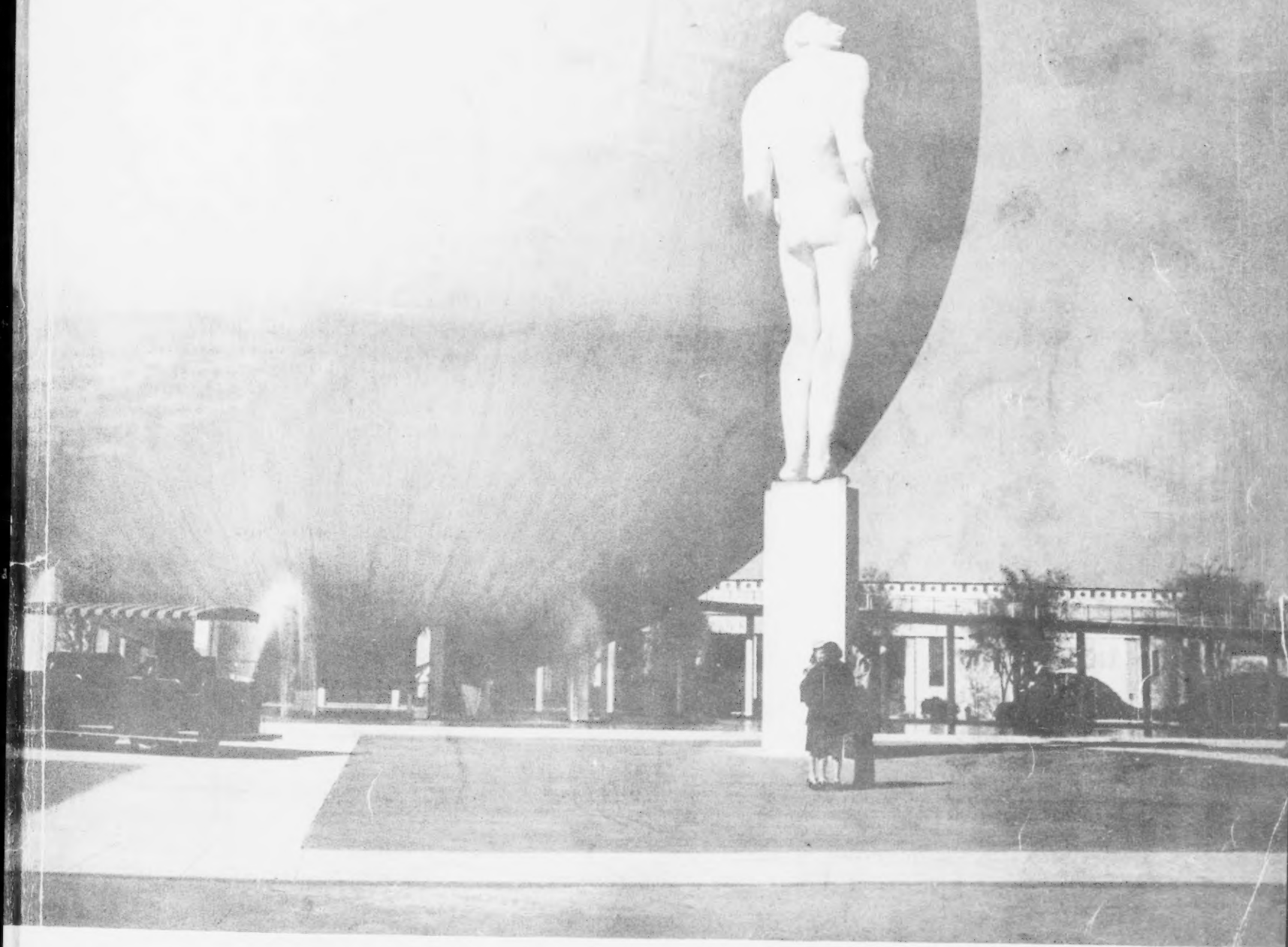


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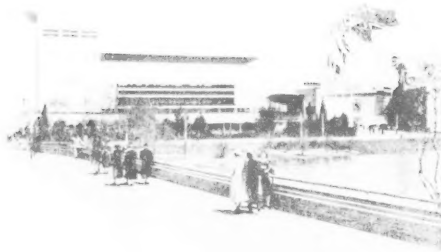
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SPECIAL ISSUE

THE NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR

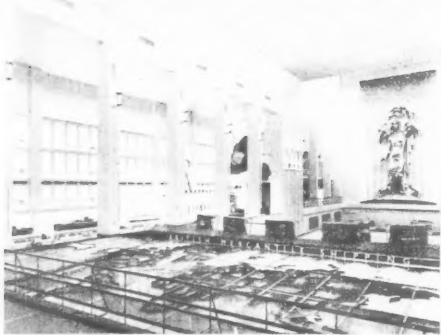
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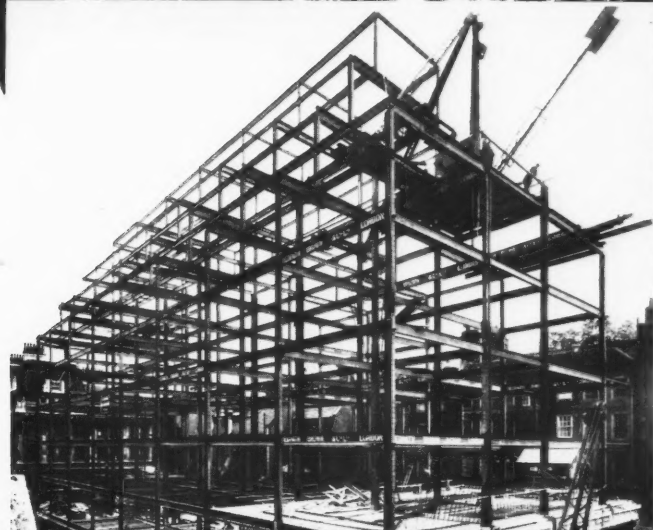
Alumilited Aluminium was used extensively for the metalwork and lighting fittings at the United Kingdom Pavilion in the New York World's Fair. Carried out for the architects, Stanley Hall & Easton and Robertson, and for Industrial Design Partnership who were responsible for so much of the interior display.

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VOL. LXXXVI No. 513

August 1939

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The children's section of the amusement area at the New York World's Fair shows a contrast between modern methods of display and the traditional style of the fun fair. The world of yesterday, richly gilt, boisterous, rather uncontrolled, prances past the newer, taut, simplicity—the world of tomorrow in an exhibition whose insistence on such inexact generalities occasionally becomes ballyhoo for a somewhat vague Utopia. The design of all concessions in the amusement area was under the control of George Howe, who wisely allowed the flamboyant painted horses of yesterday to remain unstreamlined.

F o r e w o r d

EVER since the Dutch perceived the genius of Frank Lloyd Wright; ever since Le Corbusier publicized the bold glory of skyscrapers and grain silos; European architects have been looking hopefully towards America. They have been looking for the emergence of striking new forms and techniques. Here was a nation cross-breeding the various national traditions of Europe, a people highly skilled in the mechanical complexities of mass-production and living in a country of great natural resources. Surely these factors should combine to produce a significant new architecture? Yet the guiding star failed to appear. Some recent American achievements, notably the new motor highway in the neighbourhood of New York, belong to a world that Europe can envy. But the prefabricated house, the trailer home, the one-piece bathroom, have all amounted to a good deal less than the new era they seemed to foreshadow.

More recently still, European hopes were raised by the advent of the New York World's Fair. At last American designers were to have a chance to show the world of what they were capable. At last Europe would see how an international exhibition should be organized. New York would benefit by the experience of Paris, Brussels and Chicago. Even the theme of this Fair was encouraging. The "World of Tomorrow" would at last give the modern architects a chance to throw off restraint.

The World's Fair is now open. The vast resources of money and materials are here, the publicity, the high ideals, the large-scale organization; yet alas the architectural quality of the whole is obviously below the standard of Stockholm 1930 or Paris 1937. The modernity is superficial. The architectural world is no richer for New York.

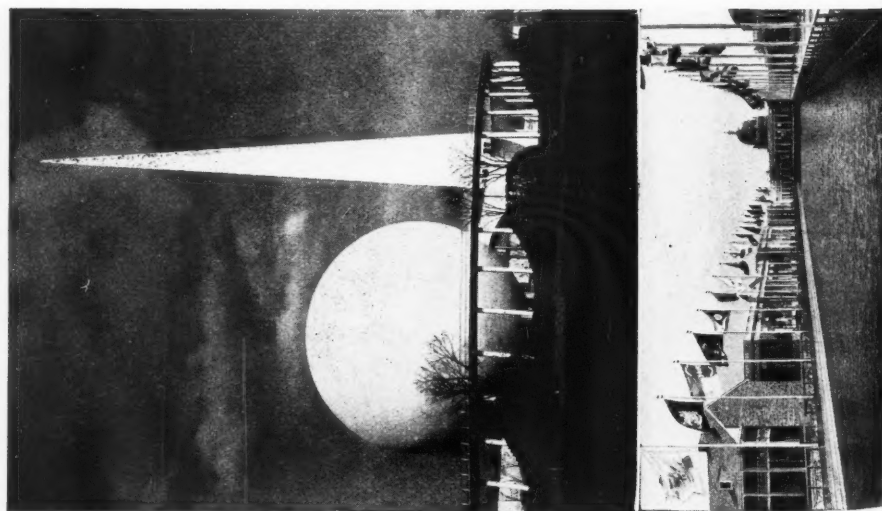
It would need a profound analysis of American character and circumstances to explain why. It is partly, perhaps, that the commercial expediency that dominates so much of American life sees no difference between the trimmings of a contemporary style and the essence of the style itself. It may partly be that same sense of inferiority that made American architecture of a generation ago look to the Beaux Arts school in Paris for sources of inspiration, ignoring the native originality of Sullivan and Wright: even second-rate European being preferred to the local product. We can only remind ourselves of Louis Sullivan's prophecy, when the authorities in charge of the Chicago Fair of 1893 set American architecture along the wrong turning by choosing Beaux Arts classical as the official style: "Thus architecture died in the land of the free and the home of the brave—in a land declaring its democracy, inventiveness, unique daring enterprise and progress. The damage wrought by the World's Fair will last for half a century from its date, if not longer." The half century is nearly up. In our issue on the Paris Fair of 1937 we quoted Sullivan's words, adding that in 1939 America would have the opportunity of acquitting herself of Sullivan's reproach. If she has, in the New York Fair, done little more than to turn away from historicism to a new kind of pastiche, we can hope at least that with the new school of modern architects now springing up, whose hand is seen in the few good native buildings at the Fair, the real reform will not be long delayed.

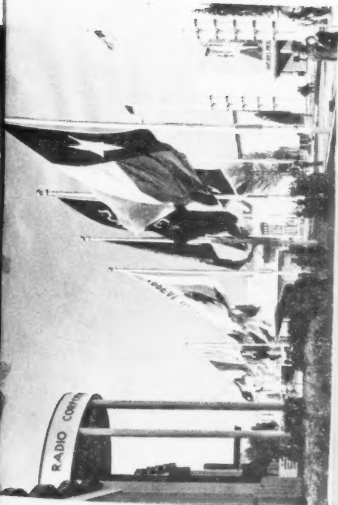
There are, in any case, aspects of the present Fair that merit a detailed study of it. Numerous points of architectural interest can hardly be absent from an undertaking of such size and complexity, and in any case, failure is not always less instructive than success. But the unequal quality of the design and the entire absence of interest in certain parts of the exhibition has determined the arrangement of this issue. First, the site and its general lay-out are discussed, the reclamation of waste land that produced it and the solution of a number of difficult

communication and general planning problems being the one American achievement of indubitable merit; then, coming to the buildings, the national pavilions are given a section to themselves. Although they form only a small proportion of the total number of buildings, they contain a large proportion of the architectural interest. Following these, the half-dozen most interesting of the home pavilions are similarly described. An attempt is also made to criticize some of the details of design and display according to a common standard, by following the method used in THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW'S issues on Brussels, Paris and Glasgow: taking advantage of the existence side by side of numerous attempts to solve exactly identical problems, to use one as a yardstick by which to measure another. Finally, to show that on occasion the Fair has taken seriously and constructively its theme, the World of Tomorrow, one of its by-products is given some attention: a documentary film, entitled "The City," made for showing at the Fair, with a spoken commentary by Lewis Mumford.

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW'S opinions on the value of national representation and the way its needs should be met have been given on other occasions. From the more strictly technical point of view the one thing that matters is that these great exhibitions do act as a kind of nursery of experimental architecture, which makes the maintenance or otherwise of a consistently advancing standard of much more than topical importance.

The photograph on which the cover design of this issue is based is by Wurts of New York. It shows one of the sculptured figures, entitled "The Astronomer" and designed by Carl Milles, on Constitution Mall against the background of the Perisphere. Other photographers responsible for the pictures in this issue are named on page 97.

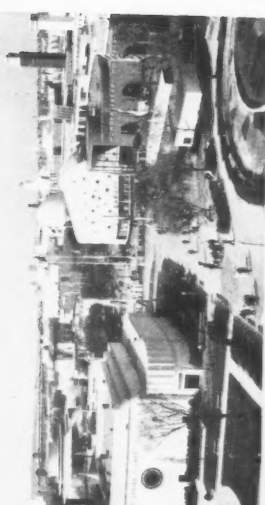




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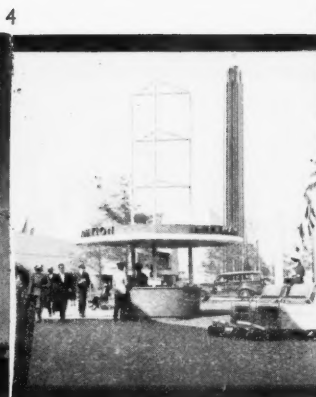
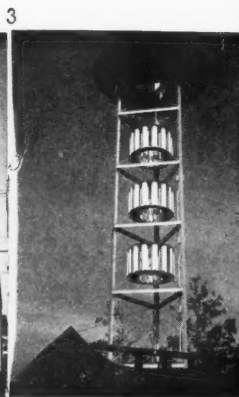
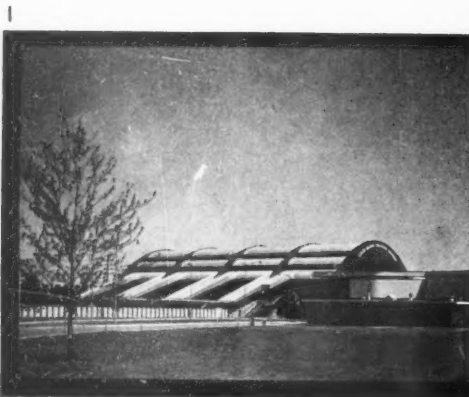
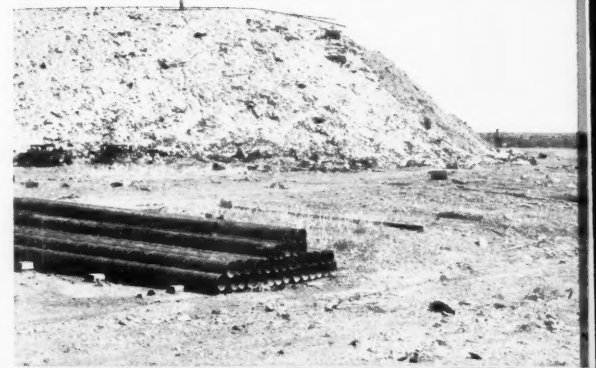
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1, the 700 ft. high trylon and 200 ft. high perisphere which dominate the Fair. The 1,000 ft. ramp known as the helix leads into the perisphere, inside which is a model of the "City of Tomorrow." 2, the Lagoon of Nations and 3, the Avenue of Communications (see plan on pages 60-61). 4, looking down Constitution Mall towards the Federal Building, showing on the left the standard pavilions built by the Fair authorities and rented by some of the smaller countries. 5, a general view, which shows the considerable architectural confusion, rather than variety which prevails in spite of well-planned circulation and restrictions on exterior colour schemes. 6, Constitution Mall, the central avenue of the Fair, looking towards the Theme Centre. In the foreground, two of the four Freedom figures (symbolizing respectively freedom of speech, religion, the press and assembly) and behind, Washington, the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of whose inauguration to the presidency provides the excuse for the Fair. In the background the trylon casts a shadow on the perisphere.

The three photographs on the right illustrate the progress of the Fair site from its original state.

Top, Corona dumps, which occupied the polluted marshes around Flushing River before the site was improved. Later, development of the suburban villa type converged on the marsh but the insanitary conditions limited further encroachment, centre.

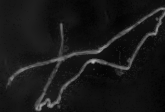
Bottom, the Fair in the latter stages of construction showing the way in which Fair traffic has been isolated from through traffic by means of bridges. In the left-hand corner can be seen the clover-leaf junction of Grand Central Parkway and Horace Harding Boulevard, and at the top right that of Northern Boulevard and Grand Central Parkway. Across the top part of the picture runs the combined subway elevated line and below the track of the Long Island railway. This view also shows the way in which the Fair grounds are separated from Flushing Bay by acres of parking fields which will eventually be planted and included in the park. A condition in the agreement by which the City and State of New York aided the Fair authorities in the development of Flushing Meadow, is that within four months of the conclusion of the Fair all the buildings shall have been removed. The only exceptions to this rule will be the New York City building, which is to be used as an indoor sports centre, and the New York State amphitheatre, which will be retained for the staging of pageants and similar giant spectacles. The rest of the park will be developed for different types of recreation and will include a golf course, children's playgrounds, playing fields, cycle and riding tracks, and garden areas. A perspective view of its future appearance accompanies the plan of the Fair on page 61.



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The Site and the Plan

THE European observer, however much he may deplore the mediocre design which pervades the Fair itself, cannot but admire the broad vision and long-term planning which are shown in the creation of the site upon which the Fair is placed. Four years ago it was a polluted marsh used as a city refuse dump. In 1932 it was decided to traverse this undeveloped area between the inner and outer Long Island suburbs with the Grand Central Parkway connecting the new Triborough Bridge with the Long Island parkway system. With a new suburban development in sight, it was decided to create a new park immediately instead of waiting for land values to rise and then being forced to try and carve out open space in the conventionally expensive way. Under the impetus of Robert Moses, New York's energetic Park Commissioner, the nascent schemes for a Fair and a park were combined. A tide dam was constructed across Flushing River and a sea wall with a boat station

built on the Flushing Bay front. The refuse dump was levelled and the marshy land filled. Two lakes were made, and the muck from these excavations was processed and spread over the site as topsoil. 10,000 grown trees have been planted by the Fair authorities, apart from the planting done by exhibitors, most of which will presumably be left in place when the exhibition closes.

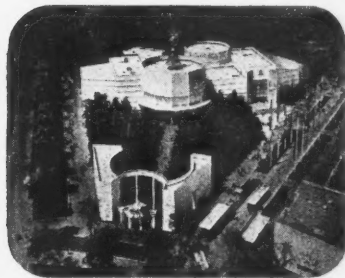
One of the first cares in developing the new park was to make a clear and safe distinction between local and through traffic by bridging the two parkways which cut through the site. The facilities for through traffic have also been improved, most notably by the construction of the Bronx-Whitestone bridge which carries traffic directly from the northern end of Manhattan into Long Island, thus avoiding the congested midtown section altogether. It is now possible to travel from New England to Long Island without being off a parkway for more than two or three miles. Thanks to the Fair it has been possible to drive towards completion the great plan of highway development which will eventually spread a net of parkways over most of New England and Long Island. These improvements, accomplished within the space of less than five years, do not compare, of course, with the reclaiming of the Zuider Zee by the Dutch in either economic or engineering importance; but they do show a similarly broad vision and boldness of approach.

Having converted Corona Dump into Flushing Meadow, what have you? 1216½ acres of flat land traversed by a small and sluggish river which broadens out at one end into a lake. As a park the site had possibilities of development, as a fair site it had serious disadvantages. It takes half an hour to reach it from most points in Manhattan, though the journey need cost you no more than 5 cents. (the subway and elevated lines run on a one-price fare). Incidentally, for a visiting architect the approach by rail is of interest in itself, as a summary of American housing progress. After passing above the gigantic Y-shaped foundations of the city's new project for low-cost housing at Red Hook, the train rattles on through Queens, the "Borough of Homes," littered

with row upon row of dejected villas left over from the speculative building boom of the 'twenties. If he returns to Manhattan by boat, the architect will have the opportunity of contrasting the straggling line of rundown depots on one side of Flushing Bay with the steel skeleton hangars marking the site of the vast new city airport at North Beach, which will enable the air traveller, whether he comes by land plane or flying boat, to be brought within 20 minutes' drive of the centre of Manhattan. In such practical developments as these America comes nearer to a realization of the World of Tomorrow than she does in the Fair itself.

Given the size of the site (of course it is claimed to be the largest in history) and its flatness, a plan in the Grand Manner, with immense axial features and a great deal of variously planted open space, might have seemed to be the least wearisome and most effective way out. Wide vistas, careful development of the existing lakes, and skilful variation of the skyline might have served to achieve both order and variety. Any such ideal, however, must immediately face two objections. First, it is only the European nations who consider a Fair to be worth considerable government subsidy. An American fair has to pay its way. Secondly, anything approaching the rigid control such as Tait was allowed at Glasgow would never be tolerated by exhibitors paying so much per square foot, with the competition of the San Francisco fair as an additional big stick. American manufacturers are not accustomed to control even by the Government, and they would certainly not tolerate anything more than suggestions by a private organization such as the Fair. The result of these difficulties is written in the memorials of past American fairs.

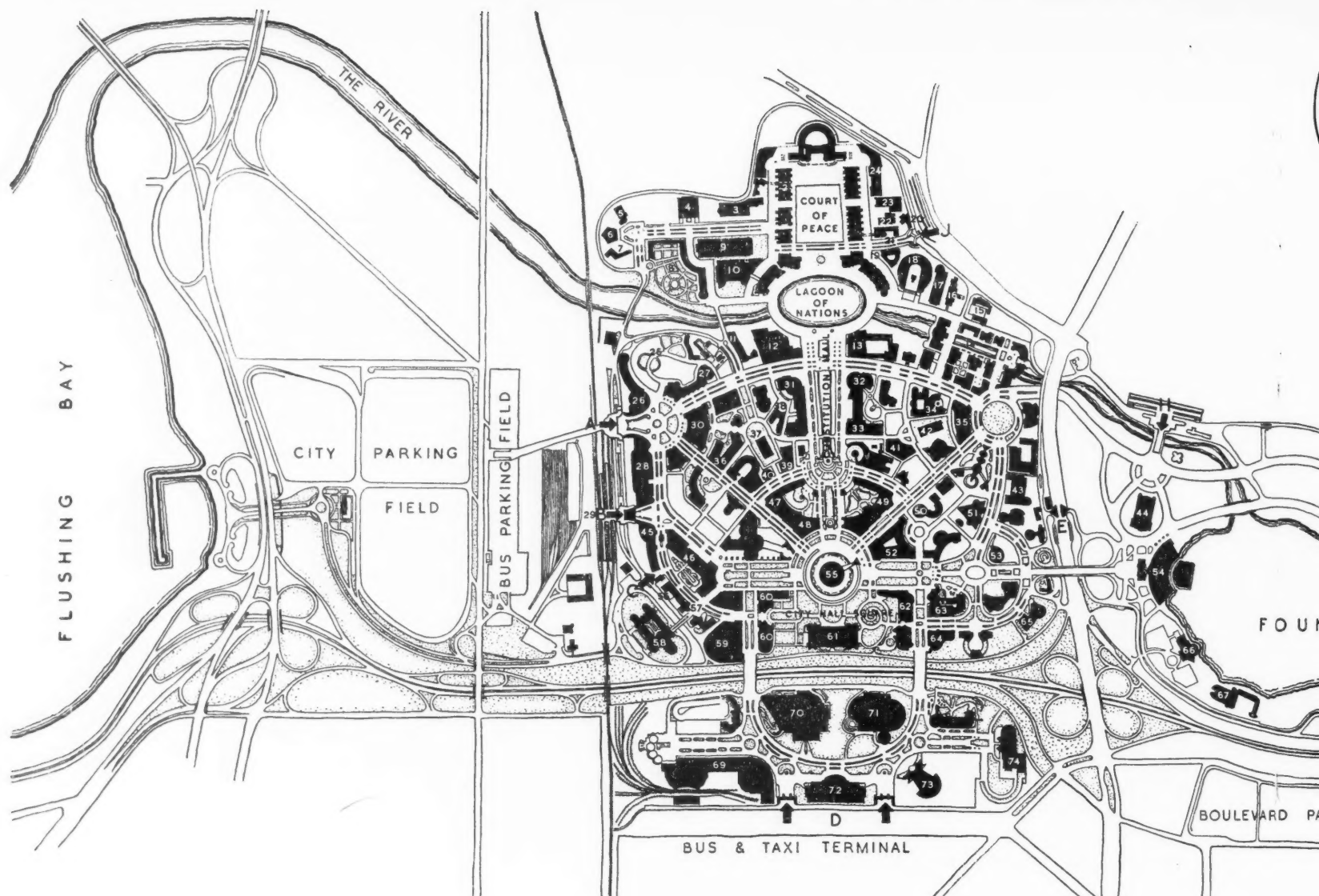
If the New York Fair shows any improvement over its predecessors it is rather in intention than achievement. The noble gestures have certainly been made. For example, a Board of Design, consisting of four architects, a landscape architect and an industrial designer, was given control over the general layout and also powers of censorship over the individual exhibitors' buildings. It is difficult to say whether their failure to produce



Ackwardly shaped sites are caused by the radiating roads from the Theme Centre. The American Telephone and Telegraph Co.'s building shows a clumsy solution of the difficulty by the addition of an irrelevant entrance structure.

ACCESSORIES

The real flavour of an exhibition is often found not in individual buildings, but in the quality of design in the accessories. On the left are some of the better designed accessories in the World's Fair grounds. 1, the Long Island railway station. 2, the admirable information booths, with their roofs of corrugated white metal sheeting hung from exposed steel trusses. 3, the illuminated sign on top of the information booths seen at night. 4, the smaller sales booths for souvenirs. 5, one of the best of the numerous light standards.



any striking result was due to a lack of real architectural ability or to their lack of effective controlling power.

Again, it was a good idea to decorate the World of Tomorrow with sculpture and murals; but in an attempt to please all tastes (and all artists) the grounds have been overstocked with Art, most of it only mediocre in quality. Yard upon yard of high-minded symbolism (in the Federal Building the murals keep on unrolling more and more, just like newspaper) only serves to weary a sore-footed visitor, not only by the disproportionate scale of its physical bulk, but also by the abstract nature of its subject matter. The little fellow down below is beaten into weary indifference. The sculpture is less tiresomely abstract in its mode of expression, and therefore a more suitable relief to the sheer physical exhaus-

tion of visiting a Fair of such size. And on occasion, notably in the case of Carl Milles' "Astronomer," below the great bulk of the perisphere, it is well placed for effect.

The general layout of the buildings was dictated to some extent by the **varying** firmness of the ground (for this reason the railroad exhibit was placed at the south-west corner of the site), but the main consideration was given to the handling of an estimated average daily attendance of 250,000. This figure dictated the 75 acres of avenues and open space, which were to be arranged for the quick disposal of incoming crowds—the majority of which were expected to come from the Long Island Railroad and the subway-elevated stations on the west side of the grounds.

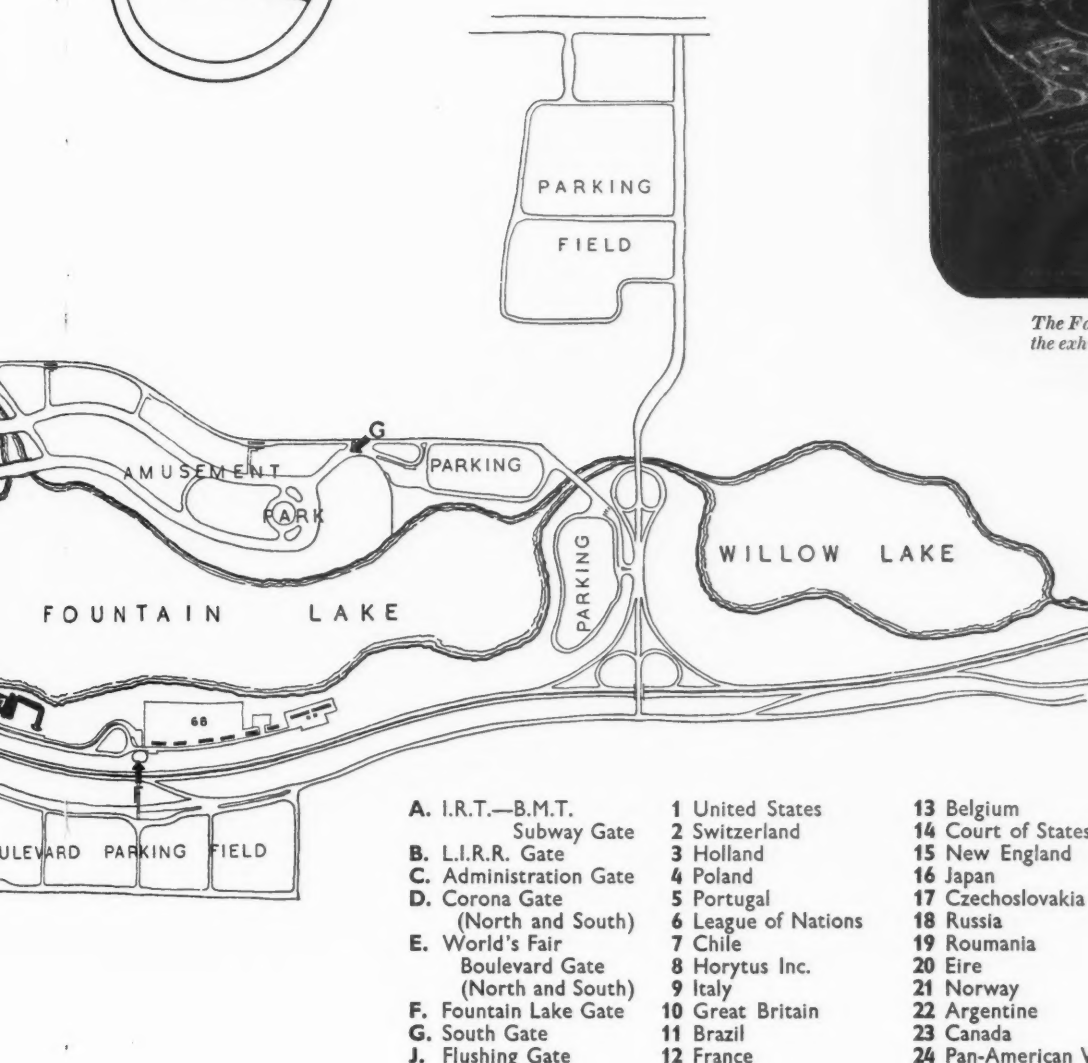
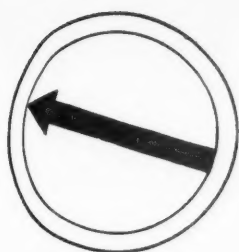
Unfortunately bare efficiency is, in this case at least, not sufficient to achieve magnificence.

The latter demands large stretches of open space strategically placed for effect, the former a network of small streets whose width is out of scale with the size of the buildings on either side. The vistas are further congested by large flags and pylons, by booths and statuary. For once the elements of art and gaiety only conspire in the production of dullness.

The greatest disappointment, however, if only because it comes so near success, is Constitution Mall, the grand vista by which the plan might have been to some extent redeemed. Here is your big open space (half a mile of it), your fountains and statuary, your trees and significant features. Both the Theme Centre and the Federal Building are in themselves excellent for their purpose of closing a vista, the former tall and magnificent, the latter more stocky and with a

less elaborate interplay of masses. Yet each of these elements has been robbed of its full effect by the presence of all the others. George Washington, the Four Freedoms, the Lagoon of Nations' fountains and the great sundial, all fight to confuse and belittle the great vista. Only at night, when some of the elements are subdued, does the view achieve that poetic magnificence of which it was always inherently capable.

Whereas Constitution Mall is killed by Art, the Theme Centre is smothered by Commerce. From no point on the grounds can it be effectively seen as a whole. The base of the trylon is hidden by the surrounding buildings, and with its scale in relation to the human figure thus obliterated, its great height no longer makes its full effect. It might have been saved by putting it on top of a specially built hill, or by



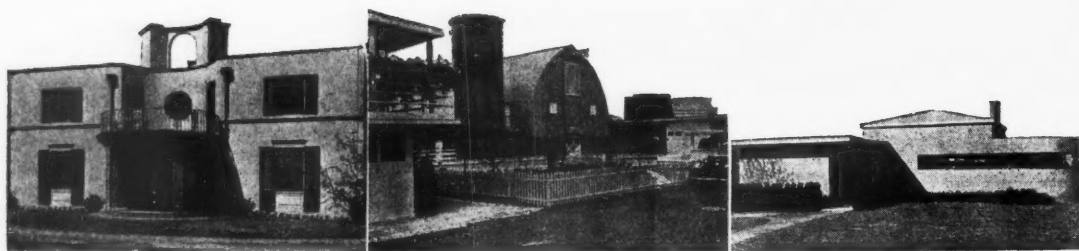
The Fair site has been planned to serve as a permanent public park when the exhibition is over. Above, a perspective view of its future appearance.

allowing considerably more open space at its base. But hill-building was too expensive; space too valuable.

The elaborate colour scheme, which was to achieve co-ordination between the general plan and the various exhibitors' buildings, turns out to be more practical on the drawing board than on the Fair grounds. The Theme Centre is the hub of a colour wheel in each segment of which a colour of the spectrum shades from pastel tints on the nearby buildings to deep clear tones of the same colour on the buildings at the perimeter. The failure of this scheme in practice seems to be due partly to the widely varying height and form of the buildings, partly to the lack of strict compliance, partly to the multi-coloured flags which supply the dominant colour notes in the avenues.

The Buildings

THE exhibition building is display as well as shelter. In many of the buildings to be seen at New York, as in much 19th century painting, the Message has obviously been considered of more importance than the sensitiveness of the technique with which it is expressed. The most obvious example of this is the National Cash Register Co.'s exhibit (Walter Dorwin Teague, designer; Harry Heybeck, associate) which consists of little more than the world's largest cash register, and must be placed on much the same level of design as the ice cream parlour in the form of the world's largest ice cream cone. Only a little more subtle, perhaps, because they are promoting ideas rather than products, are the Russian and Italian pavilions. But the giant cash register, the Soviet's stainless steel worker and Italy's Roma are all attempting fundamentally the same method of impression, in contrast to the Swedish pavilion, for example, which attempts to impress by the sophisticated originality of its design. Moreover, the display within the building may be of equal or greater importance than the external form of the building



Variety in "Tomorrow Town." The Motor Home (Adams and Prentice, architects) left, an unexpected piece of period design; the plywood house, right, designed by A. L. Kocher; the pitched roof was insisted upon by the manufacturers who financed its construction; and the farmhouse, centre, where the traditional forms of barn and silo inspire a clean-cut honesty of design. (Harrison and Foulhoux, architects).

itself. Thus the General Motors building heads the Gallup popularity poll not because of its sprawling, smoothly rounded mass, but because of the vast and ingenious piece of stage design within. No one could find the exterior of the American Telephone and Telegraph Co.'s building anything but dull and muddled, but it was placed high on the Gallup poll because of the human interest of the goings-on within.

The whole issue is further confused in the case of the New York Fair by the nature of the American "man-in-the-street," to whom the exhibits are specifically designed to appeal. He and his family are still profoundly impressed by sheer bigness; their artistic tastes are much the same as those which govern American advertising: they love sentiment; they are profoundly ignorant of European artistic achievements (though with an acute picture of European politics); they have an intense interest and faith in all types of mechanical and scientific achievement; and, finally, they are unwilling to walk upstairs. Such human foibles may seem unimportant when judging the architectural features of an international exhibition, but they should be considered as important factors in the design of exhibition buildings just as they are in the design of commercial displays.

Such national characteristics must always be kept in mind, but the long-term architectural importance of an exhibition building is not measured by a Gallup poll. The Crystal Palace is still important; most of the pavilions at New York will be forgotten by all but the historians in less than five years. In presenting such a large exhibition ruthless selection is imperative, and if we include in this review some American buildings of little more than temporary significance, it is with the idea of filling out the picture for many who will have no opportunity of toiling through this Fair in person.

Modern architecture in America has so far scarcely come of age. There are American architects capable of fine modern design, men such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Richard Neutra, Edward D. Stone, William Lescaze, William Wilson Wurster, Eero & Eliel Saarinen, Antonin Raymond, George Howe, Harrison & Foulhoux (to mention only those who first come to mind), but few of them are represented in this Fair. Those of them who have been given a chance—Lescaze, Howe, Harrison & Foulhoux—have in each case produced at least one interesting structure. For the rest, the World of Tomorrow has been built by the architects of yesterday. Modern is for these men just another style, on a par with Colonial and Georgian: certain European mannerisms imposed on a framework of traditional thought.

The most important contribution of American designers, so far, has been in the field of mechanical equipment, where they have streamlined everything from a pencil sharpener to a railroad train. It is therefore quite typical that, for the European observer, the most startlingly American building is that of General Motors, which is nothing more than a giant blow-up of an industrial designer's clay model. The smoothly rounded contours, the distorted lettering and the bold originality of the whole conception, all contribute to the general bravura effect which may be found in the objects displayed on any department store counter. It is scarcely conceivable that any but an American designer would have designed such a building: it is "styling" applied to

architecture. One can only hope that this same "styling" will not later be applied to Town Halls.

Equally original, but in a less stylized American fashion, is the exhibit of the E.G. Budd Manufacturing Co. which is not a building at all, but a series of machine sections suspended from posts and sheltered beneath a series of huge corrugated stainless steel umbrellas. Towering above the whole exhibit is a giant stainless steel tube tapering towards the top, where a slim windsock, also of stainless steel, turns flashing in the wind. All the construction is of shot-welded stainless steel, the product for which the firm is principally famous. Here at last an exhibition structure achieves those qualities of impermanence and surprise which are usually found only in the amusement area. And at the same time it fulfils its commercial purpose by holding the product in the forefront of attention.

The same architects, Voorhees, Walker, Foley & Smith, have employed much the same technique in the other buildings for which they were responsible—Borden's, the American Radiator & Standard Sanitary Corp., and the Petroleum Industry building—but nowhere else have they achieved the same fundamental originality of design and treatment.

Of the structures erected by the Fair authorities only the Theme Centre and the Aviation building are worthy of detailed attention. But the trylon and perisphere, unified by the helieline, would in themselves be sufficient to redeem the American section of the Fair from the charge of complete architectural banality. Simple shapes are here handled with all the skill and originality of a Ben Nicholson painting; but with notable insensitiveness to the finer shades of texture. This is probably of advantage, for few American architects (let alone the American public) are yet sensitive enough to appreciate any symbol less direct or more subtly presented. And vulgarization of the symbols in the form of "souvenirs" has proved them simple enough to wear even under such torments. A strange technical failure is the lack of a sufficiently smooth and waterproof surfacing for the perisphere, so that the giant ball no longer appears to be supported on great jets of water as originally planned. It is even beginning to peel at the top, whereas it should obviously have the smooth, hard roundness of a ping-pong ball dancing up and down in a rifle range.

The Aviation building is distinguished by an equal boldness of form, and it has the advantage of being placed on a site large enough to allow an appreciation of its flaring shape. Unlike the two prows which mark the Maritime building, the form of the Aviation building makes no attempt to mimic the actual shape of the exhibits within. It does succeed very well, however, in suggesting the spirit of air transport, of hangars and wind tunnels and corrugated steel fuselages. And the feeling of lightness and tension, entirely lacking in the heavy formality of the Maritime building, is carried into the laced canvas awning, supported on light metal spars, which spreads out in a welcoming curved apron at the front.

Of the other Fair-built structures it is sufficient to say that they are single-storey windowless boxes, designed to provide the largest possible amount of saleable floor space. The decorative touches, the twirls and pylons and serpentine roofs, have all been taken over from Europe and coarsened in the process. These buildings are pompous when they should

[Continued on page 63]

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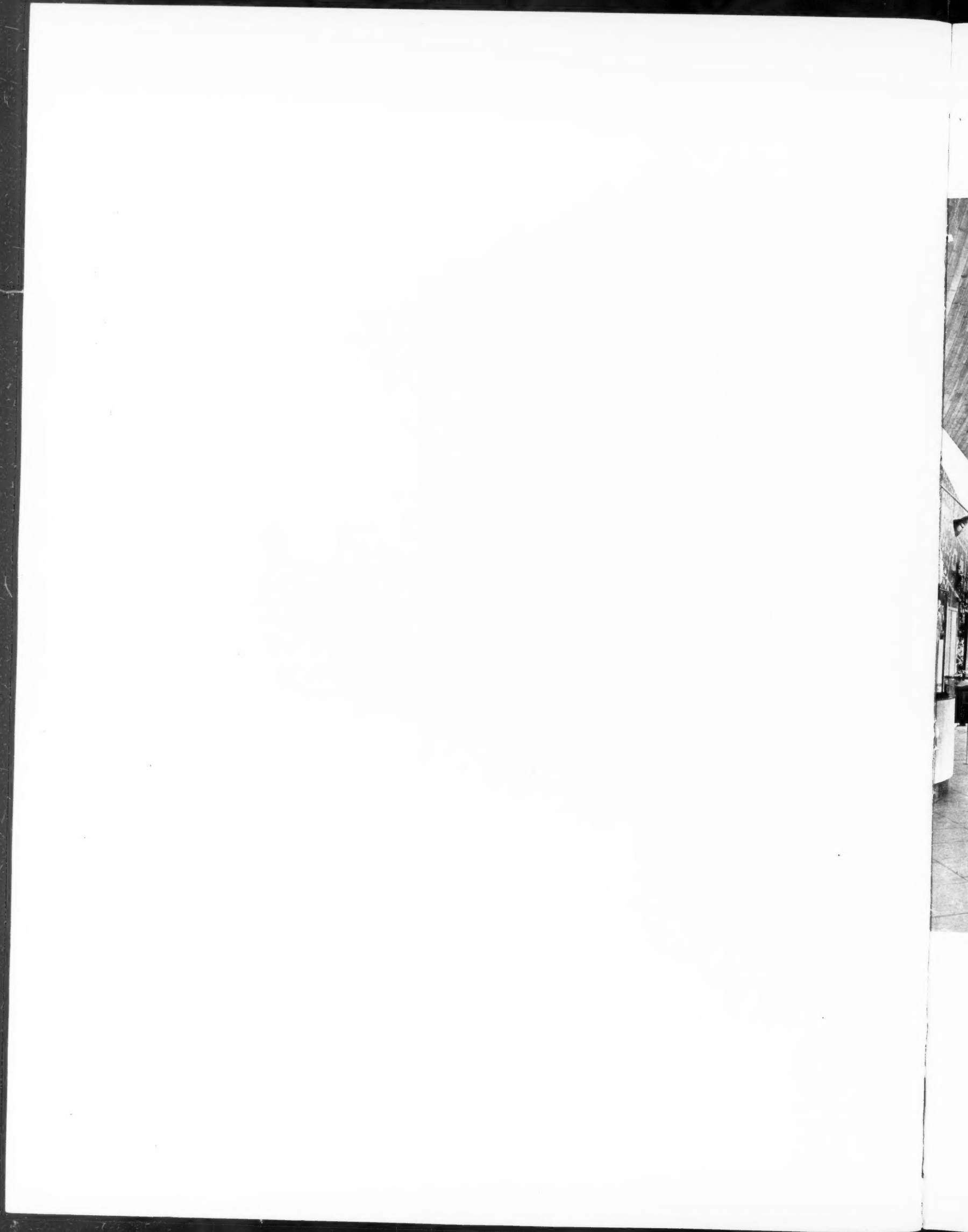
SWEDEN

Refreshments in the open and an informal secluded garden in the Swedish pavilion. The unobtrusiveness of its design is typical of the exhibition displays of the Scandinavian countries, whose superior quality is more in evidence at New York than at previous exhibitions. Sven Markelius, architect.

PLATE II



August 1939



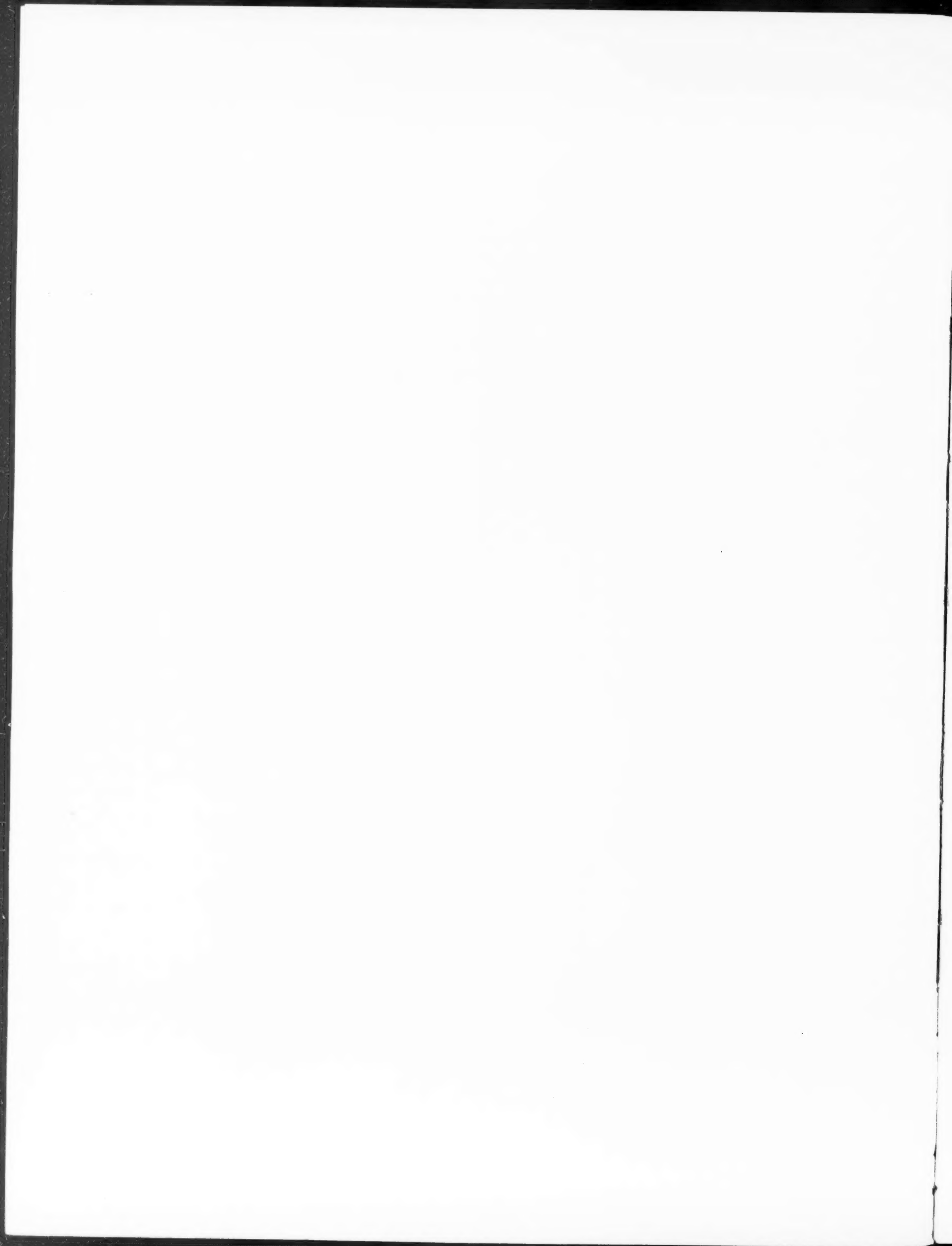


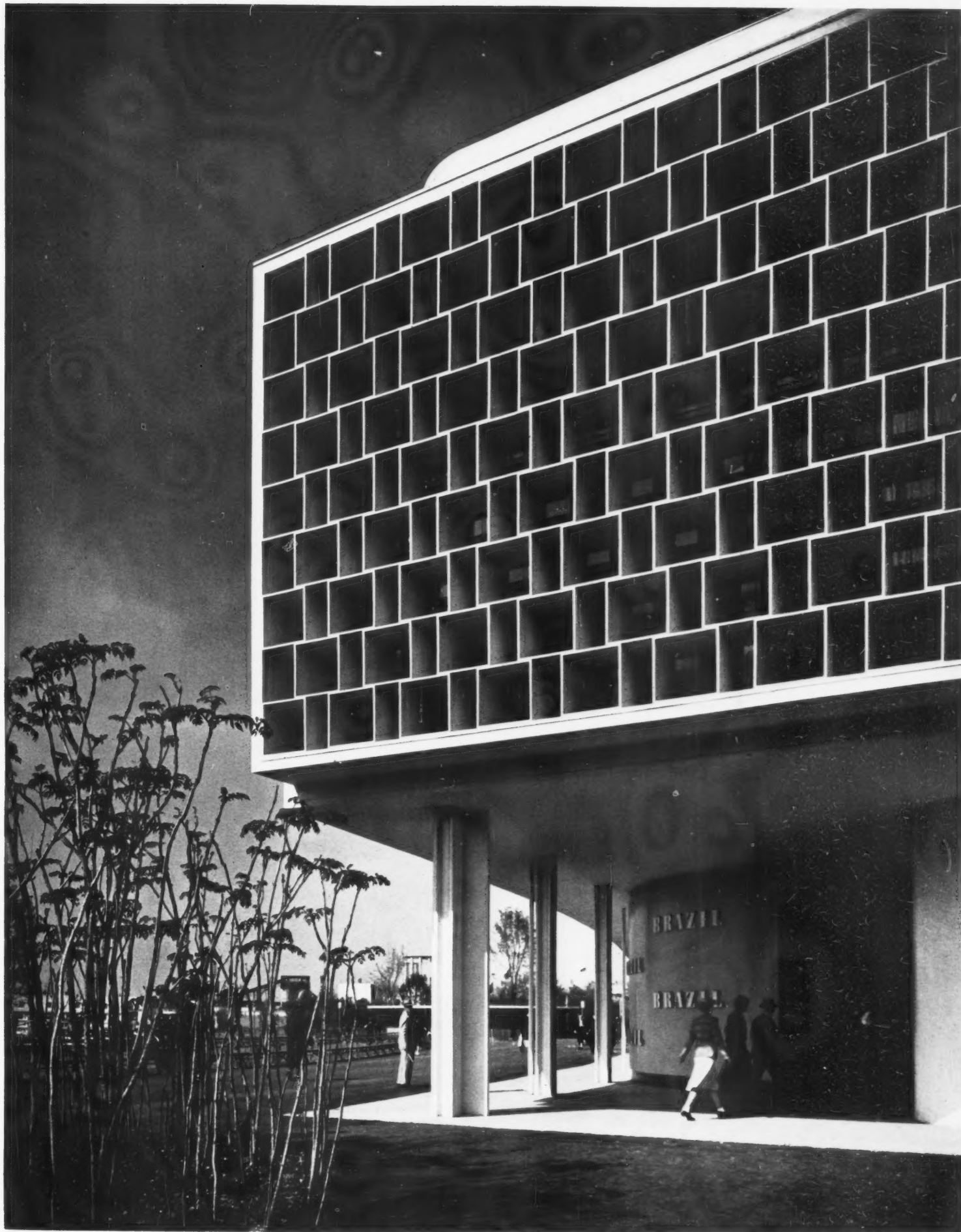
SWEDEN

This pavilion is notable for the complete accord between the design of the exhibits and that of the building. The latter is an unpretentious and obviously impermanent structure. The well-displayed statistical material is humanized by photographs of actual people with details of their names and professions and a message skilfully directed to the American public. Sven Markelius, architect; Anders Beckman and Bibbi Lindstrom, display designers.

PLATE iii

August 1939





B R A Z I L

A rectangular pattern, a unit of display rather than of function, covers the main exhibition hall of the pavilion. A contrast with this pattern is provided by a series of curves on the first floor terrace: see page 72. Lucio Costa and Niemeyer Soares, architects; Paul L. Wiener, interior displays.

PLATE iv



August 1939



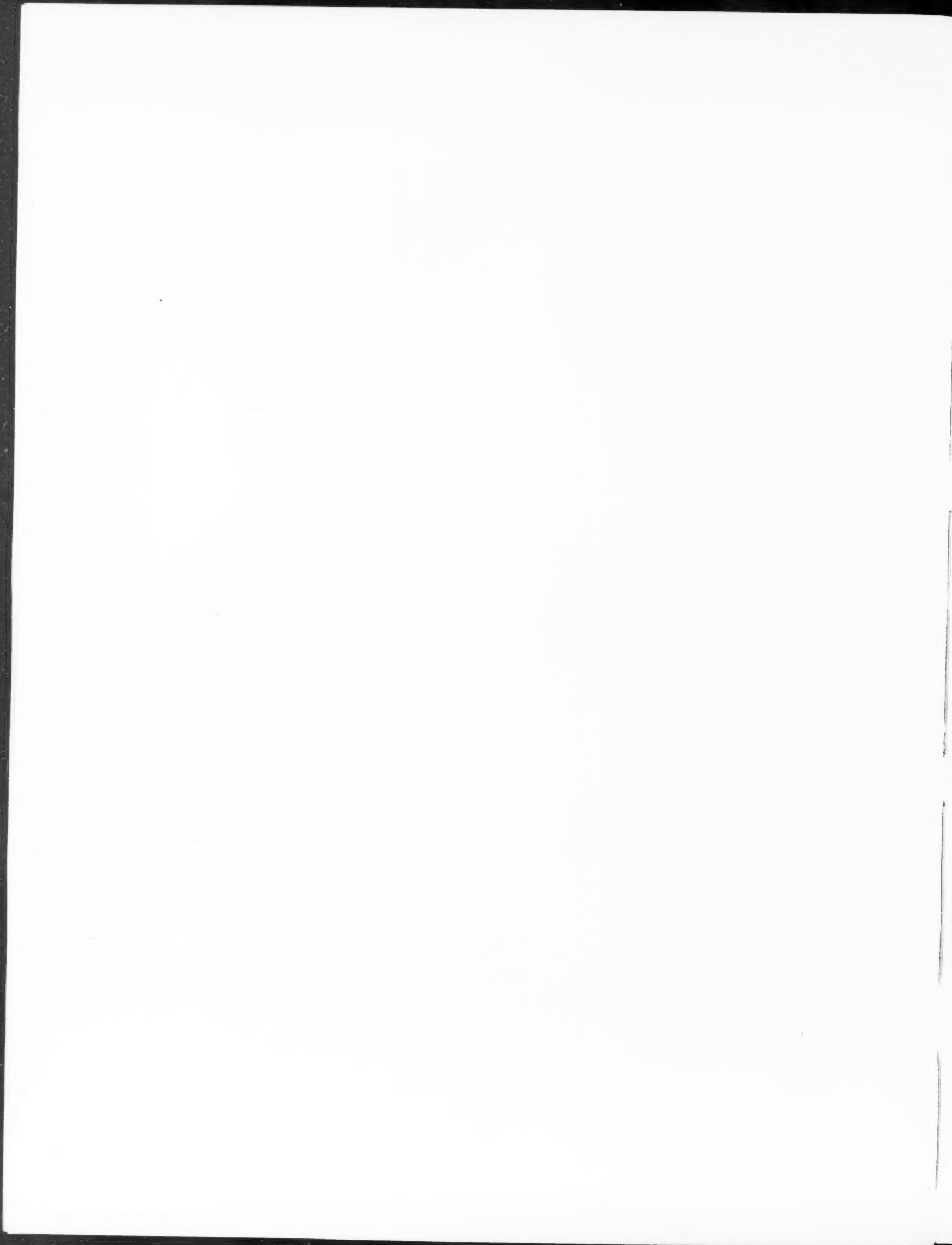


AVIATION

The form of the Aviation building attempts no direct imitation of the exhibits housed within. But its exterior finish of aluminium-covered asbestos sheets, and its lively shape flaring out from the great white semisphere, combine to give an impression of modern air transport: a more subtle method than the realistic prows of liners used as an architectural stunt in the Marine Transportation building (see page 90). William Lescaze, architect; J. Gordon Carr, associate.

PLATE v

August 1939





ARGENTINE

The subtle complexity of the entrance details in the Argentine pavilion achieves dramatic interest by purely architectural means. Passing over a little bridge spanning a pool, the visitor is led between the bases of four stainless steel sheathed pylons and along a curved path marked out by a line of free-standing display cases. He finally enters the main display hall through frameless glass doors. Armando d'Ans and Aymar Embury, architects.





SWITZERLAND

A side view of the pavilion, showing also the garden in which trees transplanted at the time of the pavilion's erection have been skilfully related to the building. This includes an auditorium for Swiss music and dancing as well as the usual exhibition hall and restaurant. William Lescage and J. R. Weber, architects.

PLATE vii

August 1939





FINLAND

Finland and several other of the smaller countries have housed their displays inside standard Fair pavilions. This exhibit therefore tends to be a little cramped, but it shows all its designer's customary originality and taste. The illustration shows a photo-mural display of timber production and agriculture, with an exhibit of plywood products beneath. The sloping curtain wall is patterned with birch logs spaced at varying intervals, the whole being seen from the balcony restaurant opposite as well as from the ground floor. Alvar Aalto, architect.



[Continued from page 62]

be impressive, confused when they should be logical, and their attempts at lightheartedness are laboured instead of witty.

The foreign nations have been given a section of their own centred on the Court of Peace in front of the Federal building. Down each side of a wide expanse of green asphalt is a continuous line of small pavilions. The less moneyed countries have taken only a pavilion; the more lavish nations have in addition built a pavilion of their own. The latter are in most cases placed on what are virtually side roads behind the range of pavilions lining the Court of Peace. This arrangement has the doubtful advantage of providing a uniform vista on the main axis of Constitution Mall; it has the disadvantage of providing singularly poor sites for those nations which have erected their own buildings, and it makes an unhappy split in the exhibit space of those nations which have taken a Fair-built pavilion in addition to erecting their own building. England, Switzerland and Norway have joined the two sections of their display with a bridge. Italy and Russia use their small pavilion for constitutional propaganda, the Netherlands for commercial manufacturers' displays.

No allowance has been made for any adequate vistas across the main axis (Italy has provided the necessary feature, but her site is an irritatingly small amount off-centre), and even the river front has been denied the foreign architects, for a road runs along its entire length in the foreign section. Only the Russian and Brazilian pavilions attempt to use it as a reflecting pool, and their success shows what other nations, notably the British, French and Belgian, might have accomplished had they made the attempt. France and Belgium have the only really fine sites, overlooking the Lagoon of Nations, but neither pavilion seems to have made worthy use of its good fortune. The possibilities of the site have in each case been realized, but in a comparatively dull fashion.

Sweden did well to accept a vacant site in the Food Zone, where her excellent pavilion (the most original individual building in the Fair) had better opportunities of making its due effect. This is one of the few buildings which is sensibly impermanent, in which the buildings and displays form a coherent whole, and which needs no elaborate system of air-conditioning to provide tolerable coolness during the torrid New York summer.

It is unfortunate that neither Finland nor Denmark have

pavilions of their own design, though their displays within the Fair-built structures reach an extremely high standard.

For the rest we are on what is now familiar ground. Except for the absence of Germany and the eerie presence of Czechoslovakia and Albania, most of the pavilions repeat the tricks displayed at Paris two years ago. The Belgians once again have produced a solid and competent piece of work, its dull red tile and blue-black slate a welcome relief after the miles of tinted composition board. But the whole design is just a little too solid and respectable to make a successful exhibition building.

The French have concentrated on their great concave front to the complete neglect of the other sides of the building. The interior is a slipshod piece of work, fitted out with all the muddled congestion of a bargain basement. It is impossible to conceive of any pavilion in which the circulation problem has been so hopelessly neglected. It is even harder to imagine what might have happened had the burning of the S.S. *Paris* not left some of the displays in the mud of the English Channel.

The Japanese pavilion, a reproduction of a Shinto shrine, with the Liberty Bell in seed pearls as its main exhibit, presumably reflects the Japanese estimate of American popular taste.

The most refreshing novelty is the worthy representation of the South American countries, with the handsome openness of the Brazilian pavilion emphasized by its location next door to the clumsy French building. Ireland is another surprisingly mature newcomer, in spite of the awkward choice of a shamrock plan, which can be appreciated only on paper, and the poverty of the displays within.

In taking a broad general view of the hundreds of buildings at the Fair, the foreign exhibits, and the Swedish pavilion in particular, stand out in the memory as the centre of whatever vestige of architectural originality one may be able to discern. These buildings, and the products displayed within, have, in many instances, an elegance and refinement which America has as yet failed to reach. On the other hand, in the more obvious dramatics of display America is ahead, possibly due to the fact that it is simpler to dramatize a manufactured product or a mechanical service than it is to dramatize social statistics. But above all the visitor is continually conscious of American vitality, of an immense energy which has so far failed to find any significant architectural form of its own.

The National Pavilions

The following are some notes on the most interesting of the National Pavilions at the World's Fair. Illustrations, plans and some more details of these buildings appear on pages 65-74. The British Pavilion is discussed independently on pages 75-80.

SWEDEN

It would be difficult to overpraise the elegant charm of the Swedish pavilion. Whether one considers its general plan and construction, or focuses on a single detail, one is immediately struck by its originality and restraint, its fine craftsmanship and rich variety of invention.

This was not an expensive building to construct, and its scheduled demolition will be very cheaply accomplished. Nor is there a large roofed exhibit area; more than half the site is given over to an informal garden and pool. The dedication stone bluntly states: "It is with modest resources that our country participates in this contest between the nations of the world." It may be, however, that this cost limitation was in reality an advantage, for what the designers lacked in financial resources they have more than made up for in quality of design.

Three sides of the central garden court are sheltered by wooden roofs of amazingly beautiful contour supported on slender lally

columns with spot-welded metal fins. Each of these roofs is at a slightly different level, so that at the corners there is a subtle interweaving of space. And at the "leading edge" of each wing-like roof, the wooden slats with which it is faced are slightly separated to allow for the ventilation which will provide an insulating barrier against the heat of the summer sun (see the detailed drawing on page 66). On the fourth side of the courtyard is an enclosed building for the display of furniture, fabrics, pottery, glass and silver; also the restaurant, half in and half out of cover.

In the centre, visible and inviting from every point, is the garden. Here irregularly shaped planting, comfortable armchairs, brightly coloured sunshades and pretty little lamps, the row of birch trees and a brilliantly fantastic crystal fountain, all help to set the tone of elegant informality which pervades the whole exhibit. Even the advertisers have been persuaded into cultured restraint, their names and businesses neatly carved on some of the limestone paving slabs.

An important factor in the success of the whole is the unity of

form between the building and the displays which it houses. This is not a hall furnished with displays. Here the displays and their shelter are one, not only in feeling but also physically. The poster boards are strung between roof and floor, the photographs climb all over the wall. And the displays themselves are presented with a finesse and human warmth which is lacking in most of the other government pavilions. Sweden Speaks—but through the mouths of individuals. Their pictures are on the front wall, and their names, too—Ulla Widmark, teacher; Sven Lindstrom, architect; Olaf Calderon, industrial worker; and so on. As one goes through the displays one meets these people again; each one tells his own part of the story, until the visitor finally has a well-rounded impression of the “land where democracy works.” (*Sven Markelius, architect; Pomerance and Breines, associates.*)

SWITZERLAND

The trees in the courtyard of the Swiss Pavilion, though they do not pierce the physical structure of the building, which would be unreasonable in view of the fact that their planting was contemporary with its construction, nevertheless form an integral part of its volume and not merely an incidental relief. Sunlight, more lively for being dappled by moving leaves, falls on the gravel courtyard (how much harder on the feet than a less yielding material), on the rows of brightly coloured flags, on the gay peasant costume of the waitresses, and on the chequered tablecloths. The main exhibit hall, in one of the stock Fair pavilions, is reached by a simple metal bridge lined with flower boxes, and is distinguished by that high quality of display which experience leads us to expect of the Swiss. (*William Lescaze and J. R. Weber, architects.*)

HOLLAND

The slender colonnade in the forecourt of the Dutch Pavilion is seen to best advantage at night when the somewhat coarsely moulded glass ribs, which run down the sides of the columns, tell only as glowing lines of light. The delicate lead cupola which crowns the tower in the far corner of this colonnade is charming in itself, but the lettering round its rim is too small and confused to tell from the ground; and the design of the tower seems to conflict with that of the colonnade, particularly as the latter's roof line cuts the top part of the tower from its base.

The interior of the building is spacious and extremely well lighted. The displays are arranged in a modified system of staggered shallow bays, which is an improvement on the normal system of bays but not as satisfactory as a more carefully guided plan of circulation. (*Dirk Slothouwer, architect; George P. Post & Sons, associates.*)

DENMARK

It is New York's loss that neither Denmark nor Finland were able to erect a pavilion of their own design. Instead they have made a valiant attempt to express themselves within the limits of stock Fair-built pavilions. Denmark gives chief place to her china, glass and silver, fabrics being used incidentally as part of the furnishing of the pavilion. Little attempt has been made to produce more than a tastefully designed showroom display, with the material laid out on simple wooden tables. At one end of the ground floor, however, there is a small bay on whose curving walls is ranged an excellent display of pictorial statistics, and just beyond is a conventionalized map of a farm, with amusing little pollard willow trees and fat, curly-maned horses, all carried out in rich earth colours, dull reds, browns and yellows.

A handsomely proportioned stairway with open balustrade leads up to the restaurant on the first floor, and also to a display of Greenland's resources demonstrating that it is a good deal more than just an “icy shore.” Though the displays are restrained in form they are designed with a fine sense of craftsmanship, especially in such details as the showcases.

An interesting point of design in the structure of the exhibit is the way in which the standard window units, in some of which clear glass has been replaced by transparencies, are repeated in the partitioning of the offices and restaurant, thus achieving unity between the shell of the pavilion and its contents. (*Tyge Hvass, architect.*)

FINLAND

The immense wooden screen, sloped and curving, which dominates the Finnish exhibit, may recall the Aurora Borealis, as the catalogue tells us, but far more important than this are its merits as a piece of exhibition design: unexpected, impressive and yet at the same time gay. As for the displays at the base of this giant wooden

curtain it is obvious that they have been crammed into too small a building. Add to this that there are more original display notions in this one building than in half a dozen others put together and it will be appreciated that such an excess of talent has created a general confusion which yet remains charming and original in detail. (*Alvar Aalto, Aino Marsio-Aalto, architects.*)

BRAZIL

By its openness of plan, the Brazilian Pavilion achieves a lightness and grace which are usually absent in pavilions of this size. The ramp leading to the first floor balcony is disproportionately heavy for the rest of the building and does nothing but confuse the circulation, inasmuch as there is a flight of stairs at the rear of the building. As a piece of decoration the box front which shades the south end of the building is practical and striking. So why should we complain if this seems to be a complicated way of solving a common problem? After all this is a piece of exhibition architecture.

The quality of the display work within the building reaches a very high standard. The design of the lettering throughout—a modified form of Bodoni—is particularly noteworthy. Space divisions are achieved not by solid walls but with the suggestion conveyed by an area of dropped ceiling or by the shape of the display stands themselves, which tend to make this perhaps a building for architects rather than for the less perceptive public. The complete openness of the ground floor, and the (apparently) informal arrangements of exhibits, gives the whole building a particular quality of subtle design, as fascinating as it is rare. (*Lucio Costa and Niemeyer Soares, architects; Paul L. Wiener, interiors and exhibits.*)

BELGIUM

The Belgian pavilion depends for its appeal primarily on the beauty of its wall textures. The rough-surfaced terra-cotta tiles, dull red in colour, and the blue-black slate, come as a particular relief after the acres of tinted plaster board which distinguish most of the other Fair structures. On the interior of the building, the walls have more interest when the insulating slabs are left to make their own effect than when they are covered with highly polished black marble.

The interiors are spacious, but the general effect is confused by irritating changes of scale caused by sudden jumps in the roof level. The most successful section is that where the height of the windows is carried off by the great hall opening out to the left. The display cases here are also more happily placed than in other parts of the building where large, glass-sided cases, about 8 ft. high are ranged down the middle of a gallery lighted from both sides, so that reflections prevents one from seeing the goods displayed within. This is particularly unfortunate inasmuch as some of the displays (notably the flat exhibit) and many of the products shown are very well designed. (*Van de Velde, Stynen and Bourgeois, architects.*)

RUSSIA AND ITALY

The struggle for power is here translated into obvious architectural form. There is no subtlety here; there is great deal of vulgarity and dullness, but there is also a certain impressive majesty. The waterfall, for example, which courses down blue mosaic steps on the front of the Italian pavilion (M. Busiri-Vici, architect) is a brilliant exhibition idea; but it is killed by the tomb-like solemnity of its background.

The Soviet building (Boris M. Iofan and Karo S. Albian, architects; Simon Breines, associate), on the other hand, though almost more conventional in design, does achieve a certain architectural interest from its plan form, a horseshoe of halls thrown around the base of a slim red porphyry column. And, moreover, the problems of circulation have been solved with a good deal more success than in the Italian building, and far better than they are in the British pavilion.

Both the Italian and the Russian buildings are more impressive by night than by day, for then the features designed to impress—the stainless steel worker and the goddess Roma, the waterfall and the tall column—are isolated from the dullness of the buildings themselves and achieve a certain backhanded impressiveness.

The interiors of both buildings are equally vast. While Russia is distinguished by its vulgarity, Italy stands out for its dullness. But whereas Italy retains the quality of classic restraint, Russia has no such safe guiding line, and it is difficult to imagine anything more vulgar than the full-size mirror-lined reproduction of a Moscow subway station. On the other hand, it must always be born in mind that Russia does succeed in *épater le bourgeois*, which, after all, was what it set out to do.

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THE NATIONAL PAVILIONS

Grouped immediately below are some of the pavilions put up by participating nations, and on the following pages a dozen of these have been selected for detailed illustration. Not all the nations were able to build their own pavilions and in such cases space was rented in the standard pavilions erected by the Fair authorities. An article discussing the contribution of each nation begins on page 63.

1, the French pavilion (Expert and Patout, architects) concentrates on an imposing façade, while the Turkish, 2, (S. H. Eldem, architect) richly coloured in blue, green and gold attempts a presentation of the local vernacular in a way made familiar at Wembley and elsewhere. 3, the Norwegian pavilion (Finn Bryn, architect). The upper part of the exterior is panelled in wood, with a natural finish. 4, the Argentine pavilion (Armando d'Ans, architect) which, together with the excellent Brazilian pavilion, forms an unexpectedly lively contribution from the South American continent. (See also Plate vi.) The Italian pavilion, 5, three storeys high, is surmounted by a statue of the goddess Roma, and from the tower a cascade of water falls down the steps. (M. B. Vici, architect.)

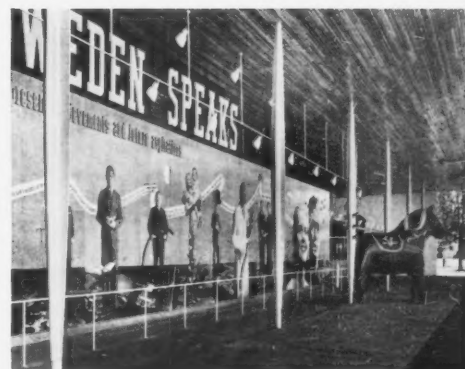


1 SWEDEN

SVEN MARKELIUS, ARCHITECT

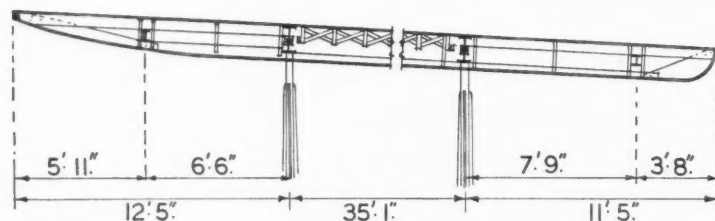
Designed throughout for display purposes, the Swedish pavilion is probably the most successful in the Fair. Its impermanence is especially suggested by the delicate roof which is made to serve as more than mere shelter in the interior display. Statistical material is conveyed in photo-murals and on large placards attached to the stanchions, and the exhibits also include a timber display and working-class living-rooms. It is a one-storey building. The gaily decorated flagstaff (see overleaf) makes a more attractive landmark than the statues of the Russian or Italian pavilions.

1, an interior showing the lively method of displaying social statistics; also a life-size horse, an enlarged version of a typical Swedish peasant craft product.

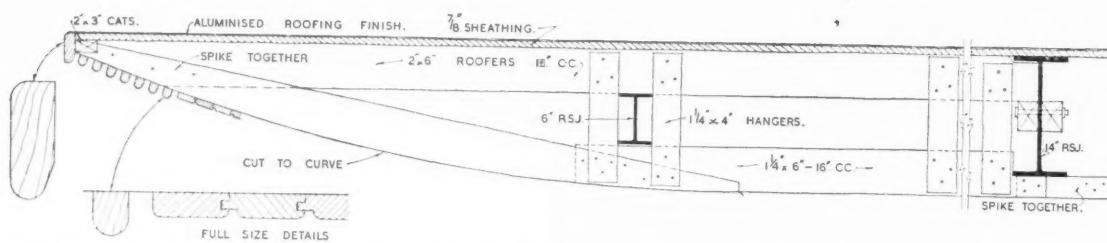
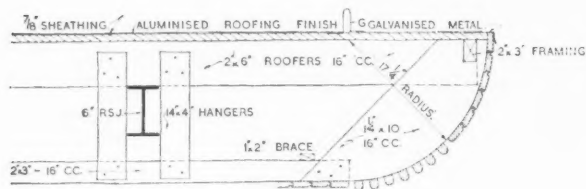


SWEDEN continued

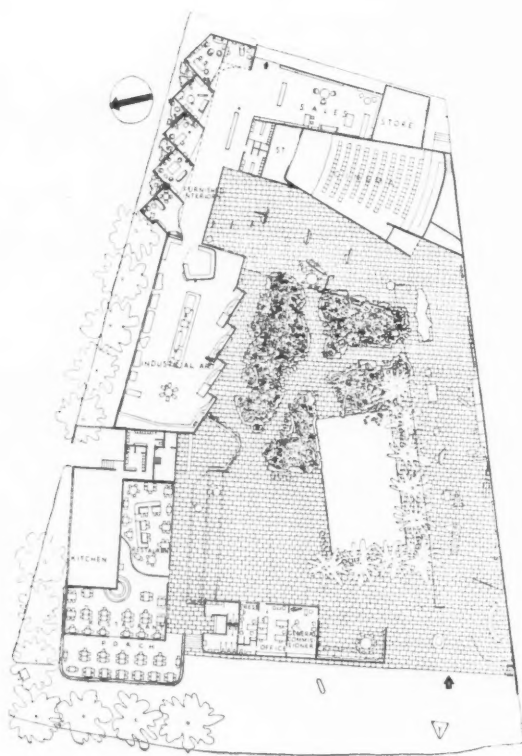
2, the exterior of the pavilion showing its open impermanent character. 3, a timber display in which wood products such as alcohol, newsprint and women's stockings are set in lighted niches in the tree trunks. 4 and 5, a farmer's living-room and kitchen, demonstrating the widespread qualities of good design to be found in ordinary Swedish life. See also illustrations of the garden restaurant and of an interior display on Plates ii and iii.



SECTION THROUGH CANOPY



DETAILS OF FRONT AND BACK EDGE OF CANOPY



GROUND FLOOR



2



3



4



5

2 FINLAND

ALVAR AALTO AND AINO MARSIO-AALTO, ARCHITECTS

Finland, like several other of the smaller countries, has not erected her own pavilion. Her exhibit is housed in a standard building rented from the Fair authorities. Wood is the principal product displayed both in the interior structure and in the exhibits themselves, which include furniture, skis and aeroplane propellers. The latter can be seen on the right, displayed beneath the ceiling. A cinema has been included in the small space available by suspending a projector from the roof and placing a screen on the end wall so that it can be seen by visitors from the balcony restaurant. A trellis of birch logs over which creepers are being trained to act as a screen for the restaurant windows, gives a national flavour to the exterior and is an original substitute for an awning.



1



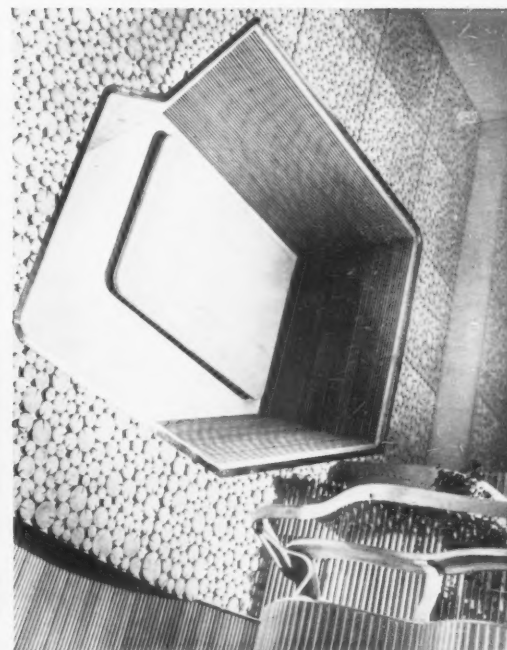
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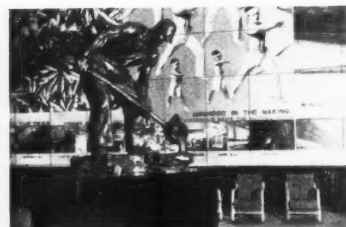
1, the exterior trellis screen on which creepers are being trained. 2, a general interior showing the balcony restaurant, the suspended cinema projector and a lounge with plywood furniture by Aalto. 3, one of the restaurant windows. 4, display case lighting. 5, the cinema screen on the end wall, showing also a corner of the balcony railing. The wall has a surface of birch log discs of varying diameter but equal thickness. The odd shape of the aperture allows the screen to be seen from floor level as well as from the balcony. See also Plate viii.

3 JAPAN

UTIDA AND MATSUI, ARCHITECTS

The Japanese pavilion combines a traditional exterior, which is a reproduction of a Shinto Shrine and exhibits characteristics such as the raised central roof, with an interior display largely devoted to national propaganda similar in technique to that of most of the Scandinavian countries.

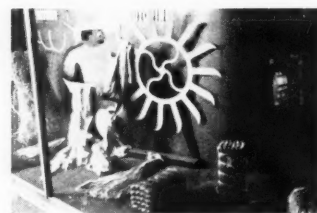
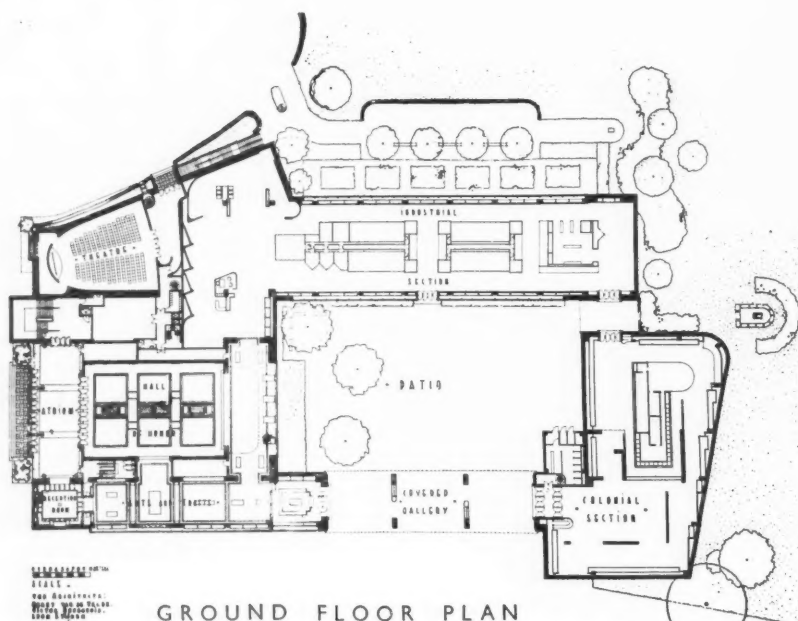
1, the exterior, with the tower of the Russian Pavilion in the background. 2 and 3, interior displays, the latter showing particularly the odd effect of Japanese figures and certain Japanese conventions used as the basis for the familiar photographic wall display.



4 BELGIUM

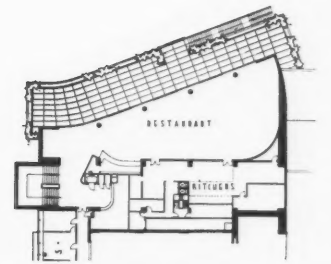
VAN DE VELDE, STYNEN AND BOURGEOIS, ARCHITECTS

The Belgian pavilion is similar in many ways to that at Paris in 1937. It includes a glass enclosed stairway whose lightness emphasizes the rather ponderous qualities of the rest of the building, which is of steel frame construction with dull-red terra-cotta tile facing.

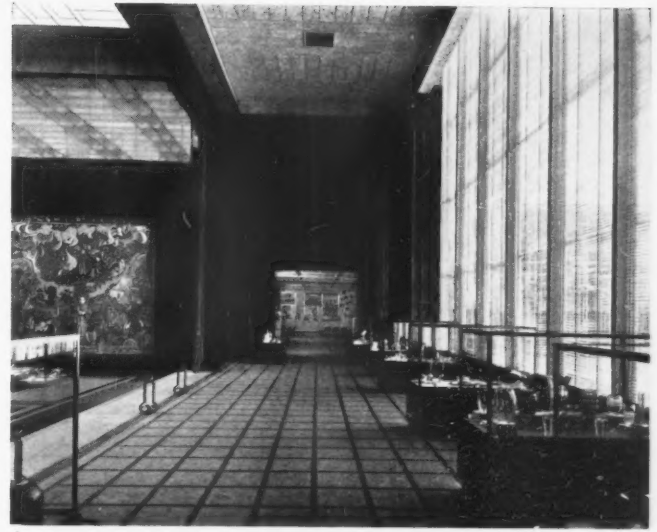


1, an exterior view of the building. 2, a mural relief display of commercial products. 3, looking through the staircase.

4, display cases in the main exhibition hall of the Belgian pavilion, whose severe proportions combined with the monumental flavour of the interior give an impression of dullness.



UPPER FLOOR PLAN

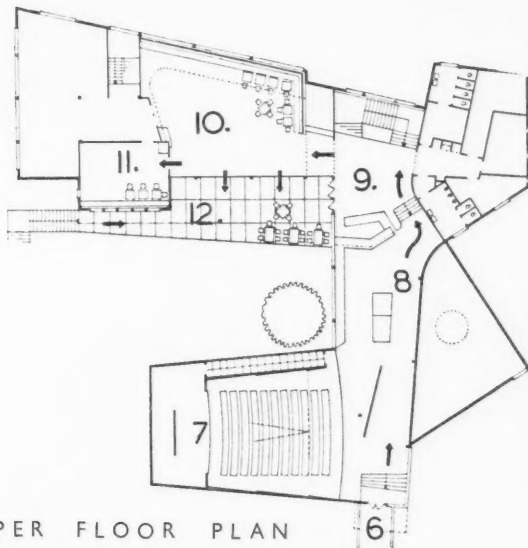


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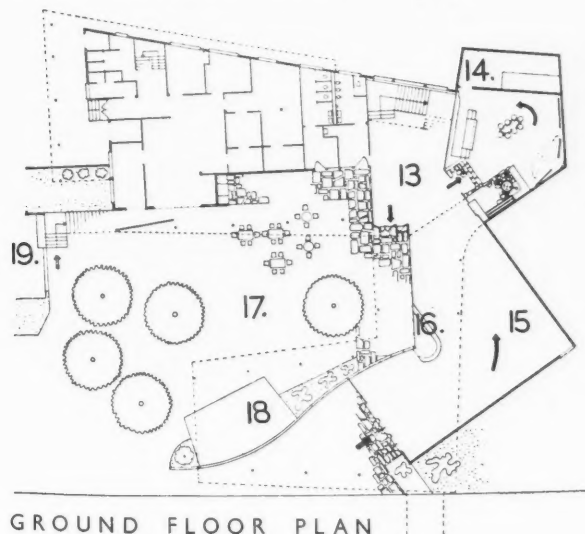
5 SWITZERLAND

WILLIAM LESCAZE AND
J. R. WEBER, ARCHITECTS

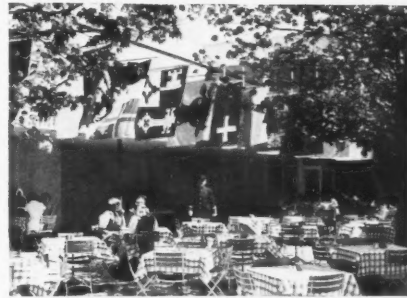
A Swiss and an American architect have together produced a good modern building which is not lacking in some of the characteristics of its country of origin. As in the Scandinavian pavilions considerable space is given to a garden restaurant.



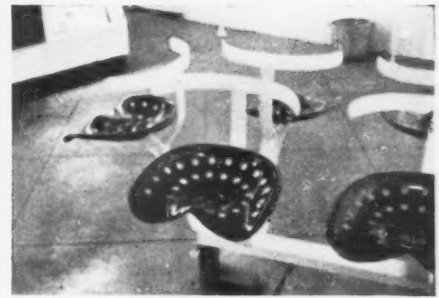
UPPER FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



2



3

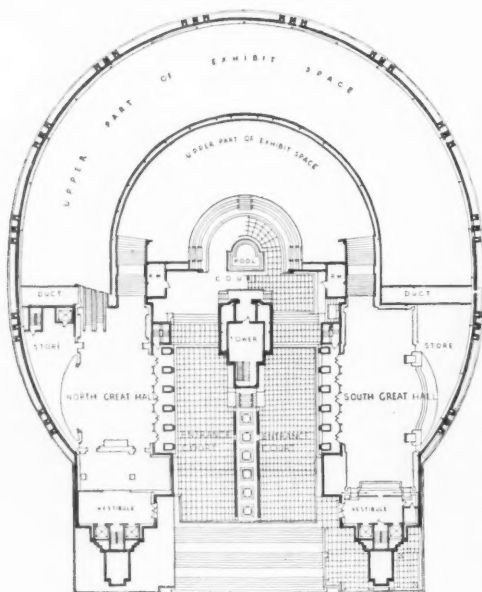
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|------------------|---------------------|
| GROUND FLOOR | UPPER FLOOR |
| 13 HALL | 6 BRIDGE |
| 14 CHEESE CELLAR | 7 AUDITORIUM CINEMA |
| 15 TOURISME | 8 SPORTS |
| 16 INFORMATION | 9 HEIMARBEIT |
| 17 BEER GARDEN | 10 RESTAURANT |
| 18 STAGE | 11 SCHWEIZERSTUBE |
| 19 BOWLING ALLEY | 12 TERRACE |

1, a general view of the pavilion. The main entrance is on the extreme right. See also the side view shown in Plate vii. 2, the garden restaurant. 3, metal farm tractor seats painted vermilion red with white frames used with good effect in the cheese room.

6 RUSSIA

BORIS IOFAN AND KARO ALBIAN, ARCHITECTS

A large steel and marble pylon topped by a stainless steel figure of a worker holding a star-shaped red light dominates the Russian pavilion. The exhibition galleries are arranged in a horse-shoe plan round it. The exhibits, occupying 100,000 square feet, are planned to illustrate conditions in the eleven Soviet Republics and in addition is a model of the Palace of the Soviets carried out in precious and semi-precious stones. An upper floor also includes a cinema in one wing and a restaurant in the other.



1, the exterior overlooking the river. 2, the model of the Palace of the Soviets. 3, in the interior: a full size model of one of the new Moscow underground stations.



2

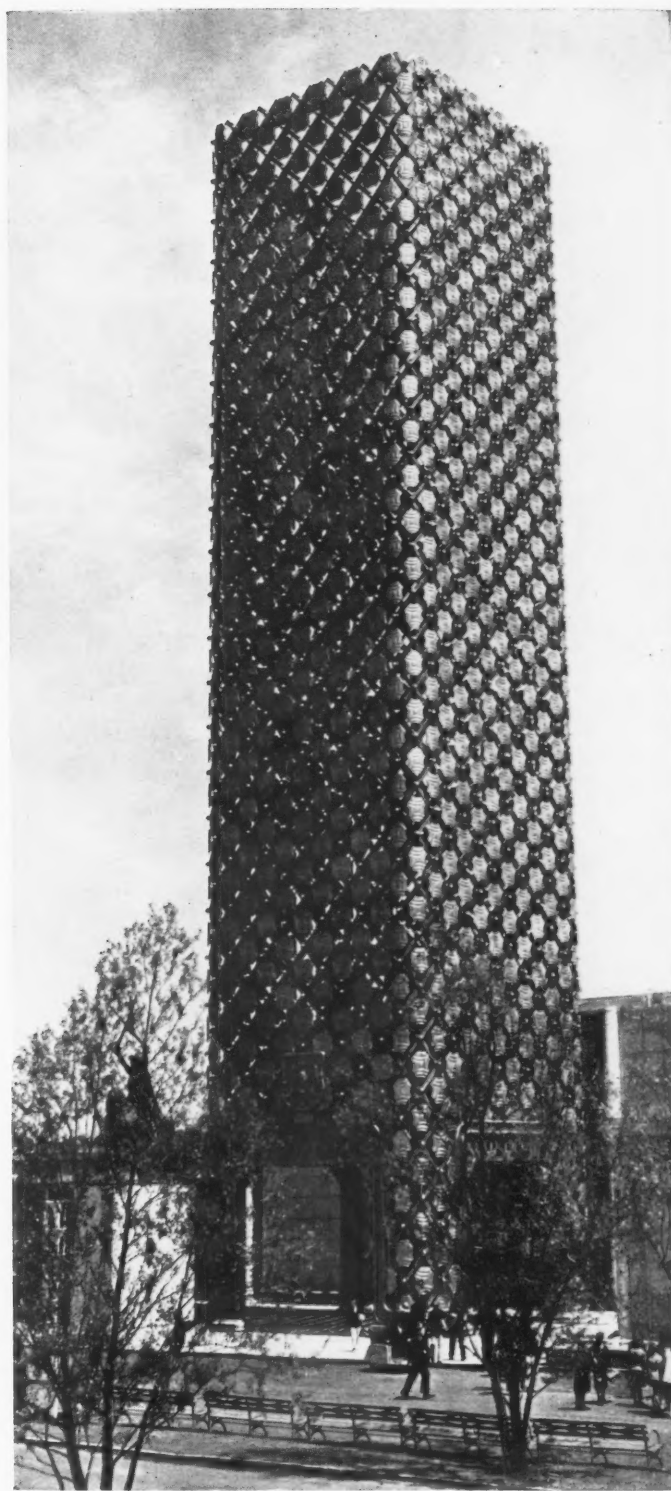


3

7 POLAND

JAN CYBULSKI AND JAN GALINOWSKI, ARCHITECTS

The exhibition space in the Polish Pavilion is a piece of straightforward design and all its display features are concentrated in the gilded metal lattice-work tower, 150 ft. high, a somewhat cumbersome feature for an ephemeral exhibition structure. In an adjacent circular building a modern bar, a popular tavern, a terrace café and a de luxe restaurant specializing in Polish food, provides the most lavish eating and drinking facilities of any of the national pavilions.

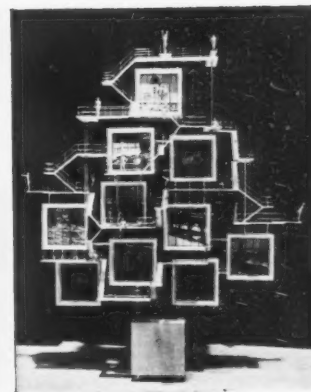


8 HOLLAND

D. F. SLOTHOUER, ARCHITECT

The Dutch pavilion, spaciouly planned, includes a life-size figure of Peter Stuyvesant, one of the important characters in the history of New Amsterdam, who provides an apt link for an exhibition in New York. The main entrance to the building is through a courtyard enclosed by an open colonnade. The square columns have moulded glass ribs which are illuminated at night.

1, the exterior. 2, an interesting photographic display of swimming and diving in one of the interior galleries.

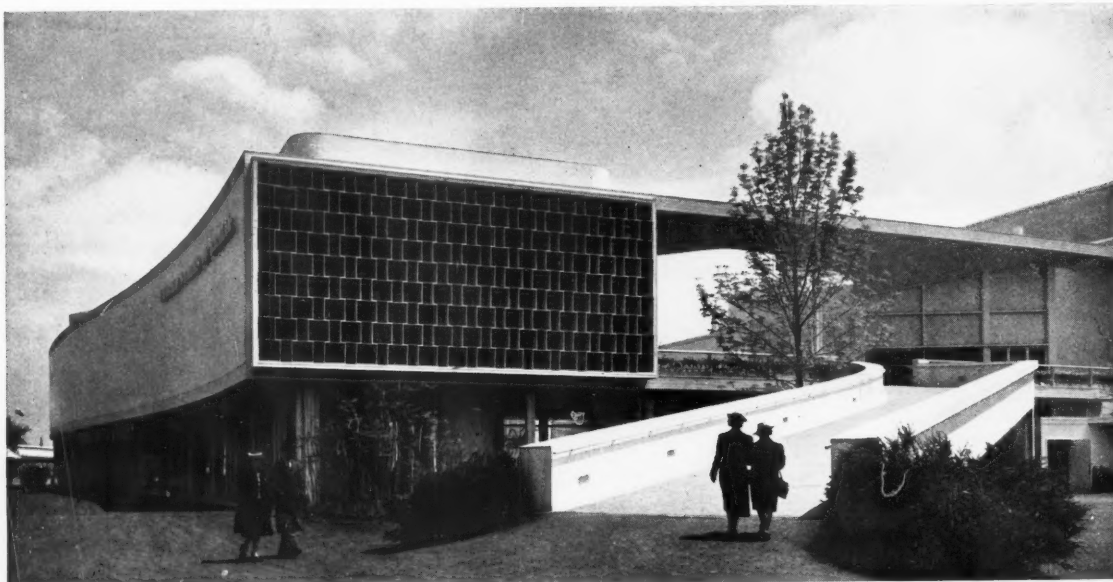


1

2

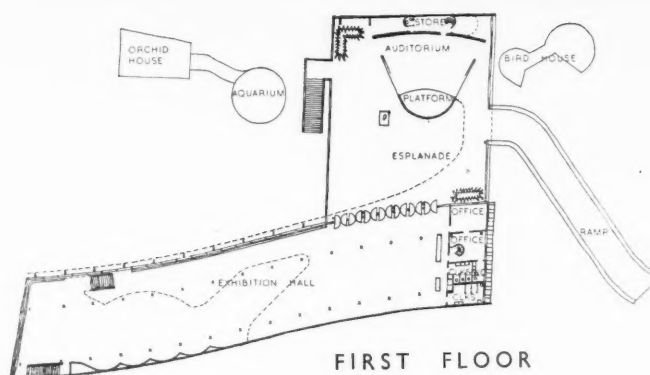
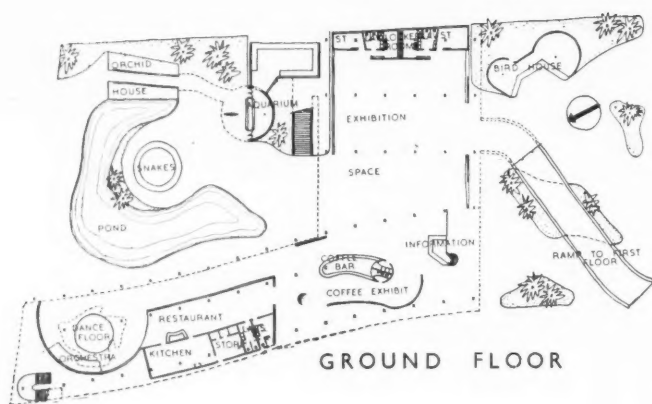
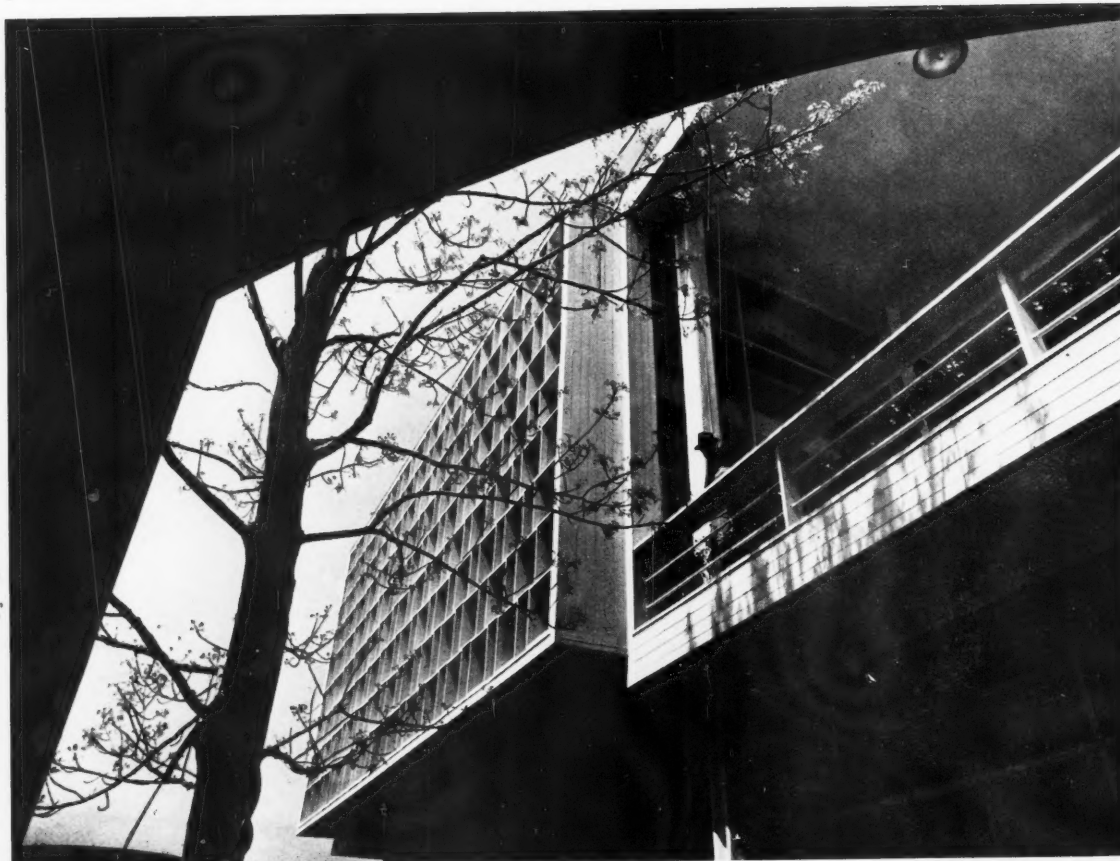
9 BRAZIL

LUCIO COSTA AND NIEMEYER SOARES, ARCHITECTS



The rectangular pattern of the first floor façade dominates the Brazilian pavilion. A curved ramp leads to the first floor balcony to the right of which is an auditorium. Space divisions in the interior are suggested by the curves of the ceiling and the display stands, some of the latter being surrounded, on the ground floor, by a short box hedge which is let into a trough in the ground. The curve of the ramp and the exhibition hall provide an effective contrast to the rectangular pattern of the façade.

1, a general view of the exterior showing the entrance ramp. 2, a detail of the first floor terrace. See also Plate iv.



On the right, two typical interiors in the Brazilian Pavilion, showing the steel stanchions left free except for a thin casing to smooth off their angularity; also some instances of the use of box hedging referred to on the facing page. 3, the first floor exhibition hall. 4, the central exhibition space on the ground floor.



3



4

10 DENMARK

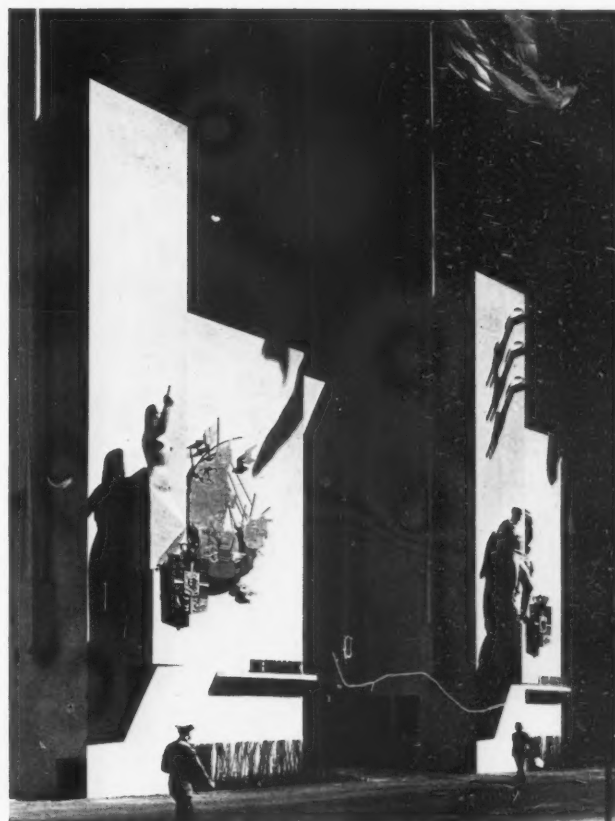
TYGE HVASS, ARCHITECT

The Danish pavilion, which is structurally one of the stock Fair pavilions, is decorated with a ship whose sails take the form of a map of the country, and a coat of arms, both carried out in metal. Most of the interior, apart from a display of Copenhagen porcelain and silverware, is taken up with pictorial statistics of cultural, educational and commercial progress; a feature common to all the Scandinavian pavilions.

1 and 2, exterior and interior views of the pavilion.



2

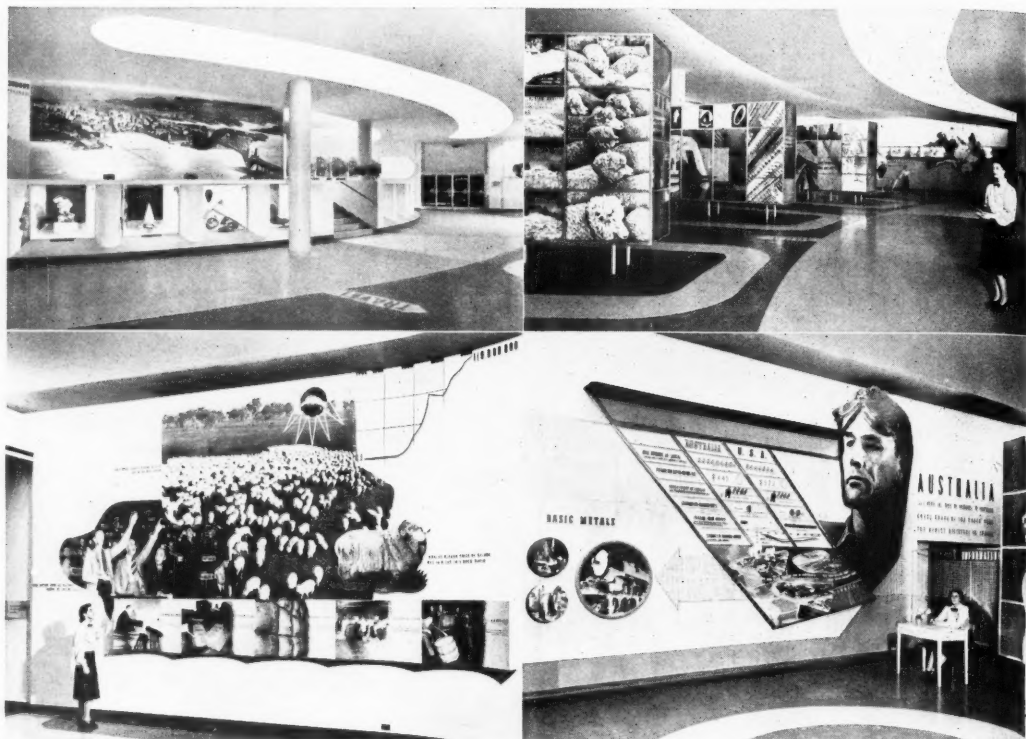


1

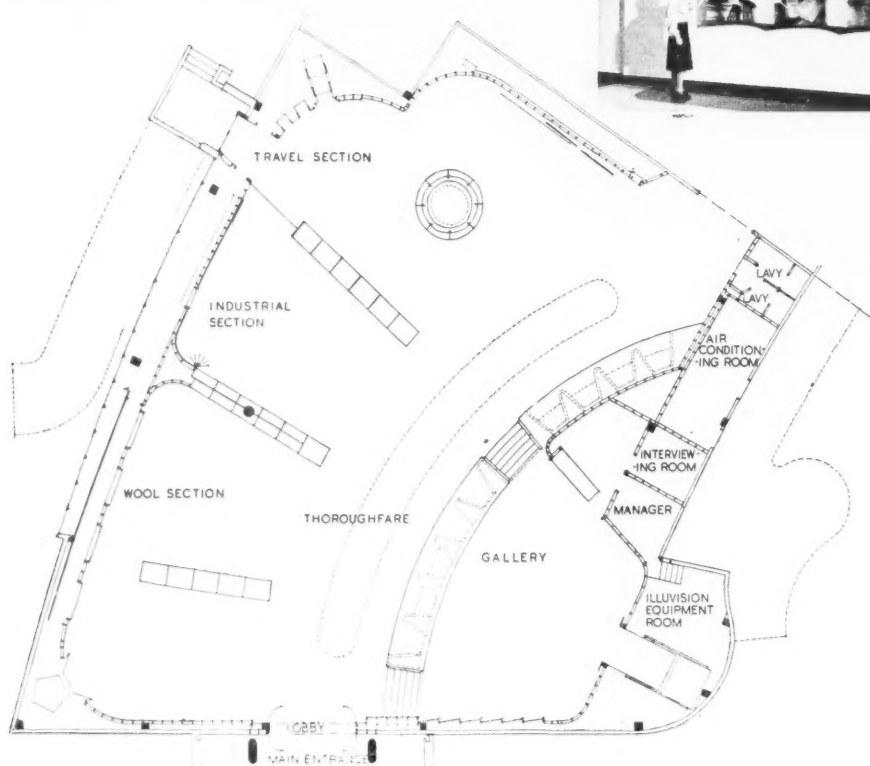
11 AUSTRALIA

STEPHENSON AND TURNER, ARCHITECTS

The Australian exhibit is housed on the ground floor of the southernmost of the two British Government pavilions, sharing the whole ground floor area with New Zealand (see plans on page 76). It is here selected for special prominence, from among the Dominions and Colonial exhibits to which this page is devoted, in recognition of the great step forward made by Australia since previous exhibitions. In THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW's special issue on the Glasgow Exhibition attention was drawn to the clumsy old-fashioned design of the Australian and other Dominion exhibits, and it was suggested that there must be Australian display designers capable of something better. This year Australia has given her own modern designers a chance. The mural display throughout is extremely effective, and commercial and social statistics are interesting and easy to grasp. The design of the display stands and the lighting are also skilfully planned.

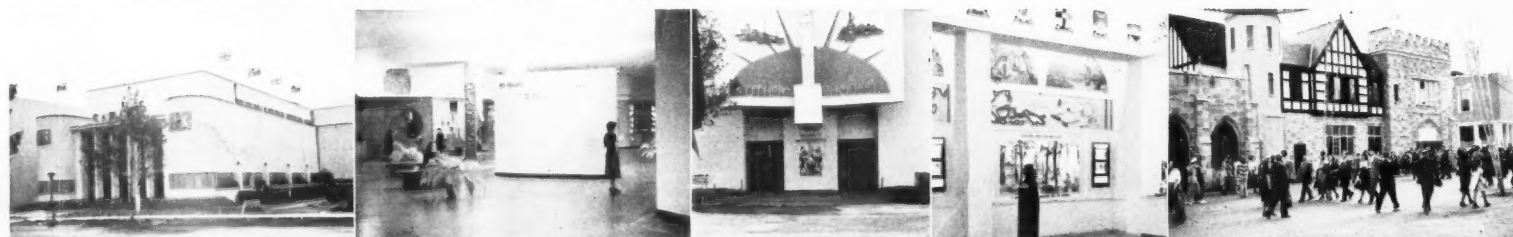


Above, four interior views in the Australian pavilion showing the up-to-date standard of display. The top left-hand photograph also shows a good use of the space below the dioramas as display units.



DOMINIONS AND COLONIES

In contrast to the Australian pavilion the other Dominions have adhered to the style of previous exhibitions as shown below. Left to right Canada (not much advance since Wembley and none since Glasgow), New Zealand (a slight improvement), contained, like Australia, on the ground floor of one of the British pavilions, Southern Rhodesia, West Indies and last "Merrie England."



13 GREAT BRITAIN

GREAT Britain has progressed a long way since the bad old days when national representation at an international exhibition consisted of the erection of a shed—more or less showily ornamented—enclosing space to be let out to any trade firms that would pay for it. As recently as Brussels, 1935, the British Pavilion was still a trade bazaar, but in Paris, 1937, although it was filled almost entirely with trade goods, these were selected by government-appointed committees. A standard of quality—even of design—had crept in. Britain had joined the ranks of the class-conscious countries that mind about yellow boots with morning coats. In Glasgow, the year after, the British Government took another step forward. They organized an out-and-out “prestige” exhibit advertising health, social and educational services as well as our major industries; presenting the British for the first time in history, so far as exhibitions are concerned, as something more than a nation of shopkeepers. Furthermore in Glasgow they employed the best team of young modern display designers in the country.

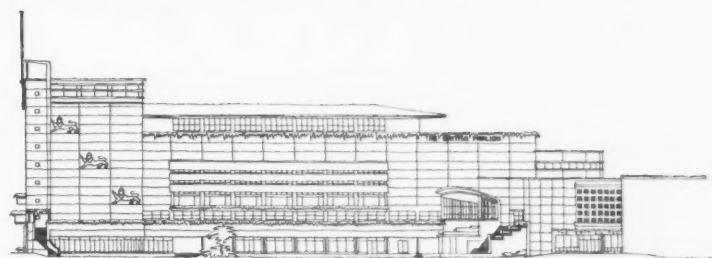
The next occasion was New York, and Great Britain here has entered the lists, frankly and seriously, among the countries that stage a major display, with what has been called “national projection” taking a more prominent place than the display of goods to trade buyers. It is a moment that was bound to arrive sooner or later: Great Britain’s joins the suave voices manoeuvring for attention, just as foreign propaganda broadcasts now issue from the B.B.C. It is indeed an obligation that many critics of her past exhibition endeavours have been pleading for her to assume; but it is a responsibility as well as an obligation. We have come out into the open. We are playing the same game as our rivals, and cannot afford to be beaten at it. We can no longer evade the issue by taking cover, as we did in Paris, behind the whimsical conceit that what Britain is really equipped

to tell the world about is hunting, shooting and fishing.

Great Britain, furthermore, is in the peculiar position that, having decided not to exercise the right her big name gives her of behaving as eccentrically as she likes, as at Paris, but to play the game like everyone else, she has, as a “first-class power” to play the game in a big way. She cannot be content with the modest and lighthearted originality of the second-class powers, such as Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Switzerland, who always contribute so much to the gaiety and sheer quality of international exhibitions. Great Britain, for once consciously mobilizing all her resources, finds herself in competition with the experienced experts of Italy and Russia. She starts with only one advantage: her cultural and racial link with America, which invites exploitation at a fair designed for the American public. This accounts for the rather pompous emphasis on Magna Carta, the Crown Jewels, History in Heraldry and the rest. It becomes tiresome and is to us rather a bore. We do not feel it is leading us anywhere new. But it is probably good showmanship.

Great Britain, then, has at last set out to compete with the great powers. Her handicap, unfortunately, is that the British temperament is not fitted for extravert display. We do not dramatize ourselves naturally. We are not accustomed to advertise the ways in which we think we are superior. Either we take our superiority for granted or we disguise our achievements by attributing them to some other motive, so that it shall not appear that we achieved anything intentionally. Our conservatism, also, prevents our competing wholeheartedly in company where originality and forcefulness carry most weight.

Translating all this into terms of architecture we find that the British Pavilion at New York is not quite big enough nor tall enough to compete successfully with Germany or



The British Pavilion: western elevation.

Italy, though this rather childish game of making yourself noticed by sheer physical aggressiveness can appropriately be left to these countries to play amongst themselves. Yet the British Pavilion has a certain glamour. Especially in the view from the south do the gilded lions, the lines of striped awning and a glimpse of the charming garden produce an effect of dignified gaiety, such as the Department of Overseas Trade would naturally feel was called for. From other aspects it can be best summed up as a “safe” building: competent without much inspiration, suggesting, as we have mentioned, a conservative anxiety to be not so up-to-date as to be unfamiliar. Unfortunately exhibition architecture, trading as it does on novelty, is very apt to degenerate into cliché. And to play for safety by using the clichés of the exhibition before last is the most fatal of all choices. In this sense the building probably represents truly the present degree of enlightenment among the authorities responsible for our part in these exhibitions. It is a great improvement on the ideals the architect was expected to express a few years ago; but whether our particular form of bureaucratic organization is the most likely one to give the architect next time a chance to produce a building of more than “safe” modernity is a question only the future can answer. The answer is not dictatorship; for Sweden, the most democratic of all countries, has produced in recent exhibitions the most consistently original pavilions: dignified without being banal and lively without stunts. It is possible of course that Sweden simply has the better architects, but this would be too easy an explanation, as so often the opportunity makes the architect. It is certain that Sweden, having chosen her architect, gives him all the scope he needs. One spirit permeates the whole. Expediency is never in conflict with design.

All this is less an architectural question than one of official culture and taste. When we come to look at the British Pavilion simply from the point of view of the problems its architect and display designers had to solve we find a mixture of good and bad points. First of all, the architects had a difficult site to deal with. They were not allowed by the Fair authorities to open up the Lagoon of Nations front, which probably accounts for the somewhat unshapely spread of the building. The exterior is safe and solid; the detail, such as the heraldic

entrance, dignified in rather an official way. The pale blue interior, with its corrugated asbestos ceiling, is spacious and cleverly lighted. The circulation, however, is much less controlled than in other pavilions. There is, for example, a well chosen display of British painting and sculpture from the last fifty years; there is a pleasant little cinema showing British documentary films; there is even a small display of modern British architecture. But all this material, of considerable interest to the many foreigners interested in something other than industrial and social achievement, is tucked away outside the main lines of circulation, so that it forms no effective part of the national exhibit. The awkward site, which makes an enclosed bridge necessary to link two parts of the building, adds to the difficulties of circulation. If the visitor approaches up the main entrance stairs on the Lagoon of Nations front, he will almost inevitably fail to see either the Crown Jewels or the silver.

The lack of direction is further emphasized by the over-abundance of open space (in contrast to the French pavilion where it is emphasized by an over-abundance of show-cases) which reduces the exhibits to the status of small pieces of occasional furniture placed round the walls of a vast assembly hall. The most successful co-ordination between exhibits and building is found in Magna Carta hall, in the kidney-shaped Heraldry Hall and in the silver display room, where in each case the ceiling has been lowered to more human proportions. Yet in considering the actual quality of the exhibits shown, apart from their rich colouring, these are the least interesting sections of the building.

For the social displays there can be nothing but praise. In the details of construction and design they are unsurpassed for quality, and Dronsfield’s amusing little paper models are among the most original to be found anywhere in the Fair. The displays by Misha Black on the first floor “tell” more than those for the heavy industries by the Reimann Studios on the ground floor, since Black has made more effective use of movement. But all the displays are in one sense defeated by their own quality. Their sturdy respectability lacks that touch of bravura which always marks the most successful exhibition technique. And the few light touches that emerge are lost in the vastness of the building in which they are placed.

The garden, as a garden, is charm-



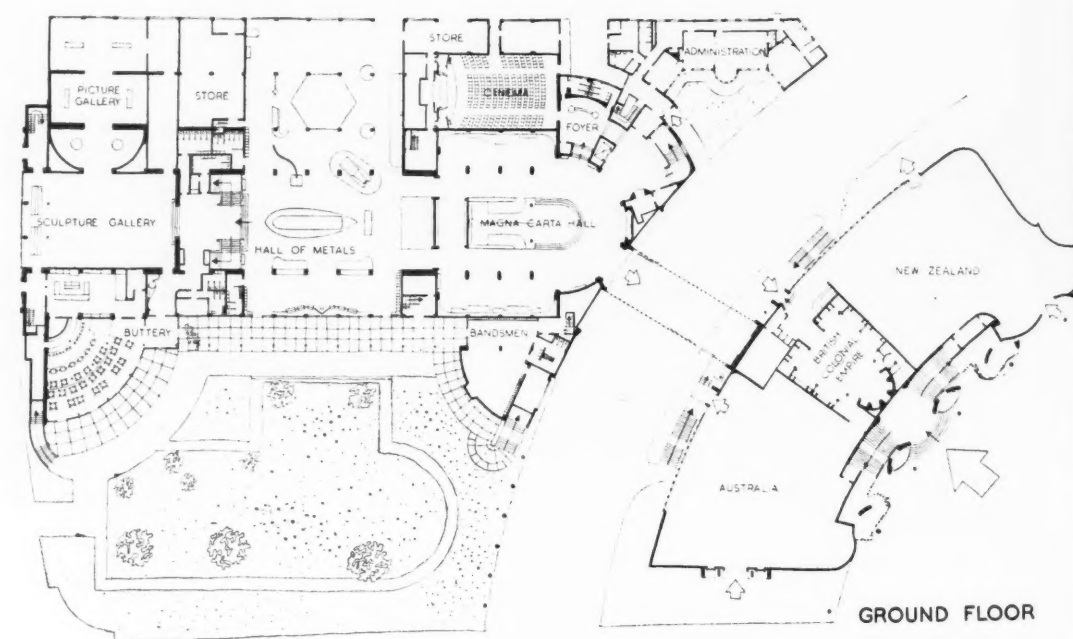
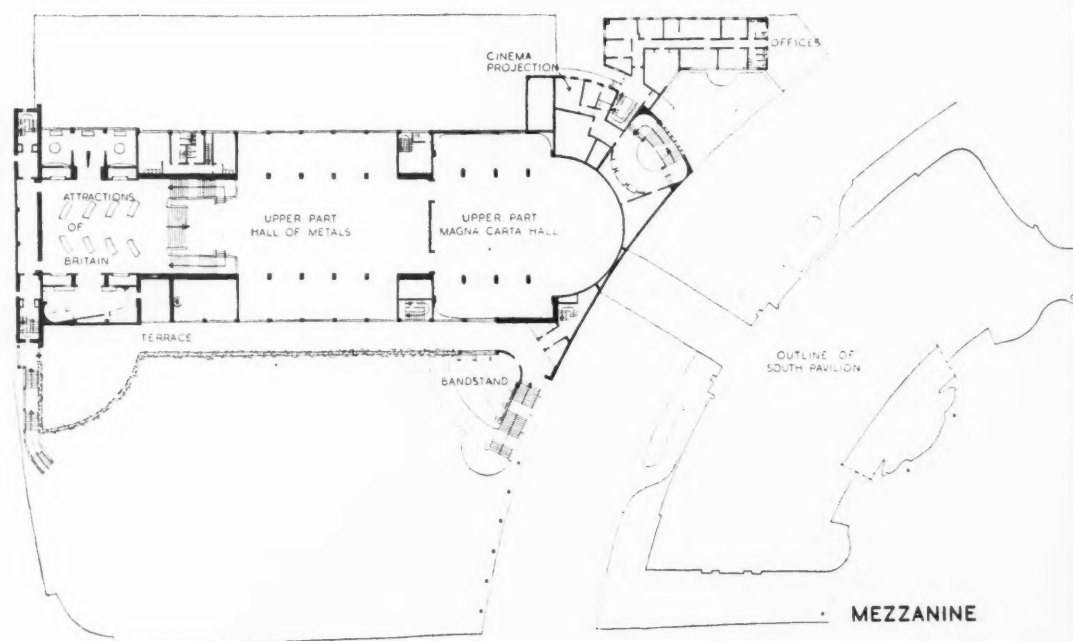
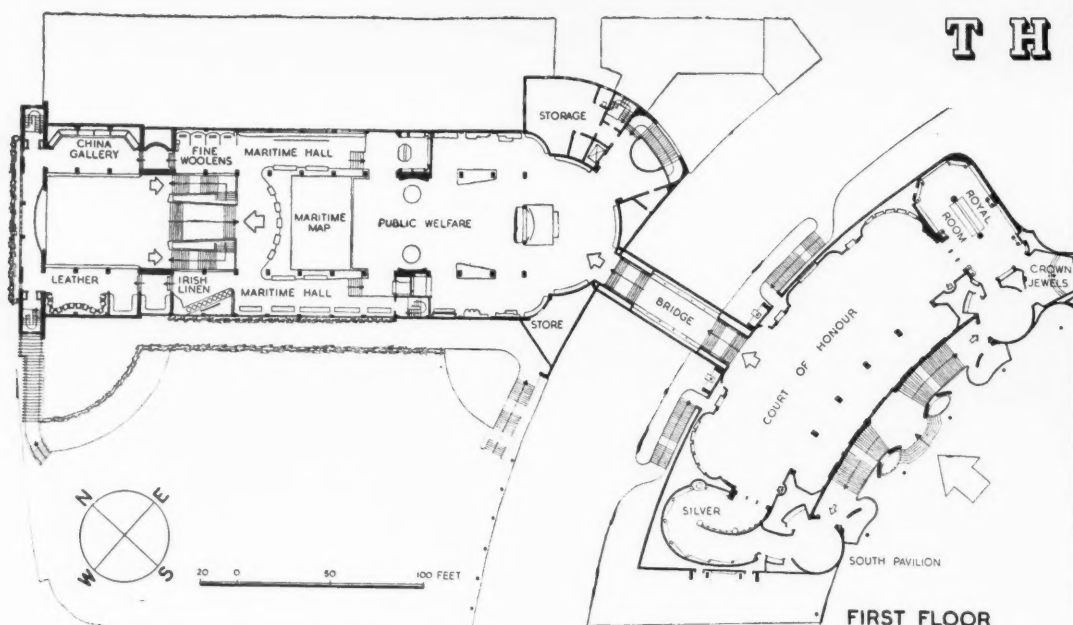
The “Fine Woollens” display on the first floor of the British Pavilion. It balances the Irish Linen display on the opposite side of the main staircase leading down from the Maritime Hall. Designer, Misha Black.

ingly traditional. But one can only regret that it is not made more accessible to the public. The garden outlook from inside the pavilion is cut off by lines of models and display cases, and from the road on the other side it is hidden by a thick hedge of evergreens. If it is really impossible to maintain the beauty of fine turf under the tramping of many feet, then surely this is not the most suitable type of garden for its purpose. To rope off the lawn and the first floor terrace is nothing more than a confession of failure, unless a considerably larger area of paths is provided, around which the visitor may circulate.

Another general criticism: it is important that the tempo of the displays should be adjusted to the habits of the public to which they are shown. The moving displays inside the Pavilion are too slow for New Yorkers, accustomed to a high-speed mode of life.

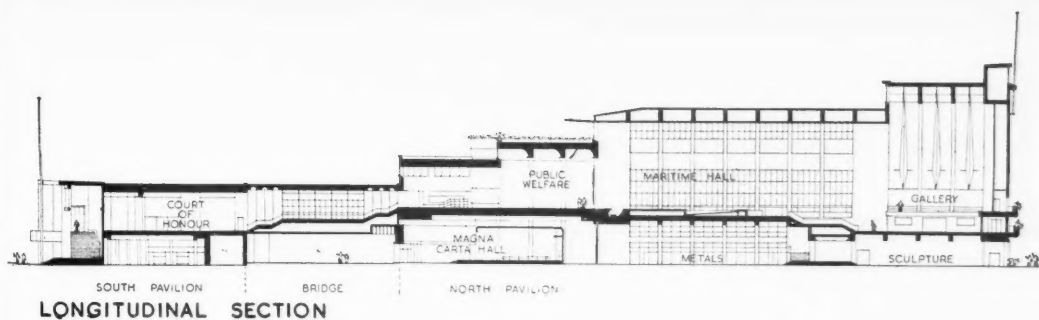
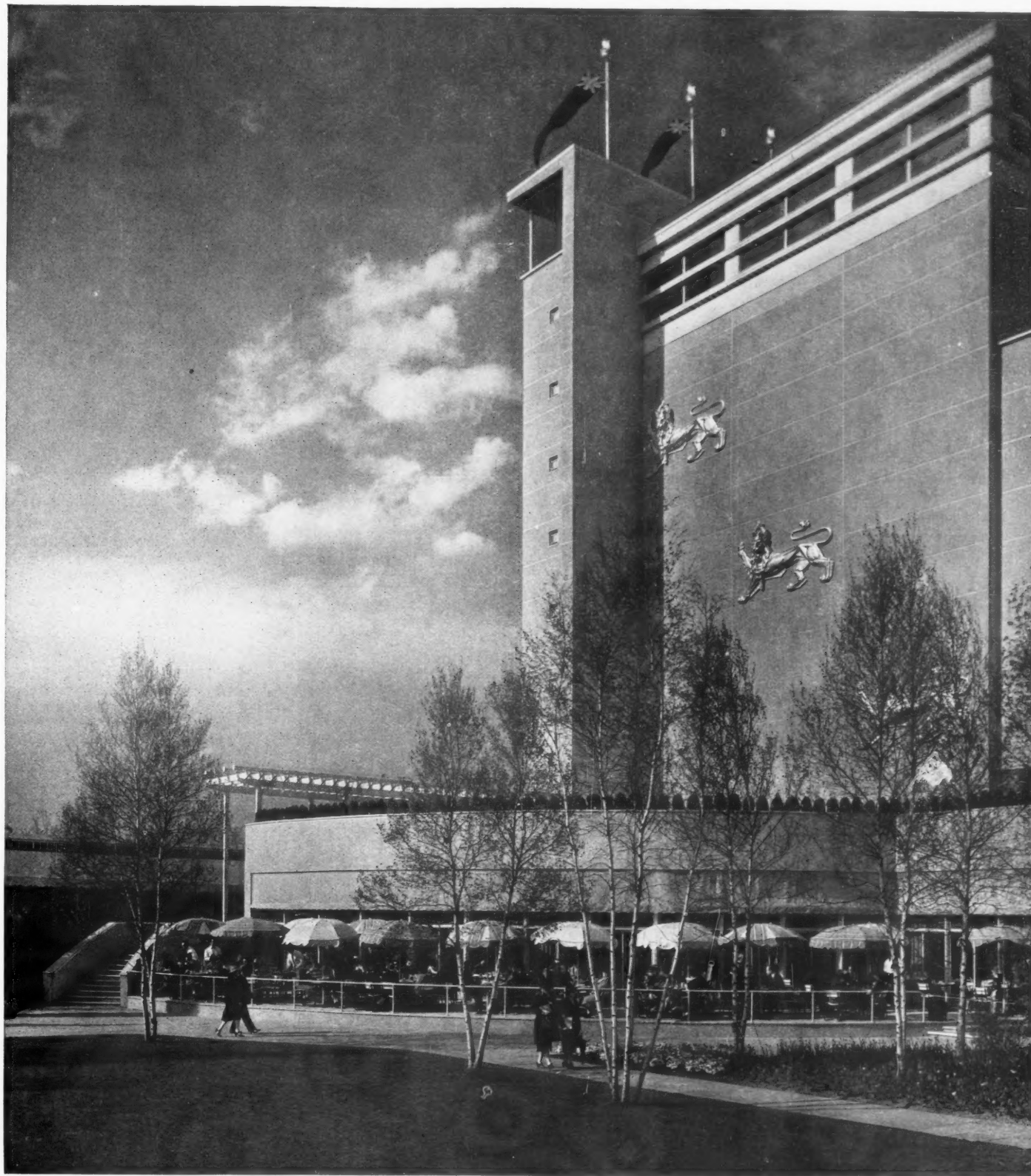
But equivalent criticisms could be made of many other pavilions. What is more important, with our eyes already on the next exhibition, is to analyse the characteristics of the British exhibit as a whole. It is good; it is modern; yet its goodness and modernity seem to spring from a desire to do the right thing rather than from any pleasure to be got from exhibiting Great Britain to Americans. It is a remarkable, and incidentally a new, experience to see the British ideal of good form reborn in the Modern Movement.

The weakness of our exhibit, in so far as it is not one of temperament, would seem to be that it still is not conceived from the beginning as a whole. We have progressed a long way from the Trade Show ideal, but *architecturally* its influence is still with us. The Department of Overseas Trade still regards the British Pavilion as simply a building to be designed as such and subsequently to be furnished with various exhibits. Whether Great Britain is going to continue in the future to try to impress by sheer weight of artillery or, like Scandinavia, by personality and original taste, the only way to success is to regard the whole building as being the exhibit (not as a hall to contain it), the details of display giving the architectural character to the building. This needs organization of the simple, non-bureaucratic character that we are not usually very good at. It needs an uncompromising standard of design that makes no concessions to expediency, and it means above all that the architect must have control from the beginning.



BRITISH PAVILION

STANLEY HALL & EASTON
AND ROBERTSON, ARCHITECTS



The British Pavilion consists of two buildings separated by a road but joined by a bridge at first floor level. The south building houses the Australian, New Zealand and British Colonial exhibits (see page 74) at ground floor level, the British Pavilion proper being approached by a double flight of steps. The general exterior design of the south building was laid down by the Fair authorities. After the approach to the North building over the bridge, the circulation is by descending levels to the far end and thence back at ground level to the secondary entrance under the bridge.



2



7



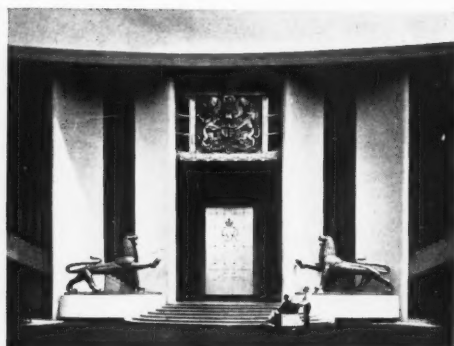
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2, a general view across the river that runs through the Fair grounds. The garden is between the river and the building. The long windows light the Maritime Hall on the first floor. 3, a close-up of the same windows, showing on the left the "Buttery" restaurant with its open-air terrace. 4, 5 and 6, the three principal entrances: 4, looking up the outside staircase leading to the Court of Honour on the first floor of the south building; 5, the lowest flight of the outside double staircase with a dedication panel in the centre and flanked by Alfred Hardiman's "Norwich" lions and with an inscribed door panel; 6, the entrance to the north building beneath the bridge. On either side of the latter can be seen showcases containing relief floor-plans of the whole Pavilion. 7, a progress photograph showing the light steel frame construction of the building, which is covered with panels of building board. The supervisor of construction was Mr. H. Barrett, and Mr. L. Preston was the architects' representative on the site.

ENTRANCES



4



5



6

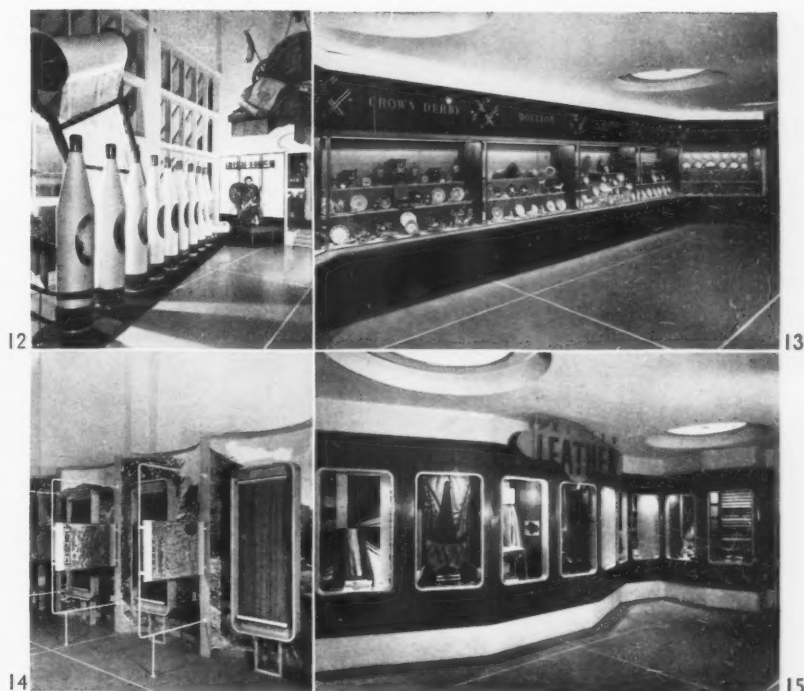
E B R I T I S H P A V I L I O N

The first room the visitor enters, after ascending the external staircase of the south building, is the Court of Honour, 8 and 9, which contains an heraldic display illustrating the history of Britain. Seven bays, framing painted panels and shields modelled in relief, each cover one century from the thirteenth to the nineteenth. The scheme was planned by Anthony Wagner, Portcullis Pursuivant. On either side of the Court of Honour are the Royal Room, with another series of historical paintings, the Crown Jewels and the Silver Room.

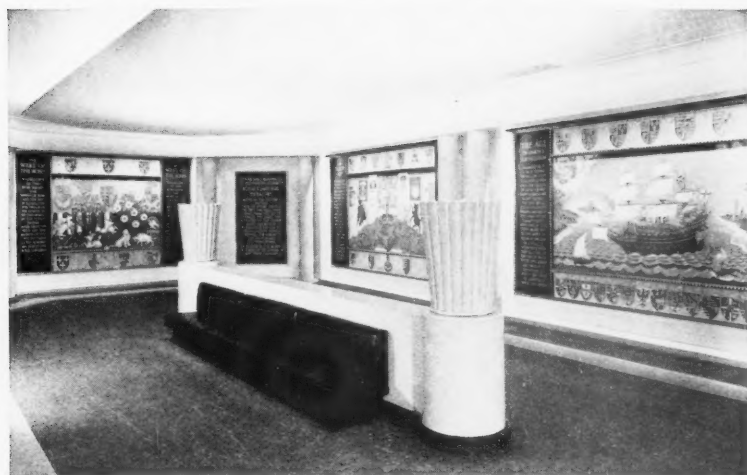
Entering the north building direct from beneath the bridge, the visitor passes through the Magna Carta Hall into the Hall of Metals, 10 and 11 below, the principle room on the ground floor. This hall demonstrates the history and progress of metal production since the seventeenth century. The display is by the Reimann Studios Display Unit.

Ascending the main staircase beyond, the visitor passes through an "Attractions of Britain" display and thence to the first floor. At the top of the staircase are four galleries, 12, 13, 14 and 15, right, exhibiting respectively Irish Linen (display by C. Allenbruck), China, Fine Woollens and Leather. The display in the last three is by Misha Black and Milner Gray. (The actual displays of merchandise were arranged by the manufacturers and not by the designers.)

LINEN, CHINA
WOOLLENS, LEATHER



HISTORY IN HERALDRY



8



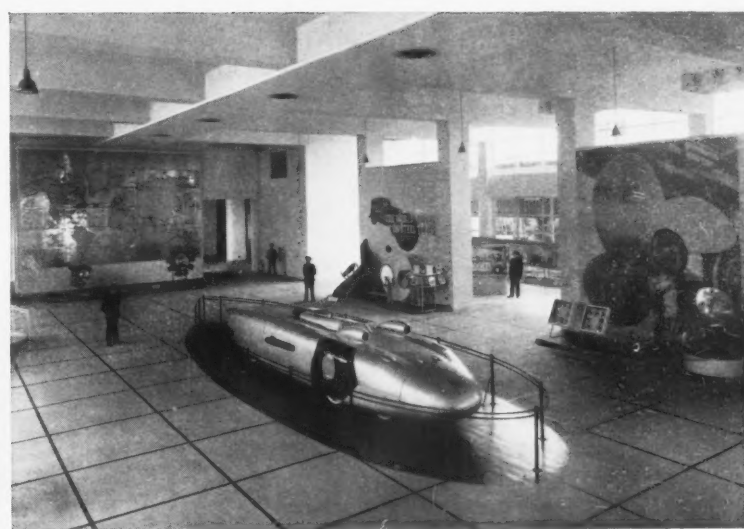
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HALL OF METALS



10

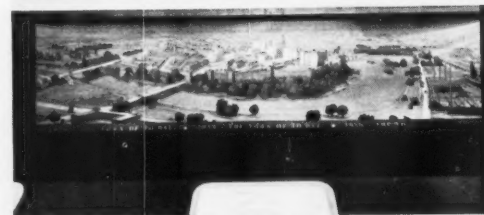
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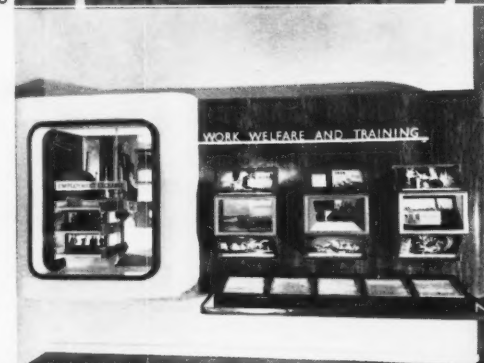
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PUBLIC WELFARE

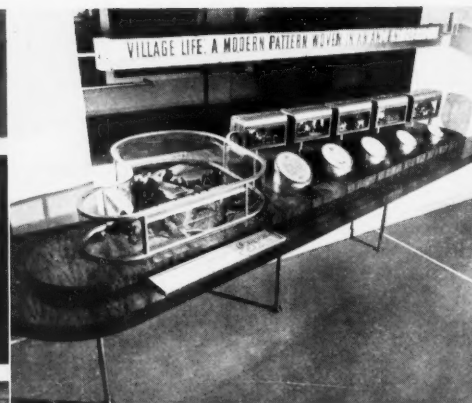
The largest room on the first floor is devoted to Public Welfare, and contains a series of displays designed by Misha Black, dealing with various aspects of the theme. Four typical displays are shown on the right; 16, an ingenious changing panorama, showing an English town first in the Elizabethan period; next during the industrialized nineteenth century, and finally replanned today. 17, public services adapted to English rural life; a Cotswold village taken as an example. 18, industrial welfare and unemployment services: 19, part of the health services display. Artists and model makers responsible for individual units in these displays were R. T. Rousell, T. Bayley, Bertha Wright, Gordon Cullen and John Barker.



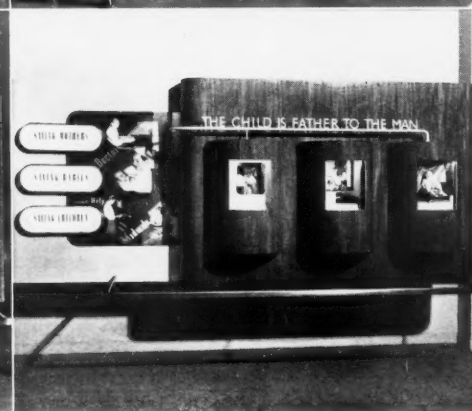
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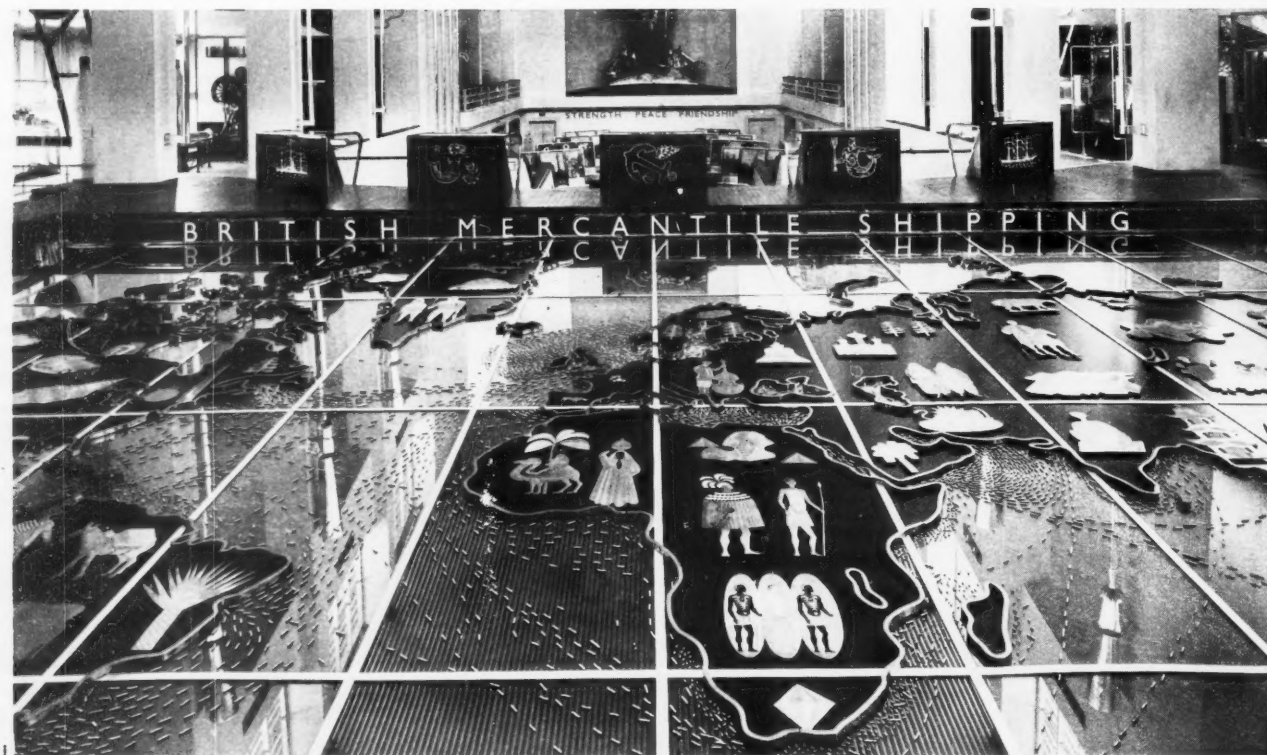
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MARITIME HALL

The rest of the first floor consists of the Maritime Hall, also designed by Misha Black. On one side of the Hall, 20, is a series of models illustrating the development of British transatlantic shipping. The central feature of the hall is a large map of the world, 21, showing by means of 9,000 small models, the distribution and extent of British mercantile shipping. The oceans are of glass and the decorative symbols of copper, engraved by Eric Ravilious. The incised wood carvings at the rear of the map were designed by Milner Gray.



20



21

THE BRITISH PAVILION

The Home Pavilions

The following are some notes on the more interesting pavilions of American industrial concerns or institutions and those devoted to specific products. National Pavilions are similarly discussed on pages 63 and 64, and the British Pavilion on pages 75 and 76.

GENERAL MOTORS

An oversize enlargement of an industrial designer's clay model is better, architecturally, than an oversize enlargement of a cash register (which is what another important firm has produced: see page 61), mainly because the former was conceived on broader lines in the first place. But even so, this streamlined, putty grey mass, humped on the ground, has little to do with architecture as generally understood. On the other hand, it is an efficient and exciting piece of exhibition design, conceived on a scale that only a dictatorship or an American industrial corporation could contemplate with equanimity.

But whereas the outside is designed only to impress by sheer bulk, the display within is designed also to interest. After walking up an enticingly curved ramp the visitor arrives in a great hall, his path dimly illuminated by purple spotlights, the air charged with the booming tones of a loudspeaker voice proclaiming the glories of more and finer and bigger roads. He is led through the mysterious semi-darkness on to a moving platform fitted with pairs of comfortably padded seats. Each pair of seats has a small loudspeaker at ear level, talking in a gentle conversational tone, explaining the features of the model before which the visitor is passing. The ride in itself is fun, and the static nature of the model is relieved by frequent changes of scale. Finally a close-up of the city of 1960 passes by and suddenly the moving platform emerges into the light and dumps the traveller into the middle of a full-size reproduction of the intersection which he has just seen in model form. What does it matter if the product displays in these buildings seem just a little dull at the end of it all? It is a brilliant *coup de théâtre*.

(Albert Kahn, Inc., architects; Norman Bel Geddes, designer.)

FORD MOTORS

The Ford exhibit lacks unity, but contains a number of striking details. The spiral ramp, for example, a section of the Road of Tomorrow used for demonstrating Ford cars, is a strikingly beautiful reinforced concrete form with the lines of the cantilevering left to make their own effect. The stairs and balconies of the loading platforms have something of the same qualities. But in the middle of the spiral ramp green cypress trees have been planted, their strong green verticals fighting bitterly with the smooth white lines by which they are surrounded.

Then again the interior of the great exhibit hall achieves a certain powerful majesty with its huge slowly turning table spotted with a series of most imaginative little models. But all this is thrown into a solid, unimaginative building whose exterior has all the characteristics of commercial modern.

(Albert Kahn, Inc., architects; Walter Dorwin Teague, designer; Charles C. Colby and Russell R. Kilburn, associates.)

UNITED STATES STEEL

A building material can be most effectively displayed in the form of the exhibit building itself, but the particular qualities of the material—in the case of steel its tensile strength—should be exaggerated as far as safety allows. This stainless steel casing, hung from five intersecting open-web arches, gives little feeling of the lightness and strength of which steel is capable, and the balcony is equally heavy-handed in treatment. This tradition of heavy members is an old one in the American steel industry, and is brought about in part by the prevailing high level of wages, which makes the fabrication and erection of small lightweight members more costly than heavier members of larger size.

Once the designers managed to forget Big Business, however, the result is far more lively. In the courtyard behind the building, such items as pipes and bolts, screws and spirals of chicken wire are composed into pleasant little groups with all the character of a still-life painting, enlivened by those bright blues and reds and yellows which give such charm to freshly painted agricultural implements. (Walter Dorwin Teague, designer, George Foster Harrell, associate; York & Sawyer, architects.)

THE E.G. BUDD CO.

The highest praise that one can pay this exhibit is to say that it reaches the high standard of design set by the products which it displays—streamlined trains, aeroplanes and automobiles. The same qualities of lightweight strength and straightforward design have been incorporated in the exhibit display. Full-size sections from some of the manufacturer's products are set out in the open courtyard, sheltered by a series of great stainless steel umbrellas. These sections are hung by wires from stalks of metal tubing which curve over at the top to form a light socket. Towering above the whole exhibit is a tall hollow tube of shot-welded stainless steel tapering off towards the top and crowned by a slender wind-sock of the same material.

(Voorhees, Walker, Foley & Smith, architects.)

THE BORDEN CO.

This is a conventional type of building, but it is raised above the general level of achievement by its sound design and lightness of detail. The focal point of the whole exhibit is the glass-walled rotolactor, in which cows are put through the conveyor belt ordeal of scientific milking ("from cow to you untouched by human hand"). This central feature carries through from the outside to the enclosed inner section of the building. In both sections there is a skilful handling of natural light, which is admitted from horizontal openings just below ceiling level, with a consequent absence of glare; at the same time there is ample wall space available for display. The cow theme is carried into all the details of the building. The display cases, for example, are covered with cowhide and slung by leather thongs from conventionalized yokes on the ceiling. And round the top of the rotolactor housing are conventionalized cows' heads modelled in flat copper by Giovanni Repetto.

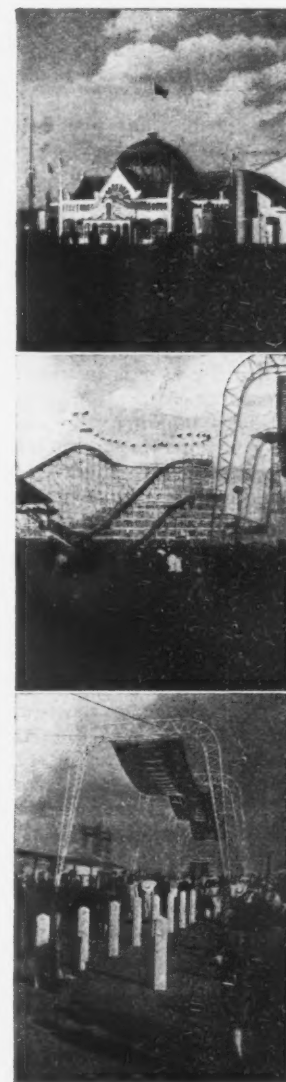
(Voorhees, Walker, Foley & Smith, architects.)

DISTILLED SPIRITS

Here is a frank and refreshing bit of façadism, successful precisely because it pretends to be nothing more than it is. The lettering is above the standard of that found on the surrounding buildings, and the applied design on the dull gilt background of the flaring sign is not only successful in itself, but is also explanatory of the exhibit within. The exposure of the steel framing members at the rear of the signboard and the cantilevered canopy achieves that feeling of sparse vitality which is seldom to be seen outside the Amusement Area.

The garden taken as a whole is featureless; but it is interesting and successful in its detail—the serpentine glass brick walls which run down the centre of the pools and the corrugated glass fencing are both ideas worthy of development. It is disappointing to

Three views of the Amusement Area in which, architecturally, an element of gaiety is to be found somewhat lacking in the more grandiose native pavilions. George Howe, architect.





Three typical views in the Children's World, showing the appropriate simplicity and spaciousness of the buildings and layout. George Howe, architect.

find that the rest of the building and the displays are conventional and uninspired.

(Morris Sanders, architect; Ross-Frankel and Morris Lapidus, designers.)

GLASS

One always hopes that the glass manufacturers will produce a fairy palace, and one is always disappointed. Once more an attempt has been made to build a glass exhibition building and once more the result is disappointingly conventional, achieving only a small measure of that lightness and fragility characteristic of the material. The main exhibit building is for the most part sheathed in Carrara, the most solid form of glass as far as appearance goes. The tower of glass block with plate glass projecting fins achieves its full glory only at night when it stands out against the sky, detached from the solid bulk of the building at its base. And the tricks and fancies—the glass stairway, the great sheets of transparent plate, an open canopy whose portholes are fitted with transparencies seen against the sky—are all huddled together in a smallish courtyard within a curve of the main exhibit building, whereas one is able to appreciate their full beauty only when illuminated by sunshine and space. The great semi-circular hall with its mirror ceiling is a noble theatre for the glass blowers who perform there. But the smooth and practised gestures of the workers themselves will always be more impressive than their setting however noble the latter may be. Incidentally it is perhaps of some significance that the most popular exhibits are the distorting mirrors.

(Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, architects.)

THE CONSOLIDATED EDISON CO. ELECTRIC UTILITIES EXHIBIT

The efforts made by some of the foreign pavilions to express political power is in most cases a good deal less accomplished than the Americans' attempt to suggest electric power. In the Electric Utilities building, the visitor passes beneath the dam, as though he were emerging through a sluice gate. Such use of water is perhaps less imaginative than the fountain jets in the Consolidated Edison building which spurt up to pattern the brilliant deep blue curve of its façade. Here the control of water has been raised from the level of the merely impressive to that of constructive architectural form. In each case a little bridge of glass and steel is thrown into striking relief against the mass of the water.

(Harrison and Foulhoux, architects.)

AVIATION

This is one of the few Fair-built structures which was happily allowed to deviate from the general standards of construction and design set up for the other commercial exhibit buildings. The exciting shape is not a mere *coup de théâtre*; it provides a large, unencumbered floor area and sufficient height to display four complete airplanes suspended from the roof as though they had just swooped in from the sky and would immediately fly out again at the other end.

The general feeling of mechanical power is heightened by exposure of the solid-section hinged steel arches forming the framework for the corrugated asbestos sheets faced with aluminium which are used for the roof and walls. The overlapping semisphere is of more conventional construction. It is covered with painted canvas on the exterior, faced with white stucco on the interior. By lighting this white stucco shield more brightly than the exhibit hall itself, the illusion of space becomes considerably more vivid.

The triangular prow which projects above the canopy at the front of the building houses a café. The canopy itself is of yellow painted canvas laced to a series of braced tubular steel columns. The whole construction is anchored by guy lines attached to concrete blocks at each end. The light and practical design of the canopy only serves to make the bad design of the benches even more irritating than it might be if placed in contact with architecture of poorer quality.

(William Lescaze, architect; Gordon Carr, associate.)

CHILDREN'S WORLD

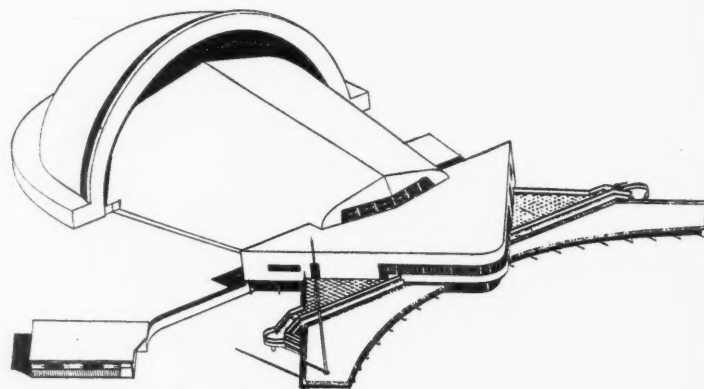
By the intelligent use of unit design a number of disparate buildings have here been tied together into an overall unity of design. Plywood sheets, glass bricks, and steel casement are the materials used; and monotony has been avoided by the light-hearted touches applied to the accessories—such items as signs, outside metal stairways and ticket booths. The line of overlapping plywood shelters not only provides much needed shade, but also ties the isolated administration building (perched up on lally columns so that it shall not block the circulation) into the general plan of the surrounding buildings. The whole area has a feeling of lightness, gaiety and impermanence, which is most appropriate in a Fair but is found only in a few instances elsewhere on Flushing Meadows.

(George Howe, architect. Oscar Stonorov, Herbert Spigel, Cornelius Bogert, associates.)

AMUSEMENT AREA

The amusement area contains some of the most exciting unconscious exhibition architecture in the whole grounds. No one except a carpenter has designed a roller coaster; no architect was in on the design of the bobsled ride, with its wooden slats supported on narrow-section curved metal stays. But one item of design which occurs throughout the amusement area was consciously designed for effect: we refer to the canopies slung across the roadways to give shade in the daytime and light at night. The slender braced tubular steel frames, delicately fined down to a point at the base, serve as support for strings of wooden slats. On every other slat is a fluorescent tube, and the whole construction is firmly held by steel guys running through from one end to the other and pegged into the ground.

(George Howe, architect.)



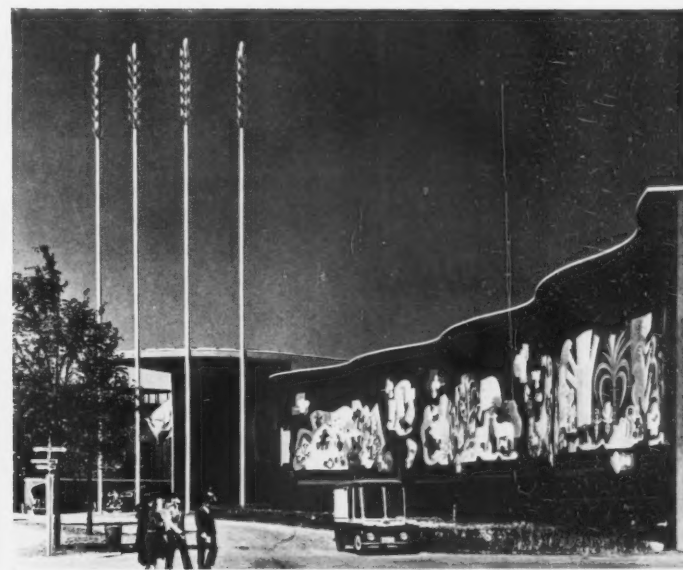
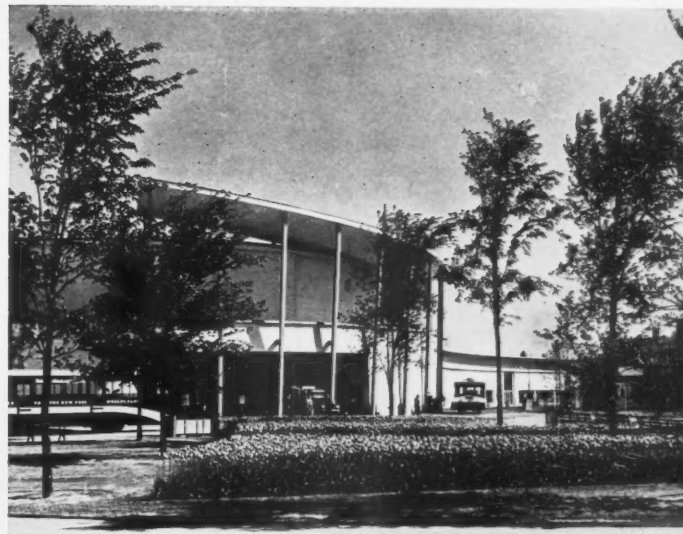
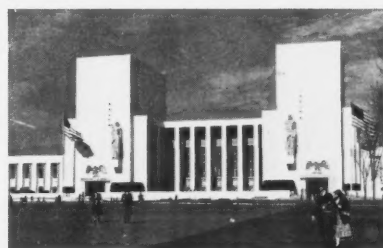
The Aviation Building, one of the more successful home pavilions. William Lescaze, architect.



THE HOME PAVILIONS

The following pages are devoted to pavilions erected by various American industrial concerns, by important industries, such as glass and steel, participating collectively and by government authorities. As with the National Pavilions, general views of a number of buildings are grouped immediately below, while other buildings are selected for detailed illustration.

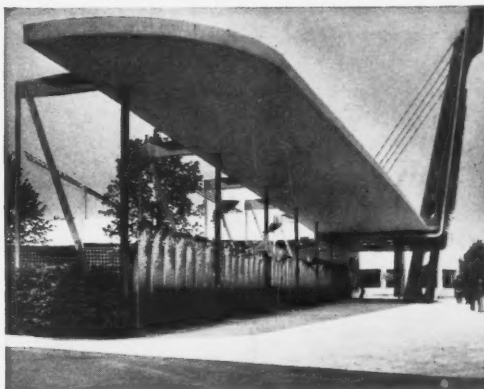
1, the Petroleum building consisting of an oil derrick and a triangular shaped display pavilion supported on replicas of oil tanks. Its dramatic lines become even more accentuated when lit at night. (Voorhees, Walker, Foley and Smith, architects.) 2, the United States Federal building which closes the vista of Constitution Mall and faces the Theme Centre: typical of the style of the official buildings. (Howard L. Cheney, architect.) 3, the Home Furnishings building whose exhibits attempt to symbolize "the broad theme of Community Interests—shelter, education, religion, recreation and art." (Dwight J. Baum, architect.) 4, the Communications building and 5, the Food building on which murals are successfully used. The four columns at the entrance represent shafts of wheat. (M. W. del Gaudio, H. T. Aspinwall and Paul F. Simpson, architects.)



14 DISTILLERS

MORRIS B. SANDERS, ARCHITECT

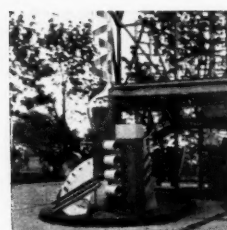
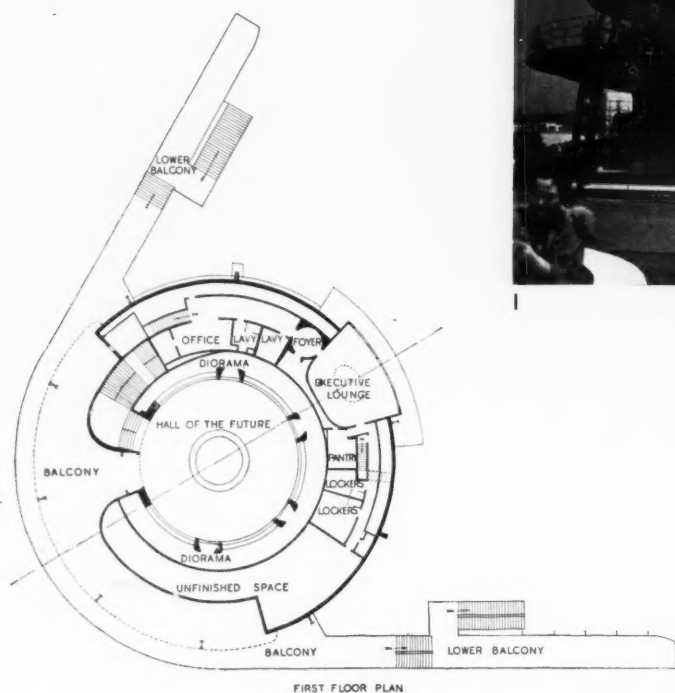
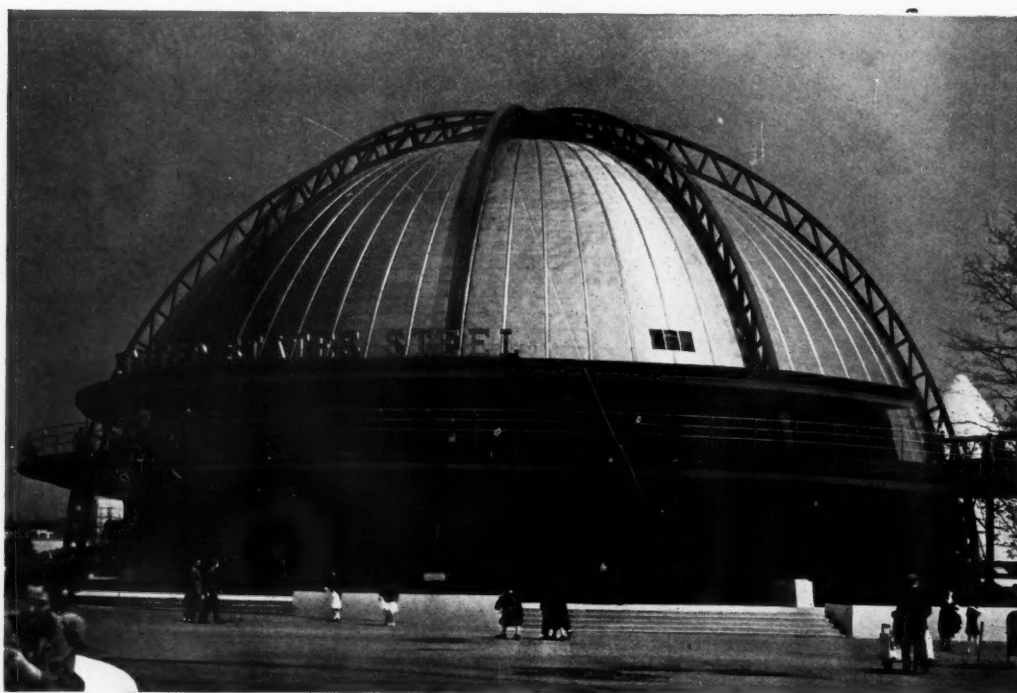
A co-operative pavilion in which the canopy, 1, and the main entrance feature, 2, are plainly impermanent exhibition structures. A dome covers the exhibition space where, strangely, no liquor is either obtainable or on view. A series of murals and dioramas outline the scientific and legislative background of the industry.



15 U. S. STEEL

YORK AND SAWYER, ARCHITECTS

A stainless steel dome anchored on steel girders is an appropriate structural method for such an exhibition building. The girders are embedded in concrete and no attempt is made to disguise their function; the exterior thus becomes a definite part of the whole exhibit. Unfortunately the lightness of steel is hardly suggested by the rather bulky forms.

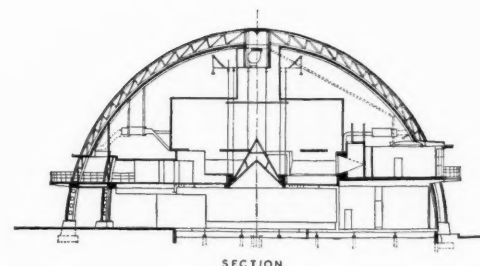
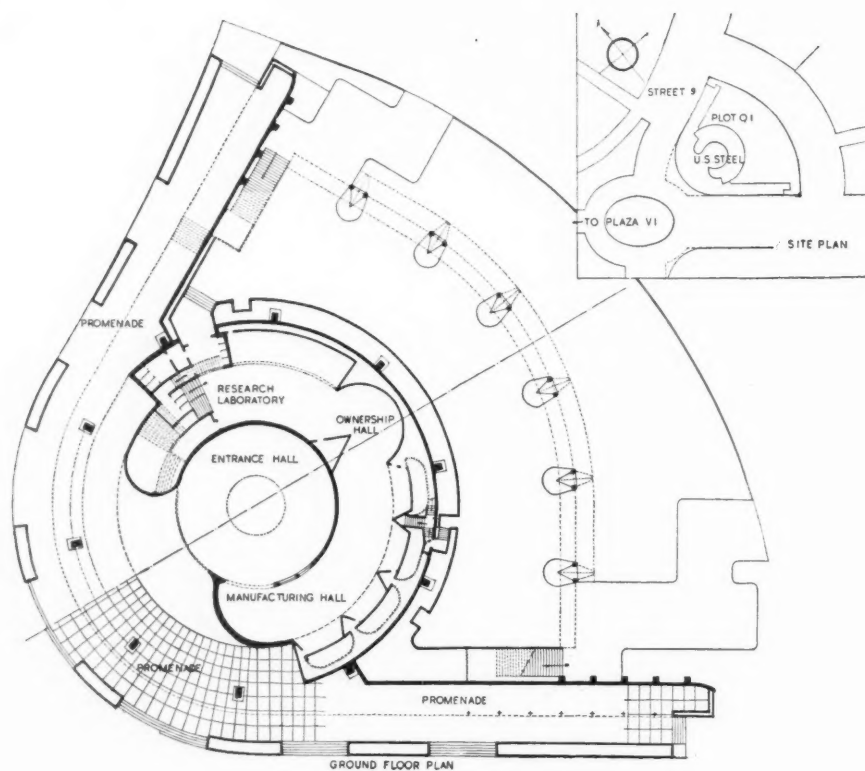


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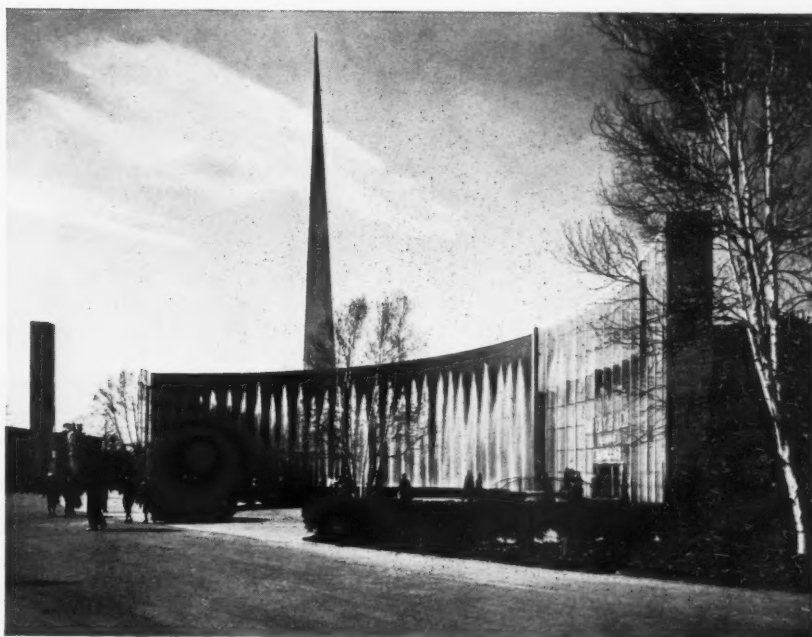
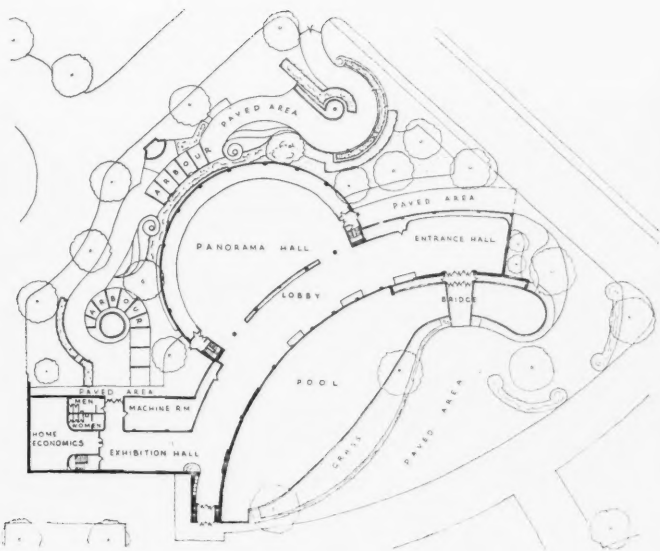
The building contains an open pit ore mine; a blast furnace; and a rolling mill depicting the principal steps in steel manufacture. 1, a general view of the building. Blue tube lighting along the girders is reflected at night by the steel sheathing of the dome. 2, a composition of pipe sections and thin sheet steel painted in bright colours, and 3, the steel canopy over the balcony at the rear of the pavilion.



SECTION

16 EDISON

HARRISON AND FOUILHOX, ARCHITECTS



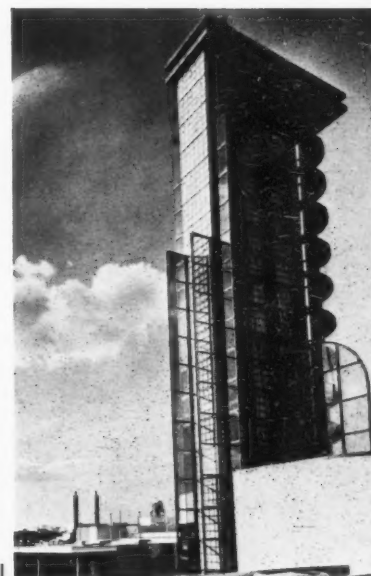
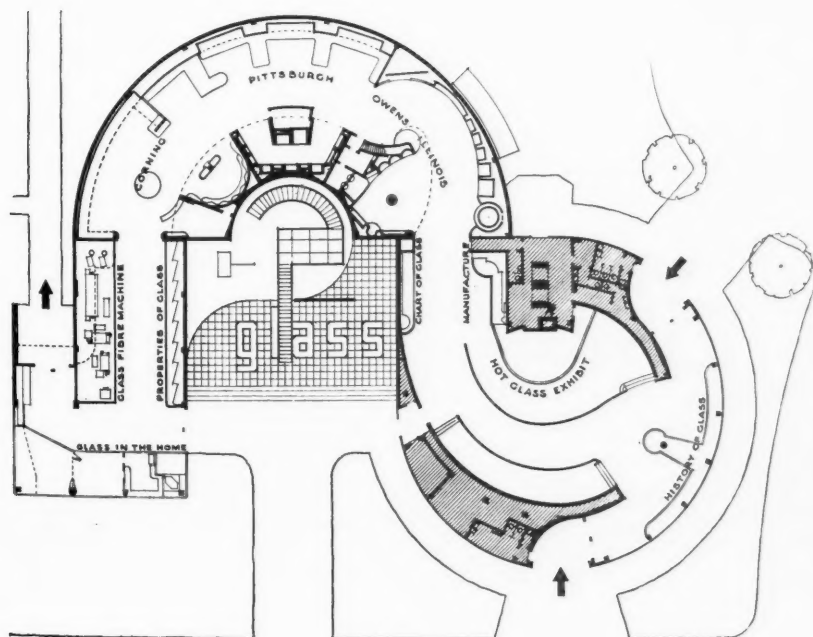
A building erected by the Consolidated Edison Company for the display of their principal product—electricity. The straightforward design allows for the somewhat lavish display methods such as the series of fountains which play against the dark blue background of the curved façade. On the right the glass-fronted City of Light houses a diorama of the City of New York in which music and sound effects present a 24-hour picture of the metropolitan area and the part played in it by gas, electricity and steam supplied by the company.

17 GLASS

SHREVE, LAMB AND HARMON, ARCHITECTS

The main building is a rather conventional design and only in the large tower of plate glass and glass brick has an attempt been made to show the structural advantages of glass as a material. Even this conveys a depressingly heavy effect and only achieves the lightness it should when lit up at night and isolated from the main building.

1, the tower, and 2, a pleasant method of showing the history of glass manufacture from Egyptian times until the present day. This runs round the rear curve of the S-shaped building.

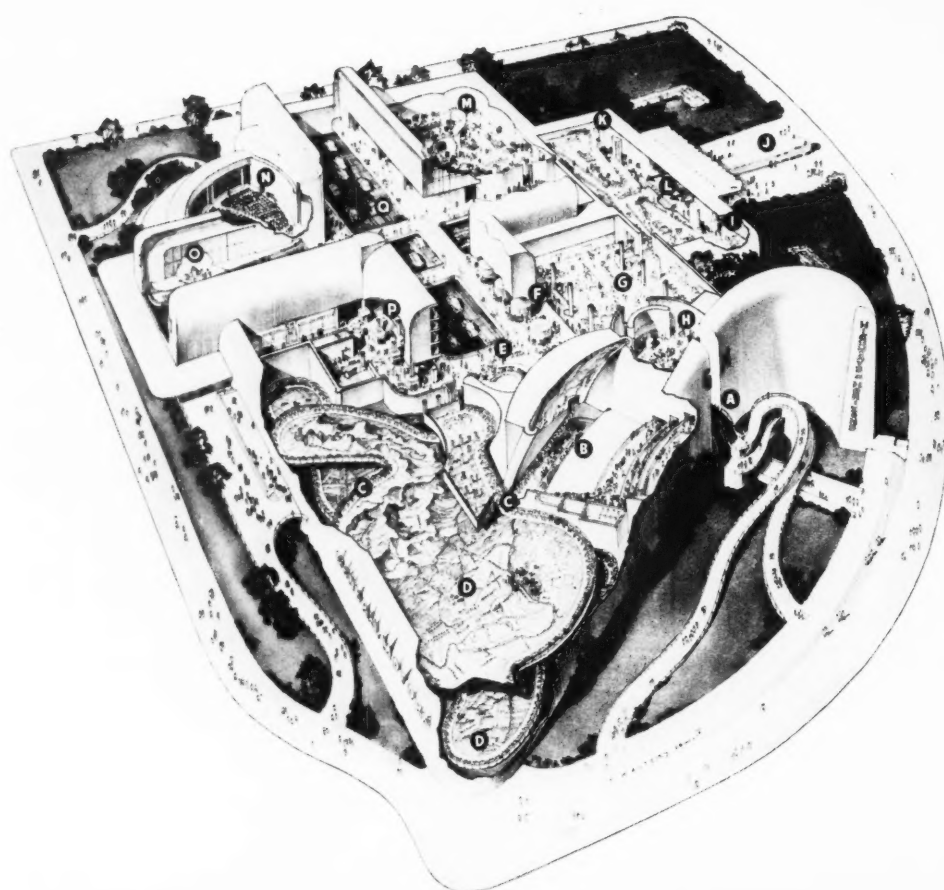
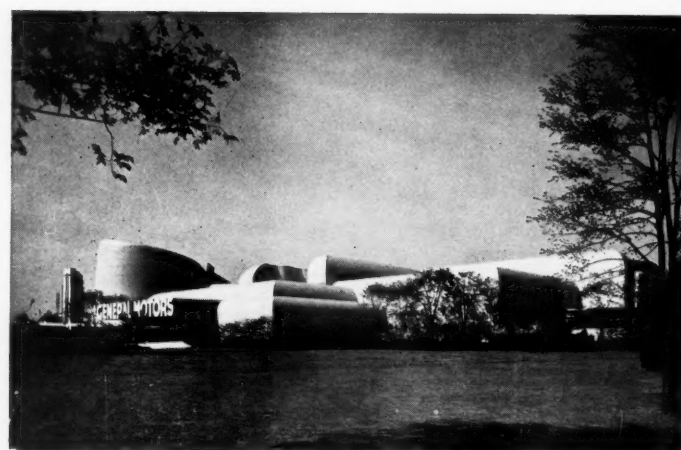


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17 GENERAL MOTORS

ALBERT KAHN, ARCHITECT

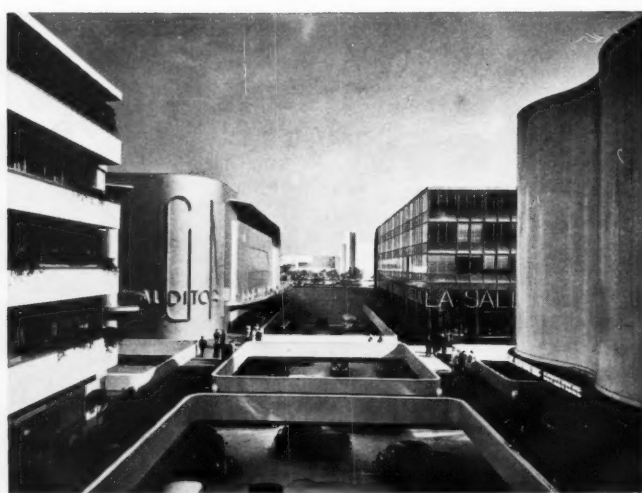
Typical of the "streamline" mania which governs much contemporary American architecture as well as its more justifiable function in vehicle design. The extensive exhibition space shown in the plan below has as its principal feature a "futura" which gives in model form a picture of both the town and countryside of the future. This is seen from chairs which travel on a moving belt through several different levels the occupants being told about the model by small microphones attached to each chair. The spectator is finally deposited into the "Street of Tomorrow" itself designed by Norman Bel Geddes in which pedestrian circulation and crossings are provided at first floor level and in which the buildings house the exhibits of the various General Motors subsidiaries. It is not surprising that such ingenuity has made this the most popular pavilion in the Fair.



KEY TO PLAN

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Main Entrance. | K. Traffic and Safety Information Centre. |
| B. Map Lobby (start of sound chair tour). | L. Fisher body Exhibit. |
| C. String of sound chairs. | M. Car Display Salon. |
| D. Futurama. | N. Casino of Science. |
| E. Unloading platform. | O. Employee Headquarters. |
| F. World Horizons Exhibit. | P. Accessory Divisions Exhibit (building in form of apartment house). |
| G. Frigidaire Exhibit. | Q. Intersection of the Future. |
| H. Research Exhibit. | |
| I. Inland Mfg. Div., Exhibit. | |
| J. 4,000 h.p. Diesel Locomotive. | |

1, a general view of the building and 2, the "Street of Tomorrow." 3, the "futura" which provides a panorama of town and countryside seen from moving chairs.



2



3

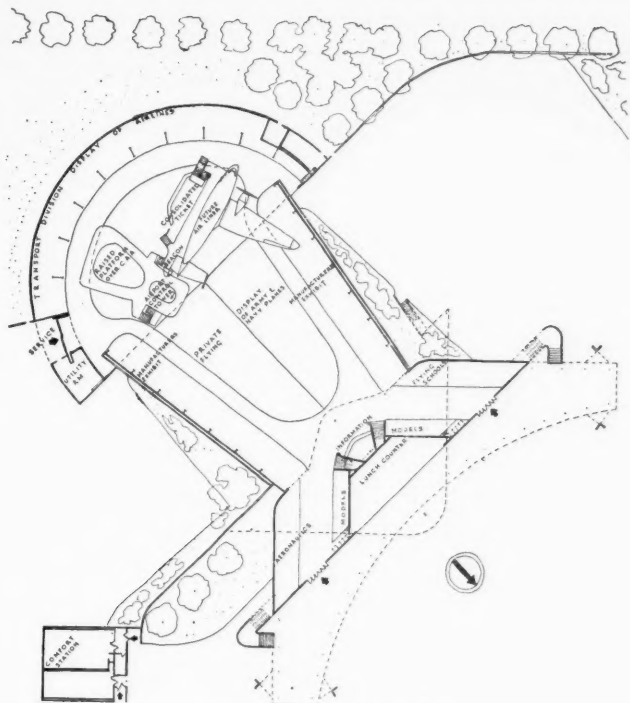
18 AVIATION

WILLIAM LESCAZE AND J. GORDON CARR, ARCHITECTS

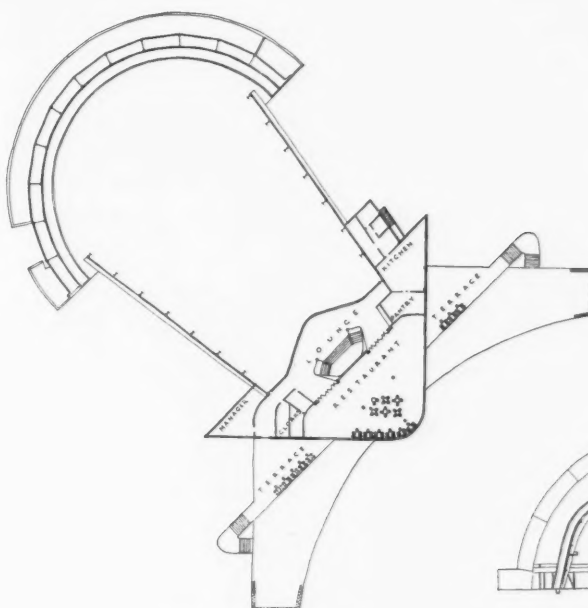
An interesting attempt to suggest the qualities of flight, both in form and constructional methods. The steel supporting arches are left exposed and the central display area is high enough to allow four aeroplanes to be suspended from the roof without encumbering the floor space. (See exterior view of the Pavilion, Plate v.) The outer covering of the hangar is of aluminium covered asbestos sheets and that of the semisphere in laced canvas awning painted white, the colours used throughout being grey, blue and white.



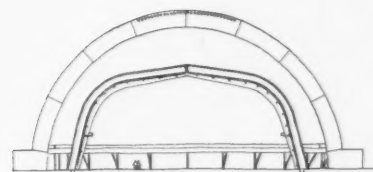
1, the interior showing the aeroplanes suspended from the roof and 2, looking from the lunch counter underneath the first floor restaurant.



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

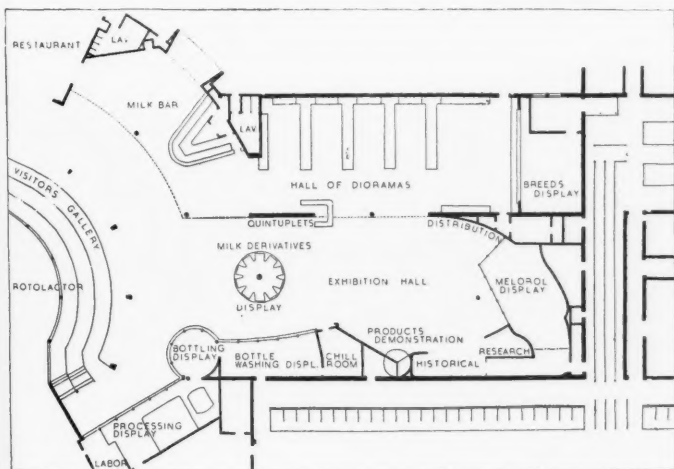


SECTION

19 THE BORDEN CO.

VOORHEES, WALKER, FOLEY AND SMITH, ARCHITECTS

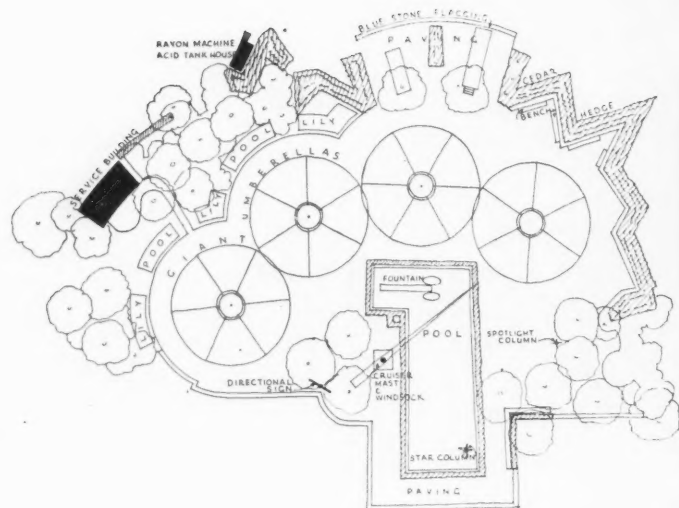
A straightforward well-designed building for the display of dairy products. In a glass-walled rotolactor cows are shown being milked by modern technical methods. Leather thongs and cowhide coverings in the display section repeat the same theme. 1, the entrance, and 2, a view of the display stands.



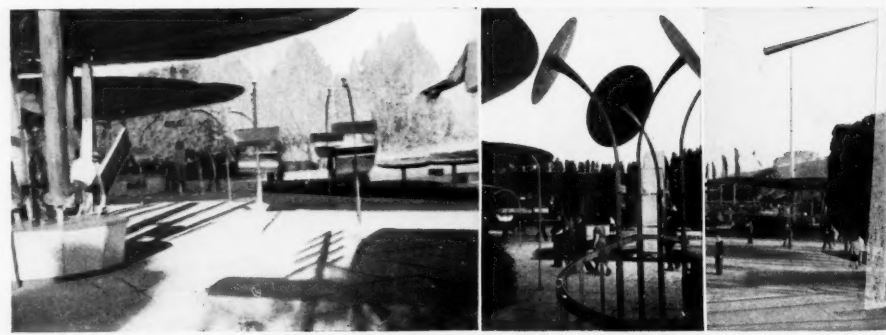
20 EDWARD G. BUDD

VOORHEES, WALKER, FOLEY
AND SMITH, ARCHITECTS

The firm manufactures sheet steel and the building consists largely of umbrella-shaped forms which provide the necessary shelter while adequately displaying the principal material.



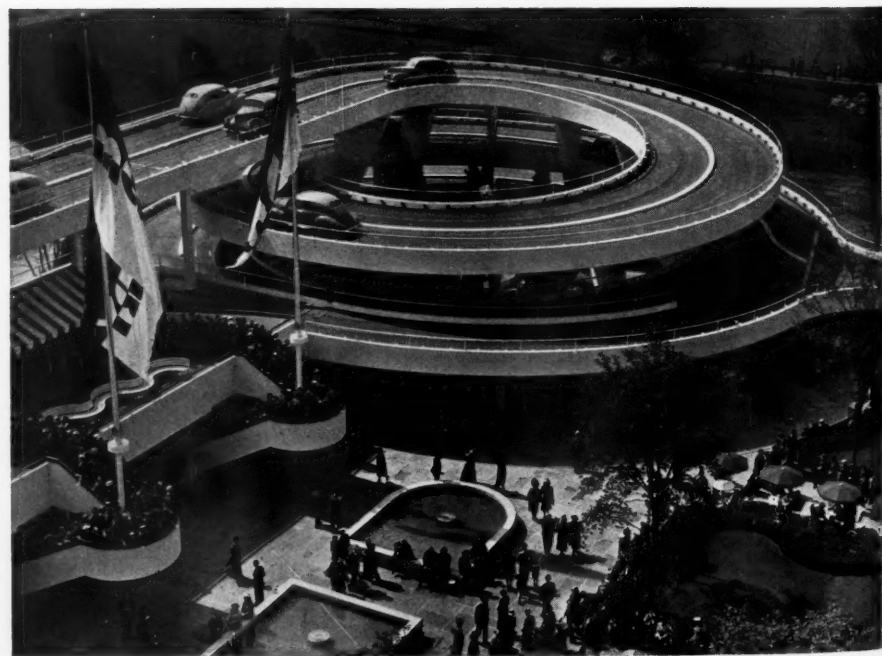
1, the large umbrella-shaped displays of sheet steel. The girders are sunk in a concrete ring which encloses a pool. 2, an exterior view and 3, the smaller displays exposed for weather tests. 4, a slender windsock on a mast; both made of sheet steel showing the lightness of the material.



21 FORD MOTOR CO.

ALBERT KAHN, ARCHITECT

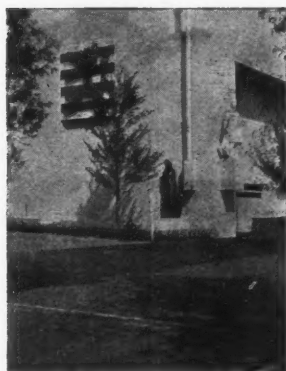
The building consists of a main exhibition hall to which is joined "The Road of Tomorrow" rising on a spiral ramp and circling for more than half a mile over the main structure and round the garden area. The purely functional lines of the latter are of considerably more interest than the main building. The exhibit includes a series of models showing the raw materials used in every part of the Ford Car and their processes of manufacture.



Right, the spiral ramp which is used as a track for the display of cars.

COMPARATIVE CRITICISM

The illustrations on the following four pages show different methods of treating the same detail in some of the pavilions at the New York World's Fair. While not all the examples illustrated are wholly bad or wholly good, cautionary examples are illustrated on the left-hand side of each page and their better equivalent on the right-hand. Similar comparisons were made in the special issues of *THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW* dealing with the Brussels, Paris and Glasgow exhibitions.



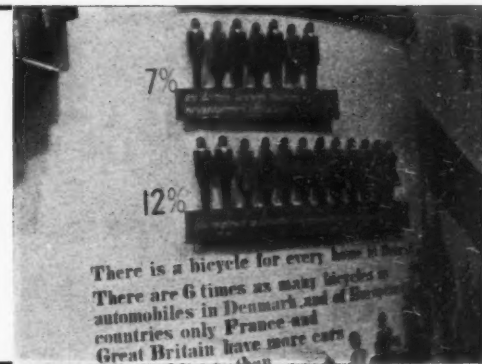
SCULPTURE

The corner of the Luxembourg pavilion, left, has accumulated a flagpole, a large and brilliantly coloured coat-of-arms, a bronze statue and a plaster statue. None of them can be seen to advantage because of the presence of all the others. The end wall of the Irish pavilion, however, right, provides an excellent background for a single statue so placed as to conform satisfactorily with the lettering.



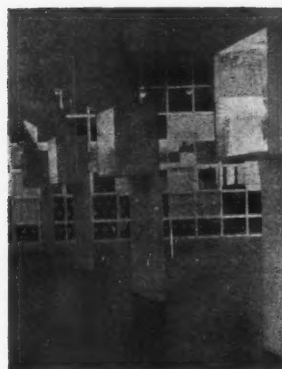
STATISTICS

Most people find statistics dry, so the job of the designer should be to liven them up; but not at the expense of accuracy or legibility. In the Italian pavilion, left, a poor attempt has been made to illustrate statistics (presented in a quite unreadable type) by means of classical type reliefs in white plaster. Far more satisfactory and attractive are the brightly coloured little figurines in the Danish pavilion, right.



PROPAGANDA

To be effective, propaganda must be impressively presented and easy to read. Russia lights the head of Stalin, left, with a good deal of skill, but the lettering of his message is too high up to be easily read. A much more effective display is to be found in the Works Progress Administration Building, right, where an impressively solid figure, gives forth his message in large and readily legible letters.



SPACE DIVISION

The partitions in the Swiss pavilion, left, though interesting in themselves, tend to detract from the spaciousness of the general effect by marking off the space into definite small parcels. In the Brazilian pavilion, right, on the other hand, there are no definite partitions, the division of space being merely suggested by the form of display stands and ceiling, so that an effect of ample size is achieved in quite a small building.





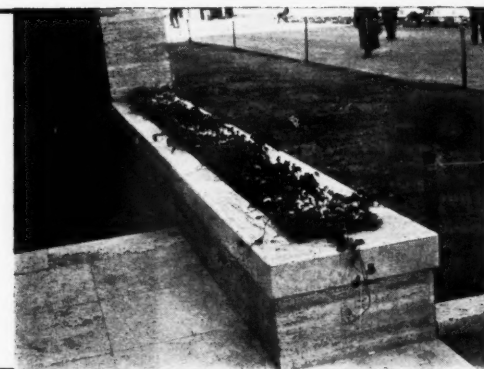
GARDENS

A garden can be a most pleasant adjunct to an exhibition pavilion, as for example in the case of Sweden, right. The British pavilion, left, also has a charming garden but, except for a small stretch of path with no chairs, it is barred to the visitor by rails and ropes and notices reading PLEASE (under the influence of America the KEEP OFF has been painted out). And the only chairs available are straight-backed and hard.



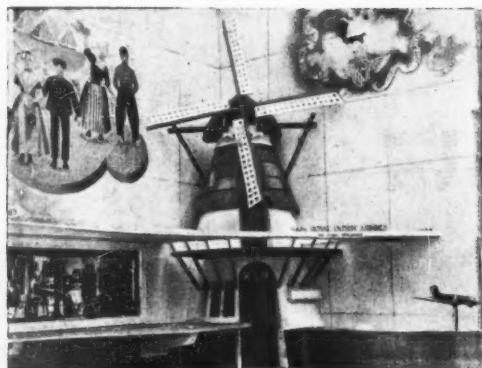
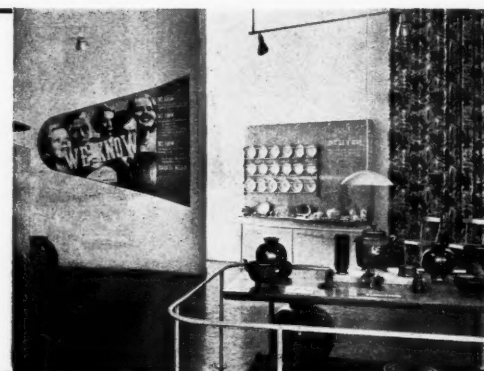
SHRUBBERY

Nothing can provide a more welcome relief from hot and dusty roads than the presence of bushes and flowers. But, like any other architectural element, this must be kept under control. In the Russian pavilion, left, the confusion between plants and sculpture means that neither can be seen to advantage. A better arrangement is that in the Italian pavilion, right, where flowers are grouped within a somewhat heavy marble trough, thus becoming an architectural detail of the building.



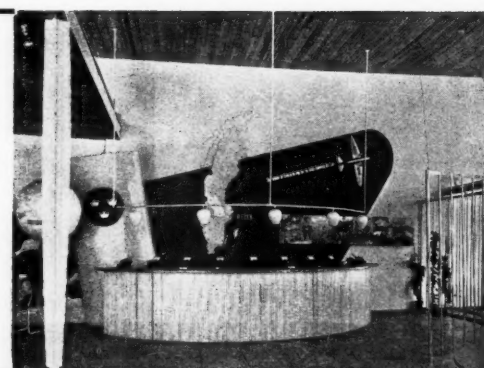
POTTERY

There are more interesting and effective ways of displaying pottery than in a formal set up behind glass, as in the Italian showcases, left. It is much better to have the material set out on open tables as in the Swedish pavilion, right. This allows for interesting arrangement and spacing, in order that the visitor may see all sides of the pottery to full advantage.



AIR LINES

One might have thought that the aeroplane was a sufficiently recent invention to avoid such embarrassing hangers-on as this booth in the Netherlands pavilion, left. Sweden, right, shows how the same purpose may be accomplished with a good deal more style and contemporaneity.



FORMS

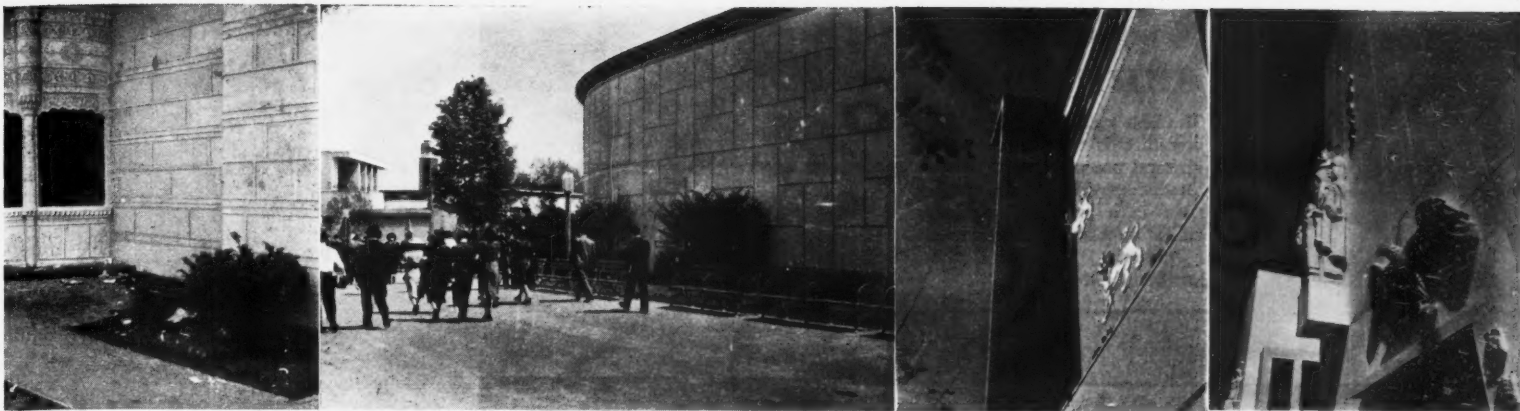
The Marine Transportation building, left, merely imitates the prow of a ship with ventilators spaced along an imaginary deck while the Aviation building, right, suggests the forms associated with aeroplanes by architectural means.



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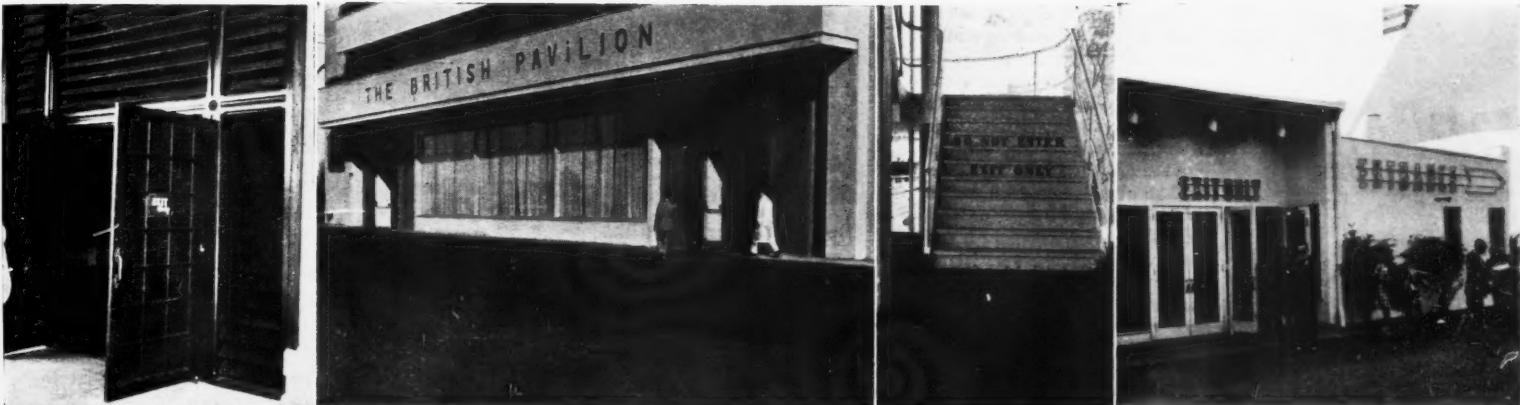
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The synthetic sheeting which is now the accepted facing material for most exhibition buildings can be given a wide variety of different surface treatments. Four examples are shown reading from left to right. The architect may attempt to make it resemble some entirely different type of construction as in the Turkish pavilion. Or he may accept the unit imposed by the sheet, emphasize it with a batten surround and then turn the sheets this way and that so that they destroy the unity of the surface altogether, as in the Works Progress Administration building. A less ragged and more imposing effect may be achieved by accepting the uniformity of dimension as a means of repetitive patterning, as in the British pavilion. But the most subtly effective treatment is to adopt the size and form of the sheet to emphasize the lines of the building and its accessories, as in the U.S. Government building.

SURFACE



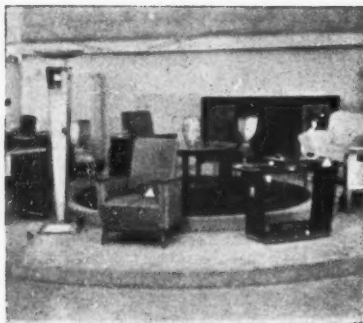
Even the best regulated pavilions must have a back entrance marked EXIT ONLY as shown above, reading from left to right, but there are more elegant ways of doing it than the badly lettered slip of cardboard hung on the door of the Polish pavilion. The British pavilion tries to evade the issue altogether by making the back entrance as pretentious as the front; so that the disappointment of the visitor who tries to enter these golden doors with crowns above must be even greater when he discovers himself in the kitchen of the restaurant. The neat lettering on the risers of a stair in the Brazilian pavilion is one solution, but it is much better to face the issue as Sweden does, and not only put up a boldly lettered exit only sign, but also an even larger sign and arrow pointing to the entrance.

EXITS



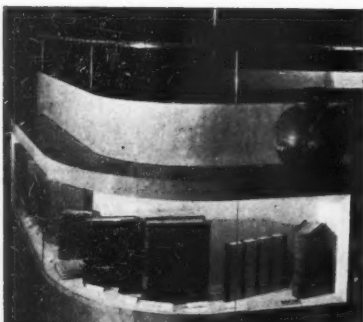
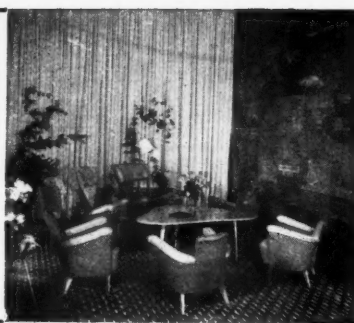
Maps are often necessary in national displays such as these illustrated, reading from left to right. But to make a map of precious stones like that in the Russian pavilion, though it may demonstrate the artificial nature of conventional economic values is neither in the interests of clarity nor of pedagogy. Similar charges might be levelled at the model in the Finnish pavilion, which, though charming in itself, might be considered too conventionalized in form for quick and complete understanding. In this respect the map in the British pavilion is more satisfactory, but better still is the one in the Swedish pavilion. For this combines a comparatively exact outline of the country with models which act as pictorial statistics, showing immediately what are the chief characteristics of different areas of the country.

MAPS



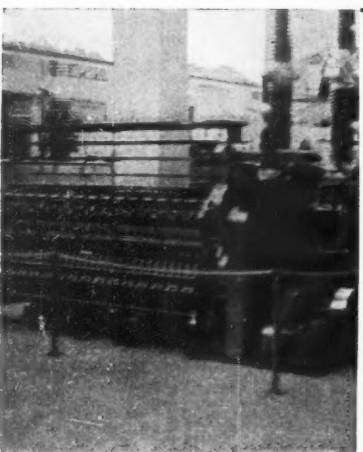
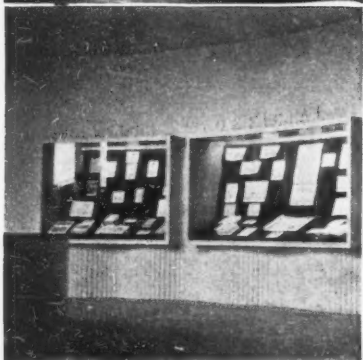
FURNITURE

The best method of displaying furniture is to set it out for visitors' use as is done in the Swedish pavilion, right, rather than in a higgledy - piggledy collection thrown together on a platform in the French pavilion, left.



READING MATTER

It is perhaps justifiable that finely bound books should be preserved from the visitors' touch behind glass cases, as in the Swedish pavilion, top left. There can be no excuse, however, for such precautions being taken in the case of British official printing, bottom left. Far better to have the books laid out on a table where people can take them up and look through them, as they can in the case of those excellent books displayed by the Works Progress Administration, top right. More pertinent still, however, is it to ask why no one except the Argentine, bottom right, makes any mention at all of magazines and newspapers, which mean much more to the average man than finely bound books? Even the Argentine doesn't have any papers and magazines which one can pick up and read.



MACHINERY

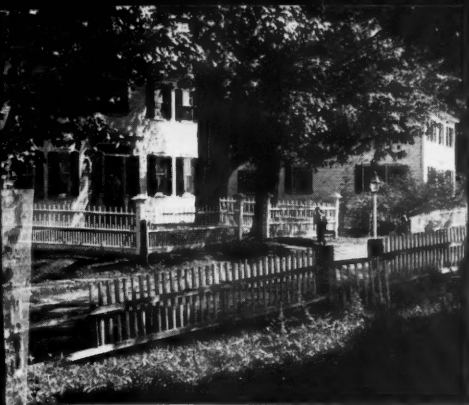
Americans have a very lively interest in mechanical achievement, but they also demand to know how the new machine works. This large and complex machine in the French pavilion, left, is unexplained by any notice and roped off so that the visitor is prevented from investigating for himself. The aeroplane section at the Budd exhibit, right, on the other hand, is not only clearly explained on a large label but is hung at a convenient level so that visitors can go up and investigate it for themselves.



CAPITALS

The pomposity of a classic capital, and particularly its bureaucratic connotations, is hardly in tune with the gaiety of a Fair. To judge from the Business Systems and Insurance building, left, one might imagine that the dignity of commerce was not to be disturbed even by a Fair. But the American Radiator and Standard Sanitary Corp's building, right, shows that business may dare to guy the classics in lively fashion.





"The town was us and we were part of it: we spaced the rows of elms along the streets, we dug the tidy gardens our mothers minded."



"Black vomit spreads across the earth. 'Smoke makes prosperity' they tell you here, no matter if you choke on it."



"We got to face life in these dirty huts, we got to let our children take their chances here with rickets, typhoid, T.B. or worse."



"Follow the crowd, get the big money."



"Losing their jobs unless they ape machines, live like machines."

THE CITY

A WORLD'S FAIR FILM

The film was made by American Documentary Films under the auspices of the American Institute of Planners as propaganda for the improvement of housing in America. It was specially designed for showing at the World's Fair. On the left and on the following page are reproduced typical shots from the film and extracts from the commentary which accompanies it. The latter was written by Lewis Mumford.

Photographed and directed by Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke; Production supervised by Oscar Serlin; Associate in production, Henwar Rodakiewicz; Original outline by Pare Lorentz; Scenario by Henwar Rodakiewicz; Commentary written by Lewis Mumford; Music by Aaron Copland; Film Editor, Theodore Lawrence; Musical Conductor, Max Goberman; Narrator, Morris Carnovsky.

ALTHOUGH the dull and important realities of American housing are consistently avoided in the Fair's World of Tomorrow, the more spectacular possibilities of ideal regional planning have been exploited to the full. There is the model of Democracy within the perisphere, with satellite towns and but a single skyscraper. There is General Motors' "Futurama" which models the world of 1960 as Hugh Ferriss was drawing it in the late 20's, but presents it so persuasively that the public may still be convinced of its soundness.

More vivid and emotional than either of these, however (and not only because of its medium), is a film called "The City," a documentary made especially for the Fair with the help of a \$50,000 grant from the Carnegie Foundation. Here are no models, charts, plans, or even maps. There are no pictorial statistics, no figures of rents, wages and construction costs. The plea for improved housing, for decentralization and a more humane pattern of life,

is directed straight to the emotions.

The film opens in an elm-shaded New England village. It picks out the rhythmic heaving of a mower, the skilful hammering of a blacksmith, the smooth flow of a water mill. In contrast to this idyllic picture is set the blackened, rutted valley of a steel town, smudged with the black vomit of the mills. Tousle-headed children play in the dirty puddles which front the rows of wooden company houses; and the repetitive pattern of these stoops appears as the sinister beat of a machine.

Then suddenly the tempo of the commentary (excellently spoken by Morris Carnovsky) changes to keep pace with the swift patter of metropolitan life. The camera picks up the vivid detail, commuters bustling out of the terminal or, bunched like a snake, worming down into the subway. An impatient motorist pokes his head out of the side window, angrily questioning the reason for a traffic jam. A stenographer perched on a drugstore stool spits out prune stones with polite



*"Cities unrolling
ticker tape instead of
life. And then to the
highway, the endless
city."*



*"Confusion cancels
out the power."*



*"There's nothing left,
for all the noise, the
tear, the worry."*



*"Nothing that
wouldn't come to
twice as much re-
moved from this
congestion, this con-
fusion."*



*"The new age builds
another kind of city.
Small cities come back
again; green cities.
The new city is or-
ganized to bring the
park and garden back."*

deliberation. A bum, drunk, sprawls listlessly beneath a mean doorway. Wall Street's dark chasm, lined with streams of bustling pedestrians; then Wall Street on Sunday morning, bare, deserted, its buildings revealed in the gigantic dullness that is their true character. Streams of cars jam-packed and stationary on a road fenced with telegraph poles and ornamented with billboards, the modern American folk art.

Contrasted with these scenes of confusion are the green lawns and indifferent architecture of such "garden cities" as Radburn and Greenbelt. And although the desirability of such charm is obvious, it appears surprisingly flat and lifeless in comparison with the teeming energy of the city. The ideal seems just a little smug, in spite of the children silhouetted against the sky, in spite of the babies being bathed underneath the trees.

The film, in fact, is more interesting for its vivid documentation of the present than for its emotional plea for a decentralized future. The commentary, written by Lewis Mumford, is also emotional in its approach. It may be that this is a good way of driving people to action, but it is perhaps unfortunate that so little regard is paid to the hard realities of housing. More important than its message is the way in which the message is presented. For the American public's experience of the documentary film is confined to "The River" and "The Plow that broke the plains" (both by Pare Lorentz, who is also responsible for "The City"), both excellent in themselves, but only a very small backwater in the great stream of Romance which flows from Hollywood. "The City" is important in itself, but even more important in the history of the American cinema.

The Wonderful Old Gentleman

If the Bains had striven for years, they could have been no more successful in making their living-room into a small but admirably complete museum of objects suggesting strain, discomfort, or the tomb. Yet they had never even tried for the effect. Some of the articles that the room contained were wedding presents; some had been put in from time to time as substitutes as their predecessors succumbed to age and wear; a few had been brought along by the Old Gentleman when he had come to make his home with the Bains some five years before.

It was curious how perfectly they all fitted into the general scheme. It was as if they had all been selected by a single enthusiast to whom time was but little object, so long as he could achieve the eventual result of transforming the Bain living-room into a home chamber of horrors, modified a bit for family use.

It was a high-ceilinged room, with heavy, dark old woodwork, that brought long and unavoidable thoughts of silver handles and weaving worms. The paper was the colour of stale mustard. Its design, once a dashing affair of a darker tone splashed with twinkling gold, had faded into lines and smears that resolved themselves, before the eyes of the sensitive, into hordes of battered heads and tortured profiles, some eyeless, some with clotted gashes for months.

The furniture was dark and cumbersome and subject to painful creakings—sudden, sharp creaks that seemed to be wrung from its brave silence only when it could bear no more. A close earthy smell came from its dulled tapestry cushions, and try as Mrs. Bain might, furry grey dust accumulated in the crevices.

The centre-table was upheld by the perpetually strained arms of three carved figures, insistently female to the waist, then trailing discreetly off into a confusion of scrolls and scales. Upon it rested a row of blameless books, kept in place at the ends by the straining shoulder muscles of two bronze-coloured plaster elephants, forever pushing at their tedious toil.

On the heavily carved mantel was a gaily coloured figure of a curly-headed peasant boy, ingeniously made so that he sat on the shelf and dangled one leg over. He was in the eternal act of removing a thorn from his chubby foot, his round face realistically wrinkled with the cruel pain. Just above him hung a steel-engraving of a chariot-race, the dust flying, the chariots careering wildly, the horses themselves caught by the artist the moment before their hearts burst, and they dropped in their traces.

The opposite wall was devoted to the religions in art; a steel engraving of the Crucifixion, lavish of ghastly detail; a sepia-print of the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian, the cords cutting deep into the arms writhing from the stake, arrows bristling in the thick soft-looking body; a water-colour copy of a "Mother of Sorrows," the agonized eyes raised to a cold heaven, great, bitter tears forever on the wan cheeks, paler for the grave-like draperies that wrapped the head.

Beneath the windows hung a painting in oil of two lost sheep, huddled hopelessly together in the midst of a wild blizzard. This was one of the Old Gentleman's contributions to the room. Mrs. Bain was wont to observe of it that the frame was worth she didn't know how much.

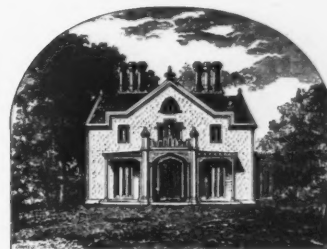
The wall-space beside the door was reserved for a bit of modern art that once caught Mr. Bain's eye in a stationer's window—a coloured print, showing a railroad-crossing, with a train flying relentlessly toward it, and a low red automobile trying to dash across the track before the iron terror shattered it into eternity. Nervous visitors who were given chairs facing this scene change their seats before they could give their whole minds to the conversation.

The ornaments, placed with careful casualness on the table and the upright piano, included a small gilt lion of Lucerne, a little chipped plaster Laocoon, and a savage china kitten eternally about to pounce upon a plump and helpless china mouse. This last had been one of the Old Gentleman's own wedding gifts. Mrs. Bain explained, in tones low with awe, that it was very old.

The ash-receivers, of Japanese manufacture, were in the form of grotesque heads, lifted with bits of grey human hair and given bilging, dead, glassy eyes and mouths stretched into great gapes, into which those who had the heart for it might flick their ashes. Thus the smallest details of the room kept loyally to the spirit of the thing, and carried on the effect.

DOROTHY PARKER.

(*Lament for the Living* : published in England by Longman's Green & Co.)



Official Architecture
in Bond Street

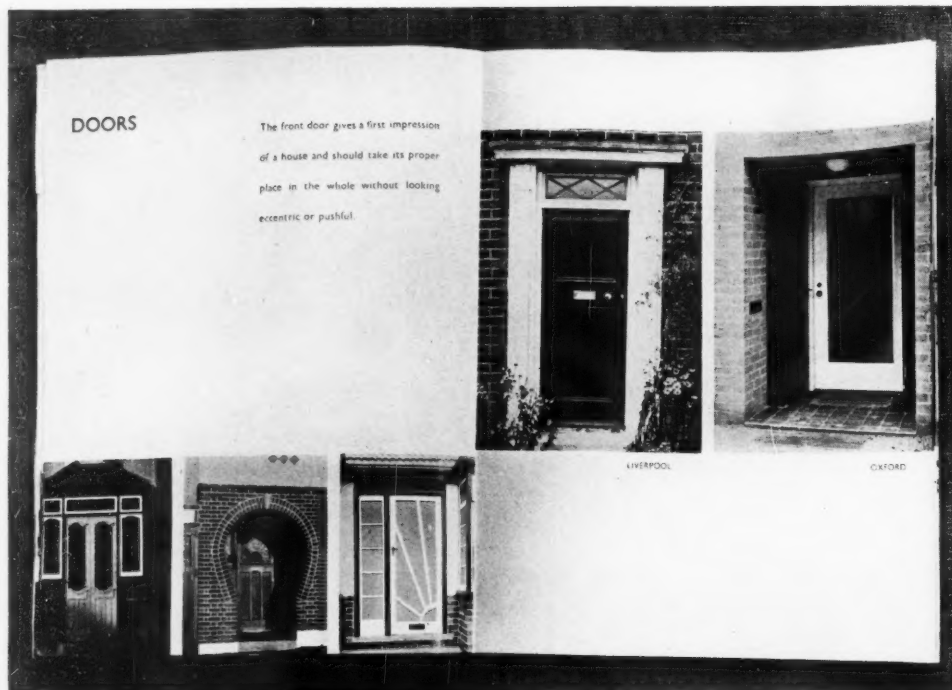
The recent exhibition of official architecture held at the Building Centre in New Bond Street, prompted several curious and it must be admitted rather gloomy reflections. The first of these was aroused by the title of the exhibition. What precisely is meant by the term official in an architectural connection?

Presumably it is intended to indicate a class of architecture of which the chief patron is the state. A class which in the past has included such masterpieces as Soane's Bank of England and Dance's Newgate, and which is, or should be, distinguished from domestic architecture by a certain monumentality, a hint of restrained but proper pomp. Today, alas, it appears from the evidence of the present exhibition to be a distinction without a difference.

The one object of the present-day architect working for the state, the municipality or some large semi-public concern seems to be to pretend to the best of his ability and so far as circumstances allow that he is really working for a private patron in need of a country residence. The result is that all branches of architecture, save perhaps, but by no means always, industrial architecture, approximate as closely as possible to the domestic. Thus we have police stations resembling Wren houses, and municipal baths which at first glance appear to be the homes of eighteenth century squires; and all hospitals become automatically cottage hospitals. Monumentality is shunned like the plague.

The second reflection prompted by a visit to New Bond Street is concerned with the value of photography as a means of recording architecture. No fallacy has been so completely exposed of recent years as the old belief that the camera cannot lie; a host of clever photographers ranging from Mr. Cecil Beaton to the man who supplies the illustrations for house-agents' prospectuses have proved the contrary beyond all shadow of doubt. Therefore, unless one is familiar with the photographer in question and his methods of work, a photograph of a building may be even more misleading than the old glowing product of the architectural draughtsman. (Incidentally why is it that the figures introduced into architectural drawings are always, if female, dressed in garments which even to the normal male eye are quite obviously ten years out of date? In several cases in the present exhibition an illusion of dashing modernism is sadly impaired by the presence of young women in the

"HOUSES WE LIVE IN"



Above is a photograph of the excellent pamphlet, "Houses We Live In," which is the subject of a note on this page. The pamphlet, which has been compiled by the Housing Committee of the Ministry of Health, is shown open at the page entitled "DOORS." Each double page contains similar brief remarks on various features and aspects of small houses with cautionary illustrations (brilliantly chosen) on the left and good examples on the right. Compare pages 89-92 of this issue.

foreground in cloche hats with waists round their knees?) A good photographer can make a small and ill-proportioned blank wall as impressive as the pyramids while a poor one can reduce a noble façade to the level of a badly painted theatre back-drop. It is as impossible to arrive at a just estimate of architecture solely from photographs as it is of sculpture. A depressing fact for the organizers of exhibitions but none the less true.

The third and last train of thought is started in the mind of the reflective visitor by one single exhibit. It is concerned with the vexed problem of restoration. There is a sheet of photographs of a public house in Essex before and after it had engaged the attention of the Trust House architect. Before, it appears as a pleasant cream-washed building with a plain decent façade having a high parapet that was none the worse for having very little connection with the rest of the building: after, as a half-timbered conglomeration of rooms whose windows are all on different levels, with an unmistakable air of olde-worlde cosiness. Now it is perfectly true that in its original state it must have approximated very closely to its present appearance, though one has ones doubts as to whether the beams were not always covered with a decent coat of white or cream plaster, and the parapet and false façade and all the rest that has been swept away were undoubtedly the accretions of a later age. But does this justify such drastic restoration? Essex is not a county in which half timbering is characteristic and anyhow that particular method of building has become so completely vulgarized and discredited by the activities of the by-pass barons that

the less we see of it the better. On the other hand the cream plaster façade blended well with the neighbouring buildings, and the bogus parapet for all its falseness was at least an attempt to pay some attention to the relation between the building and the street it stands in. However, as long as the familiar heresy that the older a building the better it is architecturally still enjoys its present deplorable vitality, we must learn to accept such sad metamorphoses.



Housing

The occasions on which one can praise a Government department wholeheartedly and with the utmost abandon are not, alas, very frequent. It is, therefore, with the greatest pleasure that one draws attention to the really admirable little book recently issued by the Ministry of Health, entitled *Houses we live in*. The object and origin of the book are well explained in the foreword by the Minister himself. "I asked my housing committee," says the Rt. Hon. Walter Elliot, "which includes architects and representative public men and women, to give me, in simple terms readily intelligible to the man in the street examples of good houses

in which proper regard would be had not only to the fulfilment of the ordinary functions of a house and to considerations of economy in construction, but also to what I may perhaps call architectural good manners."

This task has been perfectly accomplished. First rate type and layout, splendid photographs, a minimum of

MARGINALIA

letterpress and an excellent use of the familiar but effective device of contrasted pictures have all been combined to make a truly valuable and informative volume at the modest price of a shilling, and it is to be hoped that it will have the widest possible circulation, particularly among town-councillors and local authorities everywhere.



Architecture in the Antipodes

Rightly or wrongly, England has long had the impression that the architecture of the dominion of Australia has not hitherto been particularly notable or distinguished. Developed at a time when the old architectural tradition of Europe was on its last tottering legs and completely lacking in any sort of tradition of its own (though with the fearful example of India before one, it is impossible altogether to regard the absence of any native architecture to provide a focus for nineteenth century ingenuity as being altogether a disaster) one could hardly be surprised if Australia was in fact the land without art which a prominent English writer has called it. However, an exhibition recently organized by a group of modern architects in Melbourne, of which some pictures appear on the next page, encourages one to hope that such an epithet may be

THE MUTILATED UNICORN



One of the pleasantest pairs of royal beasts among London's heraldic sculpture is the noble Lion and Unicorn who face each other across the side entrance to Kensington Palace, sandwiched between the gate to the gardens and a large hotel in Kensington High Street. But for years the prancing dignity of the latter animal has been sadly marred by the disappearance of his horn, reducing him to the level of a commonplace and unroyal palfrey. This sad loss has been commented on in this column before and it is with the hope of interesting someone at the Office of Works, or whatever department is responsible for the care of such things, that the above picture is now published.

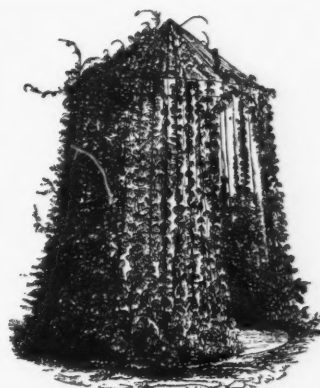
MARGINALIA

unduly pessimistic. It formed part of the 1939 Home and Building Exhibition, held in Melbourne under the auspices of the Building Industry Congress of Victoria. At the invitation of the Congress's Board of Publicity, the Council of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects agreed to sponsor an architectural gallery as part of the larger Exhibition. The display was actually arranged by an Exhibition Committee, consisting of Mr. Best Overend (Chairman), Miss Cynthia Teague, Messrs. H. Garnet

Alsop, Harold Bartlett, Alan Bogle, Stuart P. Calder, Robert Eggleston, H. E. Forrester, T. D. Freeman, Alec. S. Hall, J. K. Houghan, Rhys E. Hopkins, D. C. Ward, Raymond Schmerberg, the President of the Students' Society of the Institute (Mr. Roy Simpson) and the Secretary of the R.V.I.A. (Mr. Islip).

In some ways the exhibition can be compared with the more ambitious M.A.R.S. Group Exhibition at the Burlington Galleries, London, eighteen months ago. It was financially

supported by the building trade and was given practical assistance by architectural students. It also had similar aims: to promote understanding amongst the public, both of the nature and ideals of the modern architectural movement and of the architect's function in Society.



World's Fair Note.

A story from New York provides one interesting piece of information which will probably be new to most of those whose knowledge of the Fair is derived entirely from the pages of the English Press. Whatever the merits or demerits of the British Pavilion it is generally agreed that it does not err on the side of undue ostentation. This architectural trait would perhaps be even more praiseworthy was not the pavilion situated alongside that of Italy; for the latter nation has never been unduly reticent on the theme of national greatness, and since the advent of the present regime blowing the national trumpet has become not only a pleasure but a duty. The result in the present case is a vast building topped by an enormous female figure helmeted and armed, who is presumably Roma but who bears a suspicious likeness to Britannia. However, this unfortunate and for us, perhaps, a trifle humiliating, juxtaposition has led to fantastic refinement of ingenuity on the part of those responsible for supplying photographs to the English Press. They have contrived to discover innumerable clever angles from which to record the British Pavilion unswamped by its totalitarian neighbour. But, nevertheless, one paper did not stoop to these half-hearted subterfuges; *The Times* presented its readers with photographs in which by a cunning application of process white the whole Italian Pavilion was completely obliterated by large and strangely low lying clouds. Is this just another step in the policy of appeasement?

Photographs in this Issue

Acknowledgements are due to the following photographers for pictures of the New York World's Fair reproduced in this issue.

G. E. Kidder Smith: The Swiss Pavilion, Plate vii; the Court of States, the Avenue of Communications and Constitution Mall, page 57; the Norwegian Pavilion, page 65; the garden of the Swiss Pavilion, page 69; the detail of the Polish Pavilion, page 71; the exterior of the Argentine Pavilion, page 65; the exterior of the Danish Pavilion, page 73; a detail

of the Brazilian Pavilion, page 72 (top); the garden view of the British Pavilion, page 78 (centre); the Food Pavilion and the Communications Building, page 83; the Edison Building, page 85; the exterior of the General Motors Building, page 86.

F. S. Lincoln: the remaining views of the Brazilian Pavilion, page 72 and Plate iv; the general exteriors of the Italian, Russian and Dutch Pavilions, pages 65, 70 and 71; the maritime map in the British Pavilion, page 80; the Street of To-morrow, page 86.

Ezra Stoller: the Finnish Pavilion, Plate viii and page 67; the Argentine Pavilion, Plate vi.

Robert E. Coates: the exterior of the Swiss Pavilion, page 69; the interior of the Belgian Pavilion, page 69; the majority of the photographs of the British Pavilion, pages 77-80.

Schnall: the frontispiece, Plate i.

Ira W. Martin: the Petroleum Building, page 83; the Borden Building, page 87.

A. F. Sozio: the general view at the bottom of page 57.

Mary-Nelle Griffith: the interior of the Russian Pavilion, page 70.

Acknowledgements are also due to the New York Department of Parks for permission to reproduce the photographs on pages 58 and 61 illustrating the progress of the Fair site from waste ground to the future Flushing Meadow Park; to American Documentary Films Inc. and the American Institute of Planners for the shots from the documentary film "The City," pages 93-94; and to the Royal Swedish Commission.

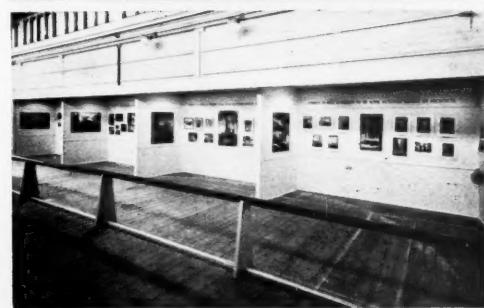
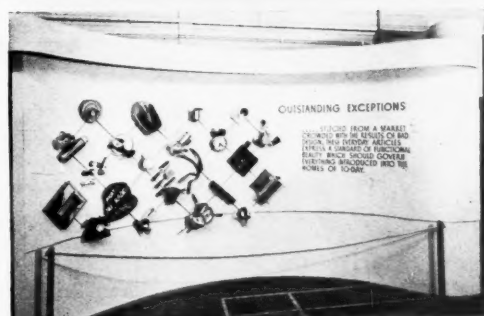
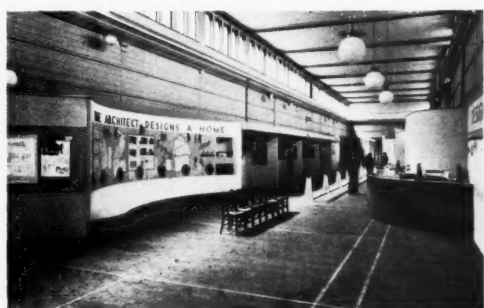
The Engravings

The engravings that decorate the "Marginalia" pages this month have a certain topical connection with the subject of the issue, being American in origin. They are taken from the first volume, covering the years 1846-1847, of the principal American gardening journal, *The Horticulturist*, self-described as "a journal of rural art and rural taste devoted to horticulture, landscape gardening, rural architecture, botany, pomology, entomology, rural economy, etc." It was edited by A. J. Downing, published from Albany and followed very closely the pattern of the English horticultural journals of the kind made popular by Loudon, Paxton and others.

The engravings reproduced, in the order in which they occur on these four pages, represent: a Cottage Villa on Staten Island; a design for the "improvement" of a common colonial type country house; the Espalier Walk in the fruit garden at Wodenethe, one of the most celebrated in the Eastern States—it was in Dutchess Co., N.Y., was two acres in extent and was the property of Mr. H. W. Sargent; a charming design for a cypress vine pavilion; a design for a simple country house, all in timber, by Mr. Davis, a New York architect, and, finally, the proud owner, a Mr. Staine, standing beside a specimen of the Giant Mexican Cactus (*echinocactus stanesii*).

The Casino, Blackpool

In our illustration of the new Blackpool Casino in the July issue it should have been stated that Mr. Halstead Best, of Blackpool, was associated with Mr. Emberton as architect.



Above are four photographs taken in the Architectural Gallery of the recent 1939 Home and Building Exhibition at Melbourne, Australia, which is the subject of a note beginning on the preceding page. This architectural display was the first attempt by Australian architects to explain the aims of modern architecture to the general public. It was organized by a committee of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects, who compiled at the same time a brochure entitled "The Work of an Architect," of which 10,000 copies were distributed during the Exhibition.

AN AUSTRALIAN EXHIBITION

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