THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration

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THE MARS EXHIBITION

As this issue goes to press the MARS Exhibition opens. By the time it appears in print the exhibition will have finished its three weeks' run. Those three weeks should go down to history as important weeks in the development of modern architecture in England—and for more than one reason. Quite apart from the architectural merit of the exhibition (which a fully illustrated record which will appear in next month's issue can be left to define) it is historically important because it demonstrates a new spirit of unity within the Modern Movement. The appearance of the exhibition is one of remarkable homogeneity and the MARS Group has succeeded in preserving, according to the principle laid down in its constitution, absolute anonymity of design in the different sections. It is in every sense, a Group effort, and the fact that the modern architects of this country are able to work in concert, pooling their ideas, subduing their private personalities, but still endowing their collective design with a personality of its own, indicates that the Modern Movement is now sufficiently established to be a basis for unselfconscious effort. A further instance of unity is the new co-operation shown between architects and the building industry. The latter have supported the exhibition financially without expecting any individual display of their wares, as in a trade show. The photograph shows a portion of the raised platform in the main gallery on which are displayed photographs to illustrate the design qualities of modern buildings; their imaginative qualities as architecture, that is to say, as distinct from the qualities of functional planning and structural suitability that are described in the earlier rooms. The photograph is taken across the flower-box that separates this portion from the model living-room. The exhibition will be fully illustrated in the next issue.

TIMBER FOR HOUSES

By R. Furneaux Jordan

Amidst the general welter of new materials, synthetic and natural, useful and ridiculous, with which the mind of the modern architect has to grapple, the most ancient of all still holds an important place—timber. Timber is an attractive material, it is a light material and an economic one, capable of the very finest treatment in the right hands. Timber however, like any other material worth using, needs sympathy and understanding and like most natural materials it has its tricks and whimsies.

So far as England is concerned timber buildings, as distinct from buildings in which the use of timber is merely incidental, are something of a novelty. Our timber tradition is not a strong one and we all know a good deal more about the ways of brick than the ways of wood.

By sheer merit the timber house is gaining ground. It has been designed, as can be seen in this issue, by architects as eminent as Professor Gropius, and in its humblest form Mr. Sjöström is using it for the houses which the Ministry of Health is erecting in Scotland. In this latter case it is helping to solve a difficult housing problem.

Appreciation of timber and the extent to which it is being used then are tending to outrun our knowledge of timber technique, and this means that a great deal of research into elementary detail has to be done every time a timber house is designed. It is therefore very right and proper that there should be an authoritative body who can assist those who are considering the use of timber in building. The need is filled to a certain extent by the Timber Development Association; but the real details of timber construction are still unobtainable. There are scores of photographs and plans from all over the world; there are structural details in foreign publications, details which are unsuited to British timber sizes and conditions. If one wants to know half-a-dozen alternative methods of handling an eaves, a detail of what happens on a corner, the junction between floor-joists and cill, and so on, one is forced back on American practice and the very limited timber experience of one's colleagues. To pool, for the benefit of architects, existing timber experience is one essential function which the Timber Development Association ought to perform, though so far it has not undertaken it.

Many architects are interested in the design of timber houses, many of them believe in their merits, but many are uncertain as to where really sound examples of detail can be found. The Timber Development Association should give to the architect a series of reliable half-inch and full-size details of timber construction suitable for this country. Such a publication does not exist; if it did it would do more than anything else to push forward the building of timber houses.

Any book on timber, however, even if it deals with only one aspect of its subject, must be regarded as important and authoritative if it bears the name of Mr. Boulton—the Technical Director of the Timber Development Association. Mr. Boulton was formerly Lecturer in Forestry to the University of Cambridge and he is head of the Timber Section of the City of London College. Presumably he must also, in the course of his career, have acquired a good deal of knowledge concerning timber houses and he must have a pretty good idea of the attitude of the contemporary architect to domestic building and to timber building in particular.

If the timber house has a future—and it is certainly " on the map "—a book of the sort which Mr. Boulton has recently edited,* although it does not pretend to give the full technical treatment of its subject which I have suggested, may have a considerable influence on our national building. The literature available on the subject of the timber house even from a non-technical point of view is not very great. This book, therefore, is more likely to be referred to by the architect than would be a book on, say, the brick house, where publications of all sorts are legion. Mr. Boulton's responsibility is therefore a grave one, since his book will be regarded by many young architects as giving an authoritative lead as to the lines to be followed in a field where no such lead has, as yet, been given. Moreover, in view of the author's position, the book will be regarded as bearing the seal of approval of the Timber Development Association, even if it does not officially do so. In short, the importance of *Timber Houses* is greater than either its size or its price would suggest.

It would be absurd to expect more than a sketch of the historical aspect of the matter; the timber house in one form or another has been built for thousands of years—it is coeval with man—and hundreds of examples, as far apart as Japan and America, have endured down the centuries to take their place worthily with other fine architecture. Timber architecture, of all periods, is a subject which still awaits a full and proper treatment. Mr. Boulton gives us a few outstanding examples and then deals with the modern house in this country and abroad.

Considering how well-established timber building is in America, Germany and Scandinavia and how recent is the timber revival in England—it has, in fact, hardly begun—an undue emphasis has perhaps been given to the work done in this country. Abroad there are rich fields still unexplored, as was emphasized by the recent monumental survey of Western Pennsylvanian architecture, whereas in England almost every available contemporary example must be raked up if a good display of English work is to be made. The strain placed upon the editor in his search for a large number of English designs is evident, whereas one can think of a dozen excellent continental ones which have had to be omitted. Most of the English houses shown are admirable and indicate how easily and naturally timber adapts itself to modern ideas of design. The flat roof, the long windows and the cubical masses—still so aggressive to the conservative mind—lose most of their sting in this softer and more mellow material. On the other hand the sentimentality and " ye olde " character of the more traditional types seems to be increased by the use of a material which lends itself so easily to barge-board-and-gable methods of design.

Mr. Chitty's delightful bungalow at Churt (illustrated on page 59), or the various designs which were premiated last year in the competition organized by the Timber Development Association, are all admirable—their modernity in no way

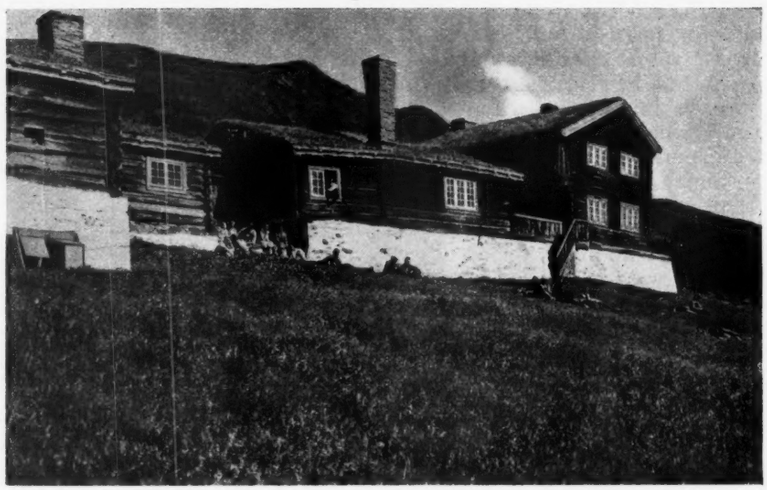
* " Timber Houses." Edited by E. H. B. Boulton (Country Life, Price 7s. 6d.)

1

2

THE TRADITION

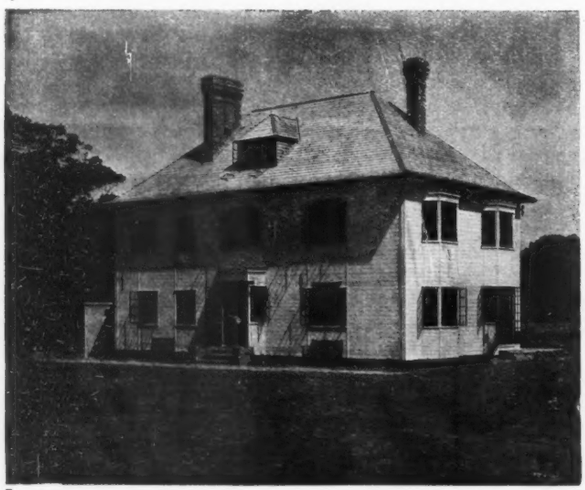
In many countries timber is a building material with distinguished architectural traditions. Although England can scarcely be included in their number, the weather-boarded farmhouse near Maldon is representative of a large series of rural buildings which make an admirable use of the material. 2, *is an American example, Rundlet-May House,* 364 *Middle Street, Portsmouth. While in America the use of wood is characteristic of a limited architectural period, the Scandinavian countries have used wood continuously throughout their history.* 3, *is an example of the Swedish tradition, an old farm in Sandbu, photographed by Bryan Westwood.*



3

4

The modern use of timber is only too often characterized by a vague imitation of traditional patterns made without any apparent appreciation of contemporary demands of planning or structure: for example, the house at Lyme Regis, Dorset, 4, *designed in the "log cabin" style and the house at Hewshott, near Liphook,* 5, *which reflects what in England is the totally inappropriate American "Colonial" type. The Ilmington Road School, Birmingham,* 6, *which aims at effects which are obviously associated with stone structure, illustrates what is another common failing in the modern timber house, namely an insufficient attention to the nature of the material.*



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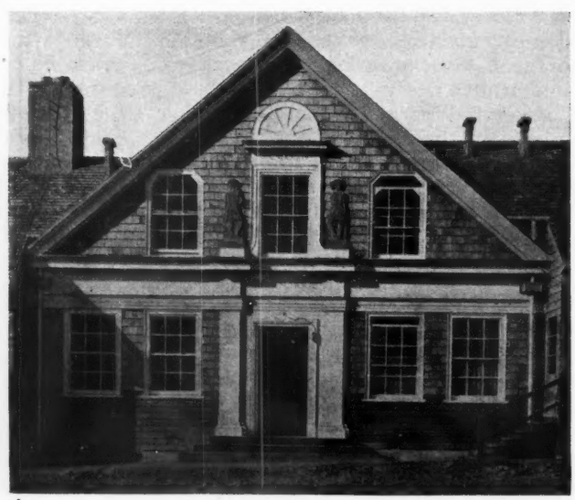

6

THE IMITATION

7

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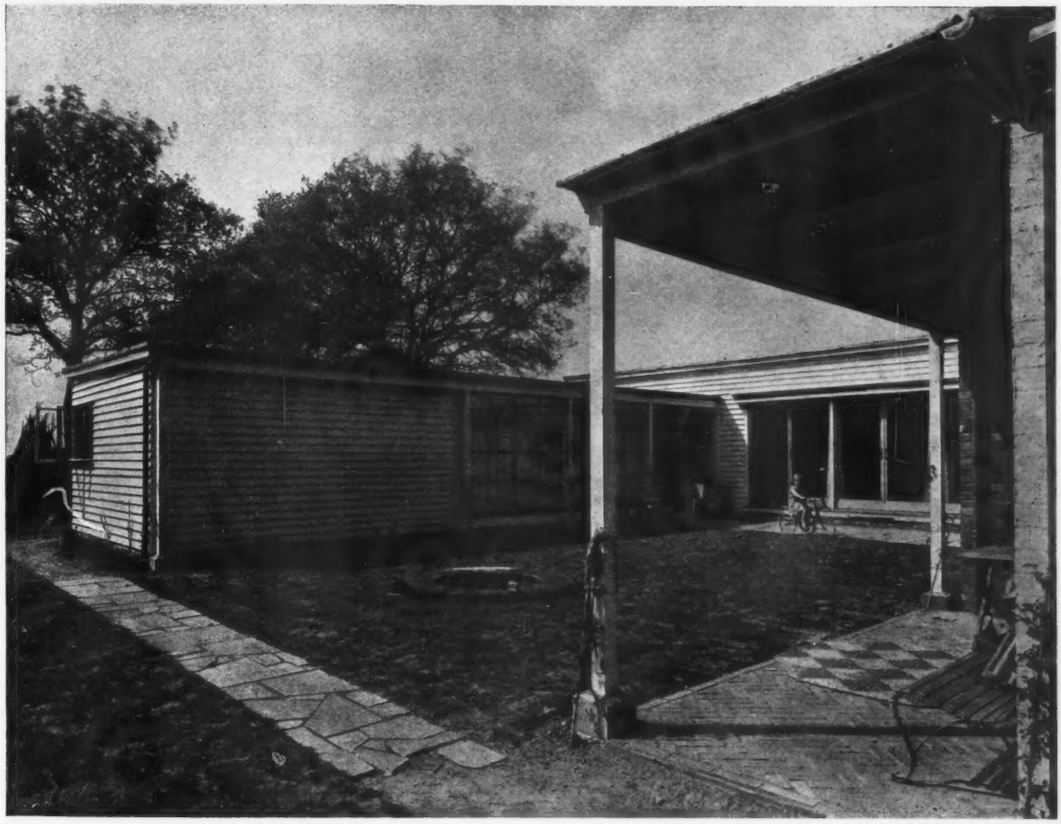


9

Illustrations 1, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9, on these pages are from " Timber Houses." Edited by E. H. B. Boulton. 2, is from " The Architectural Heritage of the Piscataqua," by John Mead Howells: New York, The Architectural Book Publishing Company.

There are, however, many good modern examples in which tradition has been neither ignored nor ineffectively imitated: in which the demands of the modern house have been reconciled to the essential qualities of timber construction. 7, is a Norwegian example: a house at Bergen, designed by the architect Bang, of Oslo. 8, is the Marcia Heath House at Madison, U.S.A., architects, Hamilton Beatty and Allen John Strang, and, 9, an English example, a house at Churt; architect, Anthony M. Chitty.

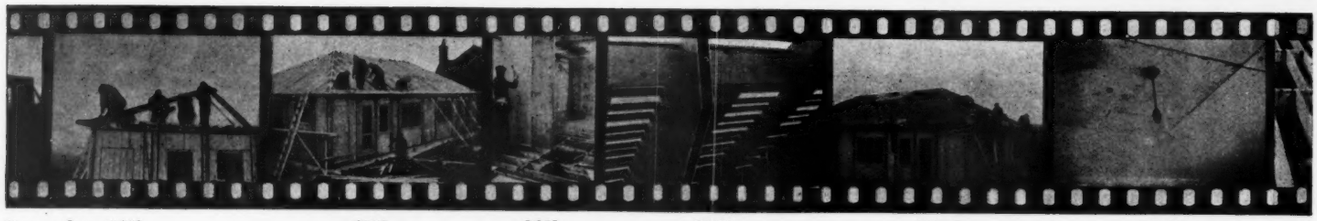
THE MODERN EQUIVALENT

detracts from the ease with which they could settle down into the English rural scene. On the other hand there are one or two houses—one at Lyme Regis in the " log cabin " tradition and a bungalow with a half-timbered porch which was erected at the Royal Show in 1934—which ought never to have been included. The same remark, I feel, applies to a school at Birmingham which reproduces stone details in timber with careful exactitude. It is not tradition which is being criticized, it is its misuse. There are other traditional examples, for instance the house near Tonbridge by Lord Gerald Wellesley and Mr. Trenwith Wills, and the famous little cedar house at Chobham by Sir Edwin Lutyens which are excellent of their kind—if you accept the kind.

Sandwiched between the English and foreign examples is a chapter giving plans and skeleton specifications for twelve timber houses designed by Mr. Leslie Mansfield in collaboration with Mr. Boulton. The facts and figures given with each design should prove invaluable and they also justify one's optimism with regard to the all-important factor of cost. As far as one can make out from approximate cubing the timber house really does seem to cost less than the equivalent brick house by as much as ten to fifteen per cent. So far as the design of these twelve houses is concerned I cannot help but feel that the " Colonial " element is too predominant, and that there is no particular reason why it should be. It is a style or character which is—or rather was—excellent in its own place and its own day, but when English Georgian motives are translated into timber they cannot help but suggest Maryland or Massachusetts, and when they thus cease to be English the last argument for traditionalism has gone.

That the timber tradition in this country has been dead so long that it is almost non-existent may make it harder to

December 10th | 10th | 14th | 15th | 15th | 16th



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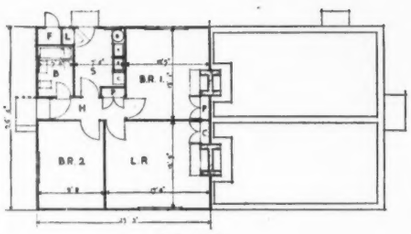
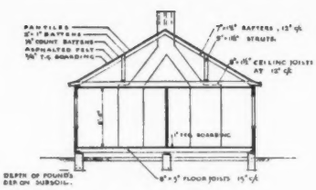
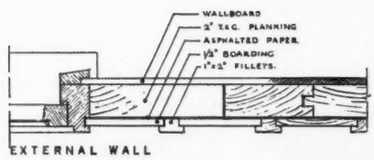


PLAN

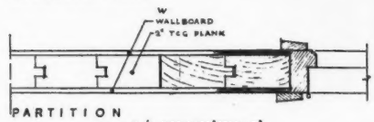


SECTION

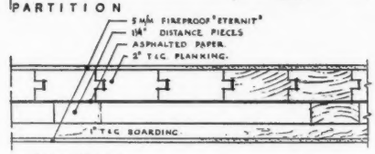
A feature of timber houses which indicates a possible field for their development in housing work is their cheapness and speed of construction. This is well illustrated in the experimental house designed by Cyril Sjöström in collaboration with the "Department of Health for Scotland." The houses were presented by the Swedish Government and H.S.B. (The Swedish Cooperative Building Association) jointly, and a site in Glasgow given by the Scottish Government. Plans for five standard plan-types were prepared, and one of them was built as an experimental house. The houses were temporarily erected in Sweden before shipment. All exposed timber was oiled (with linseed oil) in the factory to prevent absorption of moisture during building operations and before painting. Details of the construction are shown in the drawings on the right. The houses were received in Scotland towards the middle of December and were ready for occupation in January. A working schedule was prepared and the only difficulty experienced was in deliveries of bricks and other materials, partly due to ice-bound roads. Progress photographs with the corresponding dates are shown above.



EXTERNAL WALL



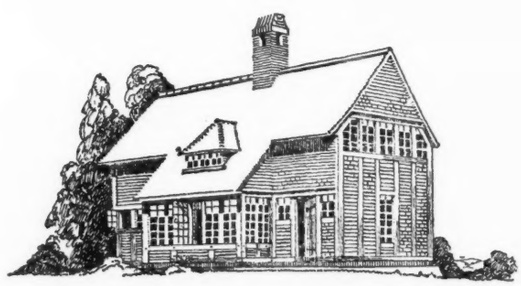
PARTITION

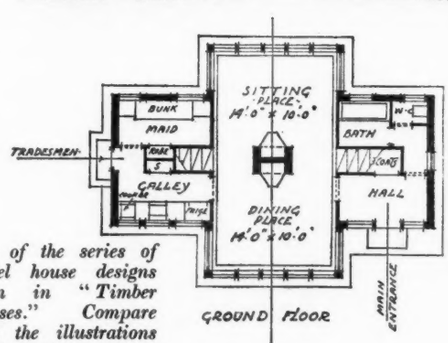


PARTY WALL

"put across" the timber house to the public; it certainly makes it more false to design in out-worn motifs, but it also makes it easier to treat the timber house with freedom and in a manner suitable to our day. It is here that the Timber Development Association, through its publicity, its exhibitions and its competitions, could have a great influence for good on our domestic architecture. That influence will not be less, nor will the purpose for which the Association exists be damaged, if it takes a firm line in this matter of design. Unlike glass and steel and concrete, timber is not a material which the mind immediately associates with the modern movement and if timber is to make its appeal to the contemporary designer its structural possibilities must be emphasized even more than is the case with those other materials whose modernity can be assumed.

In the art of designing in timber we have a long way to go in this country, but that timber can take its proper place in our architectural scheme is amply borne out by a glance at the last few pages of Mr. Boulton's book. There is a house near Zurich, another at Wisconsin, and several examples in Scandinavian housing schemes which are designs of the first order, and proof—if proof were needed—that timber is a sound "architectural" material.



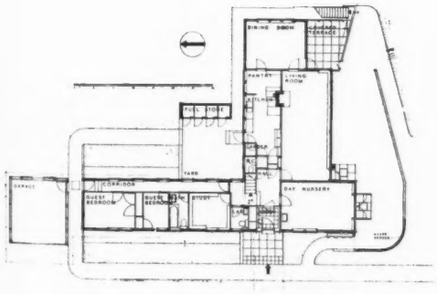


One of the series of model house designs given in "Timber Houses." Compare with the illustrations on the facing page.

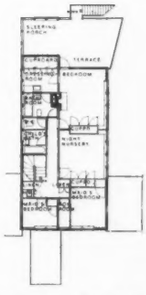
A TIMBER HOUSE IN KENT

1

WALTER GROPIUS AND E. MAXWELL FRY ARCHITECTS



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



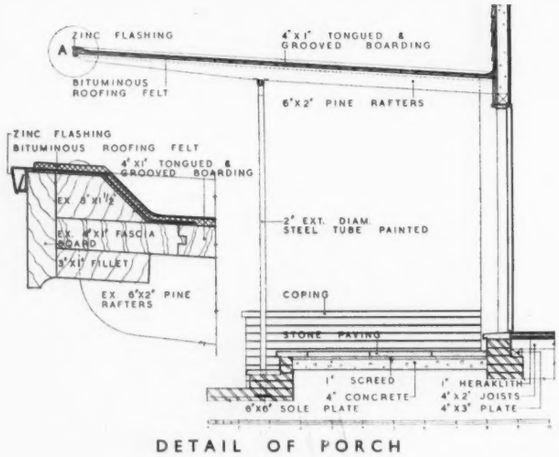
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

The house stands on sloping land within the straggling village of Shipbourne, and has long views over meadows and woodland. It survived the veto of the local Council after an appeal to the Ministry of Health, and is built exactly as planned. The house is approached from the top of the site with a car-turning space opposite the front porch. This leaves the view over the lower garden unspoiled. In effect the plan also covers the adjoining terraces which are protected from the wind and in intimate connection with the living-rooms of the house. Similarly the sleeping porch on the first floor is virtually an outside room: an open-air bedroom or nursery, protected from wind and rain. 1, the south elevation. 2, the entrance porch.

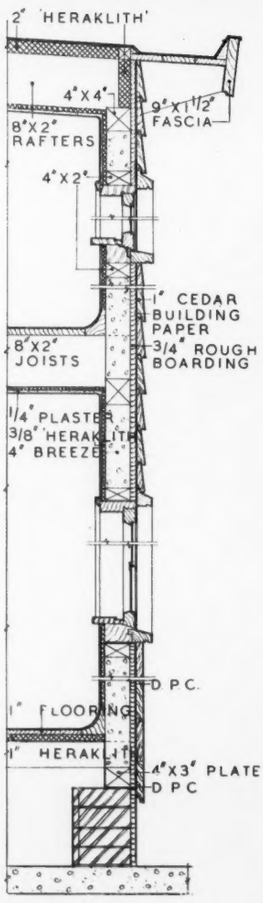
2

H O U S E A T S E V E N

3



DETAIL OF PORCH



DETAIL OF WALL

4

5

The house is entirely timber framed to a rigid specification aiming at thorough insulation. The sectional drawing and the detail view of the sleeping porch, 5, show clearly the method adopted. Windows are also in wood of a casement type though larger than the usual size of casements. The cedar weather-boarding is left unpainted and will weather in due course a silvery grey. The screen shown in 3, and 4, is in obscured glass and painted steel. It gives protection from the wind to a small play space lying immediately outside the nursery.

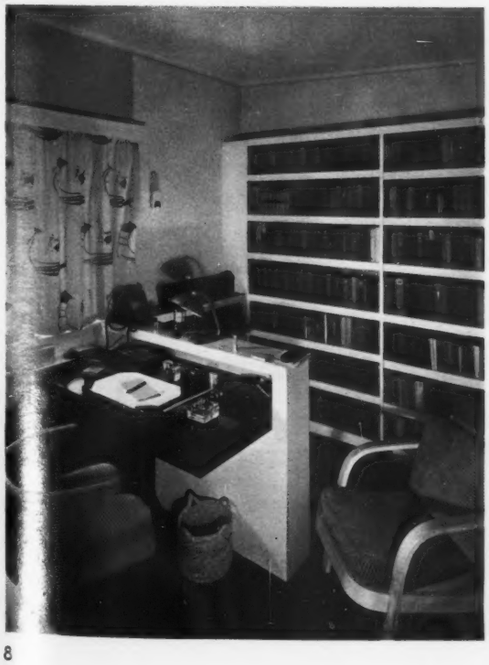
O A K S , K E N T

6

9

10

7



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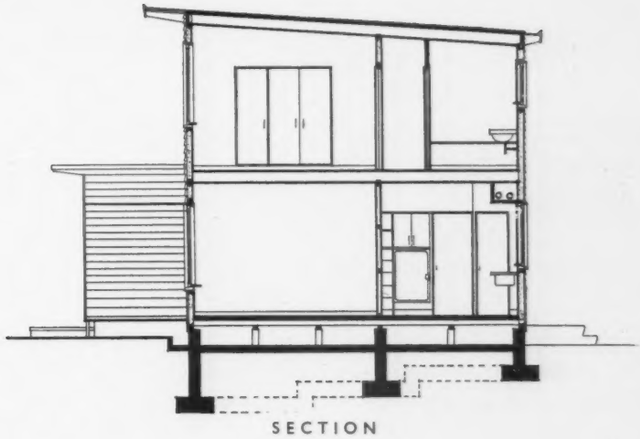
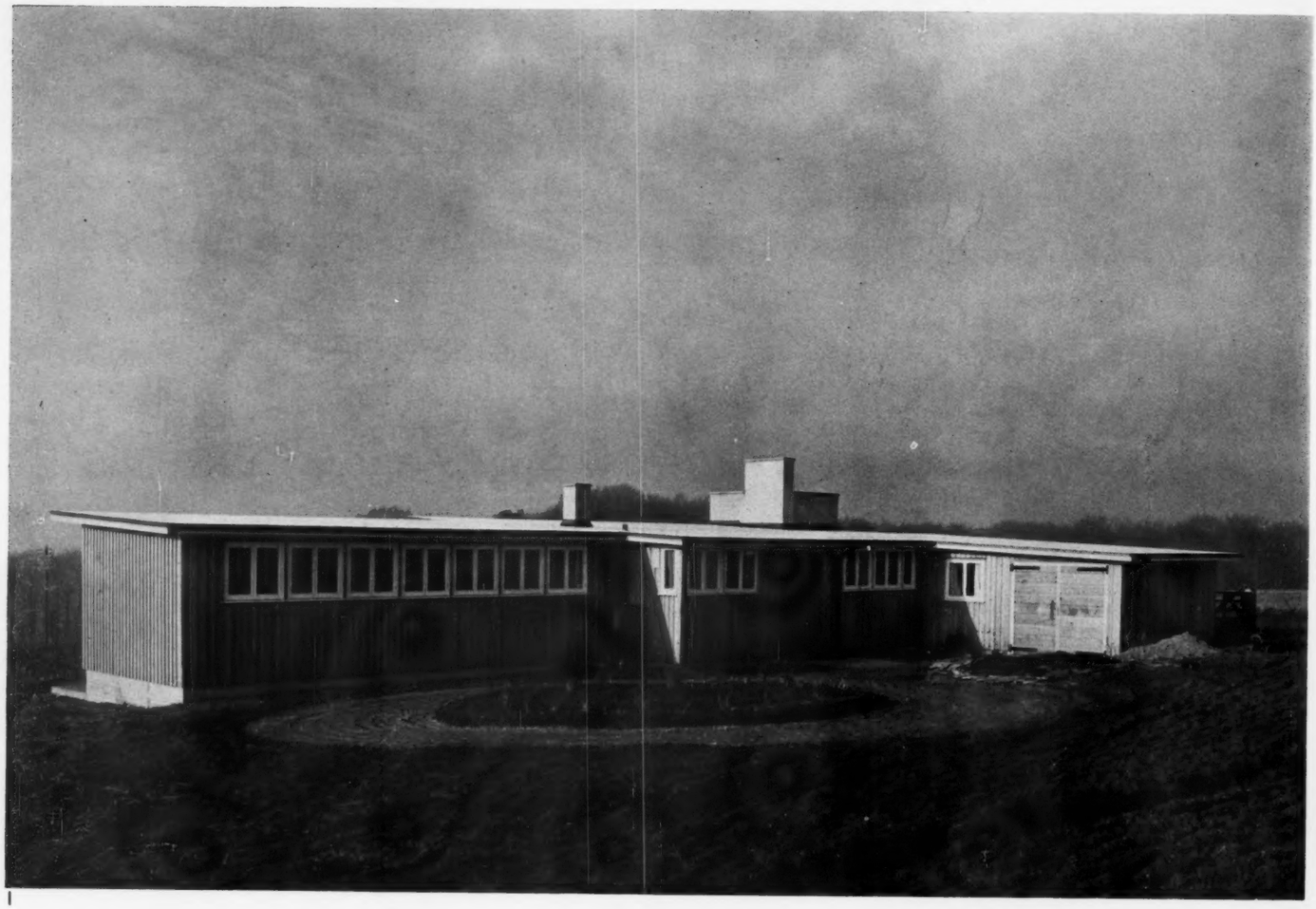


SECTION

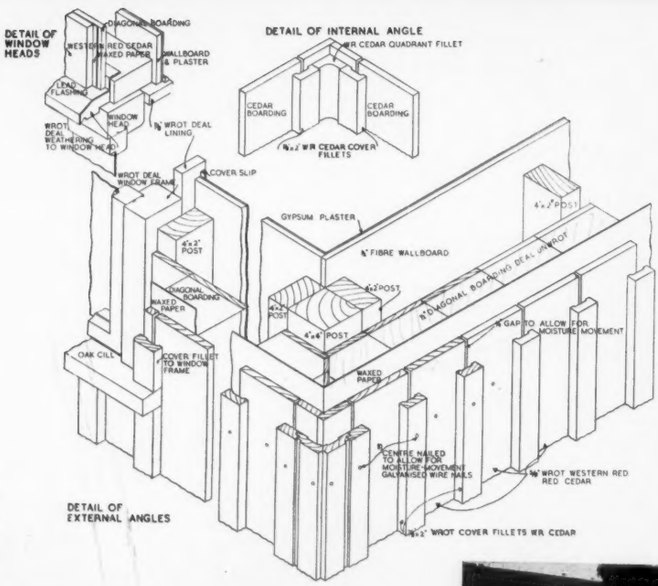
For the interior decoration of portions of the house Mr. Duncan Miller collaborated with the architects. The living-room, 7, is long and narrowish, with a range of windows along one side and heating below them. The fireplace of this room revived a use of knapped flints which had attracted Professor Gropius in his visits to the countryside. The black flints bedded in white mortar contrast well with the smooth paint and plaster finish of the interior. The chief impression is one of sunlight playing on simple surfaces of paint or plywood, and good colour. Technically the house is something of an achievement for a country builder to whom the much older form of English oak-framed building was more familiar: plumbing, for instance, is carried in internal ducts and is in copper: heating is electrical, while a high degree of mechanical finish in all equipment was called for and obtained. 6, shows the dining-room: 8, the study: 9, the nursery: 10, a bedroom.

TIMBER HOUSE AT MONGEWELL, OXF



1

NUTTALL SMITH AND DAVID BOOTH, ARCHITECTS



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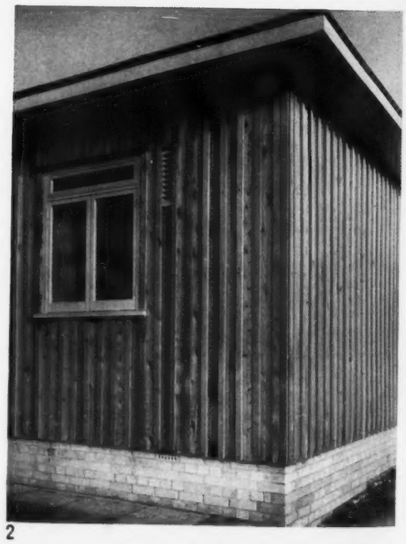
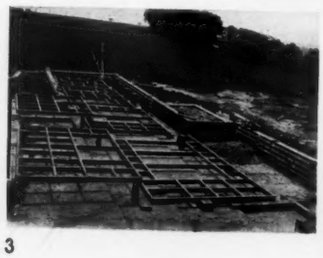


The site is on the high land overlooking the Thames Valley to the west. The fine view and the probable later development of the adjoining land to the south determined the aspect of the main rooms. It was necessary that the accommodation should be on one floor, that intercommunication should be provided between certain rooms and that a ramp rather than steps should be provided from the loggia to the garden. 1, is a general view from the north-east. 2, is a detail showing the construction, which is explained in the accompanying drawing. 3 and 4, are progress photographs: the former showing the wood frames partially assembled and in position for erecting the framing and the latter the framework in course of erection.



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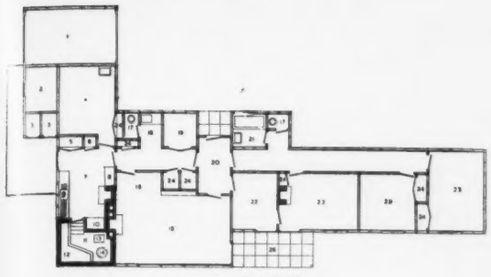
ORDSHIRE



PLAN

KEY

1. GARAGE
2. TOOLS AND GARDEN SHED
3. STORES
4. SERVANT'S BED-SITTING ROOM
5. LARDER
6. DRY GOODS STORE
7. KITCHEN
8. KITCHEN FITTING
9. SINK AND DRAINERS
10. AGA COOKER
11. HEATING CHAMBER (CISTERNS ABOVE)
12. FUEL STORAGE
13. BOILER
14. CALORIFIER
15. LIVING-ROOM
16. DINING AREA
17. W.C.
18. CLOAKS.
19. BOX ROOM
20. ENTRANCE HALL
21. BATHROOM
22. STUDY
23. BEDROOMS
24. CUPBOARDS
25. LOGGIA

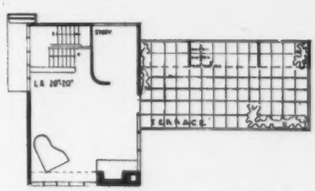
The timber framework is in 4 in. × 2 in. fir with 4 in. × 4 in. angle posts, covered externally with diagonal boarding, wax paper and wrot western red cedar boarding and lined internally with ½ in. fibre wallboard plastered one coat in gypsum plaster. The framework generally is spaced at 2 ft. centres. No mortice and tenon joints have been used and the usual diagonal bracing members were omitted : the framework is nailed together and braced by the diagonal boarding. The cedar sheathing is used in vertical boarding with cover fillets, all centre nailed to allow for moisture-movement, the cover fillets doubled and specially detailed at angles to maintain uniform board width. 5, is a detail showing the loggia. 6, is a view of the west elevation.

5

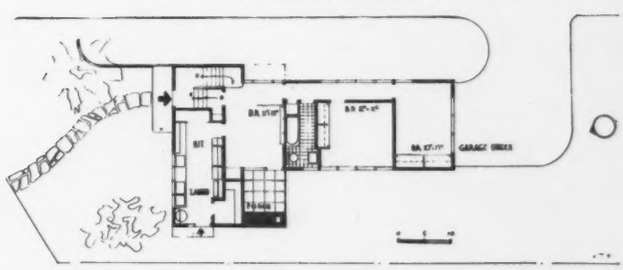
6

1

ROYAL BARRY WILLS, ARCHITECT



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



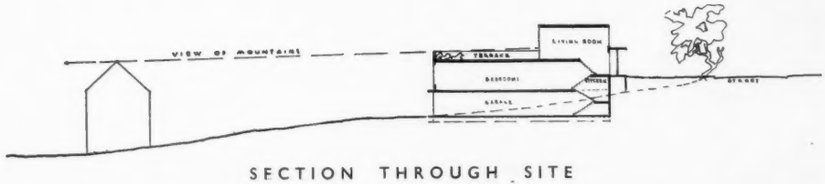
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Wood, in New England, is still the most economical building material. This house was built entirely of wood, with concrete block foundations. It is on a very small sloping lot which is explained on the drawing on page 66. The entrance is on an intermediate level between the first and second floors. This was found desirable because of the slope in the land, and to obtain a good arrangement of different elements. 1, is a detail of the entrance.

TIMBER HOUSE AT MILTON, MASSACHUSETTS

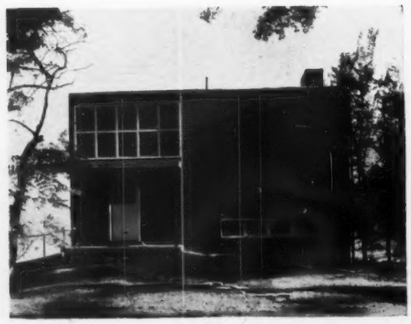
HOUSE AT MILTON, MASSACHUSETTS

2



SECTION THROUGH SITE

The living-room was placed on the top floor, because it was the only possible place from which a view over the adjacent houses could be obtained. The owner is a musician who wanted a large living-room for occasional private recitals. The terrace over the bedrooms takes the place of a garden, which on a site of this size is practically impossible to obtain.
The building laws in this part of the country caused considerable difficulty in using wood in this unconventional way. 2, is a view of the terrace looking towards the living-room : 3, a view of the elevation from the street, and, 4, a view of a corner of the living-room, showing the entrance from the stair.



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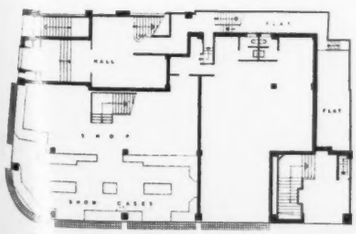
4

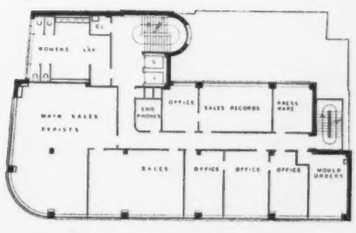
LEICESTER SQUARE: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Leicester Square is a tragic illustration of the decline of town planning standards in the nineteenth century. The fine geometrical quality of the original Square is well illustrated in, 1, a seventeenth-century view of the Square, while the recent view of the demolition of Sir Joshua Reynold's house, 2, shows the completion of the process by which Leicester Square has been transformed into its present state of architectural chaos, 3. The new office block, illustrated in 4 and 5, with its regular fenestration and simple detailing does, however, indicate that architecture is beginning once more to appreciate the need for certain standards of urban design. The form of the block is one which might very well form the starting point for a regular block of buildings along this side of the Square.

5



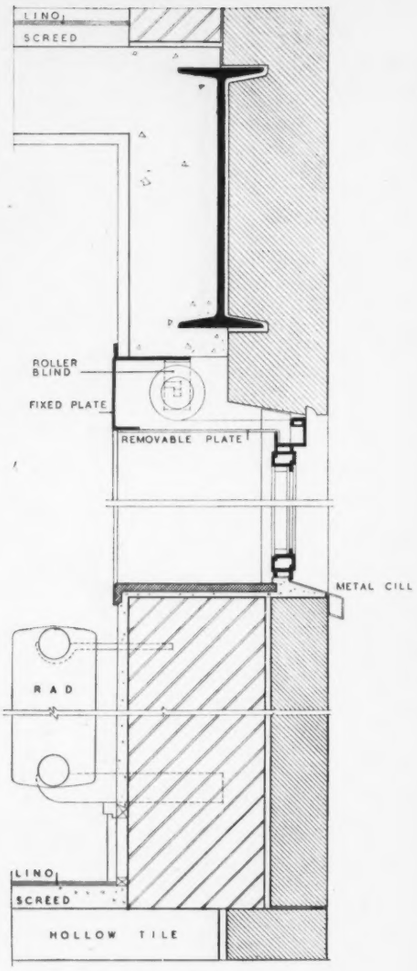
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

WIMPERIS, SIMPSON AND GUTHRIE, ARCHITECTS

OFFICES IN LEICESTER SQUARE

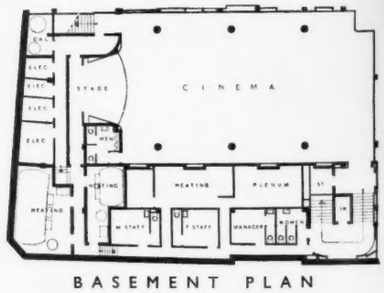


TYPICAL WINDOW SECTION

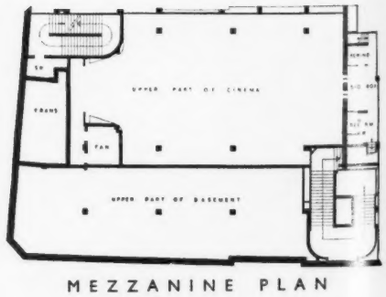
6

7

6 and 7, general views of the exterior. The Portland stone facings are in blocks 2 feet 9 inches square, and with straight joints. The rather unfortunate clock, seen in 6, is not part of the architects' design. The shop-fitting was also not the work of the architects of the building. A return frontage in Leicester Street of 40 feet was allowed, and beyond this the building had to be contained within an angle of one and a half times the width of Leicester Street. This allowed the offices to be placed in one main block 40 feet by approximately 100 feet, and all the services such as lavatories, staircases and lifts to be contained in the remaining portion.



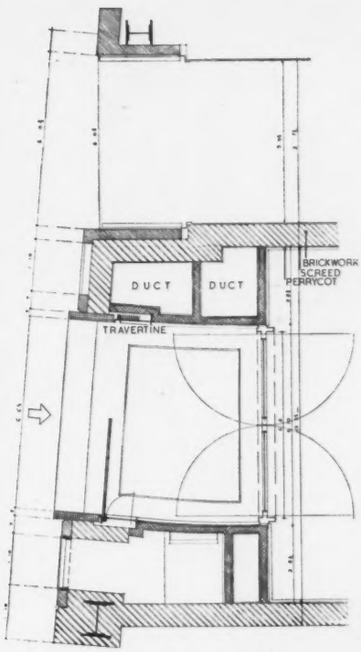
BASEMENT PLAN



MEZZANINE PLAN

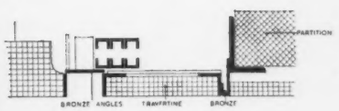
L E I C E S T E R S Q U A R E

8

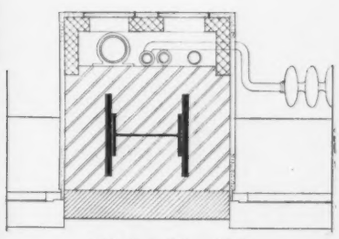


PLAN OF LOBBY

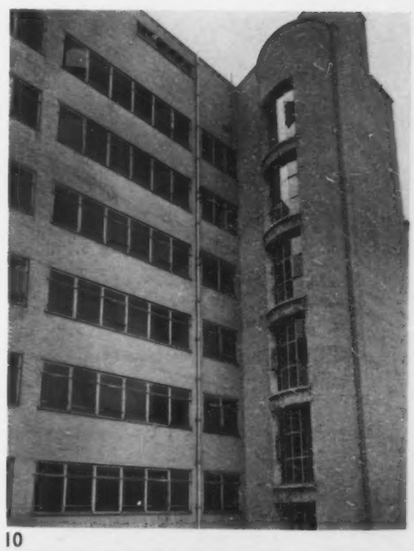
9



DETAIL OF
COLLAPSIBLE GATES



DETAIL OF
EXTERNAL STANCHION

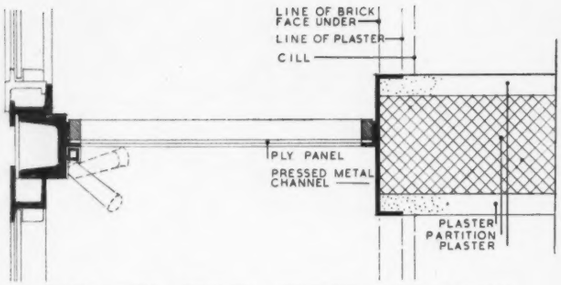


10

11

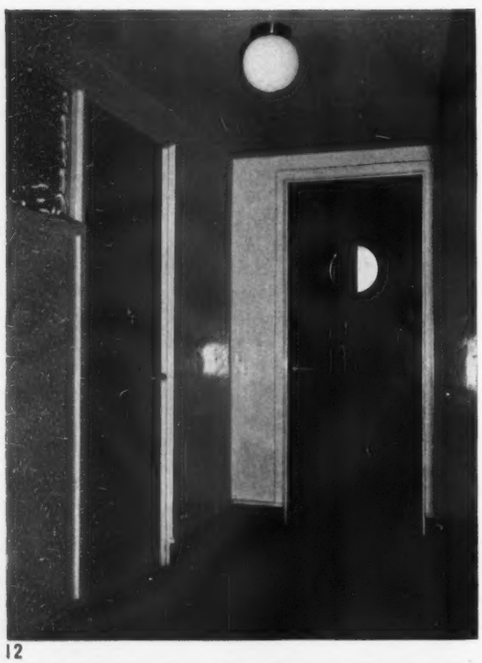
The whole of the upper part of the building is given over to offices for one firm and the ground floor is divided into two shops, except for portions given to entrances and exits to and from the remaining parts of the building. The first floor is used in conjunction with the main shop as a showroom with staffrooms and lavatories. In the basement is a cinema and at the stage end, where the depth is greater, a mezzanine floor was formed to house the Supply Company's transformers. A row of stanchions the whole height of the building were carried at ground and first floor level on compound girders to enable a clear span to be obtained for the auditorium. The main stanchions were set out at approximately 20 feet centres, and each bay was fully glazed to the maximum extent allowable (that is 50 per cent. of the wall area), and divided horizontally into six units of 3 feet 3 inches by compound mullions which allow absolute flexibility in the internal planning. The heating for the whole building is by electrical thermal storage. There is a separate Plenum system for the cinema, the purified air being discharged into the auditorium through concrete ducts under the floor up the side walls and through high level vents. There is a large central extract grille in the ceiling of the auditorium. The fresh air is taken in under the canopy in Leicester Square, and the vitiated air discharged into the area at the rear of the building. This apparatus deals with the staff-rooms and lavatories as well. 8, is a view of the entrance, and, 9, shows the lobby. The wall is finished in 9 inch by 9 inch standard hydraulically pressed tiles laid close joints and bounded by ¼-inch ochre strips in rectangles, three tiles by two tiles. 10, shows the rear of the building. Facing bricks are light grey Hunzikers. The staircase, 11, is in reinforced concrete. Treads, risers and skirting are in situ Travertine Terrazzo.

OFFICES IN LEICESTER SQUARE

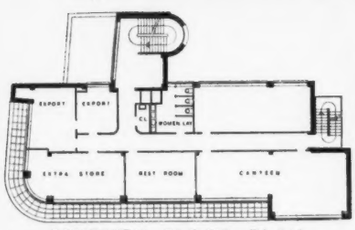


FILLING PIECE BETWEEN WINDOW AND PARTITION

14



12

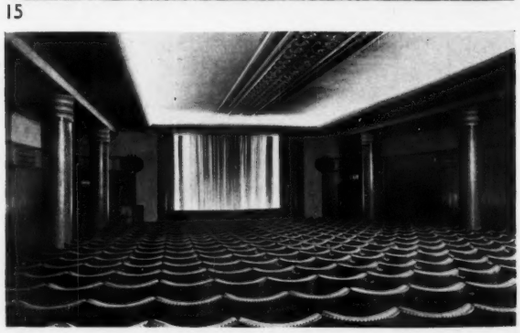


SEVENTH FLOOR PLAN

15

13

16



17

12 and 13, office corridors, showing the neat finish and well-designed door-furniture. The offices, 14, are air-conditioned. The plant is housed on the roof with central vertical fresh air and extract ducts serving branches at each floor which are concealed within a false ceiling in the corridors. Partitions generally are of hollow tile blocks and patent timber removable partitions. Office floors are finished in $\frac{1}{4}$ inch linoleum : corridors in $\frac{3}{16}$ inch rubber. Walls and ceilings are cream cellulose sprayed : high gloss to walls : semi-gloss to ceilings. 17, the cinema in the basement, for which the architect was George Coles. 15, and 16, the staircase.

The World and the Word

FURTHER REFLECTIONS ON THE EXHIBITION OF SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY ART AT BURLINGTON HOUSE

By Francis Watson

DUKE CARL OF ROSENMOLD, that representative German connoisseur of the early eighteenth century described in Pater's *Imaginary Portraits*, was wont to indulge with his court in " long discussions on matters of art—magnificent schemes, from this or that eminent contractor, for spending his money tastefully, distinguishings of the *rococo* and the *baroque*." The satisfaction of expensive tastes is profusely illustrated just now at Burlington House. The long discussions and the distinguishings of style are the privilege, and sometimes the despair, of a profession unknown to Duke Carl of Rosenmold.

It was anticipated that an exhibition such as this might find the critics in some bewilderment. One or two of them, asking " what is baroque? " and receiving either no answer or too many, have frankly confessed themselves at a loss to sum it up. It is a display of styles and tastes rather than of periods and individuals, and even the broad generalizations that were attempted in a previous article must face the condition that, with the single exception of the El Greco from the Royal Palace at Bucharest, all the exhibits are from English collections. It is a century that we are surveying, but it is a century presented to us by particular, if diverse patrons.

But the mirrors and the shadows are there. A large Hoogstraeten, " Perspective of a Corridor " (160), closes us in with its optical examination of domesticity, to be followed in Gallery IX by the boxed and luminous compositions of De Jongh, Metsu and Vermeer, as well as by a De Hooch garden-scene, " The Game of Skittles " (279), which by architectonic elaboration is given almost the value of an interior. At the opposite pole is the brooding pathos of Van Dyck's Italian period. The shadows of his " Ecce Homo " (73) wrap in mystery the sacred head that Carlo Dolci invests with artificial divinity. Only the human body is strongly lit. It is as if the Flemish portrait-painter, the pupil of Rubens and the student of Titian, could trust himself no further.

Van Dyck returned from Genoa to make his way into the English art-histories. In spite of Dobson and Riley, the English rooms at Burlington House are the playground of foreign artists. The native genius was busy in another medium. Inscriptions for pictures—and criticism of this exhibition tends to take that form—are provided in plenty by seventeenth-century poets. For they, like the painters, had the advantage of being unaware that they were adorning a baroque period. With Donne they knew only that the " new philosophy calls all in doubt." It was a restless and distracted age, more urgently concerned even than our own with the problems raised by scientific experiment and free thought. The visible world provided everything but its own explanation. The word that should make all plain was sought in religion and metaphysics, in rhetoric and allegory.

The echoes of the great philosophical disputes of the century can be heard at Burlington House. They are no more than echoes, and must not be treated as arguments. The world is the artist's province, and nominalism inevitably gains ground. But how is he to paint that world? As an assembly of shapes or an assembly of objects, an assembly of ideas or an assembly of symbols?

A cornucopial display of objects is the first impression of the exhibition. Bottles, jars, pans, drums, baskets, peaches, pumpkins, tables, chairs, rumps and noses confound the gaze or draw it conclusively to a single point. The painter's world is full of them. John Tradescant the Younger and his friend Zythepsa of Lambeth, in the picture from the Ashmolean ascribed to Emanuel de Critz (33), stand pleasantly holding hands well over to the right, in order that an important pile of sea-shells may be properly admired —not for their shape or colour, not for any poetic associations, but because they are the pride of Tradescant's " Closet of Rarities " and this is the age of scientific enquiry. In the Caravaggesque " Youth With a Recorder" (230), ascribed to Ludovicus Finsonius, on the other hand, an immense collection of victuals and household objects is disposed about a figure for reasons private to the artist,

1

2

Tumult and tranquility in the treatment of classical themes, demonstrated, 1, *by Rubens in a grisaille design for a salt-cellar, and,* 2, *by Poussin in a drawing for "The Rites of Pan." The movement and sensuality associated with baroque decoration are here contrasted with the intellectual foundations of a long academic tradition.*

to break up the spiral flow of light and give volatility to the pattern. In the same room Pereda's "Allegory of Repentance" (226), with elementary symbolism, mingles jewels, a vase of roses, and discarded property in the manner most effective to its didactic purpose, while in numbers of paintings in the Dutch rooms the object presents itself under other pretexts. So secure, indeed, is the dominance of the physical that the religious revival turns to it with confidence. Domenico Fetti's "Parable of the Mote and the Beam" (295) is so extreme an example of literal interpretation as to hover dangerously near the comic.

3

A Fleming paints Christ in Italy, not with the candour of his predecessors but in the dramatic light and shade of the Counter-Reformation. Van Dyck's "Ecce Homo."

Offering their worldly services to dogma of one sort or another, prepared to make the word flesh with all the resources at their command, the artists seem also to strive here and there to pass through concrete forms towards abstractions of their own. The spectator's pursuit of objects, which pauses in awe before the single lemon in the lap of Peg Hughes (Lely, 41) no less than before the prodigious green-grocery of Ruoppolo's "Still Life" (222), may be paralleled by a stalking of shapes. The pyramid and the truncated cone offer a common fascination, whether they be found in the geometrical arrangements of Teniers' foregrounds, in the details of architecture which are the study of every nation, or in the fall of a cloth over the corner of a table. That pictures gain by having holes in them was recognized no less clearly in the seventeenth century than by Mr. Ben Nicholson in the twentieth. Abrupt recession is used romantically by Claude with his pierced rock on the right of "Perseus and the Legend of Coral" (287), and architecturally in the perspective of a corridor. It is repeated in similar terms in works as various as Pereda's "Allegory of Repentance" already mentioned, Guido Reni's "Cardinal Roberto Ubaldini" (282), and the two Mytens' portraits of the Earl and Countess of Arundel in their sculpture- and picture-galleries (2 and 28).*

There is further a philosophical conflict between the directly sensual appeal of movement and the classical quality of repose that formed the basis of a great academic tradition. Movement, immediate and unresolved, is usually spoken of as an attribute of the baroque manner of Rubens. In the grisaille sketch for a salt-cellar depicting the sea-born Venus and her attendants (54) it is as triumphant as in any of the larger works. The strong impulse towards the left that appears in the sketch would be continued round the whole body of the vessel, but it would never be concluded. How different are the dancing figures of Poussin's drawing for "The Rites of Pan" (524). Disciplined by thought, the composition is motionless. Lines from the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" come immediately to mind, and one remembers that a French critic has praised the "silence" of Poussin. "O mens!" Gassendi is reported to have cried in reproach to Descartes, and "O caro!" came the no less critical reply. The exchange might have been made between Rubens and Poussin.

* That of the Earl of Arundel was reproduced in the January issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW as by Van Somer, as was previously thought. In the Burlington House Catalogue it is ascribed to Mytens.

Two aspects of a turbulent age are seen in "The Temple of Janus," ascribed to the Venetian Francesco Maffei, wherein the figures of the Furies are arrested as in a cinema "still"; and in the delicate grotesques of a great etcher, Jacques Callot, whose documentary frieze of gipsies following an army is here interpreted in oil, probably by his own hand.

"The Visible World" was the title of a treatise by the scholarly Dutch painter Samuel van Hoogstraeten, who justifies his preoccupation with the subject in this optical "peep-show" of domesticity, a nine feet high "Perspective of a Corridor." With Fabritius and De Hooch he prepared the way for Vermeer's "boxes of light."

The contrast is seen again in two of the few pictures in the exhibition which have reference to the persistent warfare of the age. " The Temple of Janus " (296) formerly ascribed to Salvator Rosa but here to Francesco Maffei, uses a startling technique which is nothing less than cinematic. It is an angle-shot of the Furies of War rushing over some steps from the temple into an empty and mysterious background. The picture is full of wind, and prophecy, and agitation. But the vagabonds in Callot's fantastic procession in the Spanish room (223), the gaunt camp-followers of the great armies of the century, are quietly and meticulously stated in a frieze that excites neither anxiety nor horror but only a curious interest.

Nowhere better than in the landscapes of which this age was so prodigal can the dividing streams of interpretation be studied. For here we have the ancestors both of the academies and the rebels. Claude and Gaspard Poussin and the Italian eclectics give us landscape as distinct from country, and so profound was their influence that in the early nineteenth century nature was frequently criticized for failing to reach their picturesque standards. Yet even to the schools of Rome Northern artists brought something of their familiar affection for nature unadorned. Paul Brill, who achieved a great reputation in Rome at the beginning of the century, gives us in his " View on the Danube " (63) a landscape which is certainly arranged according to acceptable rules and yet preserves the minute observation of his predecessor Patinir. Everdingen, who had travelled in Norway, presents a " Castle in a Rocky Landscape " (205) which is not yet the Castle of Otranto but, nevertheless, introduces a strong romantic strain. The growing tradition of a brownish foreground and a blueish background

4

5

6

Objects of every kind, whether as possessions, symbols or mere forms, crowd the paintings of the century. John Tradescant's collection of shells is so stimulating to scientific curiosity as to " steal the picture " of himself and his friend Zythepsa ascribed to Emanuel de Critz, 4, while in the " Youth With a Recorder," of the school of Caravaggio, 5, a profusion of objects serves an aesthetic purpose, and in Pereda's " Allegory of Repentance," 6, a didactic one.

7

One of the finest of eclectic " landscapes with figures," Claude's " Perseus," 7, is notable for the romantic use of abrupt recession in the rocky opening to the right, to be compared with the "hole" provided by the corridor to the left of Pereda's " Allegory," 6.

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11

The conflict of the naturalistic with the picturesque treatment of landscape may be observed even in the work of Paul Brill, whose "View on the Danube," 8, in spite of a tree on the left such as haunted correct composition until the revolt of Constable, treats the scene with the affectionate detail of a Patinir or an early Flemish miniature. The romantic associations of his travels in Norway give Everdingen's "Castle in a Rocky Landscape," 9, a special quality, and the freedom of marine painting such as Van de Capelle's "Shipping on a Ruffled Sea," 10, encourages the development of a straight horizon and a wide sky painted for its own sake, as in Ruysdael's magnificent "Coup de Soleil," 11.

is diverted in this picture by the great height of the foremost plane. Or there is Van de Capelle, whose "Shipping on a Ruffled Sea" (197) displays such liberty of sentiment that it was excluded from the Dutch Exhibition of a few years ago as being by an anonymous and much later hand. And, finally, in Ruysdael's "Coup de Soleil" (254), the impulse towards naturalism shakes itself free. The huge sky comes into its own. It is no longer heaven, nor is it the backcloth to a theatrically arranged composition. It is the changing arena of rain and wind and sun, and the horizon that divides it from the earth runs boldly across the canvas with no attempt to be picturesque. There is a certain tinge of melancholy in this picture, as in so many of Ruysdael's greatest. His business was the world, and at length the East Anglian landscape painters followed him. But for long they hankered after the word, the carefully learned rule and the comfortable dogma.

FLATS

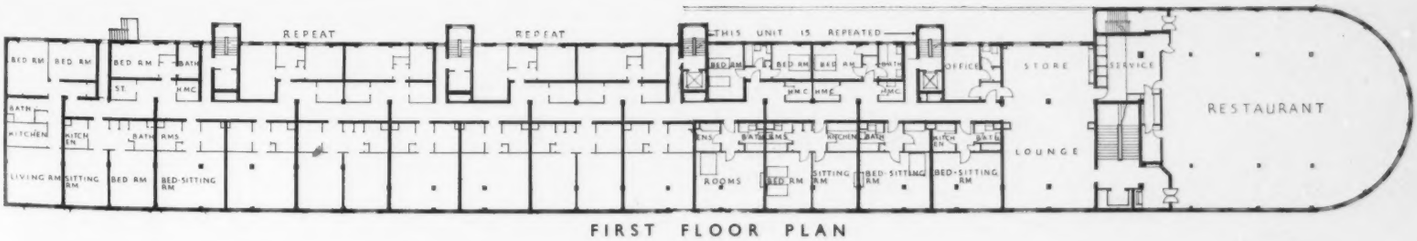
DALGLIESH AND PULLEN

1

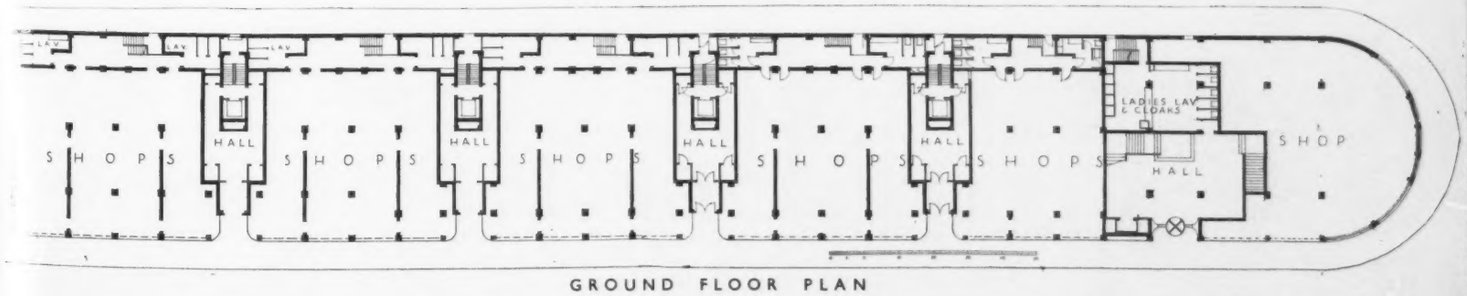
2

THE SITE The Marina, St. Leonards-on-Sea. The building comprises a block of flats, with shops on the ground floor : restaurants on the first and second floors, east end : and a tea lounge on the fourth floor, east end : the smallest flats consist of a bed-sitting room, bathroom and kitchen ; the largest have a sitting-room, dining-room, four bedrooms, bathroom and kitchen. All the flats above the second floor have balconies overlooking the sea, and on the thirteenth floor is a promenade deck for the use of the tenants.

THE VIEWS ILLUSTRATED 1 and 2, views of the main front, taken in opposite directions.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

FLATS

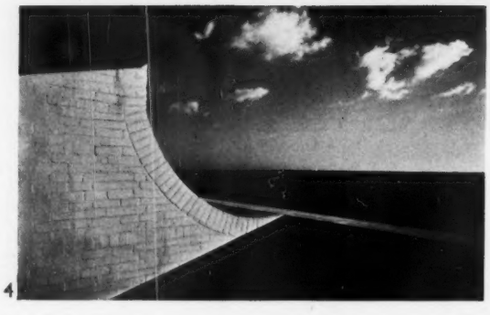
DALGLIESH AND PULLEN

PLANNING Owing to the narrowness of the site the building had to be planned vertically. Above the second floor the plan consists of four separate entities, each served by lifts and staircases. Every flat has a southern aspect and a view of the sea.

STRUCTURE AND MATERIALS Steel frame, with vertical lattice framing to resist the wind pressure, due to the great height and narrowness of the building and its exposed position. External walls are 11 in. brick cavity; roofs reinforced concrete finished with tiles; floors, hollow block; internal walls and partitions, breeze. The elevations are in golden stock facing bricks and the balcony fronts in reinforced concrete. The windows are metal casements.

THE VIEWS ILLUSTRATED 3, the promenade deck on the thirteenth floor. 4, view from one of the balconies. 5, the combined dining-room and lounge in one of the flats.

3



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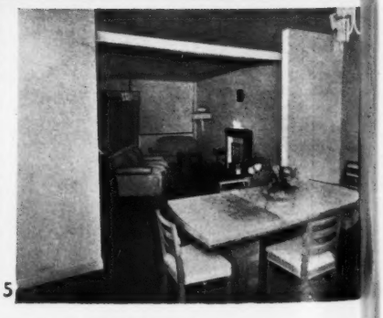

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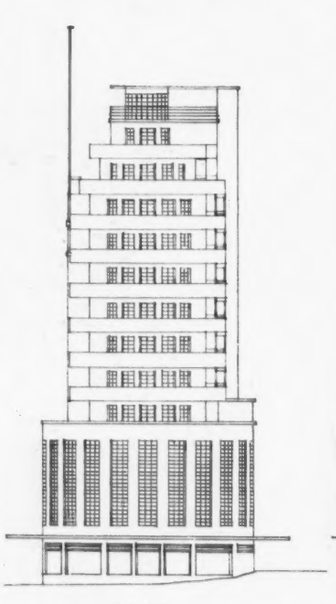
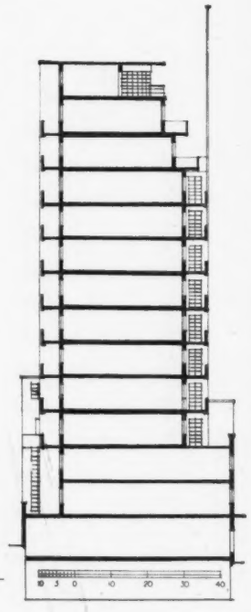
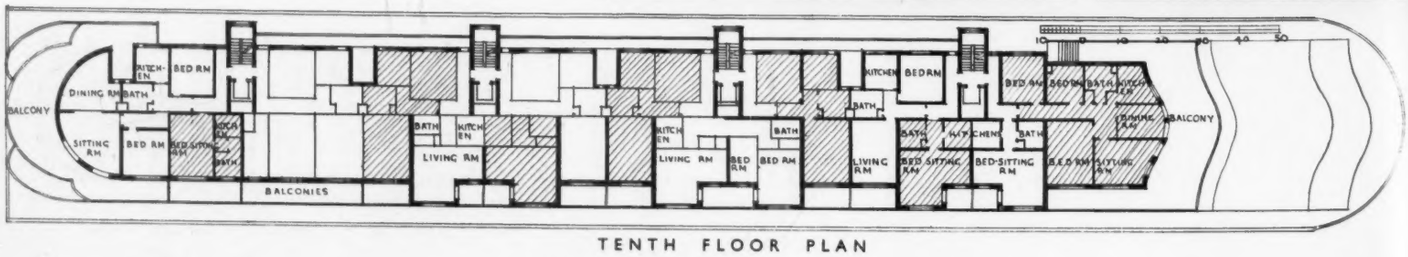


EAST ELEVATION



SECTION



TENTH FLOOR PLAN

HOSPITALS
1

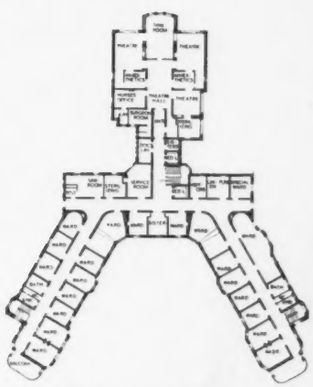
THOMAS WORTHINGTON AND SONS

THE SITE Upper Brook Street and Lorne Street, Manchester. The building is a new Home for paying patients added to the Manchester Royal Infirmary. It has been built on the site of the old cancer hospital, originally a private house standing in a large garden and situated on the eastern side of the Royal Infirmary. Its approach is through a large forecourt which accommodates about a hundred cars, and also gives access to an ambulance entrance on the east side. A covered way provides connection with the Infirmary and keeps the Home in touch with the specialized surgical and medical services of the main Hospital.

PLANNING The majority of the 100 rooms for 100 patients are placed on four floors on the internal sides of the sloping wings. Most of these are 12 ft. by 11 ft., but on each floor there are larger ones of various sizes, with proportionate rentals, and also a ward containing four beds. The two wings are connected by a cross corridor on each floor, on the south side of which there are wards and the sisters' room, centrally situated : on the north side of this corridor are placed all the service rooms for sterilizing, sinks, testing, linen and visitors' rooms, and a central service room connected by lifts with the kitchens for the issue of meals to the patients' rooms. The main entrance is at the north end and opens into a reception hall with various administrative rooms adjoining. At the focal point where the administration corridor joins that of the patients'

[Continued on page 78]

THE VIEWS ILLUSTRATED 1, private patients' wing, showing balconies. 2, general view of the private patients' wing from the south. 3, the entrance hall. 4, sterilizing equipment.



TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN

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HOSPITALS
1

THOMAS WORTHINGTON AND SONS

[Continued from page 77]

PLANNING quarters are the main staircase and two lifts each large enough to take a bed and attendants. These give access to the various floors ; to the first floor where the kitchen and all its ancillary rooms are placed, connected by lifts with the service rooms on the various levels ; to the second floor where is the X-ray department ; and up again to the operating theatres. This unit consists of a central tiled hall out of which open three theatres with their subsidiary rooms.

MATERIALS AND STRUCTURE Solid brick walls and fireproof floors. The floor finishes are of teak blocks and the corridors are covered with linoleum on cork to prevent disturbing noises from the traffic along them. Red bricks of a warm colour are used externally, varied with dressings of a rather lighter tint and a very limited amount of Portland stone at special points.

EQUIPMENT AND FINISHES The two main operating theatres have a common sterilizing and sink room. They have large north lights, walls faced with light green tiles and green terrazzo floors. The third and smaller theatre is lined with black tiles and can be completely darkened. Between the theatre floor and the ceiling of the kitchen below is a space five feet high, in which are run all the piping and services for the theatres and numerous ventilation ducts, and where apparatus for the X-ray department is housed. This space is very convenient and accessible for engineering attention. Throughout this unit ventilation is operated by fans controlled in the rooms. The heating of the theatres is effected by steam-heated ventilating panels with oil air filters, to enable the temperature to be raised very quickly. The heating and domestic hot water services are supplied from the general Infirmary boiler-house. The latter are carried in accessible ducts in the corridors with direct connections to wall panels coloured with the walls. In the individual rooms and the main circulations for heating, hot water and electricity are carried in a six feet high subway in the basement from which they rise direct to the subsidiary circulations and points on the various floors.

THE VIEWS ILLUSTRATED 5, the black operating theatre. 6, theatre sterilizing room. 7, a ward sterilizing room. 8, a kitchen.

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HOSPITALS 2

THOMAS WORTHINGTON AND SONS

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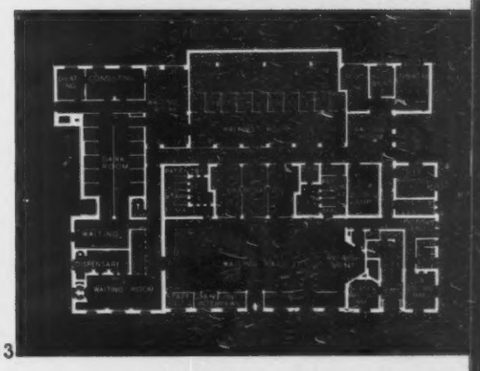
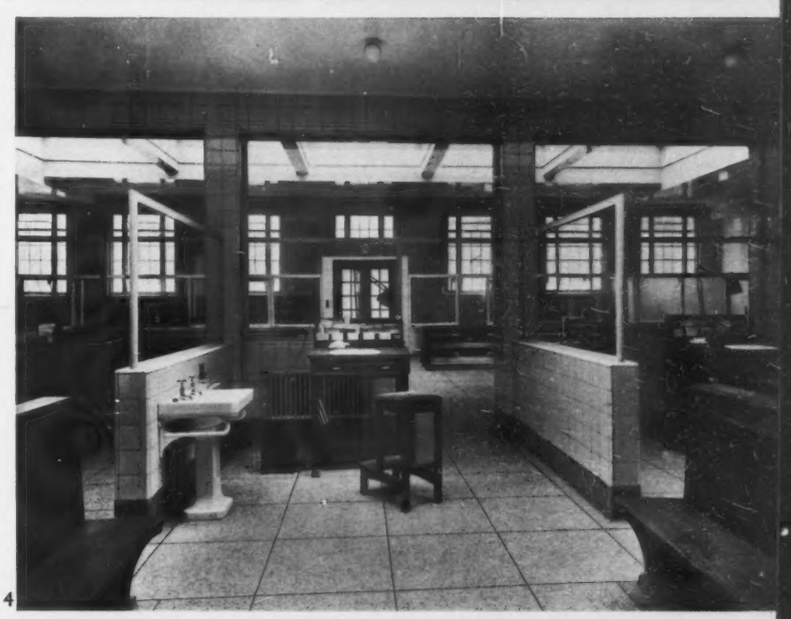


3

THE SITE Nelson Street, Manchester. The new buildings comprise a new out-patients' department for the Manchester Royal Eye Hospital, with a nurses' and maids' home over. The out-patients' department is one of the busiest in England, and sometimes deals with 700 patients in a morning.

PLANNING The entrance is in the centre of the Nelson Street façade and opens on to a large waiting hall, with record and receiving offices on either side and a refreshment buffet at the end. Facing are three examination rooms from which the patients pass to 10 eye-washing cubicles, and on to consulting rooms, dark rooms, dispensary and spectacle room to the exit in the side street. The slit lamp rooms, eye-washing rooms, theatre and accident rooms are grouped in the eastern wing. The entrance to the nurses' home is at the eastern end of the Nelson Street front. There are common rooms to supplement others in the main hospital. There are bedrooms for nine sisters, fifty-one nurses and thirty-four maids. The form of plan, recessed round the waiting hall, gives a fine roof garden and enables a maximum of bedrooms to face south-east and west and to be set back from the street for quiet.



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STRUCTURE AND MATERIALS The building is of steel frame construction up to first floor level: solid brickwork above. It is faced externally with red sand-faced bricks.

EQUIPMENT AND FINISHES Each nurse's bedroom is fitted with a lavatory basin and a cupboard fitting. Heating is by low pressure hot water system, with radiant panels in the ground floor rooms.

THE VIEWS ILLUSTRATED 1, general view of south front from Nelson Street. 2, central corridor with eye-testing cubicles on left, examination rooms on right. 3, ground floor plan. 4, examination room to out-patients' hall. 5, eye-testing cubicles.

5

SHOWROOMS

FARMER AND DARK

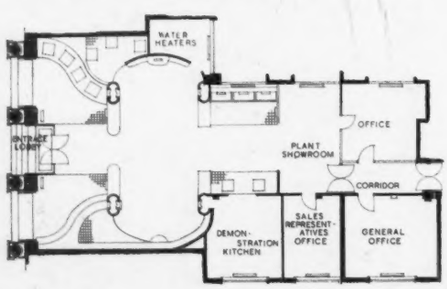
THE SITE Kingsway, London. This is not an electricity showroom in the ordinary sense, but a "model house" to display the particular range of equipment only made by the English Electric Company. The Company, being makers of domestic electrical equipment but not of electric light fittings, the architects have made a feature of lighting the showroom in such a way that the lighting becomes an integral part of the design.

PLANNING The plan provides for a "plant showroom" for small electrical switch and motor gear, a demonstration kitchen, and a suite of offices. The showroom itself is as open as possible, and only divided into bay shapes to a height of 3 ft. 6 in. in order to display electric fires and other small equipment, such as cookers and washing machines.

STRUCTURE AND MATERIALS Non-reflecting windows without enclosures have been used for the two openings on either side of the central entrance, in order that the showroom may be completely open to the public view. The wall displays for fires are in panels of black glass divided by semi-parabolic pilasters covered in white mirror glass, with a projecting shelf over, edged with mirror glass and having concealed lighting under. The brick fireplace is in 1 in. Roman bricks with 1 in. joints.

EQUIPMENT AND FINISHES The two long side walls of the showroom are a pale yellow which is carried over the ceiling in parts and reflects the plan shapes. The remainder of the ceiling and the end walls are in a warm grey. Part of the extreme end wall, opposite the entrance, is in large sheets of mirror reflecting the full length of the room. The large "light" columns are turquoise, as is the furniture upholstery, and the circle in the carpet. The main area of the carpet is the same yellow as the walls, broken with bands of nigger. The floor on either side of the carpet space is in blocks of blackwood, walnut and oak. The whole of the furniture is in macassar ebony.

THE VIEWS ILLUSTRATED 1, the exterior. 2, general view of the interior from the entrance. 3, view looking towards the street. 4, view of brick fireplace. On the right is the entrance to the water-heater room; on the left the section for electric washers, etc.



PLAN

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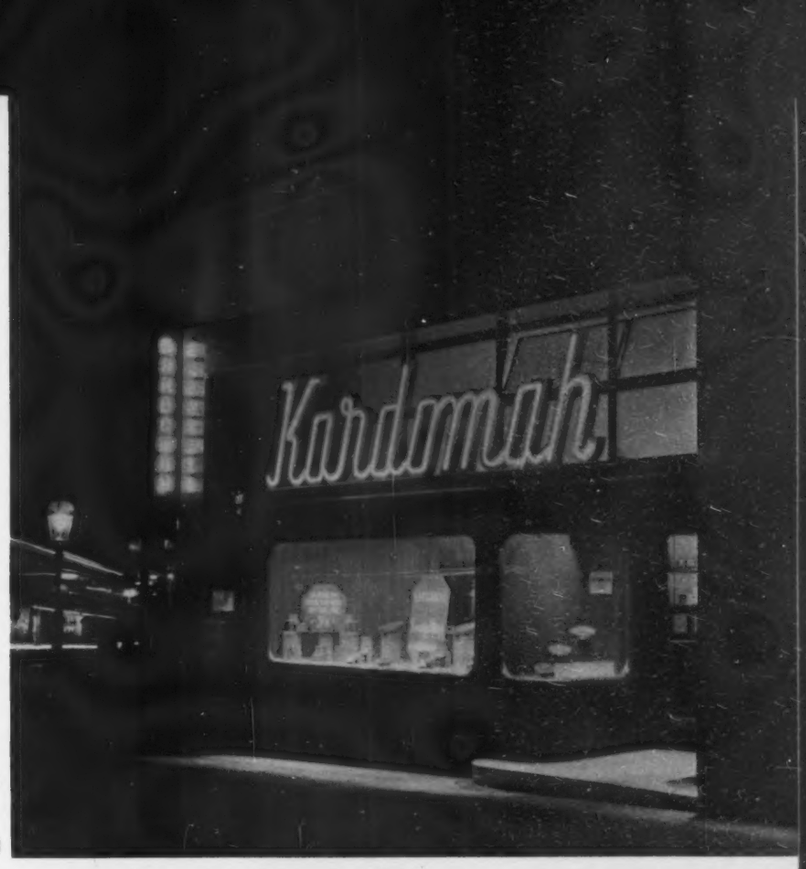
RESTAURANTS

MISHA BLACK AND
WALTER LANDAUER



1

THE SITE

Colmore Row, Birmingham. The café illustrated on this page is an addition to the chain of Kardomah Cafés, of which there are some thirty in London and provincial towns. On page 82 are illustrations of two more of these cafés, in Knightsbridge, London, and in Market Street, Manchester.

STRUCTURE AND MATERIALS

A style has been formulated which is being adhered to, in principle, throughout the whole series of new and converted cafés. It is not intended, however, that each branch should be a slavish repetition of the others, but only that the same materials should be utilized and the main idea adhered to of obtaining an atmosphere which by the use of teak, mahogany and similar materials, should retain a certain coffee-house character.

EQUIPMENT AND FINISHES

The vertical sign on the exterior of the Colmore Row café is of opal tube containing red " Neon " and the larger sign built up from sheet metal painted white with opal " Neon " tube inset. Access to the window is by means of a roller shutter. This shutter is of Honduras mahogany, and has been arranged so that it is possible to see from the street through the window into the shop itself when this is desired. The lettering in the interior is of steel tube cellulosed, fastened $\frac{1}{2}$ in. from the mahogany panelling by distance pieces.

THE VIEWS ILLUSTRATED

1, general view of the shop front by night. 2, detail showing the treatment of the signs. 3, rear view of window showing roller-shutter background. 4, corner of basement café showing treatment of lettering, handles and hat and coat stands. 5, the carving, " The Mandarin " at the far end of the ground floor. It was executed by Richard Huws. 6, detail of staircase to basement.

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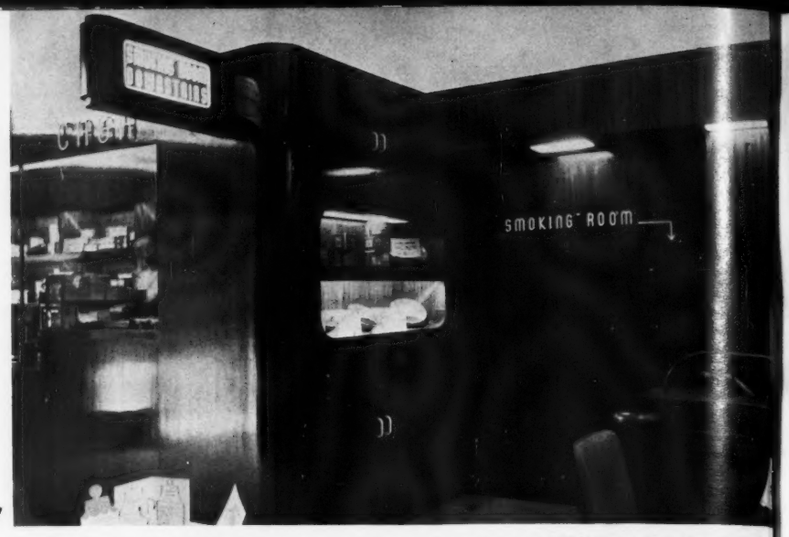
RESTAURANTS

MISHA BLACK AND
WALTER LANDAUER



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THE VIEWS ILLUSTRATED

7, the Colmore Row, Birmingham, café: a view of the top of the staircase of the basement café. The illuminated sign is formed of a panel of gun-metal mirrored glass and flashed opal backed letters to link up with the illuminated plaques. 8, the front of the Knightsbridge café: it is built of solid teak throughout. The flashed opal "Neon" tube sign is as legible when it is not illuminated as when it is. 9, the Market Street, Manchester, café: the illuminated showcases with store cupboards under, at the top of the staircase. 10, Market Street, Manchester: a general interior view. The woodwork throughout is of Honduras mahogany, the upholstery being in red leather. The tables are topped with buff tiles, held with a special bronze frame. The floor covering is of steel blue synthetic cork, relieved by thin strips in cream. The illuminated plaques are of gun-metal mirror with the design cut away, and backed with white flashed opal glass.

9

10

SAINT SIMEON THE STYLITE

"The oppressive naturalism to be seen in the temples of Baalbek gave place to a respectful compromise with the austerity of the material." A detail from the Church of St. Simeon.

By Arthur Lane

SYRIA is a country that abounds in building-stone, and the great monuments of Baalbek and Palmyra bear witness to the exuberant originality of their pagan architects. The official recognition of Christianity here coincided with the rise of the monastic system, and the site of a new shrine might depend on the whim of a single hermit or a group determined to escape from the world. The basilica-plan almost universally adopted meant a break with tradition, though the semi-circular apse can be regarded as an enlargement of the Roman exedra. Richly carved decoration persisted in a land where opulence of that kind had been the rule, but the oppressive naturalism to be seen in the pagan temples of Baalbek gave place to a respectful compromise with the austerity of the material. Capitals, based on the Corinthian, become stiff and stylized, friezes stand out in flat silhouette from a pierced ground. Most characteristic of all are the broad mouldings which form a continuous string-course round the outer walls or follow, in vigorous curves, the arches of door and window. Judged from photographs, these buildings may appear barbarous and domineering, but in their wild surroundings they were conceived with a perfect sense of fitness.

The monastic institution, with which the Syrian churches are so intimately connected, arose in Egypt with St. Anthony of Thebes. Retiring to the desert, he pursued a life of contemplation and devotion uncheered by the barest comforts of social intercourse; a credulous people saw genius in his eccentricity, and his prestige attracted the respectful notice of the Emperor Constantine himself. But the régime of Anthony and the Egyptian anchorets would appear reasonable beside those devised in neighbouring countries. The defection of the heathen persecutor had closed the road to martyrdom, but an alternative route was found in a slow immolation self-imposed. The divine sense of guilt might express itself in curious ways, as with the *Boskoi*, or pasturing monks, of Mesopotamia, who grazed the meadows in a land that has since become barren. St. Thaleleus of Syria spent more than ten years coiled up in a drum-shaped cage, while St. Salamanes of Capersana lived in a burrow underground and was only dug up once a year to be fed. Near Apamea a holy *dendrite* occupied the upper branches of a cypress tree, from which he was repeatedly dislodged by a demon, to be piously replaced by the villagers until an angel relieved them of the need. Yet however outrageous these excesses, they were accepted as signs of grace by the laity, who never failed to encourage and support the " men of God." The latter won the spiritual ascendancy of saint-hood during their lifetime, and, with the peculiar authority of their condition, dispensed ghostly and practical advice to the innumerable pilgrims who came to ask for it.

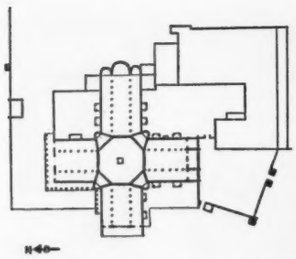
St. Simeon. The Chapel and Pilgrims' Lodging in the South-Eastern Monastery.

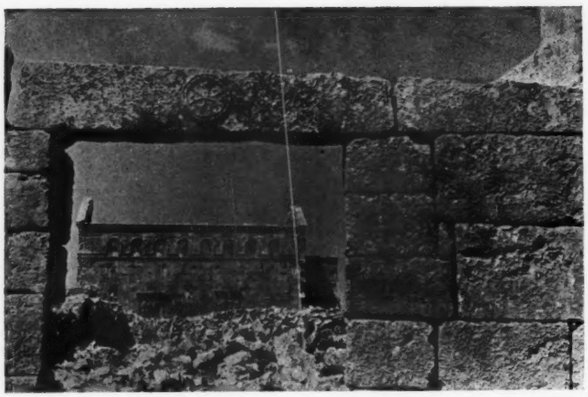
Of all the ascetics, none achieved greater fame than St. Simeon. His life was sympathetically recorded by Theodoretus, a contemporary, but in England Gibbon has had the last word :—

" Among these heroes of the monastic life, the name and genius of Simeon Stylites have been immortalized by the singular invention of an aerial penance. At the age of thirteen, the young Syrian deserted the profession of a shepherd and threw himself into an austere monastery. After a long and painful novitiate, in which Simeon was repeatedly saved from pious suicide, he established his residence on a mountain about thirty or forty miles to the east of Antioch. Within the space of a *mandra*, or circle of stones, to which he had attached himself by a ponderous chain, he ascended a column, which was successively raised from the height of nine, to that of sixty, feet from the ground. In this last and lofty station, the Syrian anchoret resisted the heat of thirty summers, and the cold of as many winters. Habit and exercise instructed him to maintain his dangerous situation without fear or giddiness, and successively to assume the different postures of devotion. He sometimes prayed in an erect attitude with his outstretched arms in the figure of a cross; but his most familiar practice was that of bending his meagre skeleton from the forehead to the feet; and a curious spectator, after numbering twelve hundred and forty-four repetitions, at length desisted from the endless account. The progress of an ulcer in the thigh might shorten, but it could not disturb, this *celestial* life ; and the patient hermit expired without descending from his column."

From a literary point of view, it is perhaps a pity that comparative theology had not in Gibbon's time advanced so far that he could make use of a suggestion, best expounded by Monsieur J. Toutain, which calls even the originality of Simeon into question. A passage in the Pseudo-Lucian, describing a shrine of the pagan goddess of Syria near Antioch, relates that in the courtyard of the temple stood several immense stone *phalloi*, about fifty-two metres in height. Once yearly a man ascended to the top of one of these, using a belt like the natives who climb palm-trees, and spent seven days and nights aloft in communion with the goddess. The idea that Simeon's penance was thus a survival of pagan ritual has been very properly refuted by Father Hippolyte Delehaye, the learned Bollandist. There were, indeed, in Simeon's own time, detractors who found something ostentatious and reprehensible in his way of life, but, on the occasion of a church conference at Antioch, the chief archimandrites of the Near East, making an excursion to the shrine, found their critical attitude dissolve into admiration before the humility and personal charm of the saint. The time not reserved for prayer he spent in receiving pilgrims, and many were the hearts gladdened by words of shrewd counsel delivered from the top of the column, while beneficiaries of his miraculous gift of healing carried his fame throughout the Christian world. When he died in 459 A.D., after spending thirty-seven of his seventy years on the column, even the Saracens rode in from the desert hoping to gain possession of his honoured remains, but they had been forestalled by seven bishops and the Antioch militia. A grateful people at once began to build, on the site of his penance, a church which was to be the most magnificent in Syria.

Kalaat Seman, so-called by the Arabs, occupies a plateau some sixteen miles north of the Aleppo-Antioch road, eight miles from the nearest modern village. The great church, with the monastic buildings grouped round it, dominates a plain thickly strewn with the settlements called into being by pilgrims to the shrine. No less than three large monasteries, with chapels surrounded by hotels for the pilgrims, lie at the foot of the plateau occupied by the church. The chapels are of the basilica type, with an apse at the east end, and a pedimental façade at the west. The hotels consist mostly of a large central hall with solid walls surrounded by external colonnades in two storeys; the shafts, square monoliths stood on end, without capitals, give them the appearance of having been constructed from a box of gigantic toy bricks. The great church itself shows the culmination of a whole school, and is by far the most ambitious





Above, the plan of the church of St. Simeon. Four three-aisled basilicas are focused on the central feature, the column of St. Simeon. Right, the chapel of the southern monastery.

Christian monument which survives from the years preceding the erection of Haghia Sophia at Constantinople. Its plan is cruciform, with an octagonal space twenty-eight metres across and open to the sky at the crossing; from this radiate the four arms, each a basilica with three aisles. The eastern arm is the longest, with nine bays ending in a triple apse; the others have seven bays and square ends. The western arm runs out over the edge of the plateau and most of it rests on a substructure of arches; at the end of the southern arm, the chief approach, is an external narthex entered by a great central archway which runs far up into the pediment above it, and by two smaller arches, each crowned with a complete pediment. The narthex is a later addition to the original church, for the stones are not bonded in and the builders did not even trouble to smooth off the mouldings of the façade at the points where the narthex walls joined on. The reentrant angles of the crossing are occupied by small apsidal chapels aligned with the diagonal arches of the central octagon. Of the nave arcades, nothing is left but tumbled fragments, though enough to show that columns with elaborate capitals supported great arches, richly moulded like those of the octagon, above which rose a clerestory, with colonnettes on corbels between the windows to support the joists of a wooden roof.

The whole plan of this vast building—which measures a hundred metres by eighty-eight along the two members of the cross—is subordinated to the column of St. Simeon, whose base can still be seen in the centre of the octagon. When the church was still complete, the effect for those looking down the dark tunnel of the basilica towards the column, lit by the full blaze of a Syrian sun, must have been one of extraordinary drama. The building was raised after the death of the saint in 459, for the biographies make no mention of it, and without its occupant the column gained the portentous quality of a symbol. All around opened the cavernous aisles of the four churches, framed by rich mouldings and pink marble columns with wind-swept capitals; the luxuriant ornament of carved stone ran back into the shadow and reached a climax in the broad frieze which encircled the eastern apse. There were no wall-mosaics, and though faint traces of painting survive, it seems clear that the church relied for its effect on purely architectural means. Massive rectangular blocks of limestone, hewn from the rock on which the church was built, stress the horizontal lines of the walls, and a richly moulded cornice acts as a string-course running round the whole building, broken only by the doors. The lintels are relieved by arched openings above, and over these and the round-headed windows run deep arch-mouldings, which return continuously from one window to the next, or coil into a scroll end. As a result what might have been a bleak, forbidding mass of grey stone is enlivened by vigorous ornament that emphasizes the main features of the building. Most interesting is the external treatment of the chief apse. The curved wall-face is carried up to the level of the top of the half-dome, this being invisible from outside.

The scheme foreshadows the Romanesque apses of western Europe; it is found, in a less elaborate form, in other Syrian churches, and if subsequent development had not been cut short by the Arab conquest, we might have expected to see a true Romanesque style developed in Syria hundreds of years before its emergence elsewhere.

The successful career of Simeon could hardly fail to provoke emulation. In the same district, on a hill between Antioch and the sea, his feats were faithfully copied by another Stylite, a plagiarist even to the name. The younger Simeon died in 592 after spending sixty-nine years on various columns. The natives built him a church, in plan resembling that of his great predecessor, chiefly remarkable for the magnificent basket-capitals, of which many survive. Instead of acanthus leaves, coiling vine-stems spring from the basket, encircling little carved groups of animals and men engaged in hunting or agriculture. Representational sculpture was rare in Syria at this time, and its presence at Mar Seman may have been due to the employment of Coptic workmen from Egypt, where human figures framed in medallions were a popular form of decoration in all branches of art. De Grüneisen has made out a good case for the Egyptian invention of the basket-capital, found in the Coptic churches at Bawit and Saqqara; the form, modified, recurs in Jerusalem at St. Helen's chapel in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and at the El Aksa mosque. With the latter, the Church of St. Simeon the Younger shares another curious architectural feature; thin slabs of marble, carved on the underside with stylized patterns, span the intercolumniations below the springing of the arches. One of these slabs is carved with four angels supporting the labarum, an obvious survival of the winged Victories who hold up a wreath on so many Roman sarcophagi. The rounded Syro-Egyptian basket-capital of the fifth and sixth century, with foliage springing from the basket, should not be confused with the Byzantine form; the latter is usually of inverted pyramid shape and the plaiting continues unbroken up to the level of the abacus. Capitals which conform closely to their Egyptian models, and must be of almost equal antiquity, are found in Italy at Tusculum, Otranto, St. Mark's, Venice, and

Above, "The lintels are relieved by arched openings above, and over these and the 'round-headed windows run deep arch-mouldings, which return continuously from one window to the next, or coil into a scroll end." On the right are two views of St. Simeon: the Octagon, looking north-east, and below, a view of one of the four arms which radiate from it: the eastern arm and apse seen from the south.

San Clemente, Rome; these alone remain to recall an unfulfilled promise, a hope for the west of direct commerce in ideas with the Christian east and the new art which was rising so surely from its Greco-Roman foundations. Islam intervened, converting to its own ends the productive forces of the conquered territories, and the Roman tradition passed as a virtual monopoly into the hands of Byzantium.

Capitals, based on the Corinthian, become stiff and stylized. Above, a capital and cornice inside the Narthex of the Church of St. Simeon. Left, basket-work capitals from the Church of St. Simeon the Younger.

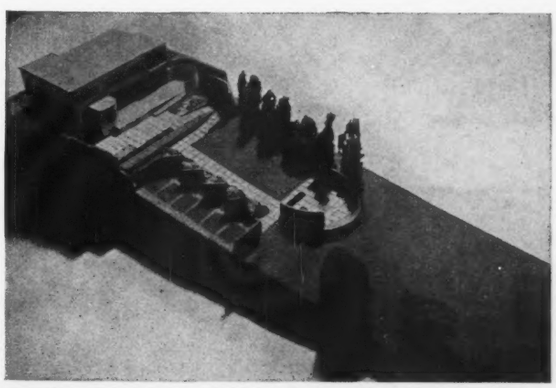
SCIENCE AND SPECIALIZATION

THE CONVENTIONAL GARDEN OF TODAY

BY CHRISTOPHER TUNNARD

THE present-day garden, with the sixpenny novelette, is a last stronghold of romanticism. T. E. Brown's poem, "A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot . . .", which leaves Edith Sitwell "with a feeling of having been hit over the ear, with no excuse and without provocation," is still successfully assailing less sensitive organs than hers. But, as F. L. Lucas has pointed out in "*The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal*," science is destroying the Dryad. The fairy ring has proved to be the work, not of fairies, but of fungi; and though science has restored in some measure that which she has taken away by giving us a new and more substantial mythology, she is being beneficially ruthless with the old methods and styles. Just as the design of the locomotive, the aeroplane, and, for that matter, the modern house, is being changed by scientific invention, in a similar way science will transform the garden of the future. The latter must necessarily be influenced by new materials and their methods of application, for example, by plant importation and hybridization, and the amelioration of soil and weather conditions. One of the chief results of applied science in this field has been to reduce the size of the purely utilitarian sections of the plan. New methods of intercropping (adapted from those of France and Holland) and new prolific yet compact and disease-resisting varieties of vegetables have helped in this process; in the orchard, experiments with dwarfing stocks now enable twice the number of apple trees to be planted in a given area to produce fruit in half the time that our grandfathers had to wait before obtaining crops of equal quantity. And who except the connoisseur will now plant varieties of apples and pears to keep up supplies for the table from August to May knowing that from overseas comes fruit as fine if not finer than his own carefully wrapped and stored specimens? Heaven forbid that the apple, pear or peach should ever disappear from our gardens, but experiments with gas storage and speedier transport may yet reduce the cultivation of the English kitchen garden to an occupation for epicures, and its area to the size of a pocket handkerchief. Similarly, economic necessity has reduced the size of gardens as a whole; an example of this is the splitting up of large estates into small units for building development; these in turn become specialist plots, where the cultivation of the newest varieties is pursued with an eye to triumphs at the flower show. Thus, since the 'nineties, when the flower itself took the place of the flower garden in the popular imagination, we have all become gardening specialists;*—proportion, line and balance of colour and form have on the whole little interest for us; we are preoccupied instead with soil, aspect and irrigation. In this manner the rise of scientific horticulture has involved the partial eclipse of garden planning.

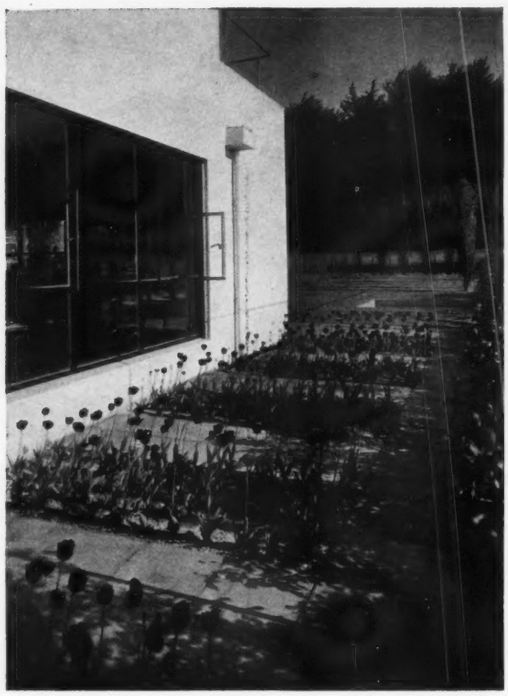
Planning goes on, of course, but in what fashion? A great deal of thought and ingenuity is put into the making of rock gardens, those hybrids which derive partly from the 18th-century grotto and partly from the Japanese Hill Garden, but which nowadays are planned from studies of natural Alpine formations. These grotesques call for skill in their creation, but, being entirely representational, contribute nothing to art.* We are not yet in possession of the artistic integrity which might enable us with equanimity to use rocks in the manner of the Japanese, nor, apparently, are we blessed with the imagination of a Pope, who decorated his grotto with shells and sparkling stones for their intrinsic beauty and associative qualities. So awed are we by nature that, were it suggested to us, we should be afraid to use a shell as decoration in the garden because such an object is not typical of

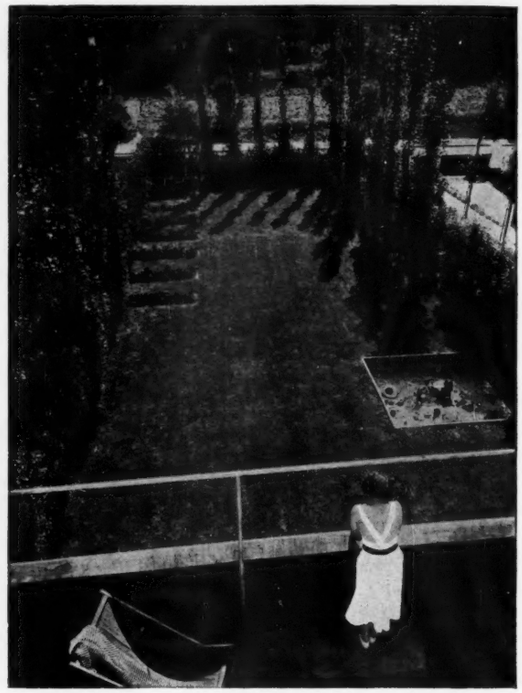


A garden at Liedekerke, Belgium, designed by Jean Canneel-Claes. The garden has been planned to preserve the view from the house and for economy of upkeep. It shows an appreciation of the sculptural quality of plant material and an asymmetrical arrangement of the plan units which are distinguishing characters of the few sympathetic gardens for modern houses.

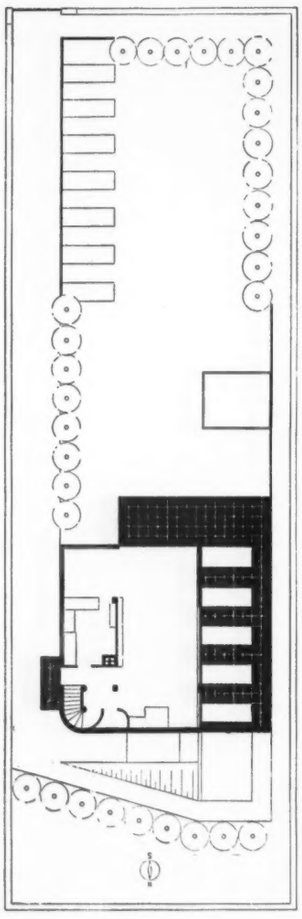
* The number of nurseries specializing in one genera or in closely related groups of plants, e.g. lilies, heathers, irises, roses, succulents, is a sign of the times, as is also the growth of specialist societies. The following are among those holding regular exhibitions in London: *Alpine Garden Society, British Carnation, Rhododendron, Iris, Cactus and Succulent, British Delphinium, British Gladiolus, National Dahlia, and National Rose.*

* It follows from this argument that we should no longer attempt to make natural rock gardens. For some people this type of gardening would then cease to be a hobby. However, rocks can be in themselves beautiful and interesting things and can be used as decoration even better than as backgrounds for collections of alpines. The cultivation of alpine plants need not be carried on in the rock garden as we know it . . . in fact, some of the choicest and most beautiful species cannot develop their blooms to perfection except in the special conditions of an alpine house, now rapidly gaining favour for this purpose. Others, suitable in habit only for the garden, need not be separated from their beloved limestone, since alpine plants may be grown among rocks in "formal" beds and borders, where ideal soil compositions may be created for them.





Another example from Belgium designed by Jean Canneel-Claes, showing the tendency towards simplicity which identifies this type of garden with the modern house. Below and right, plan and two views of the garden-architect's own house near Brussels.



mountain, marsh or meadow scenery, and our ideas of what is fit for ornament out of doors are correspondingly restricted.

Specialization has provided us with heather gardens and autumn colour gardens, developments since the time of Robinson, whose best-known work was published before the brilliant Japanese maple had been recognized as hardy enough to plant in the open border. The latter form of gardening has been particularly encouraged by the large number of new shrubs from Asia and America, particularly of the berberis and acer tribes, which have been introduced to this country by explorers like Forrest and Kingdon Ward. It has transformed October from the ignominious position of a dead month on the horticultural calendar into one of the most brilliant of the gardener's year.

All these horticultural developments have only been cursorily treated by garden planners, owing perhaps to an inability to view the garden in the round instead of in its details. The planning of the contemporary garden most often resolves itself into an unsystematized diffusion of parts without the sharp definitions in the planting necessary to coherence in the whole design. The segregation of plants, particularly in the small garden, is an important factor for obtaining this quality of "hanging together" and as such it is regrettable that it is not generally recognized. But even a reform in this direction could not redeem the irrelevance of much contemporary planning or the ineptitude of some units of the garden plan to perform the functions required of them.

Until a general conception of the garden without boundaries can arise in this country the small garden will remain the English problem. "The English garden, like the English Sunday dinner, is pretty much the same throughout the country. Most gardens consist of rose beds, herbaceous border, lawn and rockery, and, in all but the very smallest, there is a pergola garlanded with rambler roses."* This seems to indicate that there is at any rate a uniformity of opinion in the gardening world regarding the components of the plan, and, except for the possible wish to reform the rockery and clothe the pergola with plants less aggressive than the Wichuraiana rose, few will quarrel with such a selection of units. The rose grows to perfection in most parts of this country; the herbaceous border, or, preferably, the mixed border of shrubs and herbaceous plants, is an economical and decorative substitute for 19th-century bedding out; the lawn is our most valued legacy from the landscape gardeners, and the pergola, hardly necessary as it is in this variable climate for the provision of shade, fulfils a certain purpose in accommodating those climbing plants which demand good cultivation, training and support. To Mr. Hill's list must be added the modern equivalent of the shrubbery, which is now almost the first thing required of the landscape architect in even the smallest garden.

If there were the same uniformity apparent in the disposition of these accepted parts of the garden, though this would make for a stereotyped formula of design, it would perhaps be a better thing for the English garden as a whole. It is seldom that one sees a pergola serving some logical and useful purpose in the garden scheme, linking up the house and the garden shelter, for instance, or providing necessary height as a background to an architectural garden of flat colour. A much more common sight is to find it perched up on the top of a retaining wall or in some corner of the garden where it is the only architectural feature, in the manner of a many-legged insect searching for a branch to which to cling. Frequently, too, the supporting members are more than sufficient in girth and strength to carry the disproportionately narrow-beams which crown them. The result may not be lacking in stability, but the pergola for the modern house may be of light tubular metal and need not repeat this structural falsity.

Even the lawn is often badly handled. The "open centre" treatment of small gardens will have to become more widely known before the lawn as an entity, the essential *laund* or land, can come into its own. It is a common enough experience to find herbaceous borders or a bedding scheme cutting across a wide expanse of grass in obedience to the architect's dictum that there must be a vista line from the sitting-room window or garden door. What reasons he can put forward for advocating this confinement of the eye between prodigious lengths of flower bed it has not been possible for the author to discover. In nine cases out of ten, treatment such as this results in a crowded plan and the complete elimination of the lawn as a satisfying unit in the design. "I think a plain space near the eye gives it a kind of liberty it loves," wrote Shenstone, "and the picture, whether you chuse the grand or the beautiful, should be held up at its proper distance." This is a possible precept for even the smallest gardens, where borders and walks can be kept to either side, allowing the view from the main front of the house to be of mown turf, unbroken save at its edges where the flower plantations encroach, ebbing and flowing away into distant unexpected corners. The living-room window and garden door may still have their focal points, but these will probably now be set toward the far boundary and need only consist of a marked balance in the planting to arrest the eye and hold it momentarily without enslaving it. Such a garden

* Jason Hill, in "The Gardener's Companion," Dent, 1936.

gains immeasurably in apparent size and repose and loses nothing in dramatic effect. The lawn becomes its main feature, the central body from which depend the limbs of the garden scheme and though not all sites lend themselves to this treatment (a steeply sloping garden, for instance, may require much terracing and little lawn) it is a safe one for the small garden in this country.

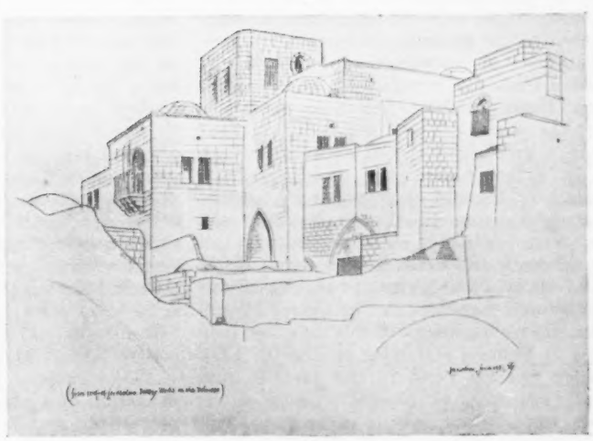
This method of approach is not put forward as a cure for the present ills of gardens, nor is any one formula either wise or practical as a method for design. As Shaw puts it, "Consistency is the enemy of enterprise just as symmetry is the enemy of art." The use, however, of a method similar to that outlined above, as a mechanical basis for the construction of suburban gardens with rectangular or well-defined boundaries, might help to avoid some of the errors of overcrowding and the loose relation of parts which characterize the vast majority of gardens all over the country. But even if a working formula could be obtained, it would be next to impossible to apply a similar set of rules to the planting of such a garden. Here lies more opportunity for error than in any Minoan labyrinth.

If, then, a new garden technique is to be evolved, it need not necessarily reject the traditional elements of the garden plan. Rather, its aim must be to infuse them with new life. Their evolution has been traced through the past two hundred years and it has been found that it is not the parts in themselves that have been lacking in intrinsic value, but the conception of their makers that has varied through the ages and put them to strange uses. Other units may be added as they become necessary (the tennis court and swimming pool are additions of the last thirty years) and neglected ones, such as the croquet lawn, may be discarded when their time of usefulness is past.

Those which are designed for use are the most important and in some ways the most interesting parts of the garden of today. Perhaps this may be a clue to our enjoyment of the gardens of the future. The hard angularity of the tennis court, with its inevitable wire surround, is a new problem in gardens and one that must either be solved by relating it to its surroundings, or by giving the surroundings a character in keeping with this new garden form. The swimming pool, so frequently lined with glazed tiles, strikes an unaccustomed note of light and colour in our placid English scene, which since the time of Chambers has lacked entirely the quality of exoticism. Both these elements, designed for use, are uncompromising in their demands upon the artistic structure, and certain it is that the new chord that has been struck must eventually be echoed by all notes in the garden scale, if they are not to be smothered in a welter of strange cacophony. "Something more animated, more significant and more in sympathy with speed and movement will be needed," says a modern writer, " a type with sharper interests —more up to date in the sense that a modern house is up to date." This will call for a new simplicity in gardens if there is not to be a period of horticultural *Art Nouveau* such as occurred in the field of architecture and decoration before the present forms evolved. In the Scandinavian countries there are signs that the new garden is already establishing itself and in the places where it is most needed. There, the functionalism of garden schemes for workers' dwellings and blocks of flats is directly the result of a whittling down—evidence of the need for the creation of the maximum recreative area in the minimum space. As an element inseparable from the problems of housing and urban and rural development, garden planning can, with the least opposition, achieve its modern form.

PALESTINE

BY ERIC GILL



Two pencil drawings recently made by Eric Gill in Jerusalem. Above, a view from the roof of the Jerusalem Pottery Works in the Via Dolorosa. Below, from a window in the Via Dolorosa.

Book of the Month

Art and the Camera

By Osbert Lancaster

VICTORIAN WATER-COLOURS AT WINDSOR CASTLE. By Randall Davies. London: Country Life, Limited. Price 21s.

When the miracle of photography was first revealed to an astonished and gratified world the art of painting had almost everywhere degenerated into the most slavish representationalism. It was not therefore surprising that many people were of the opinion that as soon as perfection in the new science was achieved the artist would automatically be rendered obsolete. Moreover, it seemed that many painters themselves shared these forebodings, for the vast majority, anyhow in England, judging by the evidence of their works, pinned their faith on the inability of the camera to record colour and set out deliberately to fill the gap by producing paintings as like photographs as possible but with the happy addition of all the hues of nature. Needless to say they were completely mistaken and the advent of photography so far from limiting the scope of the artist opened up new horizons and widened the whole field of painting.

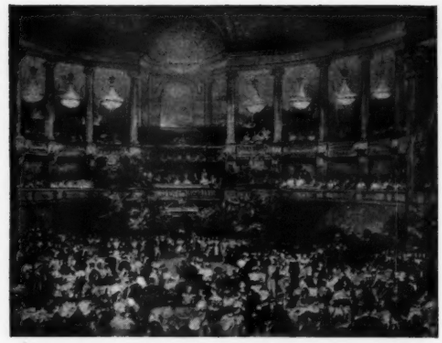
Nevertheless there was one class of painter for whom the new invention in time spelt extinction. These were the artists who devoted themselves to the recording of current events—the painters of *actualités*, to borrow an expression from the terminology of their conquerors. During the latter half of the eighteenth century the practice of commissioning an artist to make a permanent record of some historic scene, or rather some scene which the participants hoped would be regarded as historic, was already common. In most cases the results were lavishly idealized visions in which accuracy and attention to actual detail were cheerfully subordinated to considerations of prestige and manufactured glamour. Prominent among the paintings of this class are such pictures as Pannini's *Meeting of Charles XIII of Sweden and the Pope*, in the Louvre, and Bellotto's *Election of Stanislas as King of Poland*, in Warsaw. But alongside these pompous and semi-hagiological productions, there occasionally appeared paintings of current events, frequently by great masters, which were the product not of a royal patron's whim but of the artist's own desire to record some scene of unusual or artistic interest. It is to this tradition of accurate and disinterested observation that we owe such charming pictures as Guardi's *Balloon Ascent* and Canaletto's numerous paintings of festas and regattas in Venice.

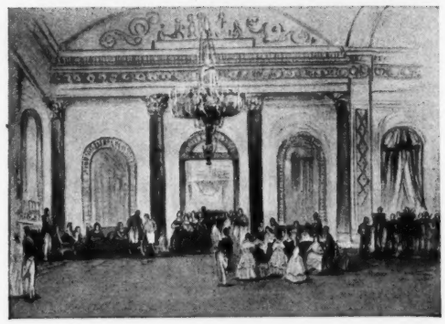
In England, during the eighteenth century, there existed few artists either willing to or capable of producing pictures that can be included in either of these two classes. A few events such as the thanksgiving service for the recovery of George III were recorded by hack artists for the benefit of the engravers. By stretching a point such a picture as Hogarth's *March of the Guards through Finchley*, may perhaps be included in the category of paintings of current events. But it was not until the very end of the century that this country produced in Thomas Rowlandson the greatest master of the contemporary scene that appeared in Europe until the emergence of Constantin Guys some fifty years later.

Like most great painters Rowlandson established a tradition in his particular branch of art which gave to a host of lesser men that framework and direction without which their paintings would have remained valueless. It was now accepted that as a medium for recording a crowded and momentary scene water-colours were far more suitable than oils. This in turn imposed certain limits on the size of the painting. Thus when the improvements introduced into the science of printing made possible the appearance of illustrated papers there existed a whole school of painters ideally equipped for providing the fantastically skilful wood-engravers with suitable material.

With the accession of Queen Victoria painting in water-colour received still further encouragement. The young Queen herself was an enthusiastic practitioner of the art and several of her ladies-in-waiting, in common with so many young ladies of the period, were accomplished amateurs. (The exceedingly high level to which some of these amateurs frequently attained may be appreciated by studying the paintings of Lady Canning reproduced in this volume, particularly the view of the Chateau d'Eu.) It is not therefore surprising that she should have commissioned water-colour artists to record various noteworthy royal occasions and collected the results in a series of portfolios. It is to a selection of these paintings that the fifteenth annual volume of The Old Water-colours Society's Club has happily been devoted.

As one gazes at these charming reproductions evocative of a whole vanished civilization one cannot but regret this victory that the camera has gained at the expense of the artist. The more so as it is to a large extent a hollow triumph. The reality of the photograph holds good only for contemporaries; unless one is possessed of considerable knowledge of the conditions and history of the period the camera can tell posterity little of interest and may even mislead. For the camera, once it has moved outside the studio and is forced to operate in the market-place, loses its limited power of emphasis and selection and becomes purely mechanical. In a final analysis, even as a record the photograph is inferior to a painting, for it can only give us the scene as it existed in terms of light, whereas the painter achieves a higher reality by showing it as it would have appeared to us had we been contemporary witnesses. Given a painting of *La Goulue* by Lautrec, one is at once aware of the fascination she held for her contemporaries, the conditions under which she lived, the whole outlook of the society of which she was a member. A photograph of the same woman, of which many exist, tells us none of these things and it is only by a mental effort assisted by the knowledge acquired from memoirs and





Above, four illustrations from "Victorian Water-colours at Windsor Castle." Top to bottom: "Supper at Versailles," 1855; by Eugène Lami. "Concert at Buckingham Palace," 1844; by William Evans. "Stowe," 1845; by Joseph Nash and "Reception at Tréport," 1843; by Eugène Lami.

gossip that one can convince oneself that this sepia coloured mincing deformity is in actual fact the celebrated charmer.

So it is with the paintings of Lami and Nash; they give us a far truer picture of the events they have recorded than the *Movietone News* could ever have achieved. For the human eye, unlike the lens of the camera, can at any given moment only concentrate on a strictly limited field; therefore one's impression of, say, a procession is confined to certain individual figures surrounded by a hazy, though doubtless impressive crowd of subordinates. This emphasis the camera with its wide-angle lens cannot achieve, and so Herr Hitler's moustache and the gleaming pince-nez of some utterly trivial little *S.A.* man in the foreground attain an equal prominence on the screen and each member of the audience is forced to make his own selection afresh; a task which in the old days was done for him by the painter. With Lami, for instance, while each individual figure, however unimportant, is minutely and beautifully rendered, one is never left in doubt of the fact that Victoria and Louis Philippe are the real *clou* of the whole scene. By a skilful use of light and shade, by a suppression of unnecessary detail, by the composition itself, one is made to realize where the focus of interest lay for the contemporary bystanders.

Alas, this skilful manipulation of crowds within the confines of a small canvas is a lost art. Look at the picture of a *Supper at Versailles* by Lami, or, *Queen Victoria's entry into Paris*, by Guerard and then try to recall any one of the numerous sketches of the Coronation which appeared in all the big illustrated papers last May and you will realize the depths to which we have sunk. Nowadays we spell Art with a capital "A" and few painters are content to remain just painters; and to record and comment on current events is no longer a task suitable to the dignity of the Artist. The best that we can achieve in this line today is either a milk-and-water impressionism in the manner of Mr. Maze which tells us nothing, or several hundred miniature portraits flung together in one frame and called a picture, in the manner of Mr. Salisbury. It is unlikely that posterity will be grateful for either.

Railway stations decorated for ceremonial occasions. Above, Queen Victoria's arrival at a specially constructed pavilion at Tottenham. Below, the Queen alighting at Gosport on a carpet embellished with rose-buds. "The occasion was a visit from Louis Philippe." From "The Railway Age."

The Iron Horse

THE RAILWAY AGE. By Cyril Bruyn Andrews. London: Country Life, Limited. Price 12s. 6d.

THE coming of the railway was by far the most important event of the nineteenth century. It was also, in many of its ramifications, the most amusing. Books have been written about it from every angle, treating it as an economic revolution, as a romance of successful enterprise, as a comedy of awkwardly adapted manners. Mr. Andrews has written a book which has no angle at all. He has brought together a quite admirable collection of illustrations, ranging from reproductions of the beautiful old railway prints and diagrams of the fantastic engineering projects in which our forefathers delighted, down to cartoons and absurd little tailpieces from *Punch*. By means of such a rich variety and excellent selection of illustrations, he evokes quite vividly the atmosphere of the early railway age. He is clearly a true railway lover: but his interest is diffuse and superficial. The text of the book betrays the promise of the illustrations. It wanders along in a sort of guide-book patter, bestowing universal wonder and approval. It digresses into long quotations, and is by no means free from inaccuracy.

Most obviously, the building of the railway stands out as a story of human achievement. The figures of Stephenson and Brunel are gigantic, by the standards of any period. Mr. Andrews catalogues the fruits of their enterprise, and quotes a charming account by Fanny Kemble of a trip with Stephenson: but he does not really summon up a picture of either of these great men, of the amazing engineering feats they carried through in their twenties and thirties, of the fullness and energy of their lives, of their influence and prestige among contemporaries. Even the epic of the Broad Gauge is only alluded to in passing.

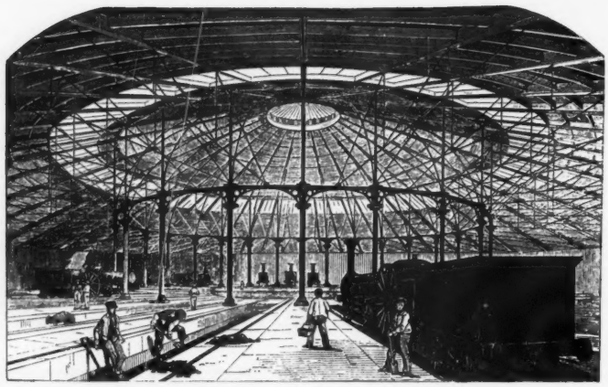
The railways brought about an economic revolution in two directions: indirectly, in the speeding up of every commercial activity, and directly, in the making and unmaking of a vast number of personal fortunes. Mr. Andrews rightly deals at length with the Railway Mania and its disastrous effects upon the small investor: yet he only accords the most casual mention to George Hudson, a man who personified the whole period of fantastic hopes and promises, and became at one time the English counterpart of such men as Jay Gould and Commodore Vanderbilt.

In dealing with the lighter side of railway history, Mr. Andrews is more successful. He quotes extensively from *Punch*, which even in the forties had its little joke about the "Little Western and No Junction Railway," apparently the predecessor of the still under-estimated line to Addison Road. He introduces us once more to the inimitable personality of Colonel Sibthorp, who numbered the railways among those agencies of progress which it was his life's work to resist with so much zeal and eloquence. And he relates a quite new story of a dispute between two companies which was submitted to the arbitrament of single combat between their locomotives:

"*The engine of the Shrewsbury and Birmingham slowly advanced in spite of the red flags hoisted, and amidst the cheers and shouts of the assembled multitude, butted against that of the London and North Western, which, being a very powerful engine, and the brakes being screwed tightly down, received but a slight shock from the concussion. . . . The two engines standing opposite each other in the closest proximity with the steam power of their gigantic bodies issuing from the various safety valves with a hissing noise, presented an exciting spectacle, representing the antagonism of their respective proprietors.*"

One of the most important and interesting by-products of railway development was railway architecture: but here again Mr. Andrews is sadly disappointing in his treatment of the subject. He dilates on the homelike atmosphere of Paddington, and on the solidity of Euston: but he does not even mention the names of their architects. The omission is perhaps a wise one, as in describing Gilbert Scott's design for St. Pancras he falls into the error of saying that Scott used a design originally intended for the Law Courts. This is an inaccurate version of an inaccurate story. Lytton Strachey said that the design was that originally intended for the Foreign Office. All that Scott himself says is that after his rebuff by Palmerston, he was glad to erect at St. Pancras a building in the style that had been officially disapproved.

Mr. Andrews' carelessness shows itself in many places: he even gets Augustine Birrell's name wrong. But in his references to Ruskin he goes entirely astray. Ruskin abominated railways, and said so interminably. Mr. Andrews quotes one of his tirades on the subject, and remarks that it



The Railways made an immensely important contribution to architecture in furthering the development of iron structure. An example of this is the circular engine house, right, at Camden Town. From "The Railway Age."

" admirably expresses the æsthetic thrill which a few amongst the cultured classes experienced at the advent of the railways." He further attributes the passage to the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, published in 1847. Yet he might easily have ascertained that the *Seven Lamps* appeared in 1849 ; that it does not contain the passage in question (unless my copy is defective); and that it does contain two separate onslaughts upon the railways, which are so bitter as to be almost grotesque. Clearly Mr. Andrews reads as carelessly as he expects others to read him.

The illustrations deserve every praise : there are some entertaining extracts from newspapers here and there. But the rest is too much descriptive and too little narrative, and the description is banal. These slim volumes of pictures and bright comment are all very fine, but they require more groundwork than a mere municipal brochure.

CHRISTOPHER HOBHOUSE

Architecture at Home

THE MODERN HOUSE IN ENGLAND. By F. R. S. Yorke. London : The Architectural Press. Price 15s.

Most people when buying a house do not particularly want to buy architecture, nor even a good investment. They want a decent house. It is still, however, only the comparatively wealthy man who can afford to get it, while others have to be content with what is given them by the speculative builder. Generally this is a pretty accurate imitation of a pre-war architect-designed house, elaborate and bargeboarded, and is sold on " charm," flashy bathrooms, and gimcrack labour-saving appliances. There is no doubt that the day of the big mansion has gone, and the day of the communal block-dwelling is still a long way off. In the meantime we have the individual villa type, dismissed by some as a temporary and unimportant solution, but whose virtues and uses are still vital, and whose problems are only beginning to be solved.

Modern living requirements have changed. The house has become smaller, but the demands made upon space have multiplied, and the architect today, perhaps with a sigh for the days of flower-pantries, gun-rooms, and twelve-foot ceilings, is faced with complicated problems which usually have to be solved under conditions of strict economy. The results have not always been successful. They have the inevitable faults of all experimental work. But as a serious contribution to modern rational living they have a genuine significance. In the last few years there has been a steady increase in the number of these houses designed to fill contemporary needs. It is safe to say that there would have been many more, but for the inevitable difficulties which must discourage the client who desires a modern house. There is the almost certain obstruction by local authorities, and its consequent delays and inconvenience. There is the trouble of expense. Modern constructional methods have not the organized labour behind them which often renders a more traditional type of house cheaper to erect. Finally there is the question of finance. Few people today own a house without some form of financial encumbrance. The owner of a modern house often finds difficulty in raising a loan from a mortgagee who lays great emphasis on what he probably calls " future marketability." Mr. Yorke's new book, which is an amplified reprint in book form of the special issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW for December, 1936, contains some fifty houses which have survived these difficulties, an impressive tribute to the persistence and enthusiasm of their designers and owners. It is the first book to be published which is entirely devoted to the modern house in England, Although every book of pictures is expected to have a text, this has been cut down to a brief historical survey by the author, including some case-histories of houses which have been rejected by local authorities, prefaced by an incisive quotation from W. R. Lethaby. The houses are logically listed under constructional methods, Brick, Frame and Concrete. (It is interesting to note here that the frame method, perhaps the commonest abroad, provides the fewest examples in England.) Each house is fully described by photographs, plans, and schedules of construction, equipment, and finishes. In some cases prices per cubic foot are given. All this information is excellently and compactly arranged on well balanced pages.

Although when lumped together these houses have a superficial similarity, they are all intensely individual solutions to different problems. It is obvious that the Modern House does not mean the same thing to everybody. There are many versions between the suave romanticism of Oliver Hill and Raymond McGrath, and the uncompromising functionalism of the earlier work of Connell, Ward and Lucas. There is a marked similarity, however, in planning tendencies. The open plan is almost universal but perhaps less easy to work than it looks. Family life is always on the move. It is difficult to concentrate it on parts of a room however neatly labelled " eating," " writing," " living." The man who wishes to leave his desk to go upstairs should not always be compelled to disturb his wife's bridge party or his children's games in doing so. There is also a tendency to reduce kitchen space below a comfortable minimum, and to wall the room in with tiers of gleaming cupboards, whose blank unglazed doors provide no clues to their contents. Much time must be wasted in looking for things. There are nearly a dozen cases where the upstairs W.C. is fixed in the only bathroom, which is to serve three or more bedrooms. This is really not good enough. Frequently the wall-to-wall window makes no provision for curtains, which, when drawn back, render a large portion of glazing useless, and therefore unnecessary. The interiors also are generally less imaginative than one might expect. The chunky armchair, the wiggly motif rug, the self-conscious vase of whitewashed twigs, are still predominant, and familiar, elements. One would guess that the prevailing colours are pale blue, the yellow of bleached woods, and earthy red.

There is still an almost defiant insistence on reinforced concrete as a material, with all its attendant clichés (the piano-shaped wall, the wedge-shaped garage, the glass-brick window), often resulting in coarse blocky shapes and unpleasant surfaces. Messrs. Connell, Ward and Lucas' house at Moor Park, Mr. Fry's at Hampstead, and Mr. Val Harding's at Farnham Common are brilliant exceptions. These houses are light, elegant and charming. It is with distrust, however, that one glances through these glossy photographs, taken in strong sun, when the paint was scarcely dry upon their subjects. A suspicion that architects are inclined to design for the benefit of other architects, becomes a conviction that architecture, which once lagged behind painting, is now the handmaid of photography. Every architect has had misgivings when advising a client or friend to go and see a modern building which has been up for more than a few months. It is not difficult to foresee the disfiguring stains which soon will trail from coping joints and fringe the window cills. Few modern architects, unfortunately, can afford the first-class workmanship which is essential to this type of design, and which is so easily and automatically accorded to the traditional house. In many cases it would perhaps have been wiser to return to the old materials, brick, stone and wood. Mary Crowley's houses at Tewin, and Maxwell Fry's at Chipperfield, are built of traditional materials. They are also perhaps the best houses in the book. Those simple direct forms and pleasing textures will have a more lasting significance than the brutal shapes and harsh surfaces of the more doctrinaire designs.

Not all the houses included are good, nor is the claim universally true that the modern architect does not allow a preconceived idea of the appearance of the façade to interfere with the efficiency of the plan, There are many examples in which it seems to a critic, admittedly ignorant of the client's requirements and conditions, that flagrant concessions to external appearance have been made. There is a house at Bognor " with rooms planned to give maximum view over the sea," in the two main bedrooms of which some 13 feet of available wall overlooking the sea is pierced by one window 4 feet across. In another house the only separate upstairs W.C. is reached by passing through first a bedroom and then a bathroom. This is described as " unusual and ingenious planning." The main staircase in a house at Haywards Heath is a tortuous spiral, cramped between walls and according to the drawing, entirely unlit. The balconies in a terrace of houses at Plumstead are barely large enough for one person to stand upon, and are placed adjacent to each other with consequent loss of essential privacy. There is a house at Dartington, the plan of which is so confused and congested as to be almost incomprehensible.

The fact that the general standard of design throughout the book is so high makes these faults the more difficult to defend. Their significance lies in that they constitute a direct and disturbing return to elevational architecture. No doubt they can all be explained away with a little ingenuity. The best architecture, however, should need no excuses, practical or æsthetic.

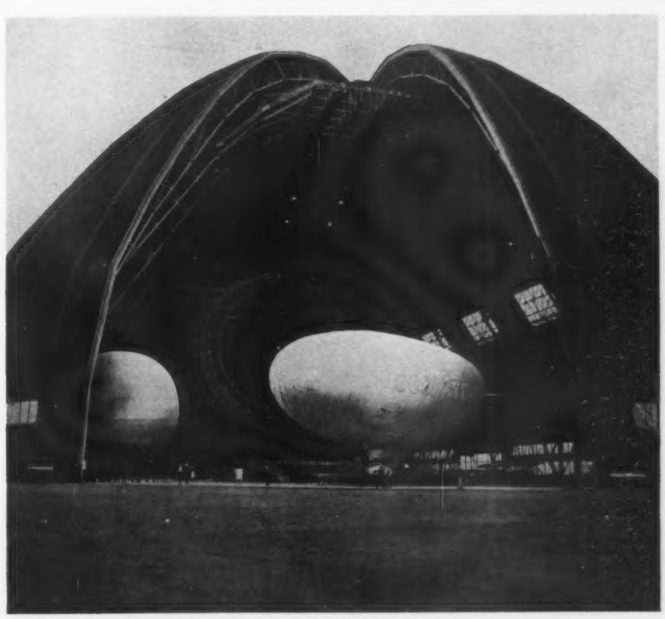
It is, however, no disparagement of this book to say that it contains many examples of pastiche, and unnecessary displays of virtuosity. All art movements pass quickly from men of artistic integrity to those who have easily acquired a superficial slickness of technique. It is rare and refreshing to sense the vital sincerity and enthusiasm which has so genuinely inspired the best of these designers. It is by their efforts that an English school of modern design has been started, and they are the first to realize the difficulties which have to be surmounted before it can be firmly established. Three years ago this book could not have been produced. In another three years it will certainly be possible to be more selective, but it will be difficult to recapture the stimulating spirit which infuses this first vivid record of a new and logical approach to contemporary living.

HUGH CASSON

decoration without limitation

AN OBJECTIVE STUDY OF THE CASE OF THE CINEMA AUDITORIUM AND OF THE SOURCES OF ITS DECORATION

The decoration of the cinema auditorium represents a typical modern architectural problem, typical in that many considerations which influence other forms of interior in a minor degree reach their climax in the design of the cinema auditorium. First, it is concerned with decorating an enclosure which is designed not for the individual but for a crowd of people, with the result that

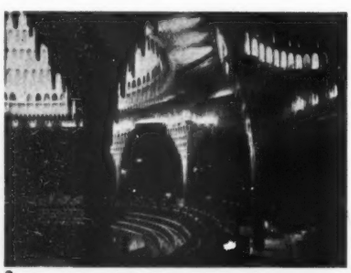


Right, 1, *the envelope unadorned; suggesting the architectural raw material of the decorator of a free interior space.*

the criteria of individual "taste" which govern the decoration of the domestic (and, in general, the domestic scale) interior no longer apply. Second, the tendency towards simplification in modern architecture, which is largely the result of the increasing technical capabilities of structure, is probably more in evidence in the cinema than in any other form of building. The architectural elements are reduced to a minimum. The position and dimensions of doors are largely predetermined, by the all-important consideration of fire regulations. Windows, normally the most valuable clue the architect is given in a design, are eliminated altogether. The architect is left with a large and completely uninterrupted space, an amorphous enclosure in which even the planes of wall and ceiling are not necessarily distinguished. Faced with this complete absence of the usual architectural limitations, the contemporary architect or decorator tends to see his problem as one of finding suitable associations on which he can base his decorative scheme.

1. The Cinema Imitates the Film

The analogy of the grotto also suggests the free architectural nature of the decorator's problem. Below: the associations of the grotto used as a motif in modern theatre decoration. 2, the "Grosses Schauspielhaus" in Berlin; Hans Poelzig, architect. 3, the eighteenth-century grotto at Oatlands Park, Surrey.



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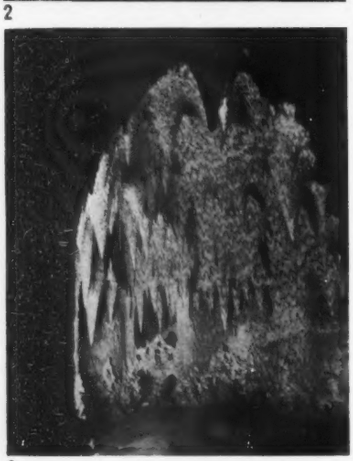

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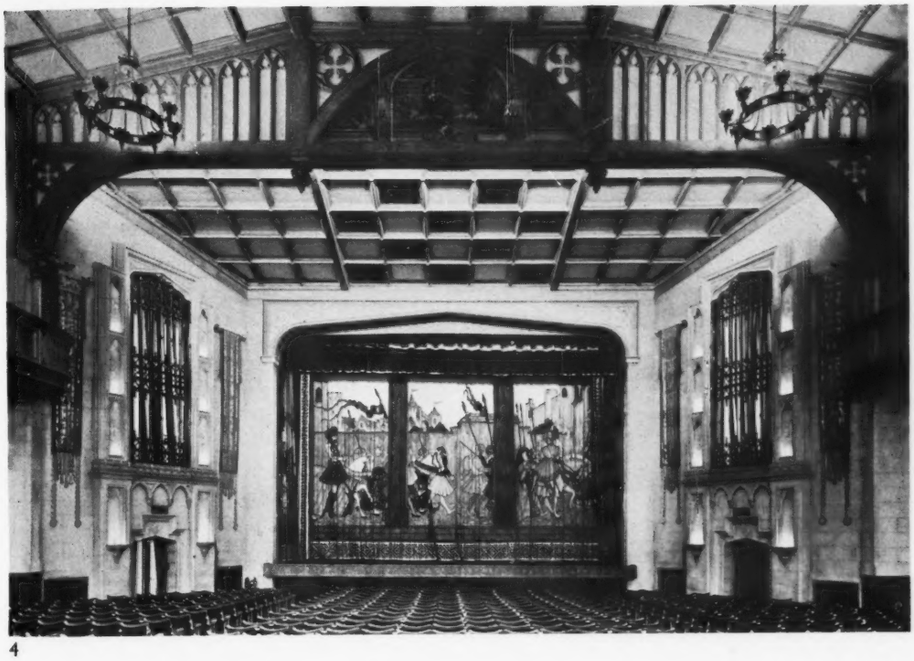
THE FILM AND ITS PERIOD SETTING PROVIDE ONE SOURCE OF AUDITORIUM DECORATION

Obvious decorative associations are suggested by the film itself, both by its general emotional atmosphere and by the actual subjects that are shown on the screen. There is the further connexion that the cinema decorator is as much concerned as the film producer with "what the public want," and tends to follow the latter's lead in trying to establish common denominators of collective "taste." For the cinema interior, more than any other type of building is absolutely dependent on commercial considerations which in a sense becomes a "built in" architectural factor. When the "Sheik" proves a box-office success the architect follows the film producer's lead and perpetuates a vaguely Moslem scene on the walls of the auditorium. The commercial cinema is concerned above all with "entertainment" value. The cinema audience, or at least that representative section of it in which the box-office is interested, does not go to the cinema to be stimulated, but for relaxation. As such, the cinema and its accompanying "decoration" performs a necessary social function in an overwrought world. From this point of view the decoration of the auditorium can be used to form an extension of the fictitious world of the film. In the highly stylized cinema auditorium the audience enters this fictitious world and enjoys its associations long before the actual film is shown and often continues in it long after it is finished. Like the film director the architect is most confident in his

THE BARONIAL SETTING



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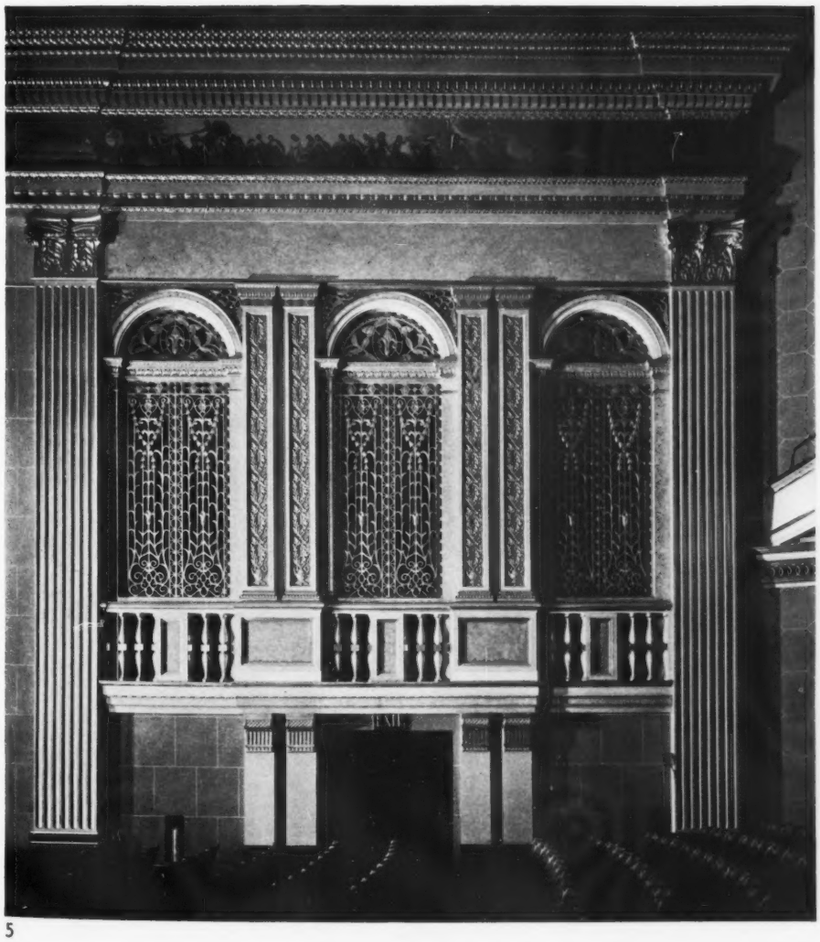
4, the Gaumont Cinema, Salisbury : W. E. Trent, architect : together with its equivalent film set of the same period.

THE HIGH RENAISSANCE SETTING



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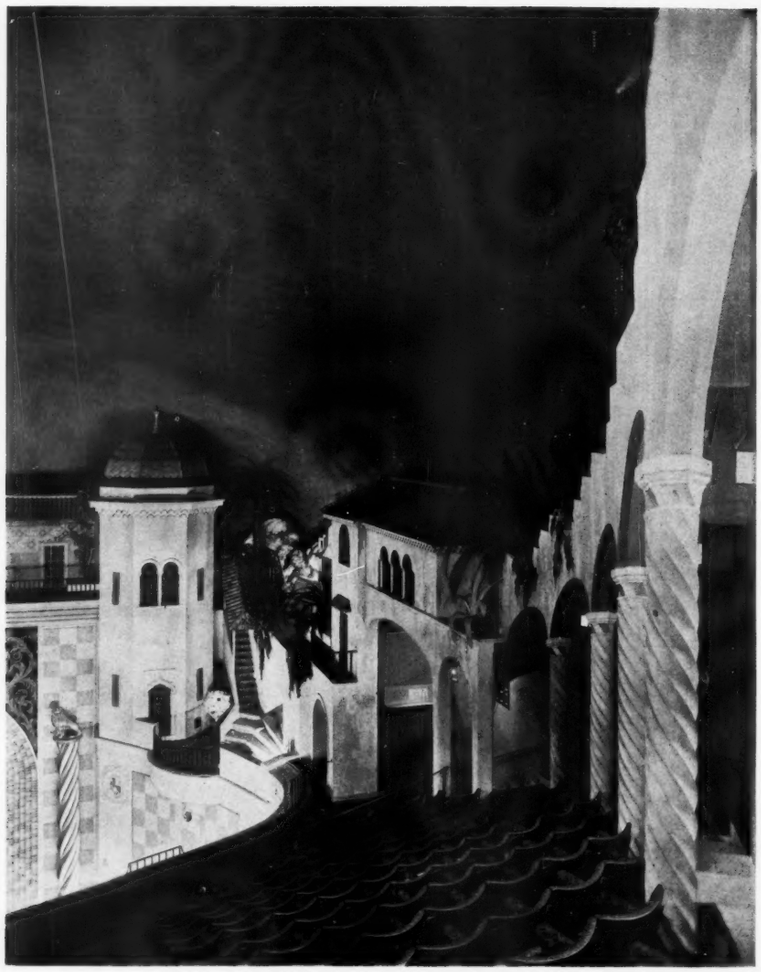
5, the Granada Cinema, North Cheam : David Nye, architect : with its equivalent classical film set.

decoration when he can find some traditional peg on which to hang his design. The auditorium of the Gaumont Cinema at Salisbury opens off a fine fifteenth-century entrance vestibule whose character has given what is obviously a welcome hint for " period " decoration in the auditorium, while a similar excuse for decorative fantasy has been exploited with equal eagerness in the design of the British Foreign Secretary's house in the accompanying film set. Similarly with the " classical " interior, the film and the cinema make use of the same, in this case essentially theatrical, associations.

And as Hollywood has evolved its own decorative style—a leavening of display values with Spanish Colonial good taste—it is natural that this should be reflected in the design of the cinema auditorium. Here the decoration and the film are completely identified. Both express in unmistakable terms their allegiance to the vast propaganda machine which has established Hollywood Boulevard as every film fan's idea of heaven. It is interesting to see how the historical film provides a meagre excuse for pure fantasy in the "Gothic" tradition. This is neither the "sublime" Gothic of the landscape garden nor the authentic "period" reproduction of the nineteenth century, but the rococo tradition of Vauxhall Gardens, of Porden, Hopper and many of their contemporaries, designers who had dispensed deliberately, as the cinema decorator has of necessity, with architectural limitations.

THE SPANISH COLONIAL SETTING



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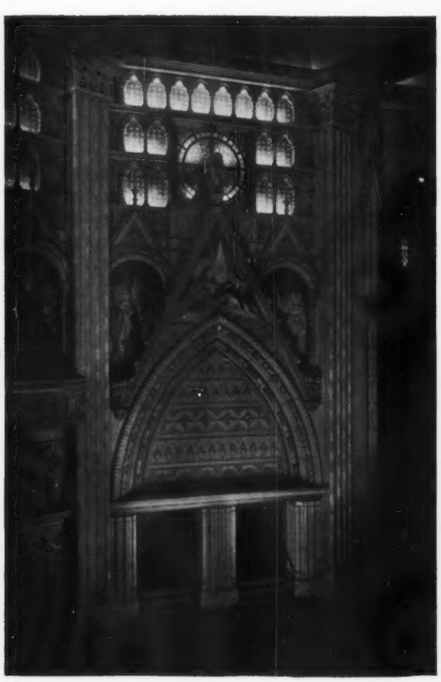
THE GOTHIC SETTING

6, the Astoria Cinema, Finsbury Park: A. E. Stone, architect. 7, and, 8, the Granada Cinema, Tooting: Cecil Macey, architect. 10, and, 11, the Granada Cinema, Woolwich: Cecil Macey, architect. The decorations for the Tooting and Woolwich Granadas were by T. Komisarjevsky.



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9. On Hollywood Boulevard, the mecca of all film fans. Its eclectic architecture finds its echoes in cinemas all over the world.

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THE GOTHIC SETTING

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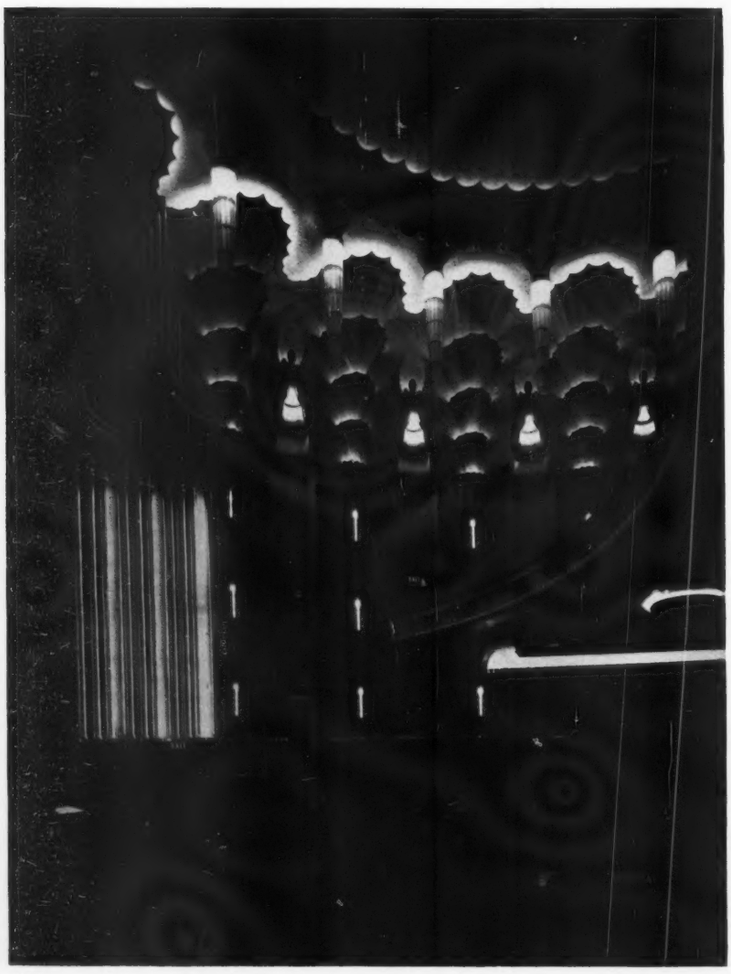
2. The Cinema Follows the Fashions

Parallel with the succeeding fashions of the film set the cinema tends to develop particular forms of stylized modern decoration. How closely this is linked with the theatrical tradition of Oscar Kaufmann can be seen in the New Victoria Cinema, with its treatment of the screen (which does not necessarily need a frame at all) as an elaborate proscenium opening. The chief association of this type of decoration is with gaiety. Ribbons and tinsel pinned on the walls are established as permanent architectural forms, as in the Ritz Cinema at Bexhill, and their gaiety increased by carefully directed lighting effects, as in the Granada at Greenwich. And just as the film finds decorative value in the poses of the actors, the cinema auditorium finds a use for figure decoration of a similar character on its walls. It is interesting to see how this, purely decorative, treatment of the auditorium emerges in the case of the private cinema, where those economic considerations which are all-important in the decoration of the commercial cinema no longer apply.

The fashion film of ephemeral style finds its echo in the decorative type of cinema auditorium.



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12, *the New Victoria Cinema, London : W. E. Trent and Walmsley Lewis, architects.* 13, *the Ritz Cinema, Bexhill : Verity and Beverley, architects.* 14, *the Granada Cinema, Greenwich : C. Howard Crane, architect.* 15, *a private cinema attached to a country house in Leicestershire ; designed by White Allom with mural paintings by Beatrice MacDermott.* 16, *the Odeon Cinema, Leicester Square : Mather and Weedon, architects.*

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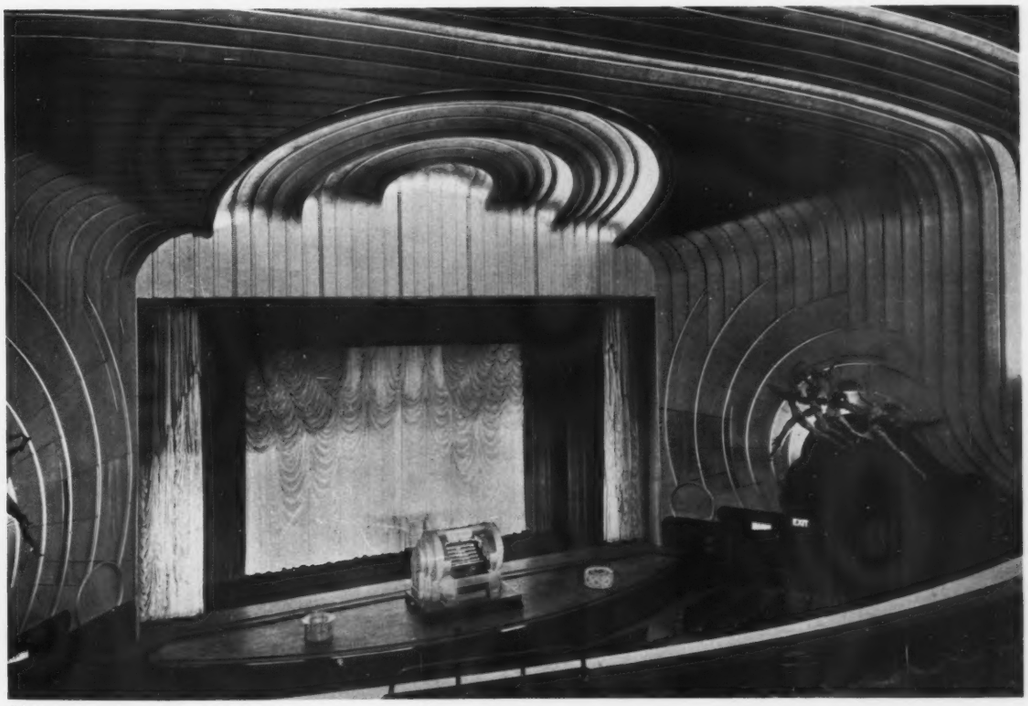

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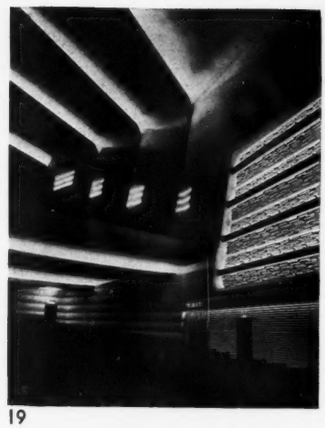
3. Novelty and Romance

Even when the auditorium does not directly reflect the decorative background of the film-set it shows a tendency to exploit the same emotional associations. The legendary associations of the film star and her luxurious background are echoed in the thick pile carpet, pneumatic upholstery and "stream-line" modernity of the cinema. Here lighting often plays an important part in providing the correct emotional associations. Each of the examples on these pages emulates a distinct emotional type of this sort, the frankly sensuous, the modern, the "romantic" type; finally, an example which emulates the essentially feminine associations of the musical-comedy chorus, with a background of draperies and looped curtains set off, as in the bridesmaids' "posies" of the film, by panels of conventionalized flowers.



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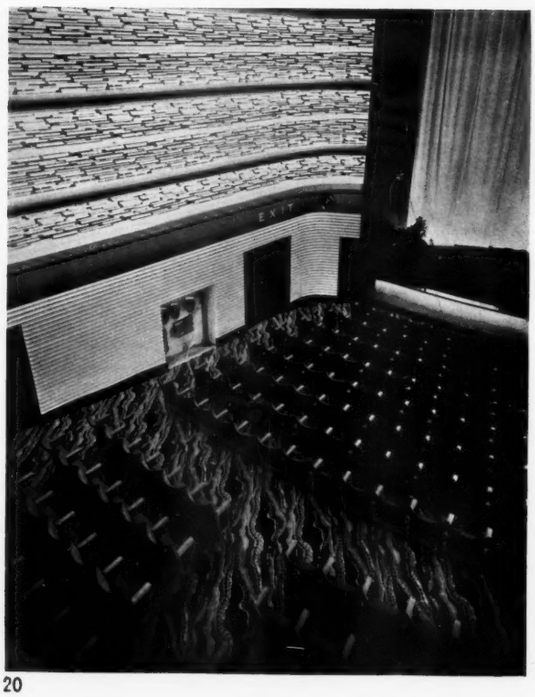

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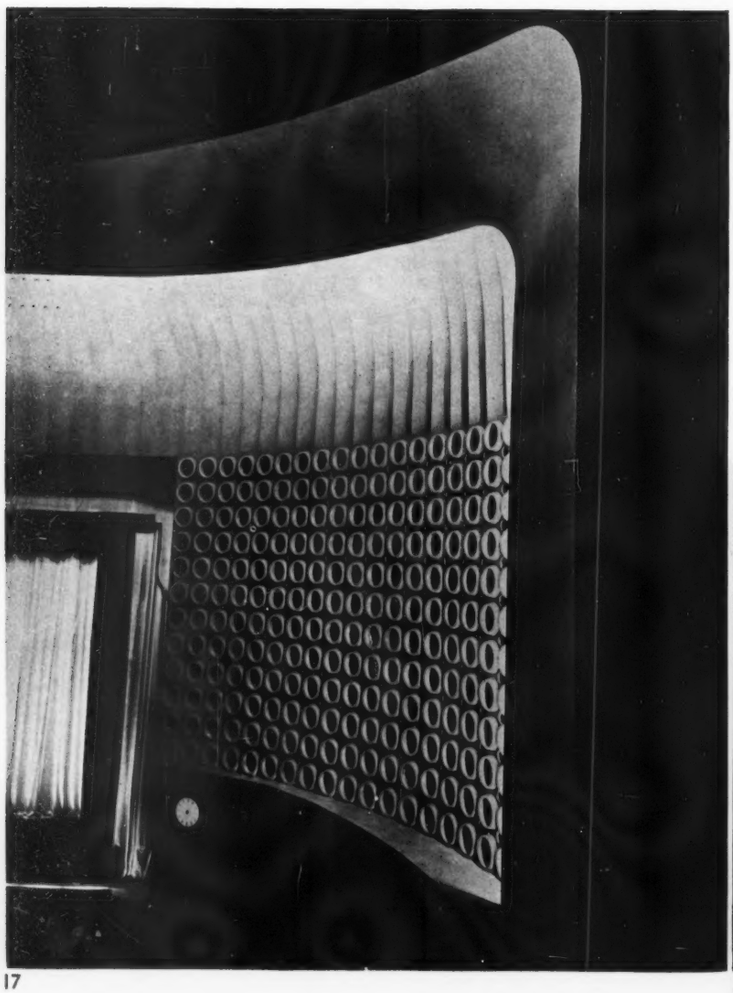

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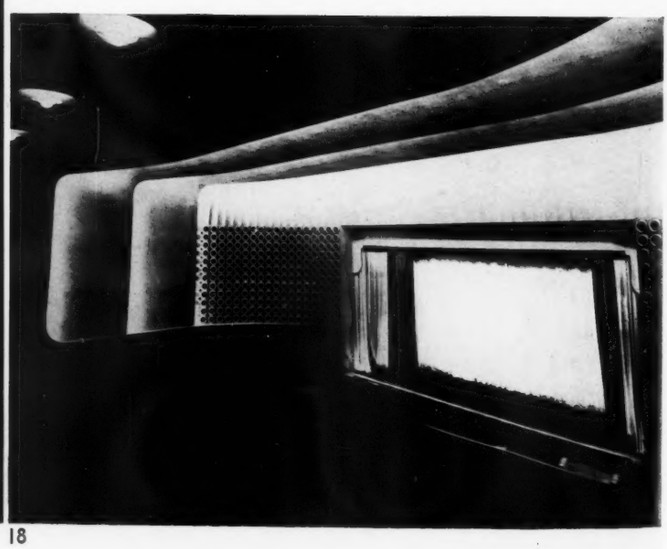

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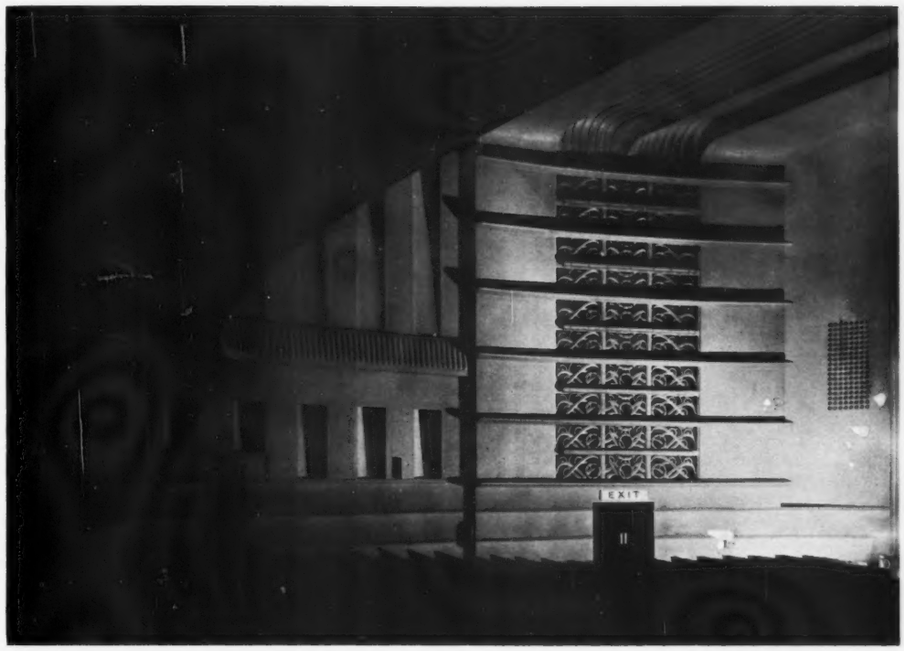

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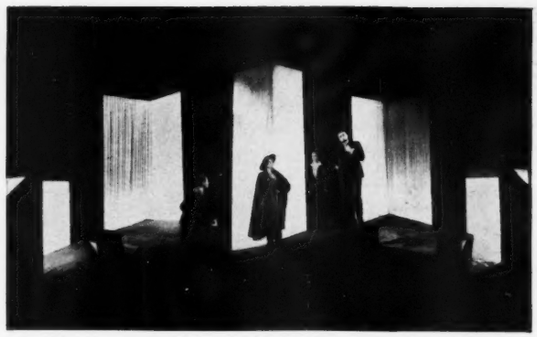
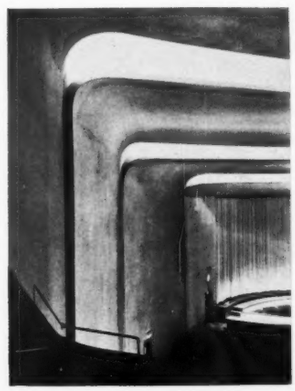
17 and 18, the Gaumont Cinema, Watford: J. Owen Bond, architect. 19 and 20, the Majestic Cinema, Rochester: Harry Weston, architect. 21, the Rex Cinema, Coventry: Robert Cromie, architect. 22, the Embassy Cinema, Esher: David Nye, architect. The decorations in all these cinemas except that at Coventry are by Mollo and Egan.

4. The Purist Cinema



23, *above, an architectural setting: a scene from the "Makropoulos Secret" by Capek, designed for the Cambridge Festival production of* 1932 *by Quetzalcoatl and Doria Paston.*

Distinct from the preceding examples is the type which, rejecting the emotional associations of the film as a basis for decoration, exploits the decorative value of characteristic architectural elements. In this way a study of lighting in its relation to the special demands of the cinema auditorium produces, as in the dramatic stage set, both a valuable architectural framework and a decorative value of its own. At the same time the interior begins to assume characteristic forms which indicate special decorative treatments. For example, the theatrical framing of the screen gives way to a freer arrangement. In the Palace Cinema at Chatham the orchestra is omitted, the stage raised and approached by a flight of circular steps and the curtains made to run on a circular track to follow the same line, with the resulting effect that the screen is carried into the auditorium itself. It is noticeable that although this type, the purely architectural cinema, tends to do without "decoration" in its accepted sense, characteristic decorative forms are found, almost automatically, asserting themselves. In the small cinema in Budapest, for example, what appears to be a purely arbitrary decoration of the central dome is in reality a strictly architectural form. The whole dome collapses like an umbrella, and the ribs are lighted up to provide a decorative feature in the auditorium.



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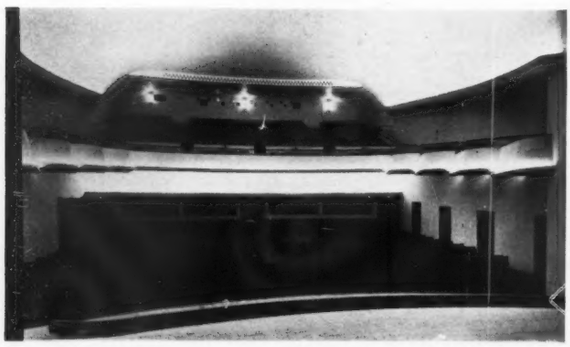

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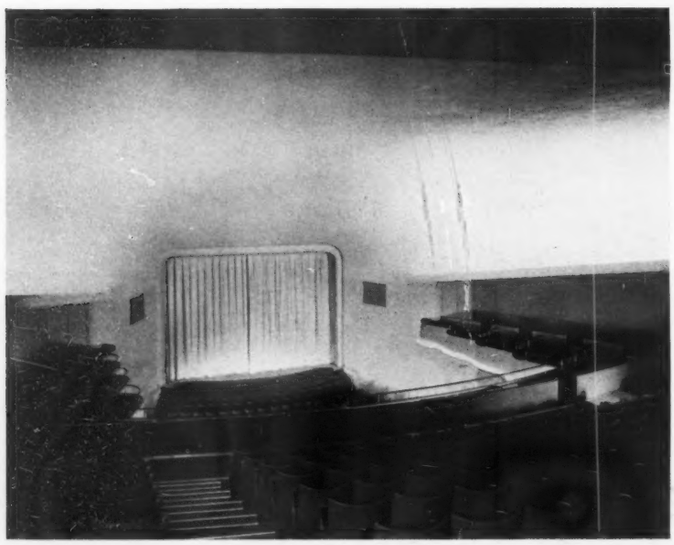

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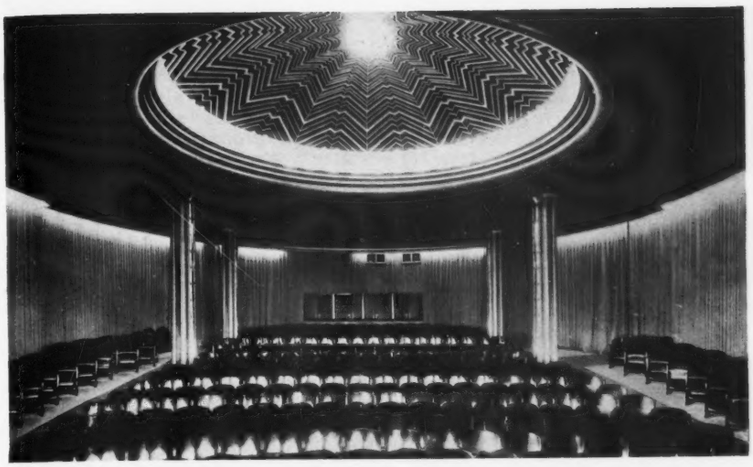

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24 and 25, the "Urban" cinema at Zurich which is incorporated in a hotel building; M. Hauser, architect. 26–28, Palace Cinema, Chatham; Arthur W. Kenyon, architect. 26, is a view from the balcony, and 28 a view of the auditorium showing the troughs for indirect lighting. 29, a cinema in Budapest; G. L. Torok and B. Asztalos, architects.

28

AT THE LEICESTER GALLERIES

SCULPTURE BY TREVOR TENNANT

An exhibition has just concluded at the Leicester Galleries of the work of Trevor Tennant. The exhibits showed work in a wide range of materials, in stone, bronze, terra-cotta, alabaster and many varieties of woods. In the handling of all of them the sculptor has clearly aimed at a certain architectural quality. On the right are shown two of the exhibits: 1, a carving in elm, "St. Francis," and, 2, another in walnut, "Extacy."

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Sculpture exhibited at the Leicester Galleries by Trevor Tennant. 3, "*The Awakening*" (*walnut*). 4, "*Madonna and Child*" (*elm*). 5, "*The Listener*" (*teak*). 6, "*Players*" (*alabaster*).

AT THE LEICESTER GALLERIES

PHOTOGRAPHIC WALL PAPERS

The use of photographs, either individually or in montage form, in interior decoration is now a familiar idea, but enormously enlarged photographs used simply as wall paper is a new one. It is now being experimented with by a group of designers working as "Photographic Murals, Ltd." They are producing designs based on straightforward detail photographs of natural form—grasses, plants, leaves and the like, of which two are shown below in use: in a private room and in a restaurant. The photographs are printed in rolls like ordinary wall papers, and hung by paper-hangers in the usual way. The cost is approximately 1s. 6d. per square foot for a paper specially designed and unique. The papers are not yet available on the market in standard designs.

ANTHOLOGY

An Irish Railway Station

The station at Helen's Bay was in those days (and indeed until the advent of the motor-car eliminated the train journey from Belfast) one of the most fantastic in the United Kingdom. Just before entering the station the train crossed a high bridge which spanned the two and a half mile avenue between Clandeboye and the sea. The station itself did not, at first sight, differ from the other stations of the Belfast and County Down Railway. There were the same long low buildings, the same weather-boarding painted a faint pink, the same 'approach' where the jaunting cars waited for possible passengers, their drivers standing up upon the footboard waving expectant whips. Yet the last door on the left opened upon a little corridor which in its turn led to Lord Dufferin's private waiting-room. This room was, on the whole, the least successful room that I have ever known. It managed to combine the atmosphere of a room which is used too little with the atmosphere of a room which is used too much. It had about it all that sense of the provisional, the transitory and the promiscuous which we associate with public waiting-rooms; its solitary window looked out upon the platform; and its silence was disturbed by the passage of trains, the shuffling of passengers, and the cry of the porter, which (for he was of County Down) was both loud and long. At the same time it exuded the musty depression of something deserted and forlorn: the key with which the station-master opened the door rasped in a rusty lock: dead flies innumerable lined the mantelpiece and the cill; the window, which looked out on to the platform and the lives of men was blurred with dust. These contrasts were rendered all the more disturbing by the disparity which existed between the proportions of the room and the furniture which it contained. In construction and design it was nothing more than a little room in a country railway station. Its furniture, however, and ornaments were those of a Victorian parlour. There was a circular table in the centre covered with an Indian cloth. The five chairs which were arranged around it had blue cushions embroidered with a coronet. There was a little red carpet with a criss-cross pattern and vague black flowers in each diamond square. There was a hard sofa in a corner and three cold Spode vases on the mantelpiece. There was an enormous composite engraving of the House of Lords in 1862 with a key-plan hanging framed below it. There were also (for some unfathomable reason) three billiard balls in a little box with a glass top. And there were four, or it may have been five, Landseer engravings in frames of light-coloured wood.

Yet there were strange things to come. Having rested in the waiting-room, the visitor was then conducted back into the corridor and down a flight of steep stone steps which led to the level of the avenue. On reaching the bottom he was startled to find himself in a large pentagonal forecourt. The walls of this Propylæa were constructed of black granite irregularly morticed together with thick cement. There were a large number of turrets, pinnacles, barbicans, embrasures, machicoulis, ramparts, merlons, battlements and arrow-slits. The avenue passed through this outer ward at right-angles to the railway line. To the right there was a high portcullised gateway which led down to the sea. To the left an even more imposing feudal arch disguised the railway bridge. Each of these two arches was decorated with a large coat of arms—dexter, a lion with a tressure flory counterflory or, sinister a heraldic tiger ermine.

HAROLD NICOLSON

(Helen's Tower: *Constable*)

MARGINALIA

Mr. Elder-Duncan

We regret to have to record the death of Mr. J. H. Elder-Duncan, who for 10 years (1900-1910) was editorial secretary of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

Born at Wolverhampton in 1877, he was engaged on public engineering works between 1894–98 and later joined the staff of the *Architectural Press*, for whose publications he wrote numerous articles. He was the author of "Country Cottages and Week-end Homes" (1906) and "The House Beautiful and Useful" (1907). Last August Mr. Elder-Duncan retired from the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, to which he was appointed in 1919, but, as secretary of the *Architecture Club*, he was an active influence in the architectural world right up to the time of his death.

HAND-MADE DOMES

"*Mrs. Montagu Norman, wife of the Governor, yesterday laid the keystone of the Princes Street dome of the new Bank of England, the last of the domes to be completed.*

Mr. Norman, complimenting those who had been engaged in what he described as a fine example of their craftsmanship, said he wished it were possible to see a building raised today on which only craftsmanship was employed and in which there would be no vestige of steel or concrete."

THE TIMES.

Why, one wonders, are steel and concrete always considered less "crafty" than bricks and mortar? And why is it always the giants of finance who are most susceptible to a nostalgic longing for the past? Or is it just that Mr. Norman has a sneaking feeling that Sir Herbert Baker should have done the whole building with his own fair hands?

Bath takes Steps

An interesting scheme for preserving architectural amenities has just been announced at Bath. In future no resident in a scheduled building will be

allowed to carry out the slightest alteration or addition to his house without first seeking the approval of a board of experts. Moreover the scheme also includes a method whereby repairs and restoration will be carried out by the Corporation and in cases where the owner cannot afford to meet the bill he may pay the Corporation in instalments. Regulations such as this have long been in force in certain continental countries but this seems to be the first occasion on which they have been introduced on so large a scale in England.

The Bath authorities who are, so the *News Chronicle* informs us, "jealous of their architectural gems" are no doubt justifiably pleased with themselves, and doubtless the scheme will operate in a most admirable way. However, malicious as it may be, one cannot forbear pointing out, first, that this jealousy is newly acquired and second, that in Bath, as in many other towns, it has hitherto been the Corporation themselves who have been the greatest villains of the piece.

In rejoicing over this new drive to preserve the beauties of the finest city of England, let it not be forgotten that it was the Corporation who were responsible for the proposal to pull down the island block at the bottom of Milsom Street in order to lay out a municipal garden, and were only prevented from doing so by one of those rare outbursts of public opinion that still remain our one, sadly ineffectual, weapon against the vandals.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor,
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.
Jan. 5th, 1938.

Sir,

Every church-crawler like the writer of this letter will be delighted by your favourable notice of the 7th Annual Report of the *Central Council for the Care of Churches* in your last issue. And perhaps some of your architect readers will come to the rescue and help in the restoring of churches, now that they know how enlightened the Central Council is.

A beautiful Renaissance Church in London last month was put into the hands of estate agents and surveyors for repair instead of an architect.

I hope you will allow me to point out that the *Central Council for the Care of Churches* and many of the diocesan advisory boards have been enlightened for much longer than your notice would lead readers to suspect. Let me give some examples from previous reports:

2nd Report, 1924–25: "Strict vigilance is exercised to see that no ancient woodwork, whether Gothic or Renaissance, is parted with."

"The nineteenth century mistake of the wholesale condemnation of the Renaissance warns us against any similarly violent reaction from the work of the Gothic Revival."

"It has been possible to retain box pews and other arrangements of historic interest."

3rd Report 1926–27: Two late Classic Churches restored to Georgian dignity from Victorian 'Lombardic.' Former advice repeated: also a section of 'Dont's' such as 'Don't disfigure the walls with cheap memorial tablets, inscribed with ugly lettering, and if you feel that you must do these two bad things, Don't assert that you are doing them to the Glory of God.'"

4th Report, 1928–29: Continued campaign against bad stained glass, modern and Victorian, and plea for Renaissance and Greek Revival work. Three Waterloo Churches re-vivified. "These and other churches of the Waterloo period have engaged the attention of the committee with a view to eliminating late Victorian rearrangements made by men entirely out of sympathy with this kind of architecture." And so on until the Seventh Report you mention.

Unluckily the Council is only advisory. What bad work you may see done of recent years has been done without its sanction. Work on the Council is voluntary and its long battle against city clergymen's wives and "ecclesiastical" so-called art, deserves full recognition.

Yours, etc.,
JOHN BETJEMAN.
Garrards Farm,
Uffington, Berks.

Acknowledgment

The film "stills" which appear on pages 91 to 100 of this issue were kindly lent by the Paramount Film Company, and the illustrations of the Granada Cinemas at North Cheam, Tooting, Woolwich and Greenwich by the Bernstein Theatres, Ltd.

CULTURE IN THE ANTIPODES, OR THE PERILS OF IRONY

Readers of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW may recall a series that ran for some months in this column a year or two back entitled *Progress at Pelvis Bay*, an illustration from which is reproduced above. This was subsequently embodied in a book of the same name and published by Messrs. Murray.

A copy of this volume came into the hands of Professor Biaggini of Adelaide University, South Australia, who used certain sections of it as a test for his students. He has very kindly granted permission for the results of these tests and the conclusions he draws from them to be printed here. They will eventually be embodied in a chapter of his forthcoming work.

The students to whom the tests were set, were drawn from all classes of the community with an average age of 18 to 25, and even included, one understands, some of his professional colleagues.

Professor Biaggini writes: "This experiment was intended not only to be a test of the power of the students to interpret the written word, but to be a way of finding out how aware they are of what are the social processes which are shaping their lives. The evidence is to show they are almost completely unaware of the real character of the world in which they live; apparently the contemporary cult of optimism has so operated upon their good nature and healthy spirits that in spite of armaments, advertisement, suburbia, a corrupt and sensational press, the debasement of literary standards, and the decay of religion, they are still of opinion that progress is automatic and inevitable and that we are living in the best of all possible worlds." His tests, with the students' replies, follow.

TEST ONE

The following passage is the foreword from Osbert Lancaster's *Progress at Pelvis Bay*. Does it make you want to read the book? In the space provided below state *yes* or *no* and then give your reasons.

"Of the Emperor Augustus it was said that he found Rome brick and left it marble, of the makers of modern Pelvis Bay it might well be said that they found it weather-boarding and left it chromium-plate. Progress at Pelvis Bay is a detailed account of a splendid metamorphosis. It traces with loving enthusiasm the development of a flourishing seaside resort from the original poverty-stricken fishing village to the present magnificent marine metropolis covering

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THE TIMBER TRADITION IN GERMANY

Many fine examples of the timber building tradition referred to in the article on page 57 of this issue are to be found in Germany. In the three examples illustrated distinct building types are represented. 1, a group of buildings at Schoemberg in Silesia, "The Twelve Apostles;" it shows the combination of the so-called "Giebel und Laubenbau," carried out in timber, with a stone substructure. 2, an elaborately carved merchant's house from Central Germany. 3, a town hall in Würtemberg, showing a form of timber frame structure which is typical of German mediæval architecture.

many acres of what had heretofore been virgin downland. By means of the numerous carefully chosen illustrations the reader is enabled to follow the various architectural changes that have taken place and to realize with what diligence the authorities have always striven to avail themselves of all that was best in contemporary Art. The author can only hope that this modest epic of enlightened municipal development will inspire others to do likewise, and that through the length and breadth of England's green and pleasant land the numberless rapidly growing urban communities will similarly bear in mind that Taste should never be neglected in the interests of Commerce and Industry and that the path that lies before them is ever onward and upward with the Arts."

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS.

There were 50 people tested; of these 20 said they wanted to read the book, 30 that they didn't. We will examine their opinions, first considering that of the noes.

Eleven of the 30 were bewildered by what they had to read, and their answers show that the passage made no real impact on their minds. Three answers will illustrate this:

"I would not care to read a book on one particular town, especially one with no historical background. It could hardly prove interesting."

"No! There is no story but just facts, therefore it has no appeal for me."

"No! The brief summary of the book given above does not awaken in me any desire to read it. Perhaps the trouble is with the summary, and not with the book itself. It just leaves me cold, that's all." "Why?" "I don't know exactly."

Another group—5 in number—said either that they were ignorant of architecture or uninterested in the subject. Two answers follow:

"I think it would be a difficult book to follow, not knowing the finer points of architecture."

"The improvements effected to a small fishing village no matter how artistic, or otherwise, do not interest the average reader, including myself."

A larger group of the noes—9 in all—rejected the passage for its real or supposed literary imperfections. Three representative opinions follow:

"Journalism at its worst and saying nothing with a maximum of words."

"I protest against 'magnificent marine metropolis.' And unnecessary capitals to common nouns make me think less of it than I did at the beginning. Little things to pick at perhaps but the author of a book worth reading would not have allowed them in the foreword."

"No! I have no desire to read a 'modest epic of enlightened municipal development.'"

The remaining 5 students who rejected the passage did so because they saw the horror of *Pelvis Bay*; they did not, however, appreciate the spirit of the writing. Two examples can speak for the group:

"The 'metamorphosis' of a quiet picturesque fishing-village into a 'chromium-plated metropolis' filled for a couple of months of the year with London trippers, retired colonels, old maids, and talkie theatres, is too horrible."

"No! It leads one to suppose the book to be merely a repetition of what one reads every day of the present progress of the world to 'chromium plating' and so on."

The "yes" answers—20 in all, it will be remembered—are more interesting than the "noes" and are worth quoting at some length.

One man, a stern if muddled moralist, deplores the spread of luxury:

"Yes! Because it seems to give an idea of the way in which the British Empire is going to ruin—putting luxury before efficiency."

A large group—18 in all—take the passage very seriously and want to read the book for reasons which cannot be neatly classified. And what they say is so interesting that they can best speak for themselves. Eight answers are given:

"Curiosity. I haven't read anything of that nature before."

"This inspires one because of its progress. From the old to the new."

"It is interesting and educational."

"I would like to see what could be done, or at least how a town could be well planned and developed so that each part was in harmony with the rest of it."

" From the foreword the book apparently bears upon the subject of urban culture. Although the author hopes rather much of the effect of his book on municipal authorities, the reading of it (as far as can be judged from the foreword) should be of benefit to the individual student."

" Yes ! A book of this type should always be encouraged because it gives inspiration of the right type, although it may not be particularly interesting reading, from the point of view of the public generally. However, I would enjoy it."

" Yes ! I should like to read this book. It is right that we should know how development is conducted. If things did not go ahead in the above manner, the world would come to a standstill."

" Yes ! because I'm interested in books dealing with the growth of cities or villages—especially if the Growth be of an Artistic nature."

There was one bright answer : let it shine for itself in a naughty world.

" Yes ! Would provide contemptuous amusement and reveal the minds of the ' progressive ' small town enthusiast. The only pity is that some may take it seriously, but ideal for one with a sense of humour."

COMMENTS.

The outstanding feature of the students' opinions quoted above is that a group of five did not want to read *Progress at Pelvis Bay* because, knowing the horror of suburbia, they were not desirous of reading of its growth; and that a group of eighteen did want to read the book because it was "educational," and " an inspiration of the right type," and an account of progress. In this group both those who share Mr. Lancaster's apprehension of the ravages of the jerry-builder and those who don't, miss altogether the ironic spirit in which he writes. Of the remaining 27 papers only 10 are worthy of serious consideration—the 9 written by those who objected to the passage on the grounds of its supposed literary imperfections, and the one which said it "would provide contemptuous amusement." The justification of the latter view will be made at another time; in the meantime a word might be said of the former.

It was only natural that those who were unable to detect the spirit of the passage should seize on what would consequently seem its literary imperfections. After all, if Mr. Lancaster were to sell his services to the land agents or to the Shire Council of *Pelvis Bay* and with his tongue in his cheek set about writing advertisements for the local vested interests, he would be taken seriously by a much larger number than the two per cent. that are intelligent enough to enjoy his book. His work, even much as it stands, would very obviously sell land and attract large crowds of Sunday afternoon visitors, and his triumph is that he has so well hit off the style of land agents and tourist bureaux; in fact, he has a rare degree of that higher two-facedness so useful to those who deal in what is euphemistically called Real Estate! But those who failed to realize this and consequently took the passage seriously, should have detected what in the circumstances would become journalistic nonsense—" splendid metamorphosis," " loving enthusiasm," " magnificent marine metropolis," " Best in contemporary Art," " this modest epic of enlightened municipal development," "England's green and pleasant land," "onward and upward," and the capital letters for " Taste," " Commerce," " Industry," and "Arts." What is puzzling is that those who did see all these signals should not have gone a step forward in reason and asked themselves the question—Could even the most idiotic journalist sustain the style through so many sentences? If he could he would in his wickedness have become a perverted genius, an artist given over to the devil.

It was said above in introducing the test that its purpose in part was to ascertain how aware was the student of his environment, and that the evidence was to show that he was almost totally unaware. The reader will agree that it has done this, and after examining it he must have wondered what did go on in the students' minds as they read that the " makers of modern Pelvis Bay" " found it weatherboarding and left it chromium-plate:" perhaps the same things that went on in Babbitt's mind as he sat in the barber's shop and thought that the gadgets surrounding him were amongst the triumphs of applied science, or the same things as might go on in the mind of an emperor of a barbaric kingdom as he saw it made splendid with gee-gaws from Woolworths. The conclusion to which we are driven is that the world's millions are taking seriously the universal suburbia which is increasingly our environment; they have lost sight of ends in their admiration of means, they do not see that domestic convenience, cleanliness, good drainage, street lighting, and so on are mere desirable adjuncts to civilization and not civilization itself, and that the sleek and well-fed people they see in soap and cigarette and cosmetic advertisements and in the film magazines are not the final products of human evolution. A proper educational process would show them this; it would bring home to them that " the essence of an epoch of expansion is a movement of ideas " and not the construction of a universal suburbia inhabited by unreflective people almost totally unaware of the significant things which are going on around them.

As a supplementary exercise to the above test, and as an additional text upon which to base further teaching, another passage from *Progress at Pelvis Bay* was set for reading. It was presented as is shown below :

TEST TWO

After reading the following passage state with your reasons whether or not you would like to live in Belvedere Avenue :

" *The best example of this praiseworthy anxiety on the part of the council for the preservation of that rustic beauty with which the immediate neighbourhood of Pelvis Bay is so singularly blessed, is perhaps to be found in the new housing estate on the west cliff. Here the greatest care has been taken to avoid all suspicion of urban monotony and the utmost variety of architecture has therefore been encouraged. Belvedere Avenue . . . was one of the first to be completed, and already well over half the houses are occupied: a striking tribute to the council's policy of insisting on the erection of dwellings with an individual character of their own and turning a deaf ear to all those cranks and so-called Modernists who are so constantly urging the merits of vast stream-lined, undecorated blocks of flats or rather tenements; despite the fact that they are likely to have little appeal to a people whose proud boast it is that ' An Englishman's Home is his Castle.' Do they realize, one wonders, when they try to foist these continental barracks on us, that English is the only language that has a word for ' home' ?*"

The results obtained from this test were very similar to those we have already seen, so there is no reason to set them out. Not a single student said, or implied, that he and his friends were living in Belvedere Avenue, or a street which was different from it only in name; and that, although we laugh conventionally at the jerry-builder and the tenth-rate domestic architect, in our hearts we respect them and unquestioningly accept their standards. Thus we have indirect evidence that in our art of everyday life—architecture—we are as much at sea as we are in the matter of the written and the spoken word. Is there any reason to suppose that in music, in sculpture, in painting, in house-furnishing, and the other social arts, we are any different? The major social problem is to improve the quality of life rather than to raise the standard of living. To feed, clothe, and shelter the people is easy enough if we want to do it; how to cultivate their minds and refine their spirits is another and a more difficult and urgent problem. The sooner we attend to it the better.

Lest we should feel inclined to be slightly contemptuous of our Australian relatives, the author states that judging from his own experience, the result of a similar questionnaire in this country would not produce any widely different result.

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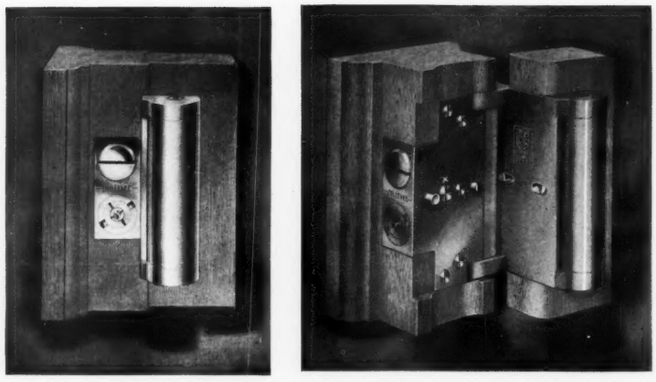

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By BRIAN GRANT

Colour and the Architect

There is available to-day an almost bewildering diversity of decorative materials. The modern architect is, I suppose, to be accounted fortunate in having so wide a range at his disposal, though there are times when one is compelled to think otherwise.

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An architect with a good colour sense is a comparatively rare individual and those who are conscious of their deficiency in this respect must doubtless be embarrassed by the surfeit of highly colourful materials. The "off-white" vogue popular for some years past and still favoured by so many is a form of "playing for safety"; this choice of a single neutral colour and avoidance of bright contrasting colours provides, we are told, an unobtrusive background against which the ladies in their gaily coloured dresses are shown off to the best advantage. "The ladies' frocks provide the decorative effect: we provide the setting"—frankly I am wearied by this escapist attitude towards interior decoration. Cream walls, cream ceiling, cream rugs, cream upholstery and cream curtains. Very chaste, very delightful, but with all the colours of the rainbow to choose from why so timid and achromatic!

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A comparatively new decorative material is "*Traffolyte*," which is available in various forms for different applications and in a wide variety of colours and designs with gloss or matt finishes. It is said to have great durability, high mechanical strength, flexibility and a surface that does not chip or flake and is resistant to oils, cosmetics, mild alkalies and acids; it is used principally for wall panelling and, in veneer form, for table and counter tops, display cabinets, built-in cupboards and as a veneer finish for furniture. It is a dense, strong material one-eighth of an inch in thickness with the colour or pattern embodied in the material, not merely applied as a surface decoration.

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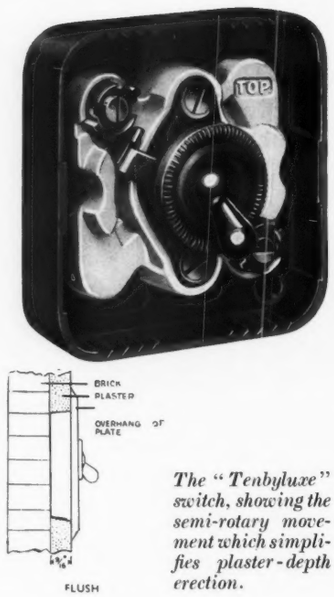

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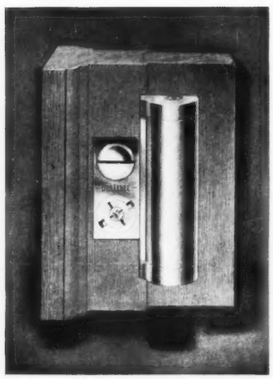

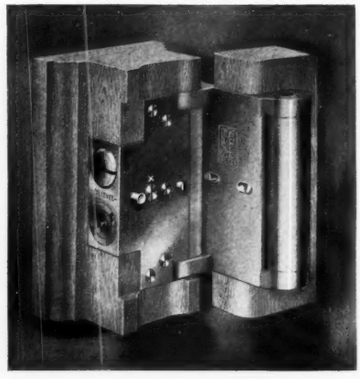

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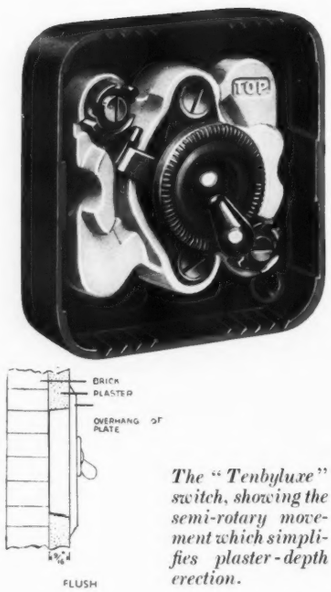

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