THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration

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Plates

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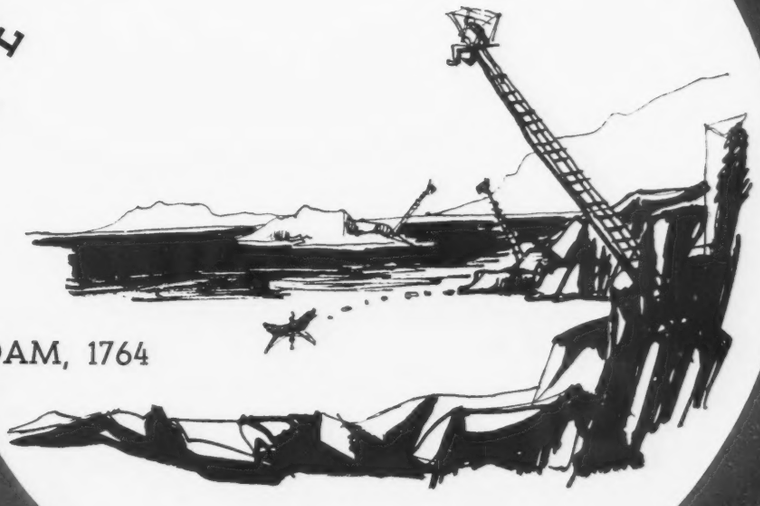
L E P A L A I S I D E A L

In the village of Hauterives, Drôme, stands this ornamental palace that was built entirely with his own hands by the local postman Ferdinand Cheval, working only with simple tools and a wheelbarrow, collecting strange stones to adorn it in his postman's bag during his daily round. It stands in the garden of his house, a fantastic architectural vision moulded into concrete form by forty years of toil. An account of the palace by Jacques Brunius, with further illustrations appears on pages 147–150.

PLATE i *October* 1936

REVISITED



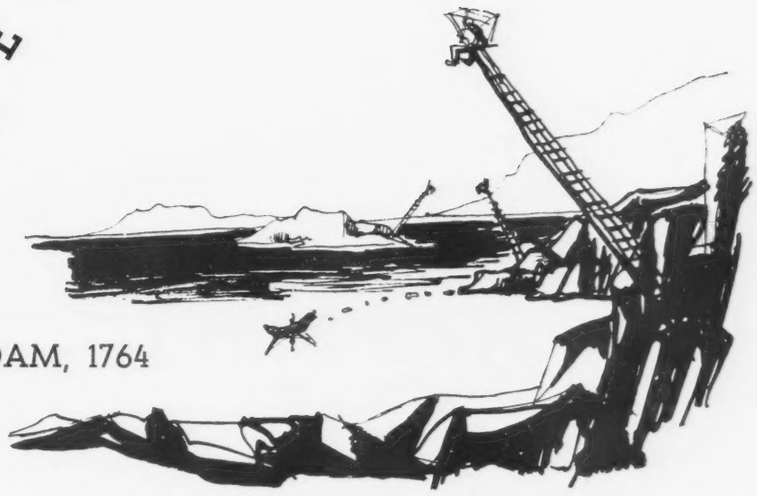
ADAM, 1764

By Hugh Casson

DALMATIA REVISITED

"... and flattered me from this first prospect that my labour in visiting it would be amply rewarded."

ROBERT ADAM, 1764



By Hugh Casson

We had heard of a new transcontinental road from London to Istanbul. Sponsored by the A.A. and foreign tourist clubs, and planned to have a uniform surface, banked corners and standardized road signs, it appeared to be the obvious route to the borders of Jugo-Slavia. We decided to follow it. From Dover a new car ferry with ramped decks and flush panelling, lavishly sanitated and with the general appearance of a design by Norman Bel Geddes, deposited us, with the help of its staff of chauffeurs, on a fine concrete quay. The first standardized road sign appeared before us. We swept round the banked corner on to shuddering *pavé* which lasted, except for brief delirious stretches of *autobahn*, until the Austrian boundary. Germany was strident with flags in honour of the Olympic games. The well-designed Olympic banner, five intersecting rings on a white background, competed alone and unsuccessfully with the familar swastika flag designed by the Führer. Cologne; Wiesbaden; village Maypoles thirty metres high; a glimpse of royalty in a black Rolls-Royce; Munich, packed with tourists; Salzburg, full of Americans in green corduroy shorts reading their glossy magazines; a night in a vaulted *gasthaus* furnished with spinning-wheels and alive with the wings of swallows; a game of skittles played on an alley made along the top of a twenty-foot thick Roman wall; the deserted roads of Italy; Susak and the Dalmatian border.

It has often been remarked, that for a people indigenous to beauty it is difficult to create beauty. Certainly there is no masterpiece of architecture on the road to Split, although there is much that is charming and picturesque. But the picturesque is on a smaller scale than the Piranesis and Salvator Rosas which confront the traveller so frequently in Sicily and Mexico. The road, built by the French general Marmont in 1805, clung precariously to the limestone mountains, which dropped smooth sheer into the water. We passed through fishing villages, spattered white and pink over the coffee-coloured hills. They were strangely quiet. The plane trees on the quays were listless and pale with dust. The houses, bearing signs of Venetian influence, with finely fenestrated façades and projecting balconies, gazed blindly with their bleached and shuttered windows over the wrinkled sea. The colours were faded. Chalky blue shutters cooled the glare reflecting from the stucco walls, warm-toned with burnt sienna cills, doors and roofs. In the market places a few languid women squatted, in a buzz of flies, behind baskets of wizened tomatoes. All shopping for the day had been done before nine o'clock, but they still sat on. A donkey pattered neatly through the warm dust. Children splashed brown and glistening in the shallows. Here and there we passed men who, perched on the tops of poles cantilevered forty feet above the sea, watched for the shoals of tunny and sardine to pass into their nets below. Venetian castles, ruined, and obviously used as quarries by local builders, crowned occasional hillocks. The landscape was dried, drained of colour by the strength of the sun.

The Romans have been blamed for the barren appearance of this coast. They cut down the vast pine woods to get timber for their ships; rain washed away the scanty, sandy soil; what had been a forest became a desert; scrub and cactus overcame moss and fern; the lizards now dart over the exposed rocks. Yet the effect is neither unfriendly nor monotonous. There is always something beautiful to look at; the traveller is not compelled to seek in art a sanctuary from dreariness of scene, and, above all, there is the crystal quality of the Adriatic light. It is brilliant, clean, sharpening the edges of shadows, silhouetting incisively each leaf, and at the same time gathering the whole scene of sea, sky and mountain into a perfect unity.

The road eventually climbed away from the deckled fringe of the sea over the mountains and into the valley of which Gospic is the centre. It was like Bavaria again. Pines gave way to fields, trees and streams. The cottages were of mud and wattle, brightly colour-washed, and roofed with wooden shingles. Chimneys were contrived by the simple method of leaving out two shingles in the necessary place. Progress here was slow but triumphal. The villagers cheered and waved as they disappeared into the dust of our passing.

We came across a fair at the junction of three roads. Stalls had been set up; singing and dancing were in progress under the aloof eye of a gendarme, who was the only one present not in national costume. The women wore many petticoats, aprons, embroidered bodices, and scarves; the men breeches, coloured waistcoats and saucy pillbox hats with tasselled fringes. The local handicrafts displayed were naïvely pleasant. The folk art of Dalmatia is neither more nor less significant than that of its European neighbours. The principal crafts of weaving, embroidery and leatherwork are still practised in the villages but individual talent is as rare here as anywhere, and the style is semi-sophisticated. The colours are gaudy, blue and yellow on white, blue on scarlet, scarlet on white. The effect is Tyrolean in its gaiety, and charming in a childish way. Like all peasant art it has had hysterical admirers who profess to read into it a great æsthetic significance. The promiscuous admiration of the townsman for the peasant pot is only to be compared with the equally promiscuous admiration of the peasant for the Axminster carpet. The peasant with his narrow artistic traditions is not trained to compare and therefore is unable to criticize and select. The townsman is equally unselective and collects his spinning wheels, his Rhodian dishes and Spanish basketwork, good and bad, quite indiscriminately.

We passed through Gospic and climbed the Velebit Pass and gazed down on the little town of Trogir, three thousand feet below. The King's yacht and its attendant destroyers lay at anchor in the harbour like toys glued to painted cardboard. All Dalmatian towns have a turbulent history of siege, capture and sacking, and Trogir, originally a Greek colony, has had many rulers. It stands on an artificial island clustered round the fifteenth-century campanile of the cathedral. Impressive with its dim, high interior, the

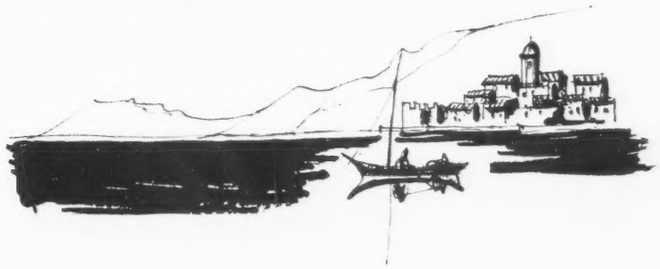
cathedral is famed for the thirteenth-century carvings in the west porch. The charm of these stylized animals, the naïveté of their modelling has indeed a sincerity only found in the best Romanesque art. The porch at Trogir is as charmingly conceived and as finely executed as any of the more sophisticated monuments of Western Europe.

There is little else to see in the town, which wore an awkward air of vitality no doubt artificially stimulated by the royal visit. Normally it makes no effort to attract the tourist, and, according to our guide book, can offer no sustenance except a cup of indifferent coffee.

Only a few miles of execrable road, now being rebuilt, separates Trogir from Salona, the broken remains of a once glorious Roman city and now the site of a cement factory. The neighbouring cottages are built of stone fragments torn from the ruined aqueduct and amphitheatre. Carved classical cornices give an unreal scale to the wooden lean-to roofs, and cast-iron farm gates are hung from Byzantine columns crowned with chipped and vacant urns. "A man" needs "strong legs and a taste for archæology" says M. Diehl, that he may wander about Salona and discover a plan among the rifled tombs and broken arches of this desolate place. The ordinary traveller will carry away the remembrance of columns, heavily bewhiskered with ferns, sarcophagi stained with lichen, and the nostalgic Romantic atmosphere of a Rex Whistler drawing.

We welcomed the fine concrete road which leads from here into Split, where the first puncture of the trip sighed to its conclusion.

"This city, though of no great extent, is so happily situated that it appears, when viewed from the sea, not only picturesque but magnificent. As we entered a grand bay and sailed slowly towards the harbour, the marine wall and long arcades of the palace, one of the ancient temples, and other parts of that building which was the object of our voyage, presented themselves to our view and flattered me, from this first prospect, that my labour in visiting it would be amply rewarded. . . . The palace of Diocletian at Spalato possessed all those advantages of situation to which the ancients were most attentive, and which they reckoned essential to every villa. The soil of that part of Illyricum was dry and fertile, though now considerable tracts of land lie uncultivated. The air is pure and wholesome, and though extremely hot during the summer months, this country seldom feels those noxious winds to which the coast of Istria and some parts of Italy are exposed. By the care of the architect in observing the excellent precept of Vitruvius every inconvenience arising from the winds is avoided as far as possible. The principal streets and apertures of the villa being so disposed as not to lie open to the impression of any of the winds which blow most frequently in this climate. The views from the Palace are no less beautiful than the soil and climate are inviting. Towards the west lies the fertile shore that stretches along the Adriatic, in which a number of small islands are scattered in such a manner as to give this part of the sea the appearance of a great lake. On the north-west lies the bay which led towards the ancient city of Salona, and the country beyond it appearing in sight forms a proper contrast to that more extensive stretch of water which the Adriatic presents both to the south and to the east. Towards the



north the view is terminated by high and irregular mountains, situated at the proper distance, and in many cases covered with villages, woods and vineyards.

"From this description . . . it is evident that no province in this wide distended Empire could have afforded Diocletian a more elegant place of retirement, and the beauty of the situation, no less than it being his native country, seems to have determined him to fix his residence there."

These were the words of Robert Adam in 1764.

Split today is a busy port and a prosperous summer resort, perhaps more attractive to wander about in than to view from the sea or the hinterland. Inexperienced and therefore indifferent to the courtesy of official couriers and guides, we fell inevitable victims to a casual tout, who, in a thickening cloud of garlic fumes, attached himself to us as a guide. He proved both charming and useful. The expectancy of a visit from King Edward had filled every hotel, and we were glad to be led to a house of our guide's acquaintance, where they took us in.

We were shown the lavatory, and then, with a praiseworthy attempt to divert our attention, our hostess pointed out an oil painting in the room which she announced was a genuine Raphael; it had cost £14. Our artistic sensibilities stirred by this, we then set out to see the Palace.

"The Palace itself was a work so great that the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who had seen the most splendid buildings of the ancients, affirms that no plan or description can convey a perfect idea of its magnificence. The vast extent of the ground which it occupies is surprising at first sight; the dimensions of one side of the quadrangle, including the towers, being no less than 698 feet, and the other 592 feet, making the superficial content 413,216 feet, being nine and a half English acres. But when we consider that it contained proper apartments, not only for the Emperor himself and for the numerous retinue of officers who attended his court, but likewise edifices and open spaces for exercises of different kinds; that it was capable of lodging a pretorian cohort; and that two temples were erected within its precincts, we will not conclude the area to have been too large for such a variety of buildings. . . . From the porticus we enter the vestibulum which was commonly of circular form; and in this palace it seems to have been lighted from the roof. It was a sacred place, consecrated to the Gods, particularly to Vesta (from whom it derived its name), to Penates and Lares, and was adorned with niches and statues. Next to the vestibulum is the atrium, a spacious apartment which the ancients considered as essential to every house. As the vestibulum was sacred to the gods, the atrium was consecrated to their ancestors, and was adorned with their images, their arms, their trophies and other ensigns of their military and civil honours. By this manner of distributing these apartments the ancients seem to have had it in view to express, first of all, reverence to the gods who had the inspection of domestic life, and in the next place to testify to them for those ancestors to whose virtues they were indebted for their grandeur. On each side of the door into the atrium lie two small rooms, one of which may have been the Cella Ostiarii, or porter's lodge, which Vitruvius tells us was common in the houses of the Greeks, and was placed on one side of that passage by them called Thyrorion; the other was probably what the ancients called Tablinum, which Pliny mentions as a repository for the archives and records of the family, containing the history of the illustrious actions of their ancestors.

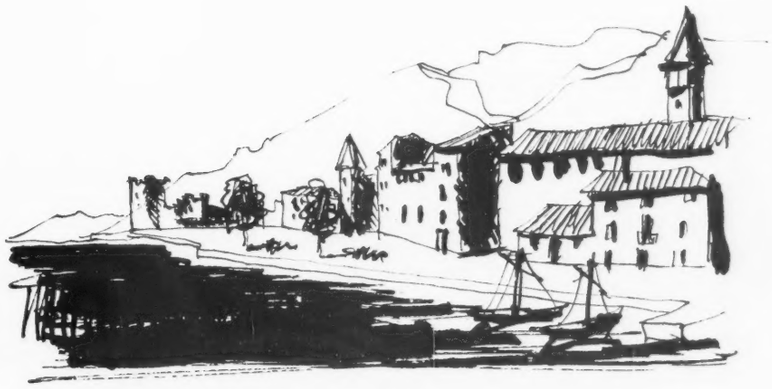
"From the atrium we proceed to the cryptoporticus, a place of vast extent, intended for walking and other exercises, which the ancients reckoned of such importance, that the securing of proper conveniences for them was a chief object in all their buildings. This cryptoporticus, like our modern galleries, was probably adorned with statues, pictures and bas-relief, and in this palace serves likewise for giving access to several apartments without passing through the rooms of parade which were also defended by it from the excessive heat of the south sun. . . ."

A good deal of the palace is still left; two temples, the splendid peristyle, three of the four gates, and much of the outer wall. The entrance is still through the water-front door into the vaulted basement, up the old steps into the peristyle square. It suffers, in company with the majority of the world's monuments (with the possible exception of Pisa) in being

hemmed in closely by later or modern buildings, which effectively prevent a real conception of the scale and entity of the design. At one end of the square rears twenty-four feet of the statue by Mestrovic representing Bishop Gregory. The cramped placing of this work, for which there are said to be historical reasons, is unable to restrain its amazing impression of vigour and strength.

Little is left of the vestibule and atrium, but the round cathedral, variously described as a mausoleum and a temple of Jove, is still there with its famous carved doors, made by Andrea Guvina in 1214. Beyond the Porta Ferrea stands the old Municipio, now a museum containing "a most interesting collection of arts and crafts" according to the guide book, and, more accurately, "a nasty little museum all about peasants" according to Theodora Benson.

By now evening had fallen and we wandered through the labyrinthine alleys



towards the quay. The scene was intoxicating—foreign. Torches of tar and resin had been placed every few feet along the quay edge. Each fishing-boat, moored by the stern, framed the lamplit supper of its crew. In front of the tall, Corinthian columns of the old palace paraded the variegated crowds. The baroque uniforms and clinking swords of the officers, the high chatter of Levantine voices, the tall pink houses lit by torches created a completely unreal atmosphere. The people formed groups, dispersed and re-formed as if at a producer's hand, and even their conversation sounded more like

the artificial mumblings of supers. To travel in Europe is often "to assume a foreseen heritage," but at this moment we felt strangers. At last we were abroad. Even the jerky sparkling of an electric sign high above the harbour spelling out "WELCOME" seemed to intensify rather than dispel the air of a theatre in which we were the spectators.

Next morning, after being photographed in a fruit shop in mistake for the royal party, we left in flattered embarrassment for Sibenik, a little landlocked harbour watched by three castles. Sibenik had no Roman predecessors, but it has a famous fifteenth-century cathedral, reputed to be the largest church in the world built entirely of stone. It stands in a commanding position, and the stone of which it is built, though coarse in texture, is brilliant and light-reflecting. The cupola, boldly conceived and insolently executed, dominates the interior and intensifies the illusion of enormous height. Locally, this place is rumoured to be the centre of a future English colony, which is eagerly expected to develop along the coast—the casual presence of two English girls seemed an inadequate basis for this rumour.

From Sibenik we went back over the mountains through Novi to Crikvenica. This is a modern place, catering almost entirely for the German and Czechoslovakian summer visitors, and is the proud possessor of an artificial bathing beach provided by the municipality, and also the scene of bi-weekly galas, firework displays and dance exhibitions. The visitors are bold and enterprising in their dress. Pyjamas and jockey caps are worn by the men; the women affect ill-cut shorts and hair-nets. Both sexes wear plane leaves affixed by some means to their noses to prevent disfiguration by sunburn. From this sybaritic centre we made steamer expeditions to the island villages of Krk, Omisalj and Malinska. The boats were punctual—an unusual quality in the Levant—clean and comfortable. The scenery was softened by distance. The jagged rocks smoothed themselves. The road which yesterday was a nightmare of pot-holes was now a decorative white ribbon dangling down the valley. The perpetual smell, combined of garlic and enveloping dust, had gone.

Back again across the dusty plains of North Italy: the Dolomites; Cortina, with magnificent hotels, "champs de tennis," Alfa-Romeos with white-capped drivers screaming round hairpin bends; Innsbruck, and the castle town of Fussen; the dim vastness of Bonatz' pre-war station at Stuttgart; the same architect's gayer Zeppelin hotel opposite; the grim profile of the Schocken store; the rather demodé street of exhibition houses; a boat bridge across the Rhine beneath the new steel suspension bridge built to carry an *autobahn*; Saarbrücken, and the fresh-smelling wood of the new frontier huts; Verdun; a wayside lunch beside a rusting shell; Lutyens' war cemeteries; the dramatic twin pylons of the Vimy war memorial; the positive, devilish ugliness of the rebuilt war areas; London; the *Daily Express:* "Arms ban for Spain"; "Another Charing Cross bridge scheme."

What then is the point of casual travel? Though the experiences and acquaintances can never be more than superficial, and no valuable comprehension of alien customs gained, the difficulties and uncertainties, the perpetual struggle with currencies and languages, the actual effort of "getting there"—these all combine to sharpen the perceptive faculties to an unusual degree, and to prepare the mind for those rare moments, combinations of beauty and particularly of "foreignness," which are afterwards vividly recalled and intensely re-lived. The first dim outline of the Bavarian Alps; striped frontier poles; the distant glint of the sea from the hills beyond Fiume; Trogir spread like a plan beneath the feet; the melancholy of Salona; the exhilaration of the crowds at Split; the warm, woolly smell of dust; these memories, momentarily experienced, can recapture the spirit of a journey more accurately and certainly than the memory-jogging of the conscientious diary, the pile of postcards, and the album of souvenir snapshots.

SULLY TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL

1

WILLIAM A. PITE, SON AND FAIRWEATHER, ARCHITECTS

The design for this hospital, which has just been completed for the King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association, is the result of an open competition held in 1931. It is probably the most important building of its kind recently to be erected in this country. A compact group of buildings, in contrast to the series of more scattered units usually provided for sanatoria, it occupies a sea-side site on the Bristol Channel. 1, the entrance front from the approach, showing the nurses' home. 2, the side elevation, with a part of the administrative building on the left and one of the ward blocks on the right.

2

Photographed by M. O. Dell and H. L. Wainwright, official photographers to the ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

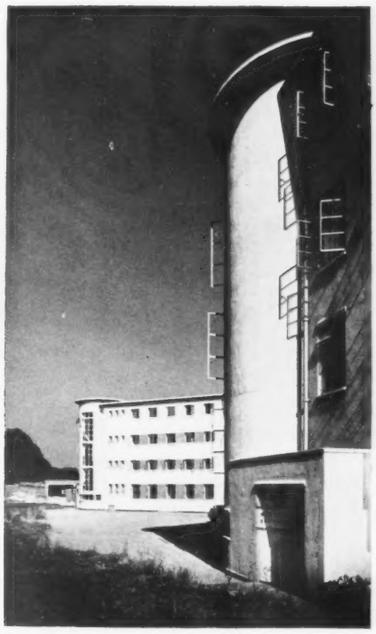
3

4

SULLY TUBERCULOSIS H

3, the patients' entrance beneath the central tower; this leads to the main stairs and lift hall from which the two ward blocks are in turn accessible. The expressive sloping windows of the staircase can be seen in the photograph. On the left is the end of the special block which houses the X-Ray department and the Operating Theatre. 4, a panoramic view of the whole range of buildings, taken from the south. It shows the rural nature of the setting and the near neighbourhood of an arm of the sea, seen on the right. 5, the isolated Post Mortem block, a building of unexpected attractiveness. 6, one of the nurses' entrances, beneath a circular staircase. 7, looking along the ward balconies towards the stepped-back windows of the four-bed wards. The series of steps, also seen in 4, is a detail of planning that is effective functionally as well as formally.

5



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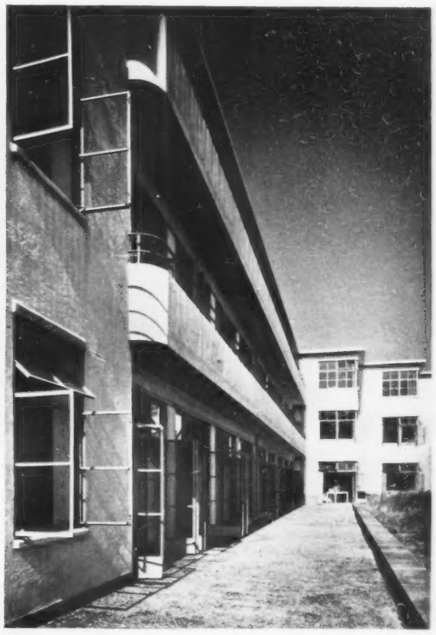

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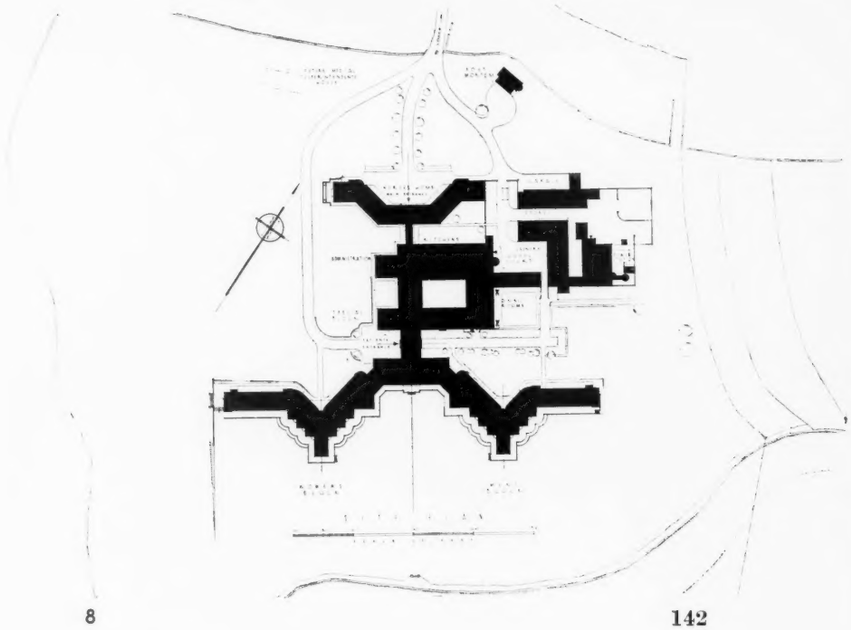
S H O S P I T A L , C A R D I F F

7

7, the interior of the operating theatre. 8, the lay-out plan of the whole hospital. On the facing page : 9, a longitudinal section. 10, a photograph of the model, which gives some idea of the lay-out in its three dimensions. 11, ground and upper floor plans of the nurses' home block.



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H O S P I T A L , C A R D I F F

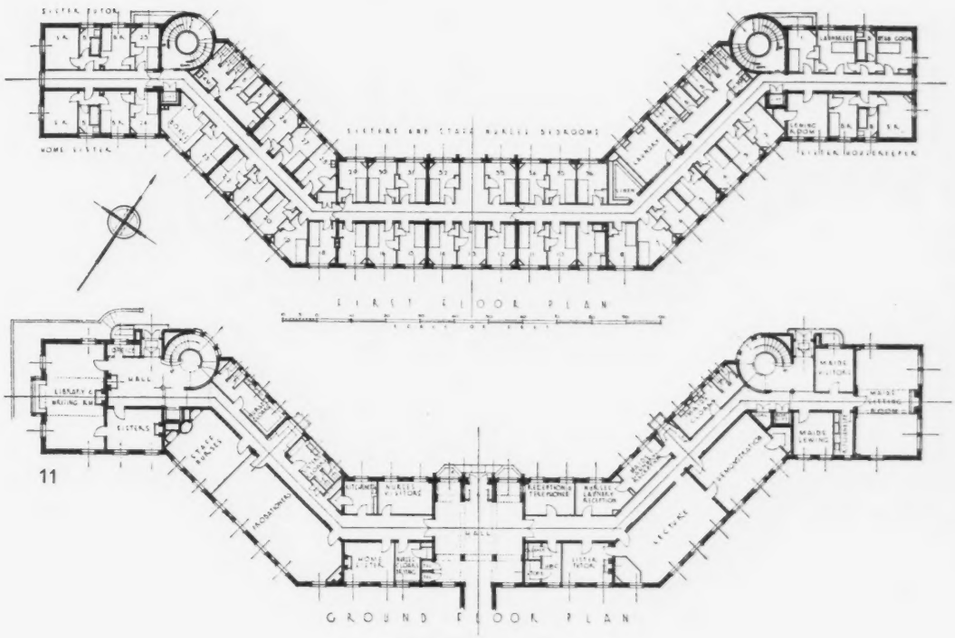
The Problem and its Solution

The architectural problem set by a tuberculosis hospital is a very specialized one. The chief factors that dictate its particular form, in addition to the necessity for an elaborate system of highly specialized technical services and communications common to all hospitals, are, first, the fact that the hospital is for the treatment of one disease only, which allows a high degree of centralization in planning and standardization of plan and equipment units; at the same time patients in all stages of the disease have to be catered for, from the bed-ridden to the ambulant, and a system of grading and segregation of the patients and their accommodation is demanded. Secondly, the treatment by sunshine and fresh air calls for special planning and orientation of the wards and the provision of open balconies. Another necessity in the case of Sully, which is self-contained and in a rural situation, is the provision of living accommodation on a large scale for nurses and other residential staff.

The building occupies a seaside site on the shore of the Bristol Channel, which it overlooks in a southerly direction towards Somerset and the North Devon coast. It lies a short distance from the road from Barry to Cardiff, and is sheltered on the three landward sides by a deep belt of trees, penetrated only by the approach drive. There is a slight slope down towards the shore. The accommodation consists of 300 patients' beds in all, in six identical ward units of 50 beds each; three in the east wing for men and three in the west wing for women.

The group of buildings, as shown in the lay-out plan, 8, divides itself into three separately planned blocks, each of which is connected by access corridors on each floor, plus a minor service block containing laundry, stores, power-house, etc., and a small isolated post-mortem block, 5, placed some distance away among the trees. These three main blocks are: first, the nurses' home, 1, the first building to be approached from the road. It is four storeys in height and contains a library, lecture and demonstration rooms and other common rooms as well as the bedrooms for thirty-six sisters and staff nurses, fifty nurses and forty-four maids. Secondly, the central block containing the administrative offices, the staff dining-rooms, and all central services such as the kitchen, food-preparation rooms, etc.; also, on the upper floors, the medical staff quarters, the X-ray department and the operating theatre. Thirdly, the pair of identical ward blocks, one for men and one for women. These also contain, on each of their three storeys, patients' dining-rooms and recreation rooms. Ambulant patients, and those not requiring highly specialized treatment are housed in eight- and four-bed wards; the severer cases have single-bed cubicles placed at the ends of each wing. The main axis of the ward block runs approximately south-east, and the angle at which the wings are planned provides shelter from the prevailing south-west wind and also from the extreme afternoon sun. The stepped-back windows of the wards, each one of which has a clear right-angle of glass, provide alternative ventilation, shelter and outlook, according to the direction of sun and wind. The ward windows slide wide open on to a terrace at ground floor level and on to narrow promenade balconies on the upper floors in the case of the single-bed wards. Large balconies, however, are not generally provided, as the wards themselves, when fully opened on two sides, fulfil the same purpose. On the roof of the ward-block there is a nurses' sick-bay with a fine view out to sea.

The construction of the building generally is 13½ or 18 in. mass brick walling, except for the ward blocks which are steel-framed with brick-panel walls. In these two blocks all constructional units are exactly duplicated. The steel frame facilitates



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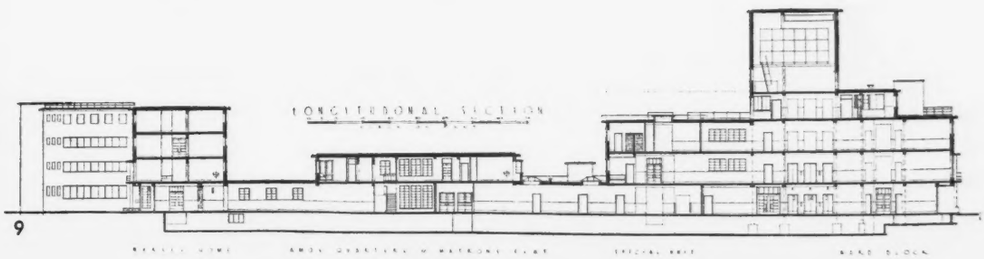

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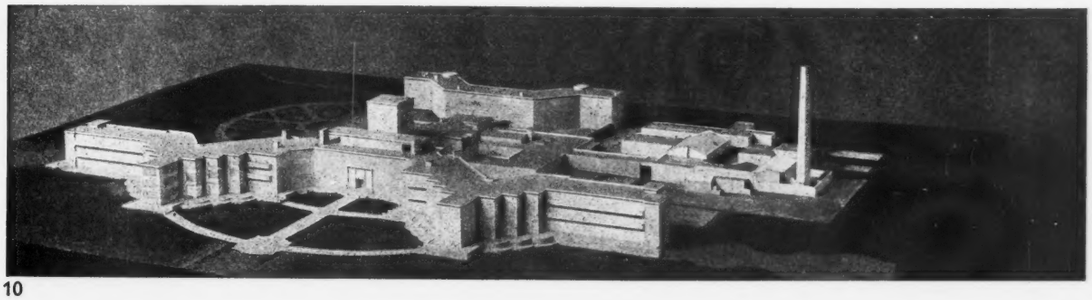
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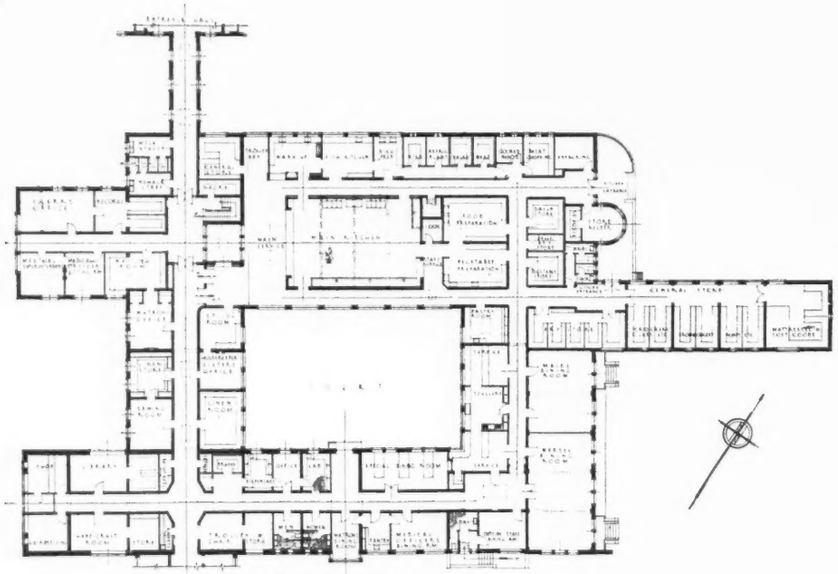
design of the very wide openings demanded for the ward windows. Floors and roofs throughout are hollow tile and concrete, and internal walls in the ward block are of hollow partition blocks. The flat, hollow-tile roof is protected by an insulating blanket of broken brick and finished with bituminous felt and tar macadam. The foundations are carried down to solid rock, the stanchions in the wards having solid concrete bases 2 ft. 6 ins. square. The windows are of heavy steel section, cadmium-zinc sprayed throughout as a protection against the corrosive action of seaside air. Externally the brick walls are finished with a ¾ in. water-repellent cement rendering, in a light cream colour.

The effect of this finish, as the photographs show, is one of pleasant homogeneity. The sensibly large-paned windows, carefully organized into simple patterns, allow the direction and massing of the whole to make its effect without any artificial monumentality. However, a hospital building, more than any other kind, stands or falls by the less apparent technical services provided, and technically the Sully Hospital has been very thoroughly equipped. Among the technical provisions may be noted: hygienic collection and sterilizing systems for sputum and foul linen; heating by low-pressure radiators, with steam radiators in the special service unit and hot-water ceiling panels in the operating theatre, the air in which latter has to be capable, for certain chest operations, of being raised to as high a temperature as 90 degrees; also a fan exhaust system in the theatre; electrically-driven kitchen and laundry machinery; a dish-washing machine in each servery for the sterilization of crockery and cutlery; a boiler-house containing two 30 ft. Lancashire boilers for providing the steam for all heating purposes and a large incinerator to deal with the hospital refuse. A large proportion of the furniture has been designed by the architects, and the colour schemes have been carefully studied to be cheerful and at the same time restful and avoid the "Institute" atmosphere. Each ward unit has a colour-scheme of its own, and all the internal doors are in bright primary colours. J.M.R.



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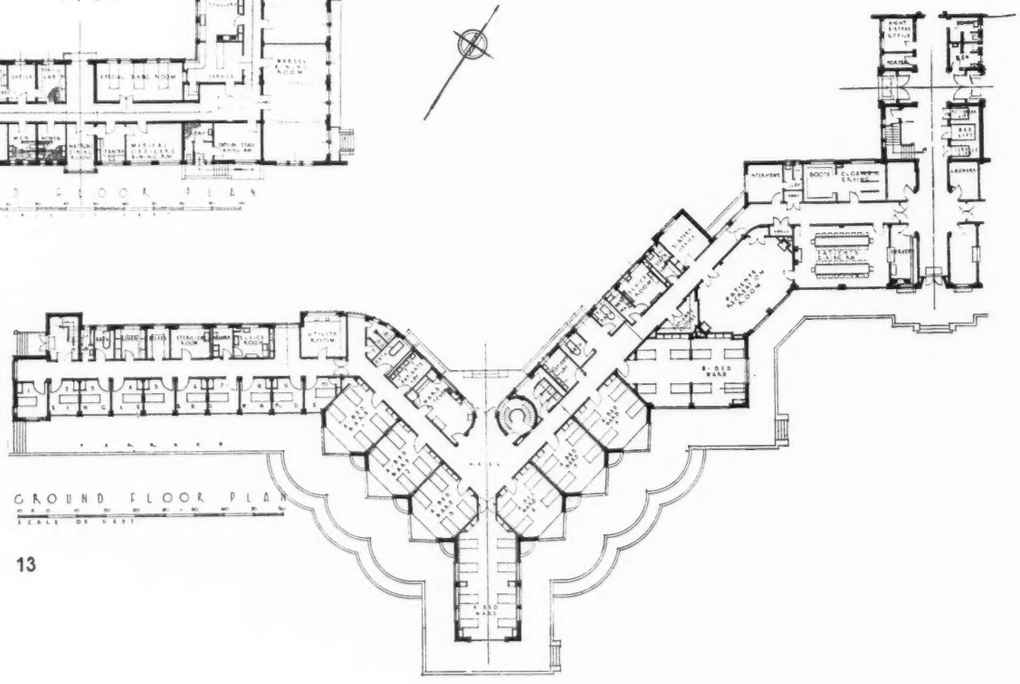

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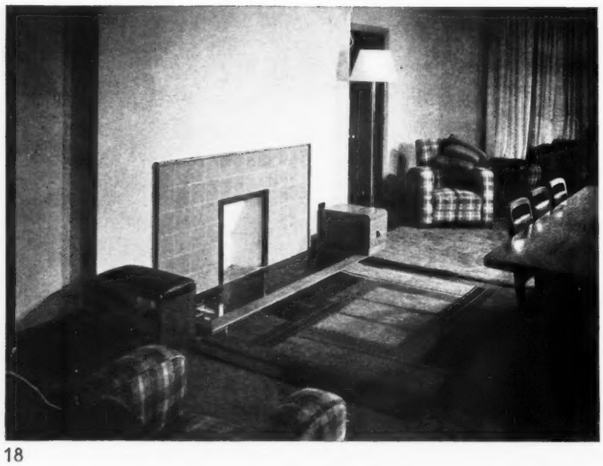
12, the main floor plan of the central administrative or service block, which is connected on the north with the nurses' quarters and on the south with the ward blocks. 13, typical plan of one of the ward blocks, of which there are two identical, each three storeys high. 14, a typical ward interior, showing the large windows giving on to terrace or balconies. 15, the kitchen, situated in the central block and serving the whole hospital. A system of food trolleys and service lifts distributes meals to wards and dining rooms and collects crockery into the wash-up room adjoining the kitchen.

15

16

16, the main staircase in the nurses' home, the entrance to which is shown in 6. 17, the main entrance hall. 18, the library, situated at the end of the nurses' home block.

17



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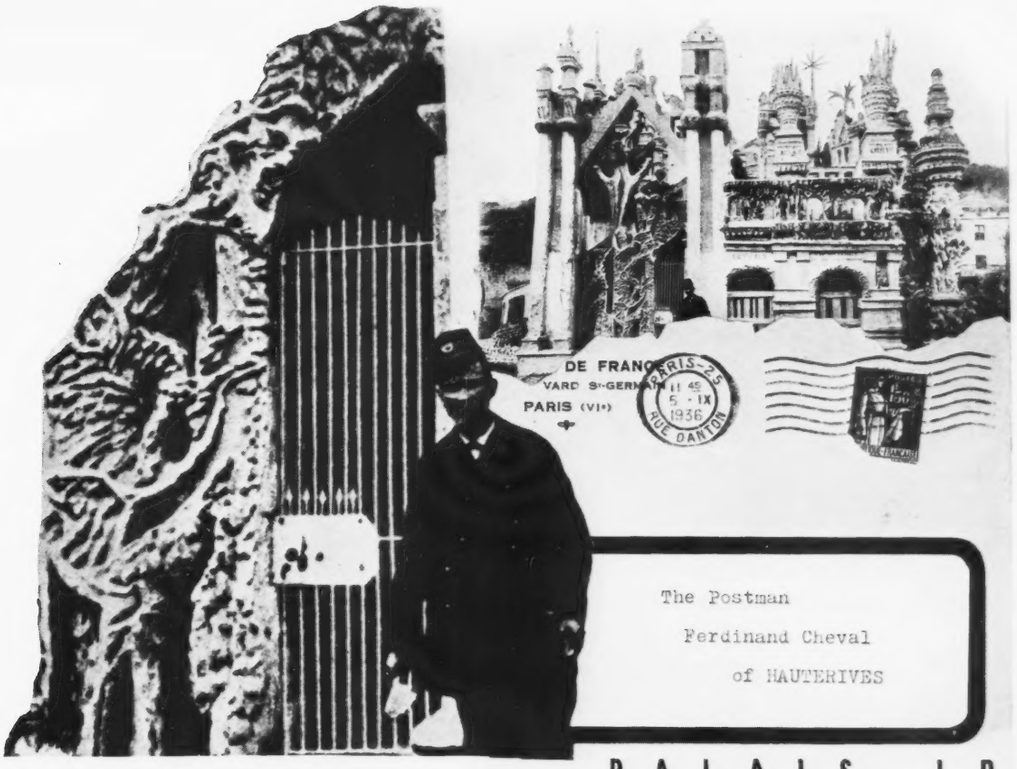


PALAIS IDEAL

By Jacques Brunius

Translated by J. M. Richards

Photographs by Jacques Brunius and Denise Bellon

A traveller who considers leaving the main road from Lyons to Marseilles to penetrate that portion of the Dauphinée known as Galaure, will find marked on his road map, close to the village of Hauterives, a cross and the words "*Palais Idéal*." The associations of the neighbourhood with the lycanthropic Pétrus Borel, who came from there, or perhaps simply the unexpectedness of the announcement, may awake his curiosity. A short detour will lead him to Hauterives.

From the road, rising above an enclosing wall, he will see the foliage of some pine trees and the complicated spires of a palace. Beside a door he will see the notice: "Entrée des grottes, 2 francs." Then, when he crosses the threshold, the northern façade of the palace will be disclosed. It will appear as an elaborate concrete mass, 26 metres long, 14 wide, and 15 high, ornamented so abundantly and so complicated in form that several visits of several hours' duration would be necessary for the inspection of all its details and the appreciation of all its beauties. All the styles of design appear to be mingled in it, though the effect of the whole is predominantly baroque and the detail might be described as a forecast of 1900 *art-nouveau* of the most confectionery-like variety.

Ferdinand Cheval, who built this palace with his own hands, was born in 1836 at Charmes (Drôme). Formerly a baker, from 1860 onwards he performed at Hauterives the job of postman.

"Facteur rural,"* he says in his yet unpublished diary, "comme mes 27,000 camarades je déambulais chaque jour de Hauterives à Tersanne (dans une région où la mer a laissé des traces évidentes de son séjour), courant tantôt dans la neige et dans la glace, tantôt dans la campagne fleurie. Que faire en marchant perpétuellement dans le même décor, à moins que l'on ne songe? . . . Je songeais. Et à quoi? me demanderont mes lecteurs. . . Et bien, pour distraire mes pensées, je construisais en rêve un palais féerique, dépassant l'imagination, tout ce que le génie d'un humble peut concevoir (avec jardins, grottes, tours, châteaux, musées et sculptures), cherchant à faire renaître toutes les anciennes architectures des temps primitifs; le tout si pittoresque, que l'image en demeura vivante pendant au moins dix ans dans mon cerveau. . ."

"Or, au moment ou mon rêve sombrait peu à peu dans les brouillards de l'oubli, un incident le raviva soudain: mon pied heurta une pierre qui faillait me faire tomber . . . Je voulu voir de près ma pierre d'achoppement . . . Elle était de forme si bizarre que je la ramassai

* A country postman, like my 27,000 comrades, I tramped each day from Hauterives to Tersanne (through a district where the sea had left obvious traces of its visit), now amongst snow and ice, now amongst fields covered with flowers. What could one do whilst walking eternally against the same background, unless one dreamed. I used to dream. And what about? my readers will ask . . . Well, to divert my mind I used to construct in a dream a fairy palace; one that would surpass all imagination as completely as the genius of an ordinary man could achieve (with gardens, grottoes, towers, castles, museums and sculptures), seeking to create again all the ancient

Above is the tomb of Ferdinand Cheval in the cemetery at Hauterives, constructed by himself during the remaining years of his life after his ***PALAIS IDEAL*** *was completed. The small picture on the preceding page shows the house he lived in, in the garden of which the palace stands. The resemblance is notable between the vernacular method of building exemplified by the house (pebbles embedded in a cement wall) and the method employed by Cheval for his own handiwork. The rest of the illustrations show different views of the palace. Even the palm trees silhouetted against the sky are carefully moulded in cement. The incongruity of architectural style seen in some of the details set into the larger mass are probably explained by the fact of Cheval's habit of rising and executing small portions of the work in the middle of the night, inspired by dreams or visions. The illustrations show details of all kinds, including sculptures of animals, one naively labelled "pelican," submarine and vegetable forms and other even more imaginative motifs; also portions of the many poetic inscriptions that occur throughout the building. The palace, 20 odd years after its completion, still stands, quite untouched by time or weather, cared for by its builder's descendants.*

et l'emportai. Je retournai le lendemain au même endroit et en trouvai de plus belles encore qui, rassamblées sur place, faisaient un si joli effet, que celà m'enthousiasma. C'est alors que je dis: 'puisque la nature fournit les sculptures, je me ferai architecture et maçon'! . . . Du reste qui n'est pas un peu maçon?"

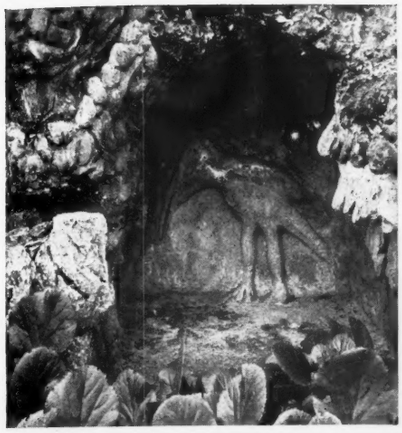
Thus from 1879, when he was 43 years old, Cheval assiduously collected his stones for 27 years, carrying them home in his pockets or his bag while going his postman's round of 32 kilometres; then, after his round was finished, returning with his wheelbarrow for the larger ones.

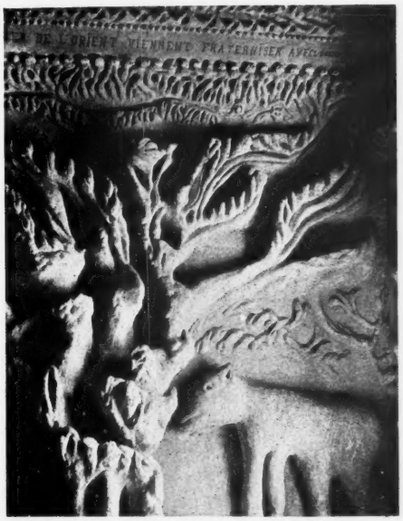
Throughout the evenings, tormented, guided by an inspiration that it is difficult to believe remained entirely conscious at the end of a day so full of effort, upheld by a megalomaniac belief in his mission, Cheval busied himself cementing into shape his fossils and his meteorites. Even nightfall was unable to stop him, as he persisted in his toil by the light of a candle.

In spite of the ridicule of his neighbours he continued his efforts for 33 years.

architectures of primitive times; the whole so picturesque that the vision of it stayed vividly in my mind during ten years at least. . .

"Then, just at the time when this dream of mine was fading bit by bit into the mist of forgetfulness an incident suddenly revived it: my foot knocked against a stone which nearly made me fall. . . I felt urged to look closer at this obstacle. . . It was of a shape so bizarre that I picked it up and carried it away. The next day I returned to the same spot and there found more stones more beautiful still, and these, when placed all together, produced so charming an effect as to fill me with enthusiasm. It was thus that I said: 'Seeing that nature produces the sculpture I myself will be the architect and the mason'! . . . And as for that who is not a bit of a mason?"





After finishing the eastern side of the palace and then the north and south sides, he purchased the next-door garden in order to enlarge the palace towards the west, and this portion was completed in 1912. He was then able to contemplate his immense plaything, its form a mansion entirely uninhabitable, and regard his work as finished; though, in fact, he devoted another eight years to the construction of his own tomb in the cemetery of Hauterives, and he eventually died on August 24th, 1924.

A sculpture group called "The Three Giants" (Cæsar, Vercingetorix and Archimedes) dedicated "A la Fraternité des Peuples," of all the various portions of the palace probably constitutes the clearest expression of Cheval's impulse towards grandeur, of the heroic urge he was moved by to tear himself away from the soil. This soil, however, he was tied to by all the roots of his peasant stock, as the gallery at the west end of the palace, the one built during the very last years, bears witness in all the motifs used. In this "gallery of sculpture from primitive times," are crowded the most remarkable sculptural expressions of memories of childhood, representing the other side of the conflict that went on within the mind of this man at once so tormented and so calm.

It is not irrelevant to point out how the architecture of Cheval resembles in many ways the traditional building construction of the district (walls adorned with pebbles embedded in the cement), and also how it resembles the natural grottoes that abound in the neighbouring mountains of Vercors. And, indeed, in detail his labours consisted in recreating in his medium of cement, the forms of nature of all kinds. Men, animals or plants spring up as though transfixed in life, out of a setting or background

which one can also recognise itself to be composed of innumerable further organic forms, mineral, vegetable, animal, comestible: boiling pools of lava, boulders, concretions of chalky grottoes, meteorites, pebbles, oyster shells, shellfish themselves, agglomerations of giant animalculæ, enormous worms—a whole morphology of marine existence, polypods and sponges, then clusters of intestines, fossilized logs, petrified fountains, leaves of acanthus, seaweed, caviar, vermicelli, puddings, and all kinds of excrement—and so on in infinite variety of reminiscence.

Cheval's achievement, with the aid of these feverish creations of his memory or his imagination, which have the essence of great art, was to strip it of all accidental, ephemeral characteristics, baring the roots of art more deeply: the great instinctive impulses hidden beneath the power of the æsthetic. At the meeting-place of primitive art and of the art of madmen and of children Cheval established a monstrous system of imagined memories. With the petrified vapour of the child-man's visions he mingled his prophetic phrases, his hallucinations: "Here I wished to sleep"; "The entrance to an imaginary palace"; "Where the dream becomes reality"; "The spirits from the east here mingle with the west," etc.

This many-sided palace, luxuriant and at the same time secret, contradictory, and inconsistent in its themes, with walls strewn with pathetic inscriptions; this plaything of an inspired child, this rock vibrant with strangeness and ingenuousness, is without doubt the frankest and most telling structure that has ever been raised quite simply as a monument to the imagination.

ELTHAM HALL

The Old Palace of Edward IV

RESTORED FOR MR. S. L. COURTAULD
BY SEELY AND PAGET, ARCHITECTS

Antiquarian Adviser, Sir Charles Peers

THE OLD PALACE

By W. H. Godfrey

THE remains of the royal buildings are not only exceedingly beautiful, but are of extraordinary interest as representing a palace which must have been one of the largest and most elaborate of the mediæval period. Its moat enclosed a building averaging 340 ft. by 300 ft. in area, and the total length of the courts of the palace probably approached 1,000 ft., with a width of from 400 to 500 ft. This rivals Hampton Court, which is 720 ft. by 400 ft., and is not insignificant even when compared with the great scheme of Inigo Jones for Whitehall, which was to have measured 1,200 ft. by 900 ft.

A most remarkable plan of the whole of the apartments within the circumference of the moat was found preserved among the many treasures in the Hatfield papers. It is, as far as one can judge, very fairly accurate. The foundations of the outside line of fortifications still exist, and correspond in the main to those shown. This outer wall is apparently of sixteenth-century date, and is not unlikely to have been partly the work of Queen Elizabeth. It formed on three sides a broad terrace between the moat and Bishop Bec's original walls. That the palace was first fortified by Bec is made extremely likely by the general resemblance of the plan to his castle at Somerton. The three principal towers at the angles and the one in the centre of the south front are probably his work. The last-named tower evidently guarded the south entrance, and it may have been the remains of this that have been spoken of as "castle-like" in earlier descriptions of the ruins. Some later hand probably inserted the fire-places in these towers. The view of the palace and moat published by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck in 1735 shows the north-east part of the wall fairly intact, and the eastern bastion raised like a tower and covered with a shaped lead roof resembling a cupola. It is probable that most of the building shown by Buck upon the outer wall was erected after the palace was despoiled, and the roofed bastion is not unlikely to have been but an eighteenth-century summer-house. The western line of the outer wall is overhung by buildings evidently of the Tudor period, and the fine range of bay windows shown on the Elizabethan plan is borne out in all but a few minor particulars by existing foundations. Further than this, a large portion of the main block of buildings that crosses the fortified area from west to east is here to corroborate the survey, and the great hall with its apartments to the east is found upon the precise line indicated on the drawing. The hall itself is correctly shown, except for the position of one buttress and an adjoining piece of brickwork, and the beautiful fourteenth-century bridge adds valuable evidence supporting the plan. Of the things revealed by this plan, none will prove of greater interest than the beautiful chapel which, to gain its right orientation, was placed so picturesquely across the great courtyard. The Parliamentary Survey of 1649 relates that, beside the "fair chapel" and great hall, there were forty-six rooms and offices on the ground floor, with two large cellars; and on the upper floor seventeen lodging rooms on the King's side, twelve on the Queen's side, and nine on the Prince's side—in all thirty-eight.

It appears from the building accounts of the reign of Henry VI that the chapel was being completed in his reign, as mention is made of the construction of a screen and of the two staircases to the gallery above. But the "fair chapel" of the Parliamentary Survey, shown on the Hatfield plan, was the work of Henry VIII. The accounts still exist of the taking down of the old chapel, and of its rebuilding by Henry some twelve feet nearer to the hall. The very massive wall standing west of the chapel on the plan probably marks the position of the western end of the former building. Henry VIII has left detailed directions as to the erection and furnishing of this chapel, which must have been one of the most beautiful buildings of its time.

The accounts also fix the date of the great hall. One of the fortnightly returns of expenditure when the roof was being framed together is headed, "Coste and

expense don upon the bildying of the newe Halle wytn the manor of Elthm in the charge of James Hatefeld from Sonday the XiXth day of Septembr the XiXth yer of the reigne of our Sovreign Lord King Edward the iiijth unto Sonday the iiid of Octobr the yer aforeseid."

From this it appears that Crosby Hall, built in 1466, was started some ten years or more before the hall of Eltham Palace; and yet the former is of much later character in almost all its details, and particularly in its panelled roof. The royal palace evidently clung to the traditional methods of design, and they were certainly capable of a more magnificent effect.

The fame of Eltham will ultimately rest upon the exquisite beauty of this great hall with its timbered roof, heavily moulded and adorned with finely-shaped pendants, its two rectangular bay or oriel windows with their elaborate vaulting and the splendid range of windows along both sides, which set the scale and still enrich the design in spite of mutilation and decay. All these have been happily recorded with infinite care and loving detail by Pugin, in the seven plates which form almost the best work in his *Examples of Gothic Architecture* (Vol. I).

THE NEW WORK

The new work which has now been completed may be divided into three sections. In the first place there was the removal of buildings which, chiefly in the 19th century, had been allowed to encroach on the site of the ancient palace, splitting it up into several separate holdings, and obscuring important views of the Great Hall and other remains from many aspects. Secondly, there was the restoration of the Great Hall, Moat Bridge and Walls, and, finally, the building of a new house as a permanent residence for its owner. The restoration included the reinstatement of bricked-up windows in the Great Hall; the repair of the roof, which has now been ceiled between the rafters; the replacement of much perished stonework, including the vaulted oriels and the external parapets; the strengthening of the Moat Bridge, and the completion of the Moat Walls where they had fallen into decay or been breached by successive alterations.

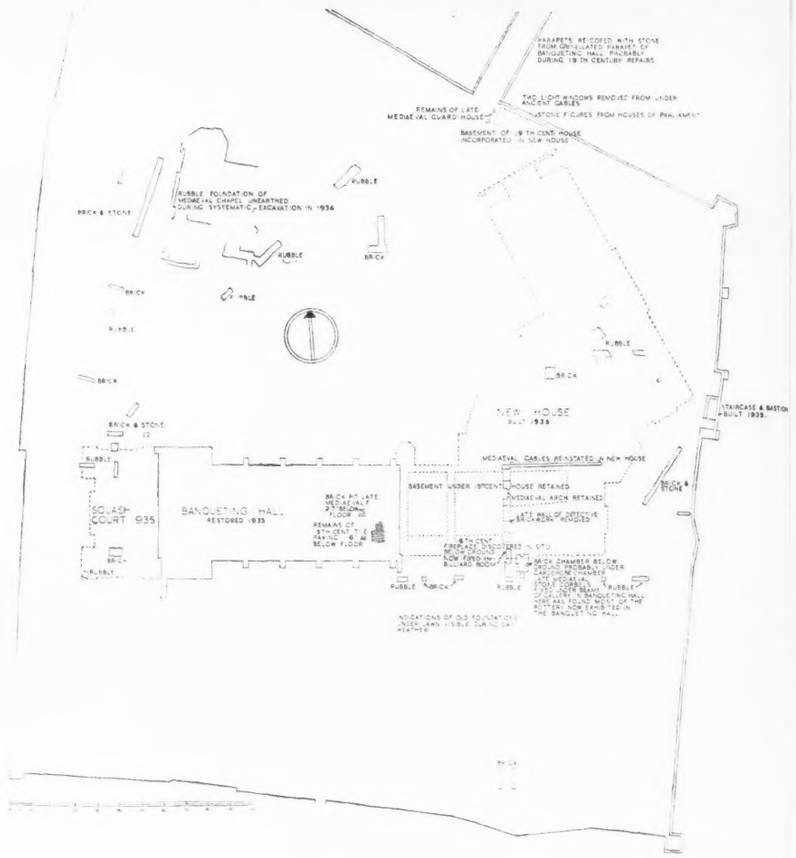
In the case of the new house the requirements were for a large house on two floors, connected to the Great Hall, and sited in such a way as to interfere as little as possible with views of the ancient remains. The planning had to provide for a given number of rooms, of which the exact dimensions in all important cases were predetermined by the sizes of fittings, furniture, pictures and carpets from Mr. Courtauld's collection.

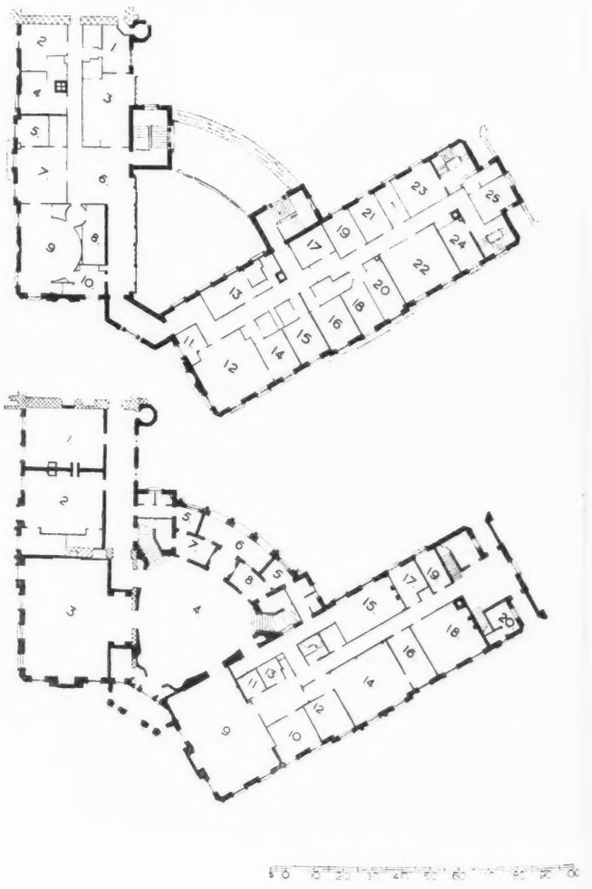
The difficulty of siting was overcome by setting the two wings of the building at an angle of 60°. By this means all the principal reception and bedrooms obtained a south aspect, while the service wing, facing north-east, forms a triangle with the Moat Wall exactly centred on one of the ancient bastions (see site plan).

On the entrance front, the two main staircases rise in copper roofed towers joined by a curved portico. While the general treatment is of rose-coloured brickwork with Clipsham stone dressings, the junction with the Great Hall on the entrance front has been achieved by a short section entirely in stone, terminating in a turret which gives access to the Great Hall and Gallery. On the South Front, the elevation has purposely been kept rather flat, so as to accentuate rather than compete with the buttressed length of the Great Hall.

At the angle of the two wings, a more romantic treatment has been employed. In the centre the connecting gallery rises to a copper roof, balancing those on the entrance front, with below it a Loggia incorporating four sculptured panels, the work of Mr. Gilbert Ledward. Supporting this central feature on either side are the two main chimney stacks, which serve the Drawing Room and Dining Room.

At the other extremity the new building extends to a Pavilion containing a Squash Rackets Court and Orangery This is chiefly composed of silver-grey brickwork with rose brick dressings to harmonize with the great expanse of the ancient gable and oriels behind it.





KEY

First Floor

1 Dressing Room
2 Bedroom
3 Guests' Double Bedroom
4 Bedroom
5 Bathroom
6 Gallery
7 Bedroom
8 Clothes Store
9 Bedroom
10 Bathroom
11 Bathroom
12 Bedroom
13 Secretary
14 Dressing Room
15 Guest's Bedroom
16 Guest's Bedroom
17 Linen Store
18 Work Room
19 Spare Room
20 Maid's Room
21 Head House-maid
22 Maids' Room
23 Footmen
24 Cook's Room
25 Butler's Room

Ground Floor

1 Library
2 Boudoir
3 Drawing Room
4 Entrance Hall
5 Lavatories
6 Colonnade
7 Ladies' Room
8 Cloak Room
9 Dining Room
10 Butler's Pantry
11 Silver Store
12 Larder
13 China Store
14 Kitchen
15 Boys' Room
16 Scullery
17 Cook's Room
18 Servants' Hall
19 Boots
20 Refuse

N O F E L T H A M H A L L

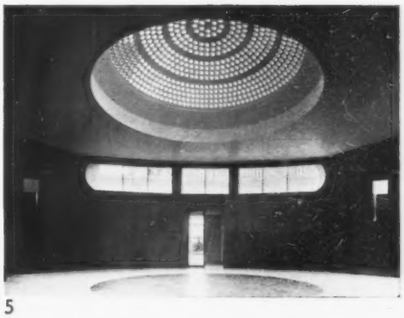
1

3

4

2

1 and 3, exteriors of the new house added to the remains of the old: from the court and from across the moat. 2, the interior of the old hall, restored for habitation. 4, sculpture by Carleton Attwood over the new entrance. 5, the entrance hall, unfinished. A scheme of decoration by the Swedisharchitect, Rolf Engströmer will incorporate an inlaid wood mural by Werkmeister. 6, the dining room designed by White Allom.



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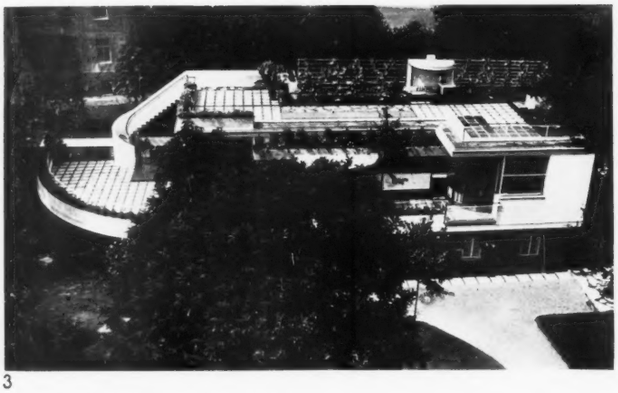
GUEST HOUSE

1

2



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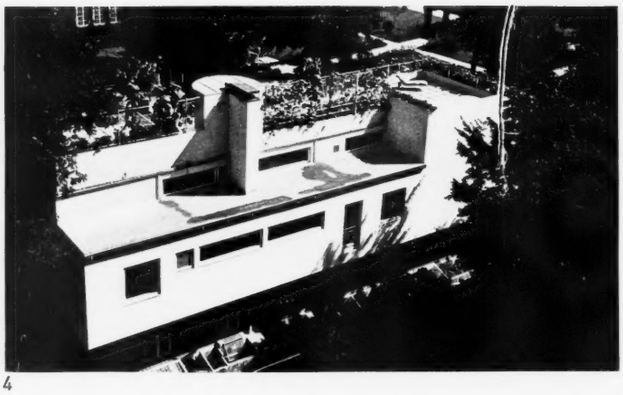


4

5

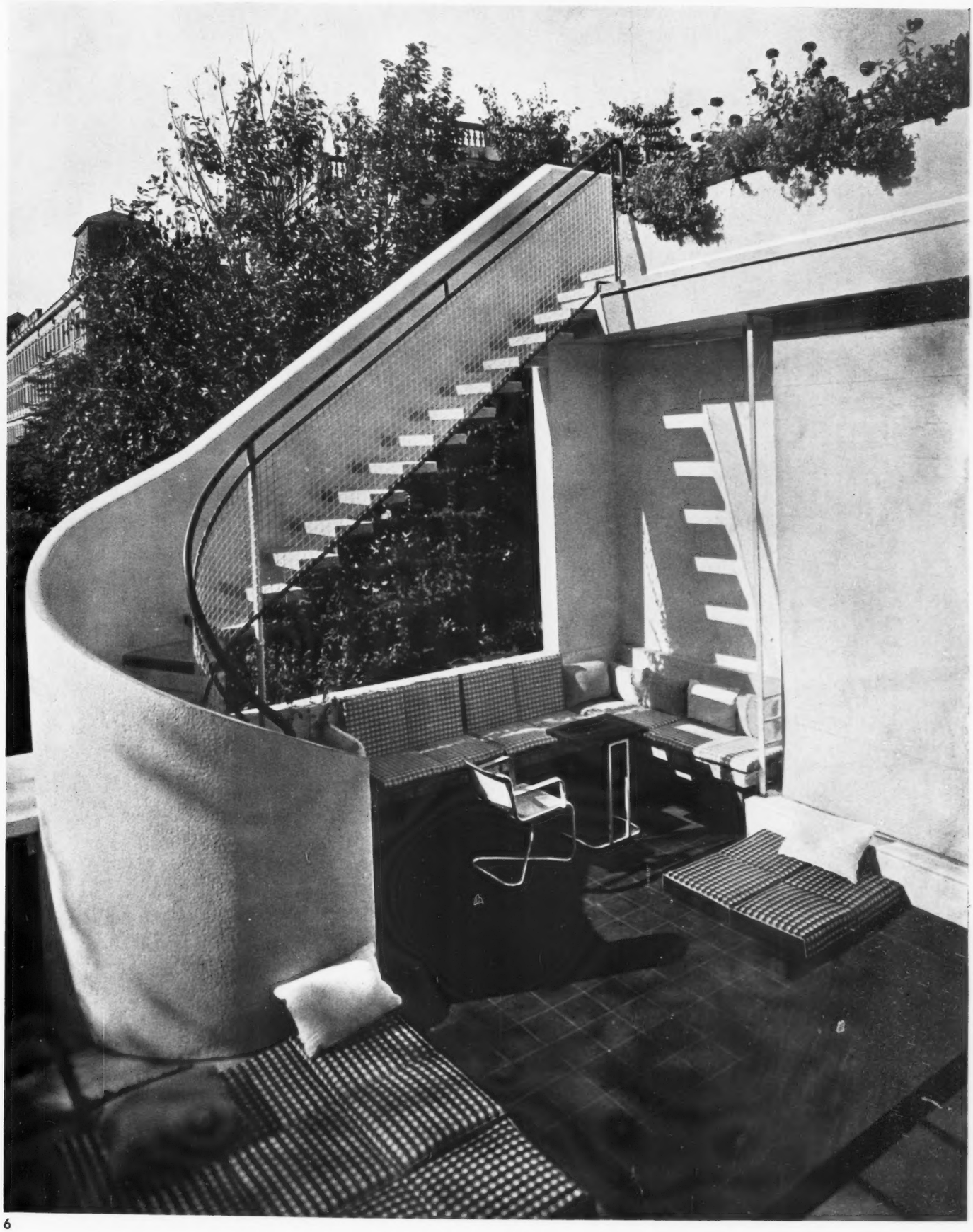
FRANZ SINGER,
ARCHITECT

This is a guest house situated in the world-famous Vienna Prater, a vast expanse of woodland with avenues of chestnuts and clumps of copper beaches, pines, elms and firs. Many villas have in the past been built along these avenues. One such villa belongs to Count and Countess Heriot ; it is of no style and dates from the second half of the nineteenth century, a very bad period for domestic architecture in Vienna—as elsewhere. It stands in a large garden and the guest house has been built on its far side so that the full expanse of the garden lies between the home of the hosts and their visitors.

Where the guest house now stands was formerly an old building probably set up as servants' or stablemen's quarters nearly 100 years ago. Time had reduced it to a shed. No trace of the old building can now be seen. It is hidden within the steel framework of the new one. The original roof supports have been extended and on these the supports of the outer walls of the new house rest. Above is a large terrace of quadrant shape, seen in 3, resting partly on the wall of the old building. The terrace, 1, is paved with artificial stone, interspersed with pebbles from which grass sprouts, forming a delightful pavement, 2. Beyond the terrace in 2 can also be seen the garden and the swimming pool. All the roofs are of reinforced concrete with cork slab insulation.

The new part of the house, built upon the old, consists of two large bed-sitting rooms, each provided with an ante-room, dressing room and wash and douche niches; also a bathroom, two smaller bedrooms, and the domestic quarters. A steel spiral stairway encased in artificial stone leads from the lower terrace to the rooms above. There is also a lift for two persons, 5, round in shape, built entirely of glass and worked from below, the mechanism being built into a special cellar. Each terrace has a garden, with flowers and plants set in boxes. These are watered centrally through pressing ventrils from which the water shoots

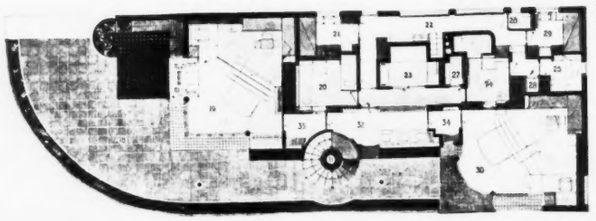
IN THE PRATER, VIENNA



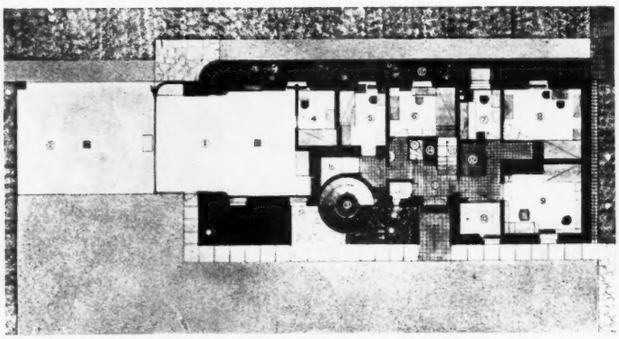
6

GUEST HOUSE IN VIENNA

7



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

1. Garage
2. Car washing space
3. Stairs and lift
4. Chauffeur's room
5, 6, 7. Maids' rooms
8. Cook's room
9. Housekeeper's room
10. Cloak room
11. Vestibule
12. Birdcage
13. Stairs up
14. Broom cupboard
15. Stairs to cellar
16. Store room
17. Garden window
18. Terrace
19 Large guestroom
20. Dressing room
21. Small guestroom
22. Corridor
23. Bathroom
24. Dressing room
25. Gymnasium
26, 27, W.C.
28. Store room
29. Small guestroom
30. Large guestroom
31. Stairs and lift
32. Lounge
33, 34. Landing

up from below. The roof, 2, 3 and 4, is a garden with covered-in niches to provide shelter from the blazing heat. This garden is reached from the terrace by a remarkable reinforced concrete staircase, 6, with steps cantilevered from a solid balustrade wall. From the terraces and roof there is a remarkable view.

Huge glass sliding doors, 7 and 8, disappearing into the walls, lead from the guest rooms on to the terraces. When open, interior, terrace and garden form one large open-air room. The doors are framed in stainless steel. All the other windows are double, steel-framed. Those of the front façade slide out of sight.

The rooms are furnished as bed-sitting rooms. The walls are partly painted on a jute ground, and partly finished with washable papering or wood inlay. The beds are made to slide from sight under a raised platform, 9; also the folding night tables. The sitting corner and writing room, 10, are on the platform, which is diagonal to the sliding door and so commands a view of the terrace, winter garden and swimming pool without. The furniture, designed with space-saving ingenuity by the architect, includes bookcase, writing table, chromed steel nesting chairs and tables. All horizontal surfaces are covered with linoleum, metal or glass. The dressing rooms are luxuriously fitted-up with built-in furniture and cupboards.

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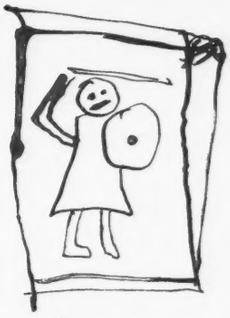

" A wander wit of Wiltshire rambling to Rome to gaze at antiquities and there skrewing himself into the Company of antiquarians, they entreated him to illustrate unto them that famous monument in his country called Stonage. His answer was that he had never seen, scarce ever heard of it, whereupon they kicked him out of doors and bad him goe home and see Stonage. And I wish that all such Episcopale cocks as slight these admired stones, and scrape for barley cornes of vanity on foreigne dung hills, might be handled, or rather footed, as he was."

LANGTOFT'S CHRONICLE

ENGLAND'S EARLY SCULPTORS

By John Piper

Early sculptures in English churches deserve to be better known than they are to the general public, and to artists and architects in particular. There are a great many of them : every county has at least a few imposing fragments, though they are scattered, and often remote. The only people who know much about them are archaeologists—they have discovered their whereabouts, and have by this time collected most of the possible information. This is nearly as scattered as the sculptures themselves, although by the efforts of a few individuals at the London museums, the Courtauld Institute, and elsewhere, it is at last becoming intelligible and available. People should form a habit of using it, and of making personal judgments. Years ago, Mr. Romilly Allen (an authority on symbolism in early sculpture) could truthfully remark that " archaeologists are past masters at hiding their information, as a dog does a bone, till they can go and dig it up again for themselves," and the older text-books, invaluable for information, mislead by having their pages littered with adjectives like " archaic," " uncouth," " artless " and " rude." So the authors of books and articles on English art have not been encouraged to look farther than the panels in Chichester Cathedral and Malmesbury Abbey, the rich carving at Kilpeck and one or two other places as examples to illustrate early native art. The more " local " types of carving, scattered everywhere in churches, have gone practically unnoticed. Comments on them by older authorities like Sir T. G. Jackson, R.A., are frightening, and have done a lot to cause the neglect. He writes :

" The early efforts of the Norman sculptors at the human figure are deplorable, and are like the efforts of the street boy with a piece of chalk on the palings, or shall we say the masterpiece of a post-impressionist painter. I have in former pages observed the same difficulty in dealing with the figure in the Lombard School, and it is only fair to say that these figures at Wordwell in Suffolk are not much worse than those at Cividale in Friule . . . In many cases the ornament of capitals is applied without any constructive idea whatever. In the example from Castor there is no attempt to express decoratively the form and function of a capital, but the figures are placed on the surface anyhow; a leaf finishes one angle with nothing to balance it on the other, and on the left-hand capital is an ill-designed piece of foliage at one corner with no resemblance to nature and no relation to anything. Nothing could be much more barbarous."*

This is a violent form of the prejudice—and modesty—about the origins of its own art that still clings in England.

However, in sympathy with the activities in art and architecture of the last thirty years, the angle of vision is shifting, and there is all the fun of the pioneer to be had in discovering and reporting finds in the light of this new vision. And great finds they are.

From the eighth century onwards for about five hundred years sculptors were dealing with forms very like those used by artists in our time working in the light of (or reacting from) the achievement of

* " Byzantine and Romanesque Architecture," Vol. ii.


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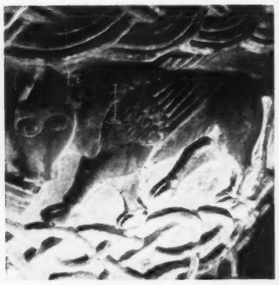
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1 and 2, figures on the font at Castle Frome, Herefordshire; late 12th century. 3, Adam and Eve on the font at Hook Norton, Oxfordshire; 12th century. 4 and 5, the font at Luppitt, Devonshire; 12th century. 6, Sagittarius: the tympanum at Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Somerset; 12th century. 7, the font at South Milton, Devonshire; 12th century. 8, the font at Toller Fratrum, Dorset; 12th century. 9, another detail of the font at Castle Frome. 10, a figure at Ampney St. Peter, Gloucestershire; 12th century.

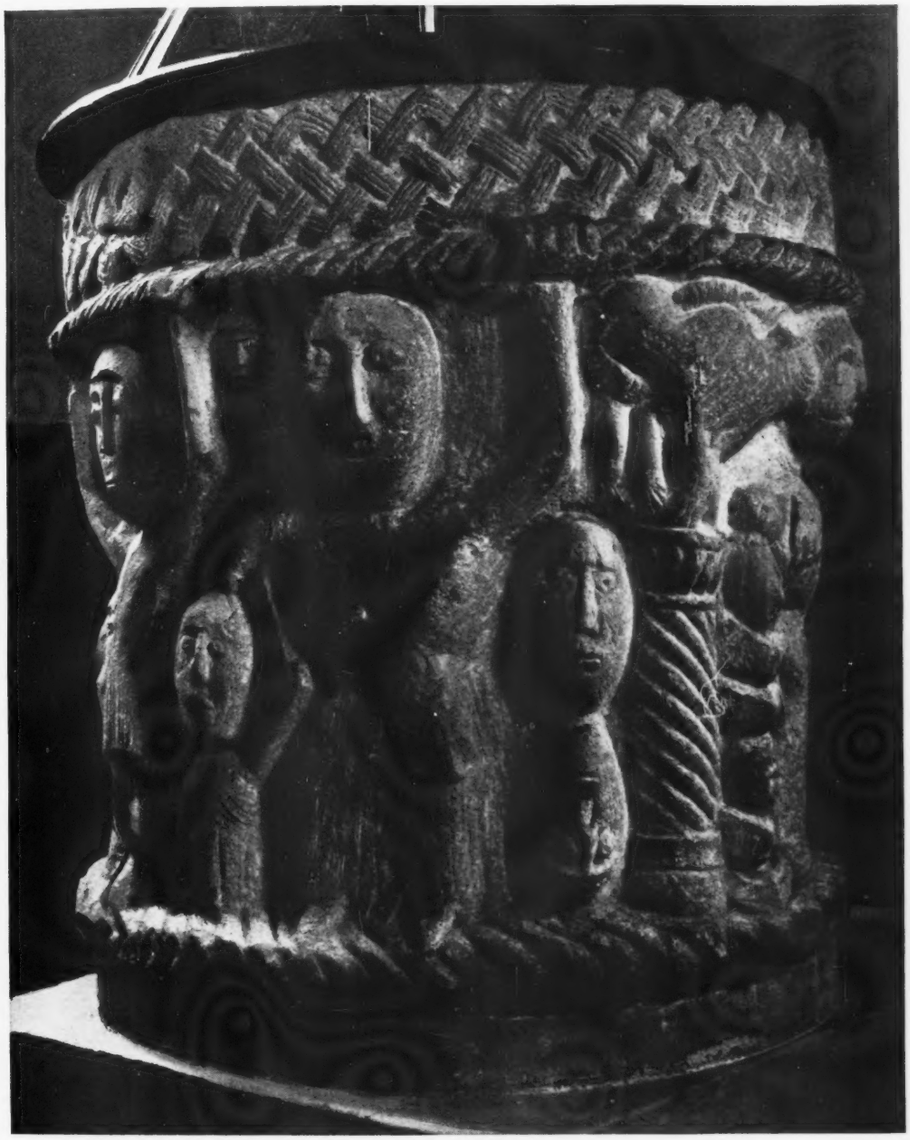
Cézanne, Seurat and the Cubists. The purely non-figurative artists of some early Northumbrian and Cornish crosses were the forbears of the pure abstractionists of today. There were also early reactions against recognized forms, and obvious expressions of the subconscious, that find a contemporary parallel in surrealism. (The Picasso-like profile on the font at Morville, 18, could have had a comfortable place in the International Surrealist Exhibition.) Up to the end of the twelfth century there was a strong bias towards geometric forms, and purely abstract pattern had an important function in any decorative scheme. Figure sculpture grew out of abstract pattern, and retired back into it at intervals—single early examples with animals and figures embroiled in the surrounding pattern often resemble the rare birds hatching with many forebodings from a Max Ernst egg. These comparisons are not arbitrary. Josef Strzygowski* discovers that

"among historical forms of religion, Monotheism appears to favour a non-representational system. Judaism and Islam are examples . . . In its origins Christianity inclined in the same direction."

* "Origins of Christian Church Art." Translation by O. M. Dalton.

And there is the well-known parallel of man in present-day world chaos and the primitive man of Wilhelm Worringer's "Form in Gothic", oppressed by the seeming chaos of the unknown world around him developing a "will to form"—desiring to make something he could recognize as *shape* in the surrounding disorder.

Such parallels can easily be pushed too far, but it is certain that side by side with the work of sculptors like Brancusi, Arp and Moore, and painters like Picasso, Kandinsky, Klee and Miró these works are full of meaning for the present day. The local type of carving to be seen on



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the font at Toller Fratrum, Dorset, 8 and Plate iii, is of just the kind to give rise to the abusive adjective from the guide-book writer—aesthetic child of Ruskin and Sir T. G. Jackson. But it has the bigness and strangeness that has been accessory to so much of the achievement of Picasso, and through him and others to the aesthetic revelations of the twentieth century. For the primitive artist the Deity, ruler of the outside unknowable world, is above all awe-inspiring and majestic; powerful, and very unlike powerless man himself. So there is very little that is knowable, touchable or "human" about these associates of the primitive English God on a village font. It was a powerful position to be in as an artist, to work under the dominance of a strong outside idea, guarded against diffuseness and detail by strict rules within which the temporary inspiration could blossom and flourish. There was no need to quarrel with the formal law and take liberties with it. It was in itself a liberation rather than a stricture because it pointed a work with a purpose, and all energy could be directed within it. The law was wide enough to give opportunity for the work, and conviction in doing it. In consequence, with a carving like this one at Toller Fratrum the whole of the

form is felt, and the composition has an immense personal conviction. Indeed, most sculpture in England of the eighth to the twelfth centuries has this conviction. For instance, the whole group of early crosses, many of them with interlacing pattern—symbols of the godhead as a "continuous, centreless activity" (Worringer)—symbols of the continuity of life in a dangerous world. The most remarkable thing about them is the richness and variety that craftsmen got from the interlacing pattern, continually repeating it, continually varying and vitalizing it by a realness of feeling. If anyone doubts the essential vitality of the fragments of early interlaced ornament that are scattered in country churches let him compare one with any of the "Celtic crosses" scattered with equal profusion on village greens as memorials of the last war. In an identical design there may be found the difference of a line tracked with feeling, as it were through undiscovered country, in every inch of its course, and of a lifeless, senseless, irritating pattern. The sculpture on the cross-shaft at Codford St. Peter, 22, connected in its character with interlaced ornament, has a rigidity and an instinctive control that seem wholly rational, and are yet free and mindless: a quality that permeates all pre-Norman carving, including the interlaced patterns themselves. (In the well-known Chichester panels it is highly sophisticated, and openly emotional). Consider the font (once a cross base) at Penmon in Anglesey, 19. The convention here, in spite of an obvious narrowness, had something about it that allowed the artist or craftsman to work with the whole of *himself*, and at the same time to produce something that was above all lucid and popular: not in the least "highbrow." This is a capacity that the present-day artist envies, and strives for. Music seeks a wider and more universal language in atonality. In poetry, a poet like Auden struggles for it in his use of musical comedy jazz-lyrics. In art, abstraction is an instinctive search for the everyday symbols of geometry; while surrealists insist on the popular character of their art, pointing to the identity of the whole human subconscious. Probably the only place today where a *popular* art can be dispensed with genius is the cinema, in the hands of artists like Charlie Chaplin and the Marx Brothers.

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11, *a capital at Bugthorpe, Yorkshire; 12th century.* 12 *and* 13, *details from the south door at Kilpeck, Herefordshire; late 12th century.*

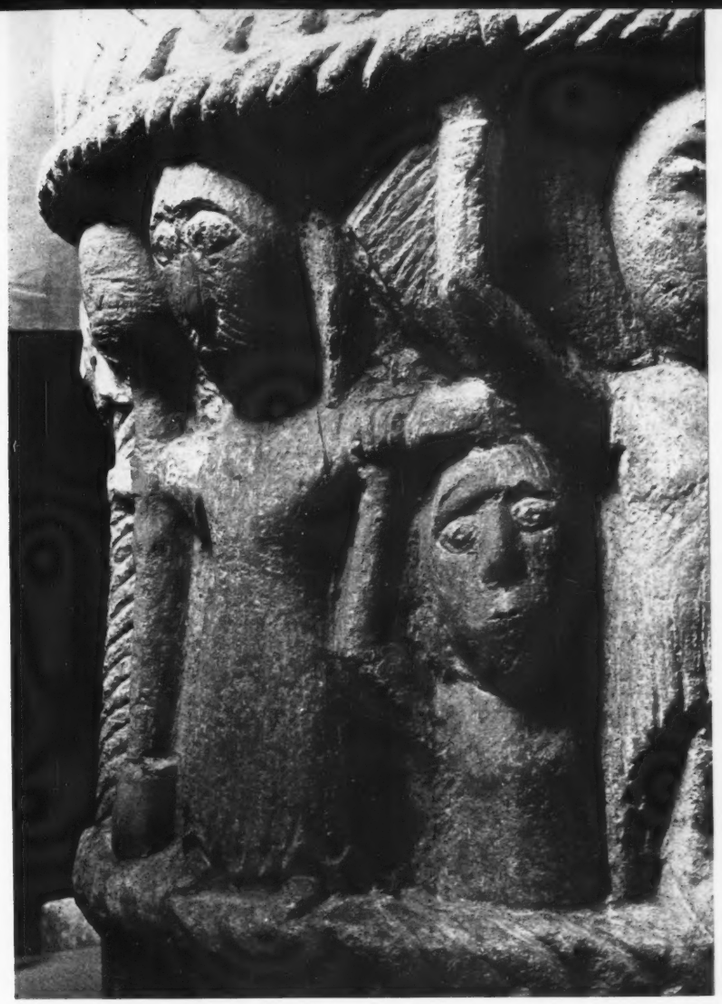
The period, character and purpose of the sculptures illustrated with this article, are varied, and they are chosen more or less at random, chiefly from the south, west and midland counties, though similar examples are to be found in all districts (Yorkshire is full of good examples). But in any arbitrary collection one quality is to be found always: this free play of the artists' impulse working within ordered limits.

This early art that shows a specially English character was nourished from many sources. Celtic, Norse and Byzantine influences were of great importance. After the Conquest an all-pervading form was evolved under the influence of the Normans which had, whatever its individual twists may be, a Byzantine sense of austerity animated by a strong linear rhythm—a native characteristic. Towards the end of English Romanesque this particular kind of order is to be seen everywhere. A good example of it is the tympanum at Rowlstone, Herefordshire, 26. Here a sustained line is used in a most subtle way to charge a design which is at once rhythmical and rigid—as if the Christ enthroned is both a seated, immovable Majesty and a flowing, abundant Life. Not again until Blake did this specially English genius show itself so well: this genius for making a line at once create a shape and enrich it with meaning as part of a whole design, for making, in Blake's own words

"firm and determinate lineaments unbroken by shadows, which ought to display and not hide the form. . . . Leave out this line and you leave out life itself; all is chaos again, and the line of the Almighty must be drawn out upon it before man or beast can exist."

The tympanum at Rowlstone is certainly a masterpiece. English modesty cropping up again, it is very little known—compared with the tympanum at Vézelay, for instance, which is bigger, grander and richer, but no "better": unless the landscapes of Rubens are "better" than those

The Deposition from the Cross: on the font at Cottam in the East Riding of Yorkshire; 12th century.



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A: A detail of the font at Toller Fratrum, Dorset (also illustrated on page 159). B: A detail of the font at Cowlam, Yorkshire. Both of the 12th century.

The Gifts of the Magi. Another detail (*see* Plate iii) from the font at Cowlam, Yorkshire.

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C: Sagittarius on the font at Hook Norton, Oxfordshire. D: a capital at Bugthorpe, in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Both of the 12th century.

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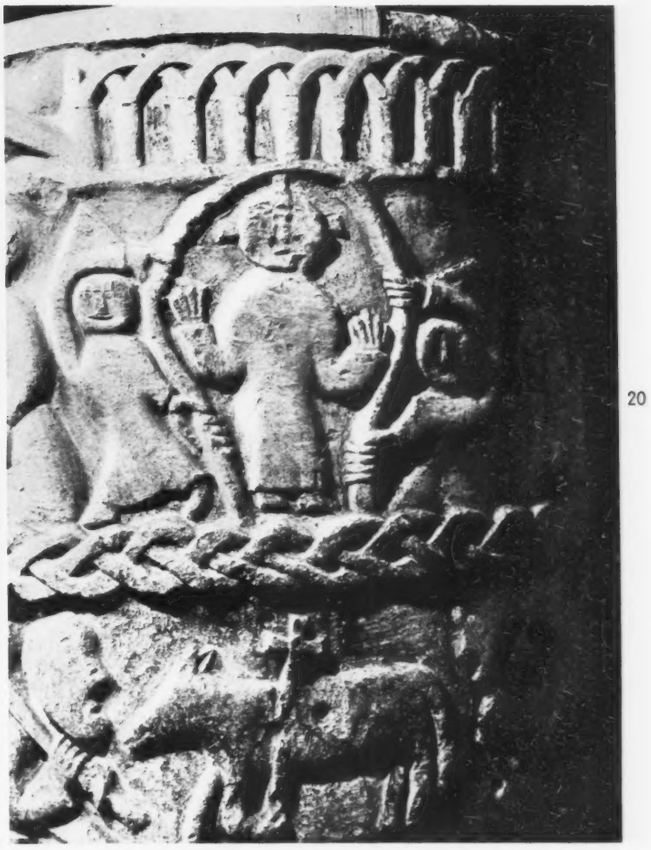

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14, *detail from the font, a bishop with two croziers, at Overbury, Worcestershire; 12th century.* 15, *two apostles on the font at Rendcombe, Gloucestershire.* 16, *The Crucifixion; one of three decorative panels at Daglingworth, Gloucestershire; early 10th century.* 17, *a cross-shaft, now used (upside down) as a font, at Melbury Bubb, Dorset; 9th or 10th century.* 18, *a 12th-century surrealist profile on the font at Morville, Shropshire.* 19, *a cross-base, now used as a font, at Penmon, Anglesey; pre-conquest.* 20, *Christ in Majesty, on the font at Kirkburn, Yorkshire; 12th century.* 21, *The Self-Destructive Qualities of Evil: a detail from the font at Hook Norton, Oxfordshire; 12th century.* 22, *Cross-shaft at Codford St. Peter, Wiltshire; early 9th century.*

of Constable. The elaborate carving at Kilpeck, 12 and 13, and on the fonts at Eardisley and Castle Frome, 1, 2 and 9, all neighbours of Rowlstone, look compared with it like the ideas of a school in the hands of highly accomplished craftsmen. Fine as they are they are less personal, and less infused with feeling. The Rowlstone quality shows itself in a modest form in the serpent biting itself with its second head, 21, and in the other carvings on the font at Hook Norton in Oxfordshire, 3 and Plate v (c), where a local artist (evidently) had a strong sense of the special genius of his time.

Side by side with this obviously linear art there was in the eleventh and twelfth centuries a kind of punctuated A.B.C. method of carving by local masons which is connected with it, and often most attractive. It is to be seen on the tympanum at Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Somerset, 6, where animals, birds, tree, are all set out like the objects in a toy zoo, carver and onlooker alike adding an imaginary "and" between each object. The unrelenting line has become a kind of linear

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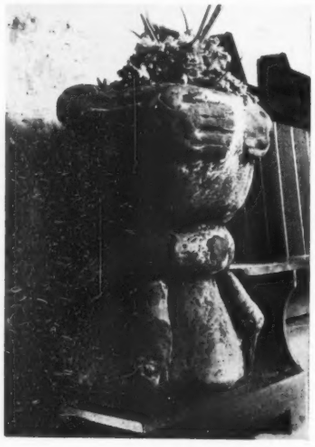

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23, Christ in Majesty : tympanum at Kirtling, Cambridgeshire ; 12th century. 24, Angel at Winterbourne Steepleton, Dorset ; 9th or 10th century. 25, Stoup at Kilpeck, Herefordshire ; 12th century. 26, Christ in Majesty : tympanum at Rowlstone, Herefordshire. 27, Virgin and Child over the chancel arch at Langridge, near Bath ; early 12th century.

idea. The same scheme is evident at South Milton, 7, Castor and elsewhere in the illustrations. The sculptor at Luppitt, 4 and 5, in a sensitive and elaborate carving, even had the delicate fancy of carving the heads of two animals in one, and then cutting them across, mouths and all, to make two—no doubt following the formal law of continuity, and making the punctuating cut with great conviction and dash.

The special English genius of the period for a small-scale sculpture with a purpose is well-seen in the stoup at Kilpeck, 25. Here the sculptor took great licence—to produce a stoup in the form of a fat stomach with two hands clasping it. The whole effect is Rabelaisian—and yet it is as austere, as taut a piece of work as could be found : fitting for its purpose and surprising in its simplicity. It is a fine "popular" work, strictly in character with the form and temper of its time. This idea in the hands of a later carver would have been as human—more so, in a sense—but would have lost the quality of awe and wonder that this stoup has in common with all carving of its period, and earlier. Humanization, "the Age of Sentiment," was soon to begin—though the wonder persisted through thirteenth-century religious art, too. The Deity and all connected with Him became more and more man-like in the art of the succeeding centuries : more an example, less an idol : until we find in a late wall-painting in a Sussex church the Virgin Mary with the Child on her knee looking like the lady of the manor in a basket chair on the manor-house lawn.

The fragment at Ampney St. Peter, 10, (an erotic figure, which had been defaced and thrown in the boiler-hole of the church, where it was found recently) has the same quality as the Kilpeck stoup. Less austerity—to suit the occasion—than most carvings of the time, but it implies an acceptance of life and the ways of God rather than a comment on God's will in general or on human foibles in particular. This *acceptance* is noticeable. All the works show a submissiveness on the part of the artists (even when they did not belong to a school), a lack of fight against the artistic conventions that is surprising. The reason being that the conventions constituted a highly-developed classical form, within which individual romantic tendencies functioned with immense richness and variety. The nature of this "classical" form is well suggested by these comments of Professor Emile Mâle* : "The art of the Middle Ages is first and foremost a sacred writing of which every artist must learn the characters. He must know that the circular nimbus placed vertically behind the head serves to express sanctity, while the nimbus impressed with a cross is the sign of divinity which he will always use in portraying one of the Three Persons of the Trinity . . . The second characteristic of mediæval iconography is obedience to the rules of a kind of sacred mathematics. Position, grouping, symmetry and number are of extraordinary importance . . . . Symmetry, parallelism, a seasoned belief in the virtue of numbers, and in fact the Middle Ages never doubted that numbers were endowed with some occult power. The third characteristic of mediæval art lies in this, that it is a symbolic code."

Anything might happen within this closely-ordered structure, and many strange and rare things did happen. But in England more than anywhere else artists used the rigid rules for their own enrichment and delight, producing works which obeyed the rules strictly, and were yet saturated with their own personalities and bursting with life.

* "Religious Art in France in the Thirteenth Century," English translation by Dora Nussey.

The photographs illustrating this article were taken by John Piper and Myfanwy Evans.

CURRENT ARCHITECTURE

1

E. MAXWELL FRY

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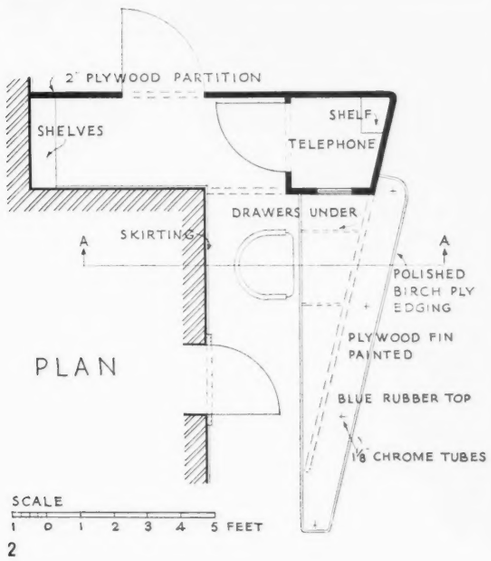

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Temporary electricity showrooms in Sloane Street, London : the conversion of an existing shop, with display window as well as a large plate-glass window beside the door through which the interior display can be seen. The front, 1, is finished in pale blue and white with large-size tubular illuminated lettering in yellow on the fascia. 2, plan of the new fittings inside, consisting of partitioning, inquiry counter and cash desk. The counter, 3, is tapered and has a blue rubber top with an edging of polished birch ply. It is supported on 1¼ in. chromium-plated steel tubes. The wall behind is painted grey, with the clock in blue and white. 4, a mural decoration by Hans Feibusch on the end wall.

CURRENT ARCHITECTURE 2

FRANK SCARLETT

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This is a block of 146 flats, known as Wellesley Court, on the north side of Maida Vale at the junction of Maida Vale and Abercorn Place. It consists of seven five-storey blocks arranged with three courts and a wide drive and car park along the front of the building. Access to the flats is by balconies from the main staircases and lifts. The kitchens and bathrooms on the access side of the flats, and the living rooms, bedrooms, etc., face outwards or into the central court. The flats vary in size from the one-room type, with living-room, bed recess, kitchen and bathroom, to the five-room type, with living-room, dining-room, two bedrooms, maid's room, kitchen and two bathrooms. Seventy per cent. of the flats have private balconies, accessible from the living rooms through glazed double doors. The majority of these balconies face south or south-west. There are six studio flats on the fifth floor of the front blocks. These are two storeys high, with gallery bedrooms, private balconies and roof gardens. They have main windows 15 ft. high and command a fine view over London. The main entrances are in the front blocks, and have panelled vestibules and lifts and staircases. There is access to the central court through the loggia between the front blocks and to the north court from Abercorn Place. There are lifts and staircases for tradesmen at the north

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and south corners of the building. The boiler room and private luggage and coal stores are in the basement below the south blocks. The construction generally is of brick bearing walls with steel beams. Floors are hollow tile, and balconies, lintols, etc., reinforced concrete. All windows are metal. The external finish is red brick for the front and sides, and white brick for the back and inside the courts. Balconies, etc., are finished in cream-coloured cement rendering. The internal finish is plaster with tiling to cill height in bathrooms. Electric fires are provided generally, with coal fires in the living rooms of the larger flats. The normal installation for central heating, hot water, electric light and power is provided, with a one-pipe system of drainage. There are special facilities for the collection of refuse and the reading of meters direct from the access balconies without it being necessary to enter the flats, by means of two-way cupboards in the outside walls of the kitchens. 5, the covered entrance-loggia to the central court. 6, a corner of one of the wings, showing the private balconies and the access balconies on the right. 7, a typical floor plan. 8, the front elevation. 9, inside one of the courts, showing on the extreme right the glass walls of the escape stair. 10, an interior (unfurnished) of one of the studio flats. 11, a detail of the entrance loggia.

CURRENT ARCHITECTURE 3

W. A. JOHNSON
J. W. CROPPER, ASSISTANT

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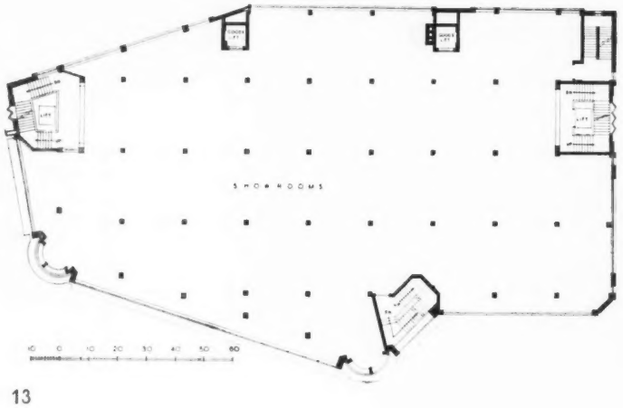

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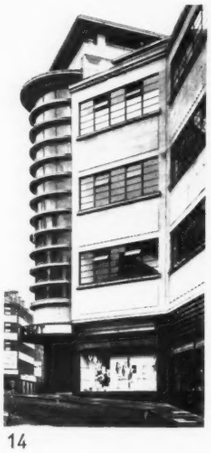

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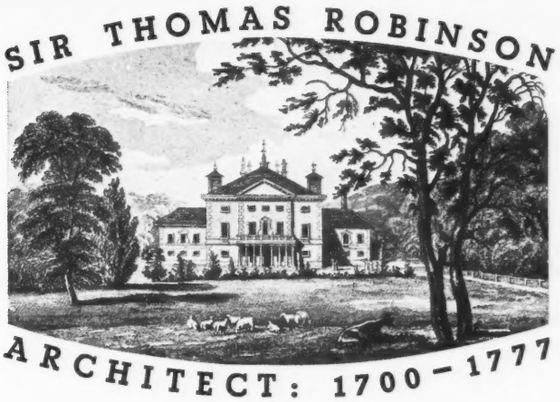
This is a department store for the City of Bradford Co-operative Society, designed by the Society's architect. The programme was to provide central shopping premises on the open-store principle; also a large restaurant on the top floor, with all services and extra rooms for the accommodation of private parties. The site is on steeply sloping ground in the shopping centre of Bradford, the slope allowing natural light and ventilation to both basement and sub-basement in the rear portion. The building is planned with large entrances on each of the three street fronts, with staircases and passenger lifts in connection with each. Loading docks at sub-basement level give direct access to the stockrooms and packing and dispatch departments. From each side of the loading docks goods lifts serve all floors. Construction is steel frame, with 14-inch brick walls faced with York stone. Roofs are of reinforced concrete, asphalted, insulated with pumice concrete. The shop fittings throughout are of walnut and bronze. The total cost, including furniture and equipment, was approximately £140,000. 12, the main elevation to Sunbridge Road. 13, lay-out plan. 14, a side view of one of the entrances, with glazed staircase window above. 15, the interior of the third-floor smoking room.



THE MODERN PROTEUS

By Dudley Harbron

It is unfortunate that the letters exchanged by the Earl of Chesterfield and Sir Thomas Robinson were not published after the death of them both. Sir Thomas desired that they should be. Had he not thought that they contained matter of public interest, he would not have so carefully preserved those of the Earl, nor have made copies of his own replies.

The two of them may have been vain, they may have written the correspondence with an eye to future publication, but even so its suppression is a literary and historic loss.

Had the Stanhope-Robinson discussion been accessible to us the character of Sir Thomas would have been revealed. He would have been diminished or enhanced in consequence. Since he was desirous of taking the risk it is reasonable to suppose that he had confidence in the outcome. They must have been an apology for his own life, a life which, seen through the eyes of others, appeared to have been wasted.

To self-centred observers so it looked. For Sir Thomas was no pattern-plate, but had ideas, costume, manners and physique which differentiated him from his contemporaries and evoked hostile criticism. What his critics could not ignore were his departures from the normal. Fortunately these were sufficiently numerous to have preserved him in memory, though the image is distorted.

When the eighteenth century dawned, Thomas Robinson was born with it. He knew no other age. His father, William Robinson, Esq., of Rokeby, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, had married Anne Walters, and Thomas was their son and heir. His parents were unambitious gentlefolk, ready to sacrifice themselves for their children. The family had long been established at Rokeby as the principal landowners.

As a youth Thomas was tall and slim. When grown to his full height as a man he towered head and shoulders above any company. Throughout his life his height was the subject of unnumbered jests which he bore without complaint. That he was tall was advantageous to him in that it enabled him to be distinguished even in his absence from other men bearing his familiar name. So he became universally known as "long Tom," and ultimately as "long Sir Thomas." For after he had been created a baronet it was still necessary to particularize him in conversation or correspondence, from the other Sir Thomas Robinson.

The latter gentleman was short and fat, the very opposite from his namesake. When together there was no difficulty over their identity. Indeed, Lady Townend said of the pair, that she "could not imagine why one is preferred to the other. *The one is as broad as the other is long.*"

As a young man our Thomas Robinson made the usual continental tour then considered a necessary part of the education of a gentleman. He went farther afield than others had done, and took a deeper interest in architecture than many of his like who had had the same advantages. It is evident that he was more intelligent than the ordinary well-to-do landed gentleman, and was early determined to become a figure in polite society, through the use of his brain and not merely the abuse of his brawn.

None-the-less he rode to hounds as hard as any man. He affected a carelessness in dress indicative of his composite character. He would appear at elegant assemblies clad in post-cap, a light green jacket and buckskin breeches, much to the dismay of the master of the ceremonies. No doubt he was one of those delinquents who danced in spurs at the Bath—and was sent home to change by Beau Nash. Such a figure was a convenient target for the caricaturists of the eighteenth century. They took the opportunity provided by his odd figure and eccentric dress to familiarize the public with his appearance.

On his return to England from his continental travels, he commenced his architectural activities in reality. He became his own client and employed his leisure in demolishing the family seat at Rokeby and in building the present house. His estate was situated at the junction of the River Greta with the Tees. It was bounded by the two rivers and the old Roman road Watling Street. Out of the estate he fashioned the romantic setting for the Poem in six cantos by Sir Walter Scott, which bears the name *Rokeby*. It was written nearly a hundred years after Robinson had planted the scenery that inspired the poet. Even still the beauty of the site moves the romantic tourist to applause. Robinson was an early practitioner of the artificial assistance of nature by landscape gardening. He was an admirer of Capability Brown the chief exponent of the art.

Within this park he built his new mansion. As the first work of a young man (who is yet referred to as an amateur) it is quite creditable. The worst that can be said of it was voiced in 1813, "the façade being disproportionate in its parts, and the whole basement much too low; the object of the architect has evidently been to gain the noble drawing room on the second floor; to which not only the height of the lower apartments, but the size of the adjoining have been sacrificed." But then the young architect was housing his own lengthy person and contemplated spending some of his time in female society.

Not only did Robinson build a new house, but in true eighteenth century manner he pulled down the existing parish church and built a new one to his liking outside his park. These undertakings engaged him intermittently for about five years. The rest of his time was spent between Rokeby, York and London where he had a town house.

It is possible to see what he was like at this period of his life when he was a young man-about-town. He attended the first night of Gay's comedy *The Beggars' Opera*, at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1728, when Levinia Fenton made her successful début as Polly Peachum, and so fascinated Lord Bolton that she became as soon as possible the Duchess of Bolton. William Hogarth, in his drawing of the occasion, represents Robinson standing in a box behind and with Lord Gaze, Lady Jane Cook, Sir Conyers Darcy and others. In the picture he is shown as dressed quite normally, wearing a heavy wig.

Later in the same year, 1728, he married Elizabeth, the daughter of the third Earl of Carlisle. The ceremony took place at Belfrys, York. The lady was the widow of Lord Lechmere. According to Horace Walpole, Robinson found a speech of his wife's first husband among his papers, and delivered the same with success in the House of Commons.

After his marriage he spent more of his time about his home and Castle Howard, his father-in-law's place, the grounds of which were being then further ornamented by Hawksmoor. At Castle Howard he quarrelled with Vanbrugh before his marriage, over the style of the works. Robinson had been to Italy but Sir John only knew of Italy second-hand. In Italy he had formed the opinion that the work of Palladio was being travestied by his successors. He thought Vanbrugh was following the dangerous road toward the baroque. Still, although he belonged to the new school whose leader was Lord Burlington, he should have had better manners than to insult Vanbrugh.

Fortunately he could not make any impression upon Vanbrugh, who had already done most of the building at a time when Robinson was but a boy—but with Hawksmoor the case was different. Hawksmoor was a milder man.

Robinson now had the privilege of relationship to his client and, unfairly taking advantage of his position, he interfered with Hawksmoor's work rather too officiously.

In 1732 we hear of Sir Thomas and his wife attending, after the day at York races, the opening of the Assembly Room in York. On that occasion the county met to hear Sensovina sing in the "great room" and to congratulate Lord Burlington upon his successful completion of so fine a work. Probably for Robinson the triumph of Lord Burlington had an "I told you so," form of satisfaction. For the general approval of the architecture of the new hall was a justification of the ideas he held.

Unfortunately Sir Thomas's married life was brief. His wife died at Bath in 1739. After her premature death he seems to have become bent on forgetting his sorrow, for he entertained lavishly in the following season. It was not that he had not appreciated her during her lifetime or that he forgot her during his own continued existence. On the contrary, he remembered her affectionately until his death. But, rather as a demonstration that her death should not signify his own, he must present himself as more alive than ever.

Sir Thomas's arms were: Vert, a chevron between three roe deer tripping and powdered with roundels sable with three cinque foils gules on a chevron. Forthwith he would live up to them. He would entertain more lavishly than before. At one of his parties, "twenty-four couples danced country dances, in two sets of twelve. There was Lady Sophia, handsomer than ever, but a little out of humour at the scarcity of minuets," observed Walpole, who was one of the guests. "We danced; for I country danced till four, then had tea and coffee, and came home."

At the second of his entertainments, Sir Thomas had the architect's notion of removing his doors from their hinges to give the crush more ample room. On this occasion Lady Sophia (whom Walpole admired much) partnered Mr. Conway, and Lord Lincoln Lady Caroline Fitzroy. "The two couples were just admirably mismatched, as everybody soon perceived, by the attention of each man to the woman he did not dance with."

Sir Thomas was now a celebrity.

His lengthy figure, topped by a head with a prominent nose and chin, pro-

vided the model for a walking stick for Fielding's Joseph Andrew, who admitted that it " was copied from the face of a certain long English baronet of infinite wit, humour and gravity." Moreover the Earl of Chesterfield passing along Whitehall could remark of the attenuated columns used by Ripley on the Admiralty building, that they were in " the Robinsonian Order " and be understood by everyone. Such is fame.

The baronet had by his lavish hospitality over-spent himself, and was sadly in need of some honest employment in order to replenish his empty pockets. At this crisis, he was luckily appointed Governor of Barbados through the influence of Lord Lincoln, who had an eye on his friend's house in Whitehall, and who had been one of the guests at the balls.

Barbados had him as a Governor for five years. The Island had earlier been the private property of the Carlisle family so that there was a certain suitability about his appointment. As a Governor he was not a success, at least the islanders did not allow him to be successful, and because of their petition he was recalled to England. It was not solely his fault, for the relationship between the mother country and the Island rendered any Governor unpopular.

During his residence in the Indies he married a second time. His new wife was a lady named Booth, the widow of a wealthy trader. She gave him ten thousand pounds as a *dot*, and when he went back home preferred to remain a Lady in Barbados rather than risk becoming a jest in London. Before he left the favoured Island he made some contribution to the architecture of the place, building himself a house and adding a fortress and barracks all of his design.

On his return to England he was appointed entertainment manager at Ranelagh. Sir Thomas was one of the shareholders in the venture. The grounds had formerly been the seat of Lord Ranelagh, himself an amateur architect. They had been purchased by a group of gentlemen and converted by them into a resort for public amusement. " The great attraction here, and which constituted the chief place for the assemblage of the company, was a magnificent rotunda, which will be better known from the print of it than from any description. The internal diameter of this splendid receptacle was one hundred and fifty feet, and it was fitted with boxes, and orchestra, etc."

In the devising of the various spectacles for which Ranelagh was famous, Sir Thomas Robinson found his *métier*. " All round the outside of the amphitheatre were shops filled with Dresden China, Japan, etc., and all the shopkeepers in mask. The amphitheatre was illuminated; and in the middle was a circular bower, composed of all kinds of firs in tubs, from twenty to thirty feet high; under them orange trees with small lamps in each orange, and below them all sorts of the finest auriculars in pots; and festoons of natural flowers hanging from tree to tree."

The Season at Ranelagh extended from Easter to the Prince of Wales's birthday each August. In order to be near his work the entertainment manager built himself a house—Prospect Place, Chelsea—where he resumed his career as a giver of breakfasts and dinners to society. In his holidays he was engaged in completing the house of the Earl of Carlisle, Castle Howard.

Poor Vanbrugh must have turned restless in his grave, for the very catastrophe which he had sensed during his lifetime, had befallen his masterpiece after his death. Robinson, the disputatious young architect, now no longer young but still the same unsympathetic innovator, was completing the work which the trusted Hawksmoor should have performed.

Robinson built the western wing deliberately different from the rest. In the interior he adopted a more severe and less arrogant treatment than had his predecessors. The belated wisdom of the prodigal had overtaken Sir Thomas; the money he now spent must go a long way.

The result is interesting. On the exterior the transition is not unhappy, and inside the devices adopted are a foreshadowing of the practice of Sir John Soane. Today the west gallery remains much as it was first built by Robinson.

The chapel contained in the west wing, originally to his design, has been entirely transformed and spoiled, though it is of artistic value as a specimen of the grand manner of the eighteen-fifties. Sir Thomas with poetic justice has been done unto as he did by. Yet on occasion he could desert Palladio. For his neighbour the Bishop of Durham he built a Gothic gateway to his palace at Bishop Auckland. By some mischance tradition has it that Robinson was inclined to flatter the important people. The nature of his employment at Ranelagh encouraged interested courtesies, but it is hardly fair to believe all the gossip which was largely inspired by his fortunate entertainment of Lord Lincoln. He had no reason to be a snob. Without effort he was in high favour with George III, and the King was of a cast of mind not easily deceived. Quite a different type of man, the Earl of Chesterfield, was also his lifelong friend.

The very different dispositions of his cronies is evidence of his variety. It supports (as nearer the truth) the verdict on his character of Henry Fielding, as being possessed of " infinite wit, humour and gravity."

How otherwise account that Chesterfield, wishing to placate Dr. Johnson, who was offended by the peer's seeming indifference to his labours over his Dictionary, selected Sir Thomas Robinson as his representative. It is true that he failed in his well-meaning mission, but then nobody could have succeeded in Johnson's then mood of proud independence. Yet, notwithstanding Johnson's awesome reputation, he had the courage to beard the lion in his lair, and the pluck, on encountering the sage to blurt out good naturedly that, " If he were rich enough he would himself settle £500 a year upon Johnson."

" Who are you? " bellowed the author.

" A Yorkshire Baronet," replied Robinson.

" If you were the first peer in the realm and should make such an offer I would show you downstairs."

Most commentators have been startled at this insolence, and at Johnson's assertion that an offer of money was an insult. Johnson's reception must have been a surprise to Robinson, since the author had not disdained to take a present of £10 from Chesterfield. To be rebuffed in such a cause is no crime.

It is said that he pestered the Earl of Burlington by too frequently calling upon him and that on one occasion he was rejected by the footman who opened the door on the chain and informed him, in anticipation of his habitual excuses, " My Lord is not at home, the monkey is dead, the clock is stopped and the fire is out."

Quite possibly something of the sort happened, but it is by no means certain that the victim was Lord Burlington or the vanquished, Sir Thomas. The introduction of the monkey into the story seems to indicate some other householder, and if so the point is lost. Whereas if it is true Burlington and Robinson had much in common and differed only in their choice of servants.

Of the same kind is the couplet written by Churchill,

" Tell how he did a dukedom gain,
And Robinson was Aquitaine."

Wherein the poet, for want of a rhyme, or over-eager to have a thrust at Sir Thomas, ascribed the wrong honour

1, *Sir Thomas Robinson in a contemporary caricature, dated 1773.* (*By courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.*)

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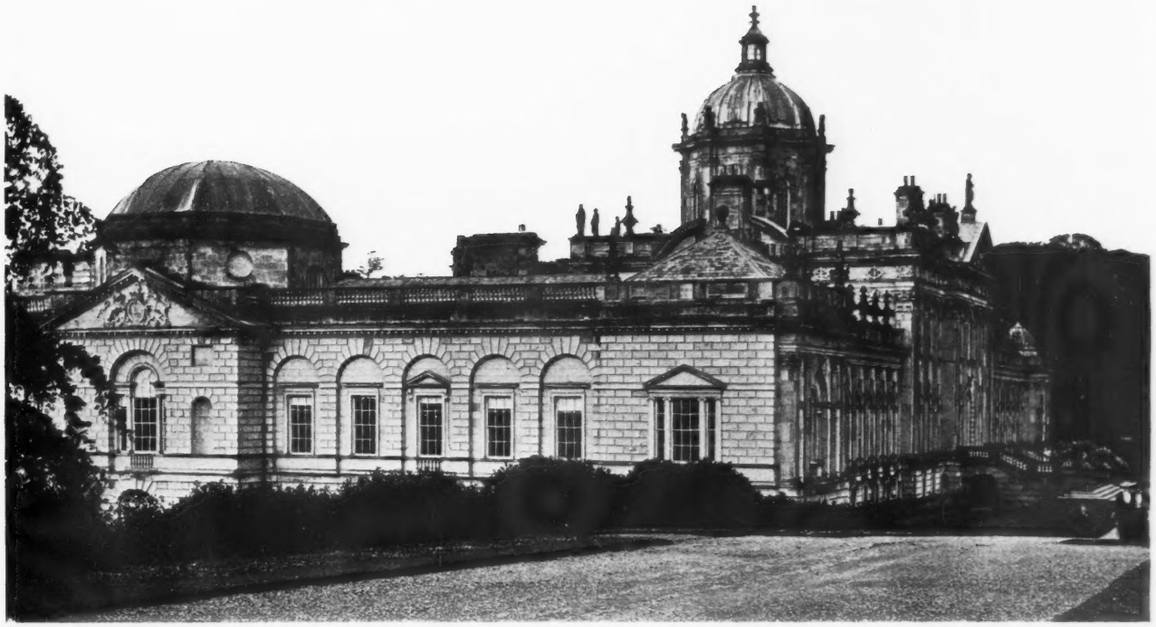

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2, the bridge at Winston. 3, the gateway at Bishop Auckland: both designed by Robinson, the bridge for the Bishop of Durham. 4, Vanbrugh's Castle Howard, taken from the south-west, showing five windows and the central octagon of the West Gallery or Library, in the west wing added by Robinson. 5, the south end of the West Gallery, Castle Howard, photographed about 1898. *The headpiece to this article is of Rokeby, Robinson's ancestral home.*

to him. For Sir Thomas at the Coronation of George III in September, 1761, had personified the Duke of Normandy and not the Duke of Aquitaine.

But this sort of satire was a commonplace in the 18th century and having survived is a source of enlightenment to us.

Next year he designed a bridge over the Tees at Winston. It carries the road from Yorkshire into Durham, " to which the noble arch of this bridge with the romantic situation of the village affords no unappropriate introduction."

The bridge is a single arch of 112 feet span, 22 feet wide. At the time of its erection it was announced to be the largest single span in Europe! The frugal cost of the work was only £500. For the Onslow's he is said to have designed additions to Ember Court, Surrey.

Sir Thomas was now an elderly man. Though nearly seventy he was active and vigorous; as full of confidence and hope as ever he had been in his long life. And to demonstrate the fact to the world, he had engaged himself to Lord Verney to provide at reasonable cost " the noblest and most perfect piece of architecture in the Kingdom."

A worthy project indeed. With the

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income from his fortunate speculation at Ranelagh (for Lord Verney, his new client, was one of his partners in that adventure) by Sir Thomas Robinson's wise guidance and expenditure this desirable consummation was to be reached: the perfect house.

In the course of the next few years they went some part of the way towards the attainment. But, like Babel before them, their laudable intentions were frustrated by confusion of tongues. Sir Thomas and his employer parted company over some matter of account. Worse yet was to befall this masterpiece, for the successor to Lord Verney's Claydon House, so little appreciated the exquisite nature of the architect's attainment as to pull it down, except for one wing. Of the fragment which remains the staircase is the principal jewel.

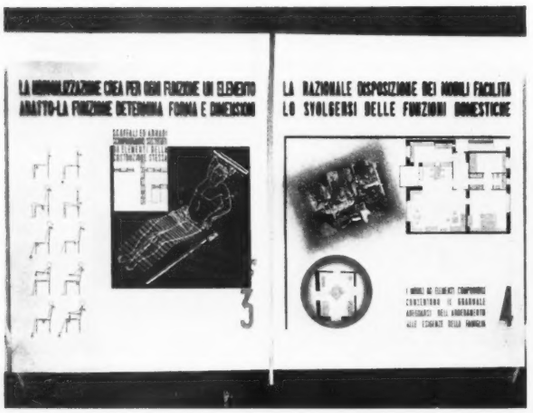
The letters from Sir Thomas to his patron have been published. They show him in a favourable light. Proud, indeed, of his work at Castle Howard, and of his business-like management of that great undertaking. Vain, in being unlike Kent who ordered work in his cups which had in the sober light of day to be pulled down. No accidents of this sort could befall his client, because "your present architect drinks little claret and never forms an opinion, with regard to architecture without much thought and study."

Yet, if he was disappointed of his last ambition he had some consolations. The friendship between Chesterfield and Robinson was proof against all strains. The dying Earl on his death bed could not resist one parting quip. Speaking to Sir Thomas, he said, "They say I am dying by inches. Thank God I am not as long as you."

Old, worn out and blind, long Sir Thomas himself passed away four years later. They buried him near to his first brilliant wife, and that the memory of his misspent life should not fade, he was accorded a memorial in the Abbey.

MILAN 1936

THE SIXTH TRIENNALE EXHIBITION



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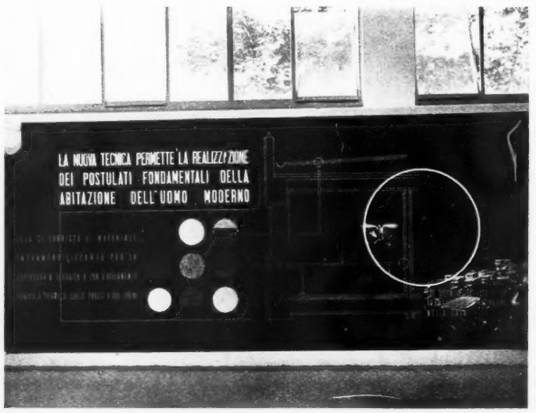

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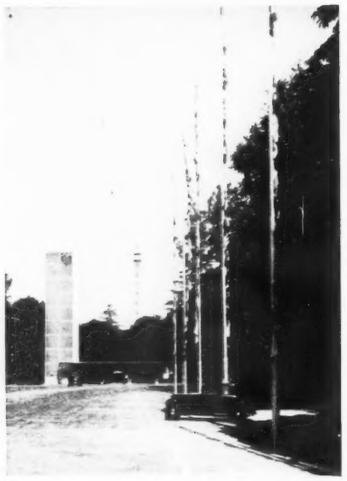

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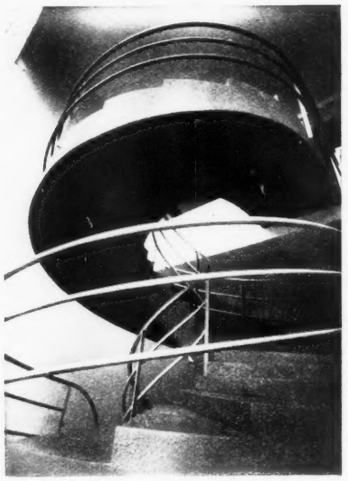

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The Sixth Triennale Exhibition of Architecture and Decorative Art opened in Milan last April and continues until November. Here are reproduced some photographs of the exhibition itself and of some of the exhibits: 1 and 2, two of a series of pictorial diagrams advertising the significance of the modern approach to design; in utilization of technique, in functional detailing and in rational planning. 3, in the Exhibition grounds: a glass and concrete tower (P. Pazano, architect) at the end of the Via Gallia. 4, an exhibition hall interior: the "Salone delle Vittoria" (E. Persico and J. Palanti, architects; Lucio Fontana, sculptor). 5, The staircase, cantilevered in reinforced concrete, leading from the first to the second floor in the main exhibition building. 6, the sitting room in a model flat in the dwelling exhibition (Magni, Opoczinsky and Pasquali, architects) with built-in radio-gramophone, book-cases in chromium plated tubing and

polished hardwood and a writing desk that folds back flush with the book-cases. 7, another exhibition dwelling (M. Latis, architect) with movable sectional furniture for a combined living and dining room. The chromium-plated sheet-tube table has a green glass top. The upholstery is in natural wool with maroon stripes running in alternate directions, and the settee can be divided into separate chairs. The floor covering is black linoleum, divided into squares by metal fillets. 8, A kitchen and 9, a sitting-room in the dwelling exhibition (Albini, Camus, Clauselli, Gardella, Mazzoleni, Minoletti, Mucchi, Palanti and Romano, architects), designed to show standardized units of furniture that are collapsible and interchangeable. The kitchen floor is of ceramic stoneware. In the sitting-room the chairs are in white cellulosed metal tube, upholstered in natural wool ; the linoleum floor has a white wool carpet ; the glass partition is decorated with natural dried ferns. The dwelling exhibition contains a series of ideal modern rooms planned to demonstrate the modern principles of open planning, the modern tendency to abolish permanent partitions with a view to flexibility and to substitute screens, curtains and pieces of furniture serving to mark the functions of the various portions of the single large room; also to emphasize the attention paid to the rational design and equipment of bathroom and kitchen. This section of the exhibition contains special dwellings with accommodation designed to be suitable for artisans, for clerical workers and for professional men.

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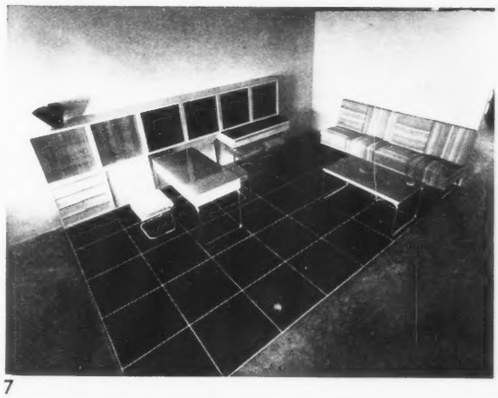

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Book of the Month

The Indivisible Problem

By Erwin Gutkind

LA VILLE RADIEUSE. By Le Corbusier. Boulogne: "L'Architecture D'Aujourdhui." Price (in England) 25/-.

"JE place comme pierre angulaire de toute urbanisation moderne, le respect sacré de la liberté individuelle." One has to agree with this principle of Le Corbusier, which he sets down as the most important human aim of town planning. The realistic aim is to work and to plan within the framework of the technical system of an engineer. These laws have regulated the whole productive work of mankind from the beginning. Not exclusion of sentiment but clear separation of feeling and thinking and a repression of the overflowing of sentiment are essential. The validity of this point of view is absolutely clear. Le Corbusier demonstrates the ideas of his *La Ville Radieuse* with a series of literary suggestions and by detailed plans for Paris, Buenos Aires, São Paulo, Montevideo, Rio de Janeiro, Algiers, Geneva, Antwerp, Moscow, Stockholm, Rome, Barcelona and Namur, which plans have been made during the course of the last few years and most of which are more or less known to the experts. His ideas are free of respect for any false historical tradition—bravo ! They are free of any hesitation in the use of all technical possibilities —bravo ! They are free from any inconsequent compromise in guaranteeing the maximum of air, sun, green and all the comforts of life—bravo ! They are free also from any failure to realize the importance of reduction, and not of increase, in traffic—bravo !

The published photographs of the model of " La Ville Radieuse " which have just come out and have been hitherto not available make very clear his understanding of this whole problem —also the limitations of his approach. I am afraid Le Corbusier would be very much

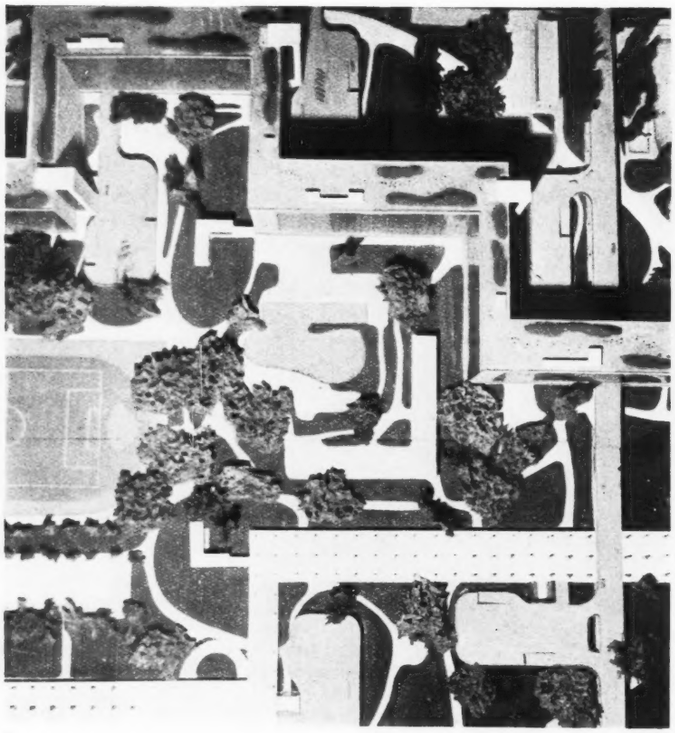
surprised if one were to object that he does not go far enough. It is certainly something in favour of his plans that they are only theory, for a theory can be a more efficient reality than effectuate plans. But this theory itself is thirty years behind. The central problem of town planning is today no more "town" planning—not any more the problem of the metropolis or the big town—but the planning of the whole of a country, at the least of large connected territories. Why ? All suggestions are and have to be insufficient if they only intend to transform the big towns either by a partial rebuilding or even by very extensive new building ; the result indeed would be the same even if a completely new town were to be constructed on the principles developed by Le Corbusier. The realization of his proposals can never be a solution or a real new creation in the deepest sense but would only be, even in the best cases, a slum clearance in the most sublime form.

The main and essential task of today is to introduce modern technical advances into the *country*, not only by mechanizing the agricultural work but by transferring the factories and their workers from the town to the country, especially away from the dreadful peripherical part of no-man's-land. The conglomeration of the town is to be loosened not by clearance and transformation inside the towns but by the balancing of town and country. There are few difficulties in the way of transfer of industry, for the choice of sites for factories is absolutely free nowadays in consequence of the unlimited power circuit, except for the factories of primary products which are hardly ever in the towns. The number of the townspeople is to be automatically reduced, the working population is to be placed in direct connection with its working places. It is better and easier to transport goods than men, whose vitality and working-power can only suffer from the daily going and coming.

This synthesis of town and country is equivalent to the same but far mightier process of the evolution of the increasing assimilation of the earth. The process of uniting international economics and the world's traffic, of mutual interchange of thoughts and culture, is now advanced, on the whole, to such a great extent that the breaking down or the elimination of one part creates the greatest disturbance in the whole—as the conditions of today show us. In spite of all disappointments, we have reached the epoch of the horizontal extension which overflows all frontiers and limits ; we are no more in the stage of vertical isolation of states each from the other. The same process goes on inside a single state concerning town and country. The ever increasing conglomerations of towns are out of date in form and in thought, and so is the existing passive attitude to the country. It indicates an anti-modern lack of a regular plan and strong resistance to the spirit of technical planning to insist on perpetuating the concentration of the population in the town ; on towns being only reformed and the country being left unchanged in the vast emptiness of population. The system of town planning must be more capacious, it ought to include town and country, balancing out one against the other, spreading the clearness of planning ideas over everything.

Is all this a reason for rejecting a new system for the re-planning of the town ? Must we, because of this, disapprove the ideas of Le Corbusier ? Not at all ! Why should not the centre of Paris be cleared and rebuilt according to the plans of Le Corbusier ? The sooner the better ! But we can never and by no means agree that "La Ville Radieuse" gives the only and right solution of the problem which faces us today. "La Ville Radieuse" can be perhaps a good partial suggestion, a great stimulation, but it leaves the most important problem untouched which is to

Le Corbusier's book, "La Ville Radieuse" was published a year ago, but only this summer did the author complete his large-scale model of a new-planned city to act as a kind of pictorial supplement to the book. It is now possible therefore to publish this article by Dr. Gutkind and at the same time some photographs of the model with which Le Corbusier completes his exposition of his town-planning principles. Five photographs are reproduced on this and the facing page. The explanations of the photographs are given in the original French, as a matter of interest in presenting exactly Le Corbusier's own description. *EDITOR. A.R.*



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organize the distribution of men and work on a completely new basis and not to be satisfied with only achieving facilitation and improvement of one part of them, and that only in a limited form.

Today it is no more a question of production but of distribution. We must demand the replacement of "La Ville Radieuse" by "La Totalité Du Pay Radieux."

Data for Design

BAU-ENTWURFSLEHRE (ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN). By Prof. Ernst Neufert. Berlin: Bauwelt-Verlag. Price (in England), 30/-.

This book contains 3,600 illustrations with concise descriptions, and I must confess that it has become indispensable to me after I have been using it for a few months in my practical work as a designing architect. It offers more than any previously known compendia of architectural information, giving a constructive unity of the problem instead of mere collections of technical details; its quintessence lying in the keeping of every building problem in relation to man and his natural dimensions. The importance of any and every function between man and his spacial surroundings becomes evident.

As far as I know this is the first successful attempt to produce a comprehensive guide for practical designing. Following the example of the Bauhaus, the author, who worked there for some time, undertook to include the formal components of design as well as the technical, though avoiding any theoretical æsthetic speculations. He discusses the dimensions of all manner of utensils, furniture, rooms, and means of transport in our daily life as well as geometrical proportions in relation to our human body; also optical delusions, i.e. that special counterpart, the knowledge of which is as indespensable for every architect as the knowledge of the technical facts of his business: "Men are not only bodily beings that need space. Their feelings are just as important. It depends

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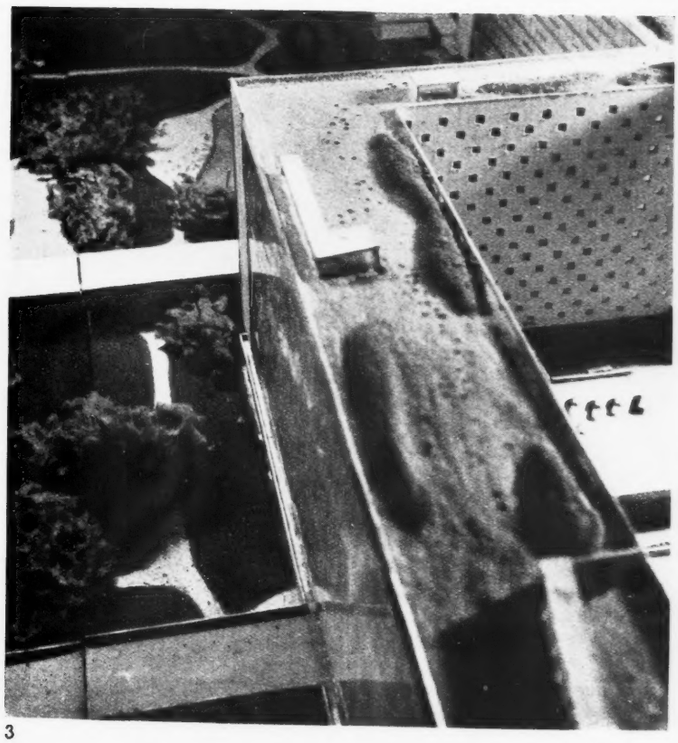

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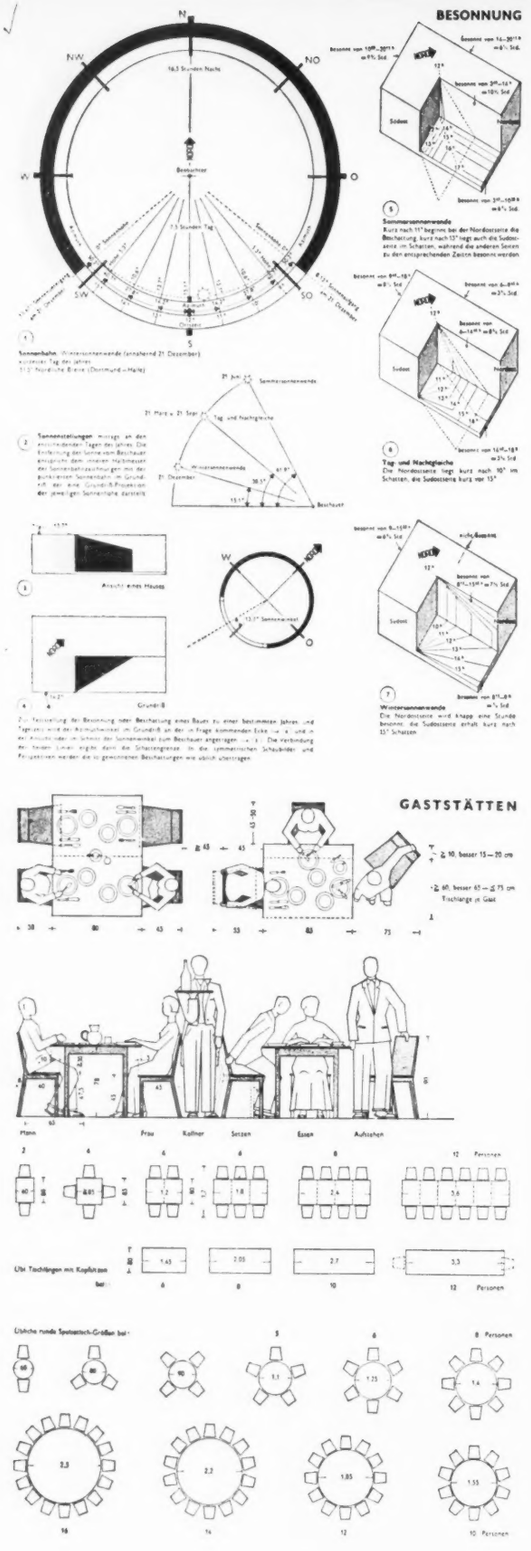
1, Vue d'avion d'un secteur de quartier d'habitation de "La Ville Radieuse," avec piscine, école, stade, auto-port, auto-route, parcs et plages de soleil. 2, Un des aspects d'un quartier d'habitation "ville verte"; parc sur 88% du terrain. Densité 1,000 habitants à l'hectare. Sport au pied des maisons. Tous les appartments donnent sur de vastes perspectives de parcs et de verdure. Ils sont orientés à l'Est, à l'Ouest ou au Sud (jamais au Nord). Au premier plan, on voit une école primaire. 3, Vue d'avion sur la plage de soleil, au sommet du redent. A droite, on voit une façade nord où ne sont que les corridors des rues intérieures. 4, L'une des autostrades surélevées dans "la ville radieuse." Le piéton ne recontre jamais l'automobile. Solution du passage des piétons sous une autostrade: à niveau du sol passent les tramways ou camions; à cinq mètres au-dessus du sol les autos rapides. 5, Une piscine sportive et barbotte; une crèche; un auto-port; un aspect des services communs, au-dessus des pilotis.

LE CORBUSIER ET P. JEANNERET.

Paris, le 29 juin 1936.



Two pages reduced ; one giving a diagram for the calculation of insolation values, given the orientation of a building, for different times of the day and year, and the other giving the economical sizes and spacing of restaurant tables, from "Bau-Entwurfslehre," by Ernst Neufert.

entirely on the division of a room, on its dimensions, its colours, light, and equipment, whether it appeals to man's sensibility." The method of successfully explaining this ample bulk of knowledge is lively indeed and though very short it can easily be understood by means of lucid drawings.

Some headings from the index to the manual may be mentioned here in order to show its usefulness and complex variety : Preliminary studies (questionnaire), Technique of Draughting, Lighting and Insolation, Roads, Gardens, and further special problems such as Dwellings, Libraries, Museums, Office Buildings, Stores, Industrial, Agricultural and Sports Buildings, Theatres, Hospitals and Churches. Each problem is treated by object lessons for the instruction of the architect or client who is going to plan a building of any essential and important type. I should like to emphasize particularly the practicability of this manual as I know how badly the practical architect needs concise formulations of parts in order to save time and money when he is planning and estimating a building. Here we have an author specially gifted for organizing reliably this huge subject and for presenting its complex relations and functions in a clear and lucid way. As the illustrations are self explanatory the book is useful even for those who do not read German. A schedule for easily converting the measuring units into feet and inches is attached.

WALTER GROPIUS

Home and Style

THE MODERN HOME : By Roger Smithells and S. John Woods. F. Lewis. Price, 30/-.

THE *Modern Home* forms a useful review of current tendencies in the decoration of homes and is not dissimilar as a picture book to other volumes, such as the *Studio Year Book*, though it is rather on the expensive side.

The text consists of nothing but short introductions to various sections, the authors expressing the view that practice is worth more than theory in such matters. It is worth pointing out, however, that in several places they reveal a common failing to realize that the so-called modern movement does not date from the Paris Exhibition of 1925 or even from the war. It is true that certain shapes became fashionable after that date, and that commercially-minded store managers then began to reckon whether it might not be worth taking a chance with these new styles, but for the genesis of thought and experiment you have to go back before the beginning of the century. Practically all the foundations were laid before the war in Germany and Holland.

I cannot think that social historians of fifty years hence will regard such volumes as this with less curious eyes than those with which we now regard the catalogue of the 1851 Exhibition. They will discover no prevalent decorative style. Most of the interiors show that their authors have no sense of style at all, and where a style is apparent it is often drawn unconsciously from many sources. Two strong influences are obviously at work, though often at war with each other. The one is the old classical influence, aiming at harmony and symmetry of some sort, the other is mechanistic, aiming at the *impression* of mechanical forms even where they are not required. In a few instances an architect proves that he can handle the new materials in a manner which speaks the artist, but there are not too many examples in this volume under review. I am not suggesting that it is anything but difficult, considering the violent break with all the lingering traditions and formulas which had governed decoration for centuries, but many of the difficulties are really nothing but self-imposed.

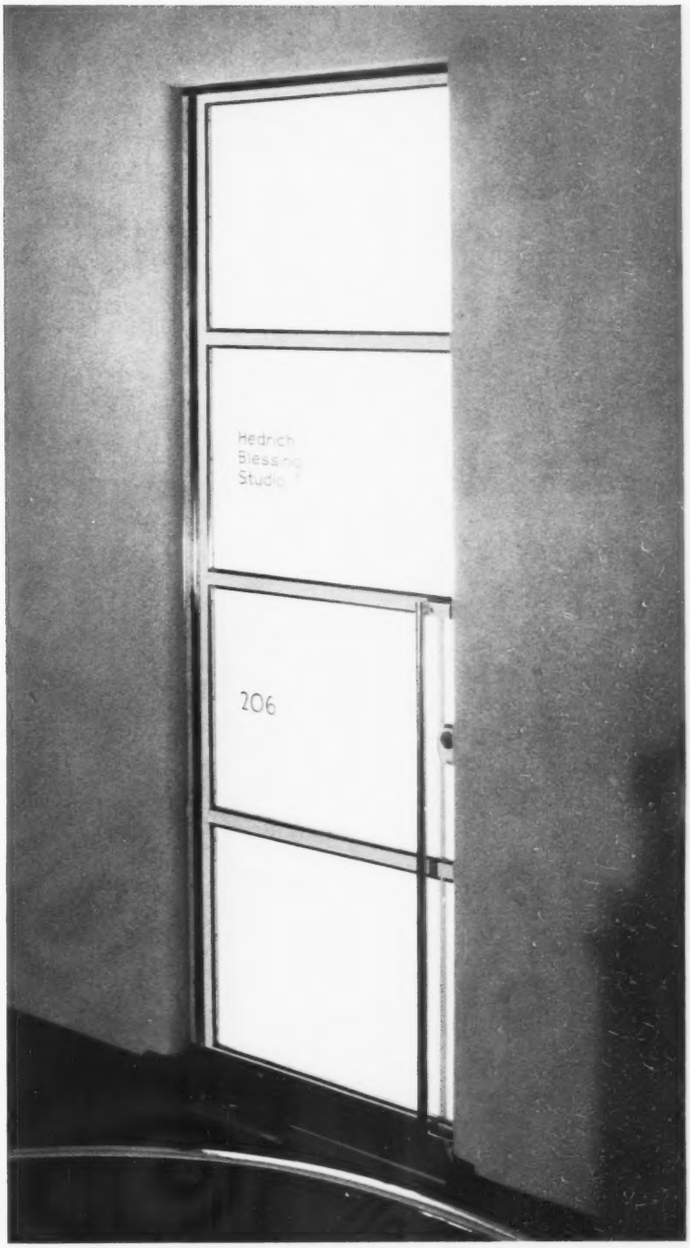
A more satisfactory result of the modern movement is the production for small houses, for vehicles, and for public places, of standard manufactured units which, while not particularly beautiful in themselves, are capable of being assembled in a way that makes a harmonious and orderly whole. This, the acceptance of shapes natural and logical to machine production, is in effect a minor revolution in public taste, though in this country it has been imposed more as a fashion from above than out of economic necessity. One must add also the advantage we have gained in being cured of that itch for filling up every corner of a room with possessions—a negative virtue, perhaps, but still a necessary one.

So, to sum up, this book reflects, as do many exhibitions and shops, the clean slate with which the decorator has been presented. What we shall now look for is the hand of the artist who, accepting the new manner of living and the new materials as a basis, will use them naturally and without aggressive forethought to create interiors which will have that absolute sense of rightness and beauty, which can be called *style*.

NOEL CARRINGTON

OVERLEAF : *AT CLOSE RANGE*

The Last Supper, on the font at North Grimstone. This is one of a group of four or five twelfth-century fonts in the East Riding of Yorkshire that were probably carved by one man—or at any rate under the dominance of one master-artist. In feeling, the form in this carving of the Last Supper is very like that in the Majesty, the charge to St. Peter and the other subjects at Kirkburn, a few miles from North Grimstone. This carving is typical of the local work that is to be found all over England — " local " in that it uses the generalities of the sculptural mode of its time, but shows no special cultivation of the artistic conventions, as was the case with schools whose work was usually richer and more " perfect," but often more dull. An article on these early sculptors of England, by John Piper, appears on pages 157–162.



The entrance door to the studio, with tubular steel frame enamelled white and glass ground on one side only.

PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIO IN CHICAGO
ABEL FAIDY, ARCHITECT

THE business of photography is not unlike the business of architecture. Both require a high degree of artistic talent, a broad knowledge of technical details, and sound organization to permit the rendering of a service at a profit.

In the planning of the Hedrich-Blessing Studio these facts were kept in mind: the reception room is designed to impress the client who calls at the studio: for though this client cannot be shown in advance what he will obtain, he must be assured of the service the firm can render. Further, to render good service the employees must have a pleasant and convenient place in which to work. The studio was planned to permit routine operations to be handled in much the same way as that of line production in any other manufacturing process.

Too many photographic studios are handicapped by inadequate space, in which an attempt is made to carry on too many operations. Too often there are dark rooms in which the operators are unable to be sure of what they are doing without undue strain. Practical experience has shown the necessity of separating the various photographic operations. And modern photographic films, papers and light filters have removed the necessity of black rooms inadequately lighted. There is no reason why photographers cannot work in colourful surroundings and under reasonably well lighted conditions.

The studio owners sought a building in a good location with inside space on the second floor. Since such space when available can be obtained at less cost than that of outside space, it becomes of both practical and economic importance to a photographer. Such space was found in a

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building equipped with air-conditioning facilities. It was an ideal and fortunate combination.

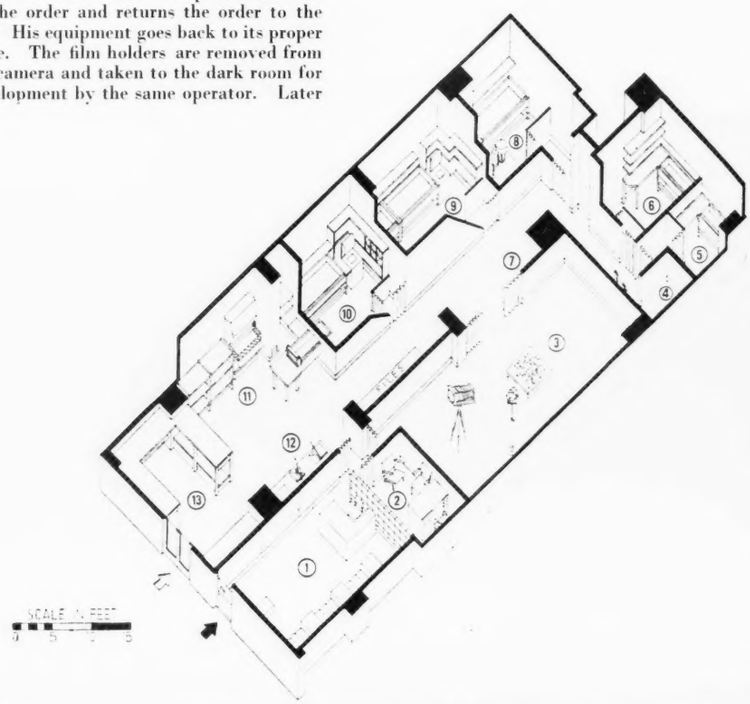
With known available space the problem then became a simple matter of architectural planning to permit the various operations in the studio to flow smoothly from one point to the next. This implies a knowledge of what goes on in a photographer's studio from the time a client places an order until the finished product is delivered.

Orders for photographs originate in the business office. A written order is prepared and placed on a file for the particular operator or camera man who will handle the assignment. He familiarizes himself with the work to be done. If it is an architectural or other outdoor subject he studies the job conditions, orientation and other factors which bear on the ultimate result. He also watches the weather and, at the proper time, selects the type of camera, lens, film and other equipment needed and proceeds on his way.

Upon the return of the operator to the studio he notes the time he spent in the field on the order and returns the order to the file. His equipment goes back to its proper place. The film holders are removed from the camera and taken to the dark room for development by the same operator. Later the same operator views the films in a viewing and retouching box. At this time he passes upon the results of his own work. If they are not satisfactory, back to the job he goes. If they are satisfactory, he obtains the original order from the file and notes the printing directions for contact and enlarged prints. The films and order then go to the enlarging and printing rooms.

Printing and enlarging is done by men experienced in that field of photography. In the printing rooms the films are printed, developed, fixed and washed. The films are sent to the files: the prints and order to the drying room. The prints are then run through a print straightener, sorted by jobs and stamped, trimmed, mounted, checked and wrapped for delivery. The original order is initialled by the person completing the order and then sent to the business office for billing.

Experience had impressed the owners of this studio with the necessity of separating the chemical, film development and printing



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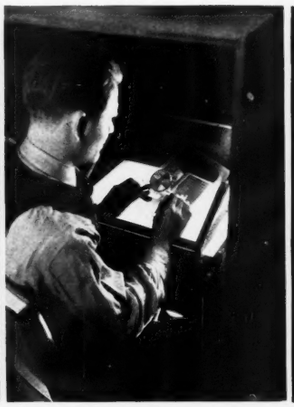

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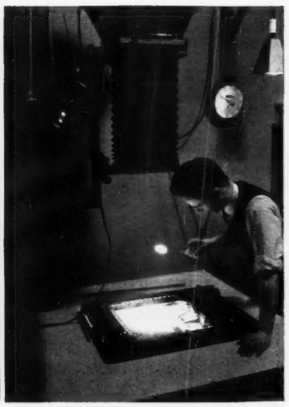

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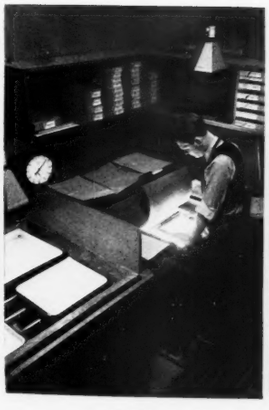
The series of small illustrations shows the sequence of operations taking place in the studio, round which the lay-out is planned. The numbers correspond with the small numbers in circles in the lay-out plan on the facing page.

1, RECEPTION ROOM; clients' entrance and waiting room. 2, OFFICE. 3, STUDIO. 4, CHEMICALS. 5-6, DEVELOPING. 7, RETOUCHING. 8, ENLARGING. 9-10, PRINTING. 11, WASHING AND DRYING. 12, MOUNTING. 13, DISPATCH.

Above, the entrance and the side wall of the reception room which is faced with mirrors that reflect a large photo-mural on the opposite wall.



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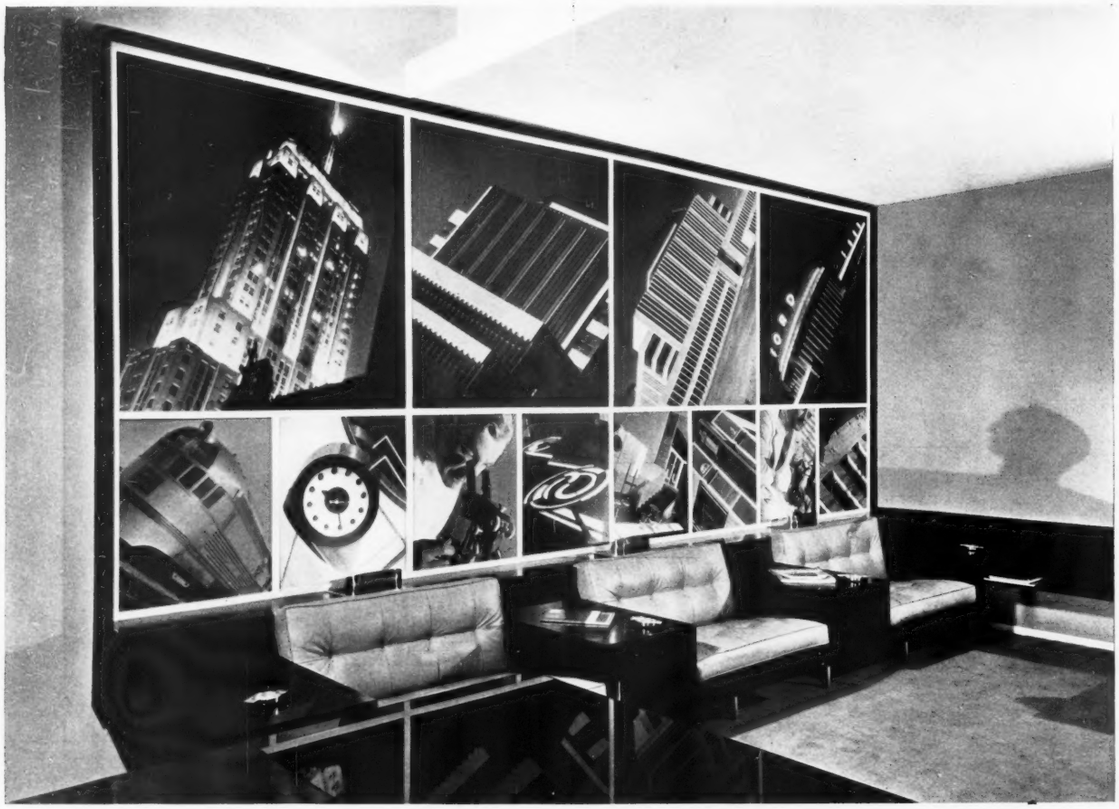


Above, another view of the reception room, showing the wall covered with a large-scale photo-mural. The photographs are separated by wood strips lacquered white. The furniture is black with pigskin upholstery. Left, the finishing room (11 on the plan) and corridor. The room is air-conditioned and decorated in grey and tan paint. Bottom, the studio stationery, designed at the same time to have the same character as the building.

operations. In the mixing of chemicals they tend to float in the air. If this is done in the same room with films and papers, the chemicals are apt to be deposited on them with harmful results. For that reason the chemical room is well shut off from the other rooms. After the chemicals are mixed they are delivered to the developing and printing rooms in containers. One man has charge of the mixing of all chemicals.

Experience had also demonstrated the need for an adequate studio room in which to photograph architectural models and items often encountered in advertising photography. This room is therefore long in proportion to its width in order to locate lights of high intensity as far from the subject as possible. Small studios requiring the placing of lights close to the subject do not permit satisfactory results. A feature of this room is the painting of all walls a different shade of grey. This is done to permit obtaining different backgrounds and to allow the emphasis of room corners when desired. Under intense light, walls at right angles when of the same colour will appear the same in a photograph and the corner disappears. Changing the wall colour overcomes this to any desired degree.

From the reception room through to the finishing room this studio has been treated in colour, which not only makes it a cheerful place in which to work but compensates for the lack of daylight in any area of the studio. Three wall areas in the reception room are painted blue, yellow and vermilion. The colours were especially mixed to obtain correct shades and values that would not be garish. The fourth wall is built of hollow glass blocks. The outside surfaces of the blocks are smooth. The inside surfaces have corrugations on each face at right angles. The result is a gradually changing pattern caused by light reflection and refraction. One wall of the reception room is practically covered by a photo-mural consisting of a group of enlargements separated by narrow bands of white flat mouldings. The opposite wall consists of mirrors which reflect the photo-murals. The photo-murals are illuminated by concealed lights placed behind the built-in seats. The ceiling of this room is stepped up and provides a shelf which conceals reflectors which provide general illumination. While this room is not large the designer has achieved the effect of space and distinction with simplicity.

THE DESIGNER IN INDUSTRY

BY NIKOLAUS PEVSNER

5—New Materials and New Processes

In the previous articles of this series I dealt with the position of the designer and the standards of design in some individual industries. I chose carpets, furnishing textiles, electric and gas fittings, and architectural metal-work, partly because these trades are of special interest to the architect, and partly because their discussion brings out several different approaches to design. In describing the situation in the textile industries I had to emphasize the importance of the manufacturer himself and his personal attitude, and the character of the work of most staff and commercial designers. In electric and gas fittings the rôle of the engineer was the central problem. The pages on metal-work introduced the architect, though not at his best. Any number of other trades could be discussed in the same way, but it seems preferable to attempt now a different method of approach, for the majority of industries would only yield results very similar to those related already. So it may be more useful to devote the remaining space in this and the following issue to two questions of a more general nature. This month the problem to be broached is the effect of new materials and new processes on designer and design, and next month that of the position of the architect in contemporary industrial design.

New materials and even more new processes have undoubtedly become more urgent problems within the last fifty years than they have ever been before. Yet it should not be forgotten that the invention of new working methods and new media has played an important part in the history of European art and technique right from their outset. To recall to memory just a few instances: the use of paper instead of vellum in the fourteenth century; the introduction of the woodcut and the copper engraving to replace more expensive and laborious artistic methods, and the introduction of the printed book to replace the far more expensive hand-painted book in the 15th century; the veneering of furniture in the 17th; the cutting and engraving of glass in the 17th and 18th; the creation of porcelain in the early 18th century, etc.

However, this slow growth of technique and applied art was suddenly accelerated by the consequences of the industrial revolution. New cheap materials devised as substitutes for more costly ones characterized the early 19th century. The organizers of the 1851 Exhibition proudly showed pieces of furniture made of papiermâché and the like, and duly enlarged upon them in the catalogue. Only the few who seriously thought about soundness of design ferociously objected, or at least expressed their anxiety. Morris's passionate campaign is famous enough, but there were true Morrisites before Morris, men such as Pugin and Semper. Semper who, owing to political difficulties in Germany, had come over to England and lectured at South Kensington in the years immediately after the Exhibition, pointed out in a pamphlet of 1852 that nowadays inventions are no longer the consequence of needs but precede them. Modern technique, Semper says, can do almost everything: granite can be cut like cheese. This unforeseen situation has entailed complete æsthetic chaos. Old laws and tenets appear no longer valid, and new ones have not yet been worked out.*

It is well enough known that it took Western architects about half a century to cope with steel and glass as building materials. Industrial designers were no quicker to appreciate the new ways. Who really concerned himself with the possibilities of enamel, aluminium or celluloid, all of which were industrially expounded during the second half of the 19th century? The earliest symptom of a changing attitude that I know of is a lecture given by Henri van de Velde, the Belgian architect, in 1900.† And have things really improved since then?

I know several factories where small articles are moulded from bakelite and other resinous materials. Are the owners interested in appropriate design? I have been to four works myself, and tried to collect information from some more firms with regard to the matter in question. Only one of them had a full-time designer trained in an adequate way. The other manufacturers regarded it as sufficient to use a draughtsman who had attended evening classes at a technical school or had somehow obtained some knowledge of tool-making. New designs may originate from his ideas or those of the works' manager, the sales manager, or even from suggestions of customers. As for details of appearance, these are either of the vulgar jazz type which we have found predominant in door furniture, or else copied from good and simple designs of the past: 18th century pottery, for example, or Georgian silver. The æsthetic result is that simple everyday things such as the cups and plates at Woolworth's are very satisfactory, but more elaborate pieces as a rule nasty, the good ones being derived from 18th century shapes, the bad ones from modernistic horrors in other industries. Needless to describe in detail the usual adornment of bakelite ashtrays or kerbs, of celluloid hand mirrors and boxes. Independent research on the intrinsic possibilities of the new plastic materials has hardly been done. It does not seem to have occurred to the manufacturers that the processes for producing bakelite mouldings are too different

* Gottfried Semper, Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst, Braunschweig, 1852.

† Quoted in its proper connection in my book on the Pioneers of the Modern Movement (Faber & Faber, 1936) where he expresses his faith in the future of "aluminium, linoleum, celluloid" amongst other new materials.

from those in use in the pottery or silversmithing workshops of the past to allow for the old shapes to be kept unaltered.

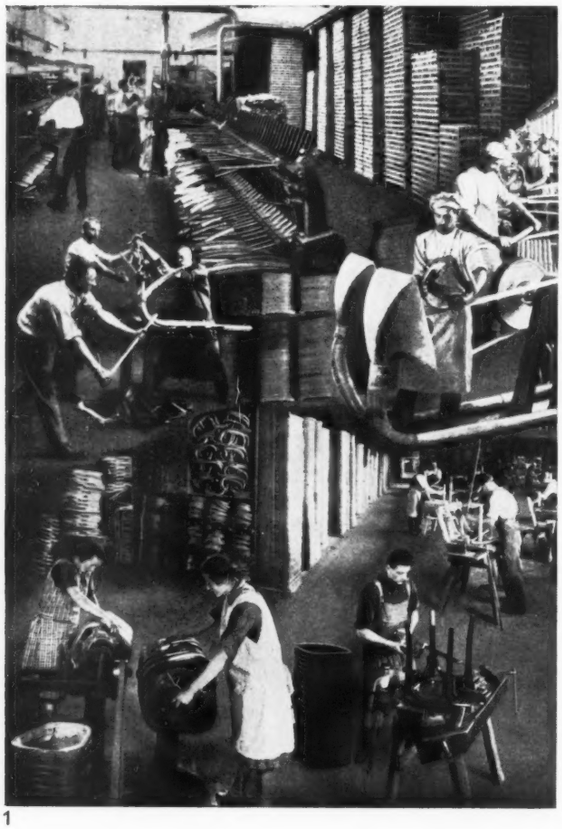
The procedure at a bakelite moulding works is like this: steel tools are made consisting of moulds, for the interior and exterior of the object to be made. The powder is poured into the mould, a plunger comes down, and, by means of heat and high pressure, the article is shaped. It is obvious that those specific qualities of appearance which, in pottery, owe their existence to the process of turning on the wheel or the lathe lose their *raison d'être* if applied to bakelite. However, modern pottery is changing its methods too, and at present the object made of clay and of bakelite may well show the same characteristics—because for the production of cheap ceramics the clay is nowadays either cast or shaped with jolley and jigger. In the first case the liquid clay is poured into a mould and then dried; in the second the clay rests on a mould which has the interior shape of the piece to be made, the jigger, a blade the shape of which corresponds exactly to the exterior form of the future piece, comes down, and while the clay on the mould revolves round the jigger, completes the shaping. Here, as well as in casting, it is the mould that determines the appearance, not the hand of the craftsman.

A similar development has taken place in the glass industry. Free blowing has been replaced by blowing into moulds, and now many cheap articles are made of pressed glass. The pressing is again the action of a plunger upon a mould. It is also well-known that mass-produced motor-car bodies are, by the biggest firms, made in the same way, i.e. by pressing the steel into the shapes required. Furthermore, there are some radio manufacturers who prefer moulded bakelite cabinets to wooden ones, because—the same advantage of the new process which is appreciated by the car manufacturers—the whole execution is reduced to a few operations, and the whole product to one seamless moulding. Another industry in which the same method is used is the holloware trade. Here again tools are provided and, by means of pressure, stamp the aluminium or the steel sheets to which afterwards the liquid enamel is applied.

The quality common to the new processes in all these industries is that casting or moulding has supplanted more complex operations which were dependant on the skill of workmen. One cannot fail to see the corresponding development in architecture which led to the introduction of concrete. Everywhere the tendency is to simplify and speed-up production. Instead of a gradual shaping by the hand of an appreciative workman such as the old potter, the old glass-blower, the old silversmith, pewterer, cooper, turner or mason, we see now the procedure divided into three completely separate acts: the designing, the tool or mould-making and the casting, pressing or moulding. Of the designer a few more words will be said presently, the toolmaker is a skilled worker although he has nothing to do with the artistic value of his tools, the man or girl who works the press is just a "hand," and of no influence on the product at all.

Before leaving this topic of new processes and passing on to some conclusions, another industry may be mentioned which has also undergone remarkable changes owing to modern technical innovations. I am thinking of the furniture trade, and of chair-making in particular. In the new processes adopted for the production of bentwood chairs (this, incidentally, is not a very recent invention; Michael Thonet started production in 1834), of bent plywood chairs and tables, of plywood furniture in general, and of tubular steel furniture, no casting or moulding takes place. However, there is this in common with the newly introduced methods in the trades just discussed, that here too a, shall we say, monolithic tendency prevails. Objects which in the natural way would have to consist of various different parts, can now be made in one piece owing to the scientifically applied action of heat or pressure, or both. This holds good of the motor car body and the wireless cabinet as well as of the steel chair and the Finnish bent plywood chair with no separate back legs, the smooth surface of the plywood door with no panelling, i.e. no division of frame and panel, and also of the bare concrete wall without mouldings.

Now that the fundamental relationship between the new processes has been shown the question arises whether any equally homogeneous consequences on design can be discovered. One fact has to be made clear first of all: most of the so-called inherent qualities of materials of which we read so much in books are no longer valid. If you produce your veneers in any required size by the rotary cutter (invented about 1892); if you glue your sheets of plywood together so that warping, springing or twisting are out of the question; if you cast your china or earthenware instead of throwing it—you superimpose something on your materials which is not natural to them according to established standards. But standards had to change when Gothic builders introduced the pointed ribbed vault, and 19th century engineers the steel suspension bridge. So



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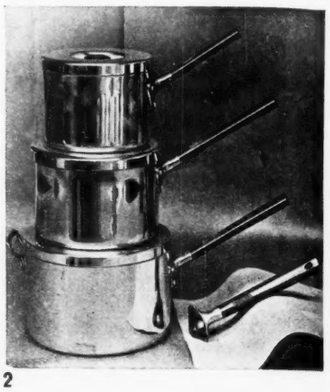
1. *This composite illustration shows processes in the Thonet furniture factory. Beech is being used for the manufacture of bentwood furniture. The timber is first steamed in special boilers and immediately afterwards bent over moulds into required shapes. In the top left-hand corner is a special device for bending chair-legs, and underneath the bending of a chair-back. On the right are men sanding the parts before they are stained and polished. At the bottom are the polishing of seat-frames on revolving drums, and, right, the final fitting of the complete chairs.*



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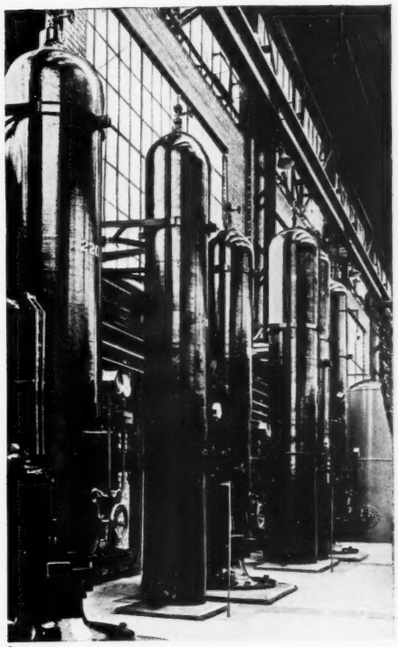

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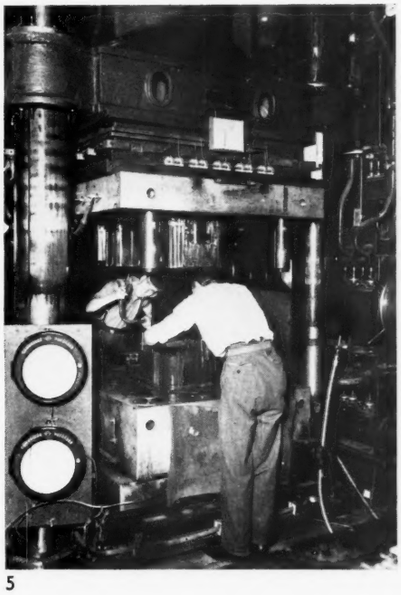

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2 and 3, typical but well-designed mass-produced household utensils. 2, aluminium saucepans, by N. C. Josephs, designed to stack and so that the lids can be lifted without touching the hot metal. Knobs and handles are in red bakelite. 3, coloured plastic ware sold by Woolworth's. 4, hydraulic pumps used for building up the pressure for moulding bakelite wireless cabinets. 5, hydraulic press, 35 ft. high and capable of a pressure of 2,000 tons, used for the moulding of the cabinets (both machines photographed in the Ekco works). 6, the body press shop in the Austin motor works. 7, "jolly" and "jigger" at work in the production of inexpensive pottery in the Wedgwood works. 8, plunger and mould for the pressing of glass (by courtesy of Chance Bros.).

our standards will have to change too. Until now, however, only very few thinkers and artists have ventured to face the altered situation in industrial art. Alvar Aalto is one of them. Marcel Breuer, Mart Stam, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the inventors of the steel chair, are also amongst them. So are those architects who first built houses without supports at the corners (Gropius: Faguswerk, 1911), or with cantilevered concrete slabs as roofs of terraces (F. Lloyd Wright). Such uncompromisingly logical innovations could not meet with public approval at once, because they upset settled criteria.

All this is of utmost consequence in our connection. It imposes upon the designer for a new industry, a new medium, a new technique, a responsibility far greater than that under which the textile designer works: a responsibility to which only the very best brains will be equal. Those who design for bakelite today or for aluminium or mass-produced pottery should realize that they are not only concerned with patterns, but with the evolution of shapes that may in the end turn out to be as different from the shapes used at present as are motor-cars of 1936 from motor-cars of 1906. To prove the truth of this we can so far only point to an extremely small number of instances. One is the radio cabinets which Serge Chermayeff and Wells Coates designed for Ekco's in 1933/34. Here was a manufacturer who knew his duty towards a new material, a new technique and the consumer. He commissioned new sets from men whom he regarded as brilliant enough to start afresh, unencumbered by previous solutions, on a new problem. And

in fact, two cabinets resulted which were equally independent in their appearance of the established standards of furniture design, equally functional, and equally successful. Another case in point is the history of car-body design. Here it was not the artist but the manufacturer himself who investigated the properties and requirements of the object and gradually arrived at highly satisfactory results.

It is obvious that from the usual staff designer with his training, his status, his salary, similar achievements can hardly be expected. Another reason for the employment of a works' designer is also no longer valid in these trades. If manufacturers often tell you that they cannot use outside artists because the designer must be on the spot and in constant communication with those who carry out what he has devised, that does not hold good in industries relying entirely on mass-production methods. Here workman and designer have nothing in common. And inasmuch as the designer moves away from the execution of his work, and away from what once was the craftsman's task, he draws nearer to the engineer. What he must know to start on his job has nothing to do with craft, but everything with technique.‡ The pertinent facts may be simple as in cast pottery and pressed glass or more complicated as in the plastics industries; in any case it is the limitations of the machine that the designer has to take into account. Objects in bakelite must be shaped so that they can be extracted from the mould, straight sides in aluminium require a stronger sheet than curved sides, etc.

Moreover, there is a third reason telling against the staff designer and in favour of the free lance artist or architect of high standing. It is an inevitable consequence of mass production methods that the number of running models is reduced and the quantity of pieces of one model increased. Whereas in blown glass or thrown pottery or hand-made furniture every piece represents the same amount of money invested in production, so that a batch of 50 is hardly a more economical proposition than a batch of 12, in bakelite or beetle a tumbler would cost 1s. 6d. if 5,000 a year were made; it costs 6d. if an order from a multiple store enables the manufacturer to turn out 300,000. The same situation is to be found in the hardware trades. Surprisingly large quantities of one model of an aluminium kettle or an enamel pan are made; 60,000 was one of the figures quoted to me.

In these circumstances there can hardly be enough work for a creative staff-designer. The few new models required each year would, at least in small and medium sized firms, fail to keep him busy. This is, so I was told, why usually a mediocre draughtsman or nobody at all is appointed. The idea of giving the 200 or 350 pounds a year not to a full-time designer who is satisfied with such an inadequate salary, but to a first-rate free-lance artist or architect as a fee for five or six or ten or twenty designs, is, as a rule, not considered. And yet it is just in these new industries, which meet often with far more public interest than the old established trades, that really convincing and original designs are almost bound to react on sales.

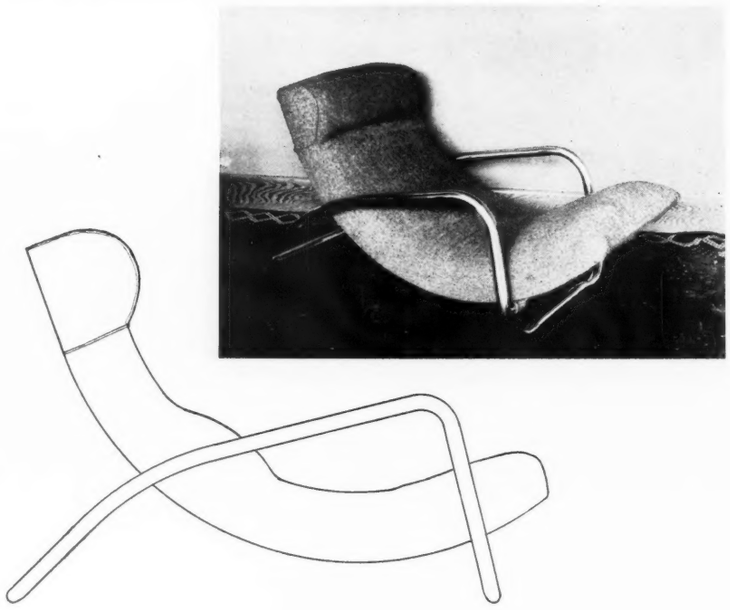
So much for the designer's point of view. Looked at from the public's angle, the most clearly visible consequence of the new entirely mechanised methods is that shops cannot accept any orders for "specials." The studio-potter would make for you whatever you wanted him to; the high-class ceramics factory would at least be prepared to let you have special decoration on your dinner set, if you agreed to pay an additional price—cast pottery with lithographed decoration you have to take as it is, or not consider at all. No private order can pay for special bakelite moulds which for an ashtray would cost £20, and for more complicated objects up to £100 and £1,000 (this last figure refers to a radio cabinet); £15 or £20 are also the price of the tools necessary to produce one article in aluminium, so that here again individual requirements cannot be met. The same applies to steel chairs or pressed glass.

On the other hand, in losing his power of selection the customer saves money. Once the manufacturer has paid for his tools there is little left to increase the price of the article. Production is very fast: one machine can turn out hundreds and thousands of pieces a day. And as it is worked by unskilled operatives, labour is cheap too. Moreover, the mechanical shaping of the objects instead of the shaping by hand saves staff. The ratio between number of workers and quantities of output in factories dealing with the new materials according to the new processes is surprisingly different from that in works organized on the old lines. You constantly see firms the small and insignificant buildings of which are in striking contrast to the enormous numbers of goods produced.

There is also a point of view of the worker in this matter, but that is outside the scope of these articles, although, in the long run, the social questions of unemployment, of reduced purchasing power, and of involuntary leisure, are bound to affect the artistic aspect of the matter more seriously and more decisively than any changes in the supply and the character of designs.

‡ "The production of plastics is one in which the technical processes are three-quarters of the controlling influence in design . . . The designer should be in a position to examine with some critical ability the pronouncements of the engineer."—H. J. Dow, head designer to the British Xylonite Co., Ltd., in "Trend," Vol. I, 1936, p. 81.

INDIVIDUAL SOLUTION—4



This adjustable chair has a 1¼-in. chromium-plated steel frame and a multi-ply seat and back built up on a special jig and veneered in Japanese chestnut. The padding is contrived by placing hair stuffing in the positions required and placing over it a sponge-rubber pillow, which latter also forms the roll at the head. The whole is finally covered in Donegal tweed. The seat is quite detached from the frame, which has two cross-bars on which the chair rests (and remains) in any position required. Designers: Banks, Carden and Gray.

Modern Improvements: 1810

"I perceive," said Mr. Milestone, after they had walked a few paces, "these grounds have never been touched by the finger of taste."

"The place is quite a wilderness," said Squire Headlong; "for, during the latter part of my father's life, while I was *finishing* my *education*, he troubled himself about nothing but the cellar, and suffered everything else to go to rack and ruin. A mere wilderness, as you see, even now in December; but in summer a complete nursery of briers, a forest of thistles, a plantation of nettles, without any livestock but goats that have eaten up all the bark off all the trees. Here, you see, is the pedestal of a statue, with only half a leg and four toes remaining: there were many here once. When I was a boy, I used to sit every day on the shoulders of Hercules: what became of *him* I have never been able to ascertain. Neptune has been lying these seven years in the dust-hole; Atlas had his head knocked off to fit him for propping a shed, and only the day before yesterday we fished Bacchus out of the horse-pond."

"My dear sir," said Mr. Milestone, "accord me your permission to wave the wand of enchantment over your grounds. The rocks shall be blown up, the trees shall be cut down, the wilderness and all its goats shall vanish like mist. Pagodas and Chinese bridges, gravel walks and shrubberies, bowling-greens, canals, and clumps of larch, shall rise upon its ruins. One age, sir, has brought to light the treasures of ancient learning; a second has penetrated into the depths of metaphysics; a third has brought to perfection the science of astronomy; but it was reserved for the exclusive genius of the present times to invent the noble art of picturesque gardening, which has given, as it were, a new tint to the complexion of nature, and a new outline to the physiognomy of the universe!"

"Give me leave," said Sir Patrick O'Prism, "to take an exception to that same. Your system of levelling, and trimming, and clipping, and docking, and clumping, and polishing, and cropping, and shaving, destroys all the beautiful intricacies of natural luxuriance, and all the graduated harmonies of light and shade, melting into one another, as you see them on that rock over yonder. I never saw one of your improved places, as you call them—and which are nothing but big bowling-greens, like sheets of green paper with a parcel of round clumps scattered over them, like so many spots of ink flicked at random out of a pen, and a solitary animal here and there looking as if it were lost—that I did not think it was for all the world like Hounslow Heath, thinly sprinkled over with bushes and highwaymen."

"Sir," said Mr. Milestone, "you will have the goodness to make a distinction between the picturesque and the beautiful."

"Will I?" said Sir Patrick, "och! but I won't. For what is beautiful? That what pleases the eye. And what pleases the eye? Tints variously broken and blended. Now, tints variously broken and blended constitute the picturesque."

"Allow me," said Mr. Gall. "I distinguish the picturesque and the beautiful, and I add to them, in the laying out of grounds, a third and distinct character, which I call *unexpectedness*."

"Pray, sir," said Mr. Milestone, "by what name do you distinguish this character, when a person walks round the grounds for the second time?"

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

"Headlong Hall."

STURDY INDIVIDUALISM

"*Finally, there is the new idea of doing one's own building under municipal tutelage. I believe the value of this idea to be not merely financial or material, but also moral. It is not merely that we can afford potential forms of self-expression of this kind—our over-urbanized civilization cries out for fruitful ways of filling leisure time. It is also worth considering as a method of associating individual effort with collective action in the intimate and vital function of homemaking.*"

So said an article on Sweden in the *New Statesman and Nation* for August 1st. If this admirable idea of every man his own builder spreads to this country one foresees a certain element of fantasy sweeping into our streets. Perhaps, after all, it is best that the efforts of private individuals should be confined to the interiors of their homes. It must not be forgotten that Sweden, although one of the most cultured of States, has no Beaton:

"*Beaton (Salzburg- and Dalmatia-bound today) lives in Kensington in what was a normal, rather stolid Victorian flat.*

"*He has done up two rooms.*

"*Bedroom is papered in 'an ordinary boarding-house pattern' (but orange-vermilion and white), with small photographs of Beaton's friends cut out and stuck up, their faces bedaubed, spangle-halo'd.*

"*Net curtain over window is pale blue, hung with white cellophane birds. Heavier curtains are dark red. Furniture is dark purple, carpet light purple; bed pale green.*

"Beaton wears bright red dressing-gown with royal blue lining and lapels.

"Massed everywhere are gaudy paper flowers brought from Mexico at great expense.

"They won't last long: London dust accumulates.

"There are artificial flowers in sitting-room, too: foot-thick violet funeral wreath from Paris frames mirror.

"Room represents garden. Green carpet is appliqué'd with bunches of flowers. Realistic tree 'grows' all over one corner; changes with the seasons, wears blossom in spring, dying leaves in autumn, snow in winter.

"Only chairs are those little green ones of bent iron.

"'Very comfortable' says Beaton: but I noticed that his secretary had cushioned hers with a pile of newspapers."

DAILY EXPRESS.

DIFFERING OPINIONS

We have not had such pleasing stamps since the old "penny red" of Queen Victoria. At last all the clumsy and meaningless decoration that has disfigured intervening issues has been left out. The simplified design comprises the essentials, and no more; but the Crown needs to be emphasized, and treated as boldly as the numerals. The colour produced by the photogravure process is excellent. So is the likeness of His Majesty's head. But a photographed head should not have been "cut off" like a conventionalized cameo. Realism, once introduced into a design, must be consistent.

COUNTRY LIFE.

As an emblem which goes all over the world, it is a poor example of our craftsmanship, inevitably inviting comparisons with that of other countries.

Apart from the meagre texture and cheap quality of this process, the typography is lacking in all sense of proportion. The huge word "Postage" is unnecessary on a stamp, and the emblem of the crown should surely not be reduced to balance the size of the type denoting the monetary value of the stamp?

C. R. W. NEVINSON.

One's first impression of the design due to the faulty lines of the neck—is merely that of a surgical decapitation. Such an appearance is never conveyed by the fine and carefully designed specimens of the head and neck which have been used in the past for similar purposes.

ALFRED PRAGA.

The new stamps are quite unworthy of this country, and their early disappearance is much to be desired.

Col. ASTLEY TERRY.

I am a stamp collector since 1880, *and have a good collection; but I must say that I seldom saw a better and finer stamp than this issue.*

ERNST WAHL.

The stamp is really a remarkable and priceless historical document. It is a complete revelation of an age of which someone who like myself has firmly adopted the mantle of the centenarian said to me: "Everything from beef to bookbinding is second rate and nobody realizes it."

Mrs. HICKS BEACH.

I think the stamp errs on the side of simplicity. Why not have "British Empire" instead of the ugly word "Postage"? The design of stamps of the late King would be very hard to beat.

G. M. WITHERBY.

What is wrong with the stamps is wrong with all modern buildings which are just simple masses with most of the 1909 *ornaments knocked off. The larger head is essential.*

GEOFFREY GRIGSON.

• • •

Before joining in the chorus of criticism which the appearance of the new stamps has provoked, we must give praise where praise is due: the fact that the Postal Authorities have shown themselves to be aware that a complete break with the recent tradition of stamp design was both desirable and necessary, is itself a matter for congratulation. But if the spirit was willing, the flesh, as represented by the final result, is undeniably weak.

Simplicity, like patriotism, is seldom enough, and is too often the last refuge of the incompetent. The fact that the stamp has been shorn of all superfluous ornament does not mean that the bare essentials to which it has been reduced are any the more meritorious. Briefly the head itself suffers from being a mechanical reproduction and not an artist's design, the print is too large and too simple in a "bogus" way, the crown and the numerals are far too small, a plain background would have been far better than the "art" shading, and finally, the arrangement of these various parts in the given space is inconsequential and totally uninspired. The solution of the problem surely lies in a return to the traditional design of the first stamps ever issued, which, although it was produced at an age which frequently evokes polite twentieth century sniggers for its presumed lack of taste, was a masterpiece of design, restrained, simple and completely adequate.

Wantonly to turn one's back on that which is good solely because it is old is to stand convicted of an odious self-satisfaction which the present standard of industrial design in this country in no way justifies.

As a pendant to the above, as we go to press the announcement appears in the Daily Press of the Postmaster General's decision to leave the design of the new stamp entirely unaltered, owing to the almost unanimous chorus of praise with which it has been received and (oddly) owing to the large quantity the public bought while the stamps were on temporary sale.

• • •

We may add to the above quotations the following, as an example of extreme procedure in another direction:

A marzipan model of King Edward in full coronation regalia, sitting in the Chair of Destiny, after being crowned, is a striking feature at the 40*th Bakers' and Confectioners' Exhibition which opened on Saturday at the Royal Agricultural Hall, Islington, London, N.*

The model, sculptured by Mr. J. E. Hampson, of Saltley, Birmingham, is remarkably realistic. The facial expression is lifelike, and even the little twist of the mouth, which is characteristic of the King, is reproduced.

The magnificent Royal blue velvet and ermine robes are faithfully recorded in full colour, and the Royal jewels—all fashioned from sweetmeats—glitter in the light of the arc lamps.

The Chair of Destiny, modelled to scale, has golden feet. Experts state that the model is one of the finest examples of the confectioners' art.

Mr. Hampson carried out a great deal of research in order to ensure that the model would be correct. The colour effects have been secured by mixing vegetable dyes with the marzipan

and every piece of the model can be eaten. It was awarded first prize in the Special Coronation Confectionery Section.

DAILY TELEGRAPH.
September 7th.

Art in the Piano Industry

There was recently held in London an exhibition of pianos, at which were displayed numerous instruments designed and decorated by a variety of well-known artists. Apparently the shape and contours of this familiar object arouse the greatest repugnance in the sensitive breasts of some music lovers, and many ingenious schemes been put forward for their improvement. While some of the designs were admirable in their own way, one cannot help wondering whether there are not perhaps other objects of everyday use which stand in even greater need of improvement.

After all what is there so objectionable about the modern grand piano? In no other piece of furniture does the function dictate the design in so marked and successful a way. It is perfectly suited to the most modern interior, but for some reason its polished plainness seems to arouse the ambitions of every would-be decorator; nor is it only the snake-skin and chromium-plate school who feel impelled to try their hands at a little improvement for a few years ago at the Stockholm Exhibition a functionalist piano was on view made entirely in plate glass. Jolly as it must be to watch the music going round and around one trusts that the old-fashioned opaque instrument will still be available for some years to come.

At the Piano Exhibition recently held at Dorland Hall. Two of the series of modern pianos by various designers. These were two of the best, as they accepted as perfectly modern (which it is) the traditional piano shape, and did not attempt to dress it up in any fashionable modern costume. Left, by Wells Coates; right, by Serge Chermayeff. The latter was a particularly successful simple interpretation of the familiar "grand" in black wood with copper pedal frame. Behind it are shelves for storing music, part of an exhibition music room designed by the architect.

A magnificent instrument, recently on exhibition at Maples, designed by the late Sir Alma Tadema for his own use. So successfully has he recaptured the atmosphere of Ancient Rome that one is almost tempted to imagine that it is the actual instrument on which Nero played while Rome burnt. Or was that perhaps a fiddle?

TOWN-PLANNING IN DETECTIVE FICTION

Like others of its kind Barhaven has been spoiled beyond all hope of redemption by the unrestricted individualism of the nineteenth century. Narrow, crooked streets, laid out without plan and without any consideration for convenience, safety or health; dingy back-to-back houses crowded into courts and alleys of incredible ugliness with a complete disregard for light and air; noisy, smoky and odorous factories scattered at random among the residential parts of the town—all lay under a perpetual pall of smoke from the maze of chimney pots.

Desperate and expensive efforts being made to rectify faults of fifty years' standing, the twentieth-century pendulum had swung to the other extreme with a vengeance. The sins of the fathers were being paid for a thousand-fold by their unfortunate descendants. Narrow streets which were death-traps to modern traffic were being widened at a fantastic cost. Men of moderate means, whose grandfathers could have built their stables half-way across the main road without exciting comment, were fleeced by garage proprietors because the local authority would not allow them to build garages in their own gardens unless

they were masonry structures of such cathedral-like solidity as to be absolutely prohibitive in cost. Thousands of tons of coal were wasted every year in badly designed boilers and grates which poured forth incessantly the smoke clouds which overhung the town and shut out the sun. The Town Council, appalled by the resultant rickets and high death rate, took energetic steps to deal with the smoke question. Municipal sun-baths were installed at enormous expense and the electricity works, old and inefficient, produced still more smoke in their effort to supply artificial sunlight in place of the real article which they were obscuring. The sun-baths did not pay. The ratepayers did. They had to. Everything was done to ensure the survival of the unfittest. It has been said that the world is full of willing people; some are willing to work and the others are willing to let them work. Prudent, hard-working people of the former type were compelled to limit their families very stringently in order to pay for the unrestrained and irresponsible multiplication of the shiftless, the half-witted and the diseased. In a word, Barhaven was a typical manufacturing town with rates at twenty-six shillings in the pound.—W. STANLEY SYKES, *The Missing Moneylender. The Bodley Head.* 6*d.*

A SLIGHT CONFUSION OF THOUGHT

But it is the flow of traffic, not the creation of architectural vistas, that must be the determining factor in planning a bridge nowadays. Moreover, straight lines are not the essentials of town-planning that they were to Renaissance designers; curves are well adapted to designs executed in concrete, enabling stream-lined sweeps to be introduced that have undeniable grace.—*From an article on the Charing Cross scheme in "Country Life."*

And what is there, pray, to prevent an architectural vista from being also the best way of regulating a stream of traffic? Are Portland Place, the Champs Elysees, the Unter den Linden, and the Ringstrasse hopelessly inadequate as traffic arteries, or can it be that they lack all those qualities which go to make an architectural vista?

This quotation should make everyone duly grateful for the discovery of concrete which has enabled our architects to give us such noble streamlined sweeps as the new Kingsway, and the lack of which prevented the designers of such inadequate curves as the Crescents at Bath and Buxton and the old Regent Street from achieving that "undeniable grace" that it alone can provide.

MODERN TREASURY—III

Corbusier has not worked in vain: functionalism has at last penetrated even to that remote Victorian enclave, the Isle of Wight. The gaunt machine-made beauty of this Building Society's offices at Sandown, with its beautiful but restrained decorations in emerald green glass, is not only a thing of modern beauty itself, but is also, presumably, the prototype of dozens of happy homesteads shortly to be erected in the garden Isle.

SHUTTING THE STABLE DOOR

Sir—I agree with what Mr. Rees Jeffreys says that the beauties of roads should be preserved or developed, but regard it as a mistake to assume that the employment of landscape gardeners would achieve this purpose in a satisfactory manner.

The gardener is a planter and usually not qualified to design. Where the best modern roads and park ways have been constructed the road engineer has collaborated with a landscape architect in designing the road. A landscape architect is a person trained in design and with sufficient knowledge of planting to give directions in carrying out his designs. He should collaborate in the design from the outset, and not be asked merely to suggest ornamental planting for roads after they are designed. Unfortunately, in this country, we are in the habit of first destroying beauties of the landscape, and then appointing persons to create new beauty in substitution for what is destroyed.

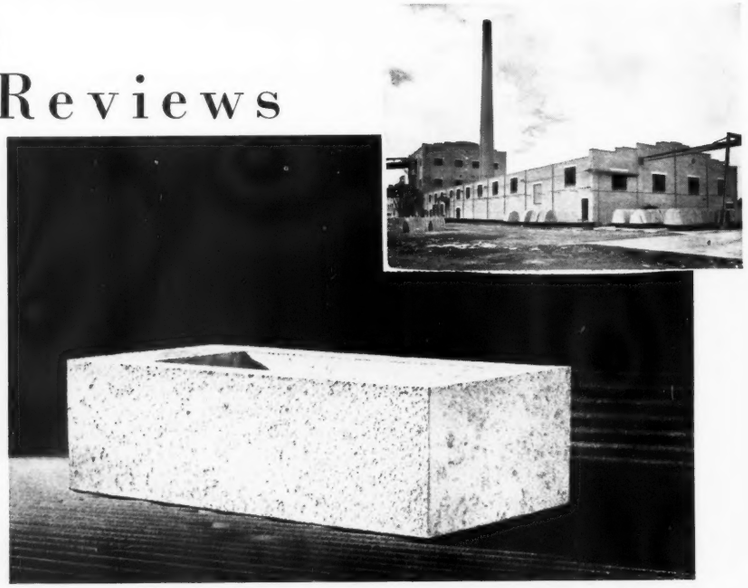
In preserving amenities and creating new amenities, on new roads to be constructed and old roads to be widened, highway authorities should employ experts in landscape design. This is really a vital issue, because the mere adornment of existing roadsides by the planting of trees, or of beds of shrubs and flowers, while providing what is conceived to be ornamental, may do so with vulgar ostentation, interference with proper road uses, and without achieving beauty.

Yours faithfully,
THOMAS ADAMS,
F.R.I.B.A.,
Vice-President, Institute of Landscape Architects.
DAILY TELEGRAPH.

Very right and proper, but it is difficult to see what good even the most gifted of landscape architects can be expected to achieve in the neighbourhood of an arterial road, the borders of which have already provided a mixed bag of jerry-builders and development kings with an opportunity of doing their worst. Until the necessary legislation is sufficiently drastic and efficient to keep the land on either side of our highways free from baronial estates and Elizabethan enterprises, no amount of planting and planning is going to make much difference.

Trade News and Reviews

By BRIAN GRANT



The product and the factory

Of paper I have a plentiful supply, my ink-well has but today been replenished with Stephen's blue-black, my pen is at hand, and, moreover, the flesh is willing . . . . . but inspiration is lacking, devastatingly so.

• • •

After a sojourn of several weeks in a small fishing village not very many miles from Lands End, with nothing but rod and tackle and St. Austell's ales to occupy ones attention, it is more than a trifle perplexing to find oneself confronted with the title "Trade News and Reviews" and the task of contributing approximately 3,000 words which will append themselves more or less intelligently to such a title. T'is difficult this "getting back into harness" after the very idlest kind of holiday.

• • •

It is September 7th and an entry in my diary warns me that these notes *must be* despatched on the morrow. It behoves me to work rapidly lest an infuriated Editor shall add his message of rebuke to the many that I have already received from sundry impatient creditors.

• • •

Concerning a new brick

My partner, bless him, comes to the rescue with an item of interest concerning a new brick now being manufactured in this country . . . . . the Hunziker brick. This is a calcium silicate brick, with an aggregate of crushed flint, having a pleasant texture, adequate strength (crushing strength for the com-

ARCHITECTURAL JOINERY

HOUSE AT EAST HARTING
SUSSEX

Archt.: NOEL REW
A.R.I.B.A.

This charming two-way staircase, together with panelling which we hope to illustrate later, is executed in British Columbian pine, and finished in a pleasing shade by the "Drytone" patent process. The hard figure of the timber is a nut brown colour whilst the soft grain takes an ivory toned hue

We are proud to have carried out this work under Mr. Rew's direction for Mr. Anthony Armstrong, the author of "Ten Minute Alibi"

We are specialists in Architectural Joinery and faithfully carry out Architects' designs and details

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Telegrams - QUALECON, NORWEST

mon brick—464 tons per sq. ft., for the engineering brick 531 tons) and low porosity.

• • •

In Switzerland, where there is little clay, the Hunziker is the standard brick in use, and how satisfactory its mechanical properties are may be gauged from the fact that the Simplon No. 2 tunnel has been lined with these bricks as an alternative to granite setts.

• • •

The new English factory is situated near Uxbridge . . . . . and thereby hangs an interesting tale of building procedure. First, up went the steelwork, the floors, the roof, and the chimney (the bricks for the latter were pressed in Switzerland of Uxbridge material); then followed the installation of the brick-making machinery, manufacture commenced forthwith and . . . . . hey presto, the bricks produced were immediately utilized for the completion of the factory.

Sort of, "counting your bricks before they're hatched" or "eating your cake and having it"—aw, dammit, neither fits, but you know what I mean.

The types being made include "facings," "commons" and "engineering" at prices varying from 39s. per thousand to 80s. and upwards for specials. The natural colour of the brick is a "silver grey," but a great variety of colours and textures can be produced to special order.

• • •

As regards the factory my partner was especially impressed—first, by the rubber conveyors that carry the crushed flint aggregate to the top of the factory; secondly, by the fact that the bricks are touched only once by hand during manufacture; and, thirdly, by the device used to pitch up large stacks of bricks without dropping a single one—"a device so ingenious," quoth my partner, "that it had obviously been designed by an architect!" Pretty vanity!

• • •

Forsooth, I must see these bricks and these contraptions of "Heath Robinson" ingenuity. I understand that architects are cordially invited to visit the factory . . . . hands up those who will join me in a tour of inspection! A post card will do. If I get any response I undertake, most solemnly, to devour my "chapeau noir."

Air Conditioning Units

And now gaze upon the above picture of domestic bliss and hygiene

and let me quote from a catalogue which lies before me:—

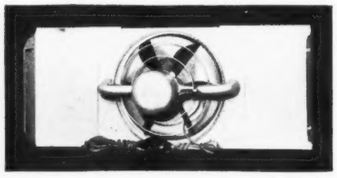
"Keep the Home Odor-free"

"Stale cooking odors have no place in the home. When greasy fumes and odors course their way from the unventilated kitchen into the other rooms of the home they cause the housewife many difficulties. Walls and furnishings are discoloured and soiled. Long after the meal has been forgotten, the home with an unventilated kitchen bears the stale, musty odors that prove so embarrassing to the hostess, so disagreeable to her guests."

Thus the high pressure American overcoming sales-resistance. In all seriousness, however, the removal of smells from kitchens, of steam from bathrooms and of smoke from smoke-rooms is well worth while and there are a number of air-extractor devices on the market that deserve the consideration of the architect.

• • •

Messrs. Air Conditioning and Engineering, Ltd., are importing the Ilg range of ventilators, which are made by the Ilg Electric Ventilating Company, one of the best known fan manufacturers in America. It is, I understand, probable that the manufacture of these fans may shortly be commenced in this country, which should make a considerable difference to the selling price as the present imported models, presumably, have to carry a fairly stiff import duty. Various models are listed in the catalogue. The illustration on the previous page shows one of the smaller (450 cu. ft.) models built into the wall of a kitchen. The control is by a single cord which operates the motor switch and an external air flap at the same time. The hinged external flap obviates the possibility of back draught, when the fan is not running, and the motor is self-ventilating, with shaded poles to prevent interference with wireless sets; the casing is telescopic so that the unit can be built into any of

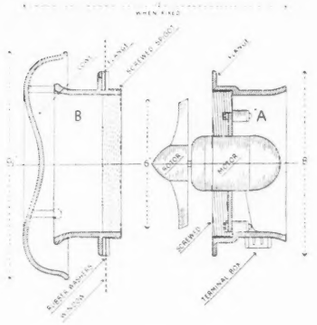


the usual wall thicknesses. A small portable model (illustrated above) is made which can be fixed at the top of the window and telescopes over a range of ten inches to allow for different widths. This unit is fitted to the reveal *inside* the window, and does not interfere with it in any way. In this model, therefore, there is no need for the air flap, since the window can be shut as usual to prevent draughts. For larger widths, or where the maximum amount of daylight is desirable, a similar model is produced with glass panels at each side of the motor.

• • •

The "Vent-Axia"

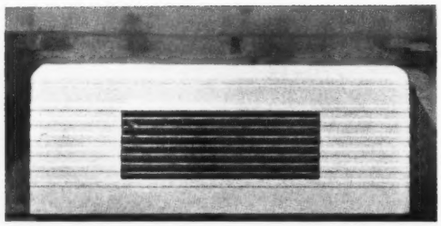
The "Vent-Axia" air-extractor is manufactured in this country and marketed by Utilities (London) Ltd. The casing, made in Bakelite, is so designed that it acts as a duct to increase the flow of air and incorporates an outside baffle which prevents rain, dust or draught from entering the room; it is made so that it can be fitted into any existing window, wall or door without bolts or screws. The overall diameter of the small model is 9½ inches and the manufacturers claim that it will run for 100 hours on one unit of electricity. A small diagram of the fan is here reproduced,



Utilities (London) Ltd., are also marketing the many different models of Servel refrigeration and air-conditioning units.

• • •

"Filteraire"



Another device known as the "Filteraire" performs a double duty. In addition to ensuring a constant supply of pure fresh air (450 cu. ft. per minute) it also incorporates a patented acoustical deflector which excludes noise. Included in a single compact sheet metal cabinet (see accompanying illustration) measuring 26 inches wide by 9 inches high is a large capacity intake fan, an air filter and a silencer. The intake fan is regulated by a rheostat so that precise control of air admittance may be maintained and the motor bearings to the fan are mounted in hair. Installation of the "Filteraire" is not difficult; it can be built-in to walls or partitions, or, in rooms where the window is sash hung, it can be incorporated as a piece of portable equipment and stood upon the window-sill. The filter gives a filtering surface of 8 sq. ft. and is made of a specially treated material which contains thousands of minute interlacing air cells.

• • •

Addresses:—Messrs. Air Conditioning & Engineering Ltd., 4–12, Palmer Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

Messrs. Utilities (London) Ltd., Walton House, 1, Newman Street, W.1.

Messrs. Filteraire, Ltd., 33, Jameson Street, W.8.

The Buildings Illustrated

The King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association Tuberculosis Hospital at Sully, near Cardiff.

Architects: W. A. Pite, Son, and Fairweather.

The general contractors were Messrs. E. D. Winn & Co. Ltd. Amongst the sub-contractors and craftsmen were the following: H. N. Barnes Ltd. (metal architraves), Beer & Warren (plumbing), Best & Lloyd Ltd. (external light fittings), Bratt Colbran & Co. Ltd. (sunk fires and gas fires), R. W. Brooke & Co. Ltd. (wood block floors), Caxton Floors Ltd. (fireproof floors, flat roofs and stairs), Cellactite and British Uralite Co. Ltd. (Cellactite roofing), Cork Insulation Co. Ltd. (insulation to mortuary), Dawnays Ltd. (constructional steelwork), Diespeker & Co. Ltd. (terrazzo flooring and skirtings), Empire Stone Co. Ltd. (cast concrete lamp-posts), Ferranti Ltd. (electric fires), Thomas Foster & Son Ltd. ("Vitunda" stair nosings), George Farmiloe & Son Ltd. (glass dome lights), James Gibbons Ltd. (ironmongery, balustrading, mortuary racks, instrument cupboards, sterilizing hood, etc.), Hallett Flooring Co. (floor tiling), Haskins (rolling shutters), P. C. Henderson Ltd. (sliding door gear), Hitchins Flush Woodwork Ltd. (flush doors and cupboard doors), James Howell & Co. Ltd. (cork carpets and linoleum, chairs designed by the architects, and standard articles of furniture and furnishing, also ward bedside lockers, designed by the architects in collaboration with the doctors), Leeds Fireclay Co. Ltd. (sanitary fittings), Leyland & Birmingham Rubber Co. Ltd. (rubber flooring), Mellowes & Co. Ltd. (metal roof and lantern lights, greenhouse), Permanite Ltd. (Permanite

The Buildings Illustrated

roofing), W. B. Simpson & Sons Ltd. (wall tiling), Topping & Leggat (main chimney shaft), John Williams & Sons (Cardiff), Ltd. (metal windows, operating theatre window, patent glazing, metal screens, cast-iron rainwater heads, iron staircases and balustrading, wrought iron balcony and other general ironwork), J. G. Proger & Sons Ltd. (cold water, domestic hot water, heating, steam and condensing and gas installations), T. Clarke & Co. (main low tension switch board), Keighley Electrical Engineering Co. Ltd. (electric cages and lifts), J. & E. Hall Ltd. (refrigerating plant with cold storage rooms), McWhirter & Sons Ltd. (ward refrigerating cabinets), Grant Engineering Co. (laundry equipment), Brightside Foundry & Engineering Co. Ltd. (kitchen equipment and steam sterilizing equipment), New System Private Telephones (South Wales) Ltd. (internal telephone system), Brynmawr & Clydach Valley Industries (chairs, bookcases, etc., designed by the architects), Hoskins & Sewell Ltd. (beds designed by the architects), Waring & Gillow Ltd. (chairs and settees), David Morgan Ltd. (chairs and standard articles of furniture and furnishing), Silverdale Manufacturing Co. (ward bedside lockers, designed by the architects in collaboration with the doctors), White Wilson & Co. Ltd. (tables, chests, etc.).

Eltham Hall, Eltham, Kent.

Architects : John Seely, F.R.I.B.A. and Paul Paget, A.I.A.A.

The general contractors were Monolithic & General Constructions Co. Ltd. Amongst the sub-contractors and craftsmen were the following : Willment Bros. Ltd. (demolition), Excel Asphalt Co. Ltd. (dampcourses and asphalt), W. T. Lamb & Sons Ltd. (bricks), Borough Green Quarry (bricks, Kentish Rag), Clipsham Quarry Co. (clipsham stone), South Western Stone Co. Ltd. (stone and stonework), Swallow's Tiles Ltd. (new roof tiles), Roberts Adlard & Co. Ltd. (old roof tiles), Frazzi Ltd. (Paropa flat over entrance hall), D. Anderson & Son Ltd. (roofing felt), Moler Products Ltd. (partitions), George Farmiloe & Co. Ltd. (glass), Henry Hope & Sons Ltd. (patent glazing, casements, door and window furniture), Dent & Hellyer Ltd. (cast lead, plain rainwater pipes and plumbing), Stoner & Saunders Ltd. (ornamental heads), Horsley Smith & Co. (London) Ltd. (wood-block flooring), Marbolith Flooring Co. Ltd. (patent flooring in kitchens and lavatories), Stonart Asbestos Flooring Co. Ltd. (patent flooring in Entrance Hall and Great Hall), G. N. Haden & Son Ltd. (central heating, gas fixtures, ventilation), Jackson Electric Stove Co. Ltd. (electric ranges), Bratt Colbran & Co. Ltd. (grates; mantelpieces in servants' hall and cottages), Carron Company Ltd. (grates), Thomas Potterton & Co. Ltd. (gas boilers), Bective Electrical Co. Ltd. (electric wiring, bells, house telephones), J. Seymour Lindsay (electric light fixtures and electric heating), Troughton & Young Ltd. (electric light fixtures), Shanks & Co. Ltd. (sanitary fittings), John Bolding & Sons Ltd. (sanitary fittings), Doulton & Co. Ltd. (sanitary fittings), Thos. Foster & Sons Ltd. (terrazzo to servants stairs), D. Burkle & Son Ltd. (wood to main stairs; special wood to architects' design; joinery, cloakroom fittings; furniture) Bakelite Ltd. (Bakelite in servants' quarters), T. W. Palmer & Co. Ltd. (folding gates; iron staircases), Bromsgrove Guild Ltd. (metalwork), Morris Singer Co. Ltd. (metalwork and signs), J. Whitehead & Sons Ltd. (marble), Carter & Co. Ltd. (plain white tiles; special floor tiles), A. Sanderson & Sons Ltd. (wallpapers), Art Metal Construction Co. (office fittings), Synchronome Co. Ltd. (clocks), Hydro Co. Ltd. (water-softening plant), John Healey (London) Ltd. (patent glazing), J. L. Green & Vardy Ltd. (new screen at west end of fifteenth-century Banqueting Hall), J. Thompson & Sons Ltd. (restoration of fifteenth-century roof of Banqueting Hall), W. J. Wheeler & Son Ltd. (plaster; decorative plaster), G. Brady & Co. (lifts), White Allom Ltd. (designers and contractors for decoration of certain of the principal rooms of the new house).

The Buildings Illustrated

Temporary Showroom, No. 147 Sloane Street, S.W.

Architect: Maxwell Fry, B.Arch., A.R.I.B.A.

The general contractors were Beck & Pollitzer Ltd. Amongst the sub-contractors and craftsmen were the following: Best & Lloyd Ltd. (electric light fixtures), Finmar Ltd. (furniture), Smith's English Clocks Ltd. (clocks).

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Flats at Maida Vale, London.

Architect: Frank Scarlett, B.A., A.R.I.B.A.

The general contractors were Messrs. A. O. Laird Ltd. Amongst the sub-contractors and craftsmen were the following: Sussex Brick Co. Ltd. (bricks), Stent Precast Concrete Co. Ltd. (artificial stone), Doulton & Co. Ltd. (terra cotta), Joseph Westwood & Co. Ltd. (structural steel), Kleine Co. Ltd. (fireproof construction), Noel Floors Ltd. (wood block flooring), Linolite Composition Flooring Co. (patent flooring), C. B. Jackson & Co. Ltd. (central heating), Bratt Colbran & Co. Ltd. (grates), Gas Light and Coke Co. Ltd. (gasfitting), Mortimer Gall & Co. Ltd. (electric wiring and bells), Ellis (Kensington) Ltd. (plumbing), George Jennings Ltd. (sanitary fittings), Carter & Ainsley (door furniture), Fred Hodge Ltd. (door furniture), Williams & Williams Ltd. (casements and window furniture), Hitchins Flush Woodwork Ltd. (flush doors), Allen & Greaves Ltd. (iron staircases and metalwork), Haskins (sun blinds), Co-plastering (East) Ltd. (plaster), Kandya Ltd. (kitchen fitments), John Stubbs & Sons (marble), Ramsden Wall Tiling and Terrazzo Contractors (tiling), J. & E. Hall Ltd. (lifts), Eric Munday & William Pickford Ltd. (signs).

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New Premises for the City of Bradford Co-operative Society Ltd.

Architects: W. A. Johnson, F.R.I.B.A. and J. W. Cropper, L.R.I.B.A.

The general contractors were the Building Department of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Ltd., Manchester. Amongst the sub-contractors and craftsmen were the following: Trussed Concrete Steel Co. Ltd. (concrete floors), Richard Crittall & Co. Ltd. (heating and ventilating), Crittall Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (metal windows), Leonard Stead & Son (fibrous plasterwork), Shaws Glazed Brick Co. Ltd. (faience wall lining to stairs), J. and H. Patteson, Ltd. (marble floors, etc.), Empire Stone Co. Ltd. (stonework to circular towers), Mather & Platt, Ltd. (sprinkler installation and hydrants, and roller shutters), Lamson Pneumatic Tube Co. Ltd. (cash tube system), W. F. S. Holt, Ltd. (roller shutters), J. A. King & Co. Ltd. (laylights to restaurant roof), W. Walker & Co. Ltd. (wrot iron balustrades, etc.), J. W. Swift (wall tiling), Doulton & Co. Ltd. (sanitary fittings), J. and E. Hall, Ltd. (escalators, refrigeration), Benham & Sons, Ltd. (kitchen equipment), Higginbotham & Sons, Ltd. (electric light and power), W. S. Hodkinson & Co. (floor coverings).

COMPETITIONS

BRITISH RAILWAYS
DESIGN FOR JOINT RECEIVING OFFICES

The Railway Companies invite architects of British nationality to submit in competition designs for Joint Receiving Offices.

Joint Assessors:	MR. CHARLES HOLDEN, F.R.I.B.A. MR. L. H. BUCKNELL, F.R.I.B.A. MR. W. H. HAMLYN, F.R.I.B.A. MR. C. GRASEMANN, M.A.
Premiums:	£300, £125, £50 and £25.
Last day for receiving designs:	7th November, 1936.
Deposit:	£1 1s. (one guinea), which will be returned on receipt of a *bona fide* design, or, in the event of the applicant declining to compete, on the return of the competition documents within four weeks before the date for submitting designs.

Conditions of the Competition may be obtained on application to me,

WILLIAM H. HAMLYN, F.R.I.B.A.
Chief Architect

L.M.S. Railway Company,
St. Pancras Chambers,
London, N.W.1.