THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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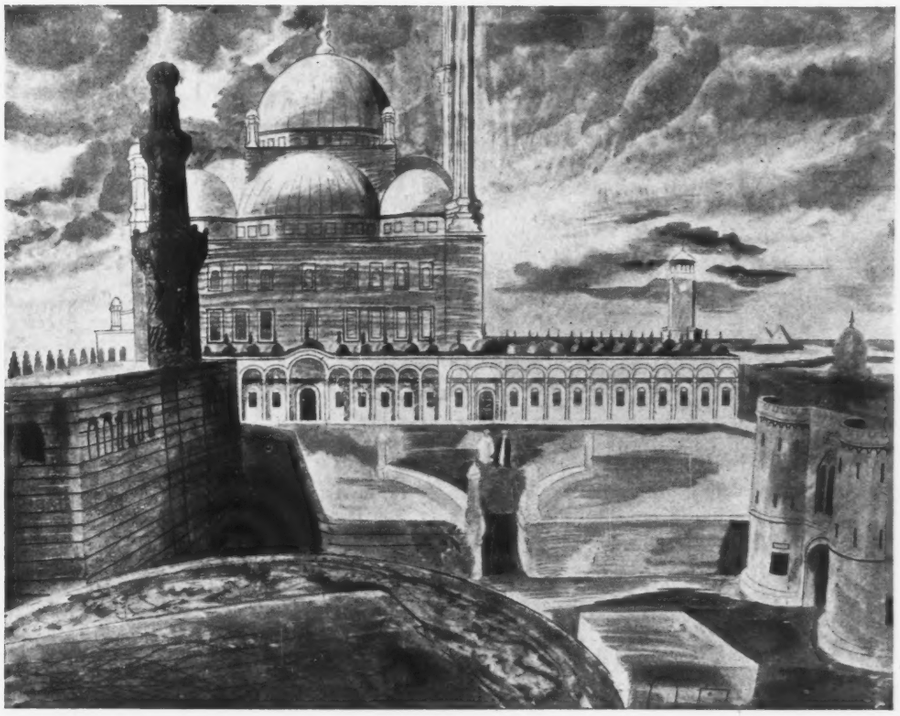

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One of Edward Bawden's most remarkable discoveries during his travels in the Middle East, where he is serving as official War Office artist, was the Emperor Menelik's Palace at Addis Ababa, capital of Abyssinia, a piece of pure Victorianism of the most fantastic kind, still resplendent in its strange surroundings. Menelik became Emperor in 1899, and the Palace presumably dates from soon after. Edward Bawden's painting, above, shows the Old Gebbi, with the Emperor Haile Selassie's former study on the right. Some more of his most recent war paintings, made in Eritrea, Abyssinia and Egypt, are reproduced on page 58. They have only recently arrived in this country and are on show at the National Gallery. Photograph by courtesy of the Ministry of Information : Crown copyright reserved.

THE LAST HIDE-OUT OF VICTORIANISM

Sheep in Wolf's Clothing

EDGAR ALLAN POE is most commonly thought of as the author of horrid tales, in which a romantic predilection for the macabre is given literary dignity by his classic style and powerfully analytical mind, as the ancestor of the modern mystery story and as a poet whose authentic lyrical talent runs in double harness with a facility in the verbal elaboration of conventional "poetic" sentiments that makes him a favourite for schoolroom recitation. Anyone looking in Poe's writings for indications of his ideas about architecture would therefore expect to find something in keeping with the romantic background of early nineteenth-century thought and feeling from which his fantastic habits of mind so clearly derived; something in keeping with the Gothic paraphernalia that plays such a prominent part in his tales—the apparitions, mysteries, pestilences and premature burials with which his imagination was constantly preoccupied. He might also expect something Byronic, since Lord Byron was, at the outset of Poe's career, his acknowledged master, and *Tamerlane* is only a naive echo of *The Giaour*—though the Byronic ideal, perhaps, hardly finds apt expression in the substantial arts. More reasonably, he might expect to find a mystical orientalism, since Poe's debt to Coleridge is equally clear, and to Moore's *Lalla Rookh* and to the fashions in local colour so scintillatingly exploited by Disraeli. At the very least he might expect to find a conception of architecture exclusively in keeping with the romantic intensity of atmosphere Poe's own tales aspired to, in common with *Vathek*, *The Castle of Otranto* and—on a less exalted plane—the works of Harrison Ainsworth, an atmosphere that allowed the physical attributes of architecture to be only hinted at, and valued more highly its power of evoking a mood. In brief, Poe's habit of mind was subjective, fantastic and diffuse, and these qualities might be expected to colour his architectural ideals.

But although an exalted romanticism, tinged with orientalism, is not absent from his descriptive writings, and is, indeed, the keynote of one passage I shall quote, he is not at all diffuse in his expression of preferences about architecture. Instead, he is quite explicit, rather pedestrian and much more at home with the prettily sentimental than with the sublime. If on occasion we do find him evoking his own Xanadu, we also find him particularising the furniture of a Victorian drawing-room and the delights of domesticated rusticity in a way that leaves no doubt where his own allegiance lay. Sandwiched among the fantastic contents of the various volumes of his tales are a number of straightforward descriptions of landscape and architecture offered to the reader with little pretence of a plot and with the undisguised aim of instructing him in the author's own preferences—and the more explicit his recommendations the more clearly they conform to conventional bourgeois sentiments.

Whether the surprisingly conventional character of Poe's architectural ideals, thus revealed, should be attributed to his memories of a poverty-stricken childhood, deprived of all home comforts and security, to his alienation from his foster-father John Allan, which meant the loss of the prosperous environment he must once have looked on as his right, or to a longing for normality such as often accompanies a consciousness of being a social misfit, maybe psychologists will one day decide. The fact remains that, however we may choose to reconcile them with his literary character and intellectual background, the passages in his tales that most obviously represent his own preferences build up a thoroughly unexpected picture coloured by a domesticated rather than an exotic romanticism.

It is only fair, however, to begin with a passage that conforms more closely to the imaginative character we should expect, though even in this he never aims at the sublime as understood by his literary progenitors—still less at the horrible and macabre; it represents a more respectable picturesqueness, idealized after the fashion of the contemporary school of landscape painters, the school that began with the classical formality of Claude, and reached its climax of limpidity with Girtin and its apotheosis with Turner. Here is no literary equivalent of John Martin's stupendous fantasies.

In this passage he puts his descriptions into the mouth of a narrator, in what was first an essay simply called *Landscape Gardening*, but was incorporated also in the more ambitious tale entitled *The Domain of Arnheim*. This narrator speaks of a friend who inherited great wealth and decided that it was most suitably spent in landscaping on an appropriately gigantic scale. He and his friend search the globe for a tract of country worthy to serve as the raw material for his operations, indulging meanwhile in some rather naive philosophising about the limitations of nature and the scope of art. Here is the description of the perfected landscape, the achievement of his wealthy friend's ideal:

"The usual approach to Arnheim was by river. The visitor left the city in the early morning. During the forenoon he passed between shores of a tranquil and domestic beauty, on which grazed innumerable sheep, their white fleeces spotting the vivid green of rolling meadows. By degrees the idea of cultivation subsided into that of merely pastoral care. This slowly became merged in a sense of retirement—this again in a consciousness of solitude. As the evening approached the channel grew more narrow; the banks more and more precipitous; and these latter were clothed in richer, more profuse, and more sombre foliage. The water increased in transparency. The stream took a thousand turns, so that at no moment could its gleaming surface be seen for a greater distance than a furlong. At every instant the vessel seemed imprisoned within an enchanted circle, having insuperable and impenetrable walls of foliage, a roof of ultramarine satin, and *no* floor—the keel balancing itself with admirable nicety on that of a phantom bark which, by some accident having been turned upside down, floated in constant company with the substantial one for the purpose of sustaining it. The channel now became a *gorge*—although the term is somewhat inapplicable, and I employ it merely because the language has no word which better represents the most striking—not the most distinctive—feature of the scene. The character of gorge was maintained only in the height and parallelism of the shores; it was lost altogether in their other traits. The walls of the ravine (through which the clear water still tranquilly flowed) arose to an elevation of a hundred and occasionally of a hundred and fifty feet, and inclined so much towards each other as in a great measure to shut out the light of day; while the long plume-like moss which depended densely from the intertwining shrubberies overhead gave the whole chasm an air of funereal gloom. The windings became more frequent and intricate, and seemed often as if returning in upon themselves, so that the voyager had long lost all idea of direction. He was, moreover, enwrapt in an exquisite sense of the strange. The thought of nature still remained, but her character seemed to have undergone modification; there was a weird symmetry, a thrilling uniformity, a wizard propriety, in these her works. Not a dead branch—not a withered leaf—not a stray pebble—not a patch of the brown earth was anywhere visible. The crystal water welled up against the clean granite or the unblemished moss with a sharpness of outline that delighted while it bewildered the eye.

"Having threaded the mazes of this channel for some hours, the gloom deepening every moment, a sharp and unexpected turn of the vessel brought it suddenly, as if dropped from heaven, into a circular basin of very considerable extent when compared with the width of the gorge. It was about two hundred yards in diameter, and girt in at all points but one, that immediately fronting the vessel as it entered, by hills equal in general height to the walls of the chasm, although of a thoroughly different character. Their sides sloped from the water's edge at an angle of some forty-five degrees, and they were clothed from base to summit—not a perceptible point escaping—in a drapery of the most gorgeous flower blossoms; scarcely a green leaf being visible among the sea of odorous and fluctuating colour. This basin was of great depth, but so transparent was the water that the bottom, which seemed to consist of a thick mass of small round alabaster pebbles, was distinctly visible by glimpses, that is to say, whenever the eye could permit itself *not* to see far down in the inverted heaven the duplicate blooming of the hills. On these latter there were no trees, nor even shrubs of any size. The impressions wrought on the observer were those of richness, warmth, colour, quietude, uniformity, softness, delicacy, daintiness, voluptuousness, and a miraculous extremeness of culture that suggested dreams of a new race of fairies, laborious, tasteful, magnificent, and fastidious; but as the eye traced upward the myriad-tinted slope, from its sharp junction with the water to its vague termination amid the folds of overhanging cloud, it became, indeed, difficult not to fancy a panoramic cataract of rubies, sapphires, opals, and golden onyxes, rolling silently out of the sky.

"The visitor, shooting suddenly into this bay from out the gloom of the ravine, is delighted, but astounded, by the full orb of the declining sun, which he had supposed to be already far below the horizon, but which now confronts him and forms the sole termination of an otherwise limitless vista seen through another chasm-like rift in the hills.

"But here the voyager quits the vessel which has borne him so far, and descends into a light canoe of ivory, stained with arabesque devices in vivid scarlet, both within and without. The poop and beak of this boat arise high above the water with sharp points, so that the general form is that of an irregular crescent. It lies on the surface of the bay with the proud grace of a swan. On its ermined floor reposes a single feathery paddle of satin-wood; but no oarsman or attendant is to be seen. The guest is bidden to be of good cheer—that the fates will take care of him. The larger vessel disappears, and he is left alone in the canoe, which lies apparently motionless in the middle of the lake. While he considers what course to pursue, he becomes aware of a gentle movement

in the fairy bark. It slowly swings itself round until its prow points toward the sun. It advances with a gentle but gradually accelerated velocity, while the slight ripples it creates seem to break about the ivory sides in divinest melody—seem to offer the only possible explanation of the soothing yet melancholy music for whose unseen origin the bewildered voyager looks around him in vain.

"The canoe steadily proceeds, and the rocky gate of the vista is approached, so that its depths can be more distinctly seen. To the right arise a chain of lofty hills rudely and luxuriantly wooded. It is observed, however, that the trait of exquisite *cleanness* where the bank dips into the water still prevails. There is not one token of the usual river debris. To the left the character of the scene is softer and more obviously artificial. Here the bank slopes upward from the stream in a very gentle ascent, forming a broad sward of grass, of a texture resembling nothing so much as velvet, and of a brilliancy of green which would bear comparison with the tint of the purest emerald. This *plateau* varies in width from ten to three hundred yards; reaching from the river bank to a wall, fifty feet high, which extends in an infinity of curves, but following the general direction of the river until lost in the distance to the westward. This wall is of one continuous rock, and has been formed by cutting perpendicularly the once rugged precipice of the stream's southern bank; but no trace of the labour has been suffered to remain. The chiselled stone has the hue of ages, and is profusely overhung and overspread with the ivy, the coral honeysuckle, the eglantine, and the clematis. The uniformity of the top and bottom lines of the wall is fully relieved by occasional trees of gigantic height, growing singly or in small groups, both along the *plateau* and in the domain behind the wall, but in close proximity to it; so that frequent limbs (of the black walnut especially) reach over and dip their pendant extremities into the water. Farther back within the domain the vision is impeded by an impenetrable screen of foliage.

"These things are observed during the canoe's gradual approach to what I have called the gate of the vista. On drawing nearer to this, however, its chasm-like appearance vanishes; a new outlet from the bay is discovered to the left, in which direction the wall is seen to sweep, still following the general course of the stream. Down this new opening the eye cannot penetrate very far; for the stream, accompanied by the wall, still bends to the left until both are swallowed up by the leaves.

"The boat, nevertheless, glides magically into the winding channel; and here the shore opposite the wall is found to resemble that opposite the wall in the straight vista. Lofty hills, rising occasionally into mountains, and covered with vegetation in wild luxuriance, still shut in the scene.

"Floating gently onward, but with a velocity slightly augmented, the voyager, after many short turns, finds his progress apparently barred by a gigantic gate or rather door of burnished gold, elaborately carved and fretted, and reflecting the direct rays of the now fast sinking sun with an effulgence that seems to wreathe the whole surrounding forest in flames. This gate is inserted in the lofty wall; which here appears to cross the river at right angles. In a few moments, however, it is seen that the main body of the water still sweeps in a gentle and extensive curve to the left, the wall following it as before, while a stream of considerable volume, diverging from the principal one, makes its way with a slight ripple, under the door, and is thus hidden from sight. The canoe falls into the lesser channel and approaches the gate. Its ponderous wings are slowly and musically expanded. The boat glides between them, and commences a rapid descent into a vast amphitheatre entirely begirt with purple mountains, whose bases are laved by a gleaming river throughout the full extent of their circuit. Meantime the whole Paradise of Arnheim bursts upon the view. There is a gush of entrancing melody; there is an oppressive sense of strange sweet odour—there is a dream-like intermingling to the eye of tall slender Eastern trees, bosky shrubberies, flocks of golden and crimson birds, lily-fringed lakes, meadows of violets, tulips, poppies, hyacinths and tuberoses, long inter-tangled lines of silver streamlets, and, upspringing confusedly from amid all, a mass of semi-Gothic, semi-Saracenic architecture, sustaining itself as if by a miracle in mid-air, glittering in the red sunlight with a hundred oriels, minarets and pinnacles; and seeming the phantom handiwork conjointly of the Sylphs, of the Fairies, of the Genii, and of the Gnomes."

So much for Poe's idea of earthly paradise. Disraeli could not have done it better: played with more glittering virtuosity up and down the scale of romantic artificiality, skated more skilfully round the perimeter of the merely absurd. Yet, as I have suggested, it is romantic in a respectable, sentimental way, never aspiring to the profoundly fantastic, the sublimely horrid, as Poe's literary allegiancies might have led one to expect. And, to confirm this impression, in the next passage I shall quote, told this time in the first person, is his description of an ideal home and its domestic landscape, less fanciful but more clearly meant to represent his personal ideal.

This is from his tale called *Landor's Cottage*. It begins with an account of how, "during a pedestrian tour . . . through one or two of the river counties of New York," the writer lost his way, but found a strange road, which he followed. It led him to the head of a valley, filled with mist:

"A gentle breeze, however, now arose, as the sun was about descending; and while I remained standing on the brow of the slope, the fog gradually became dissipated into wreaths, and so floated over the scene. As it came fully into view, thus *gradually* as I describe it, piece by piece, here a tree, there a glimpse of water, and here again the summit of a chimney, I could scarcely help fancying that the whole was one of the ingenious illusions sometimes exhibited under the name of 'vanishing pictures.'"

Then follows a long and minute description of the scenery of the valley that was spread out before him, its contours and enclosing mountain peaks, its rivulets and its lake with crystal-clear waters, its trees and other vegetation. This preliminary bird's-eye view leads on to the following:—

"The expanse of the green turf was relieved, here and there, by an occasional showy shrub, such as the hydrangea, or the common snow-ball, or the aromatic syringa; or more frequently by a clump of geraniums blossoming gorgeously in great varieties. These latter grew in pots which were carefully buried in the soil, so as to give the plants the appearance of being indigenous. Besides all this the lawn's velvet was exquisitely spotted with sheep, a considerable flock of which roamed about the vale, in company with three tamed deer, and a vast number of brilliantly plumed ducks. A very large mastiff seemed to be in vigilant attendance upon these animals, each and all.

"The slight elevation which formed the lower boundary of this little domain was crowned by a neat stone wall, of sufficient height to prevent the escape of the deer. Nothing of the fence kind was observable elsewhere; for nowhere else was an artificial enclosure needed: any stray sheep, for example, which should attempt to make its way out of the vale by means of the ravine, would find its progress arrested, after a few yards advance, by the precipitous ledge of rock over which tumbled the cascade that had arrested my attention as I first drew near the domain. In short, the only ingress or egress was through a gate occupying a rocky pass in the road, a few paces below the point at which I stopped to reconnoitre the scene.

"I have described the brook as meandering very irregularly through the whole of its course. Its two *general* directions, as I have said, were first from west to east, and then from north to south. At the *turn*, the stream, sweeping backwards, made an almost circular *loop*, so as to form a peninsula which was *very* nearly an island, and which included about the sixteenth of an acre. On this peninsula stood a dwelling-house—and when I say that this house, like the infernal terraces seen by Vathek, *était d'une architecture inconnue dans les annales de la terre*, I mean merely that its *tout ensemble* struck me with the keenest sense of combined novelty and propriety—in a word, of *poetry*—and I do not mean that the merely *outré* was perceptible in any respect.

"In fact, nothing could well be more simple—more utterly unpretending than this cottage. Its marvellous *effect* lay altogether in its artistic arrangement *as a picture*. I could have fancied, while I looked at it, that some eminent landscape-painter had built it with his brush.

"The main building was about twenty-four feet long and sixteen broad—certainly not more. Its total height, from the ground to the apex of the roof, could not have exceeded eighteen feet. To the west end of this structure was attached one about a third smaller in all its proportions—the line of its front standing back about two yards from that of the larger house; and the line of its roof, of course, being considerably depressed below that of the roof adjoining. At right angles to these buildings, and from the rear of the main one—not exactly in the middle—extended a third compartment, very small—being, in general, one third less than the western wing. The roofs of the two larger were very steep—sweeping down from the ridge-beam with a long concave curve, and extending at least four feet beyond the walls in front, so as to form the roofs of two piazzas. These latter roofs, of course, needed no support; but as they had the *air* of needing it, slight and perfectly plain pillars were inserted at the corners alone. The roof of the northern wing was merely an extension of a portion of the main roof. Between the chief building and western wing arose a very tall and rather slender square chimney of hard Dutch bricks, alternately black and red—a slight cornice of projecting bricks at the top. Over the gables, the roofs also projected very much—in the main building about four feet to the east and two to the west. The principal door was not exactly in the main division, being a little to the east—while the two windows were to the west. These latter did not extend to the floor, but were much longer and narrower than usual—they had single shutters like doors—the panes were of lozenge form, but quite large. The door itself had its upper half of glass, also in lozenge panes—a movable shutter secured it at night. The door to the west wing was in its gable, and quite simple; a single window looked out to the south. There was no external door to the north wing, and it also had only one window to the east.

"The blank wall of the eastern gable was relieved by stairs (with a balustrade) running diagonally across it—the ascent being from the south. Under cover of the widely projecting eave these steps gave access to a door leading into the garret, or rather loft—for it was lighted only by a single window to the north, and seemed to have been intended as a store-room. The piazzas of the main building and western wing had no floors, as is usual; but at the doors and at each window, large, flat, irregular slabs of granite lay imbedded in the delicious turf, affording comfortable footing in all weather. Excellent paths of the same material—not *nicely* adapted, but with the velvety sod filling frequent intervals between the stones, led hither and thither from the house, to a crystal spring about five paces off, to the road, or to one or two out-houses that lay to the north, beyond the brook, and were thoroughly concealed by a few locusts and catalpas.

"Not more than six steps from the main door of the cottage stood the dead trunk of a fantastic pear-tree, so clothed from head to foot in the gorgeous bignonia blossoms that one required no little scrutiny to determine what manner of sweet thing it could be. From various arms of this tree hung cages of different kinds. In one, a large wicker cylinder with a ring at top, revelled a mocking bird; in another, an oriole; in a third, the impudent bobalink—while three or four more delicate prisons were loudly vocal with canaries.

"The pillars of the piazza were enwreathed in jasmine and sweet honeysuckle, while from the angle formed by the main structure and its west

wing in front sprang a grape-vine of unexampled luxuriance. Scorning all restraint, it had clambered first to the lower roof, then to the higher, and along the ridge of this latter it continued to writhe on, throwing out tendrils to the right and left, until at length it fairly attained the east gable, and fell trailing over the stairs.

" The whole house, with its wings, was constructed of the old-fashioned Dutch shingles, broad, and with unrounded corners. It is a peculiarity of this material to give houses built of it the appearance of being wider at bottom than at top, after the manner of Egyptian architecture; and in the present instance this exceedingly picturesque effect was aided by numerous pots of gorgeous flowers that almost encompassed the base of the buildings.

" The shingles were painted a dull grey, and the happiness with which this neutral tint melted into the vivid green of the tulip tree leaves that partially overshadowed the cottage can readily be conceived by an artist.

" I did not remain very long on the brow of the hill, although long enough to make a thorough survey of the scene at my feet. It was clear that I had wandered from the road to the village, and I had thus good travellers' excuse to open the gate before me and inquire my way at all events; so, without more ado, I proceeded.

" The road, after passing the gate, seemed to lie upon a natural ledge, sloping gradually down along the face of the north-eastern cliffs. It led me on to the foot of the northern precipice, and thence over the bridge, round by the eastern gable to the front door. In this progress, I took notice that no sight of the out-houses could be obtained.

" As I turned the corner of the gable the mastiff bounded towards me in stern silence, but with the eye and the whole air of a tiger. I held him out my hand, however, in token of amity, and I never yet knew the dog who was proof against such an appeal to his courtesy. He not only shut his mouth and wagged his tail, but absolutely offered me his paw, afterwards extending his civilities to Ponto.

" As no bell was discernible I rapped with my stick against the door which stood half open. Instantly a figure advanced to the threshold—that of a young woman* about twenty-eight years of age. . . .

" At her most courteous of invitations I entered, passing first into a tolerably wide vestibule. Having come mainly to *observe*, I took notice that to my right as I stepped in was a window such as those in front of the house, to the left, a door leading into the principal room, while, opposite me, an *open* door enabled me to see a small apartment, just the size of the vestibule, arranged as a study, and having a large *bow* window looking to the north.

" Passing into the parlour I found myself with Mr. Landor, for this I afterwards found was his name. He was civil, even cordial, in his manner, but just then I was more intent on observing the arrangements of the dwelling which had so much interested me than the personal appearance of the tenant.

" The north wing I now saw was a bedchamber, its door opened into the parlour. West of this door was a single window looking towards the brook. At the west end of the parlour were a fireplace and a door leading into the west wing, probably a kitchen.

" Nothing could be more rigorously simple than the furniture of the parlour. On the floor was an ingrain carpet of excellent texture, a white ground spotted with small circular green figures. At the windows were curtains of snowy white jaconet muslin; they were tolerably full, and hung *decisively*, perhaps rather formally, in sharp parallel plaits to the floor—*just* to the floor. The walls were papered with a French paper of great delicacy, a silver ground with a faint green cord running zigzag throughout. Its expanse was relieved merely by three of Julien's exquisite lithographs *à trois crayons*, fastened to the wall without frames. One of these drawings was a scene of Oriental luxury, or rather voluptuousness; another was a ' carnival piece,' spirited beyond compare; the third was a Greek female head: a face so divinely beautiful, and yet of an expression so provokingly indeterminate, never before arrested my attention.

" The more substantial furniture consisted of a round table, a few chairs (including a large rocking-chair) and a sofa, or rather ' settee; ' its material was plain maple painted a creamy white, slightly interstriped with green; the seat of cane. The chairs and table were ' to match,' but the *forms* of all had evidently been designed by the same brain which planned ' the grounds '—it is impossible to conceive anything more graceful.

" On the table were a few books, a large, square, crystal bottle of some novel perfume, a plain ground-glass *astral* (not solar) lamp with an Italian shade, and a large vase of resplendently blooming flowers. Flowers, indeed, of gorgeous colours and delicate odour formed the sole mere *decoration* of the apartment. The fireplace was nearly filled with a vase of brilliant geranium. On a triangular shelf in each angle of the room stood also a similar vase, varied only as to its lovely contents. One or two smaller *bouquets* adorned the mantel, and late violets clustered about the open windows."

*The description of the young lady, omitted here, is said to be that of Mrs. Annie Richmond, a friend of Poe's later years, whose cottage he visited when he lectured on " The Poetic Principle," at Lowell, Mass., in July, 1848, a year before his death.

At this point the tale ends, with the abrupt sentence: " It is not the purpose of this work to do more than give, in detail, a picture of Mr. Landor's residence *as I found it*."

In the foregoing we see the author gradually forsaking the fantastic for the domestic, descending from the sublime so close to earth that he seems to mingle his poetic fancies with excerpts from an estate agent's advertisement; with a friendly gesture to the mastiff as his " order to view " he takes in each feature with an appraising eye. We do not need his careful disclaimer of anything shared in common with *Vathek*. Poe's ideal here is far from exotic; more than anything else, it is one of tidiness and domesticity. A literary parallel, rather, is with William Morris's architectural descriptions in his Utopian dream, *News from Nowhere*, which exhibits the same rosy, pastoral rusticity, the same anticipation of romantic suburbia. His cottage interior, though it belongs to the eighteen-forties, also constitutes an exact forecast of the modern American ideal—see the pages of almost any number of *Vogue*. The draped muslin curtains, the elegant French wall-paper, the prints without frames—we know them well.

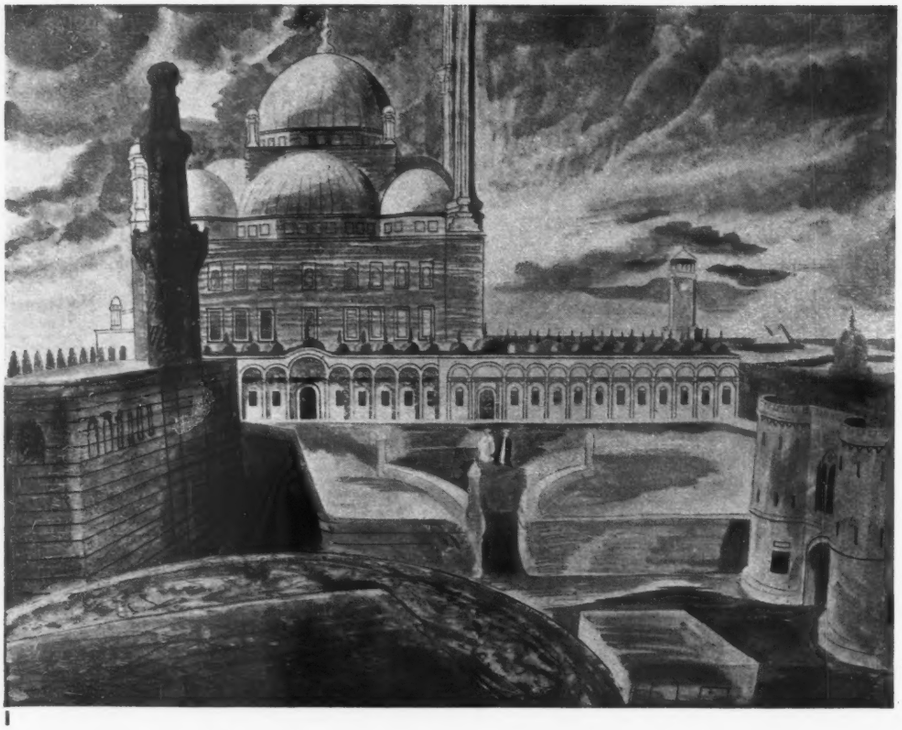
However, if we want to see Poe accepting quite without reserve the comfortable standards of the Victorians—in this case as the ultimate good in interior decoration—we must look at another passage, one in which he specifically commits himself to *opinions*, as distinct from mere ideal descriptions in which his own views are only implied. This passage occurs in an essay, incorporated amongst the collected " Tales," entitled *Philosophy of Furniture:*

" Even *now*, there is present to our mind's eye a small and not ostentatious chamber with whose decorations no fault can be found. The proprietor lies asleep on a sofa—the weather is cool—the time is near midnight: we will make a sketch of the room during his slumber.

" It is oblong—some thirty feet in length and twenty-five in breadth—a shape affording the best (ordinary) opportunities for the adjustment of furniture. It has but one door—by no means a wide one—which is at one end of the parallelogram, and but two windows, which are at the other. These latter are large, reaching down to the floor—have deep recesses—and open on an Italian *veranda*. Their panes are of a crimson-tinted glass, set in rosewood framings, more massive than usual. They are curtained within the recess by a thick silver tissue adapted to the shape of the window, and hanging loosely in small volumes. Without the recess the curtains are of an exceedingly rich crimson silk, fringed with a deep network of gold, and lined with the silver tissue, which is the material of the exterior blind. There are no cornices; but the folds of the whole fabric (which are sharp rather than massive, and have an airy appearance) issue from beneath a broad entablature of rich giltwork, which encircles the room at the junction of the ceiling and walls. The drapery is thrown open also, or closed, by means of a thick rope of gold loosely enveloping it, and resolving itself readily into knot; no pins or other such devices are apparent. The colours of the curtains and their fringe—the tints of crimson and gold—appear everywhere in profusion, and determine the *character* of the room. The carpet—of Saxony material—is quite half an inch thick, and is of the same crimson ground, relieved simply by the appearance of a gold cord (like that festooning the curtains) slightly relieved above the surface of the *ground*, and thrown upon it in such a manner as to form a succession of short irregular curves—one occasionally overlying the other. The walls are prepared with a glossy paper of a silver-grey tint, spotted with small Arabesque devices of a fainter hue of the prevalent crimson. Many paintings relieve the expanse of the paper. These are chiefly landscapes of an imaginative cast—such as the fairy grottoes of Stanfield, or the lake of the Dismal Swamp of Chapman. There are, nevertheless, three or four female heads, of an ethereal beauty—portraits in the manner of Sully. The tone of each picture is warm, but dark. There are no ' brilliant effects.' *Repose* speaks in all. Not one is of small size. Diminutive paintings give that *spotty* look to a room, which is the blemish of so many a fine work of Art overtouched. The frames are broad but not deep, and richly carved, without being *dulled* or filigreed. They have the whole lustre of burnished gold. They lie flat on the walls, and do not hang off with cords. The designs themselves are often seen to better advantage in this latter position, but the general appearance of the chamber is injured. But one mirror—and this is not a very large one—is visible. In shape it is nearly circular—and it is hung so that a reflection of the person can be obtained from it in none of the ordinary sitting-places of the room. Two large low sofas of rosewood and crimson silk, gold-flowered, form the only seats, with the exception of two light conversation chairs, also of rosewood. There is a pianoforte (rosewood, also), without cover, and thrown open. An octagonal table, formed altogether of the richest gold-threaded marble, is placed near one of the sofas. This is also without cover—the drapery of the curtains has been thought sufficient. Four large and gorgeous Sèvres vases, in which bloom a profusion of sweet and vivid flowers, occupy the slightly rounded angles of the room. A tall candelabrum, bearing a small antique lamp with highly perfumed oil, is standing near the head of my sleeping friend. Some light and graceful hanging shelves, with golden edges and crimson silk cords with golden tassels, sustain two or three hundred magnificently bound books. Beyond these things there is no furniture, if we except an Argand lamp, with a plain crimson-tinted ground-glass shade, which depends from the lofty vaulted ceiling by a single slender gold chain, and throws a tranquil but magical radiance over all."

There's richness. But, once more, hardly the richness we expected: not the fantastic embroidery of romantic story-telling, nor the sinister evocation of the macabre; instead, the naive ornateness of the *nouveau-riche*, presented as the acme of correct taste. This is the author of *The Thousand and Second Tale of Scheherazade*, of *The Masque of the Red Death*, of *Al Aaraaf* and *The City in the Sea*, to whom it is a matter of solemn pride that the Saxony carpet should be fully half an inch thick and to whom the criterion of perfection in a country cottage (to revert once more to the tale of Mr. Landor, that fortunate proprietor of an estate agent's paradise) turns out to be whether its outhouses are satisfactorily concealed from the approach to the front door.

J. M. Richards



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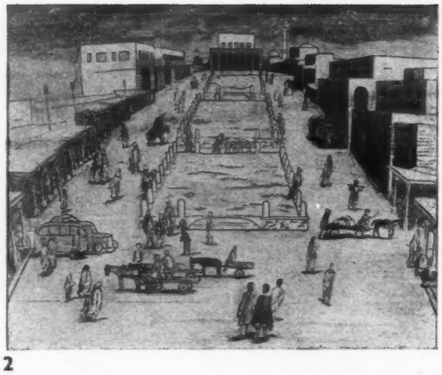

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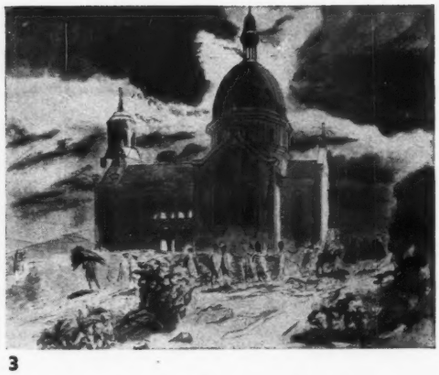

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For a couple of years Edward Bawden has been attached to the army in the Middle East as an official war artist. The most recent of his paintings to have been shipped back to this country are now on view at the National Gallery, and include several architectural subjects, painted during his travels to various parts of the war zone; Abyssinia, Eritrea, Egypt and the Libyan desert. 1, "Cairo; The Citadel; Mohammed Ali Mosque." 2, "Asmara; Piazza Italia" (the native quarter). 3, "Addis Ababa." See also the painting of the Emperor Menelik's palace at Addis Ababa, page 53. Photographs are by courtesy of the Ministry of Information (Crown copyright reserved).

WAR ARTIST IN THE MIDDLE EAST

HOUSING SCHEMES

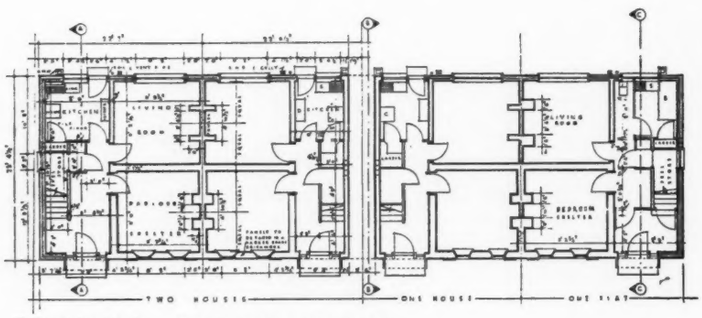
G. A. JELLICOE

RESIDENT ARCHITECTS:
D. W. PLUMSTEAD
AND ANTHONY POTT

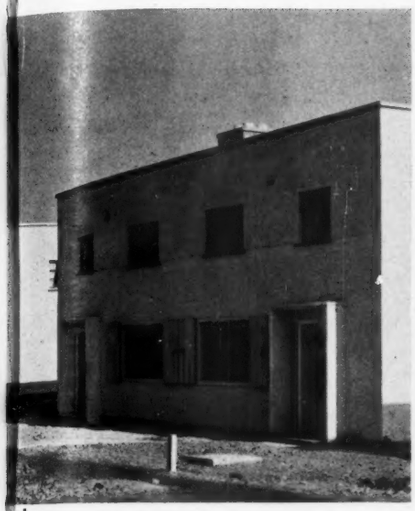
GENERAL—In April, 1941, the Ministry of Supply asked the architect to design seven estates of houses for factory workers in different parts of the country. As communications by rail and telephone were anticipated to be unreliable, while building operations would be in progress, the method of organization adopted was to design general lay-outs and structural details in London, standardized as far as possible, but taking into consideration materials locally available, and leave the adjusting of the plans to the sites and their peculiarities to resident architects with full powers to make decisions without referring back to the London office. In the early stages the rôle of these resident architects was of course more important than later, when enemy action over Britain had decreased. In the following pages two of the seven schemes are illustrated and discussed. Scheme One is seen in **1** and **2** (resident architect, D. W. Plumstead), Scheme Two in **3** to **8** (resident architect, Anthony Pott).

PLANNING—One of the chief problems with which the architect was faced was to combine standard plans and elevations with general grouping free and adaptable enough to blend the estates into their surrounding natural and architectural scenery. Terraces were used wherever suitable to avoid the scrappiness of the semi-detached suburban estate and create a feeling of spatial coherence. They are however interrupted at intervals by shorter units so as not to allow any dull uniformity to develop. On sloping sites especially semi-detached units were preferred to terraces, because they permit a more eloquent expression of upward and downward movement. On such sites streets are laid out in curves, while in flat country rectangular planning proved more satisfactory. Trees and shrubs were, needless to say, preserved everywhere, and planting plans were worked out for being put into operation after the war.

As regards the houses themselves, they are chiefly for married couples, some with, some without, children. It was calculated that about half the tenants would prefer flats to whole houses. Since however the schemes had to be designed so as to make it tempting



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



1

2

Scheme One, resident architect D. W. Plumstead. 1 is from a part of the site for which Mr. T. Alwyn Lloyd was consultant. The walls here are plastered. 2 shows how well terraces with shorter units in the bends of the curved street harmonize with the surrounding scenery.

for local authorities after the war to take them over, flats were obtained by dividing the two stories of houses from one another. All that need be done, when peace comes, is to take out one partition and make a kitchen out of a ground-floor bath and w.c.

For the houses the standard accommodation specified was two double and one single bedrooms, living room and parlour. It was left to the architect to find a solution to the problem, how shelters could be incorporated into the sites or houses. He thought it advisable to supply each house with its own shelter and make the shelter part of the structure of the house. The parlours were used for the purpose, by increasing their wall strength to 13½ inches, building in ceilings of approved slabs, and dividing, by means of wide brick piers, their large front windows into two small narrow ones. The reveals of these war-time windows were splayed so as to allow more light to penetrate. To reduce dangers from blast, parapets as well as overhanging eaves were omitted. It seems, however, quite likely that the architect enjoyed the chance which was given him to prove that completely box-like units called for for reasons of safety could be arranged into pleasant and by no means forbidding-looking groups. The only features introduced to enliven the walls are the slightly projecting window frames and the porches, stressing—on a principle at least 250 years old—the privacy of the individual house. Their design, 5, is especially successful. The glass bricks to the right and left of the door frame reflect the sun as it shines on their many edges. They also let sunlight through when the sun is behind the houses and the kitchen door is open. On peace-time evenings of the future too, these bricks will invitingly let through electric lighting in the hall. During the day incidentally it has been found that, seen at a distance, they give the whole of the porch a pale greenness, a gratifying addition to the brick and concrete colouring of the house.

As the parlour is the house's shelter, it had to be larger than it would otherwise have been designed. As it is, living room and parlour are of about the same size, approximately eleven by twelve feet. It will be interesting to watch in which way tenants

3

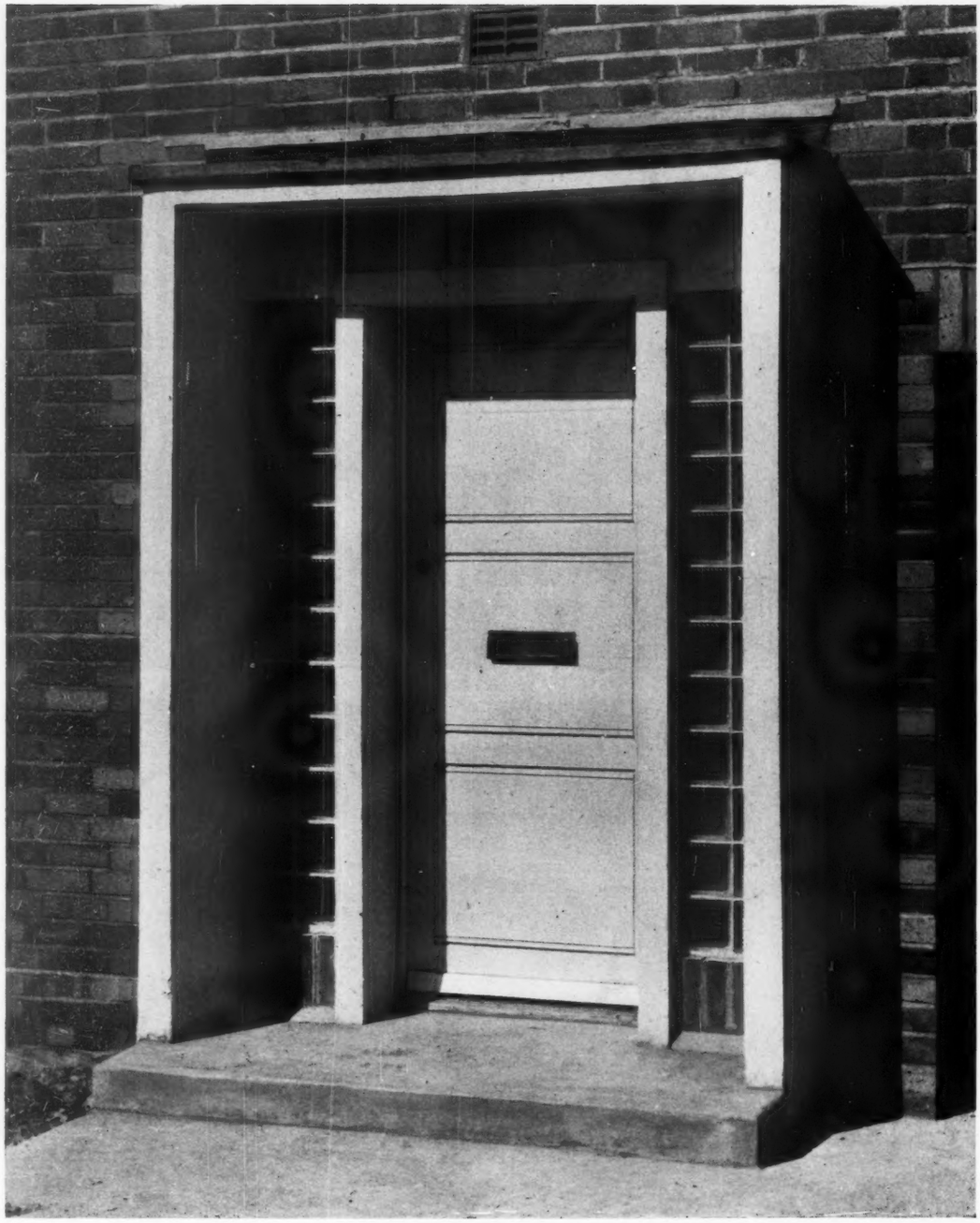
4

Scheme Two, resident architect Anthony Pott. 3, grouping of semi-detached units on a slope. 4, grouping of terraces.

will use the two rooms. Another interesting point is the variation in the standard plan necessary to incorporate the passages to the backs of terrace houses. The space on the first floors gained in such cases is given to cupboards, and, I, as in houses of this kind storing space is always inadequate, they will no doubt be welcomed by tenants. Under the staircases there are also cupboards, those on the ground floors in some cases large enough to hold a pram.

CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT

Construction varies according to sites and available materials. On one site it even proved necessary for avoiding delay to make roofs and floors of two different types. For the same reason the central office had to prepare complete sets of working drawings for 3 in. as well as 2⅝ in. bricks. The walls are brick on all seven estates; their finishes vary. Windows are metal, roofs fire-resisting and slightly sloping. Floors are fire-resisting too. To save wood, skirtings have been made of painted cement, and draining boards of asbestos covered cement. Floors are asphalt screeding with either linoleum or paint finish. Interior walls are finished in plain light distempers for economy's sake. Heating is by open fires except in one bedroom, where a gas or electric fire has been built in. Cooking can be done by gas or electricity in the kitchen, if the tenant provides his own cooker. Stoves are available in all living rooms. Hot water in the houses is from combination stoves, in the flats from gas or electric heaters.



5

6

7

5, the porches, the chief decorative feature of the houses, combine simplicity with a great delicacy of treatment. The glass bricks are especially happy. They give, whether by sunlight playing on them, or by electric light shining through them, sparkle and warmth to the otherwise somewhat forbidding concrete framework. 6 is another example of the stepping of semi-detached units up a hill. The flat roofs leave the view across the plain unimpeded to all tenants. 7, the central group of terraces of Scheme Two. 8, staggered semi-detached units, introduced in order to give better aspect and more privacy.

8

SESSIONS HOUSE

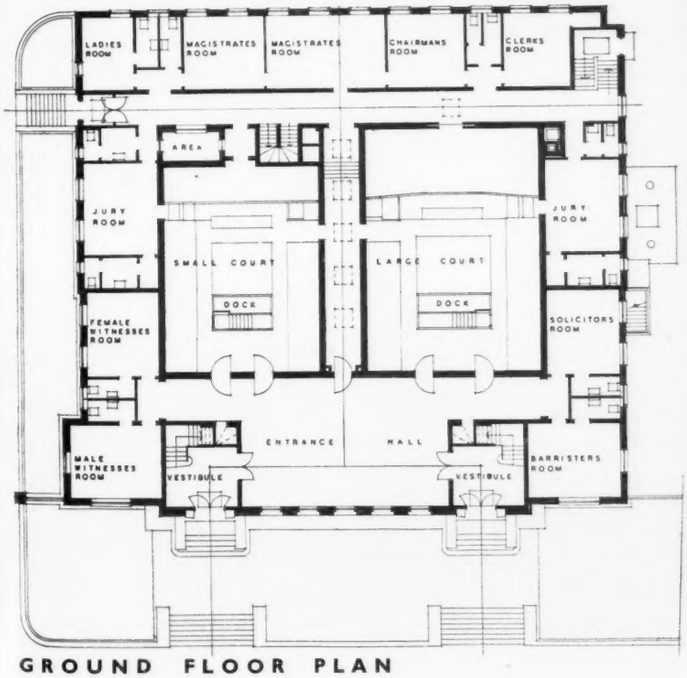
C. G. STILLMAN

SITE—A county town near the south coast, of about fifteen thousand inhabitants.

PLANNING—Two Benches had to be provided for with accommodation—a Petty Sessions Court, and a larger court for Quarter Sessions. The two courts are

[continued on page 62]

1, the magistrates' bench in the Quarter Sessions Court. The furniture and panelling are waxed Austrian oak, the chair coverings red leather.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

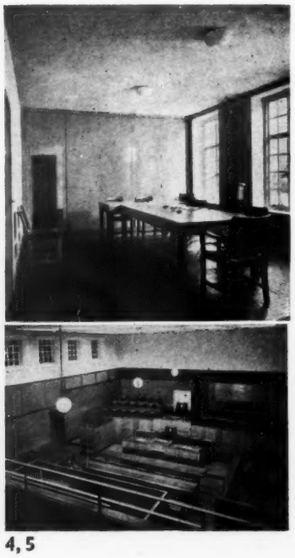
1

2

placed in the centre of an almost square one-storied building, to the left and the right of a corridor, and surrounded on all sides by ancillary rooms so as to eliminate street noises. The front has two symmetrical entrances, opening into two vestibules. From these, doors lead into the large entrance hall, and staircases direct up to the public galleries of the two courts. The public is thus kept out of the entrance hall and the usual muddle avoided between the witnesses (whose rooms are to the left), the barristers and solicitors (whose rooms are to the right) and the public. The same principle (so often neglected in court buildings) of keeping strictly separate the various groups of people who use the building has dictated the arrangement of the rooms for chairman, magistrates and clerks at the back, with a special entrance from the side, and connected with the entrance hall only by means of the corridor between the two courts. The jury rooms are placed by the sides of the two courts, with direct access to the jury boxes. The cells and escort room in the basement also have separate and direct staircases up into the docks.

CONSTRUCTION AND FINISHES—The building is of brick with floors and roof of reinforced concrete. The two main entrances are Clipsham stone with natural teak doors. The two Benches have panelling of waxed Austrian oak to the height of approximately seven feet. Above this dado there is a zone with sound insulation at the back of light brown textile panels. The walls higher up are plastered beige. There are no opening windows. Lighting is obtained from thick glass lenses in concrete framing, placed in the flat roofs and high up in the walls. The entrance hall has rough-plastered beige walls, a buff-coloured ceiling with inset geometrical decoration in light grey, green and slate-blue, teak doors and black and beige composition flooring.

3



4, 5

2, the lofty entrance hall with its five tall windows, the centre of the front. The walls are beige, the inset geometrical panels pale grey, green and slate-blue. The floor is black and cream. The natural teak door at the back of the picture leads to one of the two symmetrical vestibules. 3, the main (west) front. The steps to the terrace are of Anston stone, the terrace pavement of black and cream artificial stone in a chequered pattern, the plinth of the building and the entrance surrounds of natural Clipsham stone. The county coat of arms is incised above the doors. 4, one of the jury rooms. 5, the larger court, with its oak panelling and windows of glass lenses in concrete framing.

Ruskin in the first paragraph of the first chapter of his *Seven Lamps of Architecture* introduces architecture as something different from " a wasp's nest, a rat hole, or a railway station." Railways and their buildings were a thorn in his flesh that never ceased to torture him. Later in the same book he comes back to them and says that " the iron roofs and pillars of our railway stations are not architecture at all," because " true architecture does not admit iron as a constructive material "—let alone as a material to be exposed in facades. Now Ruskin's *Seven Lamps*, published in 1849, became for the whole of the second half of the nineteenth century the gospel of architectural theory in England.

This fact meant tragedy. It silenced all that was progressive and adventurous. So much so that the few writers with a true feeling for the architectural possibilities of iron and other new materials are now completely forgotten. Thomas Harris is one of them, perhaps the most interesting. He belonged to the generation after Ruskin's, the generation of Morris and Norman Shaw. His *Victorian Architecture* came out in 1860, his maturer *Three Periods of English Architecture* in 1894. In the *Three Periods* he wrote : " The construction of our buildings has practically become distinct from, and out of touch with the architecture ; indeed, if the present state of things continues much longer the engineer will construct and the architect will only case and decorate the carcase, the result being the extinction of the art of architecture. We are living in an age of iron. Metal seems likely to be the most prominent building material of the future. The modern fighting-ship has grown as naturally from the requirements and out of the nature of the material used (iron) as was the case in the old ' three-decker.' And, strange to say, now that we have become accustomed to them, these iron monsters do not appear so ugly. And why ? Because they so exactly fulfil the object for which they were built, and being founded on truthful construction, they *must* give pleasure to the mind and ultimately to the eyes."

Try to visualise for a moment what might have been the course of English architecture, if the public had listened to Harris instead of Ruskin. It makes you giddy even to think of it. Yet it could not have happened. For Harris was a revolutionary only in his writings. Most of his buildings are tame, and personally he seems to have been an original, but not a true reformer. Still—he should be much more widely known than he is. The following article deals chiefly with Harris as a Victorian character, and the contrast between his buildings and his writings. His theory is however so important that an adequate appreciation of it would go far beyond the space of one article. We hope to be able soon to present at least a "florilegium " of quotations.

Thomas Harris

By Dudley Harbron

" Thus (to take the most obvious case first), the impelling force to most of the improvements effected in the arts of life, is the desire to increase material comfort ; but as we can only act upon external objects in proportion to our knowledge of them, the state of knowledge at any time is the impassable limit of the industrial improvements possible at the time ; and the progress of industry must follow, and depend upon, the progress of knowledge. The same thing may be shown to be true, though it is not quite so obvious, of the progress of the fine arts."

JOHN STUART MILL :
A System of Logic, 1846.

WHEN the ghostly figure of Thomas Harris was introduced to the attention of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the response was immediate—there was no such person.

Even in his lifetime the jest was as frequent, that Mr. Harris must have grown tired of reference to his name in company with that of Sarah Gamp : " A book with such a name on the title page and coming from Holborn naturally suggests the patroness of the excellent Mrs. Gamp, and the sensitive spouse of that lady . . . ," wrote a reviewer of one of his books ; for, Thomas Harris, F.R.I.B.A., F.San.I., was an author as well as an architect.

The truth is he was anything but ghostlike. Mr. Harry Batsford, who knew him—he designed Batsford's shop in Holborn, **8**—informs me that " he was a huge shaggy man with a big sombrero hat, rather scraggy beard and tremendous hooked nose, with a deep booming voice, and he could explode in a rather terrifying way." Not the sort of figure that any would forget who had ever encountered him. He was noticeable. He was notable. It is remarkable that he should apparently have been forgotten so soon. Undoubtedly he would have been surprised and grieved that his life-work should be ignored by posterity.

Seemingly Thomas Harris was like Napoleon —his own ancestor. He was born in 1830, where, when, and of whom, I know not ; nor do I know what old school tie he wore, or yet, in whose office he studied to become an architect.

That he was trained is quite plain ; in all probability by a man with revived gothic leanings ; that he learned his letters at some school is equally evident. For as soon as it was possible, namely when he was twenty-one years old—in 1851 (the significant year of the Great Exhibition)—he was elected an Associate of the Institute of British Architects.

The young architect was intrigued by the methods Joseph Paxton had employed to house the exhibits in Hyde Park. He liked the glass and iron pavilion. In this admiration he parted company with most of his colleagues. They disliked the glasshouse. Some of them could not grant it the name of architecture, because it had no architect. Mr. Paxton was a gardener. Harris had more acumen, he realized that the onlooker sees most of the game : that men who bring their free thinking minds to old problems occasionally light upon fresh solutions. What is more, he had the audacity to say so. Like Haydon, he risked " murdering his mother "—for the architect with the academician does not relish the possibility that the amateur may excel him through ignorance of the rules.

What Harris thought was this :—

" In 1851, a new departure in building was inaugurated by the adoption of iron as the structural material of the first exhibition building which equalled in point of size most of our cathedrals ; and, as might have been expected, it was the offspring of a non-professional man."

Harris reflected for some years upon the implications inherent in the fabric of the Crystal Palace. The upshot being that his thought materialized in a pamphlet styled *Victorian Architecture*, published by Bell and Daldy in 1860.

The theme of this book was set out in his own words. " This is an age of new creations ; steam power and electric communication, neither the off-shoot of any former period, but entirely new revolutionizing influences. So must it be in architecture if it is to express these changes." Having said this Mr. Harris soared into the realm of metaphor from which he descends at intervals. Long breathless sentences consume him :—

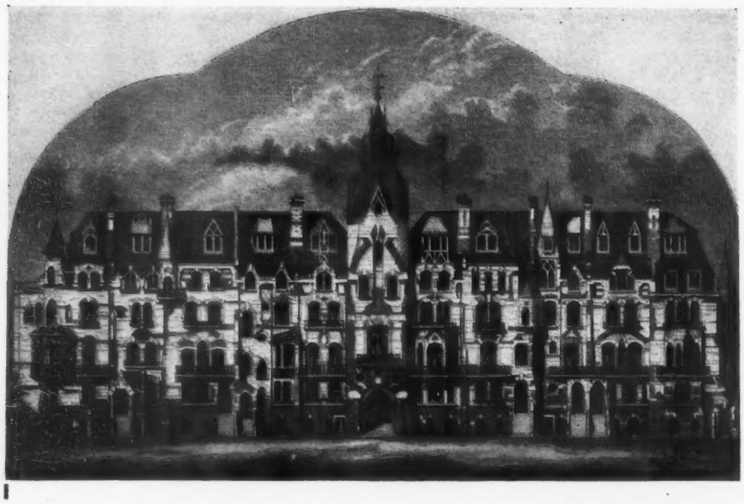
" The adoption of this or that particular period of art, however good and genuine in itself, will not suffice , no remodelling or adapting will do, but a total reproduction, arising out of and growing up with the advancement of the age ; an *indigenous* style of our own, embodying the *spirit* of the good of every age, and springing out of ourselves, . . . rather part of us than ours, . . . an honest, independent, simple expression of the true God-fearing English character."

Yet the sum of these intermittent flashes of mysticism and clear thinking amounts to an accurate appraisement of the architecture of 1860, as " nothing more than substantial *skeletons* (if as much) dressed up and disfigured by flimsy shams, *having neither flesh nor sinews, much less life*," and to the perception that—" the architecture of all past ages must be thoughtfully studied, to educate the mind and gain *the spirit and principles of application*, but not for mere unfeeling *stereotyped copying* . . ." The italics are his own.

To translate his ideas into reality, Harris and his friends proposed the erection at Harrow of a row of ten houses, five stories high, the centre of which were Lecture and Reading Rooms, and an Observatory ; thus revealing their confident anticipation that intelligent people would live in the apartments provided for them. If he had been active to-day he would provide a planetarium for each block of flats.

The group at Harrow, **1**, was designed on the system advanced in *Victorian Architecture*, " Uniformity of principle not of parts." The details of the construction were to be ruthlessly exhibited. No cornices or similar projections were to obtrude. All the materials were selected on philosophic grounds, the bases of which are detailed in his exciting book. The resultant design was not as different from the usual row of houses of the period as the verbal instructions promised. They look like the execution of one of those elaborate patterns to be built up by children in artificial coloured stones—once imported from Germany. The supreme attainment of all the trays in the box.

This originality did not preclude the election of Thomas Harris as a Fellow of the Institute four years later. Nor did his opinions prevent him exercising his ability in less adventurous ways. Indeed throughout his life he followed two paths : Words of adventure and works of



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4

Thomas Harris started with a rather hefty and heavy Gothic of his own. The terrace of houses at Harrow, **1**, *dates from* 1860. *Harris was proud of having all constructional details ruthlessly exhibited. To us the result does not look so very different from, say, a Burges design. Yet there is no doubt that in later years Harris's style grew more accommodating:* ***Bedstone Court,* 3**, *is of* 1884; ***Stokesay Court,* 2**, *also of the eighties.* **4** *is a view of Milner Field,* 1873, *a mansion he built for Mr. Titus Salt.*

caution. Even his affairs of the heart were patterned so—he died a bachelor.

Possibly drawn to seek out Mr. Harris at Gray's Inn Chambers, London, on account of his ideas, Mr. Titus Salt, the son of the great magnate and founder of Saltaire, commissioned the architect to design him a large house, **4**. This establishment was named Milner Field, from the site of that name overlooking the Valley of the Aire near Bingley. The whole was arranged on what the architect called the old English type of plan. It is a large bold Gothic revival house. Perhaps the style was selected by the owner as reminiscent of Methley (his childhood home). The architect preferred a later starting point. The estate was celebrated for extensive glass houses. The provision of these was a foible of the Salt family. Yet although Harris admired this kind of structure they were not designed by him.

The same year, 1873, as he had designed Milner Field, the architect was employed on the design and building of a large warehouse in Lisson Grove for M. B. Foster and Sons, **5, 6** and **7**. This was obviously a theme most congenial to Harris, and with slight reservations, probably imposed upon him from outside, was as executed an application of his theories. Though the Renaissance style was employed, "care was taken to preserve the commercial character of the building."

It was the materials and construction which fascinated the designer and influenced his design. The foundations were of a raft type, since the subsoil was found to be loamy sand. On this the building, divided into blocks separated by party walls, as required by the Building Act, was erected on columns from the basement. The suspended ground floor was of fireproof construction, on brick arches spanning between girders. *The Builder* (February 7, 1874) described them as follows:—

"The arches, having an average span of 10 ft., and a rise of 9 in., are constructed of two half-brick rings of Cowley stocks set in Portland Cement and washed sand, half and half, the first ring being well grouted with liquid cement before the other was turned over it. The haunches are filled in to a level of 4 in. above the crown of the arches with ground stone lime concrete; upon this are laid half battens, 5 ft. apart, as sleepers, the intermediate spaces being filled with dry sand. $2\frac{1}{2}$-in. battens, laid half an inch apart, secured to the sleeper battens constitute the floor, the $\frac{1}{2}$-in. spaces being also filled in with sand. This plan was adopted to lessen the vibration and concussion that would necessarily ensue from the rolling and pitching of heavy casks."

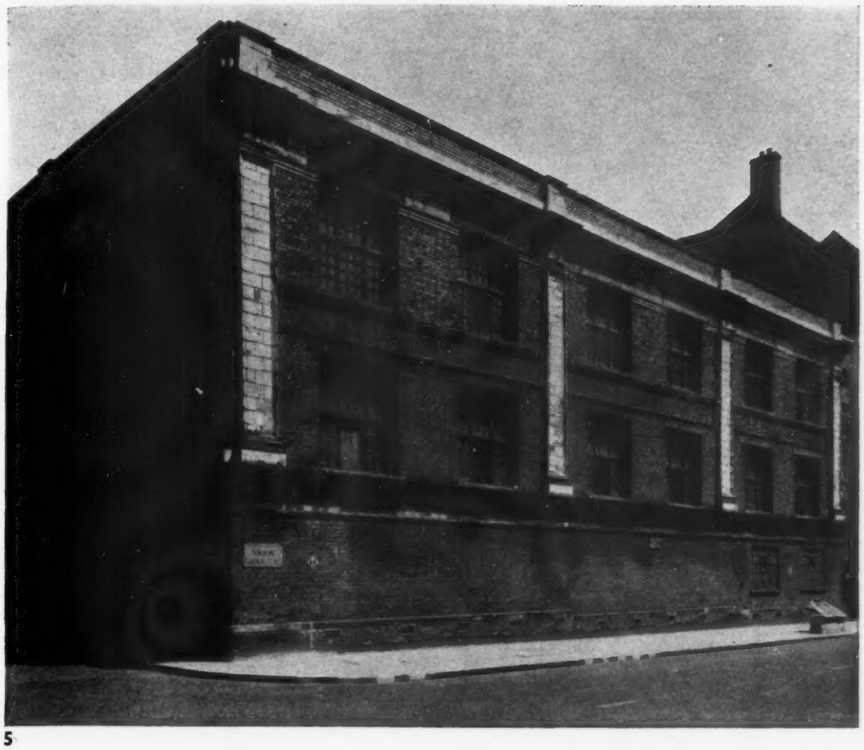
The ventilation of the building was an important element in its design. Air was admitted from the streets through grilles at the level of the ceiling of the ground floor, and was conveyed by ducts to the interior "at a lower level," *The Builder* says, "by smaller grated apertures, 6 ft. apart, which are closed by valves attached to a rod that passes along each wall, and is turned by a handle affixed to it at right angles, by moving which through a greater or less angle the quantity of air admitted can be adjusted to a nicety. The sets of valves—one on each of the principal fronts—are distinct, so that one set only may be used when it is desirable to admit the air from the coolest side. The vitiated air is drawn off by stout zinc tubes, running along the soffits of the vaulting, with perforated apertures in each bay, immediately over each gas-jet, to carry off the products of combustion as soon as they are generated, and at the same time to quicken the up-current. These tubes are carried up in the thickness of the main walls, opposite the inlets, to the top of the building, and are fitted with valves 5 ft. below the external grated apertures, so as to ensure the collection of columns of heated air. These valves are worked simultaneously from the floors to be ventilated by a simple contrivance of rods and cranks."

The building which still stands, is a remarkable witness to his insight.

In 1883, Harris was employed to alter the choir and add a semi-circular apse to the Church of St. Marylebone, that had been built from designs by Thomas Hardwick in 1819. It was to this church that Elizabeth Moulton Barrett had trundled in a cab with her maid Wilson to be married to Robert Browning in 1846.

In order to meet the cost of these extensions a grand Bazaar was held in the Portman Rooms in November, 1887. For this enterprise Thomas Harris designed the setting in counterfeit of Old Marylebone Gardens. His scheme was founded on a drawing by J. Donnewell, dated 1761. It displayed a long walk flanked by trees from which lamps were suspended, with little trellis alcoves between the trees and in the centre on the right hand a recessed space occupied by the bow-fronted orchestra. The stall holders wore eighteenth century costume. As a work of art the *decor* was admired. It was constructed in a substantial manner. At night George Grossmith gave a sketch "Holiday Hall" and there followed Mrs. Farley's Waxworks.

Harris not only designed the setting, he also wrote a pamphlet of twenty-three pages which gave—"A Historical and Descriptive Sketch of Marylebone Gardens collated from various sources." It was beautifully printed, bound in grey by the Chiswick Press, and served as a serious souvenir of the event and a record of



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5, 6, 7. *Harris's most interesting work is a warehouse built in* 1874 *for M. B. Foster and Sons in Lisson Grove. The structural directness and restrained Renaissance decoration can still be admired. The building rests on a raft foundation. The ground floor has iron columns and girders with shallow brick arches. The upper floors are of timber construction. Ventilation was of an especially ingenious kind. Harris was proud of such technical achievements, as one would expect the author of "Victorian Architecture" and "The Three Periods" to be.*

the researches he had made in order to get his background accurate.

Two years later he commenced the work Stokesay Court, Shropshire, a building that occupied him for several years, **2**. It was a house of which any other architect might have been proud. He compared the plan of this building later with Smithells Hall, Lancashire, to which it had a certain affinity, though separated by centuries. That the plan had altered, whereas the elevations remained substantially the same after three hundred years, troubled Harris. Reflecting later on this curiosity he wrote—"A man in the evening of his life, contemplating the portrait of the wife of his youth, who died young, seems to afford an apt analogy of the relationship existing between the evolved plan and the petrified elevation"—and yet the elevation contained some evidence of novelty.

This house was for J. Dent Allcroft, Esq., and is an ambitious structure. It is stone built in the Jacobean manner. Harris was naturally proud of his work although it transgressed his own canons. The architect presented to the R.I.B.A. Library a large volume of plans of each floor and many large photographs of the exterior and interior of the house. With his gift Harris enclosed a letter preserved in the book.

Although Harris had to accommodate himself to the prevailing fashions in external design, he never abandoned his belief in the soundness of his original conclusions, nor refrained from advancing them.

A client, for whom he had built a half-timbered Elizabethan mansion, desired him to incorporate a Louis XV interior to one of the rooms. She was greeted in words more emphatic than polite from the already overtried architect.

In London little of his work survives. Besides the warehouse in Lisson Grove, the most noteworthy group of houses is Nos. 58–60, Shaftesbury Avenue and No. 45, Wardour Street ("Chez Victor"), of 1889; 60, Shaftesbury Avenue is of a mildly Italianate character, 58, Shaftesbury Avenue and 45, Wardour Street, are structurally more vigorous with the triangular buttresses or pilasters so familiar in Webb's work.

Five years later, in 1894, he returned to the subject of a genuine architecture with fresh vigour. These later ideas were set out in a book —*Three Periods of English Architecture*. This was published by B. T. Batsford. Batsford was also the patron of Harris, for he had employed him to design the business premises situated at 94, High Holborn, **8**. Indeed, the figure of the architect is represented looking into the window of his bookselling client, in Raffles Davison's drawing of the elevation of the familiar shop.

He is still remembered as a frequent visitor to Holborn, where he would engage in argument with Mr. Harry Batsford's uncles, Bradley and Herbert, debate with Phené Spiers, or be familiar with Charles Latham, the celebrated photographer, whom Harris had the temerity to address as—"Old dot-and-carry-one." Latham was lame.

It was this robust Thomas Harris who returned to the fray after years of silence—in print—though of volubility in private. His new book, whose cryptic title-page forms the headpiece to this article, was divided into sections. 1. At work. 2. Asleep. 3. Awaking.

The reviews which followed the publication of his ideas were very mixed, the longest—in the *Architect*—was contemptuous. The brief were more flattering, the brief and the non-professional. It is not however with the views of his contemporaries that we are concerned. The book is more important. Much can be deduced from it. It is obvious that Harris was widely read; no less than fifty-seven different authorities are quoted. He had a strain of humour in his character ("he laughed sardonically and made weird puns") as displayed in the following quotation. If the Coronation chair were "accidentally destroyed it is probable that public opinion would demand that the new one should be as much like the old as it could be made; but it does not follow that we should like all our own chairs to be copies of it."

Further it is clear that he thought to some purpose about what he read. Moreover, he was gifted with a certain genius that enabled him to see beyond his immediate environment. Contrary to what is remembered of him, he is modest and endeavours to prove that the ideas which he advances are the common thinking and willing though not the practice of architects. (His own quandary!) In some cases they may have been anticipated. But in most respects Harris was farseeing and mystic.

"First the body, then the soul to inhabit it; the body, being a mechanical structure, can be reasoned about and contrived; but the soul must come, we know not whence, come it always has and will, adapted to, because growing out of the requirements of the structure. If this view be correct, it explains the reason why no *invention* of a new style is possible. We

can invent a new construction and the new style will grow out of it."

He seems to have been unable to condense his words to make them as efficient instruments as he desired his architecture to be. His literary style is baroque.

The last pages of his book outline in paragraphs the conclusions he had arrived at.

(*a*) That architects are not advancing with, or keeping abreast of the times, but are showing a tendency to hark back, even to the adoption of foreign styles of the past.

(*b*) That all endeavours to *invent* a new style, as such, must be abortive. It must grow out of *something*; it is therefore submitted that all question of a new style must be subordinated to the consideration of a *new construction* which will prove to be the "something" required.

(*c*) That, for reasons already given, metal seems likely to be the most prominent building material of the future; and as iron is, at present, the only metal which is offered to us in sufficient quantities at reasonable cost, it is spoken of as the building material of the future, while we are looking to the potentialities of science, which may give us, on the same conditions, others more suitable and more beautiful. Aluminium, which possesses, when alloyed, many characteristics peculiarly favourable to its use in this way, has already been referred to as non-corrosive, and marvellously light, so that it could be used much as timber is used. And, if so, what would have been the timber framing of a house in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries would be easy of execution in this material. Its sectional areas would probably have to be somewhat greater than those of iron, but this may be considered an advantage.

(*d*) That, in combination with this constructive material, various kinds of vitreous manufactures, mosaics, etc., or other durable and weather-resisting natural materials, such as granite or marble, should be employed as panel-filling, much in the same way as plaster, modelled, coloured, or plain, was applied to the half-timber construction above referred to, or as stained glass was used with stone in the later styles. But the use of these materials would probably be limited to towns, where they would help to minimize the necessity for repeated outside renovation and cleansing by presenting wall surfaces, upon which the smoke-laden atmosphere could leave no permanent defacement; whilst in the country, where nature has a free hand and executes her inimitable colouring in her own time and way, stone, brick, etc., might, at least for some time to come, hold their own as constructive materials, modified, as no doubt they would be, by the new methods coming in the train of the new architectural and constructive employment of metal.

(*e*) That, as may be inferred from (*d*), colour will hold a prominent position.

Finally, in general summary "any further development will be towards a trabeated style," and materials to which we are at present strangers will be used. He was right.

All this was indited from his late Georgian offices at 6, Southampton Street, Bloomsbury, or from 54, Carlton Hill, his comfortable home in a nice little street of post-Regency Villa houses off the Abbey Road, St. John's Wood.

By one of those peculiar coincidences which occur in life, in his old age, his first love lived in the Abbey Road—unaware of his proximity, as he of hers. When she ultimately heard of his last illness, she discovered his address, and notwithstanding the warning of her friends, insisted upon sending him an illuminated text:—

"*Very Great are His Mercies.*"

Cheered by this well-meant though cryptic token, Thomas Harris passed to his Valhalla on July 10, 1900.

The announcement of the funeral in *The Times* bore the Spartan admonition "No Flowers."

And in the architectural papers, his life work, when remembered at all, was dismissed as "an attempt to popularize the general use of chamfered and variegated brickwork."

The truth is far other—it is that "we can invent a new construction and the new style will grow out of it." The attempts which Harris made to put into action his theories were not encouraged. His work judged by the light of his own aspirations is only partially successful. The rest, side by side with that of other architects of his day—and assessed by their standards—is not disgraced.

He could not single-handed overcome the prejudices of his clients, nor pass the boundaries defined by John Stuart Mill.

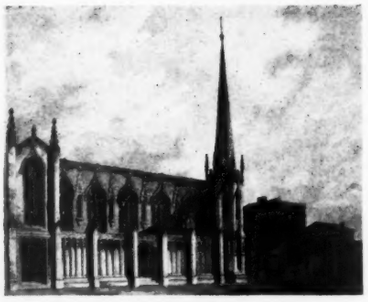
8 *Batsford's shop at* 94, *High Holborn, designed by Thomas Harris. The drawing is by T. Raffles Davison.*

BOMB DAMAGE TO NOTABLE BUILDINGS

BATH

ALL SAINTS' CHAPEL stood in the fields below Lansdown Terrace, from which it was reached by an almost rural lane. It was a pretty example of late 18th century Gothic, built as a "proprietary chapel" for the residents in the great terraces above. By the side of it is the substantial Vicarage, also Gothic. The photographs are both from the "West" (actually north) end, and show the gap made by the collapse of the small pinnacled tower on to the projecting porch. The architect of the chapel was John Palmer, the designer of Lansdown Crescent. The pierced balustrade and buttresses recall similar features at St. James's Church (page 68) with which Palmer was also associated.

ST. JAMES'S CHURCH replaced a Gothic building on this site in 1768-9, the architects being Jelly and Palmer. The west end and tower, however, are later. The curved walls seen in the picture on the left represent an early westward extension of the church, while the tower belongs to 1848, and is the work of a local architect, G. P. Manners, with his partner, Gill. It is a rather fine Italian tower, conspicuous in any view of the City, but has been severely damaged from top to bottom. The church was on the four-column plan with galleries. The order was Ionic and the columns, whose bases are seen in the interior photograph, supported an entablature with modillion cornice, from which sprang a coved ceiling with lantern lights.

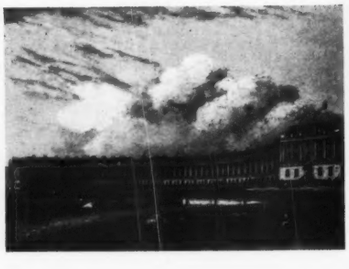


HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, King Street, was built as the New Free Church in 1821-22. The architect was a Bath man, James Lowder, and the style was Gothic of a pleasant kind—hard and neat, like a steel engraving of the time, with few pretensions to scholarship but plenty of character of its own. The view (above) shows the south aisle, looking towards the tower—or, rather, turret—which forms the most conspicuous feature in the facade towards King Street.

Churches

Royal Crescent

THE ROYAL CRESCENT, perhaps the most famous terrace of houses in England, has suffered to the extent of two houses having been gutted. The noble facade, with its elliptical parade of Ionic columns under an unbroken cornice, is virtually intact. The Crescent was designed by John Wood, the younger, and built between 1767 and 1775. The interiors, arranged to suit individual leaseholders, contain much fine plaster-work and marble fireplaces.



Lansdown Crescent and Lansdown Place, E

LANSDOWN CRESCENT, together with Lansdown Place East, Lansdown Place West and the adjoining Somerset Place, forms one of the most beautiful groups of domestic architecture in Bath. Lansdown Crescent itself (small picture) has been damaged, though not irreparably, by blast and splinters. Built about 1794, it is the work of John Palmer, one of the most active architects in Bath after the period of the Woods. In **LANSDOWN PLACE EAST,** seen in the larger picture from the east with part of Lansdown Crescent in the distance, damage has been more extensive. The ashlar facing, insufficiently bonded, has been stripped from the walls by blast, revealing the rubble construction and rough wooden lintels beneath. Also probably by John Palmer, these houses were built about 1800 and are unadorned except for the end house with its Ionic pilasters.

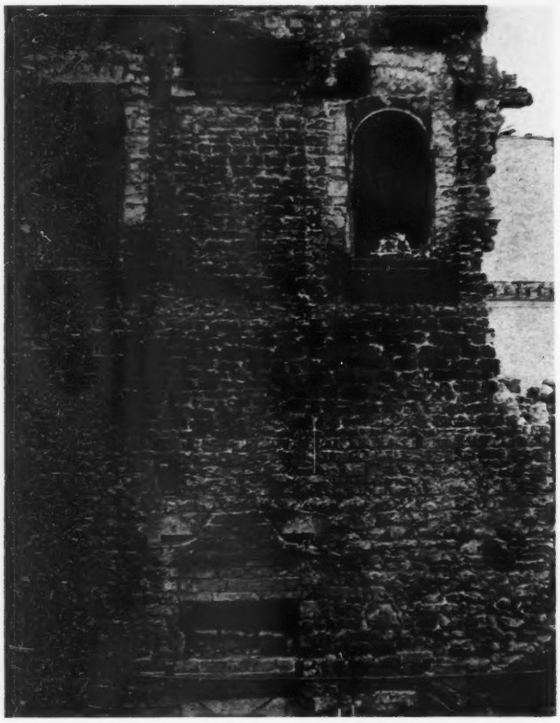
Somerset Place

SOMERSET PLACE is a terrace which continues the ribbon-like lay-out of the adjoining Lansdown series. Damage here has been severe. Many houses have been gutted, and several at the west end have collapsed. The photograph shows the centre-piece, with its unconventional pediment, more like the decoration to an engraved title-page than the crowning feature of a block of buildings. One of the great charms of these terraces is that they are actually terraced on a hill-side, with park-land sloping steeply down from the road.

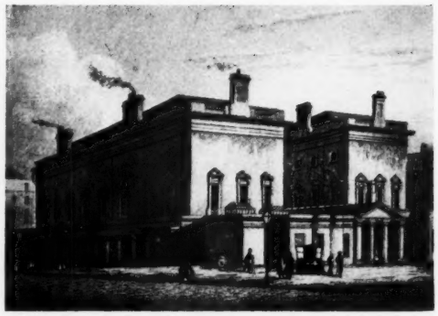
Queen Square

QUEEN SQUARE was projected by the elder John Wood in 1727, begun in 1728 and finished within seven years. Perfect symmetry was intended, with an elaborate Corinthian block along the north and subsidiary Ionic blocks on east and west. Apart from the magnificent north block, the designs were much modified. The south block, nearly half of which has been destroyed, was the last to be built, and the destroyed houses were the least in architectural importance.

Assembly Rooms



THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, whose principal interiors have been gutted, was built by John Wood the younger in 1769-71. There were two principal rooms, one in each of the two blocks seen in the engraving. The north block contained the ball-room, whose scarred walls are seen in the photograph on the left. In the south block was the smaller but more elaborately decorated tea-room, whose ornaments, as shown in the photograph above, partly survive. The third principal apartment was the octagon, which lay between the two blocks at the east end. Wood's combination of these interiors in a single plan was most skilful and practical. Shortly before the war, the Assembly Rooms came into the possession of the National Trust and were carefully restored by Mr. Mowbray A. Green. Their loss is probably the most serious which has occurred outside London.



BATH

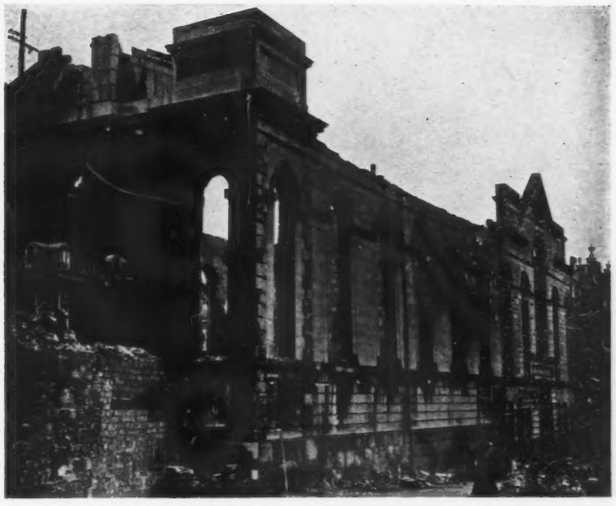
DOVER

ST. JAMES-THE-LESS is a church of Norman origin, with some early features still remaining. It was abandoned during the last century, when a florid modern church of St. James was erected; the old building, however, was vigorously restored and put once more into use. The damaged transept, seen in the illustration, is almost entirely modern work, and the church as a whole cannot be accounted of great architectural importance.

THE ROUND HOUSE is a pretty Regency villa standing between long rows of sea-side terraces and looking out across the channel, an intriguing incident in the panorama of Dover as seen from a channel steamer. It was built in the early nineteenth century for Mr. John Shipdem, who was chosen Town Clerk of Dover in 1791, and held the post, together with that of Register of Dover Harbour, for thirty-five years. The architect is unknown, but if it was not John Nash it was somebody who followed Nash's ideas very closely. The Round House bears a marked resemblance to two of his houses, particularly to the Casina he built for Richard Shaw, of Dulwich, in 1797–8. It had long been abandoned as a residence and, before the war, was in use as a Gospel Hall.

SWANSEA

THE MARKET was designed in 1889 and consisted of an enormous covered space within an ornate Renaissance shell. It was planned with a central meat and flower block round which was a continuous space for stalls, roofed with light iron and steel trusses of about 60 ft. span. The design was selected in competition, the architects being J. Buckley Wilson and Glendinning Moxham, of Swansea.



THE WESLEY CHAPEL is a curious witness of stray influences which have wandered into Wales from early nineteenth century England. The high attics, bracket cornices and rustications come from Barry's Italian revival, but the porch at the end harks back further, to Sir John Soane. The assertive gable thrown up over the main entrance is a native gesture. Wales had no tradition of professional architecture before the nineteenth century, and the study of a building such as this, if the facts attending its erection were known, would provide an interesting psychological footnote to Welsh history.

YARMOUTH

GREYFRIARS consists of two bays of the Friars' cloister, with some slight remains above, all dating from the thirteenth century, and hidden from public view until bombing opened them to the daylight. On the ground floor is a complete vault with wall-shafts and moulded capitals and ribs. Some of the upper part is seen in the illustration.

THE TOLLHOUSE is a secular medieval building of special interest because of its association with municipal government at least as far back as 1362. Parts of the building, however, are more than a century earlier than that. There is a hall, approached by an external staircase, substituted, presumably for a similar feature, in 1622. Below the hall is a prison with a separate entrance. A seventeenth century addition formerly existed over the passage-way on the right. The building was restored in 1885 and became a museum shortly afterwards.

NOTTINGHAM

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, part of which has been destroyed, was built in 1877–81 to comprise a public library, museum and lecture theatres, the whole forming part of a scheme for the education of the working classes. The architects were W. and R. Mawson, of Bradford, and the style they adopted rather resembles the Anglo-Venetian blend of Gothic invented by Sir Gilbert Scott. The College is a successful building in its high Victorian way, and the masonry, in warm Ancaster stone, is admirable.

ST. JOHN'S, Lean Side, was an "Early English" church designed by George Gilbert Scott with his partner, Moffat, and built in 1843–4. It thus belongs to Scott's early days, when he was struggling with the "true principles" and trying to forget the poor-law institutions and spiky suburban churches with which he began his amazing career. St. John's represented a substantial advance, but was still not quite the thing: the over-emphasised central lancet and trivial rose-window are witnesses of immaturity.

Cranbrook Mill

The Windmiller

By Thomas Hennell

SPEAKING of his old job, Mr. Bishop, who for twenty-five years was stone-dresser and miller's roundsman at Meopham, thus explained the windmill's principles :

" Some people fancy that the weight of those sails hangs all outside the mill. It doesn't, of course ; it all balances inside. All that weight rests equally on the neck and tail bearings of the windshaft that carries the sails. Then the framing of the cap, the *shears* and cross-pieces, spreads that weight equally all round the curb of the tower. So then, whichever way the cap is turned, the strain of the tower is always the same. The *wallow-wheel* and the upright drive (which take the power down from the brakewheel built on to the windshaft) have to balance just the same, not the least bit out of the upright and level. And then the stones must balance too ; the bed-stone must be fixed with spirit level, and the runner-stone spin level and even all the time. It was my business as stone-dresser to see that it did : always to dress the stones evenly." This conception of balance seems to be a very good basis for the understanding of a working windmill.

Mr. Bishop was speaking of our now dismantled smock-mill ; a mill, that is to say, with a wooden weather-boarded tower, and a small cap only large enough to house the windshaft, the brakewheel and the wooden brake which fits its circumference and is applied by leverage of a heavy beam upon it, the striking-gear, which opens and shuts the shutters of the patent-sails, and the gears from the fan-tail, which keep the mill always head into the wind. The fan-tail and the patent-sails are fairly simple, but very ingenious English inventions. Most of the Dutch windmills, whether smock or post-mills, are without either, so that the miller must spread and trim the canvas sails in the old-fashioned way, like a sailor ; and, with an eye to the weather-cock, lead her into the wind by his own exertions, whether with capstan and chain or by application of his broad shoulders or back upon the tail-pole.

A few English mills are still like that, and in these, especially in the smaller post-mills, the principle of balance is essential, and is beautifully observed, so that the miller can move one easily, sails, stones and all, even with fifteen tons of grain in the hoppers. For the post-mill (which is the oldest type, being recorded from the twelfth century) turns entirely, with all its working parts, upon a fixed pillar of oak, whose base is supported by cross-trees and braced by quarter-bars. The ends of the cross-trees may rest upon brick or stone buttresses ; and are often enclosed by a round-house, to protect them from the weather and to act as a convenient store. But this round-house does not bear any part of the weight. Such mills are entered from outside by a ladder, and they contain two or more upper floors. In the roof there is sometimes a narrow storage loft with the long windshaft, which is inclined upwards at an angle of fifteen degrees, and usually two pairs of stones balanced abreast, or fore-and-aft (when there must be a second driving-wheel on the windshaft). Sometimes there are three pairs, two forward and one in rear. On the lower storey are the flour-bolt and the smutter for cleaning grain before it is ground, also the governors which control the space between the stones. In the processes of cleaning, grinding and dressing, the grain or meal may have to ascend and descend several times. It descends by gravity ; to draw it up there is the sack-hoist. The sack-hoist can be set in motion (when the mill is running) by pulling a cord on either floor ; this, by means of a lever, tightens a belt upon the revolving windshaft, and so sets in motion a horizontal roller with iron *strakes*, on which the sack-chain is wound up. As the sack is thus raised from floor to floor it opens a pair of wooden flaps with leathern hinges, which fall together after the sack has passed for they can only open upwards. Even in the simplest post-mill, it was the miller's pride that the mill did " all the work."

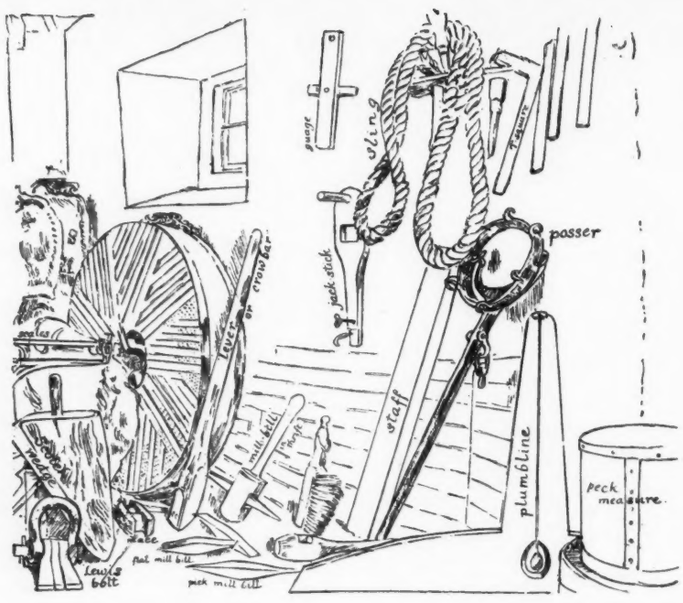
Most of the old millwrights' work was in wood ; massive and strong yet very accurate. The stocks and whips of a mill-sail are tapered

and not square in section; each mortise and stay for the bars which form the sail is set at a differing angle, so as to form the hollow twist of the whole surface, cutting into the wind at the outer and leading edge, throwing it back at the inner edge near the cross. And this form, called the *weather*, was established and perfected by generations of millwrights, who had their rules for sails of given length and breadth, long before Smeaton expressed the movements of air currents and the theory of mill-sails in scientific terms. The miller and millwright knew what the sail should be, though they could not give a reason. The mathematician could check and confirm, but he could not improve on practical perfection.

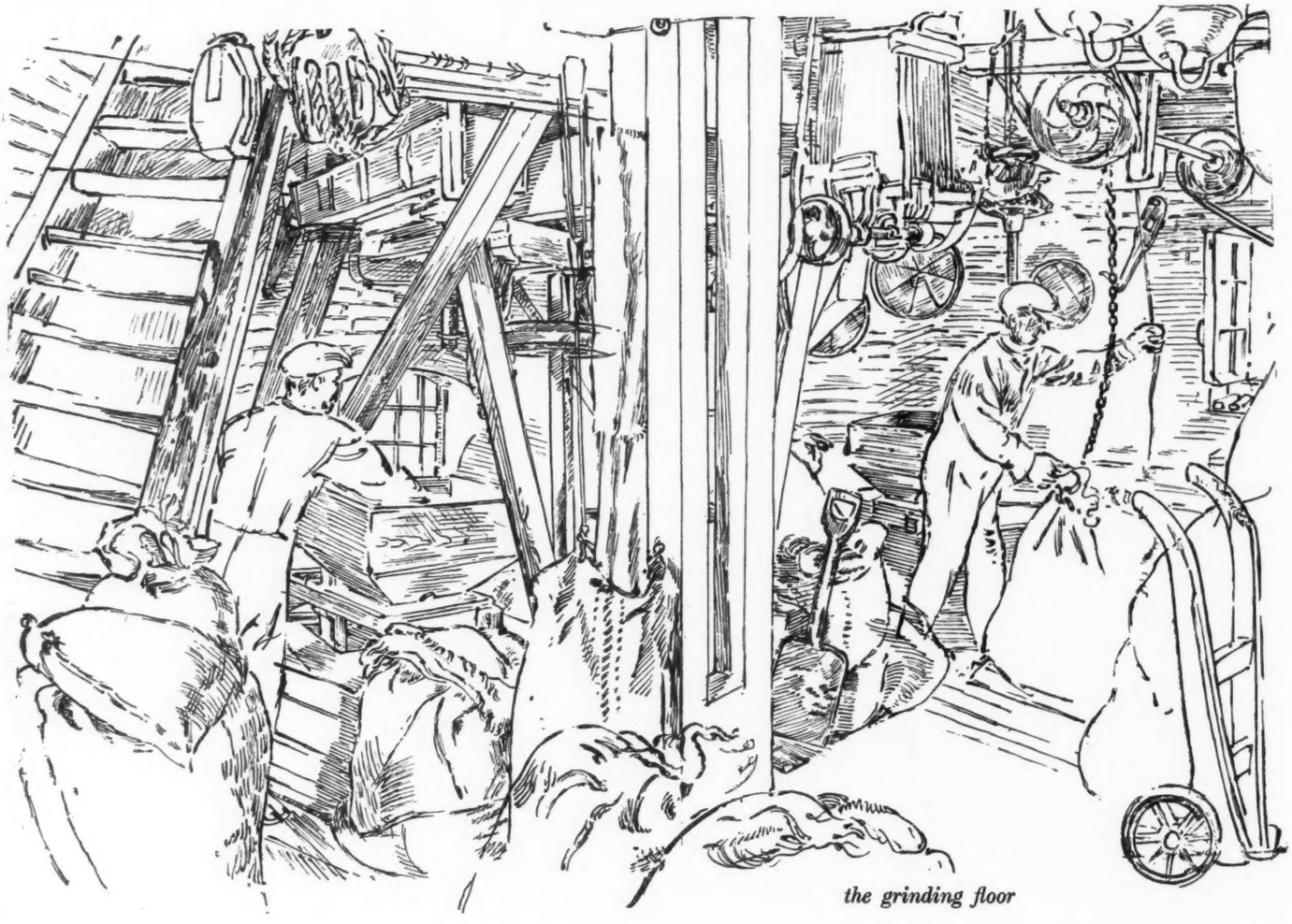
The gears were formerly of wood throughout, and even now are as often of wood as of iron; the two commonly working together. As has been mentioned above, only the upper stone moves. The mill-cogs are of some hard wood such as hornbeam or apple-wood; they run more silently and smoothly than iron to iron.

When the mill is grinding, the corn is poured into square hoppers, the bases of which are a foot or more above the stones. From the tapered bottoms of these it is allowed to run in a steady stream (controlled by shutter and cord) into the *shoe*, a long and sloping receptacle, which shakes it, as seed is shaken from one's hand, into the opening or *eye* of the runner-stone. The stones are covered in with wooden casings or *vats*, which can when necessary be dismantled, and upon these is a wooden trestle called the *horse*, from which the shoe is slung and vibrated by the movement of the spindle.

The runner-stone must be made more hollow near the centre than towards its circumference, otherwise the grain, being suddenly flattened instead of ground, will soon clog it. So then the meal is driven out centrifugally from the stones, the vats prevent it from dispersing; and falling down a wooden spout, sometimes with a canvas sleeve, it is collected in a sack on the floor below. Two sorts of stones are commonly found in old mills, namely, Derbyshire or Peak millstone, and French burr. The latter is esteemed for wheat-grinding; a pair would cost about £30. It is a creamy-brown stone; it is not found in large masses, and so these stones are composite, built up from polygonal pieces which are cemented together and bound with strong hoops.



the miller's tools



the grinding floor

upper floor with spur-wheel, quant, vats and flour-bolt

The stone is dressed in eight quarters or *harps*; there are eight long channels running nearly at a tangent from the *eye* to the circumference, and four short grooves into each main channel. The Derbyshire stones are "stitched" with a pointed *mill-bill*; they need re-dressing almost every week if in daily use; the French stones, which are kept for wheat-grinding, are dressed with more care but less often; they are also much more durable.

The stone-dresser has a gauge for the depth at the eye, and *rules* or *splines* of wood for the channels. To ensure that the stone-spindle shall run true with the bed-stone he tests it with a jack-stick, in which the quill of a feather passing through its outer end should touch lightly all round the bed-stone. Also there is the staff, a rather massive piece of straight and level wood, whose surface being rubbed with a brick of Venetian red is passed over the face of the stone; this marks the high spots which are dressed down until the whole face of the stone is worked level.

To continue in the words of Mr. Bishop, the stone-dresser: "The front edge of each channel comes up square, and the back runs off, but it won't do to make it square and sharp; you must take a bevel off the cutting edge. That French stone is so hard it would break your heart to dress it except in just the right way. You dress it in stitches, just like the rows down those cord trousers of yours. The runner has to balance in the *mace* of the spindle; then it won't do to make it fit too closely there. The runner should be made more hollow round the eye, then it grinds the corn and don't get clogged up. But you work the bed-stone on the level all over."

"You use some kind of straight-edge smeared with ink, don't you, to get the surface level?" I ventured. "Oh, yes, I has my rule and my splines and jack-staff, and marks it true with these, then works it off with the mill-bill." (The *bill and thrift* is a tool of a kind between pick and chisel. The blade is a steel wedge tapered square at either end and fitted, somewhat like a plane-iron, into a slot in the end of a wooden handle called the *thrift*, which has a long round grip. It is repeatedly raised and let fall along a predetermined line; thus each stitch is renewed.)

"My master Killick told me all the secrets of the trade before I left him," added the stone-dresser. "He made a blend of seven wheats, you could get them all then, and there was nothing to touch it. I used to eat white bread then just like cake. Well, now I eats a wholemeal loaf every day, but it's not what we used to make, and don't go so far."

Treasure Hunt

By Peter F. R. Donner

Ninety-nine per cent. of the buildings which surround us are of the last hundred years, that is of the "Coburg" and "Windsor" styles. The object of these articles is to draw attention to the characteristics of these two surprisingly unnoticed styles in their various stages and idioms, and to tempt readers into similar hunting expeditions in their own districts. They will find that, wherever the game is played—even in so unpromising a street as the one chosen this time—it pays in entertainment as well as enlightenment.

SPECIMEN No. 1

The typical Ernest Newton bay window and gable of c. 1890—used by the suburban builders of twenty or thirty years later.

If you have joined in previous Treasure Hunts, there cannot be any difficulty for you in placing this overhanging tiled gable with its bay-window beneath. The same mixed Ernest Newton–Charles Annesley Voysey tradition appears here as in the Eton Avenue houses of the June Treasure Hunt. The tiling, to repeat what has been said there, was a favourite treatment of walls and gables with Newton (who had seen his master Norman Shaw use it with gusto). The roughcasting of walls was a favourite with Voysey. He has it in his earliest works of before 1890, as Newton has the tiled gable. The wooden brackets supporting the gable are, however, of so distressingly feeble a shape that they give away our specimen as a mere builder's job. Taking into consideration the usual time-lag between the creative architect's conception of a motif and the suburban builder's use of it, we may say that a date earlier than say 1905 or 1910 is out of the question for this house.

Ernest Newton, c. 1885-90.

SPECIMEN No. 2

Infinite are the permutations of Newton and Voysey features in the hands of the late Coburg and early Windsor builder. Only a few yards

The typical Voysey buttress of c.1890—again used by the suburban builders much later, and coupled most awkwardly with a big corner window that betrays knowledge but no understanding of the idiom of contemporary architecture.

C. F. A. Voysey: "*Norney*," *Cobwall*, 1897

from the house just examined stands a pair of semi-detached houses with these buttresses against its corners. They are unmistakable. Voysey loved them and nobody but Voysey and his closest followers. However, no sensible architect who had learnt Voysey's lesson would have put buttresses so close to such large windows as can be seen here. The arrangement is out of all proportion and destroys the feeling of weight that the buttresses should convey and the feeling of lightness and air to be expressed by the windows. These incidentally hint in a pathetic way at the real date of the house. They would certainly not have been pushed so far towards the corner, if their designer had not had in his mind some blurred recollection of the wide corner windows of to-day's style. So I cannot imagine this house to be earlier than about 1925, in spite of the fact that all other details look as though they might comfortably belong to 1905-1910.

SPECIMEN No. 3

A Shavian oriel, but with the Palladian tripartite arrangement which had been so dear to Norman Shaw reduced to a feeble curve, and placed close to a vaguely mediæval low semi-circular porch, copied from Voysey.

Take the bay-windows on the ground floor as an instance. The treatment of the panes in the centre part goes back to Norman Shaw's favourite "Ipswich" motif. It had been adopted by dozens of direct and indirect followers of his. But this niggly version of it is, if I am not mistaken, absent in the work of the better architects, though very popular with the builders. Moreover, as to our specimen, the dimly Georgian flavour of the weak curve stands especially ill at ease side by side with the intended roughness of the somewhat mediæval-looking entrance recess. Now such entrances under heavy semi-circular arches had been seen in several Voysey houses. There they look in place, an integral part of a free, generous and romantic composition. Never would Voysey have used such a motif symmetrically right under a big gable in the centre axis of a building.

C. F. A. Voysey: "*The Pastures*," *North Luffenham*, 1901

SPECIMEN No. 4

This grouping of two semi-detached houses under one big gable as though they were not two houses does not seem to appear in the work of good architects, but is very frequent in the suburbs. The funny little oriel is a descendant of Shaw's.

This gable worries me altogether. I cannot find any instance, in the work of any of the good architects of the day, of such a single gable binding together a pair of semi-detached houses. What more sensitive designers apparently have done is either to have separate gables to each house above the main rooms, placing entrances and staircases towards the middle, or at least, if the gable is to stress the centre axis of the pair, two separate ridges. Thus Voysey had treated several houses. One example is illustrated above. I could well imagine that the sham unity of two houses created by the one big gable in common to both, was against the grain of architects who had gone to the Tudor cottage for inspiration because of its soundness and unsophisticated honesty. Sham half-timbering, of course, was even more distasteful to them. It is amusing to see how, in our specimen, a little oriel of Norman Shaw origin has been stuck into the half-timbered gable. Since Voysey had used the same pretty oriels in early houses of his, our specimen may incidentally be of Voysey and not of Shaw extraction.

?

Who can supply examples in the work of good early twentieth century architects of two semi-detached houses being bound together by one big central gable?

A more satisfactory grouping of two semi-detached houses: *C. F. A. Voysey at Normanton*, 1904

Norman Shaw, Swan House, Chelsea Embankment, 1876

SPECIMEN No. 5

Sham half-timbering and a senseless Tudor porch.

The last of the houses picked out in this particular street of this particular suburb, is the most depressing of the four. There is no sense in this scrappy half-timbering of the first floor centre, and the Tudor arch of the entrance is a motif so slavishly taken over from the past as no self-respecting domestic architect of that date would have done —at least not in such a context.

SPECIMEN No. 6

A depressing Jacobean gable of hardly more body than in the earliest days of the Elizabethan revival. For the builders of this house Shaw, Voysey and all their contemporaries have worked in vain.

The ill-advised builder of this house has altogether, it seems, gone back to models preposterously out of date. This comes out above all in the Jacobean gables. You can take Loudon's *Encyclopædia* once again and you will find exactly the same gable and exactly the same circular window. And yet this house can hardly be earlier than the others. They all stand close to one another off the Golders Green Road. Now this dates them. On maps of the district it can be seen how, when the Underground was extended to Golders Green in 1907, the Golders Green Road was still a lane through the old Green. Side-streets like ours appear developed for the first time on maps of about 1923, and even then not completely. So the stage represented here is suburban 1910-1925, based on what had been new in 1890-1905. No other style is so frequently met around all the cities of England. This is why it deserves careful analysis.

Loudon's Beau Idéal of a villa, 1833

ANTHOLOGY

Furnishing for Love

The section of the boudoir in which Henri found himself, described a circular line, softly gracious, which was faced opposite by the other perfectly square half, in the midst of which a chimney-piece shone of gold and white marble. He had entered the room by a door on one side, hidden by a rich tapestried screen, opposite which was a window. The semicircular portion was adorned with a real Turkish divan, that is to say, a mattress thrown on the ground, but a mattress as broad as a bed, a divan fifty feet in circumference, made of white cashmere, relieved by bows of black and scarlet silk, arranged in panels. The top of this huge bed was raised several inches by numerous cushions, which further enriched it by their tasteful comfort. The boudoir was lined with some red stuff, over which an Indian muslin was stretched, fluted after the fashion of Corinthian columns, in plaits going in and out, and bound at the top and bottom by bands of poppy-coloured stuff, on which were designs in black arabesque.

Below the muslin the poppy turned to rose, that amorous colour, which was matched by window curtains, which were of Indian muslin, lined with rose-coloured taffeta, and set off with a fringe of poppy-colour and black.

Six silver-gilt arms, each supporting two candles, were attached to the tapestry at an equal distance, to illuminate the divan. The ceiling, from the middle of which a lustre of unpolished silver hung, was of a brilliant whiteness, and the cornice was gilded. The carpet was like an Oriental shawl, it had the designs and recalled the poetry of Persia, where the hands of slaves had worked it. The furniture was covered in white cashmere, relieved by black and poppy-coloured ornaments. The clock, the candelabra, all were in white marble and gold. The only table there had a cloth of cashmere. Elegant flower-pots held roses of every kind, flowers white and red. *In fine*, the least detail seemed to have been the object of loving thought. Never had richness hidden itself more coquettishly to become elegance, to express grace, to inspire pleasure. Everything there would have warmed the coldest of beings. The caresses of the tapestry, of which the colour changed according to the direction of one's gaze, becoming either all white or all rose, harmonized with the effects of the light shed upon the diaphanous issues of the muslin, which produced an appearance of mistiness. The soul has I know not what attraction towards white, love delights in red, and the passions are flattered by gold, which has the power of realizing their caprices. Thus all that man possesses within him of vague and mysterious, all his inexplicable affinities were caressed in their involuntary sympathies. There was in this perfect harmony a concert of colour to which the soul responded with vague and voluptuous and fluctuating ideas.

HONORÉ DE BALZAC

The Girl with the Golden Eyes (*A Eugène Delacroix, painter*) 1834–35.
(Translated by Ernest Dowson—L. Smithers, 1896).

MARGINALIA

National Buildings Record

The first Report of the N.B.R. has been published. It tells of a successful year and holds out a promise of more beneficial work, if support can be secured. The aim of the N.B.R. is threefold: the maintenance of a Central Index of records of buildings, the recording of war-damaged buildings, and the recording of buildings before they are damaged. During the past year much has (with the assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation) been specially photographed of war-injured or specially vulnerable architecture. Readers of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW will remember many N.B.R. photos illustrated in the REVIEW'S Bomb Damage pages. The Central Index is being worked on by the N.B.R. with the aid of 328 architects throughout the country. An index of records runs parallel. The Architectural Graphic Records Committee has placed its index of about 50,000 drawings and engravings, and the Courtauld Institute its Conway Library of about 100,000 photographs at the N.B.R.'s disposal. Co-operation has been established with the Royal Commissions on Historical Monuments for England and Wales, the Central Council for the Care of Churches, many architectural and archæological societies, the Royal Photographic Society and its architecturally-minded members, etc. The last pages of the report contain a summary of how the N.B.R. can be assisted by local committees, architects, draughtsmen, photographers, libraries, museums and private people of "some leisure but no special technical skill." Its address is All Souls College, Oxford.

Basil Champneys, 1842-1935

The fact that so many among us still remember Basil Champneys makes us forget that he belonged wholly to the nineteenth century. His principal works date from the nineties. Their historical position is similar to that of his contemporaries Sir T. G. Jackson and J. D. Sedding. The three form, to put it as briefly as possible, an intermediate generation between that of Shaw and Webb and that of Mackmurdo and Voysey. Of the three Jackson was the most conservative, Sedding the most progressive. Champneys stands a little dimly between them. Most of his works do not depart to an easily noticeable extent from antiquarianism. This applies especially to the most famous of all, the Rylands Library at Manchester, completed in 1905. But those that are more original show picturesque charm and inventiveness. Examples illustrated on the following page are the Quincentenary Building of Winchester College and the Indian Institute in Oxford. Champneys came from an old family of wealthy clergymen. He was educated at Charterhouse and Trinity, Cambridge, and always maintained the attitude of the highly cultivated amateur. Lethaby would certainly not have accepted him amongst his "hards."

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Sir,—Recent copies of your journal would be much appreciated by members of this Association in the armed forces. The correspondence and discussion now appearing in the technical press on the organisation of the present building programme and of post-war reconstruction should be made as widely known as possible to all building technicians. Not only would their views be of value, but decisions are being taken which affect their future, and are therefore of great interest to them.

Realizing that many are unable to afford journals on their army pay, the Forces Committee of the A.A.S.T.A. has, for the past twelve months, been collecting and circulating the leading building periodicals to members serving at home and overseas.

May I appeal to your readers to send us their copies of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW when they have finished with them? We shall be glad to forward them by post to individual members who have asked to be included in the scheme.

Yours faithfully,
J. M. WOOTTON
(For Forces Committee, A.A.S.T.A.)

The Editor
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Sir,—I was most impressed by the dramatic cover of your April issue and its promise of an architectural survey of Canada. However, the material which followed was most disappointing.

Mr. Adamson's preface struck what I believe to be the right note, that of regionalism, with his reference to ". . . the fishing communities of the maritimes . . . the old villages of the St. Lawrence . . . the small prairie centres with wooden elevators that stab the horizon . . . the early settled towns sitting in a patterned wood of trees . . ." But nowhere was this idea of regionalism developed. What followed was Baedeker or a dull geographic.

Not only were the photographs of the picture post card and travel folder variety, but they seemed to bear no relation to the accompanying text nor to each other. That monstrous railway hotel in Quebec City appears over and over again, and while it may be significant as "hotel architecture," it is Quebec's greatest blot, distorting the whole scale and line of that very distinctive town. Pictures of bush towns, Baie Comeau, Ocean Falls, Port Radium, which have a common pattern, were scattered across the pages while important references to buildings occurred of which there were no views.

In a country of vast distances such as Canada, there is to be found the regional character of the basic producing community and the part regional and part standardised character of the major control towns, the financial and distribution centres. The architectural character of the base town lies in its unconscious manifestation of social and economic life. Such small places in Canada never established a canon of taste and seldom recognised one, but they have an architectural character. Quebec stone masonry, Ontario red brick, clapboards in the west, each contribute to a regional statement.

The control towns are more pretentious and span the styles from baroque to constructivism. I saw no adequate representation of the eighteenth century public buildings which still stand in Quebec, no public building or country mansion of the neo-classic period, which in Canada denotes the consolidation of the English Conquest, no Victorian Gothic church or town mansion such as are to be found throughout the early industrialised sections of Ontario.

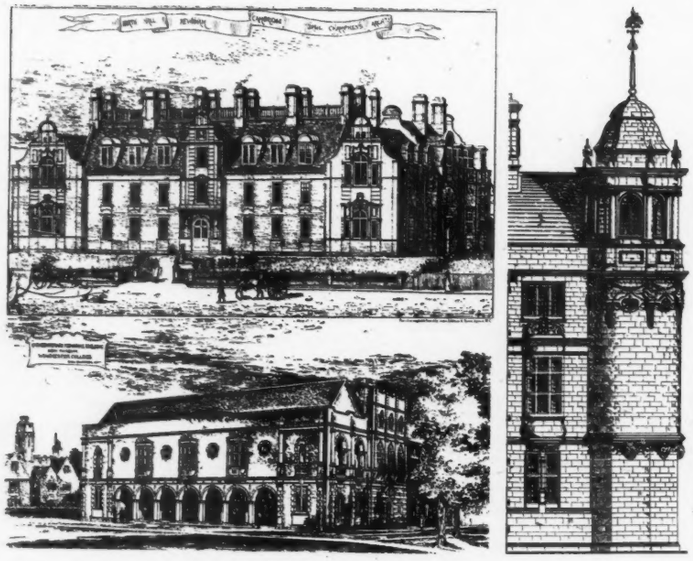
Finally, there was no work shown, despite the welter of bridges and factories, of the one firm which practises in Toronto and which has a real appreciation for a modern æsthetic, nor was any discussion made of the fact that the greatest amount of functional building in the country is being done by that most conservative body, the French Catholic Church in Quebec.

I do realise that publishing an architectural magazine under war conditions is no simple matter and your issues have maintained a remarkably high standard. But it so happens that I am most interested in Canada and in its architecture where one can read so much of history and development. I did feel bound to make some remarks about a subject which I feel has been unnecessarily maltreated.

WILLIAM S. GOULDING.
Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

Here is Mr. Adamson's reply:

Sir,—The Canadian number of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, of which your correspondent, Mr. Goulding, dis-



BASIL CHAMPNEYS

Three of the best and most characteristic works of Basil Champneys, the centenary of whose birth falls into this month. The North Hall of Newnham College, top left, dates from 1881 *and shows complete dependence on Shaw's Dutch Renaissance. The corner tower of the Indian Institute in Oxford on the other hand* (1883-96) *is quite a bold mixture of Tudor and Wren motifs. The same blend is made up even more successfully in the Quincentenary Memorial Building of Winchester College, bottom left* (1895). *The Tudor oriels are placed above the Wren arcade with an admirable sense of what may be just permissible of aesthetic licence. Champneys's best-known later works, the Rylands Library, Manchester (completed in* 1905) *and Bedford College, Regents Park (completed in* 1913) *are of far less adventurous design.*

approves, was prepared in Canada for a spread almost one-third larger. An order of the Paper Controller forced the editors, I understand, to telescope the material, and to uncover evidences of cutting, patching and elimination, which Mr. Goulding noticed. Of course I cannot say whether the original lay-out would have satisfied him and readers any better, but it would have eliminated some of the minor points of criticism made. 24 pages is not much coverage for a country 338 years old, and larger in area than all but two others. I myself thought that the editors did an excellent job of telescopery, so if there is general criticism the main round is on me.

In defence of Mr. Goulding's principal criticism that I did not treat Canadian culture "regionally," I must point out that I did send over material that could not be used. If anybody is really interested in "unconscious manifestation of social and economic life" you might even yet print a photograph of Kirkland Lake that I sent you. As for Canada's "regions" there are four completely isolated ones which can be subdivided into subsections by function and building materials and age almost indefinitely. Portrayal of each one would, no doubt, tell a lot about local "character," but I really felt there was not room. Besides, even if there had been room to examine one or two little early towns such as Perth, I doubt if I would have done so to the detriment of my "welter of bridges." I prepared the material for the perusal of English architects and others who rest in a very normal ignorance of Canada. Had I been doing it for North American savants, I would have acted otherwise. I wanted your readers to believe that even though Canada has always had its culture drained from it by its rich neighbour (as I feel it lost Mr. Goulding), and is to-day fundamentally ignorant of architecture, yet its individuals are remarkably quick, resourceful, original and unfrightened in the presence of technical problems. That the English need to be told this is apparent from the two subtitles written by yourselves under the illustrations of the street car and the War Factories. It is still common practice in Europe to think that if two and two equal four there, the same solution in America is "a tendency towards a whole-hearted acceptance of the most advanced European standards"—your words. The bold presentation of our little early triumphs on the mantels of Niagara-on-the-Lake or in the streets at Quebec, or the naivety of our later

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continued from page xxxvi]

attempts at architectural importance do not need, I believe, to be shown to English readers. Their sterling "character" is appreciated in the U.S.A., because they understand there what makes North America tick. To make European readers understand would require, in my opinion, a dozen pages for each of a good dozen regions. These reasons I fully realize lay me open to charges of Philistinism and propagandism, both of which play their part, however, in Canadian culture.

In further and more practical defence of this "Baedeker" number, I must repeat that the REVIEW was debarred from exporting sterling, and that getting photographs for nothing from people who live by selling them is difficult. Also in a country of so many regions without a centre for cultural dissemination, good photography is hard to locate. I think Mr. Goulding is a little rough on the Château Frontenac in calling it a "blot," and over-emphasizes the functional propensities of the Church in Quebec; and, I hope, to learn direct the ignored firm in Toronto.

Had I been prescient to foretell the order of the Paper Controller we might have done better, but considering the distances apart we worked, I think the issue was not bad, and that you publish your magazine at all seems remarkably creditable.

ANTHONY ADAMSON.

Port Credit.

The Editor,

THE GARDEN CITY MOVEMENT

Sir,—The first sentence in your correspondent's reply to my letter, published on page xlii of your July issue, shows clearly where the misunderstanding is. He has not grasped (as I think by this time he should have done) that Letchworth and Welwyn are *not* suburban extensions of London, but self-contained industrial towns. He says, "The creation of the two Garden Cities has resulted in making two suburb-like agglomerations, which lack even the advantage of being near *their urban nucleus*, and this latter is indisputably the advantage of an ordinary suburb." Actually (I give the 1939 figures for obvious reasons) nearly 100 per cent. of the occupied population of Letchworth are employed in Letchworth industries and businesses—their "urban nucleus"—and only 2 or 3 per cent. travel daily to London or other distant towns. In Welwyn, 85 per cent. are employed in the town itself, about 15 per cent. travelling out to London and other towns, and 15 per cent. coming in to work. The saving of time and money, and the gain in "community," are immense as compared with excessive suburban development, which we have always opposed.

F. J. OSBORN

(Hon. Secretary, Town and Country Planning Association).

Bath

The photograph of Lansdown Place on page 69 is by Hans Wild, and is reproduced by courtesy of *Life* magazine. That of the interior of St. James's church is by *The Times*. The other photographs were specially taken for THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW by Bill Brandt.

The Buildings Illustrated

Two Housing Schemes in the West for the Ministry of Supply

Architect: G. A. Jellicoe

Scheme 1. *Resident architect:* D. W. Plumstead. The general contractors were William Cowlin & Son, Ltd. Scheme 2. *Resident architect:* Anthony Pott. The general contractors were Bovis, Ltd.

Sessions House, Sussex

Architect: C. G. Stillman

The general contractors were Chapman, Lowry and Puttick, Ltd., who were also responsible for the demolition, foundations, reinforced concrete, partitions, plumbing, stair-treads, plaster, joinery, water supply, etc. Principal sub-contractors and suppliers are as follows: G. Asserati, Ltd., asphalt and special roofings; Roberts Adlard & Co., Ltd., bricks; Damer Bros., Ltd., stone; Blokcrete Co., Ltd., artificial stone; Matthew T. Shaw & Co., Ltd., structural steel; Pilkington Bros., Ltd., glass; J. A. King & Co., Ltd., patent glazing; Granwood Flooring Co., Ltd., woodblock flooring; Korkoid Decorative Floors, floor covering; A. A. Byrd & Co., Ltd., waterproofing materials (Tricosal); Brightside Foundry and Engineering Co., Ltd., central heating and ventilation; Hall Boilers Ltd., boilers; Cosh and Hammond, electric wiring; Falk Stadelmann & Co., Ltd., electric light fixtures; Bunce & Co., Ltd., door furniture and cloakroom fittings; Crittall Manufg. Co., Ltd., casements and window furniture; G. P. O., telephone; James Gibbons Ltd., cell doors and grille gates; Bayliss Jones and Bayliss Ltd., metalwork; Jordan and Cook Ltd., textiles and furniture; Smith's English Clocks Ltd., clocks; Dales, Ltd., signs.