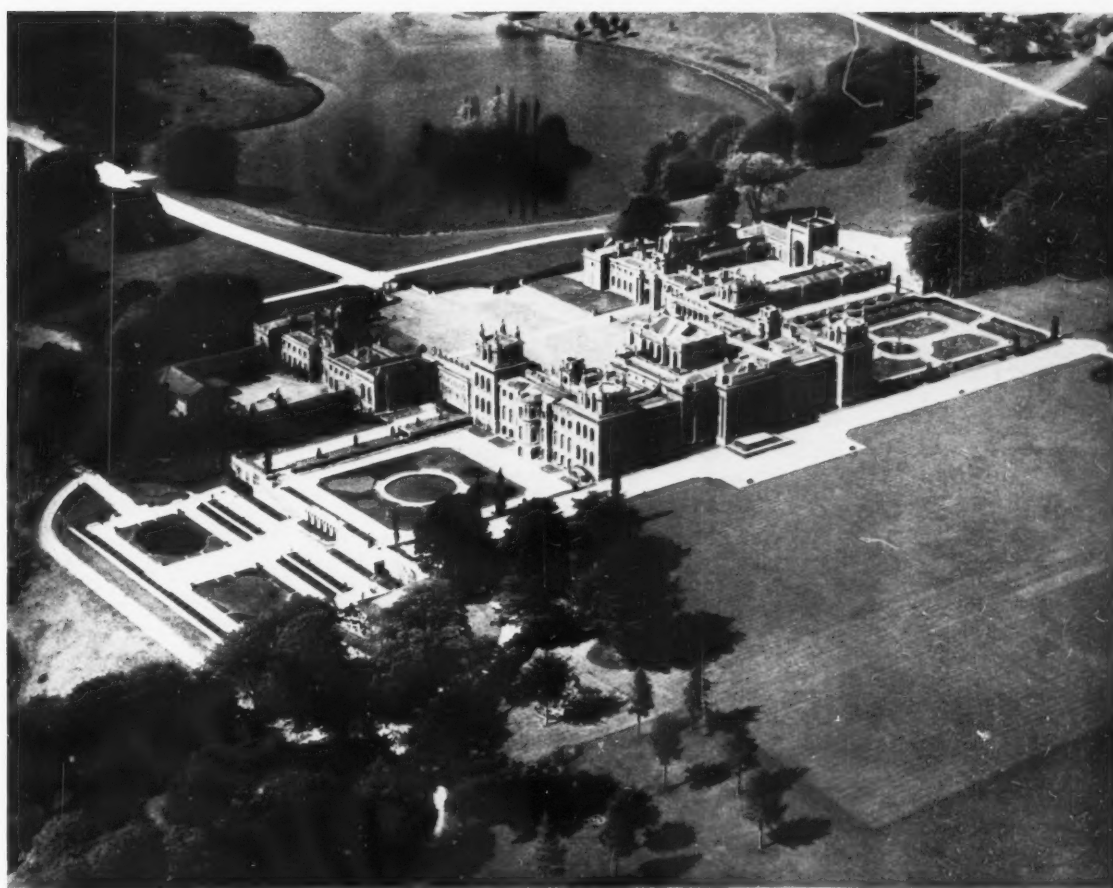
We must now ask ourselves whether it

is possible to discover any consistent motive prompting the various changes which man has brought about in the English landscape during the last four thousand years. What prompted the men of the Bronze Age to forsake the hills and settle in the valleys? Why were the woodlands cleared and the marshes drained? For what reason were the common fields enclosed, and, most important of all, why was the planting of trees, E, page 91, carried on with such vigour in the eighteenth century? It seems obvious that the reason for these changes was the desire of man to improve his environment, either economically or aesthetically, and that we may justly claim that the tradition of the English countryside is a tradition of improvement rather than of preservation. But this might be said of many landscapes, so that we must seek further if we are to discover the essentially English features of the tradition. We have seen that what may be termed the essentially English features of our landscape, the hedges, the hedgerow trees and the decorative but not rigidly formal plantations, were added to it during the eighteenth century. Each of these has a similar effect in shutting out the distances and reducing the landscape to a more human scale, and this human scale is the most distinctive characteristic of the English landscape. Ours is, in fact, a humanized landscape, F, page 91. To the great end of humanizing the landscape all the improvement schemes of the eighteenth century were directed. Every small squire of the period was simply trying to make his immediate countryside the open-air part of his home. "Nature," though it was beginning to be worshipped in the more advanced circles as the century drew to a close, was not his god. Rather was he the "Creator and Ordinator of things" who was anxious to reduce to a human order whatever of the original chaos was still existing in his day.

[To be continued]



A



B

Two views of Blenheim which emphasize the contrast between the ideals of the earlier and later schools of landscape gardeners.

A. Immense avenues, symmetry, formality.

B. A fine piece of landscaping in which the symmetrical lay-out is jettisoned in favour of a highly studied effect of natural landscape. The avenues at Blenheim have been newly planted and the young trees in A give an idea of what much of England must have looked like in the eighteenth century. The absence of old trees is noticeable in many eighteenth-century prints.

PLATE iii

March 1935



✓

The Ugolini Golf Club of Florence lies on the smaller Chianti hills, near Impruneta, in a characteristic Tuscan setting of rough ground, Roman pines, and cypresses, with mountains in the distance and olives in the valleys below. The course—18 holes—was laid out by two English specialists, Mr. Blandford and Mr. Gannon, and the instructor, who is now busy at work teaching enthusiastic beginners, is also of British nationality. In the middle of a small wood near to the starting point and the last hole is the club house, 1 and 2. The architect has used the uneven ground on which the building stands as part of the design in the construction. The entrance at the lower level, 4, has the dressing rooms and lockers for members, and the next floor consists on one side of wide terraces, 3, and on the other, large doors that lead straight to the wood, to the swimming



2



3



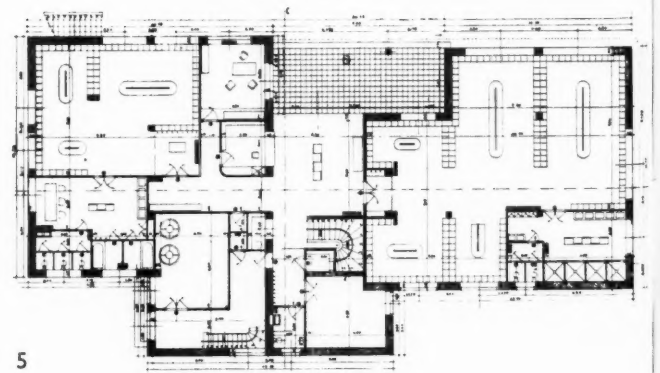
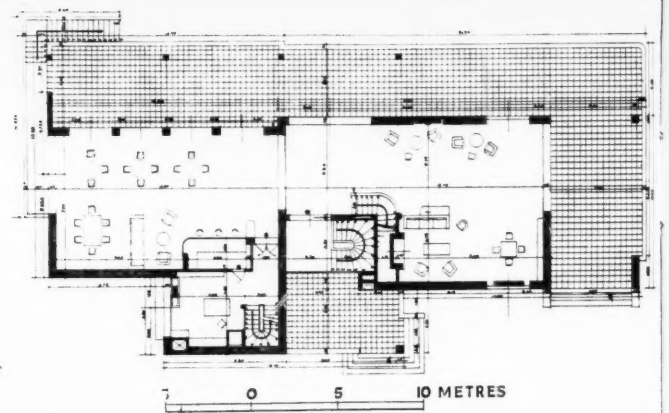
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GHERARDO BOSIO,
ARCHITECT

G O L F C L U B I N F L O R E N C E



4

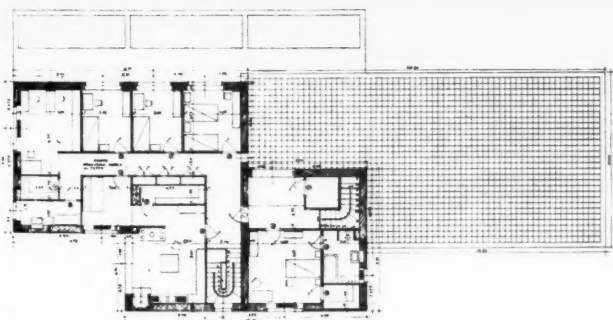


5

G O L F C L U B I N



6



7

pool, 8, 9 and Plate iv, and tennis courts. On this floor is one enormous room arranged on the right, as a bar and restaurant, and on the left as a living room, 6, with many comfortable armchairs and an open fireplace. This is no doubt a concession to the many foreign members as the whole place is, of course, warmed by central heating. On the top floor are the kitchens, the secretary's rooms, and a large terrace. A separate staircase goes from the kitchens and offices to the restaurant below. In planning the clubhouse the architect has studied the question of space and in the

dressing rooms the windows are two metres above the floor level, giving space all round the walls for the metal lockers. There are 170 for the male members, and 250 for the women.

The club house is built of reinforced concrete and brick. For the isolation of sound and equability of temperature, sheets of cork two inches thick have been used. Enamelled Ferrari tiles cover the walls and floors of the douches by the dressing rooms, but the floors in most of the other rooms are covered with indiarubber in colour toning with that of

F L O R E N C E



8

the walls. The terraces are all paved with red brick of a dark tone. The walls of the rooms are all painted with *Arsonia* in clear colour, while the outside walls are in a warm shade of *Terranuovo*.

The swimming pool (25 by 12.50 metres), is entirely lined with sky-blue tiles subdivided by six darker blue lines for use in competitions. The water flows through continually and is afterwards used for irrigating the golf course. The maximum depth is 3.75 metres.

YOI MARAINI



9

G O L F C L U B I N F L O R E N C E

Scenario for a Human Drama

By P. Morton Shand

EXPLANATION

THE time has come when this series of articles must be interrupted, if only temporarily. A retrospect entails stepping backwards illogically from effect to cause. Its technical difficulty is that the average (non-editorial) mind does not function naturally as a reversible gear. Consequently, the ground to be covered refuses to unfold itself to the mind's eye from the start like a neatly delimited vista, ready patterned into convenient territorial divisions, as in a survey moving forwards from one point in time and achievement to another. Time-tables for such itineraries, being based on guess-work, are apt to prove unreliable. The result is my "serial" has more than outrun its allotted span, and this before I am half-way through to Soane. A halt having to be made somewhere, I chose the end of the last (sixth) instalment as an interim full stop.

Firstly, because from the present-day to the beginning of the *art-nouveau* movement, by far the most obscure and baffling of my three sub-periods, has now been fairly clearly plotted out. What it represents—the conflict, interaction, and gradual coalescence of simplified traditionalism, decoratively inspired modernism, and the new engineering technique; and their eventual partial synthesis in functionalism—is almost entirely Continental (and to some extent American) history. That is why I have expatiated on it at perhaps disproportionate length. But this initial Continental period derived its immediate stimulus from two different sources, which fall, respectively, wholly within the orbit of my second and just without that of my third. And since these sources coincide with phases which, for all that they are of international significance, form an integral part of English architectural history, and indeed belong exclusively to it, they will be already largely familiar to readers of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

The second of these sub-periods is dominated abroad by the inspiration of William Morris, the spiritual step-child of Ruskin, either directly, or through the two succeeding generations of English domestic architects he informed: his own contemporaries, Philip Webb, Eden Nesfield and Norman Shaw; and the contemporaries of Mackintosh—Voysey, Walton, Baillie Scott, Ashbee, Lethaby, Newton, the early Lutyens, etc. Its achievement can be very briefly resumed: growing liberties with the conventions of plan and the traditions of form. In the first of "these freedoms" there was real progress. In the second not even a quarter was regained of what had been attained by English eighteenth-century speculative builders of urban terraces, and wantonly sacrificed by English nineteenth-century architects. Between Soane and Ruskin was wholesale retrogression, with the Gothic Revival flowering as a *fleur du mal* in its Neo-mediaeval hot-house. But into the gathering slough of the Industrial Revolution modestly projected a last landmark of rational building: the small, two-storeyed early Victorian "country cottage," with low overhanging slated roof, painted or whitewashed walls, and a complete absence of "architecture."

I shall therefore devote this closing article to much the same sort of synopsis—only one rather freer in scope and treatment—as I have given month by month to summarize my preceding articles. This, I hope, will serve a double purpose: to complete the two remaining sub-periods in skeleton form, and provide a framework on which, when time and opportunity permit, a second series of "infilling" articles can be based to round off the first.

Three dominant factors are fused in the design of the modern house: a new structural technique, complete freedom of planning, and a styleless rationalization of architectural forms. The first of these (anyhow in this specific application) is a wholly Continental contribution; the second as wholly English. What of the third? Let anyone who doubts that its genesis was purely English compare that deliberately rationalized "brick box," the late-Georgian standard London *Reihenhaus*, first with Loos's house for Dr. Scheu, and then with any outstanding domestic example of the New Architecture.

"An Englishman's home is his castle."
Proverbial Saying.

"I say I call it a gentlemanly bijou residence."
George Meredith's
"General Ople and Lady Camper."



William Morris.

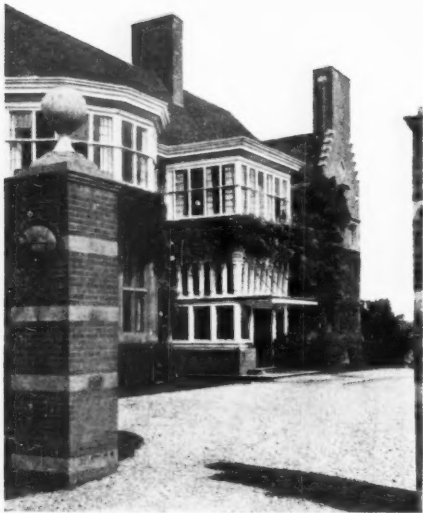
VII. Looping the Loop

"The Rich Man in his Castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them high and lowly,
And ordered their estate."

HYMNS A & M.

I AM assured that since the war, that horrid leveller, no vicar would dream of asking his congregation to sing this singularly spiritual canticle. But during the generations in which it remained "a general favourite" the Church, as always, was the direct mirror of English life and thought. *Post hoc, propter hoc!* Dwellers "at the gate" disappeared, the whole population aspiring to be tenants of metaphorical castles. The megaphone of Cressus became the *vox populi, vox dei*. By living in or near a town, where no cottages nestled feudally beneath baronial ramparts, every one could rank as a castellan. Villas had to have that conventional contraction of twin lodges and a drive, the "gravel sweep," for this proclaimed the entrance to a fictitious, and fictitiously secluded, seat of the more retiring nobility or landed gentry. So the select suburb was invented to provide a sham extra-rural "county"—a no-man's-land where every respectable squatter was free to park his one-maid-power baby Locksley Hall—and with its rise was accomplished the final destruction of that orderly, town-planned civilization which the genius of the supremely reasonable eighteenth century had created out of the chaos of the Middle Ages. Forthwith the *rus in urbe* rot set in. Later on it changed its speculative name to "estate development on ideal garden-city lines." Today it has become the arterial ribbon: a polite name for the halter with

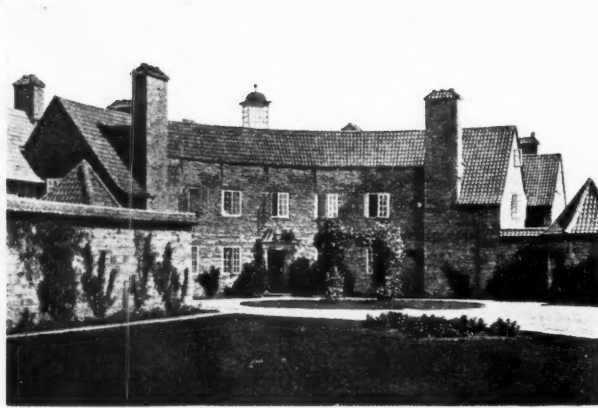
The previous articles were published in the issues for July, August, September, and October, 1934, and January and February, 1935.



which both town and country are being legally garrotted in a last frenzy of *laissez-faire* exploitation and its *après moi le déluge*.

Poetry and the Wall

Viollet-le-Duc said that a house was "an enveloped necessity." His less intellectual English contemporaries referred to it with hearty mock modesty, but an immediate sense of its material requirements, as "a roof over one's head." The unconscious prophet of the modern house, the Cavalier poet Richard Lovelace, pointed out that "stone walls do not a prison make" unless the mind of man is a consenting party. Some people will doubtless find a direct prognostication of liberation through the agency of reinforced-concrete construction in "nor iron bars a cage."



LOOPING THE LOOP

Each of these houses typifies a decade. Between the slightly disingenuous cottage humbleness of 1, the sitting-room of C. F. A. Voysey's own house, "The Orchard," Chorley Wood (1899)—or its opulent, mock-farmhouse echo in 4, Sir Edwin Lutyens's "Grey Walls," Gullane (1901)—and the baronial pomps of 5, Norman Shaw's "Cragside," Northumberland (1870), there is only one intermediate stage. But the light, space, and human scale recovered in the first is directly evolved from the freer planning for romantic effect of the last, which owes not a little to Eden Nesfield's renunciation of "strict Gothic" in Kimmel Park (1866). In 2, Ernest Newton's rebuilding of "Buller's Wood," Chislehurst (1889)—characteristically described as "a commonplace Victorian stucco house recased in brick and stone"—we find more light than at any time since 1830, but the growing demand for it expressed in the "cultured refinement" of Jacobean mullions and transoms. Surprisingly enough, 3, Philip Webb's "Red House," Bexley, is the earliest (1859). It represents the first attempt to invent that rustic "English Vernacular," which passing from architects' into speculative builders' hands has proved the main obstacle to rational design.

Up to about 1920 two obstacles confronted the further evolution of the home into a more modern type of dwelling, one moral, the other material: "poetry" and the wall.

To take poetry first: that is the picturesque, romantic, sentimental, anti-classic or Gothic tendency. Poetry is no impediment to technical progress, but rather a direct stimulus to it, so long as it is a poetry (as with Behrens) which is the expression of the contemporary spirit fighting its way out of the strait-jacket of forms derived from remote antiquity resanctified by yesterday. The struggle during the last two decades of the nineteenth century was to evoke a living *Zeitgeist* poetry as a substitute for the pedantically fossilized poesy of archæolatry into which the formal symbolism of western civilization had become debased. Unfortunately it was easier to destroy the latter than to create the former.

In spite of all insistence to the contrary we have not got rid of that poetry in architecture Ruskin taught us to demand for the good of our starved souls. Nothing proves this so clearly as the emotional fervour with which Corbusier, the greatest living architectural poet, urges us to plant our house-tops. His designs evince that essentially romantic, town-bred attitude to nature, bred of daily "constitutionals" through railed municipal parks, to which the countryman remains a stranger. Like Hannah Moore, Corbusier regards the country as

"moral scenery" in theory, but what Sydney Smith called "a kind of healthy grave" in practice.

The wall, or rather the vent in it—the window—is a far less simple matter. For the problem of the wall ultimately resolves itself into that of the means to break it down or, as Gropius would say, dissolve it. (It is significant that he always refers to each successive stage in the evolution of the New Architecture as marking a fresh "breach" in the old.) For him, as for Corbusier and the rest, the wall is "the traditional foe." *Murus delendus est!* The shapes and sizes of rooms, the proportion of their height to their width, are all subordinate to this indispensable safety-valve—the hole in the wall. There are English brick houses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which provide an object lesson in fenestration carried as far as is physically possible with supporting walls. It is not primarily a question of the size of their deep vertical windows, or of the slenderness of the wooden divisions (hardly eclipsed by those of modern steel casements) between their large and well-proportioned panes, but of a deliberate intention to make voids preponderate over solids. And on the inside of the necessarily thick walls the embrasures are often cut away obliquely on each side to admit still more light. No houses anything like as light as these had ever been built before; and until our own day none

were destined to be built again. For unlike the aperture of room-to-room doors, which remained "normed" to human breadth and stature, this immense practical advance was wilfully sacrificed to the æsthetic dictates of the gamut of nineteenth century stylistic revivals. In the first of these, the Gothic, windows became mediævally small, deep-set and broken up by heavy stone tracery once again; so that their light could be "subdued into a dim religious sweetness." It was an age of curtains, and the eclipse of glass—save that paradoxical sort which admits a minimum of light. ("Those who live in glass houses must be careful to pull down the blinds" was a contemporary witticism that commanded a universal chuckle.) Panes were dwarfed into leaded lozenges, often either coloured or deliberately speckled, to which a further refinement of opacity was added by furuncular 'bottling.'

Small wonder that the protagonists of the New Architecture began by tilting against the incarcerating solidity of the wall in the spirit of Goethe's dying words. But the first breaches effected in it by the Victorian pioneers of "more light!" were small and hesitant enough to be almost unnoticeable, or to pass for clever variants of the dreary old academic exercise of patterning solids with a "grammatical" punctuation of voids. As long as the walls had to support the floors no more could be done than Georgian and Regency architects had already accomplished. It was only the engineer's achievements—frame construction and cantilevering—which enabled the process of "dissolution" to be carried further. Even when travelling backwards we must not allow ourselves to confuse effect with cause. The will to subordinate enclosure to its opposite preceded both the attempt to be rid of style and a realization of the artificiality of its barriers. The wall had first to be denounced as Public Enemy No. 1 of the Home. Between the first promptings of that desire and its partial realization lies an era of progress in structural technique without parallel in history. So rapid and sweeping has this revolution been that even today the vast majority shrinks from accepting the enfranchisement it assures them, and clings in panic to that lath-and-plaster "rock of ages," the Jerrybethan manorlette. For behind the dimly divined desire for more light, air and space lay a gradual groping towards some freer way of living; and to most of us the prospect of a new manner of life is almost as alarming in its implications of the unknown as the prospect of an existence after death unsimplified by marriage lines, pass-books, income-tax returns, season tickets and dog-licences. The modern house is founded on a structural, not an artistic, principle. Its æsthetic, definite though it is, is purely a by-product. But the effect of this principle has been to reassert the classic, anti-romantic conception of architecture; and to redress that false bias Ruskin gave to architectural "poetry" by emphasizing the importance of parts of a building to the prejudice of the whole.

After Morris there was a determined



John Ruskin.

attempt to supersede the urban house by a far more countrified type (the arts and crafts movement was essentially anti-urban in character) which heralded the coming suburbanization of domestic architecture. Roofs and chimneys were deliberately enlarged, dormers protruded, etc. This had its importance because at bottom the whole modern movement may be diagnosed as the nostalgia for a return to a more natural form of existence: an ideal expressing itself now in a sort of clumsy hobbledehoy echo of eighteenth-century pastoralism; now in sentimental reproductions of the "vernacular" of ancient peasant homesteads (the genesis of *olde-worlde* and *hand-wrot*); and finally in naked construction (engineering romanticism) as an end in itself.

It was perhaps an accident, but it remains a fact, that Morris's mediævally inspired crusade for a return to honesty and pride of workmanship proved the point of departure of the whole modern movement in design. The Renaissance of Handicrafts may seem an impossibly romantic ideal today. It was almost as impossibly romantic in 1860, but vitally necessary then as a first step back to the right road. In his cult of "the house beautiful" Morris rejected the machine because he believed there could be no ethical progress in human betterment, or joy, in mechanical production. This fatal myopia was the result of the rising indignation with which he watched historic forms being soullessly and inappropriately reproduced on an ever wider scale. There was a good deal of typically Victorian humbug about the whole Arts and Crafts Revival. Though its aim was loftily spiritual, its support depended on the material market of affluent customers. Morris was a socialist, but he did not make goods for the people. Thus it is hardly surprising that the manly, intellectual honesty of Morris's guiding principles degenerated into a more and more self-conscious and effeminate arty-craftiness in his followers. What he preached and inaugurated was primarily a Renaissance of Decoration, and only incidentally a revival of the arts and crafts, which ignored the intrinsic excellence of the simplest hand-made utensils because they were innocent of ornament. But Morris's gospel of sincerity in the use of materials and processes (in which simplicity was only a minor implication), being in direct opposition to the prevailing shams of representationalism, paved the way for a revision of the practical requirements of all basic designs that eventually crystallized into a growing in-

sistence on "fitness for purpose." The very artificiality of the Morris "Revival," as of the Gothic Revival that preceded and evoked it, began to clear men's minds as to the fundamental difference between abstract and humanistic art—that is: how and for what the machine should, and should not, be used. But that realization dawned slowly. Even in 1914 hardly anybody had grasped that the essentials of design which apply to a factory hold equally good for a private house.

Philip Webb's "Red House," 3, for Morris at Upton, near Bexley, (1859) has a close-walled, yeoman solidity. It is traditional and yet unstylistic. "Clouds," near Salisbury, which is later, is perhaps that architect's most typical design.

Architects were for long far more concerned with the creation of space for spatial effect than with its practical organization as elbow room. Up to the beginning of our present epoch of economic stress—which reintroduced classical rectangular shapes as the most compact solution for low-cost housing—there was no particular need to subordinate furniture to the room. The restricted floor area and minimum furniture of the modern house is the voluntary sacrifice of an artistic liberty become useless or anarchical, which foreshadows the demand for the authoritarian state in the domain of politics. What the *Jugendstil*ers substituted for utility was only its somnambular symbolization—Olbrich defined the architect's sphere as "a world of his own such as never had been and never could be," whence it was but a short step to Stevenson's "blooming, gaseous folly"—but they did give their clients "rooms to be lived in," instead of "rooms for inspection" which might be used in a gingerly manner provided museum-like precautions were duly observed. That scheme of living in space on several different levels simultaneously, which is half the charm of Corbusier's houses, would have been impossible but for their rejection of the symmetrical fetish. It is just because Corbusier and Gropius were too young to take part in this movement that their work is so much better—or, as some say, drier. The necessary prelude to their emergence on the scene, the rediscovery of the plain bourgeois virtues of *Biedermeier* about 1903, was in part a reflection of English influence on the more serviceable design of clothes which Loos had noticed and welcomed.

That the rooms of a house should form an organic spatial unity was an unthinkable notion for Continental architects or their clients prior to about 1900. Houses were designed from their façades inwards. Pre-ordained elevations dictated stereotyped plans, in which utility and convenience were unquestioningly sacrificed to exhibitionism. The *petit rentier's* villa was a doll's-house palace faithfully scaled down from the sublime to the ridiculous, in which "the suite," a row of rigidly boxed cells, constituted the watertight-compartments of a severely symmetrical "period ensemble." In terms of space they were crowded deposi-

tories of imposing furniture: in terms of design tawdry stage-settings. The originals they were modelled on had been the necessary social and economic background of a still feudal age, in which the Court was law-giver; whereas in the process of a few decades of *parvenu* reproduction these miniature Châteaux de Chambord and Petits Trians had become the carefully dressed shop-windows of their proprietors' lives. Instead of the *villa comme il faut* serving its inhabitants, it was the inhabitants who served that tyrannical mistress in the humble capacity of lay figures, "occasional" as their supernumerary tables.

In the initial stages of replanning the room as a free space shaped from the void for a definite purpose, instead of as a stylistically trimmed and artificially encumbered unit of physical enclosure made for show—a picture requiring a special light passe-partout of its own, not one painted to fit a heavily moulded ready-made frame—England, the home of comfort, that enviable and mysteriously acquired desideratum, provided the first practical exemplars. (Muthesius made Baillie Scott's Blackwell House at Windermere the favourite crib for a modern *Grundriss* abroad.) But, as we have seen, it was in Germany—though much later—that the really decisive steps were taken for remodelling the "living-room" (an English term!) as the fullest, most unfettered expression of our domestic civilization. To which it only remained for younger Germans to add "and most economical" after the war.

Under the influence of Morris the English country house slowly developed along lines representing a characteristically illogical national compromise between Gothic and Classic traditions, which had the practical advantage of allowing much greater freedom of plan. The aim of the architect, as an artist, might be (and usually was) to produce a fever-graph skyline of picturesquely jumbled gables and pinnacles (i.e., the earlier houses of Norman Shaw), but the inevitable result was an asymmetrical grouping of the rooms, originally more agglutinative than organic; and a growing tendency to segregate separate functions in separate wings. It is interesting to see how what—though it had no conscious theoretical basis—began to be known as *das Englische Wohnsystem* appeared to contemporary foreign observers, as indicating the extent to which the Continent started borrowing from this "embodiment of a higher standard of life and manners."

In sympathy with the undulating landscape, the English house—we might take Voysey's "Broadleys" as an at once outstanding and culminating example—preferred spreading sideways to towering aloft. It made little attempt to emphasize class distinctions by an outward parade of pomp, being content with a reticent simplicity, habitability and a cheerful homeliness. There was first of all the structural differentiation of rooms according to their nature (living, sleeping, service, etc.). The prevalence of a two-storeyed hall set a logical scale of differentiation between more and less important

rooms. Servants had surprisingly ample and human quarters. Still more remarkable than the provision of bathrooms was that of separate bedrooms for husband and wife. Dining- and drawing-rooms were designed, not as diminutive banqueting-halls and audience-chambers, but just to sit and eat in at one's ease. A damp misty climate and good cheap coal had made the English like to see as well as feel heat. Unlike that fixture in a corner, the faience stove, the open fireplace was an active dissolvent of purely formal arrangements of furniture. In point of household equipment and furniture of practical design England was far ahead of other countries. The same applied to the disposition and shape of rooms. Whereas on the Continent, their prevalent height was a ceremonial 4.5 metres in England it was 8-11 feet. There was still more to learn in respect of windows, though the insular sash model did not find favour. That Regency legacy, the bow-window—the genesis of the ultra-modern "wall-angle" casement—was eagerly copied, though at first only as a decorative feature. But English progress in fenestration went further still. In the 'sixties Norman Shaw had introduced a longer and wider form of the narrow horizontal Tudor window (dictated by the lowness of pre-Georgian ceilings), which his Bedford Park Estate at Chiswick (1880) quickly popularized among speculative builders. His object was doubtless an entirely decorative one, but in spite of meticulously leaded glass much extra light was gained as a result. Norman Shaw's lateral windows were the direct prototype of Corbusier's sliding wall-to-wall casements.

England, which had given the world the W.C., taught the Continent to think of "le home" in terms of a structurally separate dwelling within the reach of anyone of moderate means—a fundamentally different conception to the legal-address-cum-social-headquarters significance of the *hôtel particulier*, the *appartement*, and the *petit pied-à-terre*. Ebenezer Howard's "Garden Cities of Tomorrow" (1898) democratized this idea, and gave the Germans that untranslatable technical term *Flachbau*; meaning flat, that is horizontal, building—numbers of small houses scattered over a wide outer area as opposed to the multiplication of storeys on small central sites (*Hochbau*).

The absence of any external echo of the contemporary spirit made the half-rationalized English nineteenth-century house (Voysey's "The Orchard," Chorley Wood, 1, is the high-watermark of our pre-war achievement) as personal as its eighteenth century counterpart had been impersonal. With the passing of the Age of Reason safeguarding one's domestic privacy had become identical with broadcasting one's cultural pretensions. The architect declined into "a tailor of taste." A little later Henri Sauvage was able to boast that he made houses to measure.

In Regency days Society knew what it was, and what it wanted a house to be: just as that very different conception, society with a small "s" is now beginning to again. But in the intervening century

Society and society alike did not. Unable to come to terms with itself, and incapable of envisaging a future different to the present, or else not daring to do so, each tried to live resolutely backwards with the aid of a complete wardrobe of historical fancy-dress costumes. The germ of this escapist mentality was the romantic movement which had been gathering force ever since Horace Walpole's days. Starting as a sort of charade it gradually developed into a master passion with all classes. Heralded by poets, the movement found a popular emotional outlet in the "enthusiasm" of Methodism. Its long duration in architecture can best be explained by the speed at which wealth was being amassed, and the inability of the new rich to find other means of spending which gave anything like as much moral satisfaction.

The standardized house of the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries was admirably planned for the needs of the life of that age: an orderly, well-mannered, hieratic age, based on the division of society into hard and fast ranks, which had achieved a nice equipoise between reality and ceremony. It was an age content to be itself, devoid of false or cultivated sentiment; with no false modesty, but little self-consciousness. It played a little with the past, but hardly at all at being the past; and was on the whole singularly true to itself and its own severe canons of taste. In matters of design it kept romanticism at bay, having perfected the beauty of an almost ultimate elimination of ornament in which its horror of accent found elegant expression. Over and over again in Stendhal, perhaps its most clear-sighted spokesman, occurs the exhortation "*surtout pas trop d'emphase!*", a noble paraphrase of the preceding generation's more flippant "*pas trop de zèle!*" Being aristocratic it disliked display, a plebeian itch. Wealth was a thing to be expressed in proportion, not pomp; dignity of reserve, not scintillation; quality, not extravagance of variety. Yet this age was quite conscious of having inaugurated a new century, of the rapid progress of science, the gathering momentum of the machine, the steady enfranchisement of the human mind, the imminence of changes without precedent. Democracy was knocking at the door with characteristic loudness, but democracy had begun to mean assimilable self-made men, not the howling mob of *sans-culotte* have-nots. To sum up: an era of little and good, Wedgwood china and Soane's Bank of England, the last scene but one of "Rule, Britannia"; an age some of us would gladly go back to for many things.



Sir John Soane.
From the painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence.



c.1825 "More glass than wall . . ." A house on Richmond Green. Maximum fenestration possible with supporting walls. Complete rationalization of form. "Architecture" has passed away. Amen.



c.1865 An Oxford Don's house. Reinforced by religiosity, "Architecture" returns with a vengeance to close the wall against the Prince of Evil. Sentiment without sense. Very much "to let" today.



1868 House in Palace Green, Kensington, by Philip Webb. Romantic enough, but a new sort of honesty and seemliness struggles bravely through the growing "vernacular" confusion of form with function. The wall, however, has "set hard" again.



1899 C. F. A. Voysey's "The Orchard," Chorley Wood. The "Vernacular" reduced to its simplest and highest terms. The elevation reflect, though hesitantly, a much subtler interior planning; but the wall retains a tight-lipped frown.



1905 Peter Behrens's Obernauer House, Saarbrücken. English influence. The wall, now beginning to yield, has consented to forego "aids to beauty" permanently.



1906 Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House, Chicago. The pace quickens in America. Walls begin to slide back in long horizontal panels, the window, becoming dominant instead of incidental features. The geometric form of today is all but realized—only an unexpected throw-back to romanticism intervenes.



1911 C. R. Mackintosh's Hill House, Helensburgh. The false dawn of the new aesthetic, taking us back to the last example but one in all save non-essential. Clean surface and more light, but no structural advance; "art" is the prime motive.



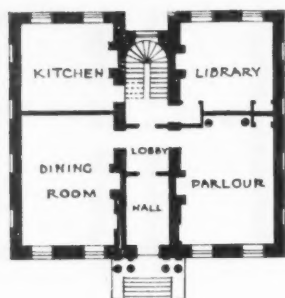
1912 Back to 1825, but an immense step forward: Adolf Loos's house for Dr. Scheu in Vienna. The definite prototype of the modern house emerges—flat roof, open planning, asymmetry, set-backs storey by storey, and a complete absence of ornament—in spite of adherence to the old building methods and materials.



1916 Van t'Hoff's Huis ter Heide at Utrecht. In an immediate sense its design is an echo of the influence of Cubist painting on the Stijl group. There is a somewhat forced return to symmetry. True, concrete is employed for roof and balconies, and the windows have conquered their walls. But in rationalization, this house is a little behind the last.



1930 Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, Poissy. Journey's End. A full-fledged, but very "poetic," realization of the house of today. Frame construction with a minimum of supporting-points, light, air, space, the full human scale living on several different levels at once in intimate association with nature. The wall relegated to a pliable screen moved here and there like a chair.



c.1830 The compact plan of the symmetrical early-nineteenth-century villa, with (for supporting-wall construction) a maximum of fenestration and a minimum of angles and other obstructions to the free use of space.



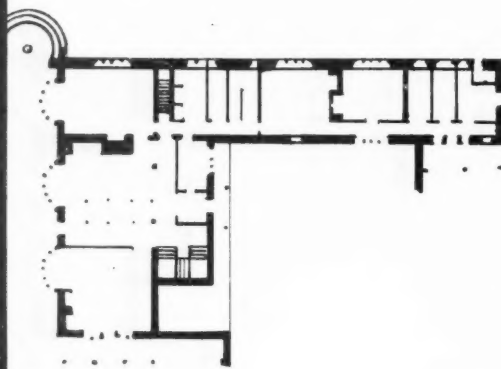
1868 Norman Shaw's Leys Wood, Sussex. Romanticism breaks up the box-like division of the old symmetry, and in so doing sets a useful precedent—but for the time being that gain is almost pure loss.



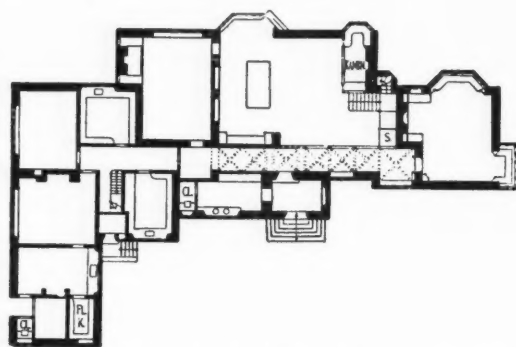
c.1870 "Unplanning": the typical muddle of a Victorian ground floor, resembling an insuperable jig-saw puzzle. Walls are everywhere—the internal almost as thick as the external, and such space as remains is largely useless as a result.



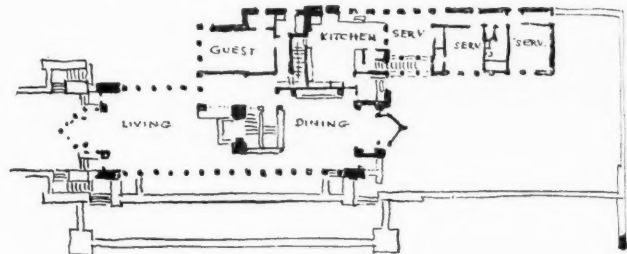
1894 Sir Edwin Lutyens's "Ruckmans," Surrey. A masterly plan from the "vernacular" point of view; but at the same time a confession of the limitations of planning for modern life with mediæval resources.



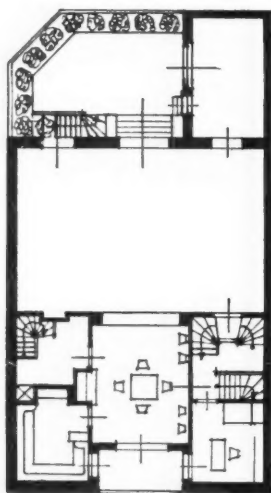
1898 Voysey's "Broadleys," Windermere. The garden front almost achieves the "living in space" ideal, but the rooms on the other front remain rigidly separated and box-like.



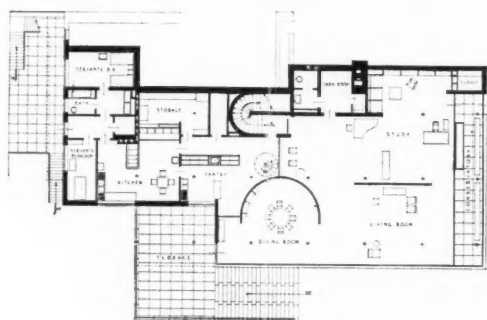
1902 M. H. Baillie Scott's Blackwell House, Windermere. Some few rooms begin to open out into each other; but the walls are too ubiquitous to allow the process to be carried very far. All the same, the principal room runs straight through from front to back, trees to trees.



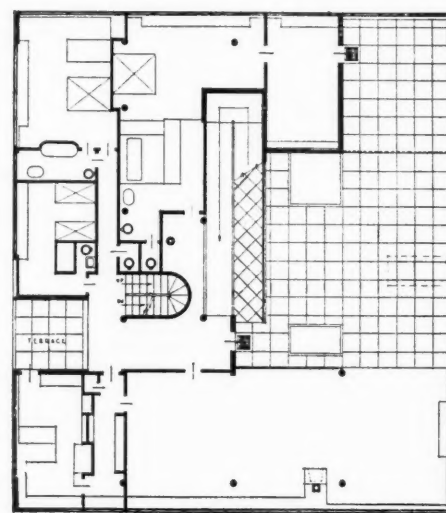
c.1905 A typical Frank Lloyd Wright plan. The beginnings of modern flexibility emerge. The floor appears as a single space, organically subdivided—and that sparingly—to meet the essential human need of relaxation. Those thick black lines, the old illogical interior frontiers, have vanished.



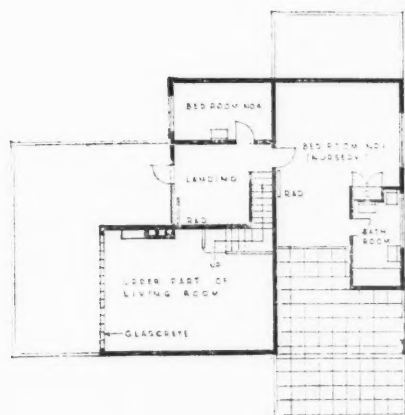
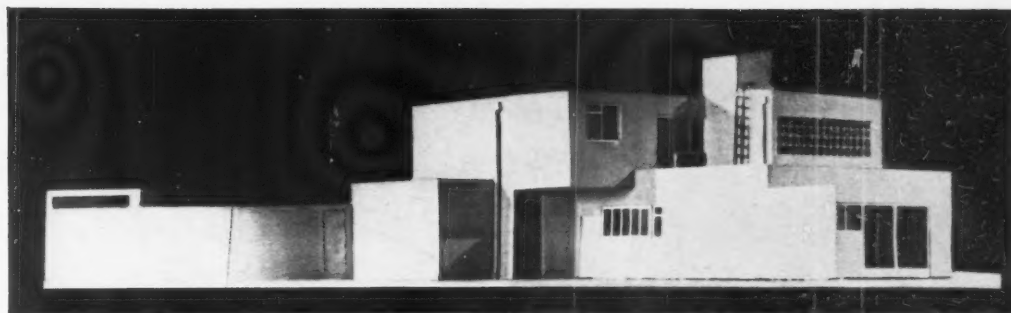
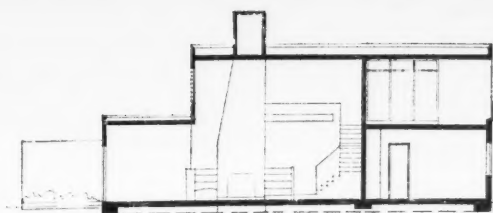
1926 Loos's House for Tristan Tzara in Paris. Solid walls, deeply cut into, so that from one front to another the floor is a single unit of space.



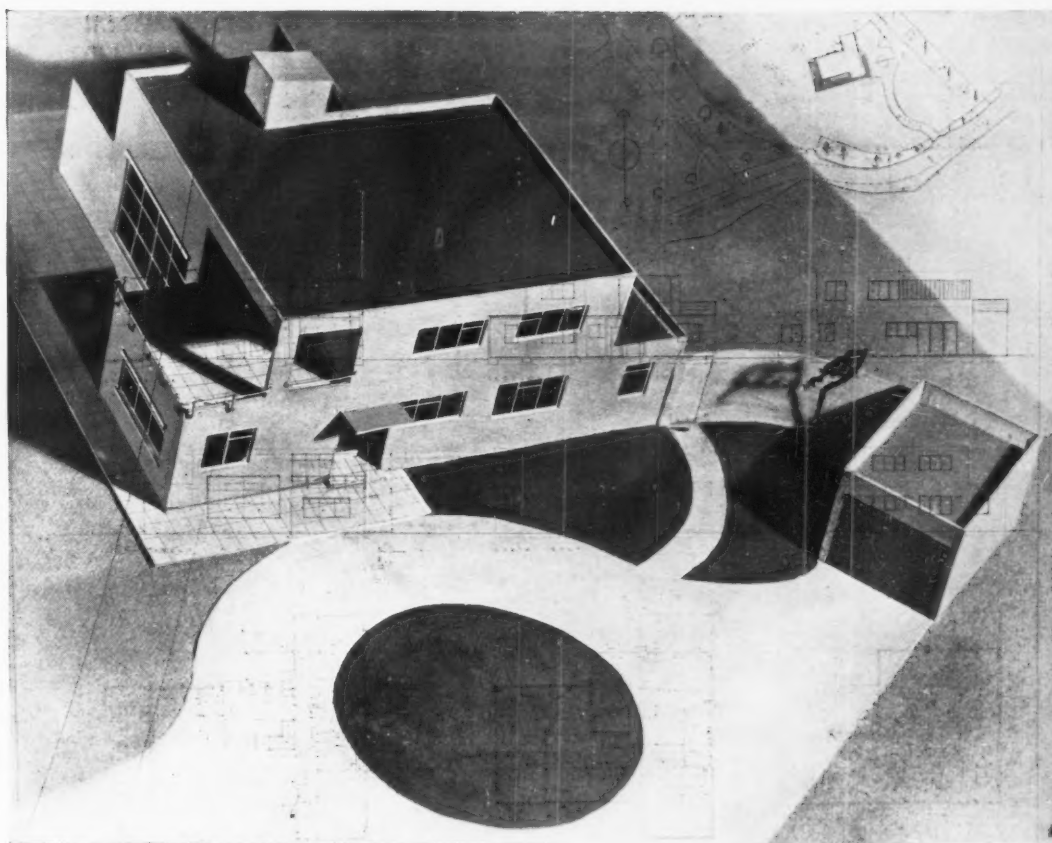
c.1930 Miës Van der Rohe's Haus Tugendhat at Brünn in Czechoslovakia. Consummate realization of the illusion of unenclosed space: the "envelope" is so unobtrusive as almost to be unnoticeable. The rooms merge into a surrounding paved terrace, just as the terrace merges into the garden. The last confining barrier has been spirited away—yet privacy is adequately provided for.



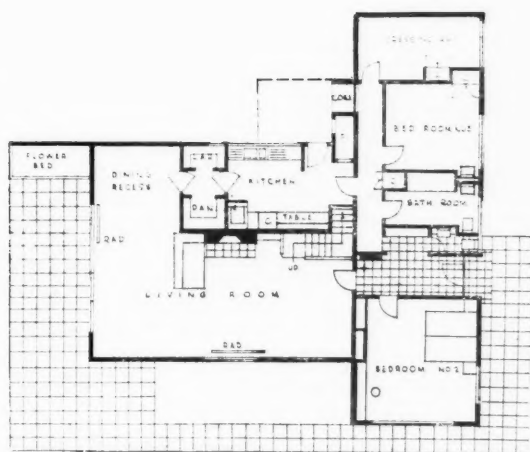
1930 Corbusier's Villa Savoye, Poissy. Raised on stilts, the ground floor becomes the first, and the sense of being on any particular level disappears. Instead the Master gives us free (almost too free) life in space and bids us live it to the full.



3



4

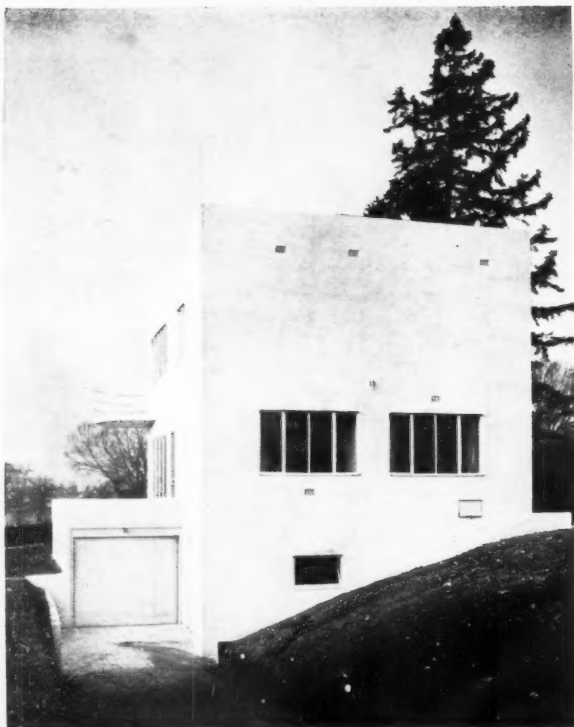


F. R. S. YORKE, ARCHITECT

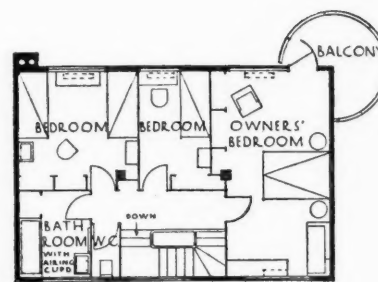
NOTE.—The chronological sequence of elevations and type-plans illustrated by Mr. Shand on the two preceding pages have taken us down to the Corbusier house of 1930. The following eight demonstrate the rapid generalization during less than five years of what Josef Frank calls "the depersonalized Corbusier model." For the prototype of the modern house realized by Corbusier's genius had to be stripped of his highly individual "poetry" before it could become sufficiently standardized to be acceptable as a basis of design for every civilized country. Seven of these "international" examples happen to be in England—though characteristically enough one is the work of a Swiss architect practising in America. The eighth, significantly, is in Greece, but could almost equally well be representative of Iceland or Japan.

The construction of this house near Hatfield, Hertfordshire, is of 4 in. and 5 in. reinforced concrete walls carrying reinforced concrete floor and roof slabs insulated with $\frac{1}{2}$ in. compressed fibre board on inner face of all concrete—walls and floor and roof slabs. Part of the living space rises through two floors, so that the staircase landing becomes a balcony in the living room. Between the nursery and the flat roof deck is a sliding folding glazed screen, and when this is folded the nursery and paved roof become one large play-space 42 ft. long. The living room is 32 ft. by 26 ft. at the widest part. The illustrations are 1, the longitudinal section; 2, the plans; 3, a model of the house showing the north-west angle; and 4, a bird's-eye view from the south-east.

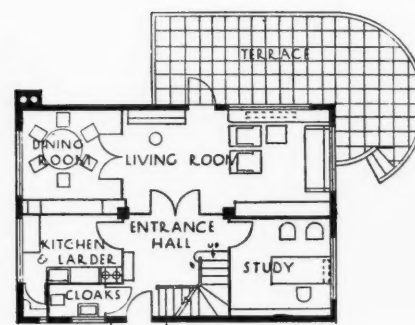
N A S T H Y D E , H A T F I E L D



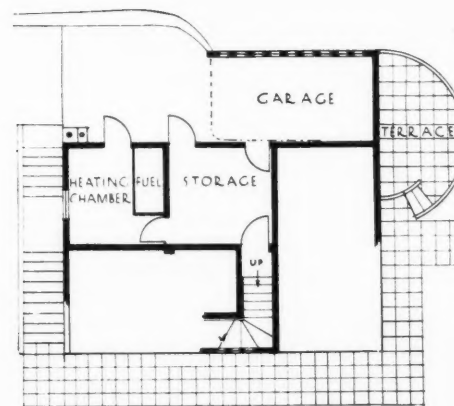
SERGE CHERMAYEFF,
ARCHITECT



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



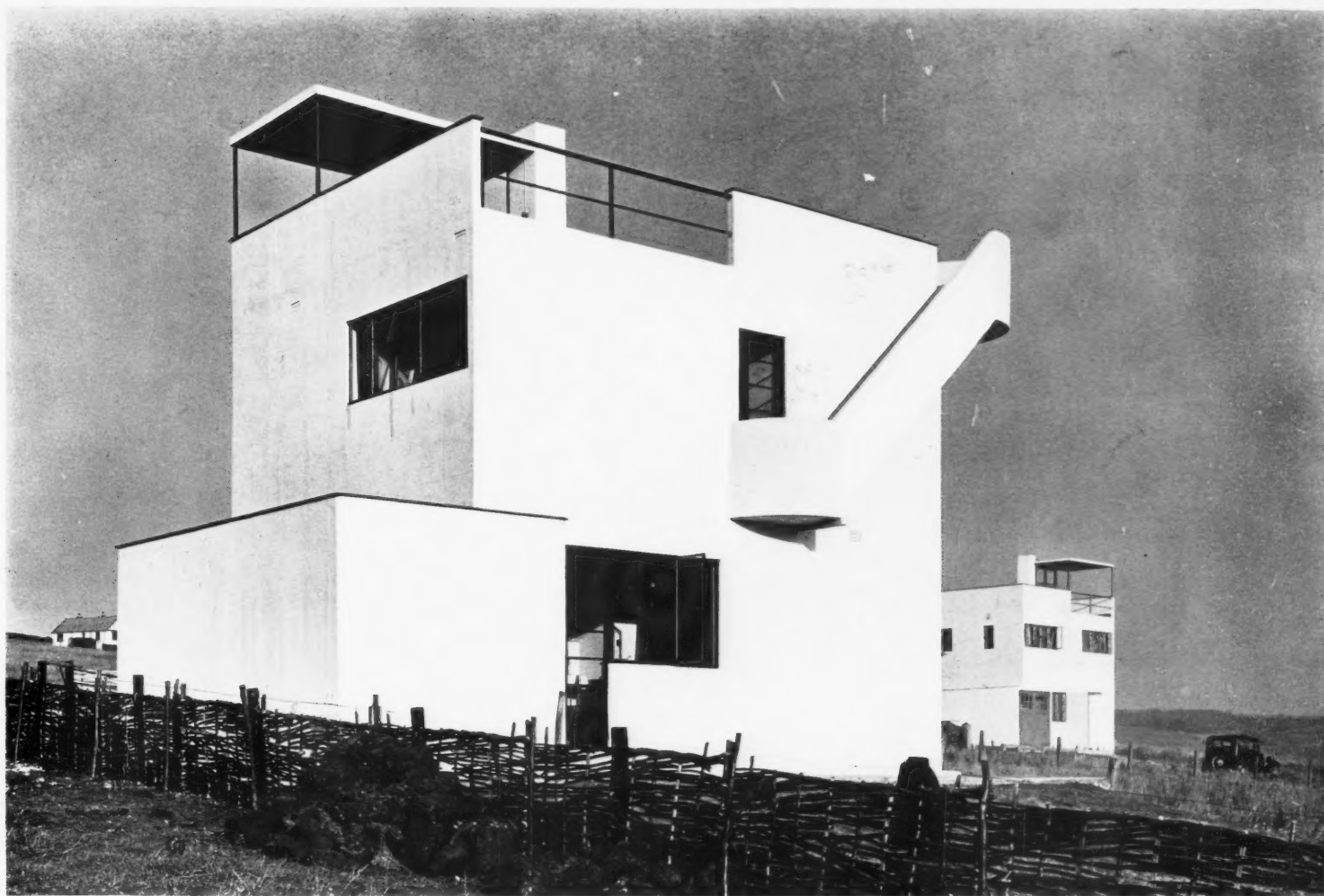
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



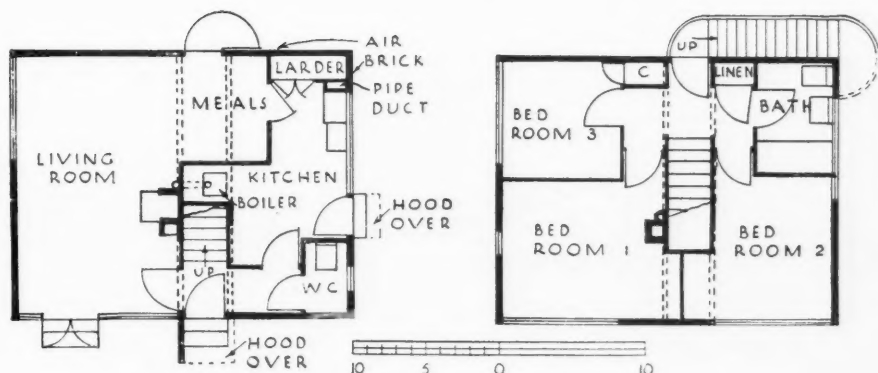
BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

The principal feature is the circular cantilevered balcony, 1, off the main bedroom at first floor level, balancing the circular termination of the terrace below. The house is constructed with 4 in. reinforced concrete walls acting as beams, and is sprayed exter-

nally with a protective waterproof finish. The floors and roof are hollow tiled. The total cost, including the terracing, drive and built-in furniture, was £1,400. The illustrations are: 1, the house from the west, and 2, from the south-east ; 3, the plans.



CONNELL, WARD AND LUCAS
ARCHITECTS



TYPICAL GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS



2

3

Three houses, all of the same accommodation, but differing slightly in plan, have been built at Saltdean as a speculation. The total cost of the houses, including garages, was £1,650. The walls are of 4 in. concrete, reinforced with twisted square-

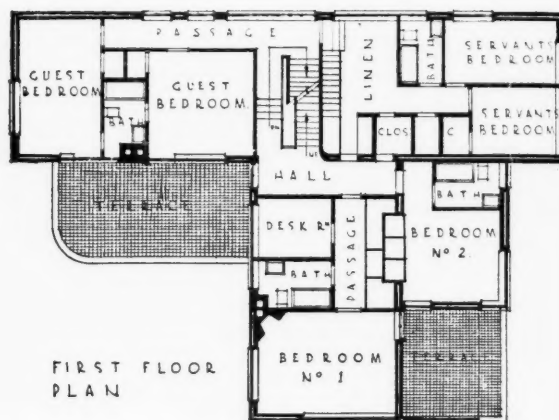
section rods. The exterior finish is paint, the windows are metal. The roof is of asphalt, and the canopy in one corner is concrete with a glazed screen. 1. A view from the garden. 2. Typical Plans. 3. The roof.

S A L T D E A N , B R I G H T O N



2

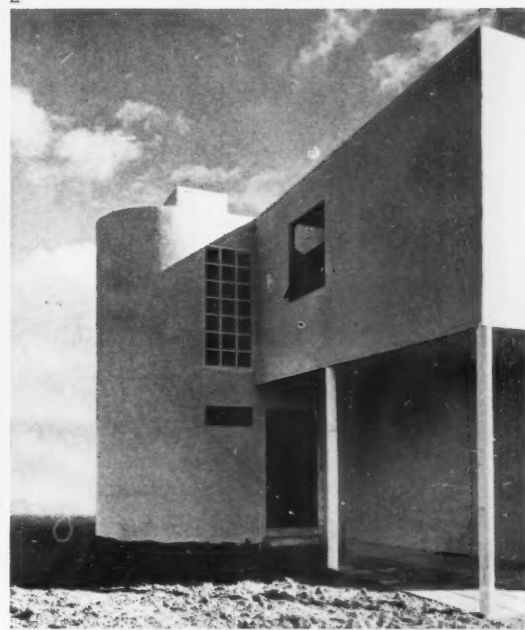
HOWE AND LESCAZE,
ARCHITECTS.



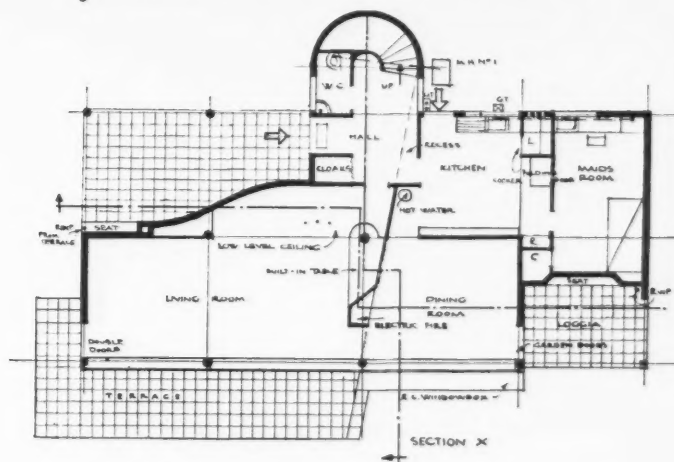
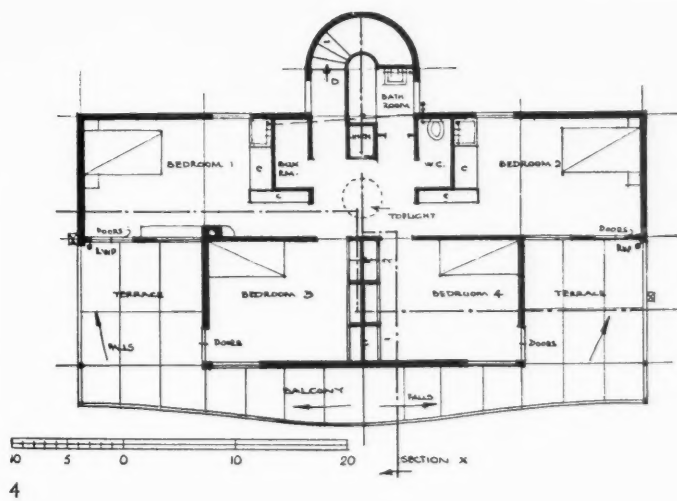
This house is situated on a country road running north and south, and is planned with its main rooms facing south, 1, and west, 2. The first floor slabs and footings are of reinforced concrete. All the exterior walls above the first floor are of two $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. brick walls, 3 in. apart, bonded

together with galvanized iron ties. For the terrace roofs quarry tiles have been used; the other roofs have a slag finish. The floor of the terrace from the main bedroom is an exposed concrete slab finished with cement. All the windows are metal.

T O T N E S , S O U T H D E V O N

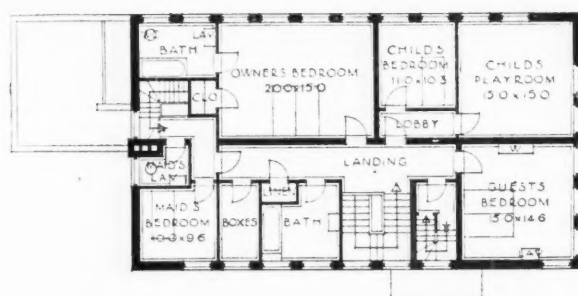


CHITTY AND TECTON, ARCHITECTS

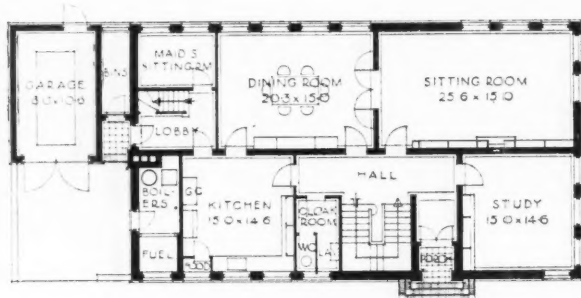


This house at Bognor is built on the foreshore with the garden running down to the beach. The construction is of reinforced concrete with 4 in., lined with 2 in. cork slab for insulation, finished with plaster. The exterior is cream, with grey window frames.

The living room has a continuous window, 1, 40 ft. long with sliding sections. The curved balcony on the first floor, 2, keeps the sun out of the living room in the heat of the midday sun ; 3, a detail of the main entrance ; 4, the plans.

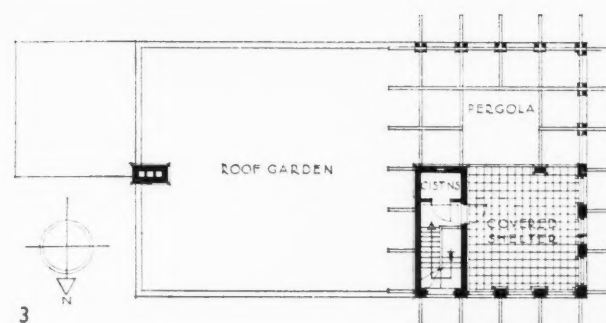


FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

2



3

ROOF PLAN

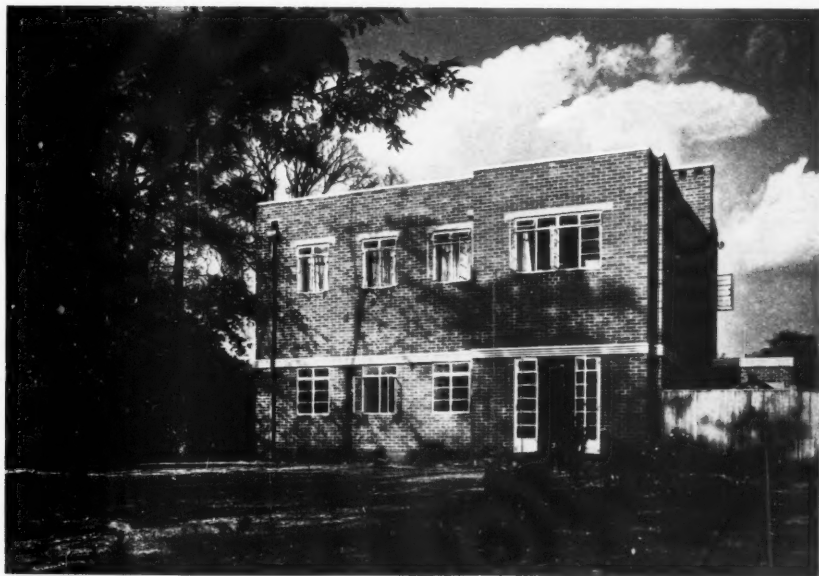
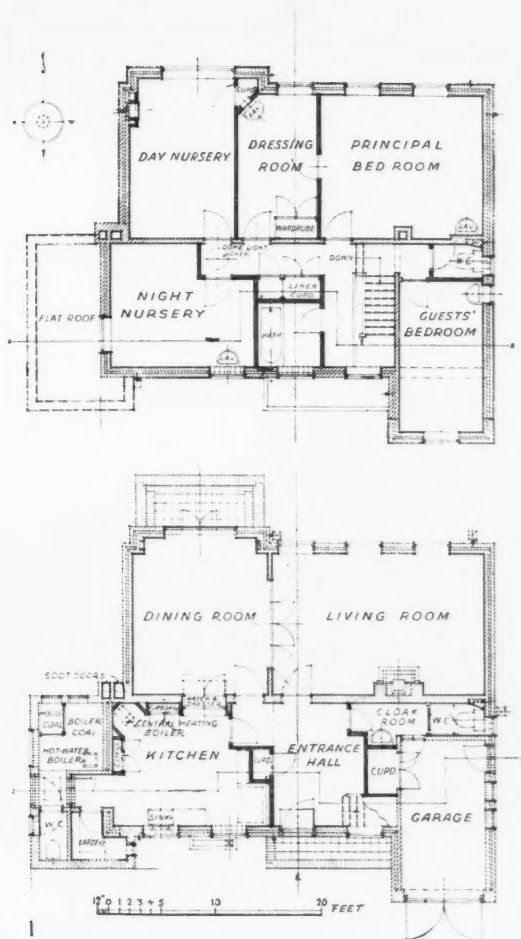
SCALE 10 5 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 FEET

MARSHALL SISSON,
ARCHITECT

Traditional domestic construction and materials have been employed here. The walls are of 14 in. brickwork, and Coleford multi-coloured facing bricks are laid with $\frac{1}{2}$ in. flush joints. The copings, cills and lintels are of reinforced cast stone, rough in

texture and finished with a tooled surface. The windows have wooden frames, with casements painted white and glazed with crown glass. The illustrations are 1, the garden front, 2, plans of the ground and first floors, 3, the roof plan.

C A M B R I D G E



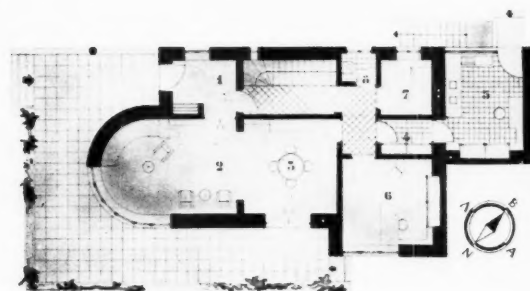
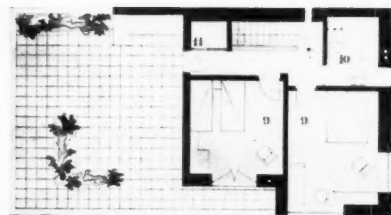
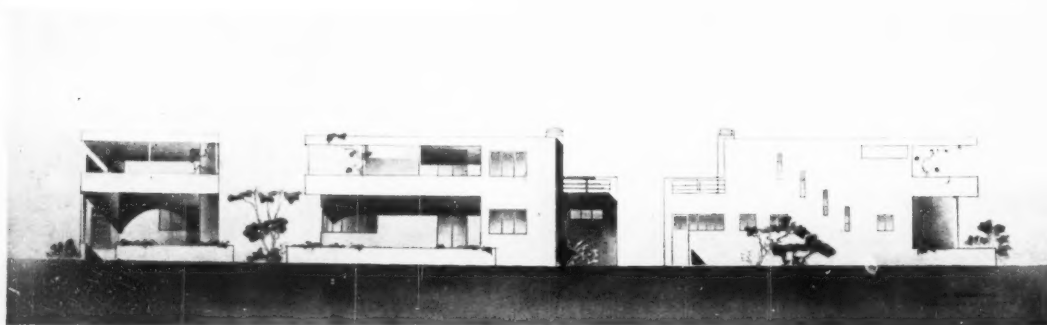
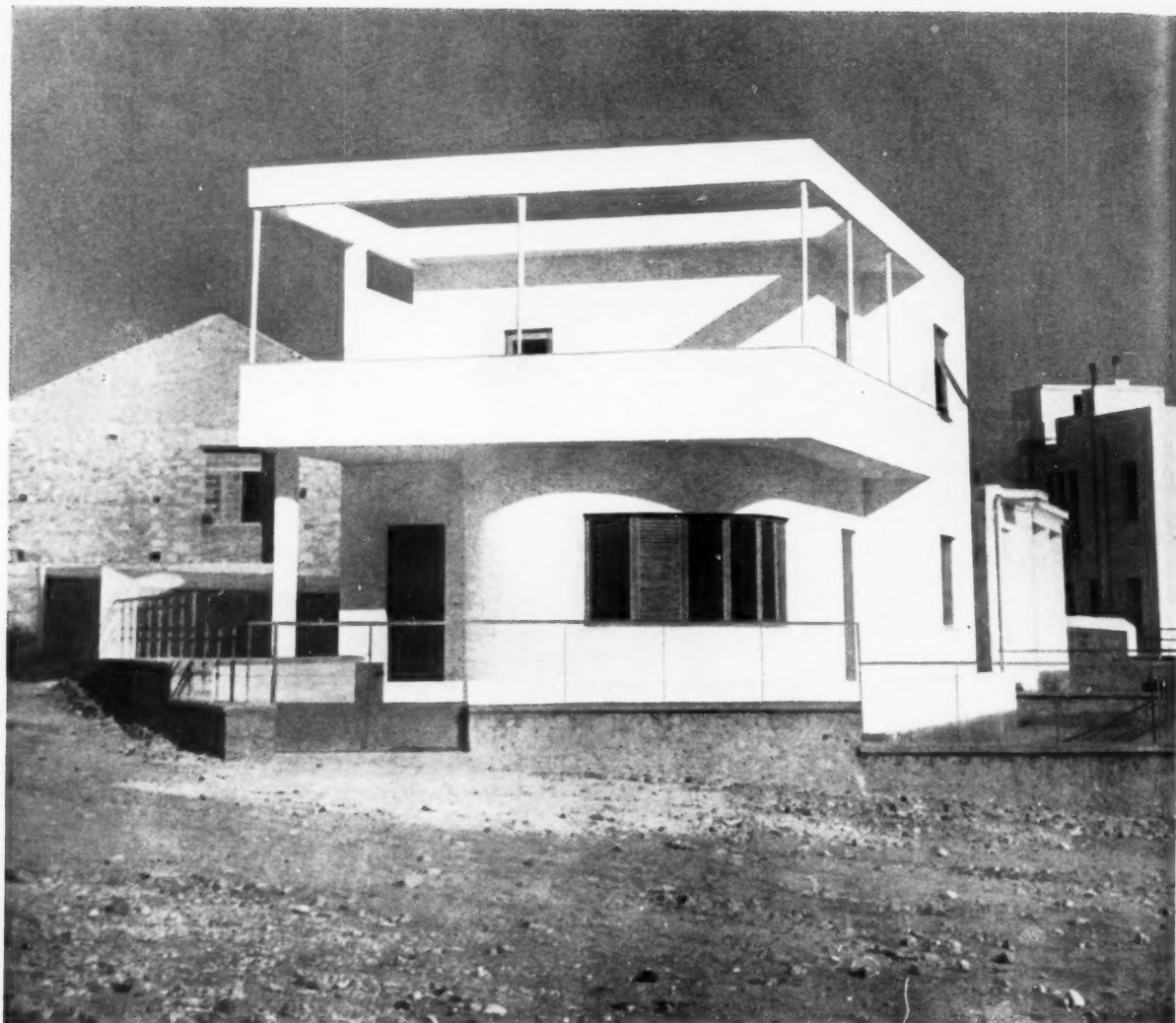
HALLIBURTON SMITH,
ARCHITECT

The bricks used are multi-colour Sussex stocks. The roof covering is asphalt on expanded metal felt and boarding. The coping is artificial stone, and the band course is finished in heavily moulded white cement and grey sand. The windows are standard metal,

with the exception of the specially built dining-room door. The cost of the building (without land and not including the forecourt, etc.), was approximately 1s. 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per cubic foot. 1, the plans; 2, the garden front; 3, the entrance from the garden.

W I M B L E D O N

*F. MICHAELIDES
AND
C. VALENTIS,
ARCHITECTS*

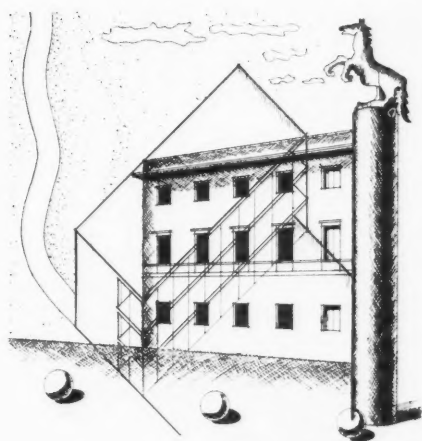


This villa is situated between Athens and Piræus ; it is built on an awkward triangular site, on the corner of two converging roads. The building is of reinforced concrete frame construction, with an

infilling of light rough stone, and cement rendered. The cost was as low as £800, as labour and materials are both cheap in Greece. The illustrations show the entrance front, elevations and plans.

A T H E N S

Criticism



1. The Town Hall Problem

By Professor C. H. Reilly

WE are all agreed by now, those that is, who are likely to agree at all, that the new manner of plain unvarnished truth to the material facts is the right thing for all the ordinary everyday buildings of our time. There are, however, certain classes of building where the material facts are not the only facts, or even the most important ones. Churches are the most obvious case. Town halls and municipal buildings come next. In neither is the main accommodation apart from vestries and offices merely a question of efficiently and hygienically housing so many persons for the work they have to do. In both the programme calls for a special appeal to the imagination; an appeal, too, which it is difficult entirely to dissociate from traditional forms. This is particularly the case with the churches of some established communion like the Roman, the Anglican or the Lutheran. Yet it is among the churches of these, and particularly of the two latter, that success has been attained, and attained by adherence to the spirit and not to the letter. Many indeed would put these modern churches among the most successful buildings of our time, more successful indeed than the modern factories, schools, hospitals, and even houses we know so well.

1. *Peterborough Town Hall.* E. Berry Webber, architect. 2. *Worthing Town Hall.* C. Coates Voysey, architect.

[NOTE. The following article is the first of a series in which Professor Reilly will discuss recent buildings, and the degree to which he considers they fulfil the rational principles of contemporary architectural design. It should be said that the articles are aimed not so much to elevate the understanding of the architect as to fan the ardour of the layman, who is to-day increasingly tempted to follow the current trends of architectural thought.]

The reason, no doubt, is that they are necessarily and by their purpose something more than perfect machines to serve material ends.

If this is a correct estimate it is difficult to understand why no one has yet produced a town hall to correspond, say, to a Cache-maille-Day or to a Velarde church. It may be, of course, another unfortunate result of the competition system, which on the whole, seems to produce clever men rather than first-rate buildings. All the recent town halls in this country, save those which have been poured into the lap of Mr. Vincent Harris, have come about in that way and all have been of revival architecture of one fifty years or the next of a century or two back. In giving Mr. Harris his buildings there was no doubt that he, too, would fall into line. On the other hand, the one town hall of recent date where tradition has been thrown over yet distinctive dignity achieved, that at Hilversum in Holland, is the work of a salaried architect putting up Hilversum's schools and other municipal structures as called

upon. It is too much, no doubt, to expect an assessor, who has himself made a name designing and building today eighteenth-century town halls and who has been selected for his position because of this, to choose a purely functional building such as Maxwell Fry or Wells-Coates might offer, but it is surely time one had the courage to go further than the Swedish-Georgian compromise and to select such a building as, say, an Oliver Hill might design. If he did he would, I believe, do the architecture of our day a very great service. If, on the other hand, he did by some strange accident choose a purely functional building in which the material facts alone had been considered and where nothing had been added in the way of height or scale to certain parts to symbolize the dignity of the town with its past history and its ever-increasing activities, I doubt whether anyone would consider the result satisfactory. Let us look at some recent examples beginning with one such.

The House of the Soviet, Nizhni Novgorod, by A. Grinberg, 6, has to serve very much



1



2

THE TOWN HALL PROBLEM

the same functions as an English town hall. There is the big audience chamber in the curved portion to serve for theatrical performances and as an assembly hall. Behind it is the conference hall, corresponding to the council chamber. Adjacent are the rooms for the president and the members of the council. There is a recreation room for the council which is perhaps a new feature—I am not so sure—but that does not greatly affect the plan. The wings are the offices of the administrative staff. There it stands, truthful to the obvious facts of its programme, naked and unashamed. Does it thrill one? Does it touch the imagination? Personally, I cannot say it does in any deep sense. I feel it is a fitting temporary home for a young and serious government, free from graft, but not a permanent building expressing the historical importance and dignity of the town. It is clean and straightforward, but that is all—a great deal, of course, and rarely to be obtained in this country, but not everything. Would it not have been possible by broader corridor-halls, finer and better placed staircases, more lofty assembly rooms, to have achieved something more stirring? The answer might well be "Yes, but not till everyone in the town is properly housed"—an answer on sociological grounds, if not on architectural ones, I should find irresistible. It may be in the present state of the world, and of our English cities in particular, we should content ourselves with temporary town halls. If so, this is exactly the sort of honest structure we should put up.

The Civic Hall at Leeds, 3, is the complete opposite. Its façade is a pretty toy which would look well in old Staffordshire stoneware: the twin towers and the great portico are entirely unnecessary, yet erected while Leeds is nobly trying to rebuild a third of the town to afford more decent living conditions for a section of its great working-class population, largely out of work. They do not seem to me real, these features. The Mayor does not drive up in such state as to warrant the portico, nor is the town so happy in its circumstances as to require this pair of dancing towers. The great windows behind the portico giving on to some public room seem to me quite expressive enough. There is dignity in them. The portico and the towers today are mere dressing-up, even in these times a little sinister, like Marie Antoinette's suggestion of cake to those who could not afford bread.

Worthing Town Hall, 2, is far quieter and more in keeping with the times, but only by being like a stiff old grandfather standing in the background and watching his children play. He still wears his tall hat with its curly brim, his well-cut frock coat



3. The Civic Hall, Leeds. E. Vincent Harris, architect. 4. Barnsley Municipal Buildings. Briggs and Thornely, architects. 5. The Guildhall, Swansea. Percy Thomas, architect. 6. The House of the Soviet, Nizhni Novgorod.

and a fob to his watch chain. We can forgive him these foibles in a flourishing place like Worthing where there are no unemployed to make one ashamed. He stands back quietly, too, from the road with a certain dignity. Worthing itself being a place for retired folk, we do not resent his fancy dress as much as we should in a hard working place like Leeds. Where there is no serious work to be done and plenty of money to spend, architecture is apt to stray down by-paths and they themselves are more excusable.

Peterborough is different, 1. Here is an attempted amalgam of a rich, early eighteenth-century porticoed building with a number of modern plate-glass shops. They do not mix, and the result is unhappy. The rubicund farmer in the centre wearing the clothes of Rowlandson, should have had some buxom wenches under his arms, not those thin lip-sticked children. It is a poor stage set unworthy of its vigorous producer, though like him in parts. No doubt the Mayor and Corporation are to blame in the first instance in having such a bourgeois notion of the dignity of their historic office.

Lewisham, 7, which adopts a doublet and hose type of fancy dress, owing to its circular site, achieves in one view a certain liveliness of character. One feels the building is awake and one does not therefore resent the intrusion of the shops so much. With a little attention from the barber this could be made a modern building. Perhaps some day its architects may have the fun of making it so.

Bridlington, 8 and 9, does not seem very happy in its old-fashioned clothes. They flap about rather, especially on the main front. On the other they seem to fit better, though the sleeves on that side are too ornate for the waistcoat. Something has happened at Barnsley, 4. Mr. Clarkson has supplied the wrong wig. The standard nineteenth-century building below it was never meant to carry so heavy a tower...

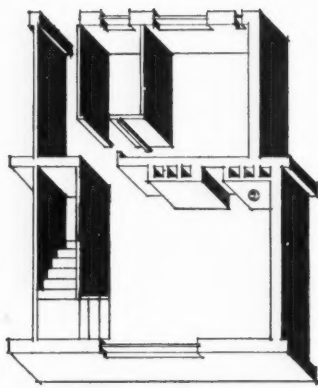
Finally, there is Swansea, 5, and here a definite attempt has been made to get away from porticoes, colonnades, pediments and all the paraphernalia of the property room. The masses of the building have been allowed to tell as masses. Where there are lofty blank walls we can assume big interior halls, though we had better not look inside. This building externally, and in spite of its unnecessary tower, is the nearest yet that we have got to a modern town hall in this country. Let us hope that Mr. Percy Thomas, young and lively as he still is, and likely yet to win a vast number of competitions, will soon take a step further.



A. Grinberg, architect. 7. The Town Hall, Lewisham. Bradshaw Gass and Hope, architects. 8 and 9. The main and western fronts of the Town Hall at Bridlington, Yorkshire. P. Maurice Necton, architect.

Louis Sullivan's Words and Work

By Frank Lloyd Wright



KINDERGARTEN CHATS. On Architecture, Education and Democracy. By Louis H. Sullivan. Edited and introduced by Claude F. Bragdon. Washington: Scarab Fraternity Press. Price \$2.50.

IT is always painful to me to see what lesser men will do to a great man when they feel him on their hands as such. One will assume to erect a monument to him by way of one's own appreciations; really, such monuments are attempts to shine in reflected light. Another will, gratuitously, place him "securely" in the Hall of Representative men, where the great man would not care to be at all. Another will sob into his own kerchief at thought of the suffering ascribed to the great man when his country passed him by—when really his country did not pass him by; the great man simply passed his country by.

There are many variations of the aftermath—the most abominable being, so it seems to me, designing in the great man's own manner to commemorate him. A form of commiseration not intended as insult—but gross insult, nevertheless. Nature her custom holds, let shame say what it will, and runs thus true to form here and now where Louis Sullivan is concerned in the preface and criticisms of his *Kindergarten Chats*.

This posthumous affair of honour—what really does it matter? A spirit has come and is with us, still, in spite of his words and work, because he belonged to those he was like and because they are him and he is themselves. It is only for them he could either write or build. They see nothing remarkable in that he expressed what they felt and knew—and love him as they love themselves, because he was what they were and he knew it as they know it.

Why not, then, let it go at that?

Well, I suppose it is this provincial matter of making the most of, or being in good terms with, ourselves by "honouring him" as we say.

But "honouring him" can't be done. No

university ever honours any man until by recognizing him as an honour it honours itself. Nor has anyone the power to do honour to any great man. The great man has become a sentimentality where they are concerned—as the Unknown Soldier has become a sentimentality to the living citizens. None really have anything concerned with him. He was. He is. He will be—a mystery.

Why look the gift-horse in the teeth? And then to "suppose" again, I suppose that, from him, post-mortem we are expected to deduce a moral or profit of some kind. What post-mortem moral or profit by way of Louis Sullivan? Certainly none by poking at his remains. His carcass was as troublesome to him in life as it would be to us in death. Certainly none in his buildings. They were the troubled carcass of his thought, shared and troublesome to him alive as to us when he is dead. I am certain that where Louis Sullivan matters now is where his love, sincerity and courage gave him to his kind while he lived, by way of his creative impulse. And it is for that we must read his words or view the fragments that are his work. Before either words or work can mean anything great to us, we too must be, or become, as he was. And then we won't value his words overmuch, nor feel other than sad that he couldn't have lived to carry his thought further in his work; glad that both words and work escaped being standards of measurement by way of which immaturity assumes maturity and so defeats youth; glad we thus escaped in order that the spirit that lived in him might continue to live and work—unobstructed by him as he stood, now that we see that inside he stood very tall indeed—up against the roof of his mind.

Heed his own words in the *Chats*: "Let it suffice that he has lived to point it out to you."

"Now begin."

It is the only honour you can do him. A great man is a great gift—but only in this sense, because "it is our time for willing."

EDITORIAL NOTE.—Sullivan got no support from his own generation for the new ideas expressed in his buildings. Public taste was governed by the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, which meant that progress in architectural evolution in America was delayed for many years. This failure prompted Sullivan to make an appeal to the younger generation of architects through the medium of the written word—and so he wrote *Kindergarten Chats*. The book begins with a scathing analysis of the architecture of the time as shown in certain buildings in New York and Chicago, and denounces it as anti-social, feudal, and false to the spirit of Democracy. He foreshadows the betrayal which followed and lays bare the perversities of the educational system which he considered to be the root cause of the catastrophe. Having cleared the ground he proceeds to formulate the principles and discuss the elements of architecture.

The following is a dialogue from the book in which Sullivan discusses the building, illustrated on page 117. He is conversing with a young critic:—

"I wonder if you know, Professor, what this particular building is?"

"You do well to say particular, for it is made up of particles. Substantives and adjectives are lacking; verbs, especially are lacking. It is all the, ands, ifs, buts; it is all connectives that connect nothing; qualificatives that qualify nothing; prepositions that prepose nothing; conjunctives that conjoin nothing; exclamations that exclaim nothing. It is all inflection where there is nothing inflected; conjugation where there is not a verb; declension without the noun. It is 'perfectly fine,' 'awfully lovely,' it's 'just grand.' And all about what? Nothing! It's the young miss in architecture. In short it is the Imperial Hotel."

"What an idea! The Imperial Hotel is in New York, and we are in Chicago."

"And so we are! How curious! Then it must be the Imperial's long-lost cheild!"

"No. I happen to know it's a department store, and not at all a hotel—never was a hotel. So you are on the wrong track."

"Not at all. I say it's a hotel. You may think it a department store if you will."

"But I know positively that it is a department store, and so that ends discussion."

"On the contrary, it begins one."

"But look at the lower windows. You see the merchandise displayed, do you not?"

"I look at the building and I see something else—other merchandise displayed, which might perhaps hearken back to an architectural department store. But that, for the moment, is neither here nor there. I tell you it's a hotel, or even *an* hotel if you prefer."

"You speak in riddles, and in plain contradiction of the facts."

"My young friend, you do not speak by the card. Look at the building with your own eyes. Surely, if it were a department store all masonry would be reduced to a minimum and there would be an expanse of glass for light and display. If you doubt it, there are several department store buildings in town that will serve to illustrate my meaning. So, you see, you are proven in error by the testimony of the structure itself. Therefore, if the building be anything nameable, it is, as I have told you, a hotel."

"Oh, no! I see where you are misled: it is a department store, surely enough, but there are offices above."

"No, my young friend, there are not offices above, that is an illusion: you are misinformed. The structure is a hotel. It is not even a department store with offices combined, as you would have me believe. It is a hotel, the lower two stories of which have, probably, been rented out to some small merchant."

"What nonsense! I tell you emphatically that there are offices in the building. I have been in some of them and so I know. Why do you persist in denying a self-evident proposition?"



The building discussed in this argument, the Marshall Field Store, Chicago.

"On the contrary, I am maintaining a self-evident proposition. Were it an office building it would suggest that function. There would be that regular and equable spacing of windows, that general suggestion of business and business housing which would be unmistakable. There are a number of well arranged office structures hereabout and not one of them has this somnolent, irresolute disposition of its masses. This, manifestly, is a building to sleep in, to rest in, perhaps to eat in. It suggests the drowsy, not the busy god.

"Well—

"Well?

"I begin to see a light.

"My little kitten!

"Yes, I begin to see a light; not altogether a pleasant one, either.

"My young friend, light always hurts eyes unaccustomed to its rays. But, as the light, little by little, grows stronger, and the eye, gradually, clearer and steadier, you will see eventually what I see—a vanishing illusion called a building, and a dawning reality, the real substance, a smirking imposition, an omelette soufflé so to speak (all soufflé and no omelette), a pessimistic, fraudulent satire; a wolf in sheep's clothing.

"If I have taken the trouble to discuss this structure with you, it is not, be assured, for its own account, for that is too insignificant, but because it stands for our purpose, as the type of a large class of structures fortunately for us, more rampant in the East than in the West which represents what I might denominate the current slang of architecture, the incapacity of the half-educated, the unleavened, the half-baked, to express in simple, well-chosen language, the casual, current experiences of life.

"This particular building is, to be sure, not characteristic of the West. It lacks, utterly, western frankness, directness—crudity, if you will. It is merely a weak-rooted cutting from the Eastern hot-house and it languishes pitifully in the open air. An expert gardener would not have done so foolish a thing.

"To be sure, in mere money outlay, it cost dollars enough, and for that very reason, if for no other, its finality seems cheap—John in motif. For of what use is money alone without a chastened guiding spirit? It merely serves, uncontrolled to make its owner ridiculous and pitiful.

"To say, then, that this building is canting and hypocritical is to couch our definition in mildest terms.

"Against the malice of such structures I would forfend your untrained, untried judgment, your too-confiding, cock-sure nature. For such structures are treacherous of spirit. They are the Judases—they betray their Lord for pieces of silver."

Diary of an Eastward Journey

GRAND TOUR. By Patrick Balfour. London: John Long, Ltd. Price 18s. net.

THE modern American travel book, in its eternal quest for the obscene, is over-sensational and falls flat after the first chapter. Its English counterpart is usually over-restrained. There is the intellectual traveller who is frightened of committing himself to errors of taste and fears to lavish praise on buildings and landscapes which deserve it. There is the healthy young Englishman who purposely ignores the flora, fauna and culture of the countries he visits, but confines himself to obscure political disturbances and to the adventures of his stomach.

Mr. Patrick Balfour in his *Grand Tour* has avoided the modern method. His book reads more like the memoirs of Bernier, Tavernier and other gentlemen adventurers of past centuries. An exceptionally intelligent observer, he is not afraid of enthusiasm, but never descends to sensationalism.

The gentlemen adventurers suffered untold discomforts in their sailing ships and bullock carts. So did Mr. Balfour. He was in Regent Street one day when he saw a man sandwiched between this startling statement:

TO INDIA
BY ROLLS-ROYCE CAR
FOR £37
LEAVING OCTOBER 18th.

This was the beginning of a journey as rough as that of any frigate. From Beirut (where the little fleet of two large and ancient Rolls' landed, having motored through Europe to Brindisi), Mr. Balfour proceeded over the Lebanon to Damascus; across the Syrian desert to Baghdad, through Persia and Afghanistan to Quetta. The picture of the great cars ploughing their way through seas of sand, getting lodged for hours at a time in 6 ft. ruts, steering miles out of their courses after all the headlights had been knocked off, make one thank Heaven for the P. & O.

But once the old Rolls' are safe in Quetta harbour, after their superb performances



1. A Saddhu, one of the five million wandering holy men in India today. From "Grand Tour."



2. Nepal. There are two passes leading from the terai, across the Himalayan foothills into the valley of Katmandu. This is a view from the top of the first pass, 6,000 ft. high. In the foreground is the fertile valley of Kulekharni and beyond it the ranges climb to the summit of Everest. From "Grand Tour."

over the rocky, rutty oceans of Persia and Afghanistan, the book becomes doubly interesting. Mr. Balfour has time to draw breath and to look about him at leisure.

On the voyage he finds Damascus disappointing. The mosque was shut and he was unable to see the mosaics, those masterpieces of a Byzantine Cézanne. The next morning, when the mosque was open, he was

ordered aboard, and plunged into the Syrian desert.

From Quetta he goes straight up to Nepal, a privilege enjoyed by few Europeans. This enchanting Himalayan kingdom, so free from Western influence, is often described as "forbidden." In point of fact it is, as Mr. Balfour so perfectly puts it, "no more and no less forbidden than Chats-

worth." It is simply a private country, but to the Maharaja's guests it is open and hospitable in an unbounded degree.

The excellence of Nepalese architecture (which, by the way, has never yet been "done" by an art-historian) is given due praise in *Grand Tour*. Mr. Balfour compares the cities in the valley of Katmandu to those of Tudor England. The comparison is good in so far as it relates to the materials of the buildings: the mellow red brick, the tiles and the dark carved wood beams let into the walls and supporting the roofs. But the proportion of Tudor architecture was not its strong point, and the proportions of the Nepalese temple proper (the pagoda-roofed type) compare favourably with the highest standard of proportion in Europe. The five-storey temple at Bhatgaon is, in its way, as balanced and perfect as the Parthenon.

From Nepal Mr. Balfour returned to India. He traversed the usual tourist route: Benares, Lucknow, Agra, Delhi, Calcutta; yet it is amazing the number of interesting things he records and photographs which other contemporary travellers ignore. Not always because they do not see them, but because they deem such things unworthy of particular notice. Jai Singh's observatory at Delhi, for example, that Cubist's dream, with its huge cubes, and globes, and hemispheres, has at last received proper recognition. And Mr. Balfour writes of La Martinière at Lucknow, the eighteenth-century fantasia of a French adventurer, and the true Blenheim of India, with a sympathy and wit long overdue (what a pity there is not a photograph of this remarkable building). In Calcutta he visits Regency churches and the vast European cemeteries full of pyramids and urns and columns and Greek temples, reviving the memory of good old Company days.

In Calcutta Mr. Balfour is offered a passage to Penang on a man-of-war. On the way he stops at the little visited Andaman Islands and describes the pleasant lives of the prisoners in the great convict settlements there. With the warm lazy climate, and the sea and the sun and the luscious jungles, he finds the place a Paradise beside Dartmoor. From the Andaman Islands to Malaya where there is little architecture, but gentle tropical landscape: "we came out into rice fields, glistening with water, seldom rectangular, but curving like emerald rivers between banks of palms."

The archaeologist and the art-historian who spend a lifetime studying the peculiarities of a particular period, often lose the real key to that period in a sea of detail. The stray traveller, if he be intelligent, often finds the key again in a chance remark. Mr. Balfour cruised down the Mekong to Angkor knowing little of Khmer art and of the influences which bear upon it. Yet he explains it in a single phrase: "The architecture of Angkor is sculpture in itself." This sentence is the secret not only of Khmer architecture but also of the Dravidian and Indo-Aryan from which it is derived. Unlike the light proportionate



3



4



5



6

3. Carving on a Nepalese roof support. The figure represents the Goddess Kali trampling on a demon. Nepalese sculpture has much in common with Indian, but it flourished in later centuries. The above carving is seventeenth century, a period when Indian temple sculpture had long since become stereotyped. 4. Prayer Wheels. 5. Bronze torana (tower) on the Boddnath stupa. The eyes represent the omniscience of the Buddha. The discs above it symbolize the 13 Bhodisattva Heavens and the crowning umbrella stands for royalty. The stupa, which is a hemisphere of brick and rubble covered with plaster, contains a relic of the original Buddha. 6. Angkor Dancing Girls. These children are trained from infancy in the intricate and highly stylized dancing traditional in their race. From "Grand Tour."

temples of Nepal, the buildings of Hindu India and Indo-China lack any attempt at proportion in the western sense. They are rather large sculptural masses whose methods of primitive trabeate construction, unlike the Greek, have not developed or altered from the earliest times until the present day.

The photographs in *Grand Tour* (bleeding has been employed in all the reproductions with much effect), unlike the crooked, out-of-focus "snaps" in most modern travel-

ogues, might well be by a professional photographer. And a photographer, too, with a rare eye for landscape and building as well as for "types." To select only a few: "By a Persian stream," "Into Nepal," "A Persian Bridge," "Casuarina Trees at Singora," and close-ups of Nepalese detail, and of the Delhi observatory, make it imperative to buy *Grand Tour* and not merely to borrow it from a library.

PENELOPE CHETWODE

A Free Commentary

By Junius

THE great Exhibition of 1935 having been received with an astonishing uniformity of disapproval by those serious critics whose studies have been most concerned with the general subject matter, it seemed good to the Chairman of the Council of the Royal Society of Arts to write to *The Times* to complain of the lack of constructive criticism, with the inference that there was nothing the matter with the show, but that the fault lay with the critics.

If that really is still the considered view of the organizers and not merely a perhaps not unnatural, but certainly unwise, attempt to save face and sell tickets by bluff and *blague*, then there is something more radically wrong with the mentality of the organizers than we, in our innocence and charity, allowed ourselves to suspect. In page 131 of this issue are collected characteristic opinions from a number of serious critics. It would be better for those criticized either to treat these opinions and arguments with the disdain it is no doubt possible to pretend that they deserve, or to put up a "constructive" defence. A plaintive bleat in *The Times* may be good enough for the many who flock to the Royal Academy by habit, assured that any show under its august auspices must necessarily be the best of which the nation is capable, but it will not help the project which all of us, criticized and critics, profess to have at heart.

I feel much less steeped in the kindly mood which flavoured these free comments last month—the mood which might not unfairly be described as akin to that which prompted the original appeal to the audience not to shoot the pianist who was doing his best. But I must approach with critical detachment the pleasantly bound and certainly not expensive *Story of the Royal Society of Arts*, which has been published by Mr. Murray of Albemarle Street. Yet I cannot quite forego the malicious pleasure of pointing out that in a book of no more than xi plus 67 pages, there are no less than three mentions of a worthy, but—we should, indeed, on the evidence, must honestly assume—a minor achievement of the Society's.

"The Society," says E. V. Lucas, in his genial appreciation, "in its desire for better pictures did not stop at giving medals and prizes, for it offered also a medal for the best shilling box of water-colours, which was gained in 1853 by one J. Rogers. It is, however, one thing to call spirits from the vasty deep and another to get them: for although no fewer than eleven million of these boxes were sold, there have not been such good water-colour painters since 1853 as there were before that date. Mangold-wurzels, however, are another matter. Until the Society got to work in 1786 to acclimatize these unwieldy but nutritious roots, there had been none; and now think of the 'pies' we see by every country road."

Three pages later we read in the text of a narrative abridged from an earlier official history: "The swede, the turnip and the mangold-wurzel, now common objects of the countryside, were introduced to our fields by the Society. It abolished the need for employing little boys as chimney sweepers by offering a prize for suitable chimney brushes (and here indeed it did a fine thing deserving of our eternal gratitude). It offered prizes for plans for workmen's cottages. It advocated the purchase of telegraphs by the State and evolved the idea of the Parcels Post. It was responsible for the production of reasonably priced scientific instruments, and for a shilling paint box of which no fewer than eleven millions were sold."

And yet again, on p. 46: "One of the most popular things the Society ever did was to offer a medal for a shilling colour box. The medal was presented to J. Rogers, of Bunhill Row, and was presented to him by the Prince Consort at the distribution of awards in 1853. The success of the colour boxes was astounding, as by 1870 no fewer than eleven millions of them had been sold."

A curious insistence this on the shilling box. No other achievement of the Society's receives anything like such stressed attention (the mangold-wurzel is runner-up—also with three less ecstatic mentions). Is this a maladroitness

attempt to claim and emphasize that concern with the needs of the poor man, the popular cause, the progressive attitude which seems to us so lacking in the Exhibition? No. I think not; merely careless editing, which has let through many other repetitions: which is not seemly in so short a book.

In point of fact, of course, the Society has done important and useful work in its 180 years of life. It early gave attention to afforestation (no doubt with an eye on England's wooden walls), to the improvement of agricultural implements and to the collection and dissemination of agricultural and horticultural knowledge here and in the Colonies; it makes a claim to a large share in establishing the tea industry in India: the electro-magnet, improved and cheapened microscopes for students, and the lifeboat owed something to the Society's direct efforts. The list of the Society's Albert Medallists is a distinguished one; with such names as Faraday, Armstrong, Thomson (Kelvin), Joyle, Perkin, Crookes, Dewar and Parsons among our own people, and de Lesseps, von Leibig, Curie, Marconi, Orville Wright among foreigners. Napoleon III, Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, King George and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales have been recipients of the medal—just to show that it is not all damned nonsense about merit that determines the offer!

One technical point in the production calls for "constructive criticism." The proportion of margin to text in the full pages is as 140 to 100; in the pages which begin or end chapters there is even more margin. This is the grossest padding out. We have long abandoned the fallacy that you make a handsome book by merely adding broad rivers of white paper. What you in fact do is by the undue irradiation of the white surround to diminish appreciably the legibility of the text—a discovery which an obvious application of the doctrine of fitness for purpose would have unveiled.

There is somewhere in England, hiding his active personality under the modest military label of J4485, a most energetic, courageous and persuasive man. He has founded a fraternity composed largely of ex-service men like himself which has as its object the building of one hundred new towns. The persuasiveness is shown in his being able to get together sufficient finance to print his argument in very attractive form (I have before me the third edition, a folio of 72 pages with many illustrations in monochrome and colour), and in finding 12 distinguished signatories to a letter in *The Times* early last year containing an abstract of his proposals. Perhaps the most authoritative name in view of the nature of the project is that of Professor Adshead, who would not be likely to attach his name lightly. His adhesion makes a prima facie case.

And the project is to build, over ten years, fifty new towns, one or more in each county, but not within twenty-five miles from London. These are to be not 'artistic' lay-outs of detached or semi-detached villas, "which are neither town nor country," but honest four-square blocks of joined-up houses not more than two storeys high—with balanced populations. This is a taker away of the breath indeed! I am all for dreams. But (Phew!) this! . . . I shall demand of all experts of my acquaintance their opinions on this fantasy.



R O M E R E N E W S R O M E

Some two thousand years ago those luxurious moderns, the ancient Romans, solved the problem of what we prosaically term 'constant hot-water supply.' As public baths, or rather communal washhouses, the *thermæ* were at once a form of social life and (in that densely-crowded world-capital of theirs) a very necessary provision of social hygiene. The Romans of the Empire soaked their bodies, voluptuously and publicly enough, in warm water. Cold made no appeal to them, for they did not dive or swim.

In the middle of the last century Robert Browning wrote two poems, "The Englishman in Italy" and "The Italian in England," to contrast life there and here. Today Italians and Englishmen have the same habits; the same, moreover, abroad as at home. Like every other nation, Fascist Italy uses hot water in privacy and disports publicly in cold.

And see what a magnificently civilizing transformation the Italy of Mussolini—younger as well as older

than Augustan Rome—has wrought in our conventional 'modern' *mise-en-scène* of that (originally English) urge to plunge and splash under an open sky! The sky here is the true *beau bleu ciel d'Italie*, fringed as it should be with classic umbrella-pines that mirror their stately tufts in living, not imprisoned, water which trickles ultimately into the drowsy Arno. From the pergola—in its native home for once, and mercifully divorced from northern suburban shams or Hollywood crudities—the view sweeps the vine-clad Chianti hills. Above the blue-tiled, Carrara-rimmed pool the clean lines of the diving-board, strong and functional as the Duce's commanding forefinger, point over Vallombrosa and the high green Apennines beyond to the ampler, freer life of air and space, sunshine and foliage—*A noi! à Noi!*

* * *

The view reproduced overleaf shows the Swimming Pool of the Ugolini Golf Club of Florence, designed by Gherardo Bosio.

PLATE iv. March 1935

P. MORTON SHAND

DECORATION

3

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW SUPPLEMENT

FLATS IN PARK LANE, LONDON

Felix Goldsmith, Architect

There have always been bow-windows looking on Park Lane. At No. 8 Seamore Place there are still bow-windows of neo-Georgian glass that keeps the early Georgian line. The whole exterior of the house, converted and brought up to date as a block of luxurious flats by Arundell Clarke, is remarkably faithful to its original design.

Two years ago Arundell Clarke bought the lease of No. 8, for the modest figure of £100. Afterwards purchasing No. 7, he knocked the two houses into one L-shaped building and constructed his flats by making every possible use of the original architecture. The doors, for example, still measure two feet six inches across, their former and typically early Georgian size. The walls stand exactly as they did.

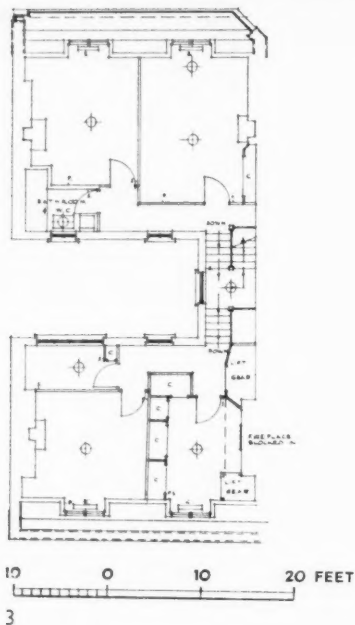
Where the original staircase of No. 7 stood, there is now an area running straight up through the house on which, from every floor, bathroom and kitchen windows face. The original staircase of No. 8 is now the main staircase for the building, modernized with the addition of ship windows.

Where the old kitchens were, on the lower ground floor, are now modern shops.

In the flat illustrated on page 124, it is interesting to observe an original ballroom with its Adam fireplace and panelling untouched, forming a beautifully spacious living-room.



1 and 2. The living-room and bedroom of a flat on the fifth floor at No. 8 Seamore Place, which can be thrown into one by opening the sliding partition. The woodwork and furniture are all Sabeli mahogany. The curtains and bedspread are of figured cotton cloth in pale cream colour. The upholstery and cushions are of dark brown Mowear. The colour of the walls and ceiling is broken white. All the furnishings here are by Arundell Clarke.



A Open balcony fitted with extending sunblind and flower boxes for shrubs and flowers.

B Glass writing table under porthole window with part of glass table top hinged as cover to waste paper receptacle under table.

C Spiral staircase to roof garden, walls fitted up with bookshelves.

D Glazed screens at each side of balcony for privacy and protection from wind.

E Low dividing wall gives increased feeling of space.

F Glazed sliding doors between hall and living room.

G Sliding partition between living room and bedroom with opening against outside wall gives uninterrupted window when open, and increased feeling of space.

H Cupboard under roof with sliding doors.

J Built-in writing table under window.

K Stairs up to roof garden from balcony.

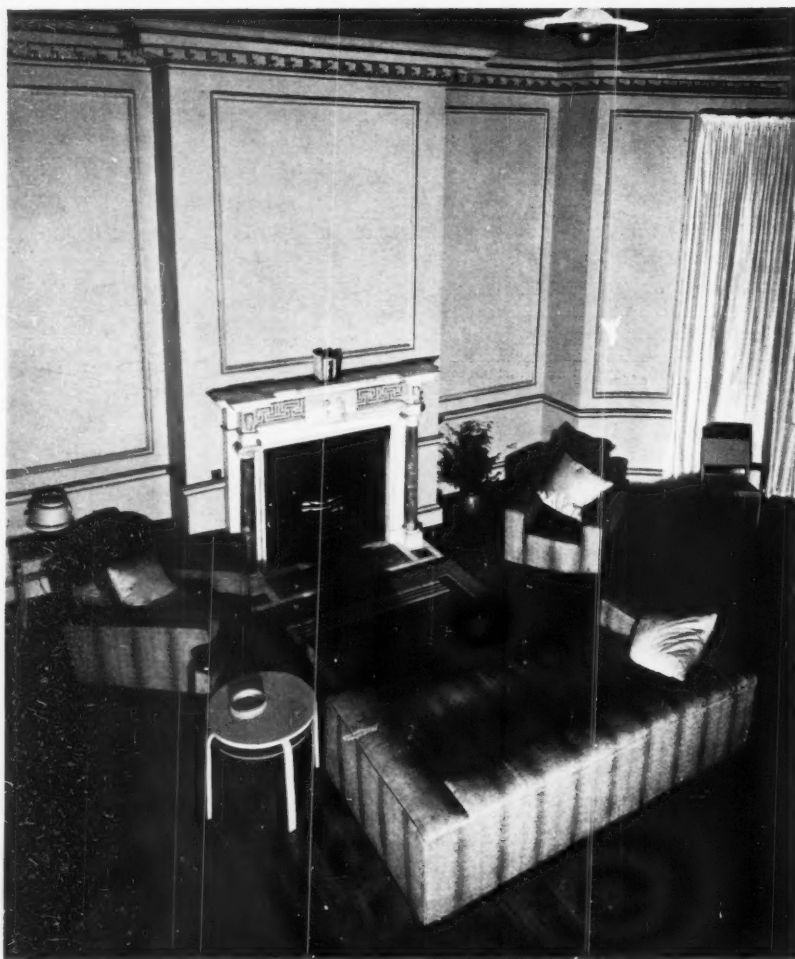




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3. The original plan of another fifth-floor flat. 4. The same plan after reconstruction. 5. The dressing room of this flat. The large circular glass is surrounded by tubular lights. The two doors, one leading to the hall and the other to the bathroom, are mirrors on the inside and covered with anodized aluminium on the outside.

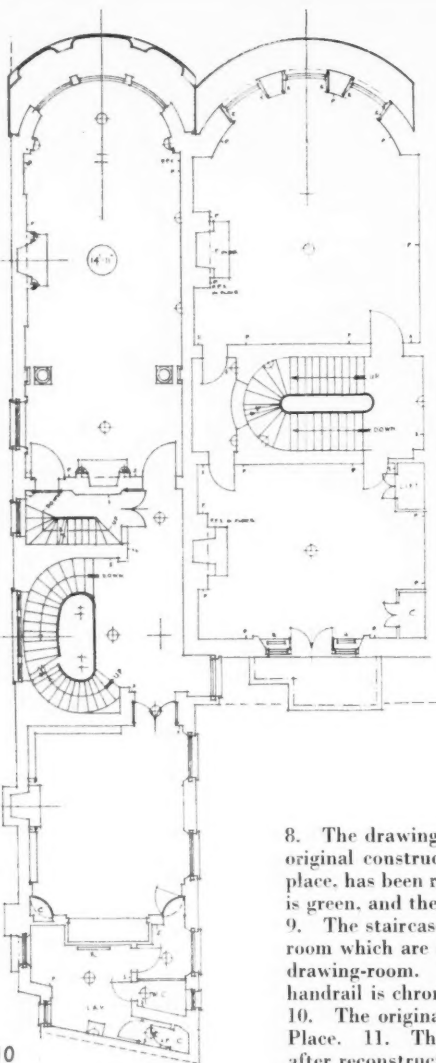
6 and 7. The living room. 6 shows the divan bed behind a low partition wall. The floor is of birch. The walls are covered with rough white plastic paint. The chairs are made of white sycamore, with yellow leather seats. The table is of wrought iron and green glass. The cocktail bar is anodized aluminium. The windows leading on to the balcony fold back completely, and are fitted with long white silk organdie curtains with two scarlet bands running along the top. The iron chairs on the balcony are from a French design, and have washable rainproof cushions.



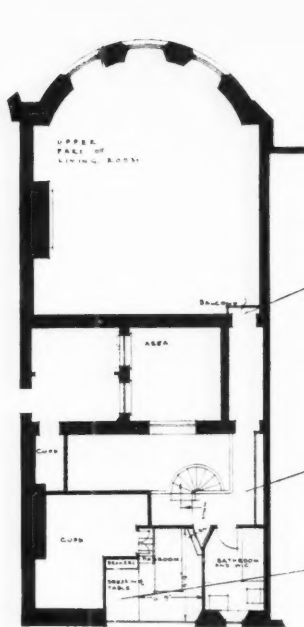
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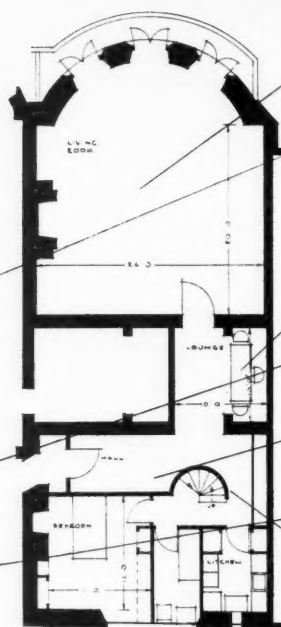
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10



11



L Original drawing room now living room.

M Balcony looking over living room.

N Dining recess under Mezzanine balcony.

O Balcony at head of stairs fitted with cupboards.

P Original bedroom now comprises hall stairs, balcony, kitchen, two bedrooms and two bathrooms.

Q Dressing table and cupboard fitted over bedroom on first floor.

R Spiral stairs up to Mezzanine.

8. The drawing-room of a flat on the first floor. Here the original construction, with the high ceiling and Adam fireplace, has been retained. The colour of the walls and ceiling is green, and the panelling is gold and green.

9. The staircase, leading to the second bedroom and bathroom which are on the same level as the upper half of the drawing-room. The wood is Indian burbinga, and the handrail is chromium.

10. The original first floor plan of Nos. 7 and 8 Seamore Place. 11. The first floor and mezzanine plans of No. 8 after reconstruction.

3. Façade and Function

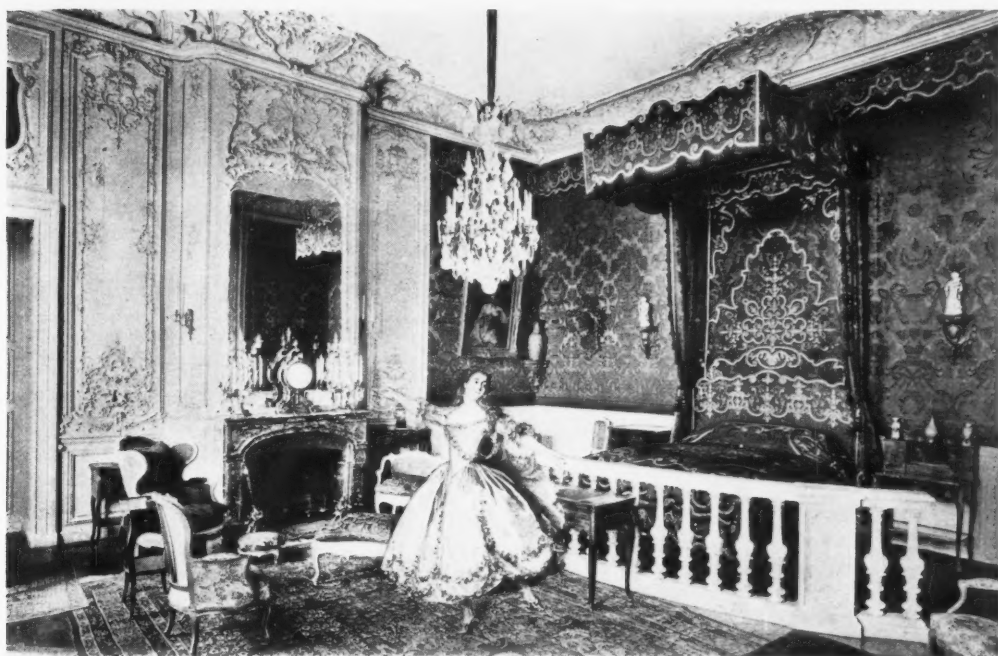
By Geoffrey Boumphrey

READERS were warned in the first article of this series that the path to be followed would probably be a rambling one, since, running through imperfectly-mapped country, it leads to an imperfectly-realized goal. Already I find myself at a dead-end. I must retrace my steps. The first half of the quest has proved abortive. If the evidence of Hollywood is to be taken seriously, the man in the street has no clear idea of what he *does* want: he is guided by nothing more definite than a vagrant fancy. I had suspected it—indeed, if I had not tried at the outset to clear my mind of all preconceived ideas, I might have known it. Oxford Street or Tottenham Court Road would have shown

it as convincingly as Hollywood. It would obviously be premature, with the scanty knowledge we have collected so far, to embark on the second part of our quest and enquire: Where is the artist going?—and I shall therefore make a cast in a slightly different direction and try to find out what the man in the street OUGHT to want. If I succeed in establishing this, the logic of our progress will be unimpaired, since the second part will fall into place as showing whether or no the artist does in fact look like giving him what we have decided he ought to have. Off we go again, then—and may some chromium-plated Lar speed our course and prosper our quest!

Confronted with the fact that the man-in-the-street has no clear idea of what he DOES want, I decide to find out instead what he OUGHT to want.

I have already announced my intention of staying a little longer in the congenial atmosphere of Hollywood (since one place is as good as another where no obvious course is laid down), and so—



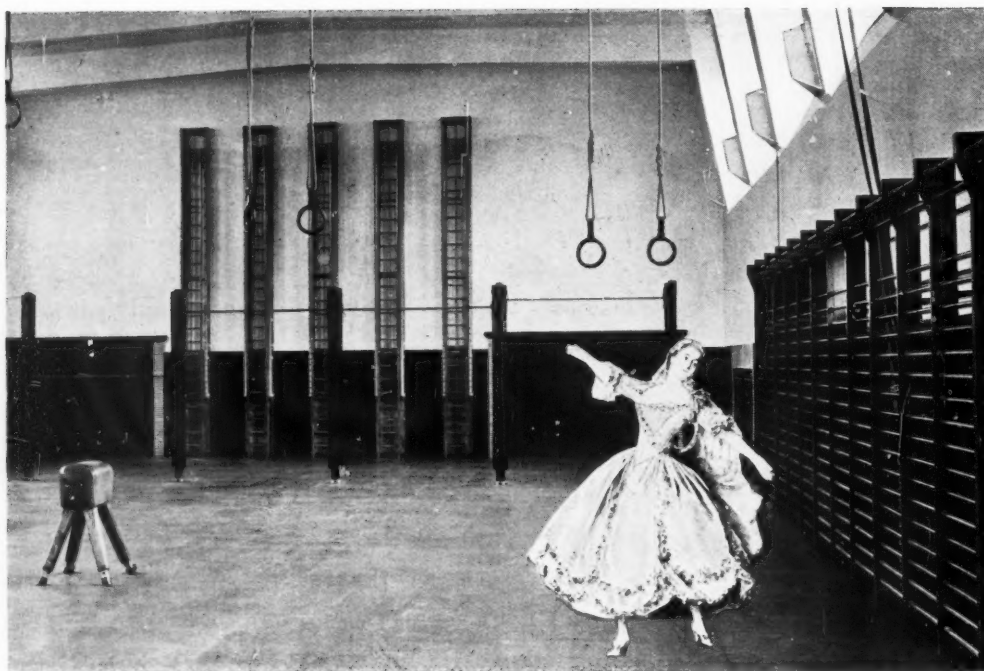
Here we have beauty and harmony, but appropriateness? No. Taste is not satisfied.

let me present to you Miss Millicent Mildew in her Hollywood home.

What do we notice? Miss Mildew has dressed herself to match her Louis XV furniture. The result is not unpleasing. It does not offend our sense of harmony, as did, for instance, the picture of Miss Ida Lupino in her Victorian apartment. What does this mean? *Clothes are part of the decoration.* Remember that, please: I shall come back to it. Already a chance sentence in the preceding article brought us to the verge of it: without doubt it will crop up again. Indeed it is a corollary of our Second Principle, "A room should represent an extension of its owner's tastes, appearance or personality." But let us look a little deeper, calling to mind the Oxford Dictionary's definition of "taste" as "the sense of what is appropriate, harmonious or beautiful." Harmony we have already con-

ceded; no man of feeling could grudge the use of the word "beauty"—but what of "appropriate"? Is a Louis costume truly appropriate to Miss Mildew's method of living? I am deplorably ignorant about the details of life at the court of Louis XV, since I did not pursue the reading of historical novels beyond my teens; but it does seem to me probable that in every important respect except eating, sleeping and making love (and even here there must have been considerable variations in technique) it must have differed very considerably from life at Hollywood today. No, it will not do. Clothes are an integral part of decoration—but fancy dress cannot be allowed. Triumphant I extract our Third Canon of Interior Decoration: "Modern decoration should suit modern dress—and modern dress suit modern life."

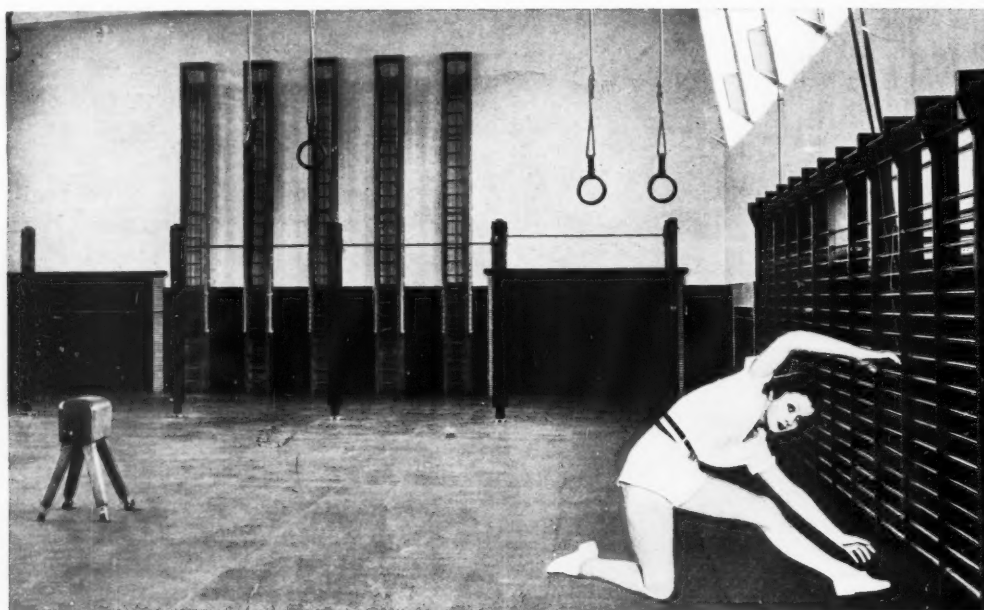
An important corollary is unearthed and a Third Principle enunciated.



The conflict between
Façade and Function.

But what is this? As if to confirm the soundness of our reasoning, Miss Mildew has walked through into her gymnasium. The conflict between habit and habits becomes ludicrously plain; there is no need

to labour the point further. But can't we gather something from a closer scrutiny? WHY is our eye so offended by the juxtaposition of fancy dress and gymnasium? The answer splits decoration in two!



Harmony between
Façade and Function.

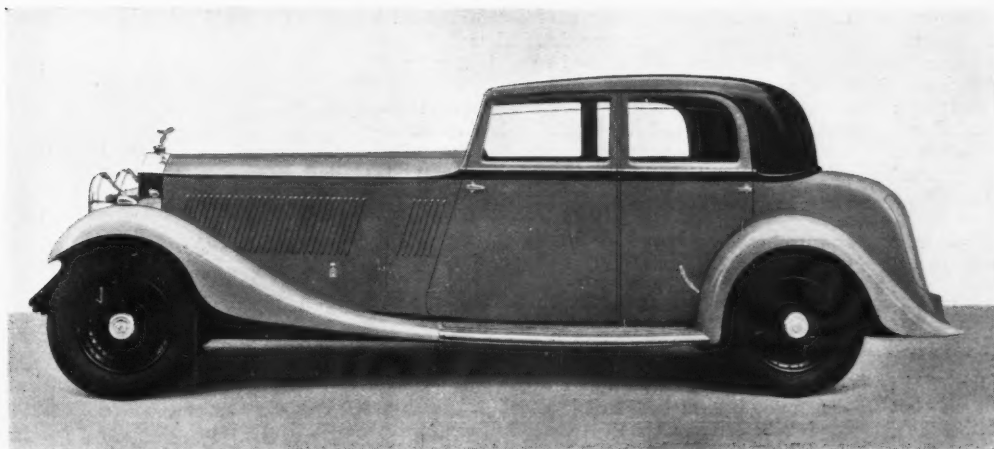
But before I give it—to heighten the suspense no less than the contrast—let me slip in this charming view of Miss Ida Lupino in her gymnasium. Here, it will surely be agreed, star, costume and setting are all of a piece—and a very nice piece too! But we must tear our eyes reluctantly away and get back to Miss Mildew (whose likeness to Camargo increases every minute). Clearly, the trouble is that

Miss Mildew's dress is suggesting one thing; her gymnasium suggests another. And what do they suggest? The gym., function—the dress, façade. Only a special imprint in red could do justice to the importance of this discovery. The coloured ink is denied me; but I can at least accord each aspect the distinction of a separate analysis.

Lest it be said, however, that I have arranged a ludicrous and unlikely incongruity in order to make my point, let me take a common object of the English road-side—or perhaps I should say, of the road-centre: a Rolls-Royce motor car. I take a Rolls-Royce because nothing in the world has contributed in a

greater degree to British prestige since Clive climbed the steeple at Market Drayton as a preliminary to conquering India and thus affording Mr. Winston Churchill an unlimited opportunity for the exercise of dialectic. The makers of the Rolls-Royce can well afford to ignore the carping of a mere pencil-pusher.

The “conflict” is
unlikely, you say—



Here, then, is a Rolls-Royce. It is a beautiful thing. Almost anyone would admit as much—though there are those who would maintain that its beauty is of a different order from that of, say,

the Mona Lisa. Yes, it is a beautiful thing, suggesting speed and comfort, endurance, silence—and innumerable technical problems almost perfectly solved.

but what

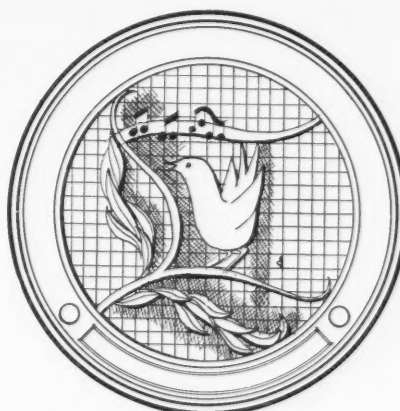
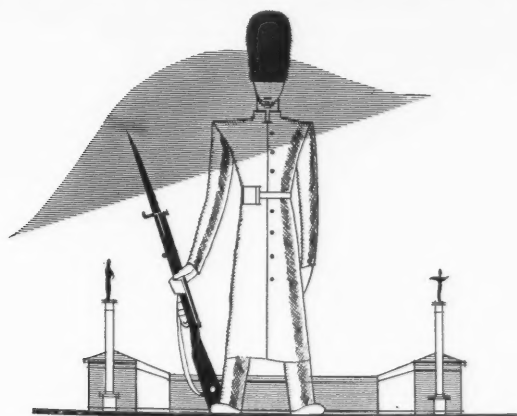
of



THIS

And here is its mascot! This wind-swept nymph, this billow of wooden draperies, is intended to accentuate the impression of all those desirable qualities in a motor-car already superlatively well conveyed by the bare design of the car itself. Is not

this just Miss Mildew and her gymnasium all over again? And if further proof were wanted of the conflict between function and façade, it would not be difficult to point to a thousand examples on every hand :—



or these?

The rifle and the busby, the fatuous loud-speaker grille—it is a lucky day when we are not confronted with dozens of them.

Let us now analyse façade. What does the word mean? Generally today—and especially by the younger school of modernists (or by the more modernistic of our youngsters) it is used as a term of abuse—much as our great-aunts would say: “My dear—she powders!” There is an almost exact parallel to be noted in the layman’s use of the word “veneer.” To him veneering is a method of covering up blemishes or faults of workmanship, a cheap way of achieving a flashy and insincere result. He has no notion that veneering is or has been a fine art, and that a sheet of veneer may reveal beauties of grain never to be glimpsed in the solid wood. It is difficult to avoid a feeling of malicious

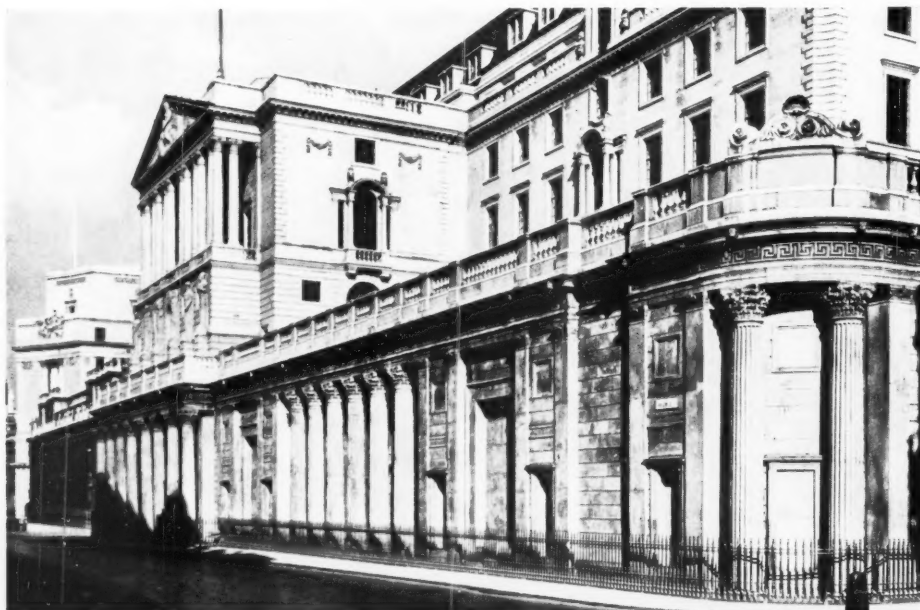
satisfaction in thus tumbling the bigoted modernist into the same galley as the despised man in the street. Have we not cause? For hundreds of years—indeed, from the Stone Age until about the beginning of the present century—mankind has been piling, in life, manners, painting, architecture and letters, façade upon façade. And this applies with greatest truth to the more cultured sections. At one time the word was almost synonymous with civilization. Then what has happened? Are we to condemn the whole of tradition, and maintain with superb conceit that to us alone has it been given to see the Light? I think not.

**An analysis of façade—
which has the
effect of throwing the
modernist into curious
company.**

Civilization broke down with the coming of the Industrial Age; façade went on. It went on—but without . . . without the meaning behind it. Like a word that is used too often. “Peculiar” once meant “especial” in the proprietary sense. In these days of democracy, when the right of the individual to be an individual is being yearly curtailed, it has

a derogatory significance: it means “odd—unlike the majority—and therefore foolish.” Again, coming back more closely to our subject, “artificial” could once be applied to works of merit: now it means merely “sham.” So with façade. Its use continued, growing more and more meaningless, until today we think of it as

Façade prostituted.



The mask of Mammon.

something essentially meaningless, masking something full of meaning.

Let us probe into the nature of this meaning façade has lost, or of the meaning it now hides from us. Are they perhaps the same? I have already implied—though tacitly—that it is something which should be not hidden but revealed. What are the facts most worth knowing about any material object? Surely its purpose and its structure. I realize that I can produce no incontrovertible proof of this assertion—but does not the solipsist dismiss as unproved and unprovable every statement but “I feel,” all else having to be accepted as “given?” We shall never get on if we dig too deeply. This is an article on decoration, not on philosophy. I can only “give” my assertion in all good faith, and state that in my opinion it appears to be true. Those who cannot accept it had better read no further. Mankind has always been plagued by a desire to get to the meaning of life. The seed of a plant, the organs of a body, the structure of a substance—these things hold the “how” and perhaps, if we could glimpse it, the “wherefore” as well. They are, at least, the nearest we can get to the

reality of life. Façade may cover them, hide them from the casual glance, ornament them; but let it bury them too deeply, belie their quality or existence—and one of the fundamental needs of human nature is starved. Is it far wrong to proceed from this and suggest that the highest purpose of façade is—if not to emphasize—at least to provide an agreeable background or accompaniment to the purpose and the structure, the wherefore and the how? Accept this, and we see a reason for the ill-repute into which façade has lately fallen among sensitive people. Façade can be right, provided it be founded on a living convention; it must be wrong if its foundation is nothing more solid than fancy; it can be right at one time, wrong at another: right here, wrong there. In this difficult piece of research I have undertaken we shall have to return more than once to what we may surely write down as the Fourth Canon of Interior Decoration: “The purpose of façade is to embellish the wherefore and the how, the function and the structure—and not to belie them.”

**Our analysis takes us
into rather deep
waters, but we emerge
with breath enough to
risk another plunge**

after

Function.

And now let us see what Function is.

[To be continued]

ANTHOLOGY

Vulgarity in Art

Where popular art is vulgar, there the life of the people is also essentially vulgar in its emotional quality. The popular arts in our industrialized communities are of an unprecedented vulgarity. Why should this be? The nature of contemporary vulgarity has been well illustrated and analysed by Mr. Leavis and Mr. Denys Thompson *Culture and Environment*. At the end of it is a series of questions, intended for the use of teachers. One is worded, 'Do you know of any ugly building, furniture, tools, etc., before 1820? Account, so far as you can, for your findings.' The context makes it clear that one is supposed to answer the question in the negative. And, of course, if one is an uncritical archaeologist, one never does see any ugliness in the productions of earlier civilizations. But for any sensitive and unprejudiced person, a walk through any museum of decorative art, through any old town, brings instant proof that the pre-industrial age was rich in all manner of ugliness and ineptitude.

The truth is, of course, that most art has inevitably always been either bad or indifferent. Artistic talent is an extremely rare phenomenon; therefore good art is extremely uncommon. The only substitute—and it is at best a partial substitute—for personal talent is a good artistic tradition. This enables people with little talent to produce good work because it relieves them of the necessity for using their own tenth-rate imaginations. A good tradition may be defined as the ghosts of good dead artists dictating to bad living artists. So long as the bad artists listen to the dictations, and make no attempt to launch out on their own account, they will produce good derivative work. But an artistic tradition need not necessarily be good. For generations the ghosts of bad artists may dictate to other bad artists; the results, when that happens, are deplorable.

The badness and vulgarity of modern popular art are the result of a number of interlocking causes. The most important are the increase of population; the improvement of old techniques for treating raw materials and the invention of new ones; the rise of the standard of living; and, finally, the development within the arts themselves of new and more powerful modes of expression. The general improvement of technical processes has helped to bring about the general deterioration of taste. We pray that we may not be led into temptation; and with good reason. For it is opportunity that makes most of the murderers, the thieves, the adulterers. Opportunity, too, that makes most of the vulgarians. One fact emerges clearly from the history of art: that whenever men have had the means to be vulgar, they have generally succumbed to the temptation. Vulgarity is always the result of some excess; and the means to vulgarity are therefore means to the realization in practice of an inward tendency toward the excessive. These are of two kinds, economic and technical.

'It pays to advertise' is a maxim as old as civilization. The rich and eminent members of every society have

always spent a certain proportion of their incomes on display. They have paid copy-writers and poster-designers to 'put them across' in nation-wide publicity drives. Sometimes these copy-writers were called Virgil or Spenser, these poster-designers, Holbein or Velasquez or Tiepolo. But often the ruler's or the rich man's desire for publicity has been gratified by artists of inferior quality. Hence, from the tomb of Tutankhamen to the Queen Victoria Memorial, those innumerable monuments of vulgarity which constitute, in such large measure, what is beautifully called the World's Artistic Heritage. Folk-art is often dull or insignificant; never vulgar, and for an obvious reason. Peasants lack, first, the money, and, second, the technical skill to achieve those excesses which are the essence of vulgarity. Vulgarity has always been the privilege of the prosperous. The general rise in the standard of living has meant a general increase in vulgarity. For the first time in the world's history the small bourgeoisie and even part of the proletariat have been able to treat themselves to the luxuries previously reserved to members of the ruling class. Conspicuous among these luxuries is artistic vulgarity.

So much for the economic means to vulgarity. The technical means are of two kinds—those concerned primarily with the treatment of matter, and those with the invisible entities in a work of art: ideas and emotions. Wherever artists find much technical difficulty in imposing form on brute matter, art tends to be simple, severe, and chaste. It cannot be anything else. Luxuri-ance, unchastity and consequent vulgarity become possible only when men have acquired almost complete mastery over matter. It is when they can express themselves freely that artists begin to reveal their true character. The man of delicate and noble talent will express freely his delicacy and nobility; the man whose talent is coarse and vulgar will be able at last to give free rein to his coarseness and vulgarity. This is why any improvement in the techniques of subduing matter to spirit is always attended by an increase in vulgarity. Only an artist of exceptional austerity can make a temperate use of the resources of a highly developed technology. Significantly enough, many sensitive artists of this age have adopted towards modern technique an attitude analogous to that of a hermit towards the pleasures of the world. Fearful of temptation, they retire into the desert—an artificial desert of their own making, a little oasis of technical aridity in the midst of the prevailing luxuriance. They are perhaps wise. Personally, however, I should have admired them more if they had faced the problem a little more courageously—gone out into the luxuriance and tried to master it.

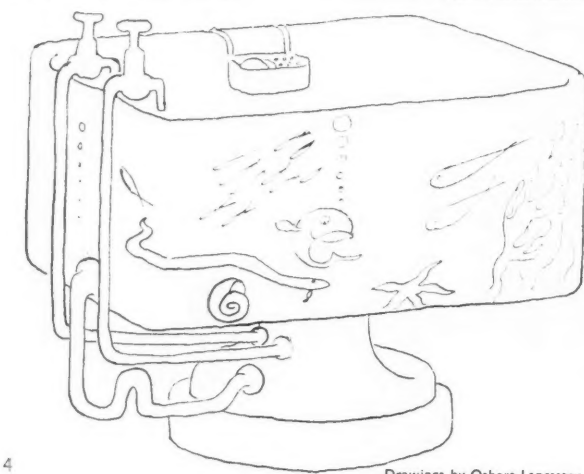
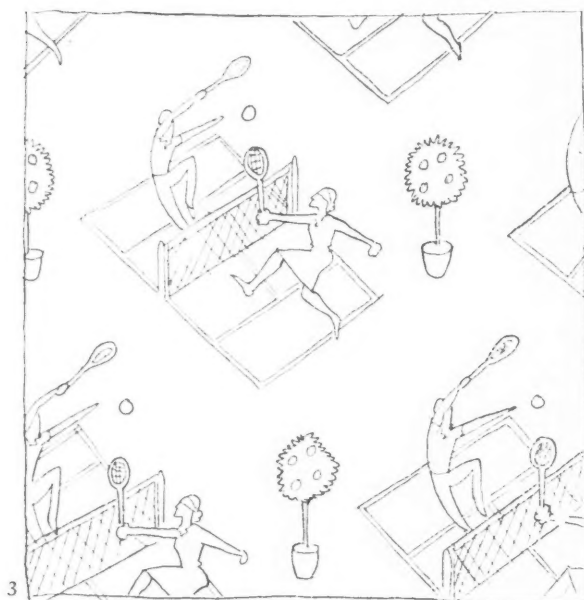
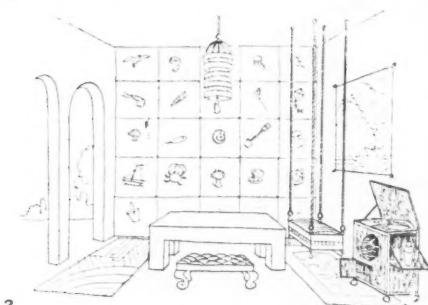
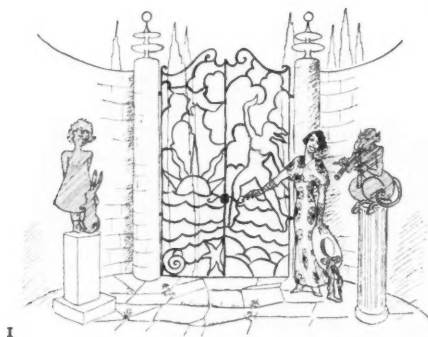
What is the upshot of it all? So far as I can see, it is this: that the vulgarity which characterizes our industrial civilization is part of the inevitable result or concomitant of our prosperity, our universal instruction, our technical progress, our urbanization, our self-consciousness.

ALDOUS HUXLEY.

* * *

The vulgarity of particular shapes is of secondary importance compared with the vulgar futility of thought which creates them.

DELACROIX.



Drawings by Osbert Lancaster.

Under the intriguing title of "Art and the Seaside," the authorities of Pelvis Bay have determined to hold an exhibition of industrial art in its relation to everyday life at the seaside. All the arrangements for the exhibition, which it is hoped will be opened early in the summer, are in the hands of a local committee, under the presidency of O. Leo Graph, Esq., A.R.A., who will work in the closest co-operation with local firms. The committee are doubly fortunate, not only have they Mr. Graph, so well known for his charming studies of rose-gardens, but also they can count on the support and advice of that veteran architect, Sir Septimus Ogive, who, it will be recalled, scored his first architectural success at Pelvis Bay, namely the church of St. James-the-Least, erected in 1875.

In order to illustrate the scope of the exhibition the editor has been kind enough to allow me to reproduce a few of the projected designs.

1. This shows a pair of beautiful modern wrought iron gates that is hoped will form the entrance to the garden section. The two exquisite examples of modern sculpture on either side are by Lead Gnomes, Ltd.; the gates themselves are the product of the Jardiniere Workshops. The charming figure in the foreground is Miss Bulp, the Pelvis Bay Tramway Queen of 1935 who, it is hoped, will open the exhibition in person.

2. Here we have a charming apartment, half playroom, half loggia, without which any seaside house will in future be incomplete. It contains many unique and interesting fittings; notice particularly the far wall, which is covered completely with glass panels, on each of which has been engraved a charming design drawn from the objects of everyday life on the seashore. The couch on the right is interesting, being designed on entirely new lines; instead of the ordinary legs usually found on a piece of furniture of this sort it is suspended from the ceiling by ropes! Notice, too, the interesting piece of furniture also on the right. This is a combination wireless-gramophone, cocktail bar and cigar cabinet made in the very rare Burmese Hooey-wood, highly polished and finished with chromium steel fittings, an article of furniture which, we make so bold as to prophesy, will soon be as indispensable in the modern home as the bathroom. On the wall behind hangs a reproduction, in sand-blasted glass, of Leo Graph, A.R.A.'s, well-known painting "The Modern Viking."

3. Here is an exhibit from the textile section, a design for a modern chintz, especially intended for holiday time, by Kraftiart, Ltd., called, appropriately enough "Le Tennis."

4. This is probably one of the most interesting objects of all; to some of the more conservative of us it may, at first, seem almost frightening in its uncompromising modernity, but one can never impede Progress for long, and it was bound to come sooner or later — the Revolving Bath! Finished in synthetic malachite with a fish design inlaid in coloured glass, it can be turned round to point in any direction desired by merely pressing a button! It will easily be realized what a miracle of modern plumbing it constitutes, and when one reflects on the seemingly insuperable difficulties that have been overcome by the designers, the price, barely 75 per cent. more than the normal for this class of article, appears amazingly reasonable.

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

MARGINALIA

Some Press Criticisms

of the

Royal Academy Exhibition of British Art in Industry

Anthony Blount in "The Spectator"

Take the vulgarity of Tottenham Court Road, the sham modernity of Wigmore Street, the expensiveness of Bond Street, some of the ability to display goods which is associated with Selfridge's, add to the whole thing a touch of the self-conscious pomposity which these goods feel at being under the impressive patronage of the Royal Academy, and you will have some picture of the Exhibition of British Art in Industry.

It was a shock to find that almost every quality which disfigured industrial objects of the nineteenth century was present here.

"The Times"

It must be said at once that the setting of the exhibition . . . is more elaborate than it need have been. There is not likely to be any more severe criticism than that it cost about £20,000 to stage. A reasonable comment would be that, if it costs all that money to show that British manufacturers are capable of artistic design, there must be something wrong somewhere. The true matter for congratulation would have been the possibility of saying that the whole exhibition had been produced at a cost of £500 or thereabouts . . . The boudoir of the duchess is no longer the secret aspiration of the average middle-class home. To take a concrete illustration of what is intended, the "Garden Dining Room," designed by Mr. Oliver Hill, with its marble wall covering, is an excellent exhibition piece, but it can hardly be said to go to the roots of the problem of Art in Industry as it affects the majority.

To sum up first impressions—this is, taken as a whole, a flirtation between art and industry rather than a genuine marriage for human nature's daily needs.

C. B. Purdom in "Reynolds's Illustrated News"

. . . An attempt to humbug the public. I found nothing but the ghosts of nineteenth-century art craftsmen which the triumph of the machine was supposed to have laid. Here they are as large as life. What have these tiaras and beauty-cases and biscuit-boxes to do with industry? Nothing.

Did you say this is vulgarity rather than

art? I am not surprised. The Burlington House Exhibition is an insult to twentieth-century British industry. What is its relation to mass-production and the machine? None. What is there in this Exhibition for the ordinary man and woman who wants something decent for their own home? Nothing.

Herbert Read in "The Listener"

The Specimen Rooms are the very crux of the exhibition, but here our misgivings are gravest. The Prince of Wales, in a speech at the Guildhall, which the organizers of the exhibition have put before us as a model of their aims, said very bluntly and forcibly: "You must give consideration to another greater and far more important ideal, designing and working for the majority instead of the needs of the minority." In this gallery devoted to "the type of rooms which one would find on the ground floor of a house" we should have had something to instruct and inspire the majority of people to a better way of living. Here we find, for example, a dining-room with a dado of goatskin, a frieze of peach mirror, furniture in Canadian maple, more goatskin on the chairs . . . and other such exotic furnishings: cost, significantly, not stated. Next to it is what is called a "garden dining-room," designed by Oliver Hill. Its walls are covered with marble, sandblasted with cartoons, the table and stools are of "marble-stuc," there is a marble floor . . . and, appropriately, a wine-cooler filled with bottles of hock and champagne. There is a hall designed by Edward Maufe, very bright and elegant in the Swedish style: . . . with a decorative glass figure and other stylish oddments. There is a sitting-room designed by Oswald P. Milne. In this case some of the prices are given. For example, the marble fireplace and mirror above with brilliant cut pink mirror pelmet and acid-embossed pink and blue side-panels costs £35. The complete room, with its furniture, cannot cost much less than £200.

In Gallery IV there is a nursery for the children of the very rich (the dresser alone, tastefully designed in silver birch and lime tree, with painted decorations, costs £32 10s.) and there are bathrooms and bedrooms in the same plutocratic tradition.

We are informed that the decorative circles on the counters represent the first successful instance of hand-hammered Stay-brite steel. But why hammer steel by hand when it can be hammered more cheaply and efficiently by machinery? And why, in any case, spoil the beautifully slick natural surface of the material by hammering it at all?

Most of the exhibits are in traditional forms that have been current for a century or more. Josiah Wedgwood and Sons' new departures . . . do not show the instinctive rightness of the original Wedgwood patterns. The glassware, displayed in a gallery designed and arranged by E. Maxwell Fry, easily the best piece of exhibition craft in the whole exhibition, is the only room which is specifically modern in conception and atmosphere.

A platinum brooch, "entitled RAIN, consisting of a tree and series of clouds modelled in diamonds with baguette diamond drops falling on umbrellas made of semi-precious stones," can hardly be called an example of industrial art; besides, this little *jeu d'esprit* costs £285. The medals, with one or two exceptions, are worthy of the country with the worst designed coinage and postage-stamps in the world.

The leatherware is an example of obvious mismanagement. Our trunks and saddlery are the admiration of the whole world. But we are informed that these articles have been excluded for want of space. Instead, we have a miscellaneous display of ladies' handbags, pochettes, blotters, etc. A walk down Bond Street is more rewarding than a visit to this section. The dress materials are dowdy in general effect, arranged without any variety or imagination. Commercial printing (mainly posters) is remarkable for the absence of some of our best poster designers (McKnight Kauffer and Paul Nash, for example).

In my opinion, the exhibition shows no consciousness of the nature of the real problem involved, it contains little or nothing that is significant for the future of industrial design: it excludes, for reasons which may be sound commercially or nationalistically, the best designs which are available to the disinterested purchaser.

Edmund Dulac in a Letter to "The Listener"

Mr. W. R. M. Lamb's introductory explanation of the aims and principles of the Exhibition is destined to give the impression that the exhibits represent the results of *two years'* effort on the part of the Royal Academy and the Society of Arts to bring together artists and manufacturers in order to stimulate improvement in industrial design. A visit to Burlington House hardly confirms these claims. One would expect to find there (a) evidence of improvement in such industries that, so far, had neglected or refused to consider the problem; (b) evidence that such improvement, thanks to these efforts, had spread from the luxury article to the goods and gadgets that are within the range of the ordinary man's purse.

What the exhibition does show is (a) that

an already well-established association between certain manufacturers and artists existed long before this exhibition was thought of. Such examples of improvement in design as may be found in the majority of the exhibits have been on the market for a considerable time; (b) that this improvement either has not spread beyond the luxury article, or that manufacturers who can produce articles and gadgets of good design at a reasonable price have not been invited to contribute.

The pioneer claims of the Royal Academy and the Royal Society of Arts can only be substantiated in one or two isolated instances: here the spirit behind the "strenuous work" of these two societies springs from the same old misunderstanding of the problem that has always hindered a possible solution. They have done no more than to oblige the reluctant manufacturer to commission some well-known artist to design an object: a method which, however good the individual results may be, is more likely to discourage than to stimulate general improvement in industrial design, for the reason that, in such cases, the artist produces a work of art instead of a commercially suitable design, and is paid a price which, in the opinion of the manufacturer, makes further experiments undesirable.

The exhibition shows nothing to prove that in these two years of preparation still timid manufacturers have been persuaded to stop flooding the market with imitations or adaptations of all forms of art, including the modern variety, or prevailed upon to engage the permanent services of some qualified individual competent to re-educate their designers in good design within the scope of their particular industry. As things are, a more accurate description of the aims and principles of this exhibition would be that it was intended to give official sanction to certain forms of improved design *already existing*, and to avoid controversies by ignoring some of the more interesting. Whatever good may result from this consecration the manner of conferring it can only perpetuate the misunderstanding between design and decoration, and also give the world the mistaken impression that in matters of industrial design England is smugly keeping at a safe distance behind foreign countries.

Raymond Mortimer in "The New Statesman and Nation"

The exhibition is misnamed: it is chiefly concerned not with Art in Industry but with Decorative Art. The general impression is deeply disappointing—the exhibits are for the most part both cautious and vulgar. The specimen rooms are particularly bad. Mr. Oliver Hill stages a dining-room in which it is impossible to visualize real persons eating real food—pure Hollywood. Miss Betty Joel has managed to produce a revolving bed, and Mr. Robert Lutyens has cudgelled his brains to invent an original library table. Since tables in the past have always stood on legs, how modern it would be to hang one from the ceiling! Such are our fashionable

decorators' ideas of modernity. Apart from a few excellently simple pieces, the furniture is deplorable. It is a mistake to hold up to admiration stuff which contradicts every principle of design. The furnishing fabrics are so folded that the design is invisible. Moreover, they are arranged in groups according to their prevailing colour, with a resulting general impression of no colour at all. In any case, the timidity of the designers in the use of colour is shocking. I was reminded of a famous American interior decorator who exclaimed upon seeing the Parthenon "That's my colour—beige!" The dress materials are perhaps the feeblest things in the show: you would see better stuffs better arranged in any big London draper's. There are hardly any cloths and tweeds, for which this country retains a world reputation. The silver is lamentable: and the poster exhibit, which might have been excellent, is curiously ill-chosen: how the committee could have omitted the best Shell and Underground posters is quite incomprehensible.

The surprising weakness of this Exhibition is an inevitable result of the way in which it was planned. The selecting committees consist chiefly of the manufacturers whom it should have been the object of the committee to advise and educate. Many of the most necessary classes of applied art are not represented: lampshades, electric light fittings, stair carpets, linen, door handles, gramophones, office furniture, motor equipment, electric fires, geysers, and lots of the other ordinary objects of life in which improved design is so important. At best one or two such objects may be included in the specimen rooms. The attempt to be modern consists chiefly in lifeless imitation of Swedish mannerisms. A small section of the opulent bourgeoisie will find their taste here reflected in libraries for those who cannot read, in dining-rooms for those who cannot talk, in emerald necklaces and revolving beds for expensive tarts. But for that vast section of the population which is rather helplessly looking for better objects at a possible price, the Exhibition of Art in Industry is worse than no exhibition at all. For the standards it sets are both costly and depraved.

"Design for Today"

The title of the exhibition—British Art in Industry—is significant. British Art is obviously conceived as apart from industry, something to be grafted on it—the old Victorian theory of applied art: the Royal Academy supplying the art in much the same way as the baker pipes decorations on a wedding cake.

In February, 1934, it was already quite clear that the organizers . . . had no contact with industry and no vision of the extent to which art had already entered into every section of life. If we keep that in mind we can arrive at some understanding of what is now displayed. It provides material for the equipment of a highly expensive modern flat furnished and planned on Edwardian lines. It makes, quite subtly but unmistakably, class distinctions as between that section of the population

which is sufficiently endowed with wealth to afford the frills and fantasies of the Royal Academy and that vastly greater section of the population which has got to live by, and use, the products of industrial design.

Entering this exhibition, therefore, armed to the teeth with national pride, what do we see? The first piece is a re-draft of a Chinese screen in black and gold—bang in front of you, through the octagonal hall. Turn left and you see a series of interiors arranged in shop window formation within a large hall, the environment of which is Venetian. All of the interiors exhibited reveal the fact that Sweden of 1924 and Paris of 1925 have contributed not a little to the origin of the exhibits. Of the dress fabrics and furnishing fabrics the same may be said, plus most of the furniture and rugs. In plan (if such there be), the most important element of an exhibition, no ingenuity is apparent. Display—is pretty in parts, if you like interior decoration as shown in the best Mayfair manner.

One word about the catalogue. Does this not come under the heading of Industrial Art? If so why was its make-up and design not considered of sufficient importance to be done well, and for today? Here some note could have been struck to show that we are really not so deep in the track of *bad tradition*.

I feel that any foreigner's impressions of what England has to offer—from this exhibition—would have little to do with industrial art, but a great deal to do with how people with incomes beginning from five thousand pounds a year and up could amuse themselves. The steel furnaces of Sheffield, the iron works of Birmingham, the potteries of Burslem and the cotton mills of Manchester have very little say at Burlington House.

"The Builder"

We enter and ascend stairs decorated with bunches of almost Gargantuan artificial flowers of the poorest character, followed by the chromium-steel fronts to the catalogue stalls, which might appal the bravest. Whether the public will be drawn to see so much of what is already to be seen in the stores and shops, a great part of which is hardly suited to the ordinary purse and way of living, is open to some doubt; and why this exhibition is being held of all places in the Royal Academy of Arts is a question being asked and difficult to answer.

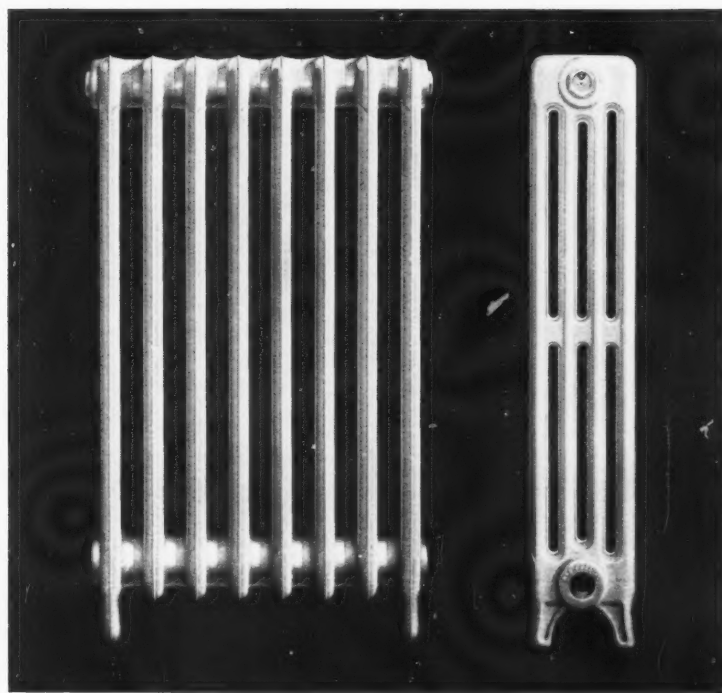
A garden dining-room by Mr. Oliver Hill, its back-wall demonstrating the process of sand-blasting of marble and stone, eliminates the nature of the material, and is, in effect, reminiscent of the "Lincrusta Walton" wallpapers of years ago: otherwise the table and eight stools might be suitable enough for the opulence they suggest. It must be observed that throughout this exhibition there is more for "society" than the man in the street.

"The Studio"

The exhibition marks a great step forward and will lead on naturally to further advances.

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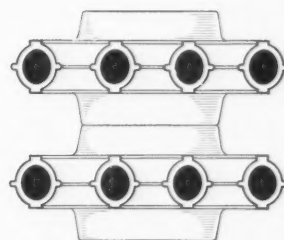
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Trade News and Reviews

By Brian Grant

Much Ado about Art

Has there ever been such a babel—so many writers, so many speakers all writing and talking about "Art" and about "Design"? So very much chatter and so very little apparent progress.

"Design and Industry," "Art and Industry," "Art in Industry," "Industrial Art," "Commercial Art," "Design for Living," "Architectural Design," AND SO ON—really, there's no end to it.

To the ordinary interested onlooker it is all depressingly confusing. There are the interminable expressions—"Modern Art," "Modern Design," "Contemporary Art," "Contemporary Design," "Functionalism," "Fitness-for-purpose," and so on, all of which, one gathers, stand for practically the same thing. And then we have that new word "Modernismus," coined by Sir Reginald Blomfield and hurled rather contemptuously at the heads of all those artists

and architects concerned with the advancement of what has come to be known as "The Modern Movement."

Yes, it is all depressingly confusing and many a stout heart and good average intelligence is likely to sink despairingly beneath this welter of high falutin' language.

What are we to understand by the term "Art in Industry"? It is this very small word "ART" and the misconstruction of its meaning that has led to the production of so much that is appalling and futile. We have been in the habit of writing so lyrically of "art" and of the temperament of the artist that the average man who lives in the street, sometimes a very mean street, has come to think of it as remote and luxurious—not for the likes of him! To quote Professor Lethaby, "Too much writing about art, over-splashed with purple and dazzling with paradox, seems to have entirely confused ordinary people." I don't know exactly to what section of the public the



"Design is not some curious contortion of form, or some super-added atrocity."

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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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Professor refers when he speaks of "ordinary people," but a recent event in the neighbourhood of Bond Street and Piccadilly proves very conclusively that this sad state of confusion exists in the minds of people who ought to know better, people who would, I imagine, wax very indignant if the classification "ordinary" were applied to them.

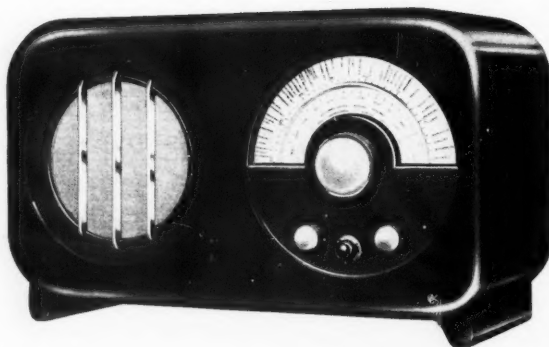
Lethaby has told us that "Art is thoughtful workmanship," "Art is the element of good quality in all production."

Eric Gill has said, "Art is deliberate skill used for the good of something to be made, not for the good of the maker, nor for the good of the buyer, but for the good of the thing itself."

Herbert Read tells us "Art is more than skill; skill is purely functional: art begins where function ends."

Of these three definitions I find Gill's the most to my liking, but when he says "nor for the good of the buyer" he would appear to imply that "cost of production" is a factor that must be ignored, AND "cost of production" is a factor that *cannot* be ignored.

John Gloag in his book, *Industrial Art Explained*, says, "Industrial art begins when the aesthetic judgment of a designer is employed to determine the character of a manufactured article." Thank you, Mr.



Design rationally subordinated to function, material and process. An Ekco radio cabinet in bakelite designed by Wells Coates.

Gloag, for those few words—they help tremendously.

I believe that most simply and generally, industrial art may be thought of as the "well making of what needs making," and that there are two virtues that must essentially be present before an article can be referred to as "well made"—the virtue of "good design" and the virtue of "good construction."

There are many who will argue that if an article is well constructed it is *ipso facto* well designed. With that creed I cannot agree, nor do I think it right to say

that "art begins where function ends"—art and function, designer and constructor (or technician) must be partners and co-dictators from the word "go."

Professor Lethaby in his *Form in Civilization* wrote, "It is necessary that we should come to closer terms with design in all our industries, yet it is hardly a paradox to say that we think too much about it, puzzle over the questions involved, and offer frantic solutions rather than serene and confident ones. Design is not some curious contortion of form, or some super-added atrocity, but it should rather be conceived of as the fitting of means to ends in the production of works which are good, each in their own order. The manufacturer must often puzzle over what will sell, and indeed it must be a madden-

ing problem: but let him rather recast the problem into 'What is good, what is the best that can be done for a given price?' and the question of design will at once be simplified if not solved."

In all industrial art there are three factors which must govern production—fitness for purpose, design and cost. Let the manufacturer or his accountants determine the approximate price at which his article will be saleable; actual production and the appropriate shaping and finishing is a problem that can then be solved satisfactorily only if a skilled technician and a competent

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This modern Architectural Feature is a fine example of the new development taking place on the Lambeth side of the river. Built on the site of the Doulton Pipe Works (now transferred to Erith lower down the Thames), it is fitting that the Main Facade should be built of Doulton's Carraraware manufactured on the adjoining site, thus linking up the old pottery industry with this modern business enterprise.

Grey Carraraware is used for the main portion of the Facade, rising from a high black Carraraware plinth, which also extends round Main Entrance Doorway.

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artist-designer collaborate together in the fullest possible way.

sion must be made for instruction in industrial design so that industry shall not lack the competently trained artist-designers it so sorely needs.

Until then we will continue to say and think, with the young giant in H. G. Wells's novel, "Art . . . what's it all bloomin' well for?"

But now the problem arises, from what source can the manufacturer obtain advice as to what particular artist or artists will best be able to collaborate competently in the design of his products. Has anything been done, is anything being done, to meet the manufacturer half-way, to offer a helping hand? I think the answer is no. Too many people are ready to condemn the manufacturer, too few to blame the artist—and, believe me, 1,999 out of every 2,000 artists have a lot to learn before they can hope to be of any right and proper service to industry. Is the onus of their education and enlightenment upon the manufacturer? Is the artist to be treated as a being on a different plane to ordinary mortals who must fit themselves for the various tasks they may be anxious to perform? But I am likely to be misunderstood—I appear to be indicting the artist as an individual, accusing him of incompetence and negligence. It is upon those responsible for the present character of art school education that the blame lies and it is high time that something approaching complete re-organization was effected in these strongholds of art with a capital "A."

Art education with its present bias towards the fine arts is almost completely divorced from the needs of the time. Proper provi-

Through the Letter Box

Electric Heating

To talk of "the aesthetics of heating" does sound a little involved, doesn't it? I heard the phrase used a little while back and pricked up my ears suspiciously—I felt certain that my friend had in mind the very ignoble art of camouflage. It always distresses me when I consider how much time and misguided ingenuity are devoted to making things look like what they are not. Personally, I loathe to see an electric fire masquerading as a coal fire or an electric light fitting dressed up to look like an eighteenth century electrolier. I hope we are for ever to be spared the radiator all "dolled up" as a modernistic cocktail cabinet or an "olde worlde" oak chest. Modern heating is progressing on very sane lines—there has been a marked improvement in the design of radiators and other visible apparatus, and many modern systems provide efficiency plus complete invisibility of the heating panels or units. I was discussing this aspect of heating with an electrical engineer recently and asked him to send me along a few notes outlining some of the ways in which electric heating

meets the demand for sightliness and/or invisibility of apparatus. I quote *in extenso* the notes which have been sent on to me.

In this case electric heating is intended to mean electric "central heating" or what is known as low temperature electric heating as opposed to the ordinary electric fire.

The question is naturally complicated by that of initial cost, but where the outlay has to be reasonable, the usual water heating equipment will take the form of cast iron multi-column radiators.

There are two electrical alternatives which compare favourably in cost with this equipment. The first is the tubular heater—a plain steel tube two inches in diameter.

There is, of course, no difficulty in finishing this to harmonize with decorations and the problem is, therefore, to deal with long horizontal lines at a low level in the room.

As an alternative to the tubular heater there is the electric skirting panel heater.

In this case, except that the skirting will have to be of a somewhat plain design, the heating system will have no effect at all upon the decoration of the room.

This particular system must, however, be adopted with reasonable care, since it would obviously not be suitable in a crowded office

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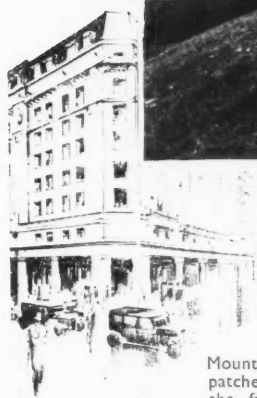
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ARCHITECTURE OF THE EARTH



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Mountain stream and dark moorland lit in patches by the shafts of sunlight penetrating the fast moving clouds—the distant green valley—the village where the mountain stream joins the broader river—the keen edge of the wind.

In such a situation any building in material other than the dark stone of the moorland would be out of place.

The modern grimy town and city call for different treatment. The steady attack of the acids of the smoke laden atmosphere can only be repelled by the acid-resisting properties of Faience.

The Burmantofts Works of The Leeds Fireclay Company have for many years been to the fore in each successive development. The range of Texture colours strikes a new note for interior or exterior work.

THE
**LEEDS
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COMPANY LIMITED
WORTLEY - LEEDS

London Showrooms: 2 Cavendish Place, W.1



A Setting of the Panella Gas Fire
Architects:
Mewes and Davis, F.R.I.B.A.

The Panella Gas Fire is the fine product of the makers' fifty years' experience. The original flush-fitting Gas Fire, requiring neither trivet nor hearth, it is in perfect conformity with modern decorative tendencies. Equally, it carries technical and hygienic efficiency to the highest point, embodying as it does the Radiation silent burner and Beam ^(trade mark) radiants, which are extremely durable and emit a 'softer' warmth, with a sensation of greater comfort.

Panella
GAS FIRES
First of their type

Full details and illustrations of the various models and finishes will be sent free on application to the Davis Gas Stove Co., Ltd., 7 Stratford Place, London, W.1.

(Opposite Bond Street Underground)

Radiation

where far the greater part of the wall space is occupied by desks, filing cabinets, cupboards, etc. Where these difficulties do not exist, however, this particular system can be considered very close indeed to the ideal.

Where considerations make it desirable that the heating system shall be in the form of a unit, there are electrical convectors available which take the form of a plain, cleanly designed cabinet, which takes up rather less room than the average hot water radiator and has the advantage of being transportable should the need arise.

Where the heating system which is more expensive in initial outlay is under consideration, there are electric panel heating systems available which may be just as inconspicuous as water panel heating systems, but which are less costly to instal and which are perfectly easily serviced in that the vital parts are not buried beneath the plaster or other finishing materials.

They also have the advantage that they can be applied to existing buildings with very little sacrifice in unobtrusiveness and with comparatively little disturbance in the way of cutting away and making good.

Finally, there is a development in low temperature electric heating which has very real possibilities from the æsthetic standpoint.

Although it has up to the present been used relatively little, those examples which are in being are highly successful.

The development in question is the combination of the heating surface with the lighting units.

This can perfectly easily be done by the application of quite small panels containing the necessary heating elements and running at temperatures of about 400 deg. F. Some care in the design of the fittings to make sure that they themselves are satisfactory in appearance is obviously essen-

tial, and as the heating is overhead it is also necessary that there should be adequate head-room to ensure that the heating effect is satisfactory and that the ceiling is not blackened by convection effects. This latter problem is not difficult of solution and where the circumstances are suitable, this particular form of electric heating possesses very real advantages and furthermore it can be applied just as easily to existing buildings as to a new building in course of construction.

Something New in Carpet Production

Messrs. T. F. Firth & Sons, of Brighouse, Yorkshire, send me a brochure describing a new type of carpet—patented and called "Firmoda." I commend this to the notice of architects and interior decorators.

"Firmoda," whilst having all the characteristics of the ordinary carpet, differs from it in that the backing, instead of normal sizing, is a material of permanent resiliency, which penetrates the bottom of the weave, anchoring it so that the pile cannot be pulled out.

When cut, the carpet forms its own selvedge; a clean vertical edge that cannot unravel and needs no binding or sewing. When two pieces of carpet are fitted together and held by a tough web of strapping, impregnated with a special cement, the effect is that of seamless carpeting, which means that a room of large size or irregular shape can be covered with narrow widths and present an almost seamless surface that could formerly be obtained only by specially woven seamless carpeting and by cutting to waste.

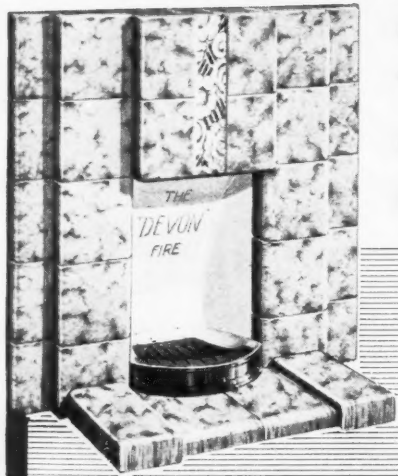
In case of stains or burns, the affected parts may be cut out and replaced by almost invisible

patches. There are no welt seams to mark the place where the repair is made.

"Firmoda" is supplied to the retailer in sixteen standard plain colours. A patterned carpet incorporating any number of these sixteen colours is produced in very much the same way as a decorative rubber floor. The varied sizes and shapes in the different colours are cut up as required for the design and are then fitted tightly together and held permanently in place by the tough web of strapping on the back—on the surface the pile of the adjoining pieces meshes so closely together as to give the appearance of a seamless woven carpet.

The general contractors for a house in Kingsmere Road, Wimbledon, designed by F. Halliburton Smith, A.R.I.B.A., were Messrs. Sims and Sims. Among the craftsmen and sub-contractors were the following: Val De Travers (asphalt), Ames and Finnis (bricks), D. G. Somerville & Co. (artificial stone), Imperial Chemical Industries (partitions), Zeta Wood Flooring Co. (wood-block flooring), James Slater & Co. (central heating), Davis Gas Stove Co. (gas fixtures), Ideal Boilers and Radiators, Ltd. (boilers), Sims and Sims (electric wiring), Doulton & Co. (sanitary fittings), Korkoid Decorative Floors, Ltd. (stairtreads), A. E. Davis (door furniture), Crittall Manufacturing Co., Ltd. (casements), Venesta, Ltd. (joinery), W. B. Simpson and Sons (tiling and mantels).

GOOD LOOKING FIRES THAT



CUT
THE
COAL
BILL



Design S 381

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THE
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See our Stand No. 62, Ideal Home Exhibition, Olympia, Grand Hall, Ground Floor, March 26 to April 18

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