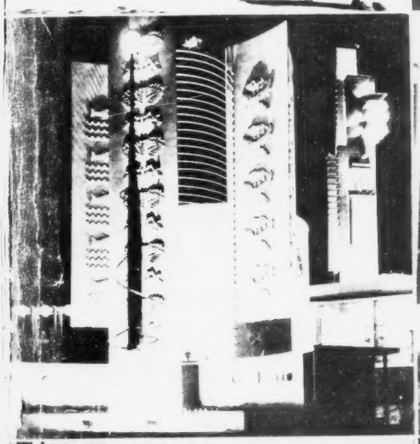
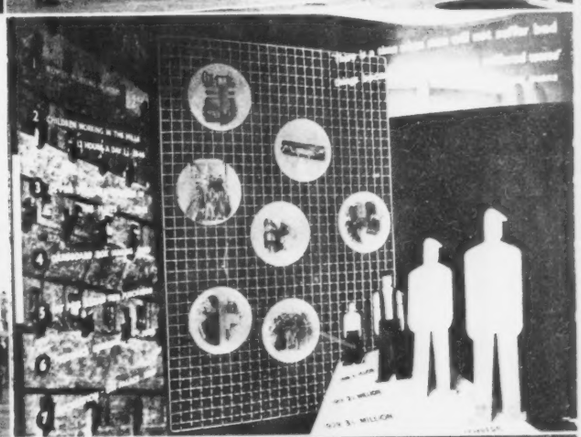
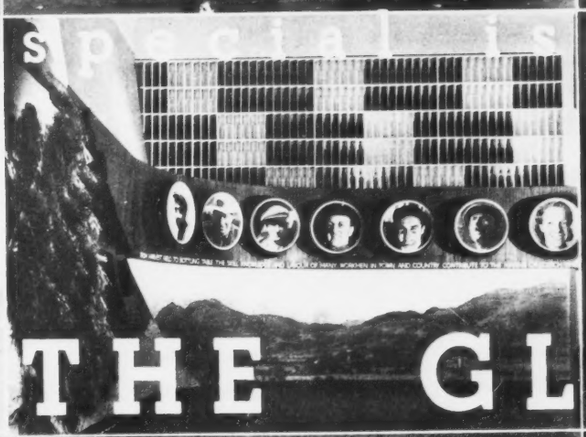
The Architectural Review







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THE GLASGOW EXHIBITION

JULY 1938

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THE
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration

Vol. LXXXIV No. 500. *July*, 1938

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FOREWORD

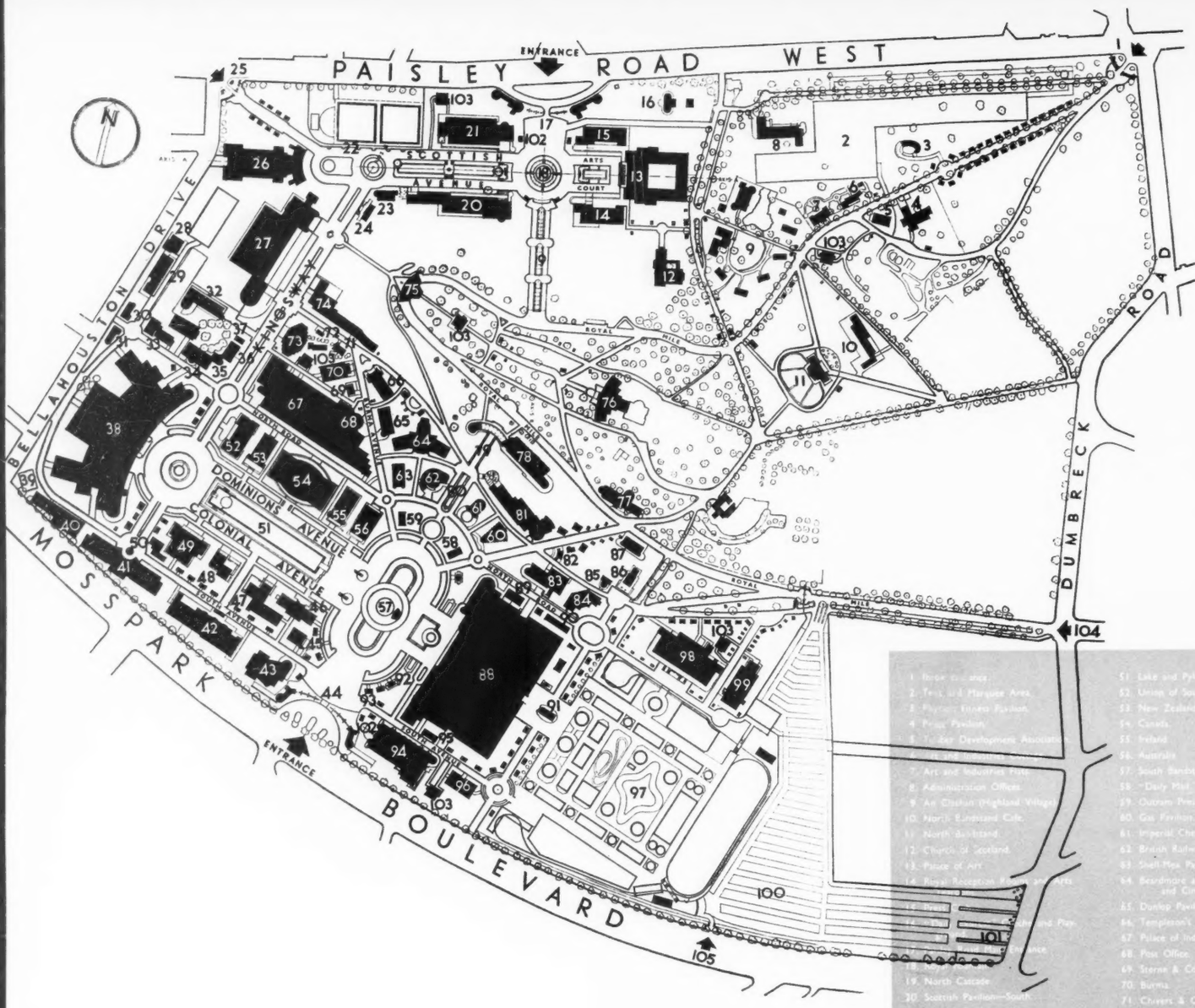
Exhibitions have always served as the nursery of young architectural ideas and as architecture's testing-ground. This is partly because exhibition architecture is essentially of the extrovert type: architect and display designer combine to arrest the visitor's attention, and the chief weapon of the latter is the exploitation of novelty. New ideas are employed for the sake of their newness, and those which in practice disclose other more significant virtues become absorbed into architectural currency. And it is partly because exhibition buildings are only temporary, so that their designers feel themselves able to make experiments that might be rash elsewhere. Thus architecture refreshes itself when it may be said to be at play, and has in the past periodically renewed its vitality through a sequence of great exhibitions.

That is our excuse for devoting a whole issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW to illustrating an exhibition, as we did last year for Paris and hope to do next year for New York.

Examination in detail is a little like having to distribute prizes at a school speech day. Certain achievements seem to deserve commendation and certain failures the reverse, but any discussion of the merits of each performance can only have real validity when it is related to what might have been made of the same opportunity or what improvement is shown over other people's performances in search of similar solutions. The comparative method adopted for other exhibition issues has therefore been repeated here. No attempt has been made to cover or comment on every bit of the exhibition. What has been attempted is to single out first such things as are worth perpetuating, and secondly such things as are instructive, if even by their failure.

If we regard each exhibition as it occurs, whether it springs up in Glasgow, Paris, Stockholm or Rio de Janeiro, as a new unit in a series through which the modern architectural vocabulary is developing itself and trying out its paces the peculiar value of exhibition architecture is shown. But we must remember also the prestige value of exhibition architecture and display. A country's exhibit at an Empire or International Exhibition is that country in miniature. The merits of Glasgow have done a lot to increase British prestige among her own people. Next year in New York we will have to withstand the competition of the world.

On the facing page: looking down the main gallery of the United Kingdom Government Pavilion. The four display halls containing the actual exhibits are reached through the doors on the left. See also pages 30-32.



1. Rose Gardens
2. Tea and Marquee Area
3. Physical Fitness Pavilion
4. Press Pavilion
5. Tudor Development Association
6. Art and Industries Hall
7. Administration Offices
8. "An Clachan" (Highland Village)
9. North Bandstand Cafe
10. North Bandstand
11. Church of Scotland
12. Palace of Art
13. Royal Reception Hall and Concerts
14. Rotunda
15. Theatre and Open Air Stage
16. Fountain
17. North Cascade
18. Scottish Pavilion—South
19. Scottish Pavilion—North
20. Advertisement Hoarding & Kiosks
21. B.B.C.
22. "The Times"
23. Bellahouston Drive Entrance
24. Concert Hall
25. United Kingdom Government Pavilion
26. Telephone Exchange
27. Technical Offices
28. Fire Station
29. Ambulance
30. City of Glasgow Pavilion
31. Police Station
32. Scottish Milk Marketing Board Model Dairy
33. S.C.W.S. Milk Bar
34. Ross's Dairy
35. Bee-keepers' Association
36. Palace of Industries—West
37. Allotments
38. S.C.W.S. Restaurant
39. Industries, Shipping and Travel (Northern Ireland)
40. Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
41. Cinema
42. Mosspark Boulevard Main Entrance
43. Wool Pavilion
44. West African Colonies
45. Southern Rhodesia, Victoria Falls and East Africa
46. Empire Tea Pavilion
47. Malaya, British West Indies, Composite Colonial Exhibits
48. H Corquodale & Co. Ltd.
49. Lake and Pylons
50. Union of South Africa
51. New Zealand
52. Canada
53. Ireland
54. Australia
55. South Bandstand
56. "Daily Mail"
57. Outram Press ("Glasgow Herald")
58. Gas Pavilion
59. Imperial Chemical Industries
60. British Railways
61. Shell-Mex Pavilion
62. Beardmore and Colvilles Pavilion and Cinema
63. Dunlop Pavilion
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65. Palace of Industries—North
66. Post Office
67. Sterne & Co.
68. Burma
69. Chivers & Co.
70. Ministry of Labour
71. Post Office Exhibit
72. Women of the Empire Pavilion
73. Atholl Restaurant
74. Tower of Empire
75. Roman Catholic Pavilion
76. Garden Club
77. Grand Staircase
78. South Cascade
79. The Distillers Company
80. Chance Brothers
81. George Restaurant
82. Army and Royal Air Force Pavilion
83. Christian Science
84. Episcopal Church of Scotland
85. Main Electrical Sub-Station
86. Palace of Engineering
87. Royal National Lifeboat Institution
88. "Daily Record"
89. Scottish Motor Traction Company
90. Union Bank of Scotland
91. The "Scotsman"
92. Coal Pavilion
93. Glenfield & Kennedy
94. Rubber Pavilion
95. Amusements Park
96. Amusements Park Restaurant
97. Dance Hall
98. Car Park
99. Entrance to Car Park
100. Information Bureaux
101. Public Lavatories
102. Amusements Park Entrance

The photographs of the Glasgow Exhibition reproduced on Plates ii-ix of this issue and the majority of those reproduced in the Portfolio of Exhibition Architecture which occupies pages 25-40 were specially taken for THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW *by Mr. Alfred Cracknell. Other photographs are by Messrs. Bryan and Norman Westwood, Mr. Robert Gee and Messrs. Sims. The line sketches are by Mr. Hugh Casson.*

The illustration on the right is a view of the last Glasgow Exhibition, held in 1888, and predominantly oriental in style. The illustrations on the following pages will show what advances Glasgow has made in 50 years. (By courtesy of the "Illustrated London News.")

GLASGOW 1938

A CRITICAL SURVEY

By J. M. Richards

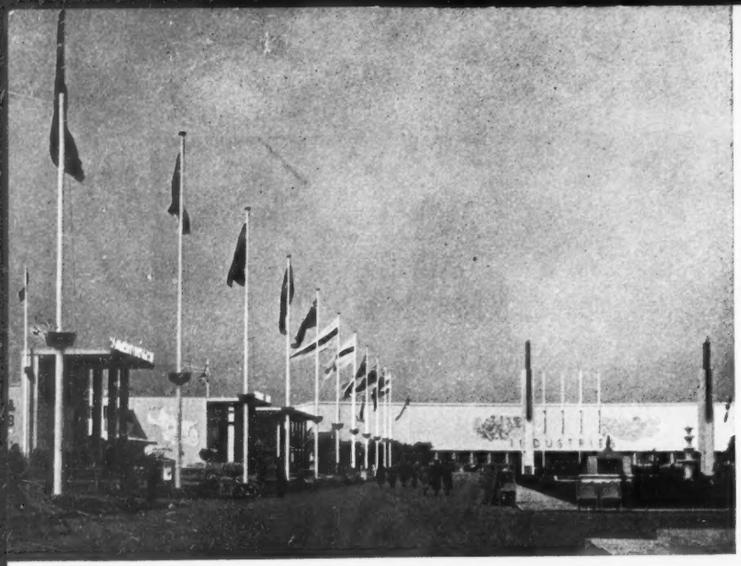
WHEN introducing the special issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW on last year's Paris Exhibition the editor observed that "not since Stockholm of 1930 has a large-scale exhibition been conceived as a unity and appeared a unity." If Glasgow of 1938 has not combined a perfect unity with the precocious architectural maturity that Asplund achieved in Stockholm, the remarkable degree of unity that it has achieved, together with an imaginative freedom of planning that marks a final departure from the monumental clichés of the Beaux Arts school, is sufficient to give it a place among important recent exhibitions. And the credit for these achievements belongs of course to Mr. Thomas S. Tait, of Sir John Burnet, Tait and Lorne, architect-in-chief to the Exhibition.

An Empire Exhibition, in a country as architecturally backward as Britain, cannot expect to draw upon the same richness of architectural talent as an International Exhibition. We did not expect Glasgow to make the same active contributions to the sum of modern architectural experience as Paris did last year; in fact, with only the dismal memory of Wembley to guide us, we expected a great deal less; and the fact that the visitor to Glasgow finds himself in fact criticizing this Exhibition by recent international standards, even if because of that his praise is sometimes qualified, is the greatest tribute Mr. Tait could wish for.

His achievement is to a large extent an organizational one. To the fact that every detail was either the direct invention of his pencil, or in some degree under his personal control, is due the consistency of which we have spoken. And this consistency is remarkable among small things as among big. It is easy enough, given reasonable architectural competence, to achieve consistency among the major buildings, the narrowest province of the architect; but one knows so well from past experience how the appearance of unity is destroyed by the litter, as it were, of the foreground: by signs and advertisements, kiosks that sell picture postcards or exhibition rock, and the assorted oriental styles with which the commercial gentlemen embellished their wayside stands at Wembley and elsewhere or the equivalent jazz-modern that they would presumably favour today. In this country we have not that elusive sureness of touch which enables the French to do small things spontaneously and well. But Mr. Tait's firm control

THE PLAN

Bellahouston Park had the virtue of providing ready-made both the flat sites necessary for the major buildings of an exhibition and the variations of level to give interest and drama that, for example, the Wembley site lacked. It was also well wooded. The dominating feature was a long oval-shaped hill, quite steep on three sides, occupying the centre. The architect's chief problem of course lay in how he should take advantage of this hill, and Mr. Tait's real achievement is that he has done it in an apparently undramatic way, that actually gives the Exhibition far more character, and is more efficient from the point of view of circulation, than the obviously dramatic way. The latter would have been to have used the hill as the culminating point of a formal ascending lay-out. Mr. Tait, however, has preserved the hill more or less in its original grass-covered wooded state, as a retreat from which the visitor can look down from a distance on the crowds and noise and has, as it were, folded the Exhibition round it along three principal avenues forming an approximate horseshoe shape. Thereby he has gained mystery and variety in the central part of the Exhibition: none of the avenues are too long; the whole Exhibition is not disclosed on one momentarily dramatic but eventually boring vista. The only buildings on the hill are a couple of restaurants, a church and a few kiosks (which have been planned so as to avoid the destruction of any trees); also the tower on the top, the only concession to conventional drama, which is approached by flights of steps on either side, linking the two ends of the horseshoe across the hill.



The orderly and consequently inviting effect of an exhibition in which the architect has been allowed full control of all details is shown in these two photographs. The upper one is a view looking down Colonial Avenue (51 on the plan on page 2) towards the Palace of Industry at the end. The lower one shows a row of the standard kiosks along one of the smaller tree-lined avenues at the foot of Bellahouston Hill.

has proved an adequate substitute. With the enlightened co-operation of the authorities he has played the rôle of architect in its widest sense. He has made himself fully responsible for design throughout the Exhibition and has succeeded in imposing his own standards so that only here and there does commercial ambition break out into obtrusive ostentation, and so that all accessories are neat and harmonious—with the exception, by the way, of the litter bins (see page 12), whose faces the authorities insisted on letting out for advertising purposes, presumably for the sake of the revenue the advertisements would bring; but this is the sole example of amenity being sacrificed to immediate profit. Finally, even some of the larger buildings, such of those of certain Dominions, whose clumsy designs were produced independently by the Dominions themselves, have been toned into relative harmlessness by Mr. Tait's pencil in its capacity of supervising censor.

But the consistency of the Glasgow Exhibition is a subtler and a completer one than the mere avoidance of discordant elements. We have mentioned only the consistency of architectural style, but the important thing about Glasgow is that it represents a whole-hearted acceptance of the spectacular as well as of the functional possibilities of the modern idiom. It may well do for this country what Stockholm did for the Continent of Europe in 1930. Thanks to Mr. Tait we can henceforward forget about the need for being modern in the sense of not being period-revival, and set about being modern in a more positive way.

But besides the long-awaited consistency of architectural style, the Glasgow Exhibition shows consistency of several other kinds; as for example consistency of surface and colour. The need for colour, particularly beneath drab Glasgow skies, has been realized, and the standard finish of the Exhibition buildings (of which more later) has offered the opportunity of applying colour to the external surfaces without restriction. The colour might have been applied with more boldness—as a relief from off-whites and pastel shades—and with more sense of being frankly a surface application allowing the use of arbitrary pattern and texture, but each piece of colour, and the colours of flags, signs and ground equipment, is carefully considered as part of a single scheme.

Finally there is consistency of scale, and this gives us the real key to the Exhibition's importance as a piece of architectural organization. For this consistency of scale derives from the fact that the whole Exhibition was planned by the architects in terms of the necessities of speedy production and easy supervision. It is this fact that made what would otherwise have been a superhuman task of organization even possible, and that gives the Exhibition its chief claim to significance as a contribution to modern architecture: a contribution which, as we have said, is even more one of organization than one of design.

All modern organization depends on working for mass production: that is, on standardization. And the three clues to Mr. Tait's organization are: the standardization of materials; resulting from this the standardization of sizes of components ; and the standardization of the basic design of the smaller buildings. The necessity of the first was made clear from the beginning, and one of the earliest of Mr. Tait's tasks was to investigate the relative merits of the various available materials for the external finish. These had to be of the nature of sheathing materials that could be adapted to cover the various structural frameworks—steel or timber or a combination of the two—that temporary construction consists in, and they had to have the other obvious qualities of ease of handling, economy, availability in large quantities, reasonable weather and thermal resistance for temporary use and suitability for varying decorative finish. After a good deal of research the material chosen was asbestos-cement sheeting, which throughout the Exhibition provides the external surface of every building, large and small, with a few exceptions, though varied occasionally by the use of corrugated asbestos sheeting or corrugated metal. This decision having been reached, the co-operation of the manufacturer was sought and as a result certain special forms of sheet were evolved and standardized for mass-production: notably a right-angle corner piece to avoid butt-jointing at the corners and a cornice or parapet section. Otherwise normal standard-size sheets are used throughout, and this standardization formed the basis of design through the whole Exhibition. The rectangle, that is to say, of the standard asbestos sheet formed a unit on which all buildings were based as on a grid, in plan and elevation, so that not only are all wall surfaces designed in multiples of the standard size of a sheet of asbestos-cement, but window and door openings conform to the same dimensions. Windows, which are largely of wood, are standardized into a few types, the most frequently

used of which, the horizontal rectangle, is an exact subdivision of the asbestos sheet unit, and the large glazed screens, which in the case of some pavilions act as external walls, are designed on the same unit. In the case of one building, that of the Distillers' Company, the standard sheets of external wall surfacing on which the design of the elevations was based (in this case plaster-board instead of asbestos-cement) were actually delivered painted their final primrose yellow colour and only had to be slipped into metal channels already fixed to the timber frame of the building.

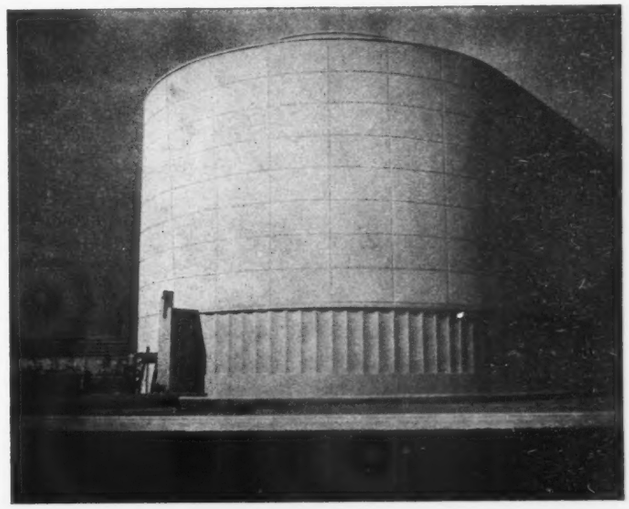
Another series of preliminary experiments was needed to perfect the method of jointing the asbestos-cement sheets. A new mastic inner joint over the timber studding allowed the sheets to be simply butt-jointed, giving a continuous flush surface with absolute water-tightness. In the case of the vertically corrugated sheeting an ordinary overlapping joint was of course both simple and adequate.

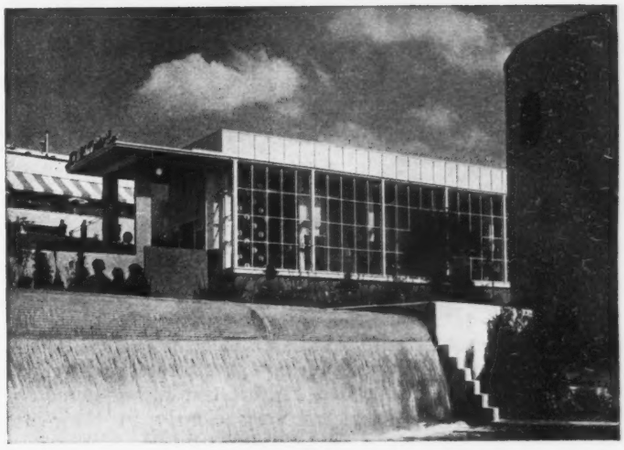
The value of the careful standardization outlined above is obvious for its aid to economy of production, but its effect on design is no less important. A gigantic undertaking such as the design of every detail of a major exhibition in a very short time can only be carried through if responsibility is distributed among a large number of designers; that is to say, after the principal has made the sketch design for each portion, it must be worked out in detail by an assistant who must be given considerable responsibility for the final form it takes; and if the unit on which all dimensions are based is determined beforehand, if standard sizes of windows and other components have been fixed, there is little risk of the variation in scale or emphasis that is apt to occur when a number of hands are at work more or less independently.

We have also mentioned the standardization of the basic design of the smaller buildings. For the innumerable buildings in this category that an exhibition seems to require, kiosks for the sale of tartan tweed or Bellahouston rock, newspaper stalls, information bureaux and the like, Mr. Tait designed a limited number of standard buildings, suited in general plan to the purpose they had to fulfil, and their owners or proprietors were allowed only to add their own trade-marks or embellishments under his supervision. As we have said, some of the final results show better taste than others—some jazz vulgarities seem to have been too insistent even for Mr. Tait's firm control, but the Exhibition as a whole has benefited enormously by the consistency of the idiom throughout.

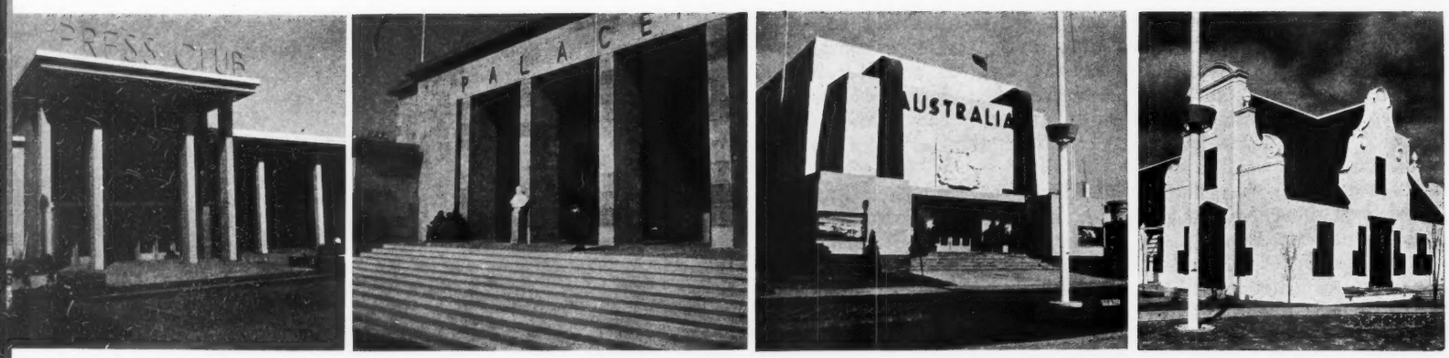
So the general character of the Exhibition can be summed up as deriving itself from the masterly superintendence of one designer, from the proper exploitation of modern mass production technique and—one more factor—from the possibility of mechanical spray painting: no universal use of a synthetic walling material, which needs an artificial instead of possessing a natural finish, would have been possible without the ability to apply acres of paint in a very short time. And the constant variation of colour in the identically surfaced paintwork of all exteriors is a dominant characteristic of the design.

The virtual absence of natural materials, as distinct from synthetic materials, has been criticized as making the Exhibition appear to be made of cardboard. The answer to this is, of course, that it *is* made of cardboard, in the sense that wall-board, plaster-board and asbestos-cement sheeting are scientific weather-resisting improvements on the cardboard idea, and show a very sensible choice of material. The light and temporary appearance that results, and that is presumably the object of this criticism, is exactly the quality exhibition architecture should have. Temporary, prefabricated construction postulates a different æsthetic that we have to get used to; dislike of it is of the same order as was Ruskin's dislike of the building for the Great Exhibition on grounds of its being no more than a great conservatory. To say that a surface looks like the non-





The design of nearly all the Exhibition buildings is based on a dimension unit derived from the standard sizes of the sheathing materials with which the steel and wood structural framing is covered. The upper photograph, of the end of the United Kingdom Government Pavilion, shows this standard rectangle used to make an incised pattern on the wall surface. The centre photograph, of the Distillers' building, shows how the sheathing to the parapet (in this case of plaster-board), has its standard unit exactly repeated in the glazing of the windows. The lower photograph is a close-up of the wall over the entrance to the Palace of Industry. The piers between the windows, centred under the joints in the asbestos-cement sheathing, show that the dimensions of the plan are also made to depend on the same standard sizes. No attempt is made to hide the joints crossing the mural decoration.



Variations in architectural expression. Left to right: the prevalent modern idiom employed by Mr. Tait (exemplified in the Press Club), frankly suggesting a temporary building of light timber construction; the more conservative style of the Palace of Art (architect, Thomas S. Tait associated with Launcelot H. Ross), the only important one of the Exhibition buildings that is to be permanent, which justifies its use of more conventional materials if not its rather timidly academic design: "modernism" as interpreted by the Dominions, consisting of heavy masses that entirely belie the nature of the building and the gaiety of the occasion (architect of the Australian pavilion, A. L. Abbott); and an alternative to Dominion-modern: South Africa's reproduction of a Dutch-style farmhouse—in the wrong spirit but preferable because at least well carried out. Architect, James Miller.

weight-bearing synthetic sheathing material that it is (and that cardboard is) is no disparagement. Such criticism only becomes valid when the cardboard (or asbestos or wall-board) is trying to look like something solider. In Glasgow we have been spared the imitations of masonry that some recent exhibitions have attempted in similar light materials, though certain of the buildings, such as the Palaces of Engineering and Industry have failed to express the character of lightly sheathed frame construction very clearly in their use of synthetic sheeting to form monumental façades with the light construction concealed behind them. However in other buildings, notably in the Palace of Industry North and the Concert Hall Restaurant, a new standard has been set for this country in the production of buildings that look as temporary as they are but have as well real æsthetic significance.

If any argument is needed in favour of the employment of frankly temporary structure and "cardboard" finishes, we only have to visit Wembley thirteen years after its exhibition closed and see its all-too-solid buildings still surviving, adapted today for industrial use.

When we come to discussing the individual features of the Glasgow Exhibition perhaps the most significant fact we discover is this: that the official exhibit of the British Government leads the field, as indeed it ought to do. But we have been for so long accustomed to finding the Government contribution always the least aware of developments of the moment. We still remember with shame the 1935 Exhibition at Brussels when the British Government was the only government that retained the not very dignified practice of treating its pavilion as so much floor space which it let out to commercial firms for the display of their wares. We remember how last year in Paris, though the British Government at last represented us with a national exhibit, the exhibit still consisted largely of a trade display of the products of our minor industries. At Glasgow Whitehall has fully made amends, not only by staging a serious display on a scale worthy of the British Government, but by employing in its design probably the most talented team of display designers now working in this country, so that in exhibition technique alone the interior of the British Government Pavilion (which lies behind an exterior imposing in scale if rather *banal* in conception) is the most distinguished piece of work in the Exhibition. The Government technical experts and the display designers have shown that a serious exposition of industrial and administrational problems and achievements, science dramatized in terms of its human elements, can be at the same time as informative and as thrilling as anyone could ask. The British Government is at last an enlightened patron of modern design; a good augury for the New York Fair of 1939.

In sad contrast to this are the efforts of the Dominions and Colonies. Apart from their disappointing buildings which, in spite of anything Mr. Tait was able to do to bring them into line with the gay modernism seen elsewhere, are clumsy and uninspiring—architecturally "Dominion Avenue" is the least distinguished section of the Exhibition and shows quite frankly no grasp whatever of what modern architecture means—apart from this their interior display shows practically no advance since Wembley: it remains a mixture of conventional trade stands and even more pathetically conventional displays of national products: the familiar accumulations of pyramids of apples, stuffed fish and coloured photographs of spectacular scenery. It can only be hoped that the Commissioners for the various Dominions in this country will have paid a visit to Glasgow and compared the display inside the British Government Pavilion with that—if display it can be called—inside their own. They will see that the Mother Country has something to teach them yet. There must be display designers to be found in the Dominions capable of producing something stimulating, contemporary and informative if given the chance.

One cannot complain with so much reason at the disappointing interiors of the three major buildings of the Exhibition: the Palace of Engineering and the two Palaces of Industry, considering that in this case they are frankly trade shows: the space has been enclosed by the Exhibition promoters and let to commercial firms to do what they like in, subject only to conforming to Mr. Tait's architectural framework in the design of their stands. This restriction, at any rate in the main Palace of Industry, makes for a

[continued on page 7]

ENTRANCE

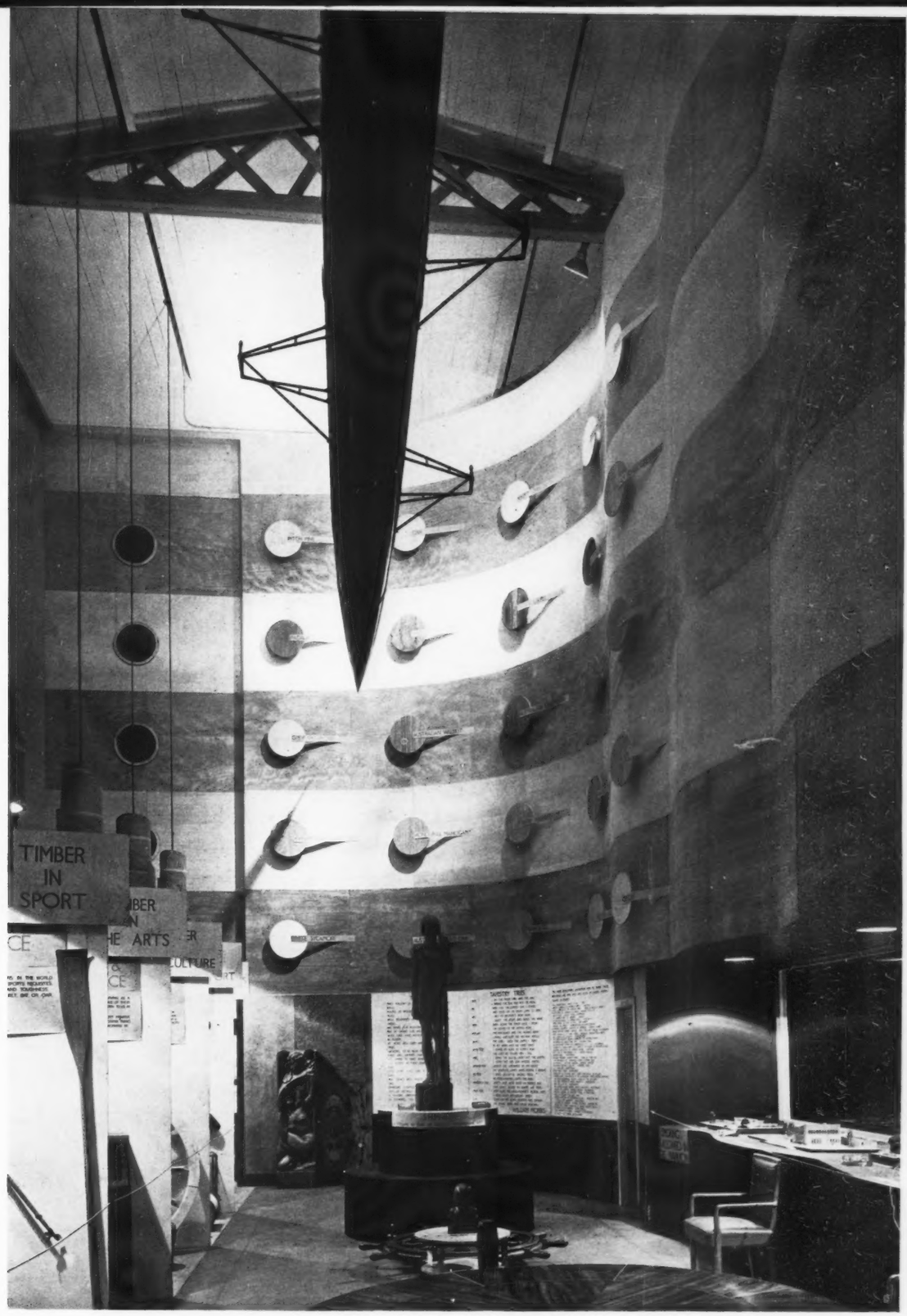
Among the many virtues of the Exhibition is the high standard of design and the fertility of imagination shown in what may be called the machinery of the Exhibition: public entrances, administrative offices, restaurants and cafés, kiosks, signposts, information stands: miscellaneous details which in past exhibitions have sometimes been neglected in favour of the central pavilions, but over which at Glasgow the architect-in-chief, Mr. Thomas S. Tait has kept a firm control. This is the Mosspark entrance. The pylons, which mark a crescent of payboxes and turnstiles, are painted blue and the lattice woodwork linking them at the top is white.

GARDEN CLUB

Probably the most successful individual building is the Garden Club with its colonnade linking it with a glazed rotunda containing shops. It is situated part of the way up the hill which forms the core of the Exhibition site, at the top of a monumental flight of steps on the axis of the Mosspark entrance. The Garden Club is illustrated in detail on pages 26-27. Architects, Thomas S. Tait and T. W. Marwick.

UNION BANK OF SCOTLAND

This branch bank, which stands immediately within the Mosspark entrance, is one of the most distinguished of the smaller buildings. It is very simple in design, consisting of a solid white-rendered frame to an entirely open front consisting of plate-glass panels, each 14 feet by 6 feet, through which the counter and cash-desk can be seen. Scarlet neon lighting forms the lettering above. Architect, Thomas S. Tait.



TIMBER PAVILION

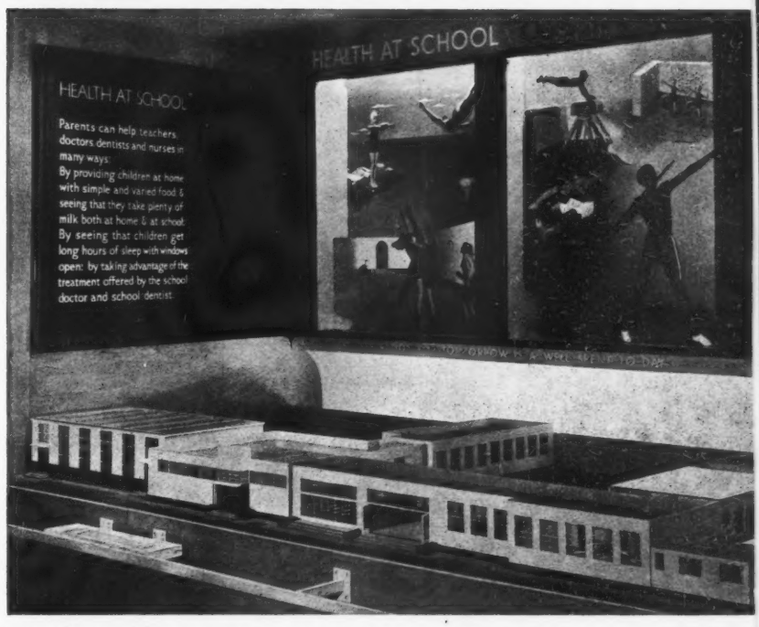
The timber industry is one of the few that has produced a comprehensive exhibit to explain its products to the public, as distinct from the more general practice among industry of leaving it to private firms to display their own wares on stand space rented in the Palaces of Engineering and Industry or in special buildings such as the Coal and the Shipping and Travel Pavilions. This is an interior of the Timber Development Association's Pavilion which stands in the extreme north-east corner of the grounds. On the left and in the foreground are displays of various wood products, on the right are models of wooden buildings, the walls are used to show the grain and colouring of different types of wood and the ceiling is floodlit from the inside of a racing shell, a well-chosen example of fine timber craftsmanship. See also page 36. Architect, R. Furneaux Jordan.

[continued from page 6]

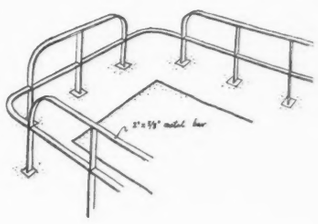
high degree of neatness and regularity, but the general effect of these buildings is hardly distinguishable from any recent British Industries Fair.

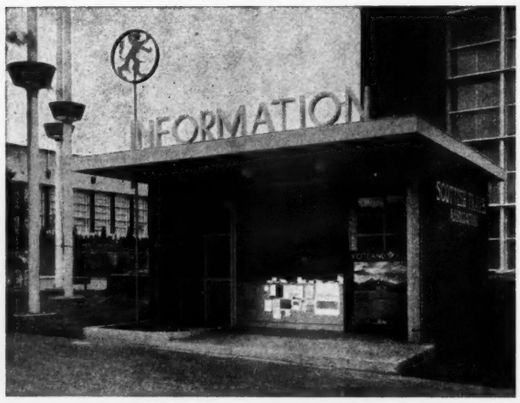
And it may be timely here to suggest that this type of Palace of Industry might be abandoned in future Exhibitions. In the British Industries Fair, that exists solely to enable wholesale buyers to see in a convenient place what new wares our manufacturers are putting on the market, and which does not pretend to cater for the general public, this type of exhibition no doubt is essential; but where prestige is involved, where the visitor is generally present in the capacity of tourist not as buyer, a designed exhibit seems in every way more suitable. In Glasgow the two Palaces of Industry, in spite of their careful architectural framework, house an incredibly tasteless collection of tawdry and shoddy-looking goods—furniture, china, glass and fabrics. Even in the latter category, where Scotch tweeds are world-famous, the standard is little higher—except in one very well-designed display by the Scottish Council for Art in Industry in the Palace of Industry North (see page 38) which suggests what this body could do if it were given the chance of displaying the whole of Scottish Industry to the public.

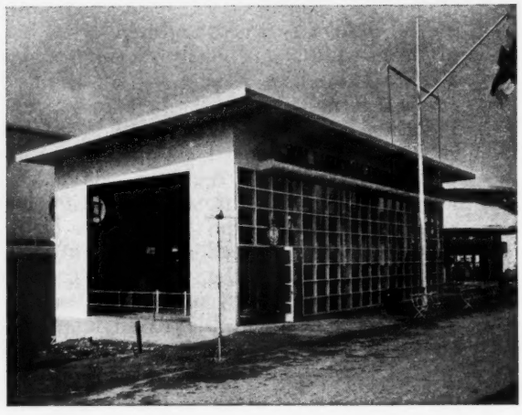
It is horrible to think what must be the impression of, say, a visitor from the Continent when he walks through the Palaces of Industry at Glasgow (the Palace of Engineering is only better because engineering products cannot help having certain fine qualities however badly they are displayed). Not realizing that these buildings are not what

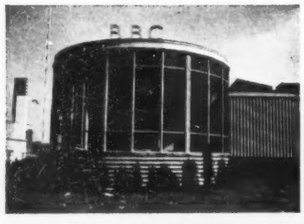


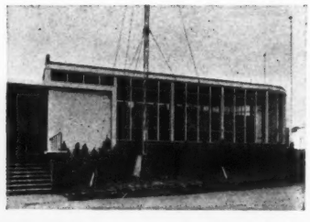
The displays occupying the four vaulted halls of the United Kingdom Government Pavilion probably constitute the best individual piece of design in the Exhibition. Three of the halls show the work of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in connexion with the Coal-mining, Iron and Steel and Shipbuilding industries, the fourth is a "Fitter Britain" display, dealing with health, leisure and housing, organized by the Ministry of Health. Top left, the Coal Hall with in the centre a demonstration of the uses of coal as a raw chemical material, and on the end wall a mural diagram on coal production by James Fitton. Top right, an experimental tank with model hull in the Shipbuilding Hall. Centre, a display entitled "Health at School" in the "Fitter Britain" hall, with photomontage by John Barker, and a model of a nursery school made by pupils of the Ealing School of Art. Bottom, the same hall showing the ingenious working model of a human body, designed by Richard Huws (the working parts are viewed from the other side: see page 19) and a mural painting by Eric Fraser. The sketch shows the neat design of the railing round the figure. Display designer, Misha Black.









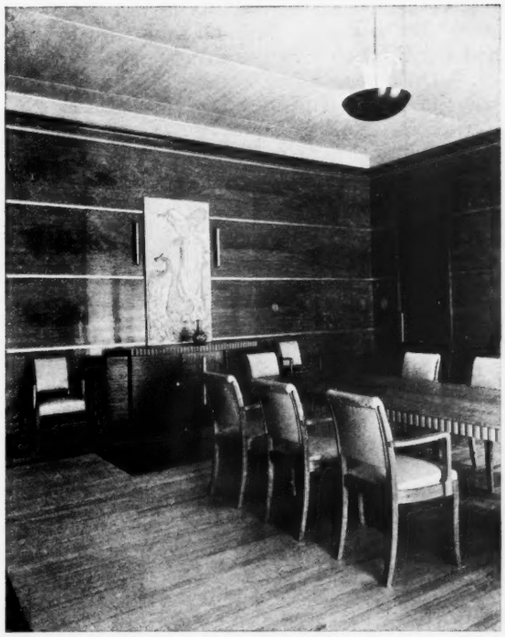


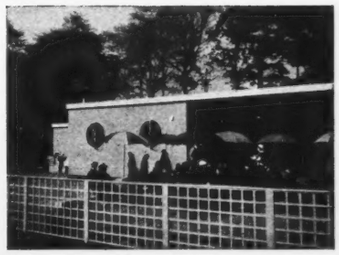
The B.B.C. has its slick and lively travelling exhibition (lower photograph), designed by the B.B.C. and the Reimann Studios in collaboration, installed in the small building illustrated in the upper photographs. It is situated at 23 on the plan on page 2. The building is designed so that the interior display is visible from the outside through the large windows. Architect, Thomas S. Tait.

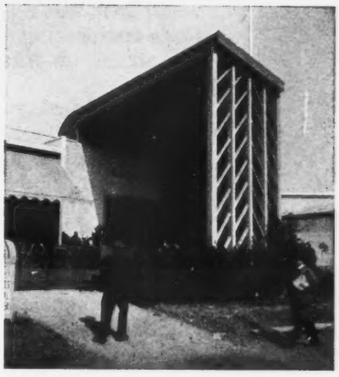
their name suggests, but only commercial bazaars erected in the Exhibition grounds, he might take the deplorable goods inside as being what Great Britain was proud to show to the world.

After Glasgow may we never be inflicted with the results of so short-sighted an industrial policy again. The promoters of the Exhibition may argue that they cannot afford to do without the rents they get for the space in the Palaces of Industry and Engineering, but the answer is that an industrialist with any foresight would be willing to contribute nearly as much to a general fund, foregoing the privilege of displaying the goods he wishes to for the sake of a unified display that will be a real advertisement of British Industry; and that in any case the difference represents the cost of organizing an *exhibition* as against that of organizing a trade fair.

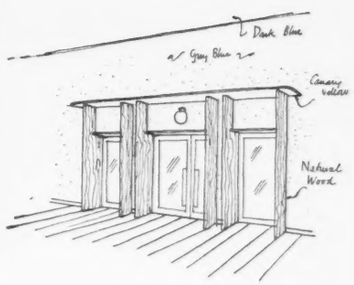
Some of the independent trade pavilions do however show real enterprise in keeping with the modern tradition that the major industries and public utility corporations are the new patrons of popular art, the Medicis of the twentieth century. We are familiar already with the debt modern art owes to the patronage of Shell, of the London Underground Railways and of similar bodies. In Glasgow Shell's pavilion is disappointing, and some others of the larger industrial ones are deplorable, but that of the Scottish Distillers' Company should be mentioned as a first-rate achievement that demonstrates how a group of firms of similar interests can stage a combined exhibit, gaining much and losing nothing by temporarily replacing business rivalry by co-operation. This exhibit should prove a model for many other industries in future exhibitions. It is well supported by the British Railways, by the I.C.I. and, on a

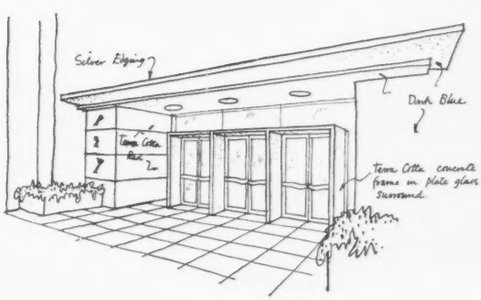






A number of lesser pavilions and details on this and the facing page show the high standard of design maintained in many varying parts of the Exhibition, giving it the unity which is its most remarkable characteristic. On the left on the facing page is a charming essay in a local vernacular, which has been justifiably used in this model house (architect, Basil Spence) for the Scottish Council for Art in Industry. It is situated at 6 on the plan on page 2 and contains furniture and equipment well selected by the Council. Elsewhere a simple modern idiom is well adapted for many purposes: on the facing page are the standard information kiosk and the excellent small building for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, inside which an actual lifeboat is exhibited. Above on the left is the interior of the Royal Suite (14 on the plan), lined and furnished with various Nigerian timbers, highly polished to bring out the natural grain (architect, Thomas S. Tait; assistant, J. H. Wallace). On the right are two restaurants, which show simple design in timber, imaginatively varied in detail. Architect, Thomas S. Tait.
Right, some doorways: the photograph shows a free-standing terra-cotta rendered frame to a simple door set in a standard asbestos-cement sheet wall; the two sketches show a range of doors in the timber Peace Pavilion (architect, Alister G. MacDonald) and a very successful treatment with a plate-glass surround to projecting concrete frames in the Scottish Pavilion (architects, Thomas S. Tait and Basil Spence).

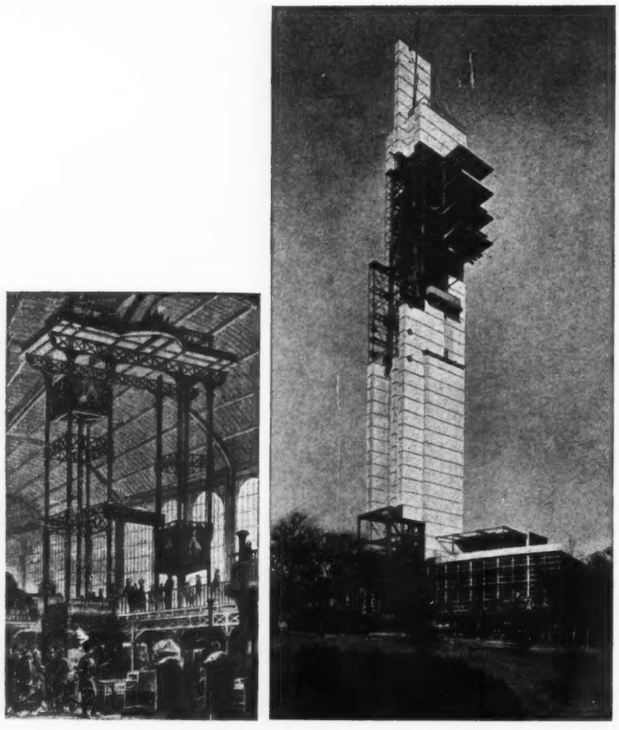




The antique section, a "Clachan," or Highland village, is sensibly segregated in a corner of the Exhibition, 9 on the plan. The buildings are arranged along a country road, where a bridge crosses the "burn" which traverses the enclosure. For the external walls plaster casts were taken from the walls of old cottages. Architect, Dr. Colin Sinclair.

smaller scale, by the B.B.C. and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

The Post Office, from whom one can usually rely on excellent taste, has unfortunately seen fit to insist on being allowed to design its own aggressive and vulgar building whose old-fashioned jazz-modern design is quite out of keeping with the general architectural setting, and whose overwhelming crimson colour not only strikes the only false note in the Exhibition's carefully considered colour scheme, but obliterates all the modelling in the shape of the building itself. Even its interior, which tries to do the right thing by dramatizing its own services and exploiting the public's latent interest in how things work, and which contains some isolated pieces of good modern display, is



The tower which crowns Bellahouston Hill is constructed entirely of steel, an ordinary riveted steel frame having a casing of corrugated steel sheeting (this photograph shows the tower in construction before the casing was completed). The tower, besides serving as a landmark, exists to serve the purpose of a lift-shaft, and an interesting comparison can be made with the lift-shafts, left, at the Paris Exhibition of 1867 *which, by being left uncased, were both dramatic and striking as an engineering exhibit.*

disjointed and gloomy. As a building the G.P.O. exhibit is put to shame by Mr. Tait's sensibly designed working post-office nearby (see page 15). A Government department ought to be the first to co-operate in the new effort towards unity; not the only one to insist on the individual's right to be different.

It must be left for the illustrations and the comments that accompany them on the remaining pages of this issue to describe the rest of the Exhibition. If one were awarding prizes to the most successful pieces of design one would be inclined to give the first prize, notwithstanding the excellence of some of the buildings that have already been mentioned, and notwithstanding the Garden Club, a splendid range of buildings that has not, to Mr. Tait for the design of the incidental " service " buildings collectively. Under this heading would be included entrances, restaurants, bandstands and information kiosks, whose design, particularly that of the two first, reaches a remarkable high standard of aptness and gaiety and is at the same time free from some of the clichés that become a little tiresome in the more imposing buildings. The booby prize is shared by the G.P.O. and all the Dominions (with the exception of South Africa which, attempting to do something entirely unsuitable, must be excused for doing it well) to which must be added Scottish Steel pavilion, which outdoes even the Dominions in clumsiness, and the pavilion of a certain famous newspaper, whose trivial academic gentility is less forgiveable because of the prominence of its situation.

If only on account of the publicity it has received a word ought to be said about the steel tower (" Tait's Tower ") that crowns Bellahouston Hill. Though impressive from many angles it cannot be said to be an unqualified success; the use of modernistic clichés rather overwhelms its structural significance. On such a scale only complete sincerity succeeds (*vide* the Eiffel Tower). It is too consciously a monument; whereas in fact it is simply a lift-shaft. It might indeed have been more effective to have designed it in skeleton form so that the visible ascent of the lifts gave it a more characteristic interest and, incidentally, typified better the Exhibition's situation in the heart of an engineering world. This of course, though it might be arguable whether it was a good thing or bad, would have made it less of an engineering feat, as the great problem was to withstand the strain of wind-pressure on its unnecessarily cased-in sides.

A good feature of the Exhibition is the strict segregation of the antique section. The historical background has its place, but that place is apart from the contemporary business of an Empire fair. Again one has uncomfortable memories of the past—for instance of the Buenos Aires Exhibition of 1932, when the whole British Section was housed in an orgy of reproduction Elizabethan half-timber work ; and, knowing the Scottish habit of sentimentalizing over the romantic side of history, one could not be blamed for expecting to find Highland costume, the Clans, Bonnie Prince Charlie, oatcakes, Baronial architecture, Gaelic poetry and the Pass of Killiecrankie obtruding themselves irrelevantly throughout the Exhibition. But the traditional Scotland of the tourist has been wisely segregated : the " Clachan," a life-like reproduction of a Highland village (and very well staged of its kind), is decently enclosed in a corner of the grounds within a high fence. You have to pay sixpence to go in : in fact, it is very properly a side-show : and there is refreshingly little sign of Scottish sentimentality elsewhere. The Scottish exhibit itself, furthermore, consists of two almost identical buildings facing each other across the first of the three main avenues. One contains the historical portion—the inevitable heraldic shields, Highland weapons and period rooms of typical Scottish dwellings ; the other, having got this, as it were, off its chest, concentrates on presenting a picture of Scotland as it lives today, using all the modern techniques of maps, photo-montage and pictorial statistics to describe the efforts of the Scottish Development Council and explain to the ordinary citizen the social organization he has at his command. The picturesque traditions of history are kept on one side, resulting in a lucidity of " national projection " that one may hope the organizers of the British Government Exhibit for New York will take note of. One hears rumours of an Olde English Village to be incorporated in this British contribution, but let forward from Glasgow be the watchword, not back to Buenos Aires.

COMPARATIVE CRITICISM

On the following pages Glasgow's several ways of dealing with a number of recurrent design problems are noted and compared. Comparisons are also made where possible with previous exhibitions, particularly with those at Brussels in 1935 and Paris in 1937, which were both sufficiently recent for the circumstances—technical and functional—to be much the same.

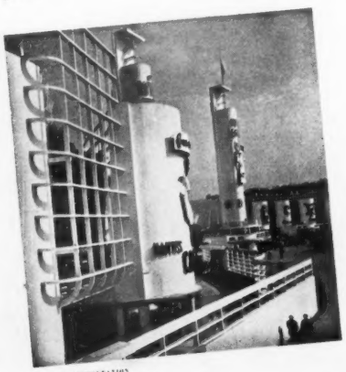
TREES

Mr. Tait's brilliantly simple solution of the difficulty of building among trees without having to cut any of them down, right, has a famous precedent in the first of all great exhibitions. In Paxton's Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, above, whole elm-trees were boldly enclosed within the building. The other illustrations from Glasgow, on the right, show the exterior of the same tree-top restaurant: the tree-trunks can be seen growing through the concrete floor : and a more modest example from one of the minor avenues, where a tree is allowed to pierce the canopy of a kiosk. Below is a contrast from the Russian pavilion at last year's Paris Exhibition. The branches of trees that occupied the site are brutally chopped off against the concrete wall or occasionally allowed to enter a basement window left unglazed for the purpose.

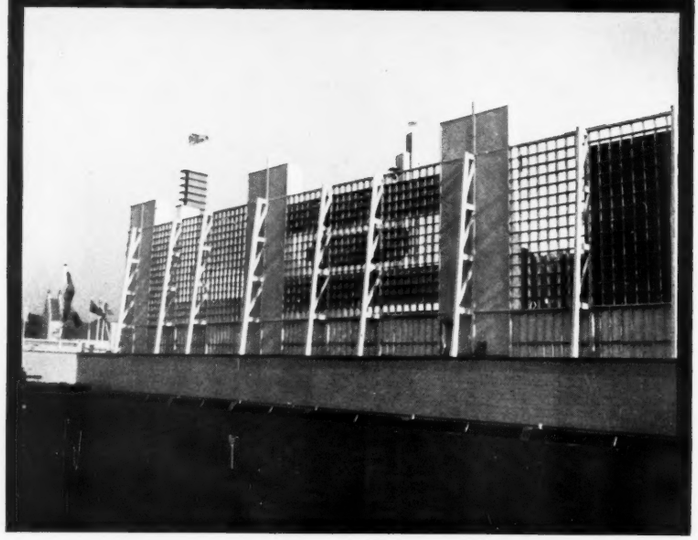
TREES The presence of trees on the site offers other architectural opportunities. RUSSIA, however, has ruthlessly pretended that they do not exist. The trees on her site either find themselves embedded in a concrete wall or growing into windows whose glass has had to be omitted to make way for them.

DESIGN FOR ADVERTISEMENTS

At Stockholm in 1930 Asplund showed us that advertisements, instead of being vulgar things to keep out at all cost, could be used for decorative—even dramatic—effect given proper control. At Paris last year the same gay use of advertisements was seen at the *Champ de Mars* entrance, which consisted of a white-painted trellis screen, bearing the advertisements, through which the visitor reached the exhibition. At Glasgow, right, a similar screen has been attempted but instead of being designed as a screen it is only a hoarding. Although the main approach to the Exhibition passes along one side of it, the appearance of this side is not considered, lower picture.



PORTE D'ALIMENTATION



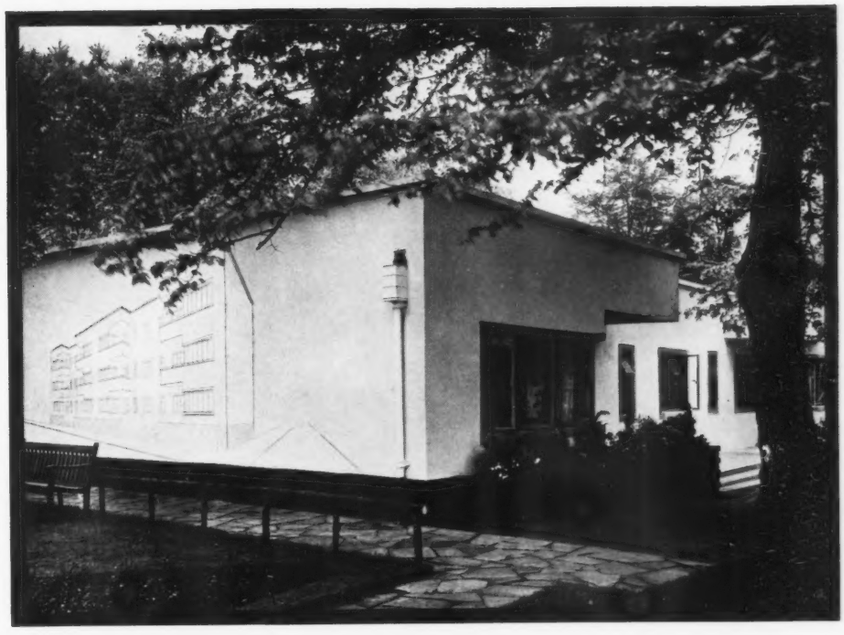
DISFIGURement BY ADVERTISEMENTS

Although advertisements can be decorative they can also be an eyesore. An excellent litter bin has been designed for the Glasgow Exhibition which, painted an unobtrusive green, is in itself seemly as well as serviceable. But the authorities have seen fit to let out the sides of the bins for advertising purposes, with the result that they provide a number of eye-catching spots in the foreground of every view. The bin becomes itself a piece of the litter it was designed to hide.

MODEL FLAT

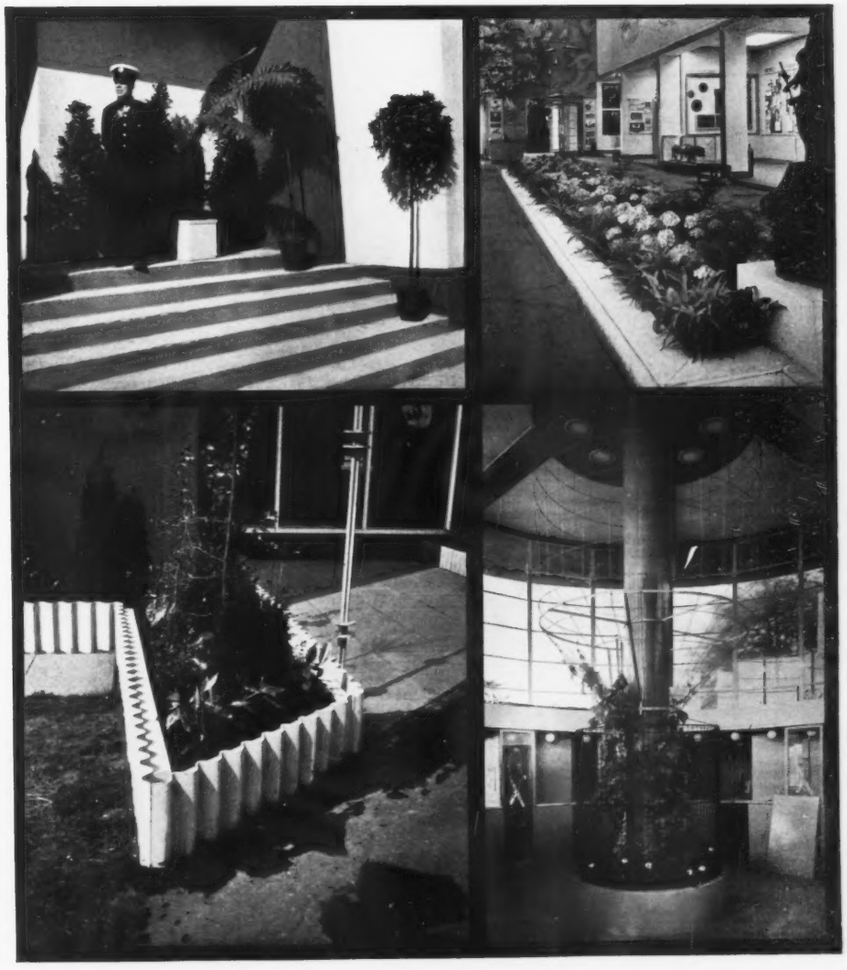
The model workman's flat, below, attached to the Dutch Pavilion at Paris last year, was criticized for stimulating the interest without satisfying it : the visitor was kept out by a glass front and could only crane his neck to see the corners of the interior. At Glasgow, right, there is a model flat very well equipped by the Scottish Council for Art in Industry, that can not only be explored in every detail but can be visualized in its real position by means of the drawing on the external wall, which shows the whole block of flats of which the furnished specimen forms a unit.

VISIBILITY In the DUTCH pavilion one method of arranging specimen furnished rooms. The effect is realistic but the visitor, peering through the glass front, can see little and is conscious only of a feeling of frustration at being unable to penetrate further.



PLANTING

Flowers and plants inappropriately and appropriately used to embellish Exhibition buildings. The left-hand pair of photographs show exterior use : a number of small trees in tubs casually and untidily placed on the entrance steps of the Australian pavilion, and planting beside the entrance to the Palace of Industry North, the latter designed in relation to the building, set in a well-planned bed with a neat curb of corrugated asbestos. The right-hand photographs show interior use : a bed filled with hydrangeas running the length of the Irish pavilion—shaped like a grave and no more gay—and another more original central flower bed in the rotunda adjoining the Garden Club. Green shoots are trained to climb up a wire cage.



STANDARD EQUIPMENT

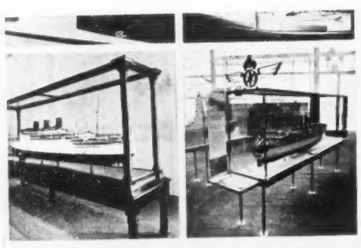
The equipment and accessories throughout the Exhibition maintain a high standard of design, largely through having been kept firmly under the control of the architect-in-chief. On the right are some typical examples : top row, drinking fountain, direction post, lamp ; centre, fountain in the Dominion Avenue canal and another lamp ; bottom, entrance pay-box and turnstile. The multiplication of accessories sometimes leads to disorder : below is a corner of one of the main avenues in which no less than eight different signs and other objects are planted in the grass in the space of a few square yards.

KIOSKS

The Glasgow Exhibition gains immensely by the fact that all the small pavilions and kiosks were kept under the architect's control. The procedure followed was that Mr. Tait designed a number of standard buildings that the users could adapt themselves for their special purposes, subject to Mr. Tait's final approval. The upper illustration on the right shows a shop for Messrs. Rowan (P. J. Westwood & Sons, architects) which is a very elegant adaptation of the original, in the same spirit as the rest of the Exhibition. The lower illustrations show how not to do it : Messrs. Cowieson's kiosk, faced with wood shingling and with modernistic window containing stained glass, and the R.A.C. kiosk with Mr. Tait's horizontal skyline broken by jazz-modern signs.

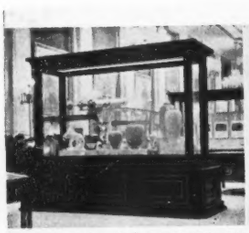
POST OFFICE

A sad reflection on the taste of our Government Departments is afforded by the contrast between the two buildings labelled "Post Office." On the left is the building which contains the official exhibit of the Post Office department. It is a large clumsy building in a jazz style similar to that fashionable at the time of the Wembley Exhibition. It is entirely out of character with the rest of the architecture which accepts and exploits its temporary nature, and moreover it is painted a brilliant crimson ornamented with gilt—the only discordant note in a carefully considered colour scheme. Instead of setting an example in co-operation the Government rejects it. In contrast, on the right is the Exhibition post office—where visitors buy stamps and send telegrams—designed by Mr. Tait : an elegant little building faced with white-painted corrugated asbestos showing quiet good taste in an appropriate Exhibition spirit.



G. The stand of Imperial Airways on the left is one of the best pieces of display in the exhibition. Enlarged photographs have been used with skill: pictorial dialectics have been used with imagination. Not an inch of the wall-space is congested—not an inch of the displayed material is dull. The unimaginative assortment of photographs, printed cards, unpeeled and encased models which comprises the Dutch exhibit on the right compares badly with the forceful directness of the English display.

H. On the left a model of an Electric liner is enclosed in a display case of heavy Victorian-classic design, wholly out of keeping with the nature of the object displayed. It is not unfair to say, after glancing at the illustration on the right, that the far humbler Swedish vessel is far more appropriately framed.



THE SHOW-CASE. The photographs are sufficient to emphasize the difference between this showcase in the GERMAN pavilion, its chimney monumentality entirely feather in form not scale to the exhibits it is intended to show

And this showcase in the SWISS pavilion. Functional yet elegant, giving the contents of the case every opportunity and at the same time establishing a subtle architectural relationship between the contents and the exhibition gallery they decorate.

NATIONAL PRODUCTS

One would have thought that exhibition design had progressed further in 1938 than this ludicrously conventional array of ornate baskets filled with piles of apples, but apparently in Australia it has not. In the Australian pavilion, left above, the baskets are displayed in front of a brightly painted background and accompanied by other exhibits in carved wooden showcases of heavy old fashioned design. In contrast is the display of the products of Ceylon, right above, designed by the Reimann Studios. A lively chequer-board background in blue and white carries the description of the products, examples of which are contained in occasional recessed squares. This display also includes showcases which are simply designed to use glass as it should be used : to obtain maximum visibility and minimum obstruction. On the left are two reminders that such surprising variations between good and bad showcases serving exactly the same purpose have been observed in previous exhibitions. In the upper one the ship in the heavy mahogany cabinet and that in the elegant glass and metal cases were in the British and Swedish pavilions respectively at Brussels in 1935. The pottery showcases in the lower one were in the German and Swiss pavilions at Paris last year.

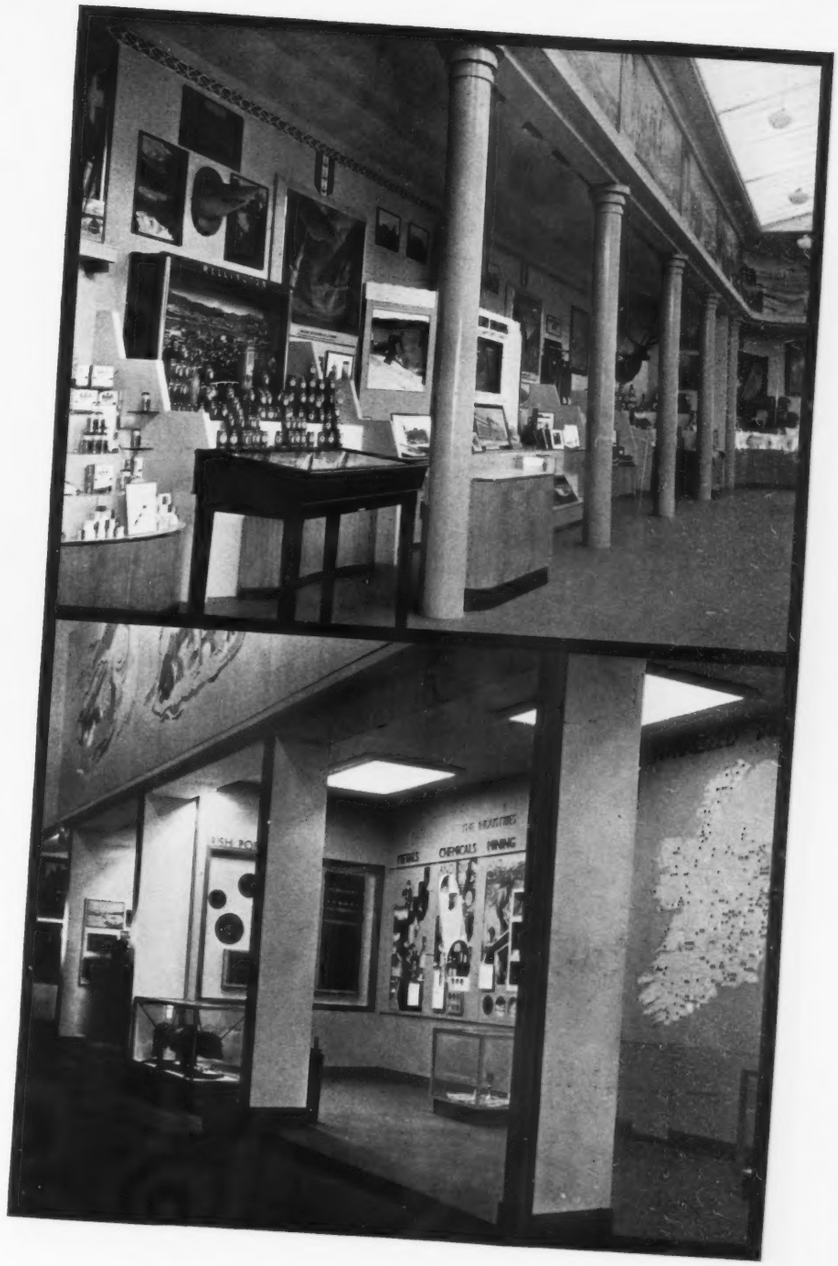
SWEDEN

The Swedish pa remarkable for struction—a web of heraklith slate purpose: also for Swedish national left: a display on one of a group of natural resources.

PLATE v

NATIONAL PRODUCTS

New Zealand wishes to show her national products. Her way of doing it, right, is to put up a building consisting of one large rectangular hall and arrange round the walls an arbitrary collection of samples and other exhibits. In this photograph can be seen a pyramid of jars of honey, a stuffed fish's head, a model train, a deer's head and a number of photographs, coloured and uncoloured. This may have been good enough for Wembley, but other countries have improved their standards of display out of all recognition since then and the Dominions will have to follow suit. It is, as a matter of fact, by no means necessary to include dozens of samples in order to show what a country produces. In this corner of the Irish pavilion, for example, lower photograph, the nature of Irish industry is expounded in maps, diagrams and well-selected specimens in a way that is really intelligible. At Paris last year, above, the Swedish staple industries—in this case agriculture—were most dramatically explained without any recourse to tiresome sample bottles of wheat or the like.

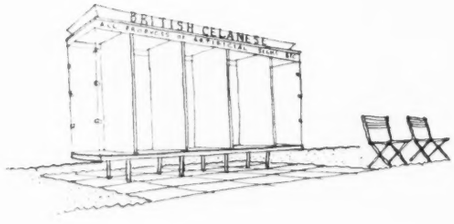


INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS

A contrast in industrial display: left-hand photograph, an ugly showcase contains assorted pieces of steel, others are placed about around it and a couple of photographs hang on the wall—the public is told nothing. This is in the Scottish Steel pavilion. In contrast the Distillers' Company have displayed their product intelligibly by telling a story that the public will be interested in: how the products are grown, made and distributed: in the most modern of display techniques. Designer, Edwin Calligan.

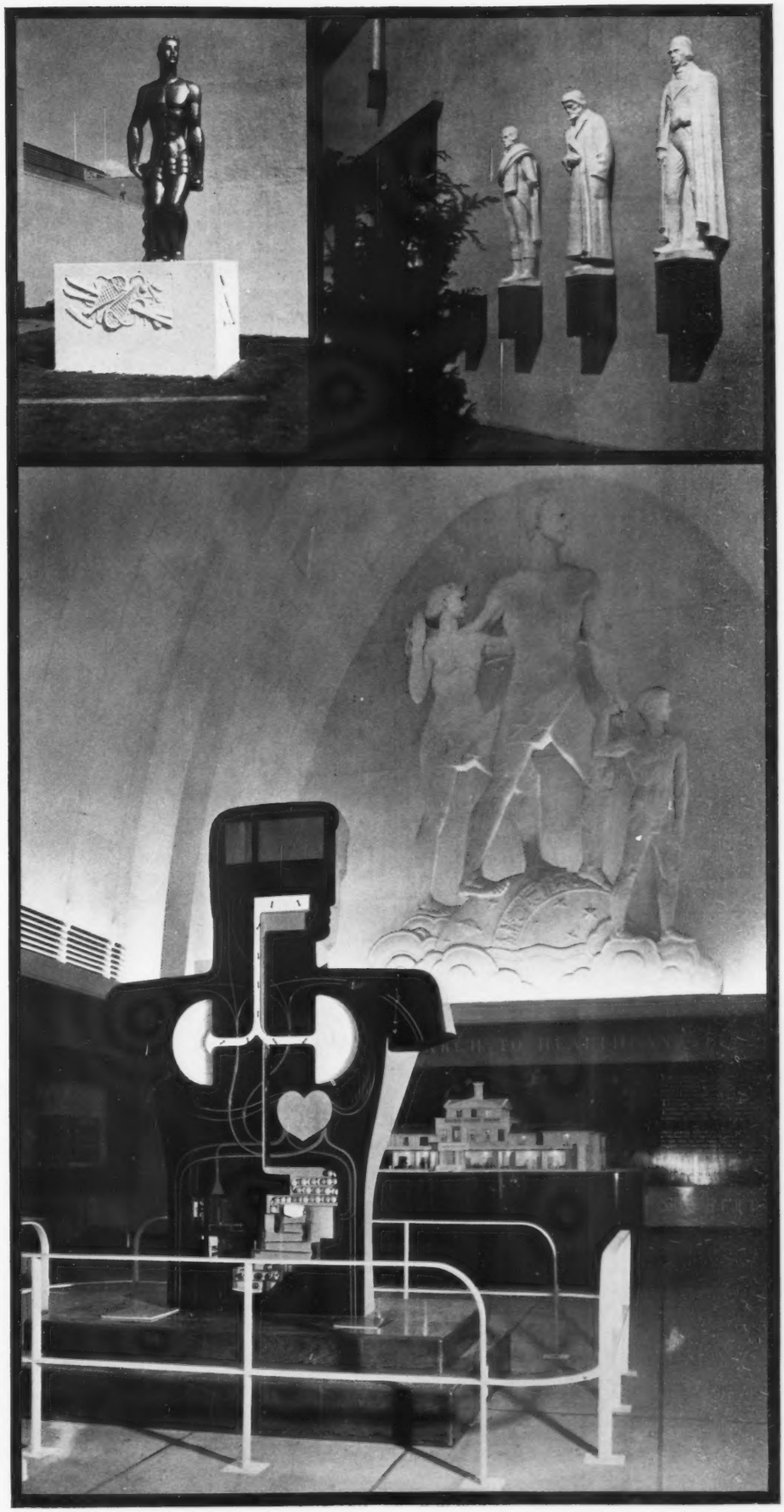
DISPLAY OF GOODS

A row of neatly designed showcases, sketch below, stands in front of the main flank of the Palace of Industry North (see page 37). The cases have been let out to various firms who have arranged their own displays. The latter vary remarkably in taste and effectiveness. Compare the two on the right. The upper one, that of "Swan" pens, contains a confused mass of pens, boxes of pens, bottles of ink and showcards with a variety of ugly lettering so that the whole means nothing to the passer-by. The lower one, that of Hector Powe, clothiers, shows decent restraint. A few objects, simply arranged attract the eye to themselves immediately. In criticizing the "Swan" display we are reminded that the same firm's stand in the Brussels Exhibition of 1935 was criticized at the time for exactly the same faults. On that occasion the ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW critic counted no few than 51 repetitions of the name "Swan." In Glasgow, this record has easily been beaten.



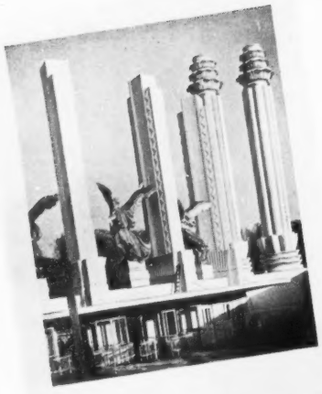
DISPLAY OF CLOTHES

In the Wool pavilion, right, a row of dummies on a floodlighted stage show off clothes effectively and are at the same time decorative in themselves, an encouraging contrast to the British clothing trade's conventional figures, above, at Paris last year.



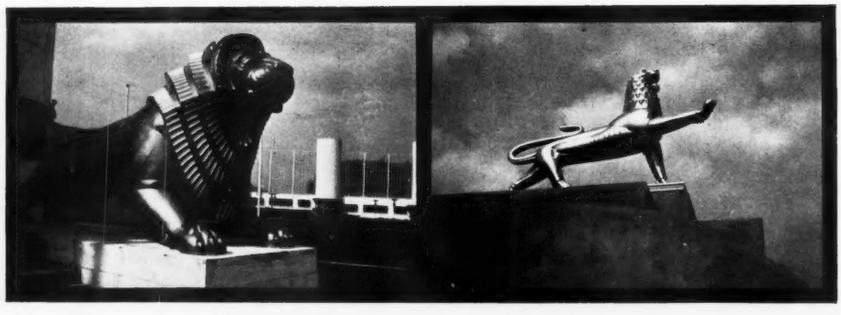
THE HUMAN FORM

On the right (at the top) are two contrasting uses of sculptured figures for the embellishment of buildings: a free-standing gilt statue of a man, representing Canadian Youth, near the corner of the Canadian pavilion, and a group of white plaster figures of Burns, Carlyle and Watt, on the wall of the Scottish pavilion (architects, Thomas S. Tait and Basil Spence). The latter figures have the virtue of being designed in relation to the building they adorn. The white figures are seen against a pale blue plaster background and are the only decoration on a long bare wall with planting at the base. Below is sculpture of a different kind: used decoratively but for instructional purposes. In the middle of the floor of the "Fitter Britain" hall in the United Kingdom Government pavilion stands the "mechanical man," one side of which is in ordinary relief (see illustration on page 7); the other (shown in the photograph) consists of a flat glass front behind which the working of the human body is demonstrated diagrammatically and gaily with lights and moving symbols: a very successful adaptation of sculpture to scientific display. At the top of the same photograph can be seen another piece of sculpture (by Mr. Barney Seale) whose heavy symbolic character is quite out of keeping with the modern scientific nature of the display it is intended to adorn. The "mechanical man" was designed by Mr. Richard Huws.



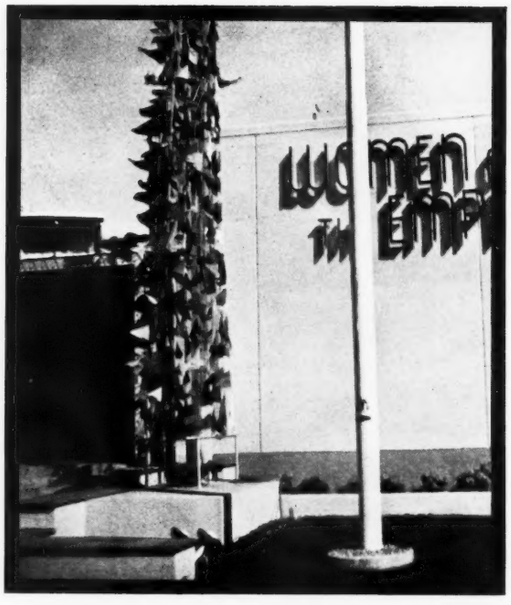
ENTRANCES

The entrances to an exhibition set the key-note of its character and Mr. Tait at Glasgow has designed a series of lively entrance "features," right, that admirably epitomize the spacious planning and design inside. Above, by way of contrast, is the main entrance to the 1935 Brussels Exhibition, whose heavy modernistic style may have been related to that of some of the official buildings but certainly belied the good instances of design the exhibition contained.



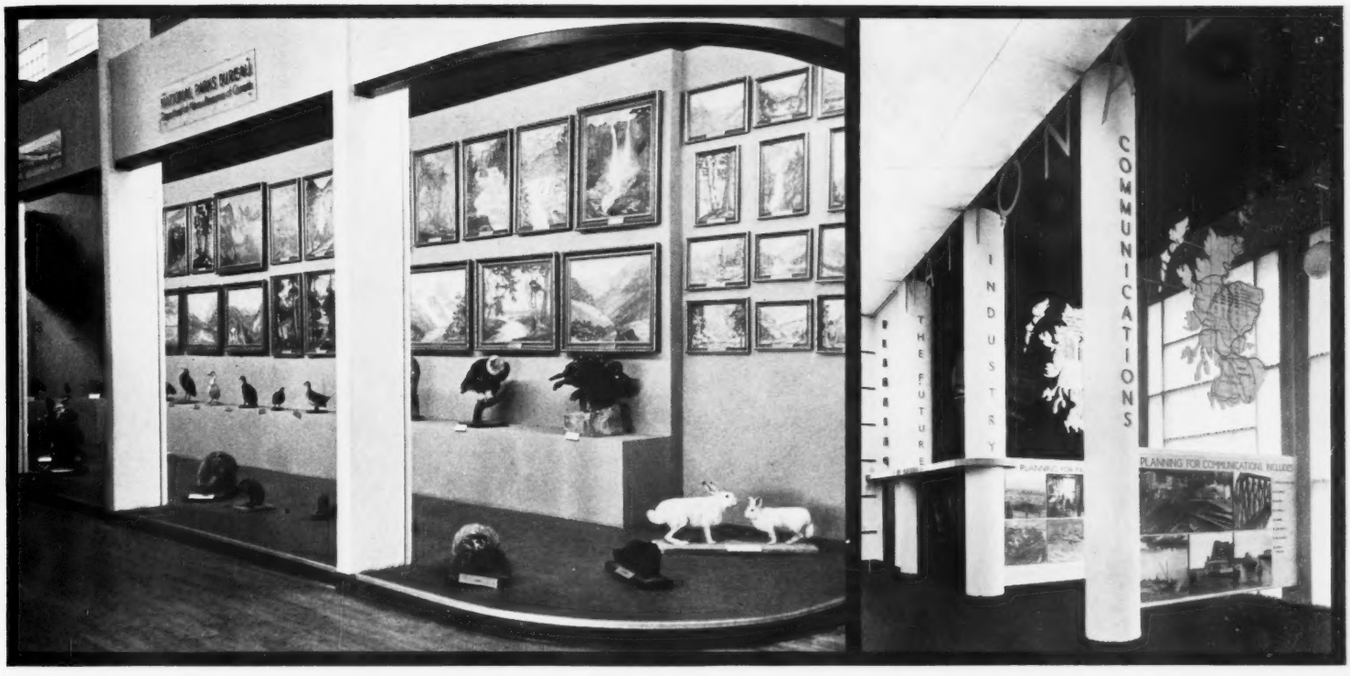
LIONS

Heraldic sculpture should have dignity before anything else, a quality that the gilt lions which flank the entrance to the United Kingdom Government pavilion (left-hand photograph) lack. Mr. Hardiman's celebrated Norwich Lion which adorns the main avenue (right-hand photograph) is more successfully conventionalized in its frankly decorative way, though its massive pedestal is not in the same spirit, being more reminiscent of the inappropriate monumentality of Wembley.



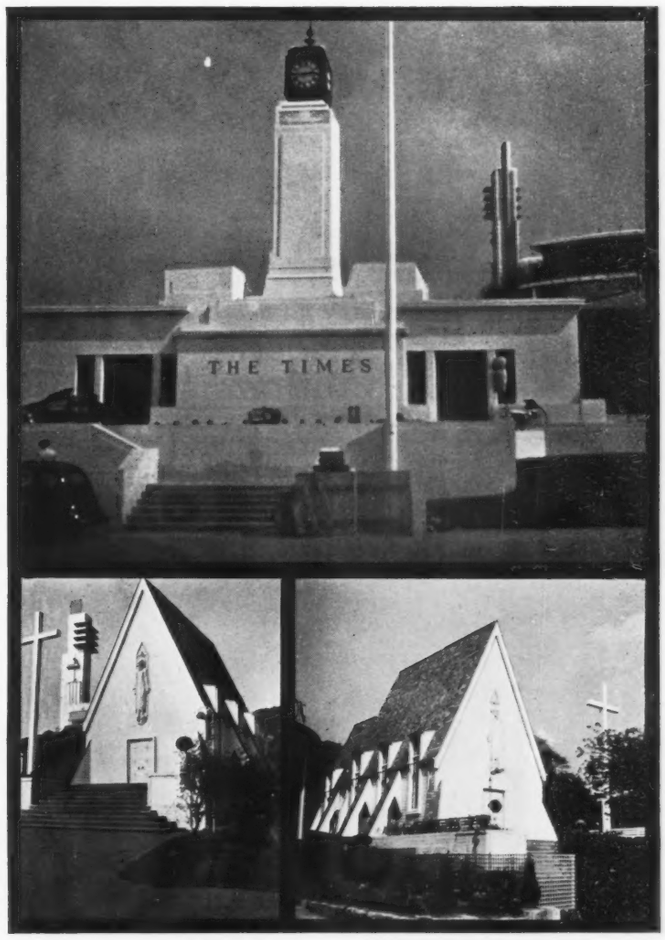
FLAGS

Massed flags are used with good intention in front of the Women's pavilion, right, but do not appear to provide a successful decoration motif on such a diminutive scale. The right use of massed flags on a grand scale was seen last year at Paris, above.



GEOGRAPHY

Canada has a magnificent National Park system about which an enthralling story might have been told, but above on the left is the National Parks exhibit in the Canadian pavilion, consisting of a row of highly coloured oil paintings in flashy gilt frames hung on the wall together with a few stuffed animals placed on a shelf below : probably the most inept piece of display in the whole Exhibition. Canada has learnt nothing since Paris (small illustration below). On the right above is a contrast from the Scottish Pavilion in which Mr. Basil Spence has designed for the Scottish Development Council a lively exhibit giving about Scotland the real territorial information that Canada fails to give, and at the same time, presenting an attractive modern display.

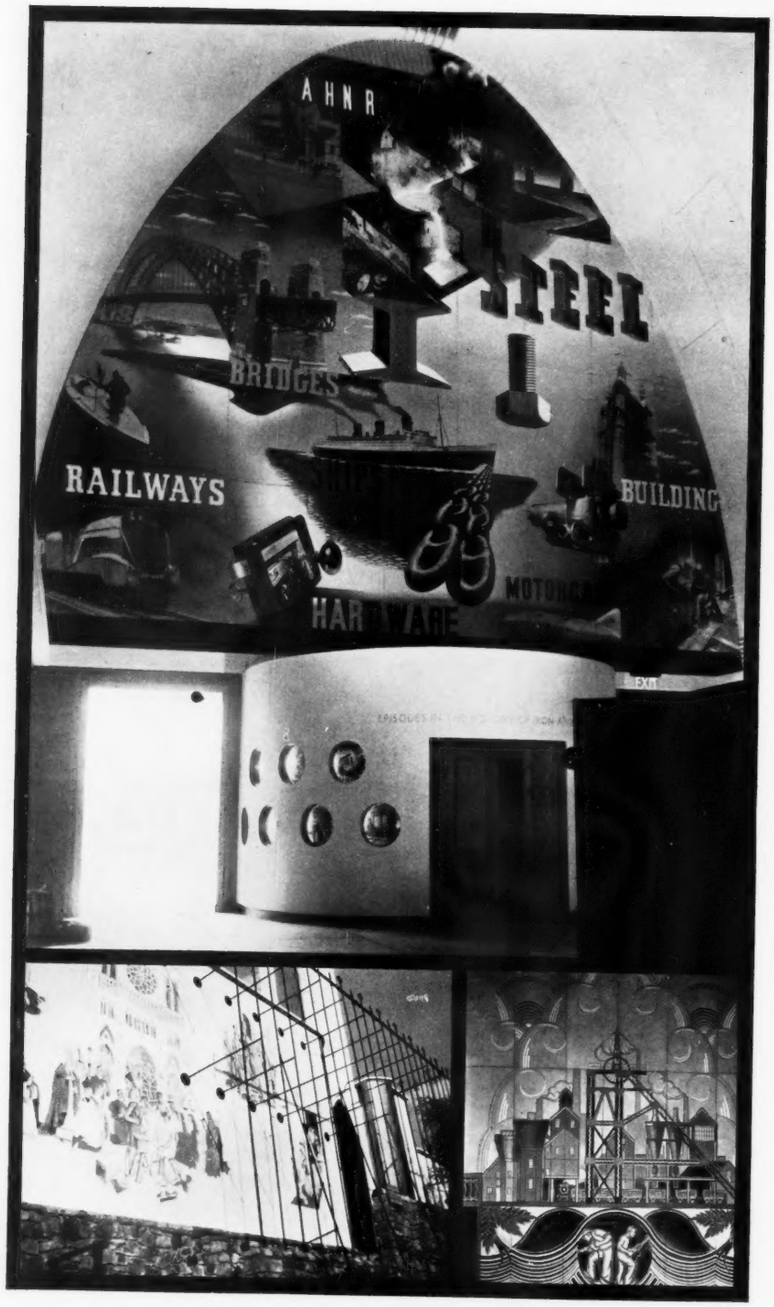


CONSERVATIVE CHARACTER

If certain institutions feel that it would be unsuitable for them to conform to the light-hearted temporary spirit of the rest of the Exhibition, there is still a good and a bad way of doing it. Right : upper photograph, the pretentious classic of the "Times" pavilion, entirely out of scale (architects, Ellis and Clarke) ; lower photographs, the Episcopal Church shows a happy compromise between tradition and modernity (architect, R. M. Noad).

MURAL DECORATION

The United Kingdom Government pavilion contains some good examples of mural decoration enclosed on the end walls of the display halls by the high barrel vault. The upper photograph on the right shows that in the Iron and Steel hall, combining in a solidly decorative way lettering, photography and paint. It is by John R. Barker. The lower photographs show more conventional painting disposed with pleasing freedom about the external walls of the Roman Catholic Church (architect, J. Antonio Coia), and the one failure among the mural decorations in the United Kingdom Government pavilion, that in the approach gallery, whose insignificant decorative conventions and unimaginative colour compare badly with the work in the display halls. Above are two reminders from past exhibitions of what mural decoration can achieve : that on the Austrian Pavilion at Paris, whose great merit was its homogeneity with the building, and the decorative map in relief on the external wall of the Danish pavilion at Brussels.



LETTERING

Right, a contrast between the crudely formed lettering on the equally crudely detailed front of the Canadian pavilion and the well-studied lettering, designed to give scale to the wall it is placed on, of the Women's pavilion (architect, Thomas S. Tait associated with Margaret Brodie). The mannered forms of the letters are probably justified by the occasion, and the decorations over attract attention and add gaiety though they employ a motif from the Paris Exhibition that is used rather frequently in Glasgow.

TREE-TOP RESTAURANT

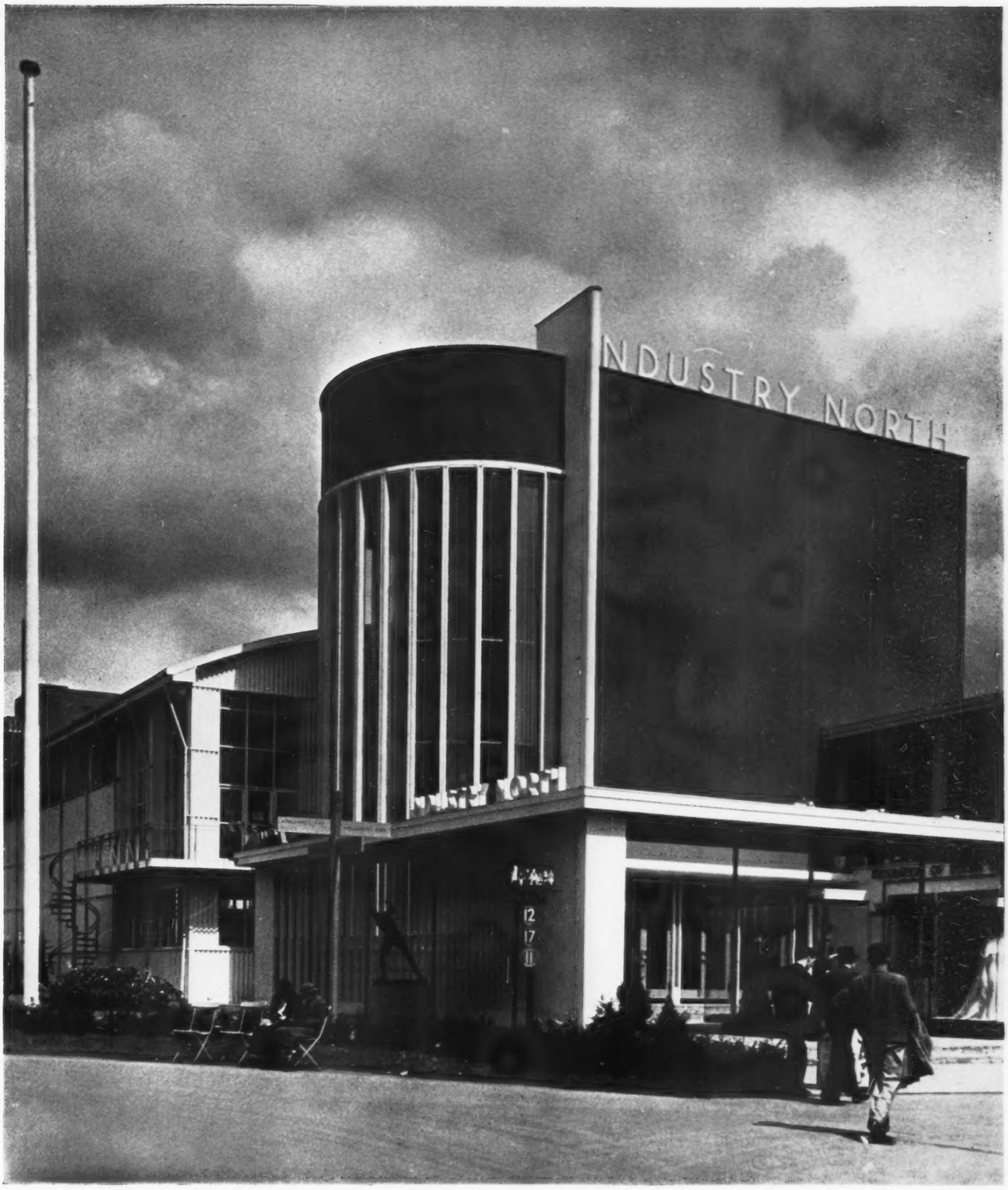
Bellahouston hill, which forms the backbone of the Exhibition site, is well wooded, and in the design of this restaurant, which forms the base of the tower crowning the top of the hill, not only have the trees been preserved but advantage has been taken of their presence to achieve a remarkable form of live interior decoration. Their upper branches have simply been incorporated in the restaurant, which is at first floor level, standing on steel columns. The trunks of the trees grow through the concrete floor. Architect, Thomas S. Tait, associated with Launcelot H. Ross.

COAL

The Coal Utilisation Pavilion, situated beside the Mosspark entrance to the Exhibition, presents an interesting change from the asbestos sheeting widely used elsewhere. It is entirely surfaced with corrugated steel sheet, of silver and blue finish. It also shows good architectural use of lettering. The latter is painted red and combined with neon tube lights. Architect, Thomas S. Tait.

ATLANTIC RESTAURANT

This restaurant occupies one of the slopes of the hill and overlooks the second of the three main avenues. It takes the form of a terrace or sun-deck designed in imitation of a liner's prow with the restaurant itself on a higher level, carried over a roadway passing behind the terrace. This photograph is taken from the prow of the terrace and shows the central flag-mast and the granite obelisk which was the foundation stone of the Exhibition and was dedicated last year by their Majesties the King and Queen. The Atlantic Restaurant is further illustrated on pages 39-40. Architects, Thomas S. Tait and T. W. Marwick.



PALACE OF INDUSTRY NORTH

This, with the Garden Club, is the most successful of the individual buildings in the Exhibition, largely because it has been designed so frankly as a temporary structure. It is entirely of timber construction with the standard wall finish of asbestos sheeting, plain on the tower and corrugated elsewhere. The tower is painted brick red; everything else white. The inside, except for a fine circular staircase lighted by the tall tower windows, which leads to a café on the first floor (see pages 37-38) is of little interest as it chiefly contains stalls stocked by manufacturers with their industrial products instead of a designed exhibit. Architects, Thomas S. Tait and J. Antonio Coia.

A GLANCE TOWARDS NEW YORK

IN Paris last year we were able for the first time to judge a British exhibit at an international exhibition on the same standards as the exhibits of other countries: not only because the standard of design was more or less on a comparable level, but primarily because at last there was a national exhibit to judge. For at the Paris Exhibition Great Britain took the first step (a step that other countries had taken some years earlier) away from the consideration of an exhibition as simply another trade fair, where a Government built a building and the contents of the building consisted of such commercial products as any firms that cared to rent space inside it chose to show. At Paris the British Government, through the Council for Art in Industry, selected the contents of its building, so that the building housed a collective exhibit representing certain sections of British industry: an exhibit chosen impartially on merit.

That was an important step forward. The comments it evoked from intelligent people can be summarized as follows: first, of course, gratification that this step had been taken, coupled with admiration with the way the Council for Art in Industry had done the work they were asked to do; secondly, criticism of the limited programme the Council had been set: it had been made to appear that British industry confined itself nowadays to the output of luxury goods, textiles, books, pottery and glass, and similar small-scale products; it ignored altogether the heavy industries on which Great Britain's industrial reputation rests. Finally, and most important, Paris evoked regrets that the British Government, in reconsidering their attitude to an international exhibition, had not seen fit altogether to discard conception of it as a trade show. Other countries, while usually including a section of carefully selected industrial products, concentrated on presenting a picture of their national life and characteristics, of which of course the manufacture of saleable goods is only a part. A tour of an international exhibition is a tour of the world in miniature, and the visitor to the pavilions of most of the nations took away some impression of that nation as a whole.

The British Government did in short advance as far as staging a national exhibit, but not as far as staging anything more dignified than a national trade exhibit. The storm of criticism, however, with which their effort was received, inspired by the tradesmen who had been "left out" will be remembered; and naturally the Department of Overseas Trade (the Government Department responsible for British participation in international exhibitions) decided that next time things must be different. However the British exhibit was received abroad (and it was not received at all badly) they could not afford to have it so unpopular at home. But somewhat unaccountably they chose as a scapegoat the Council for Art in Industry and decided that their appointment had been a mistake, not to be repeated. Whereas in fact what virtues the Paris pavilion had, a high standard of design among the goods shown and very tasteful arrangement, the Council for Art in Industry had been responsible for; while its failings lay in the limitations of the programme the Council had been set by the D.O.T. This unjust apportioning of blame was due to failure to analyse the criticism received. For mingled with the informed *and disinterested* criticism whose conclusions we have outlined above, was a great deal of criticism inspired by industry itself, and particularly from manufacturers whose products had not been exhibited. This criticism was of its nature vociferous, and came from sources sufficiently influential to demand the attention of the Government. It was also, as we have said, difficult to distinguish from disinterested criticism. Naturally it would have suited many tradesmen better to have been allowed to rent space in the national pavilion and exhibit what they liked, irrespective of good or bad design and national prestige abroad, and, in fact—and this is the crux of the matter—the criticism launched by the industry at the British exhibit in Paris was largely due to the fact that for the first time goods had entered the British Pavilion on merit instead of on payment for space. The manufacturers, and the manufacturers only, would rather have the short-term benefit of the trade fair than the prestige of a non-commercial exhibit on the lines of other nations.

But Paris is an old story. What must concern us now is the effect the experience of Paris has had on policy at Glasgow and, more particularly, on the policy that is being worked out for the New York World Fair next year. The New York Fair is going to be on a gigantic scale. It presents an opportunity of doing something of sufficient merit to place Great Britain once more in the position she should occupy—in recent international exhibitions her position has been quite frankly that of a third-class power, of slightly less importance than Finland or Denmark and perhaps slightly more than Uruguay or Greece.

Now in Glasgow, it should be realized, the problem set the Department of Overseas Trade was not the same as in an international exhibition. The exhibition authorities had already arranged to cater separately for industrial and commercial interests in huge Palaces of Engineering and Industry before they invited the British Government to provide a pavilion of its own. It is regrettable, as has been observed elsewhere in this issue, that these Palaces do not show a collective exhibition of what industry and engineering can do, but represent a return to the principle of letting display space; but that is the business of the exhibition authorities. What we are concerned with is the *official* Government attitude. In New York, so far as this country's representation is concerned, the Government will be the exhibition authority.

In Glasgow, then, the Department of Overseas Trade found commercial interests already catered for and found themselves free to stage an exhibit literally representing British Government. How well they have done this is described elsewhere in this issue; it is sufficient to repeat here that the interior of the United Kingdom Pavilion reaches a standard of "national projection," both in the matter exhibited and in the technique of display never before reached in this country. The bodies which have actually organized the subject matter, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in the case of three of the display halls and the Ministry of Health in the case of the fourth, have proved once for all that, with the help of a sufficiently imaginative display designer, the facts of national services and admin-

istration can be dramatized into as exciting and informative show as could be wished for. This exhibit has, in fact, all the virtues of presenting a popular but dignified picture of a nation's interests and achievements that we so missed from the British exhibit in Paris.

So far then there can be no complaint at the result of the Department of Overseas Trade's decision to take things into their own hands. But what is their intention for New York where, as we have said, the programme will be a more comprehensive one? In New York the Department will be responsible for the whole British participation. This presumably will have to include some kind of representation of British industry and manufacture. We are not ourselves convinced that this need be a very large part of the British exhibit—in some of the most successful Paris Pavilions a very small selection of the best and most characteristic manufactured products were carefully displayed in part of the pavilion, to represent one side of national life; but these were definitely playing a subsidiary part in a unified exhibit. However we do not suppose that official opinion in this country has sufficient courage to work independently of interested sectional criticism. But we are also sufficiently confident in the Department's vision to believe that they now realize that a purely trade exhibit is not good enough, and that they will have been encouraged by the success and obvious merits of their own show at Glasgow to include in the plans for New York some official exhibit on the same lines, and perhaps, seeing the scale on which the whole Fair is being organized, even more comprehensive in scope.

We shall expect then to find the British contribution in New York to consist of a central "prestige" exhibit demonstrating some aspect or aspects of national life (and if this follows the model of Glasgow we shall have no fear of being outshone by other countries) plus an attempt to give various industries opportunity to show America and the world what they are capable of.

There are various ways in which the latter might be organized. First, by a return to the old method of allowing manufacturing firms to rent space in the British Pavilion and arrange their own displays (the reader might look at the display of "Swan" pens at Brussels and Glasgow—page 18); but a return to this is unthinkable. We are confident that by now the Department of Overseas Trade realizes that visitors to an exhibition simply will not look at such things, and that therefore they defeat their purpose; so we will not consider it even as among the possibilities. In contrast to this there is what we are inclined to consider the proper method: to advertise industry by dramatizing its character and discussing its difficulties and achievements without necessarily exhibiting its actual products as such. This is what has been done with such effect in the United Kingdom Pavilion at Glasgow for the coal, iron and steel and shipbuilding industries by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. But as we have said it is unlikely that so great a step forward towards genuine "national projection" will be taken all at once. It has been done at international exhibitions by other countries, but perhaps in those countries industrial interests were not in so dominant a position.

So, assuming that we are to have an exhibit of the actual products of industry, there arises the question, how are the examples shown to be selected? Selection can only be done by a selection committee: organize a number of specialist selection committees under a co-ordinating committee, and you have an organization that should be relied upon to produce the best possible results—but you also have something very like the Council for Art in Industry that did the selecting for Paris, whom the Department of Overseas Trade have forsworn as a result of the criticism their Paris effort met with. It is to be hoped that the Department will now realize that the fault lay in the programme the Council were set rather than in the way they did their work. Not that we hold any personal brief for the Council for Art in Industry as such. It is an admirable body in that it combines expert knowledge with the virtue of being disinterested, and it was called into being exactly for this sort of purpose. But any other assemblage of committees with expert knowledge and taste would do as well, provided they were also disinterested. The essential thing is that goods should be genuinely selected on merit. Any attempt to reduce the highest standards with a mistaken intention of "giving a show" to the manufacturer of an article that a competent selection committee decides not to be good enough, would be disastrous. American standards of design and efficiency are high. We shall need our best products to be able to compete on level terms.

And here lies the danger of any attempt to compromise with interested opinion. One can imagine the Department of Overseas Trade being tempted to observe: "it was from industry itself that we received most abuse on account of our showing in Paris; if we leave the selection of the industrial exhibits for New York in the hands of the industrialists themselves, they will have to take responsibility for the results and we cannot be blamed"—and then inviting every trade association to make the arrangements for exhibiting its own products. But the D.O.T. can be blamed. At this date no Government Department will be allowed to go on retreating behind the line of least resistance, Apart from the fact that such decentralization of control would tend to destroy the unity of what should appear a national exhibit, it is not fair to ask the manufacturers themselves to act as a disinterested jury. Their associations exist to further the interests of each one of them and it would not be just to expect them to exclude the work of one of their members (so long as he had paid his subscription) because it was not of a high enough standard to compete with the work of another who had also paid his subscription. Who can say what is the best but an impartial committee qualified to judge? And even a manufacturers' association (and we do not deny that there are such) with sufficient foresight to instruct their own committee to act temporarily, as it were, as jury instead of as counsel for the defence, would only be recreating an exterior expert committee similar to those set up by the Council for Art in Industry—but lacking the central co-ordination the Council itself provided. Moreover, these trade associations are not equipped to undertake the task the Department of Overseas Trade might be tempted to impose on them. In spite of their high-sounding titles: "Incorporated Association of Fire-engine Manufacturers," or the like—they consist for the most part only of a small London office with secretary and typist through which the firms can organize to prevent price-cutting. They have no desire to set about organizing an exhibition in New York (though they might be blackmailed into doing so by the threat that their industry would otherwise go unrepresented). Moreover, they have no experience of what is required of an exhibition. They would have to experiment and would inevitably make the elementary mistakes of all who start by being amateurs. And we cannot afford to make our elementary mistakes at New York.

The official excuse given for the one-sided British display at Paris was that the Paris Exhibition was for some reason only classified as a second-class exhibition. The New York World Fair is classified as a first-class exhibition, and we have found that there are three essentials that both the British public and the British manufacturers have a right to demand in the organization of the British Pavilion if our contribution is to be of first-class standard. These are: a non-commercial Government exhibit presenting national life and characteristics, as distinct from manufactured articles; if the latter must be included as samples in the industrial section, a method of selecting them that is absolutely impartial and that is capable of judging on grounds of real merit. (This implies a willingness on the part of Whitehall to withstand interested criticism and to suggest to a manufacturer who complains that his goods have been left out that he might try improving the design and quality of his goods in preparation for the next exhibition, instead of using his influence in high places to have the national exhibit altered to suit his standards); and finally an essential is that the technique of display be recognized as a specialist job, considering the objects displayed only as the raw material the display expert has to work with, as the various Government Departments concerned very sensibly did at Glasgow.

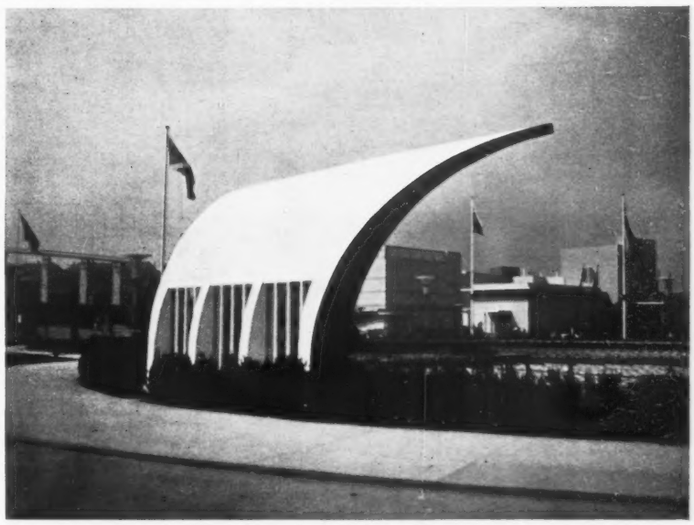
The distinction that this country has not yet shown that it appreciates is that between a trade fair and an exhibition.

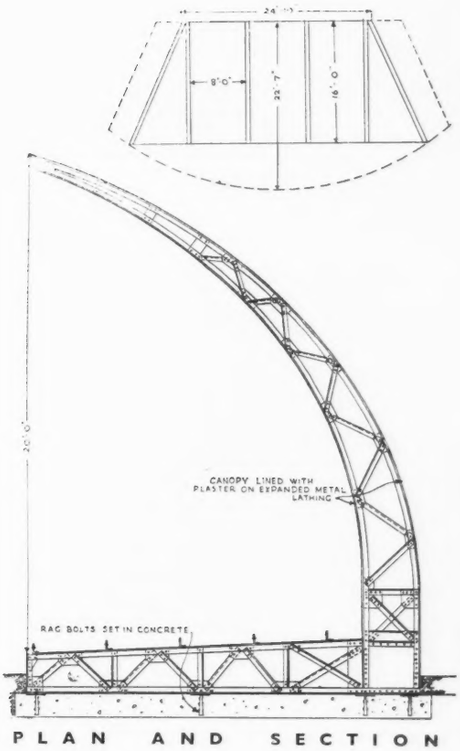
PORTFOLIO OF EXHIBITION ARCHITECTURE : GLASGOW 1938

The illustration and discussion of the Glasgow Exhibition on the preceding pages has concerned itself chiefly with architecture in its capacity of handmaid to display: as the vehicle of publicity and prestige. But exhibition buildings, in spite of their temporary nature, can also be considered simply as examples of architectural design, and on the following pages are illustrated those of the buildings contained in the Exhibition which appear most worth recording as interesting contemporary solutions of a number of recurrent architectural problems.

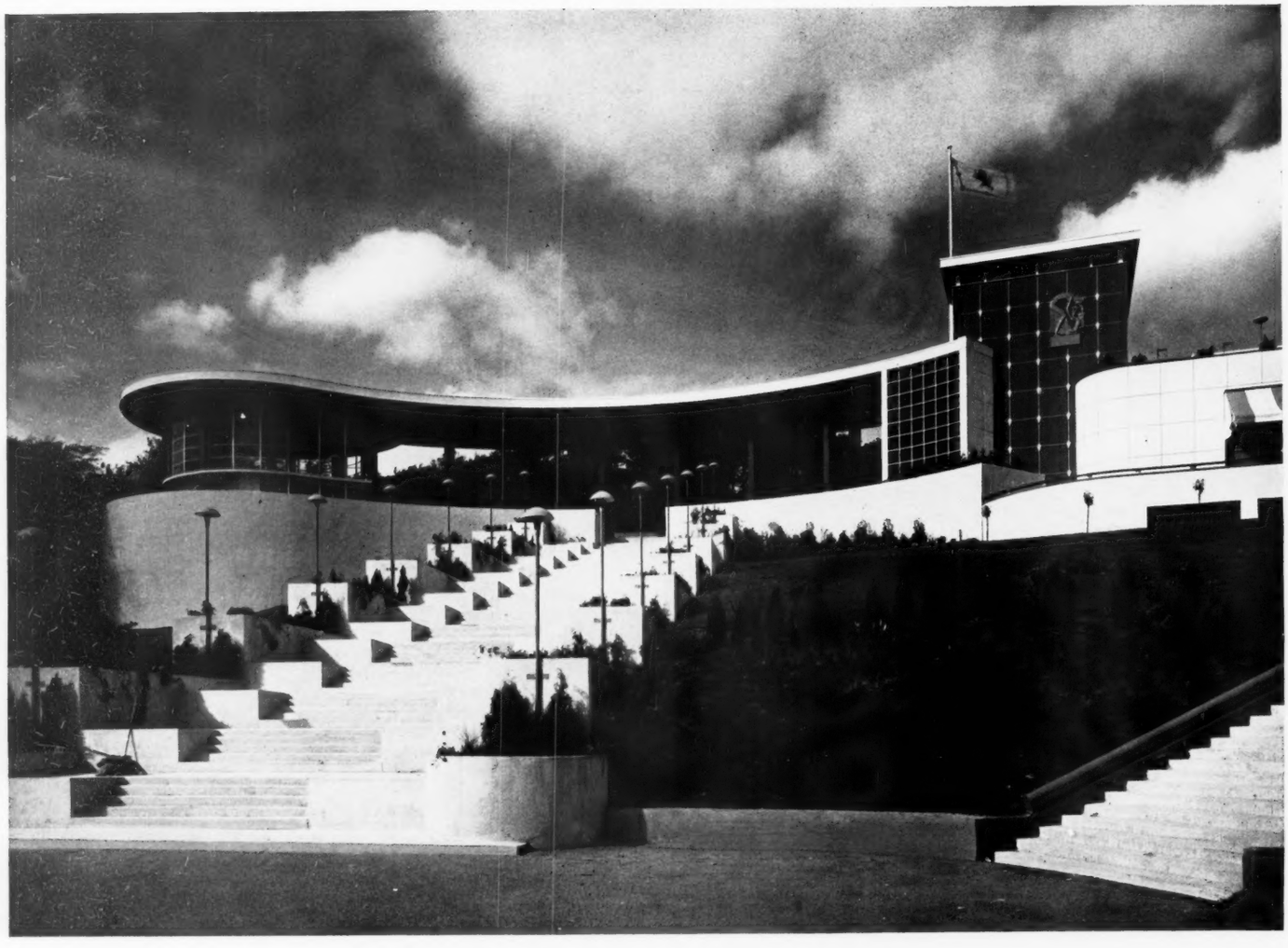
1. Bandstand

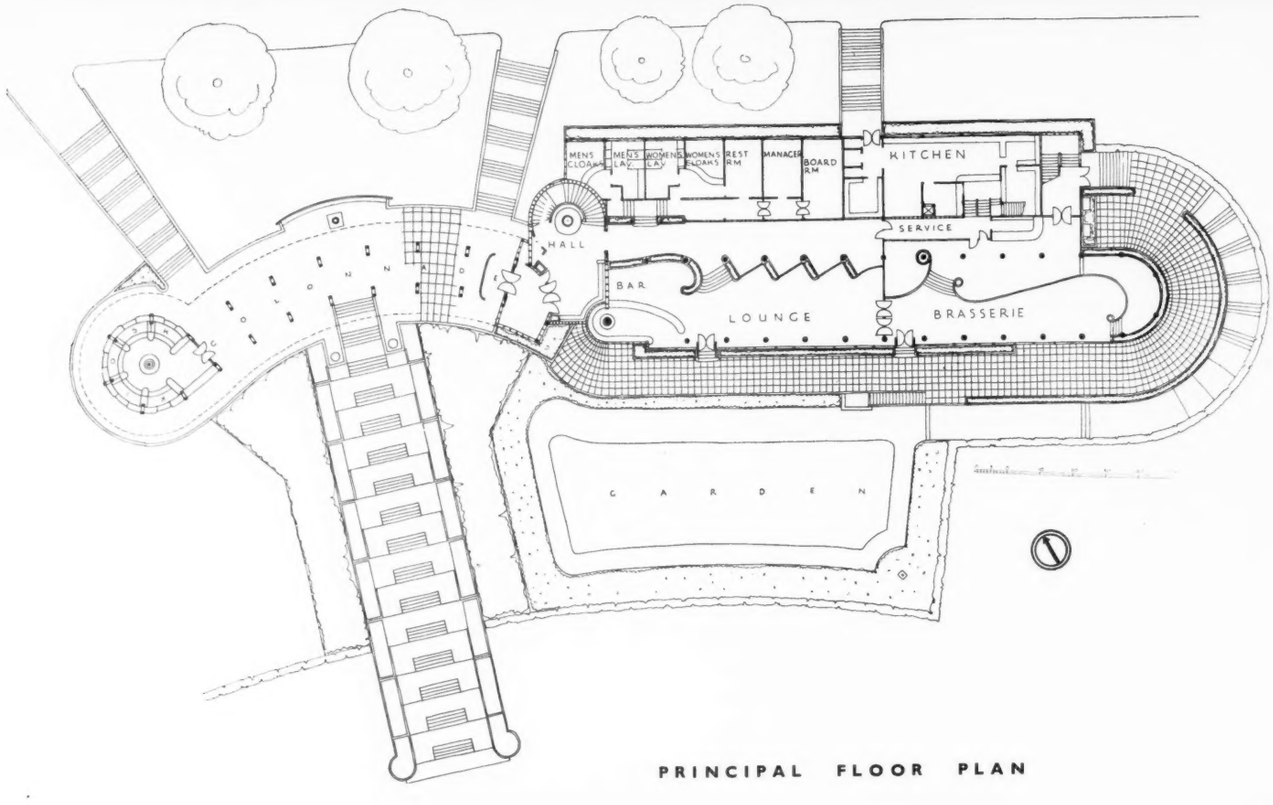
The band enclosure, with the cantilevered canopy illustrated, lies on the axis of the principal avenue, immediately in front of the Palace of Engineering. It is marked 57 on the plan on page 2. The great merit of its very simple shape is that it hardly obstructs the views in any direction, while at the same time providing sufficient shelter. It is constructed, as the drawing shows, of a light steel frame. The inside surface is decorated with a mural painting. Architect, Thomas S. Tait.



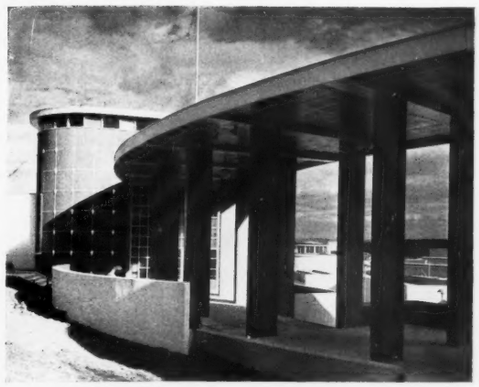


PLAN AND SECTION



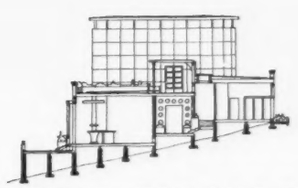


PRINCIPAL FLOOR PLAN



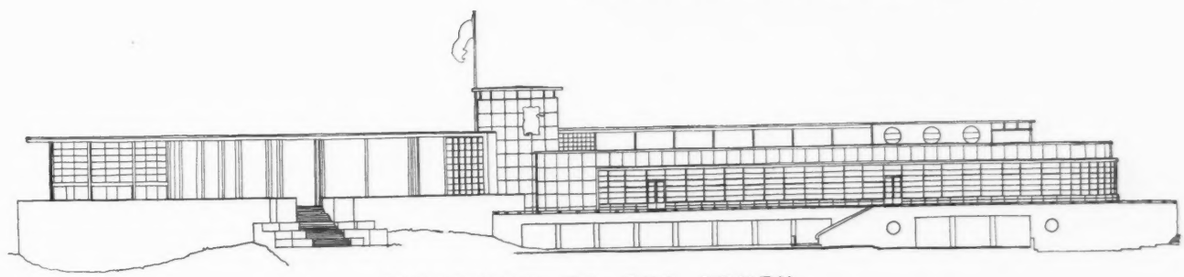
2. The Garden Club

This building (marked 78 on the plan on page 2), occupies the south slope of Bellahouston Hill facing the Mosspark entrance. It is approached by a flight of steps leading into a colonnade through which the public have access to the top of the hill and from the terrace of which is a view over the southern half of the Exhibition and the Amusement Park. It is composed of a number of units whose grouping very successfully takes advantage of an informal site without losing the drama of the axial approach. At one end of the colonnade is a circular pavilion containing six small shops, designed to serve both externally and internally : at the other is the Club itself, containing lounge and restaurant on a slightly lower level than the entrance, and a tea terrace on an upper level. The constructional frame of the building is timber, faced with building board, and painted in appropriately gay colours. The windows only are of metal. The external colouring is cream for the main range of the restaurant, the staircase tower and the piers of the colonnade being chocolate brown. The terrace blind is orange and white striped, and the sculpture and other details of the exterior are picked out in orange. The underside of the colonnade roof and the reveals of the glazed screen that lights the Club entrance are painted blue.

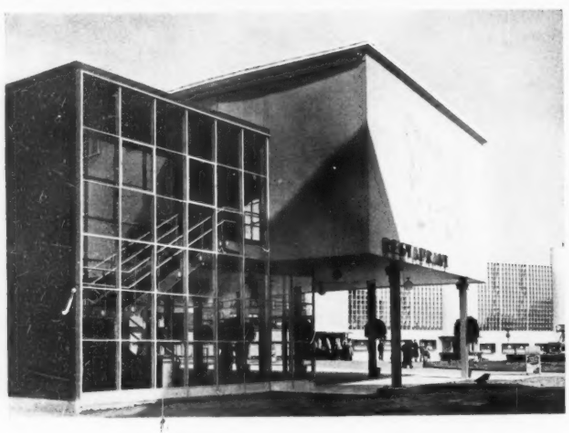


CROSS-SECTION

The external sculpture is by Hugh Lorimer and Thomas Whalen. A close-up view of the western end of the Club from the colonnade terrace is given on Plate iii, together with a night view of the whole building from below. The two interior views on the left show a most successful treatment of the main Club staircase, which is lined with building board and totally enclosed in a cage of wire mesh, painted brown and red, and the lower floor of the brasserie restaurant with its ceiling lighting composed of an S-shaped arrangement of six-inch spheres. Architects, Thomas S. Tait and T. W. Marwick.

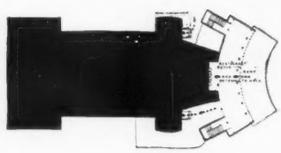


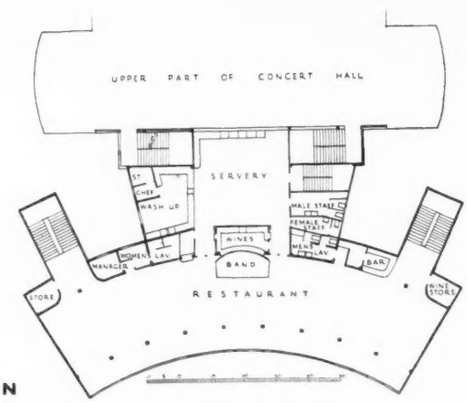
ELEVATION TO THE SOUTH



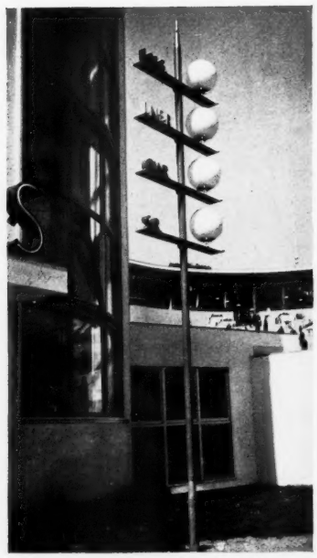
3. Concert Hall Restaurant

The Concert Hall (marked 26 on the plan on page 2), closes the end of the first of the three main avenues. Its front is marked by a restaurant, which is raised on steel stanchions, so that access to the Concert Hall is preserved underneath it (see block plan below). The curved façade of the restaurant consists of a white-painted glazed screen of an appropriately light nature. The restaurant is reached by an elegantly-designed glass-enclosed staircase either side of the Concert Hall entrance (bottom picture). The exposed steel stanchions are painted pale blue, the asbestos - cement sheathed wall of the staircase enclosure is colour - washed brown and the similarly sheathed blank end wall of the restaurant pink. The latter carries a painted decoration. This building, with the Garden Club just illustrated and the Palace of Industry North, is the most successful piece of architectural expression in the Exhibition, taking more character from its structure than many of the buildings with more solidly designed masses. Architect, Thomas S. Tait, associated with James Taylor Thompson.



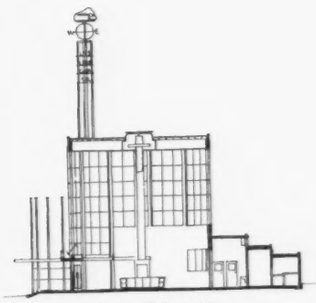


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

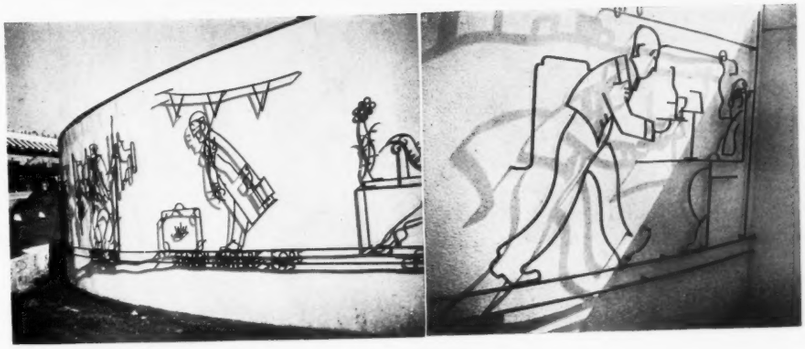


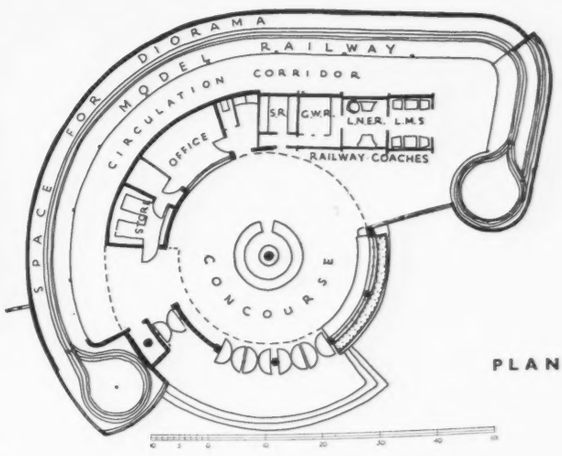
The British Railways Pavilion (marked 62 on the plan on page 2) is planned round a tall cylindrical drum about three-quarters of whose circumference is glazed and the remaining portion used inside to display a large map of the British Isles. The rest of the building consists of a low gallery containing a model railway, open to an artificially lighted corridor except at the ends where there is enclosed turning space for the model trains. An interesting display feature is a full-size section of a sleeping or dining car from each of the principal railways. The interior of the glass drum contains a travel enquiry counter planned round the central column which supports the roof. The blank external wall of the model railway gallery bears a series of mural decorations depicting railwaymen at work, carried out in square-section black bar iron, raised about an inch in front of the rendered wall surface. These were designed and made by Gee and Stevenson. The mast shown in the general view on the right is decorated with neon-lighting. Above is a detail of the lighting standard beside the entrance, each cross bar of which supports the initials of one of the railway companies. Architect, Joseph Emberton.

4. British



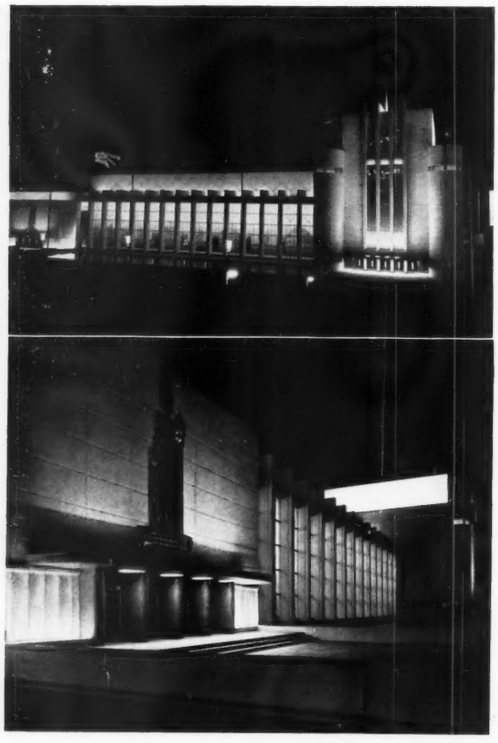
SECTION





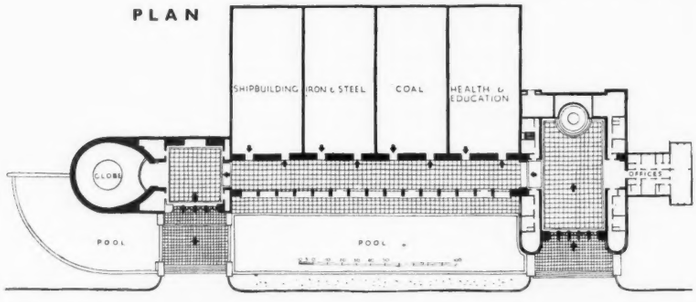
PLAN

Railways Pavilion



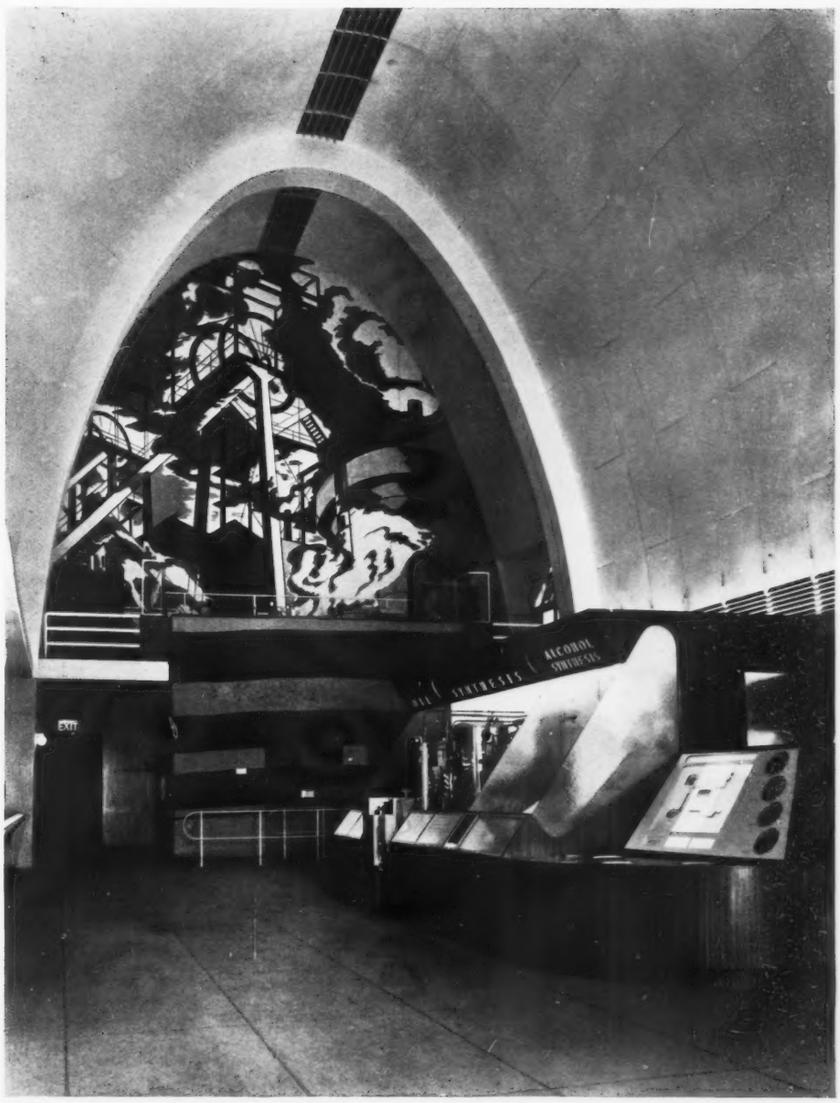
5. United Kingdom Govern-

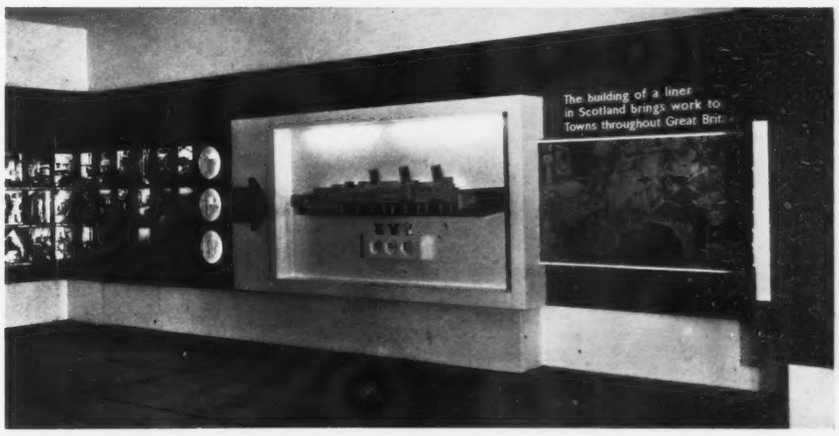
This building (marked 27 on the plan on page 2) houses the official exhibit of the British Government, who, the trade side of the Exhibition having been catered for elsewhere, were able to concentrate on producing a purely educational and prestige exhibit. Four aspects of national life were selected for exposition and dramatization; the three major "heavy" industries, shipbuilding, coal, and iron and steel, and the topical subject of "Fitter Britain." Each of these is given a large rectangular hall, and the design of the United Kingdom Pavilion consists in essence only of these four halls with a series of approach galleries. As can be seen in the plan this series of galleries forms a very monumental architectural frontispiece to the four exhibition halls behind. Except for a large glass globe displayed beyond the exit hall they contain no actual exhibits. Though the



ment Pavilion

general character of the building is perhaps over-solid, its conventional composition is well carried out and it has an appropriate dignity: also its plain white walls form a useful foil to the broken surfaces elsewhere. The building has a steel and wood frame, lined on the outside with expanded metal cement rendered. The exterior and the entrance hall are marred by a quantity of gilt sculpture of poor design, and the long open gallery, itself effective in scale (see frontispiece of this issue) carries mural paintings that are among the least successful in the Exhibition, but the architect has achieved four remarkable hall interiors for the display designer to work with. These are identical in shape with high parabolic roofs lined with wallboard. Their scale is impressive and the flat end walls provide appropriate spaces for mural painting. The display in these halls is of very high quality and exploits to the full, with ingenious display techniques of many kinds, the possibilities of dramatizing scientific and industrial facts and processes. On the right one of the halls is seen, that devoted to coal-mining, with the end wall occupied by a painting by Clive Gardiner. Below the painting is a large model of a coal mine, the underground workings being viewed at floor level and the surface workings from the gallery. Below is a model blast furnace in the iron and steel hall and below, on the right, part of the shipbuilding hall in which modern improvements in shipbuilding technique and modern industrial organization are described in models and photographs. Architect, H. J. Rowse. Display designer, Misha Black.

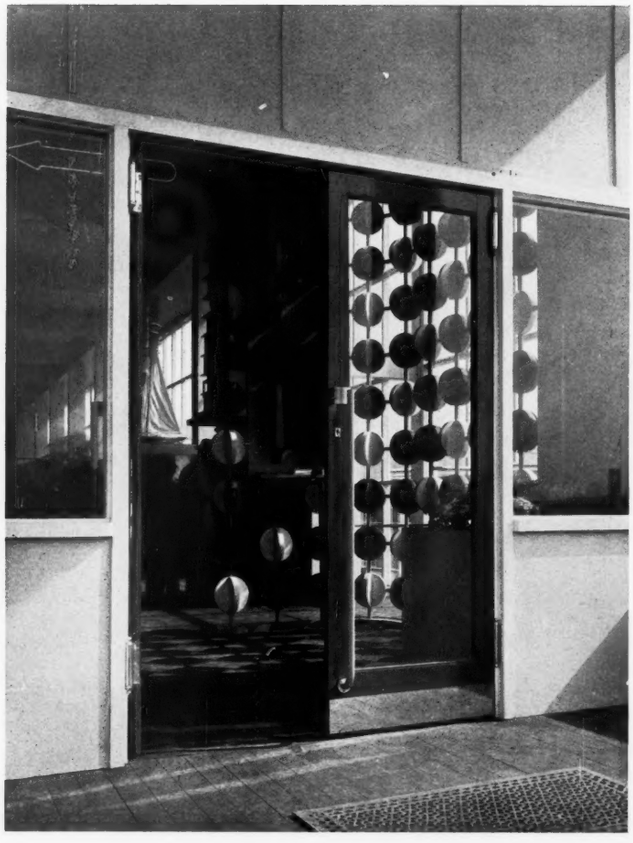


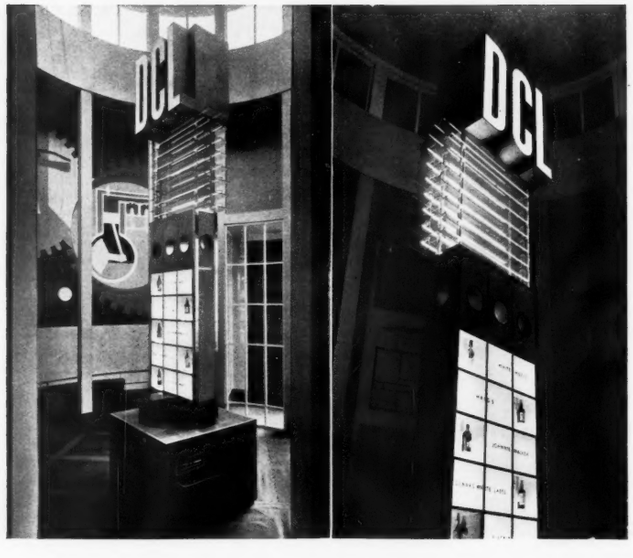


Further details from the interior of the United Kingdom Pavilion; top, the central inscription in the "Fitter Britain" hall, describing a century's progress in national health (lettering laid out by Jesse Collins): centre, display windows at the back of the same hall. Photographs describing the "enemies to health" are recessed at eye-level in a polished wood surround: bottom, in the shipbuilding hall, a demonstration model of the Yarrow Testing Tank. Display designer, Misha Black.

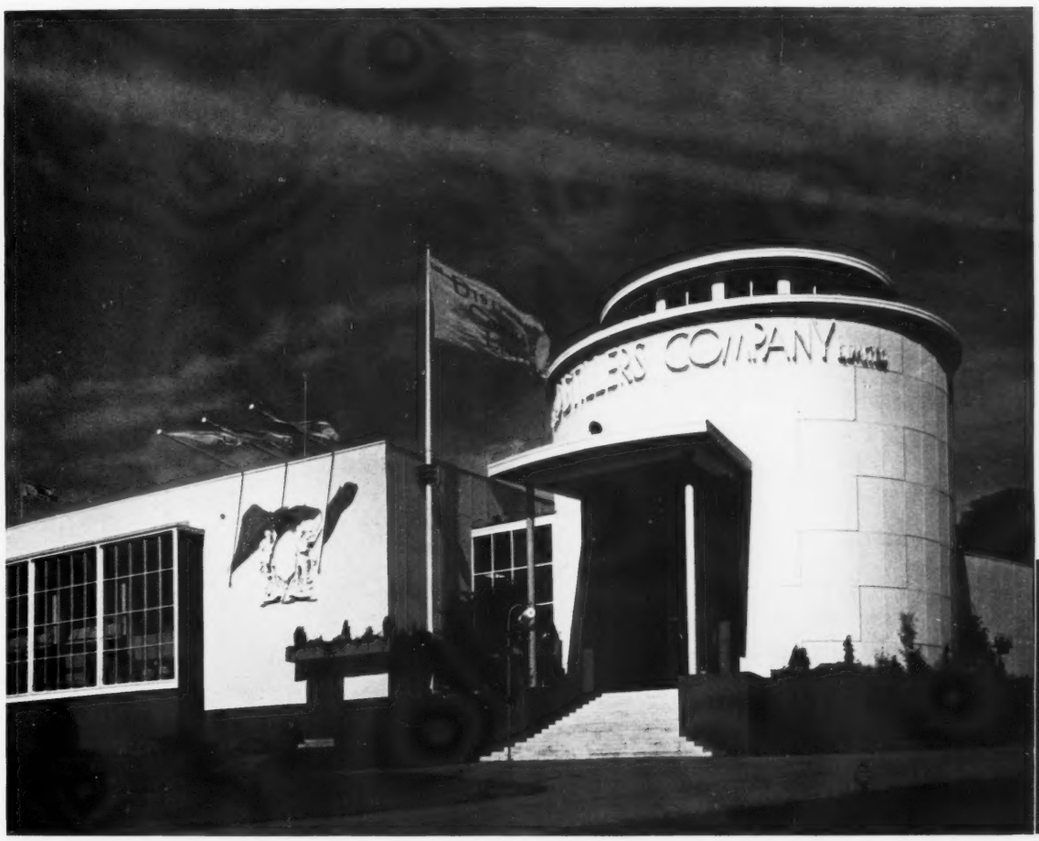
5. United Kingdom Government Pavilion

6. Distillers'

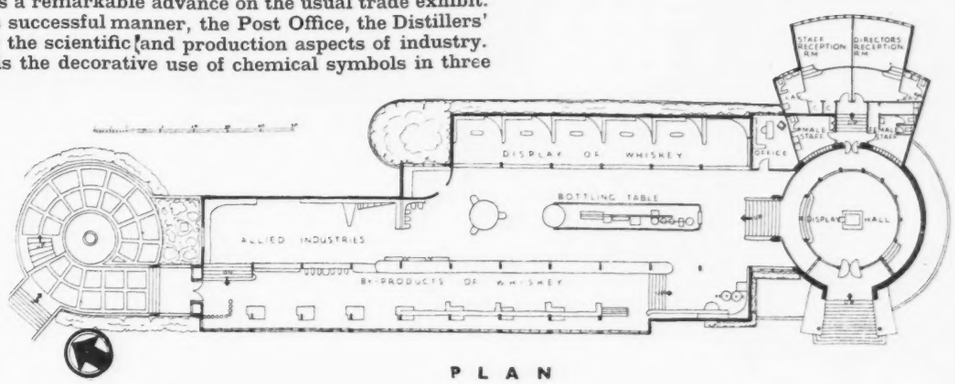




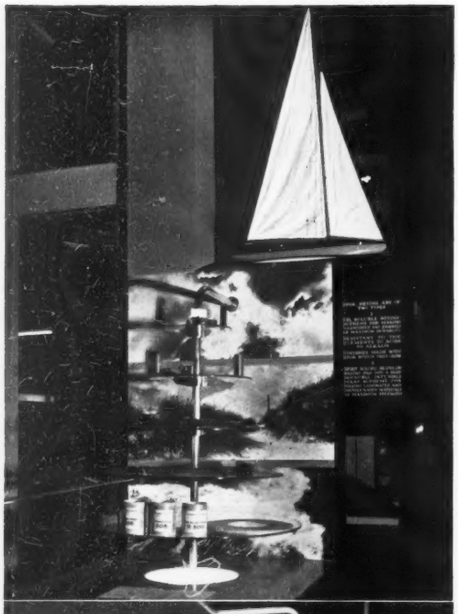
Company Pavilion

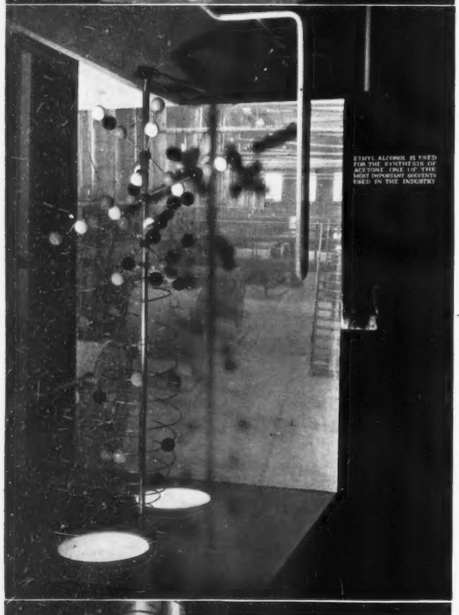


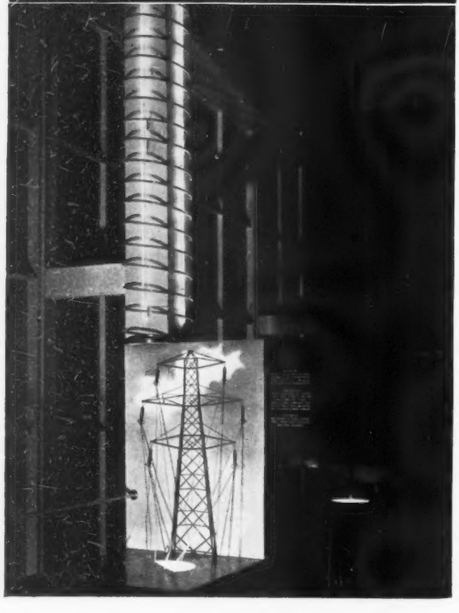
This pavilion (marked 81 on the plan on page 2) is a collective contribution by the various Scottish distillery companies and represents a remarkable advance on the usual trade exhibit. Like the British Government and, in a less successful manner, the Post Office, the Distillers' Company has concentrated on dramatizing the scientific and production aspects of industry. A feature of the display (see also overleaf) is the decorative use of chemical symbols in three dimensions, as in the screen within the doorway on the facing page. The symbols are painted red, white and black to represent the constituent elements of alcohol. Below are photographs under two lighting conditions of the indicator tower in the entrance hall. The exterior, (shown above by day and by night), is finished with sheets of plasterboard instead of the asbestos sheeting generally used elsewhere. It is coloured yellow, with the window bars white and the return and the base of the long window on the left chocolate brown. Architect, Thomas S. Tait.



PLAN

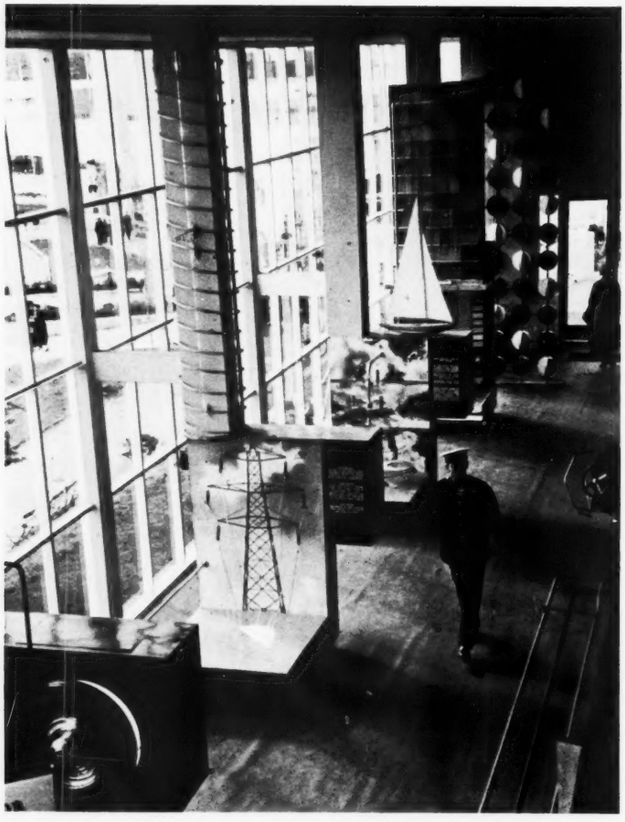


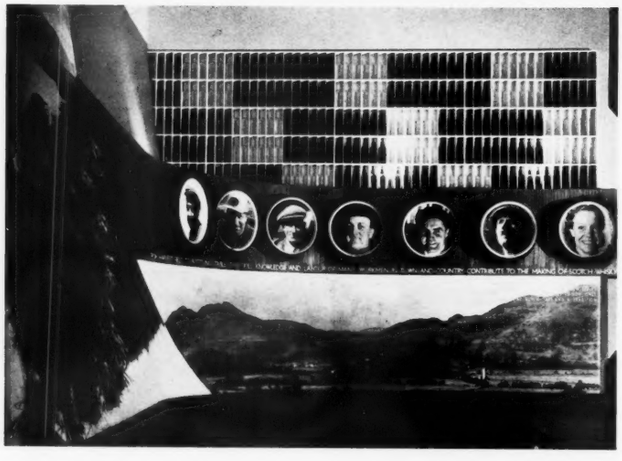


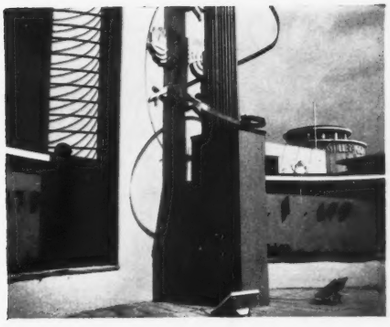


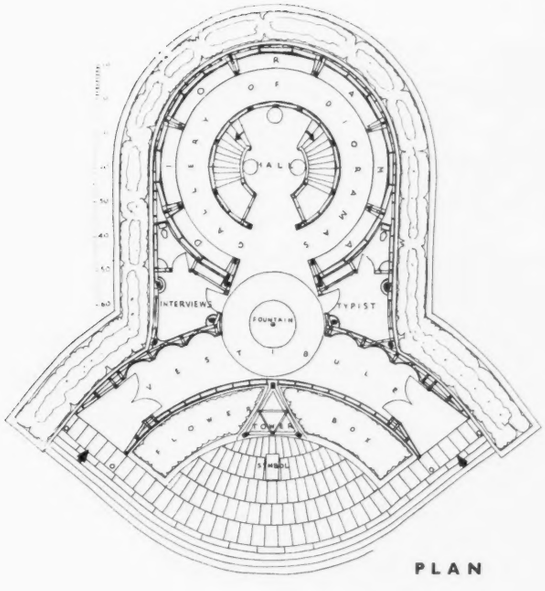
6. Distillers' Company

The interior display, as shown on the plan on the previous page, is arranged on two parallel galleries on different levels. The upper one is devoted to the proprietary whiskeys and the lower one, illustrated below, to the by-products of distilling, which are demonstrated in a series of lively display shown in detail on the left. The bottom photograph shows bottles of different colours effectively used as decoration. Display designer, Edwin Calligan.





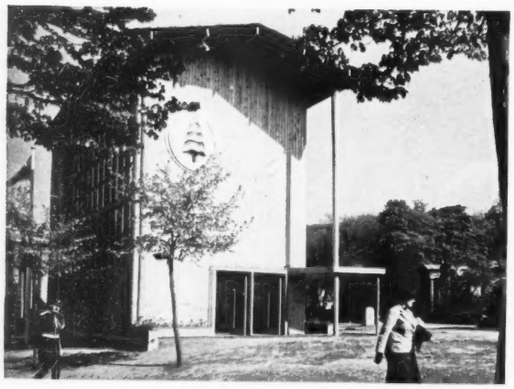


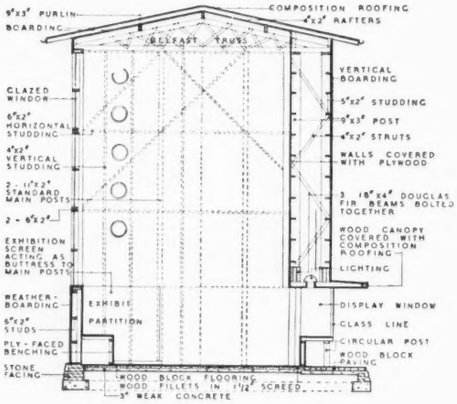


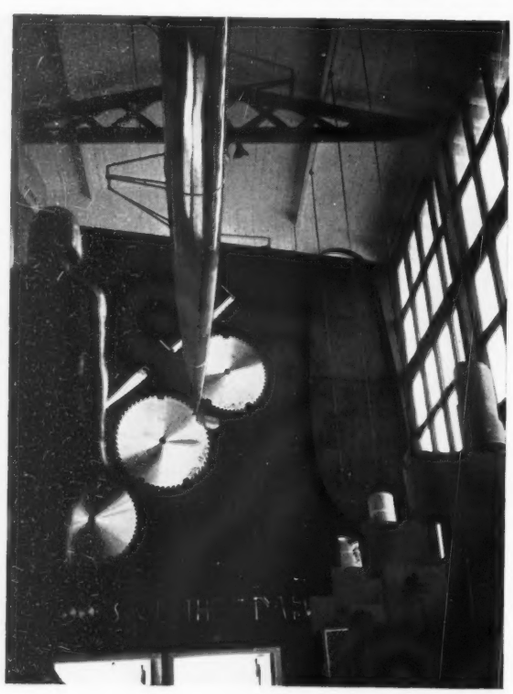
PLAN

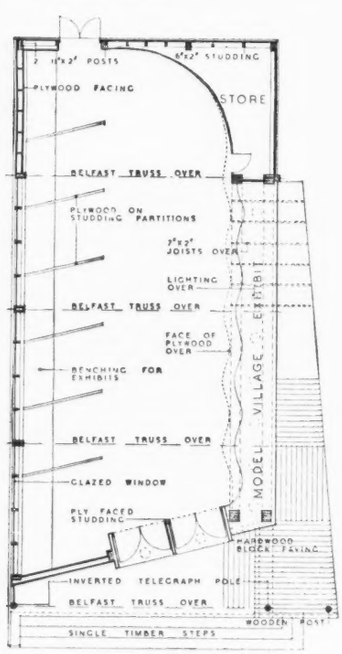
7. Imperial Chemical Industries

The I.C.I. Pavilion (marked 61 on the plan on page 2) is of a more fanciful design than the other buildings, consisting of a cylindrical hall containing the interior displays (which include some good mural paintings by Robert Westwater) dominated outside by three triangular pylons intended to represent Earth, Air and Water. They are braced together by curved rods of cupro-nickel, and are supplemented by another free-standing pylon in cupro-nickel, copper and brass, surmounted by an illuminated trade mark. The sculpture on the pylons is by Thomas Whalen. A curved vestibule in front of the building surrounds a pool decorated with a number of frogs (right), modelled out of sheet copper by Walter Pritchard. Architect, Basil Spence.









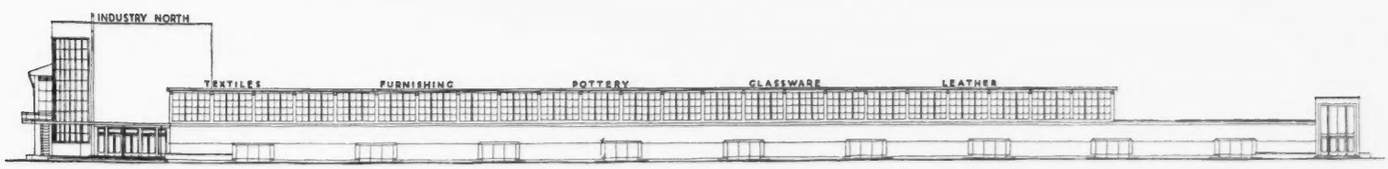
PLAN AND SECTION

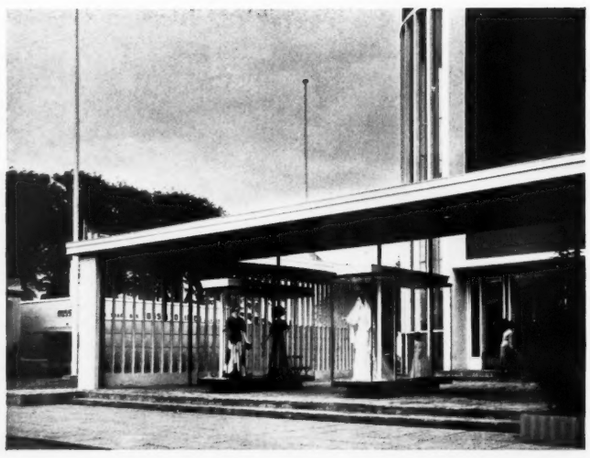
8. Timber Development Association

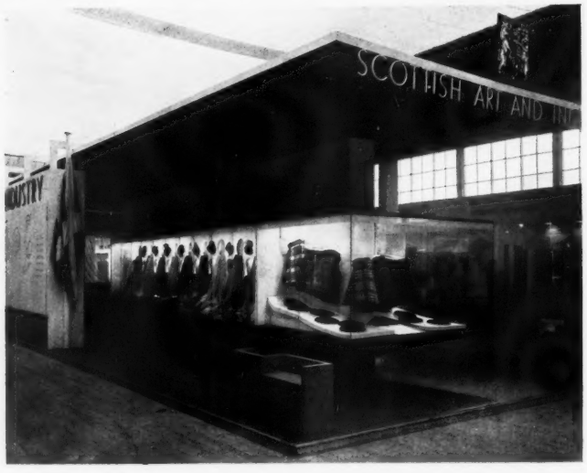
This pavilion is situated in the extreme north-east corner of the Exhibition grounds, and is marked 5 on the map on page 2. It is of all timber construction, including the roof which takes the logical form of a flat two-way pitch supported on a series of Belfast trusses. The ridge and purlins are carried beyond the front wall to form a protective porch. The latter is framed by a pair of inverted telegraph poles, painted scarlet. Otherwise the wood-boarded exterior is finished in natural colour. On three sides the boarding is arranged vertically, and on the fourth panels of horizontal weather-boarding, cedar shingling and other finishes demonstrate their external use. This side (see smaller photograph) also contains a large window in teak. The interior (see also Plate v) displays wood products in a series of bays separated by screens beneath the big window, and the woods themselves on the opposite wall which also curves round the back. This wall is boxed out so as to provide a deep window in its thickness at the base. This window, which is of continuous plate-glass protected by a blue-painted wood canopy (see exterior photograph) contains models of timber architecture. The bottom photograph shows the end wall above the entrance with its display of woodworking tools, and the racing shell suspended in the roof. Architect, R. Furneaux Jordan.

9. Palace of Industry North

Unlike most of the larger buildings in the Exhibition, which incorporate a certain amount of steelwork, this building is entirely constructed of wood, and it has achieved a remarkable architectural quality out of the temporary nature of its construction. It consists of a large hall with clerestory lighting (see photograph and elevation below and plan overleaf) marked at one end by a staircase tower leading to a gallery restaurant and at the other by an entrance porch, right. The building is faced with corrugated asbestos sheeting, painted white. The window frames are also white and the tower and porch terra-cotta red. In front of the main façade is a series of well-designed free-standing show-cases (see also page 18). Architect, Thomas S. Tait in association with J. Antonio Coia.

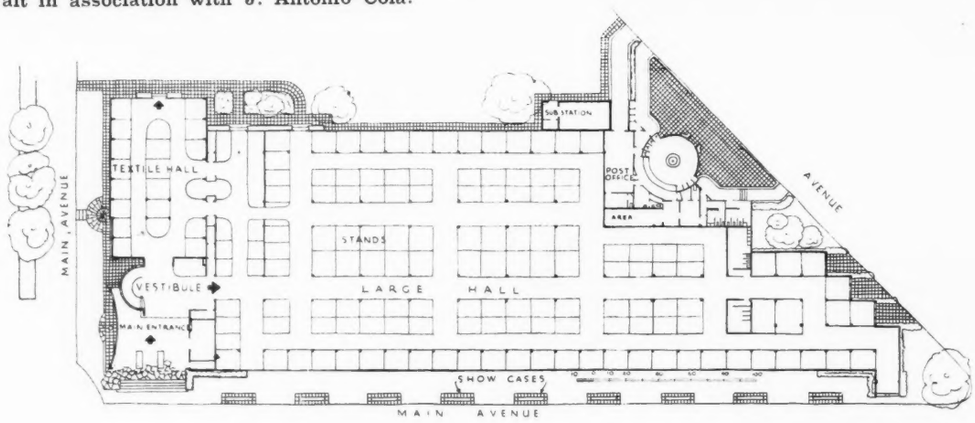






9. Palace of Industry North

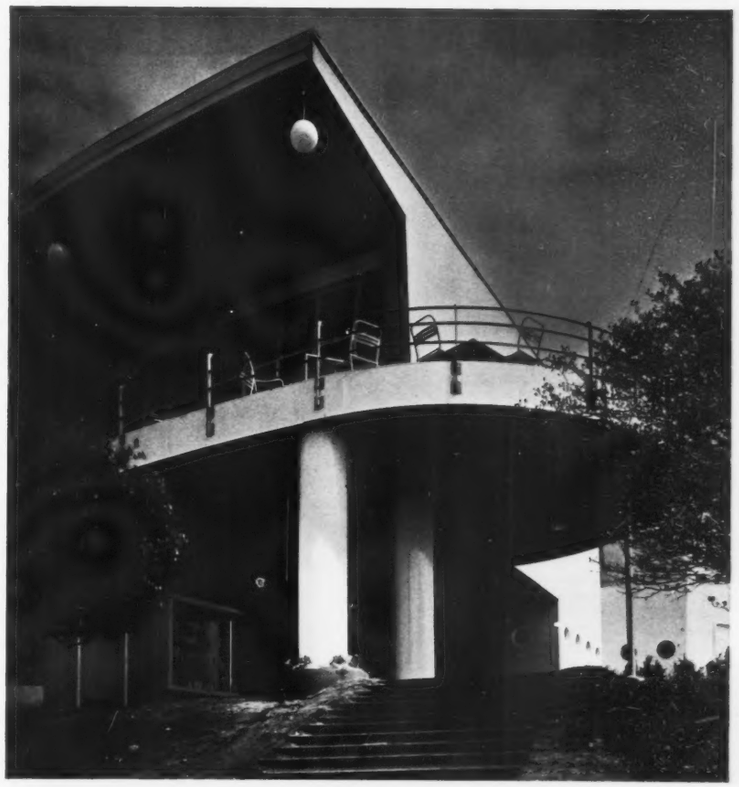
The end of the building, with the staircase tower, right, leading to a gallery restaurant, abuts on the second of the three main Exhibition avenues. It is marked 67 on the plan on page 2. The main entrance is at the base of the tower and is approached through a small stone-paved forecourt containing glass showcases within a wood-framed shelter, extreme right (see also Plate ix). The lower photographs show the interior effect of the tall tower window and a very distinguished display stand designed by J. Duncan Miller for the Scottish Council for Art and Industry. It consists of a continuous glass-fronted cabinet cantilevered out from a central wall. The latter and the soffit of the roof are painted dark blue. Below is a steel spiral staircase which decorates the outside of the smaller textile hall. The latter is reminiscent in its design of the Swiss Pavilion at Paris. The building also incorporates at the back the Exhibition's working Post Office, suitably and simply designed in contrast to the pretentious monument put up by the G.P.O. itself (see page 15). Architect, Thomas S. Tait in association with J. Antonio Coia.

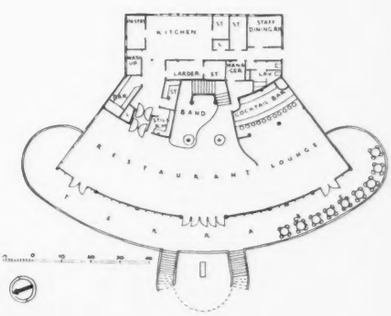


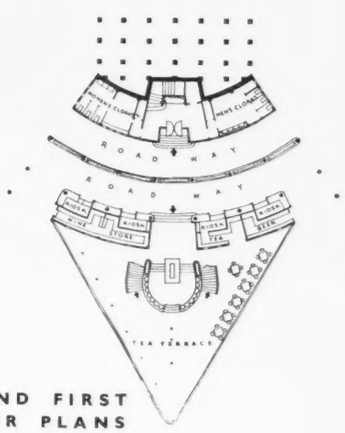
PLAN

10. Atlantic Restaurant

The Atlantic Restaurant (marked 75 on the plan on page 2), is situated high on the western slope of Bellahouston Hill, commanding the second of the three main avenues of the Exhibition. The top photograph shows the restaurant as seen from the gallery windows of the United Kingdom Pavilion. The tower that crowns the top of the hill can also be seen, and the Women's Pavilion in the foreground. The other photographs show a close-up view of the corner of the building with the end of the terrace overhanging the roadway, a front view taken at night, and a side view of the lower or tea terrace. The restaurant itself occupies the upper part of the building and is carried over the roadway running round the hill. The kitchens are behind, built into the slope of the hill. At the lower level is the restaurant entrance on one side of the roadway, and on the other side a triangular tea terrace separated from the roadway by a row of small shops. This terrace is linked with the upper terrace outside the restaurant windows by a double flight of stairs, see Plate viii. The curved front, as of a deck-house, the bowed section of the windows and the decorative use of mast and flags give the nautical flavour which was intended, a pleasant conceit that the realistic prow which terminates the tea terrace rather overemphasizes. The cantilevered hood to the upper terrace has a pale blue painted soffit, otherwise the colouring is white and pink. The restaurant is managed by the Anchor Line. Architects, Thomas S. Tait and T. W. Marwick.



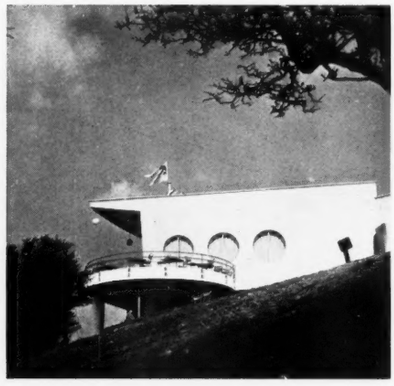


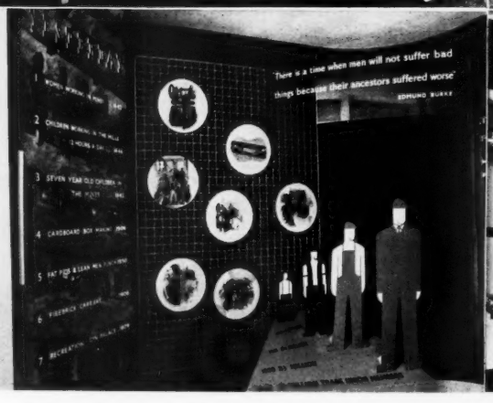


GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS

10. Atlantic Restaurant

The interior of the restaurant showing the large bow-fronted terrace windows and a side view showing the slope of the hill and the restaurant terrace springing from it. Architects, Thomas S. Tait and T. W. Marwick.





The purpose of this small pavilion is to describe the growth and achievements of the Trade Union Movement. The exterior (above) is an intelligent adaptation of one of the standard exhibition kiosks. The walls are coloured dark red with horizontal fillets and outline lettering in white wood. A mast carrying a sign pierces the canopy. The top of the mast can be seen in the background in Plate iv. The inside (right) shows good use of the modern techniques of photography and pictorial statistics. Architect, J. Cruikshank Rose. Display designer, P. S. Rose.

11. T.U.C. Pavilion

Period Piece

Pumpernickel stands in the midst of a happy valley, through which sparkles—to mingle with the Rhine somewhere, but I have not the map at hand to say exactly at what point—the fertilizing stream of the Pump. In some places the river is big enough to support a ferry-boat, in others to turn a mill; in Pumpernickel itself, the last Transparency but three, the great and renowned Victor Aurelius XIV, built a magnificent bridge, on which his own statue rises, surrounded by water-nymphs and emblems of victory, peace and plenty; he has his foot on the neck of a prostrate Turk—history says he engaged and ran a Janissary through the body at the relief of Vienna by Sobieski—but, quite undisturbed by the agonies of that prostrate Mahometan, who writhes at his feet in the most ghastly manner—the Prince smiles blandly, and points with his truncheon in the direction of the Aurelius Platz, where he had begun to erect a new palace that would have been the wonder of the age, had the great-souled prince but funds to complete it. But the completion of Monplaisir (Monblaisir the honest German folks call it) was stopped for lack of ready money, and it and its park and garden are now in rather a faded condition, and not more than ten times big enough to accommodate the Court of the reigning Sovereign.

The gardens were arranged to emulate those of Versailles, and amidst the terraces and groves there are some huge allegorical waterworks still, which spout and froth stupendously upon fête-days, and frighten one with their enormous insurrections. There is Trophonius' cave in which, by some artifice, the leaden Tritons are made not only to spout water, but to play the most dreadful groans out of their lead conches—there is the Nymph-bath and the Niagara cataract, which the people of the neighbourhood admire beyond expression, when they come to the yearly fair at the opening of the Chamber, or to the fêtes with which the happy little nation still celebrates the birthdays and marriage days of its princely governors.

Then from all the towns of the Duchy which stretches for nearly ten miles—from Bolkum, which lies on its western frontier bidding defiance to Prussia, from Grogwitz where the Prince has a hunting-lodge, and where his dominions are separated by the Pump from those of the neighbouring prince of Potzenthal; from all the little villages, which besides these great cities, dot over the happy Principality—from the farms and the mills along the Pump, come troops of people in red petticoats and velvet headdresses, or with three-cornered hats and pipes in mouths, who flock to the Residenz and share in the pleasures of the fair and festivities there. Then the theatre is open for nothing, then the waters of Monblaisir begin to play, then there come mountebanks and riding troops, and the delighted people are permitted to march through room after room of the Grand Ducal palace, and admire the slippery floor, the rich hangings and the spittoons at the doors of all the innumerable chambers. There is one pavilion at Monblaisir which Aurelius Victor XV had arranged—a great prince but too fond of pleasure—and which I am told is a perfect wonder of licentious elegance. It is painted with the story of Bacchus and Ariadne, and the table works in and out of the room by means of a windlass so that the company was served without any intervention of domestics. But the palace was shut up by Barabara, Aurelius XV's widow, a severe and devout princess of the House of Bolkum and regent of the Duchy during her son's glorious minority, and after the death of her husband cut off in the pride of his pleasures.

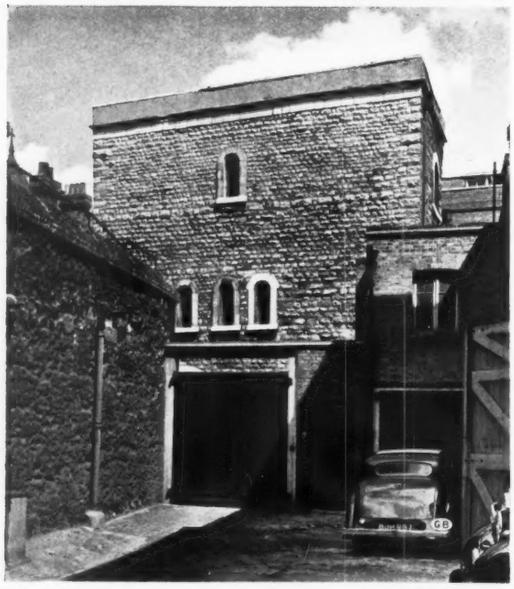
WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY
(*Vanity Fair*)

Abingdon Street

It is a cause for general satisfaction that the Lord Mayor's Committee have at last been induced to abandon their original (or, rather, second) scheme for the King George V Memorial which involved the destruction of a number of admirable eighteenth-century houses in order to achieve an ill-shaped open space, and for the creation of which a clear view of the fourteenth-century Jewel House (heavily restored in the last century) provided but a flimsy justification. The scheme that has been substituted and which has the approval of the Royal Fine Arts Commission, who were firmly opposed to the original scheme (despite the fact that it was sponsored by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott) as were the Amenities Group of both Houses,* the London Society, the S.P.A.B., the Georgian Group, the Londoners' League, the President of the R.I.B.A. and the Deans and Canons of Westminster, is perfectly unobjectionable. Indeed, in that it will remove Labouchère's old house which at the moment masks the façade of Nos. 6 and 7, a building of quite exceptional merit, it is highly welcome if none the less a trifle disappointing to those who had hoped for one of the three more ambitious alternative schemes. Praise is due to the Georgian Group who, after a long campaign of protest, actually opened an office in Abingdon Street where the public were invited to go and sign a petition to be sent to the Prime Minister. Although when the decision of the committee was made known the office had only been open two days a quite surprising number of people had taken the trouble to climb the three flights of stairs to give their signatures, and letters of support had been received from prominent figures in every department of public life.

Almost the only dissentient voice was that of the leader writer in the *Times*, who deplored the abandonment of the larger project and gently rebuked the various societies who wished to save Abingdon Street. "In the present state of

* *See the letter on page 43.*



Upper photograph, the eighteenth-century stone-fronted houses, which were to have been sacrificed to make way for the George V Memorial, but whose safety is now assured by the adoption of the new scheme, which will moreover increase their value by removing the house which at the moment masks half the façade from the view of the bystander in Parliament Square. Lower photograph, the building for a clear view of which it was proposed to sacrifice the houses above. It has at various times sheltered ecclesiastical delinquents and ecclesiastical treasure and now provides a haven for (presumably ecclesiastical) automobiles. It was refaced in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

THE ABINGDON ST. ALTERNATIVES

artistic feeling in England it is easier to arouse enthusiasm in defence of old beauty than for the creation of new," said the writer, regardless of the fact that the great justification of the scheme put forward by its promoters had been the opening up of the fourteenth-century jewel house, which is undeniably old though less certainly beautiful. Moreover, some of us have learnt wisdom; could one be assured that for every old beauty destroyed something of equal merit would be substituted, the various preservation societies would have no further *raison d'être*.

This recent development, it may be added, does not remove the danger of the proposed block of offices being built on so unsuitable a site as part of Abingdon Street, a development which the Georgian Group will have to continue to fight.

Jekyll into Hyde

A report in the *News Chronicle* describes an interesting dispute that recently arose between the Winchester Housing Committee on the one hand and the Lynford Estates, Ltd. and their architect, Mr. J. N. Coleman, on the other. It affords a remarkable and one fancies unique example of a curious reversal of the usual rôles in this type of dispute.

"*The Ministry of Health has allowed an appeal against Winchester City Council's decision to ban half-timbered 'Elizabethan' fronts on an estate where 96 houses are planned.*

"*Colonel J. A. F. Cuffe, chairman of the Winchester Housing Committee, told the News Chronicle:*

"'*Objection was taken to the sham fronts, which include diamond pattern lead glazing of windows, herring bone brickwork, Gothic hinges to the front doors, brick quoins, and tiled eyebrows to the tops of some windows.*

"'*The houses incorporate five different types of architecture and the back and sides are quite different from the fronts. They are not in keeping with the general standard of Winchester architecture.*

"'*The builders were able to go ahead in spite of the fact that the Council disapproved of the elevations because the Town Planning Act of 1935 gives us little or no power.*

"'*We can zone the land for different purposes and say that not more than a certain number of houses may be built to the acre, but we have, unfortunately, little power to restrict the sort of house that a builder may put up.*'

"*Said Mr. J. N. Coleman the architect of the houses: 'The Council wanted us to build a box of bricks. We wanted to build attractive homes.*'

"*Mr. H. Wilkinson, director of the building contractors who are putting up the houses for Lynford Estates, Ltd., said:*

"'*The Council is making a mountain out of a molehill. You can see houses with similar features to these anywhere in the suburbs of London.*

"*I have never before heard of a Council objecting to the front of a house being dissimilar from the back.*'"

The Print Academy

"This exhibition," it is stated in the foreword to the catalogue, "is an experiment. Its ultimate purpose is to show the public what works of art are available in the various forms of printing and in mechanical reproduction." As such it is to be warmly welcomed, for all too often one is at a loss to know what reproductions are available other than those which appear in every print shop window and on every undergraduate's mantelpiece. In the course of time this somewhat limited range has become depressingly familiar; there are moments when one could wish that Van Gogh had never seen

a sunflower. Thus in making the public aware that first-class reproductions of other pictures, equally good, if less familiar, are available, the present exhibition serves a most excellent purpose. Moreover, if it has the effect of stimulating print-makers into diverging from the beaten track and giving us prints of still less hackneyed pictures, we shall be still more indebted to the organizers.

An admirable feature of the exhibition are the excellent lithographs produced by such good modern artists as John Aldridge, Paul Nash and John Piper, and published by Contemporary Lithographs.

CORRESPONDENCE

Abingdon Street

5, Carlton Gardens,
S.W.1.
June 7, 1938.

To the Editor,
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.
Sir,

At a largely attended meeting of the Amenities Group (all parties of both Houses of Parliament) held on the 31st May, it was reported that a decision was likely to be taken by the Executive Committee of the King George V. Memorial Fund on June 14th as to the site of the proposed Statue, and fears were expressed that the site selected might involve the destruction of the Georgian houses in Old Palace Yard.

It was resolved, with two dissentients, to offer strenuous opposition to any such proposal, which was believed to be contrary to the advice of the Royal Fine Art Commission. It was considered essential that the Government should obtain the recommendation of the Commission before submitting any scheme to Parliament for approval.

Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, R.A., loaned the models for the Members of Parliament to see, and was there in person to describe them. Professor A. E. Richardson, A.R.A., attended and expressed his opinion as to the fitness, etc., of the situation. Sir George Broadbridge, former Lord Mayor of London and Chairman of the Sub-Committee handling the matter, was there in person and spoke. Lord Ullswater was present and spoke, and a representative of the Middlesex County Council

R.I.B.A. BRONZE MEDAL

The R.I.B.A. bronze medal for the best London building erected in 1937 has been awarded to Stockleigh Hall, above, a block of flats in Prince Albert Road, Regent's Park designed by Robert Atkinson and A. F. B. Anderson, FF.R.I.B.A. When this building was illustrated in our last issue Mr. Anderson's name was inadvertently omitted for which error we now offer our sincere apologies. The view shown above is taken from the garden on the Prince Albert Road front.

ROBERT ATKINSON AND A. F. B. ANDERSON, ARCHITECTS

also attended and addressed the Group.

The matter was debated from very many angles and the above resolution was passed with only two dissenting votes.

Yours etc.,
ALFRED C. BOSSOM.
Secretary, Amenities Group.
(All parties, Lords & Commons).

This letter shows the strength of the protests the threat to the Abingdon St. houses evoked. Their happy outcome is recorded on page 41.

"America Preserved"

150, So. Madison Ave.,
Pasadena, California, U.S.A.
May 1, 1938.

To the Editor,
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.
Sir,

Today I was very pleased to receive a copy of the April issue containing my article, America Preserved. As a modernist, I appreciate much that you had to say in the preface about a too slavish dependence upon the past. But if your charge of sentimentality is against the people of Natchez for having organized the annual Pilgrimage, a word of explanation is necessary.

It must be remembered that ever since the Civil War Natchez has been poverty stricken. Recently it was realized that some drastic steps would have to be taken to secure money for repairs if the finest of the old houses were to be saved. It must be remembered too that a local nationalism persists in the South precisely as in Scotland and Wales, and with the same justification. Southerners have their own history, their own traditions and their own institutions. The purity of their Anglo-Saxon racial strain distinguishes them from the rest of Americans, as does their speech. Among their institutions none is more beloved than the annual Mardi Gras which is held in many Southern cities, as it is in France. A carnival period is a deeply rooted feature of the spring season, and it has proven to be a very practical means of drawing tourist money into a district that badly needs it. One cannot blame the citizens of Natchez, who until recently had not shared in this wealth, for utilizing those features of their heritage which will lend a carnival spirit to their architectural pageant. The use of the rebel Stars and Bars is still general throughout the South on its holidays, just as the Scottish Standard is flown in Scotland. Personally, I do not see in what respect the costume festivals indigenous to the South are more sentimental than the Highland gatherings in Scotland or the Eisteddfod pageants in Wales. It was dire need rather than any desire to emulate Hollywood that brought the hoop-skirts out of Natchez garrets.

Yours etc.,
A. B. CUTTS.

Radio Distribution

73, Sloane Avenue,
S.W.3.
June 7, 1938.

The Editor,
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.
Sir,

We wish to congratulate you on your article "Sound Equipment in the Interior." In our opinion, it is by far and away the best that has been done so far and should be of considerable assistance to the architect.

There is one point we would like to criticize, and in doing so we would like you to bear in mind that we are in no way prejudiced against any particular system, nor are we manufacturers of any particular standardized equipment.

We do not think you have done sufficient justice to distribution at low frequencies. There are many more advantages than those that you have mentioned, namely, simplicity of operation, improved quality of reproduction, saving of space and reliability.

By far the greater proportion of the listening public are only interested in the British National and Regional programmes, supplemented by Foreign broadcasts to tide over the time in the morning before the B.B.C. start to operate and to give a larger variety of programmes on Sundays.

The owners of property are able to give this service much cheaper than the average listener can operate his own receivers at a capital and maintenance cost which is negligible compared with the total cost of building and maintaining the property.

With regard to the disadvantages, we certainly cannot accept the statement that nothing better than a presentable second-rate speaker can be provided. Nowadays, speakers in all instruments up to a cost of, say, 25 guineas are standardized and it is only in the luxury sets that special equipment is provided.

With regard to the provision of television, we would estimate that 95 per cent. of the aerial installations that have been provided and 50 per cent. of those which are at present being installed would be of no value for the distribution of television. There would not be much difference in the cost for making the reception of television possible on a low frequency installation than with distribution at high frequency. All it would mean would be the necessity to draw in an extra cable in the tubing to be provided, as in both cases an additional aerial and amplifiers are necessary.

Yours etc.,
G. CAMPLING.
Director, Radio Furniture & Fittings Ltd.

During June an exhibition of work by members of the Institute of Landscape Architects was held at Broadway, Worcestershire, in Messrs. Gordon Russell's showrooms. For the occasion this small garden was laid out by Messrs. G. A. Jellicoe, Page and Wilson. A central lawn is surrounded by formal planting and stone-paved walks. The exhibition, which confined itself to garden design in relation to domestic life and architecture, will be shown at the International Landscape Exhibition at Essen in August and may come to London in the autumn.

EXHIBITION GARDEN