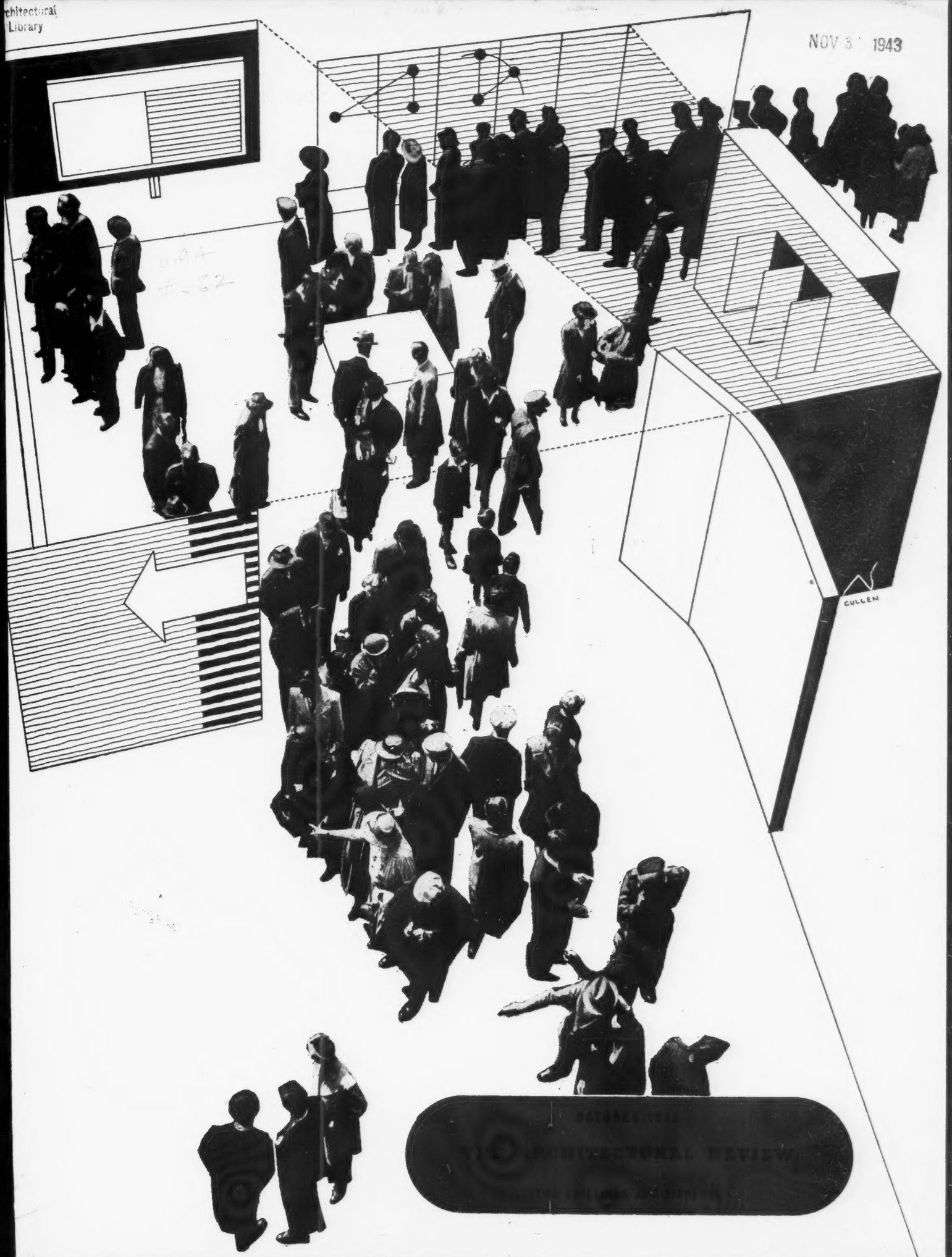

OCTOBER 1943

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

The Architectural Review

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TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

THE COVER

by Gordon Cullen, is a free rendering of the Army Exhibition held in the bombed-out ruins of John Lewis's Stores, which is illustrated on pages 99-100. Since the exhibition is staged (in the main) at lower basement level—and since the basement is roofless—shoppers in Oxford Street get a bird's-eye view of it exactly like this. It is the view one gets of a doll's house when the roof is off. The achievements of the MOI and others are put on record in this issue.

Kiev

As this issue goes to press the Russian Armies are still ten miles from the scene shown here. Any day they may be in actual occupation of the ground. It is Kiev, one of the greatest, most venerable, and most beautiful cities of Russia. Standing on the banks of the Dnieper this side of the river can be seen the monastery of the caves. A note by Professor Nikolai Voronin on this monastery with some further illustrations will appear in November.

THE POLITICS OF PLANNING

Common Wealth, the new Parliamentary Party, originated from Sir Richard Acland's "Forward March" and J. B. Priestley's 1941 Committee. It was founded in 1942. Sir Richard, the fifteenth baronet, is himself an independent member. His division is Barnstaple, the part of the country where his principal family estates are—or were. For THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW has reported earlier this year that Sir Richard gave 13,000 acres of land to the nation, that is to the National Trust, as an earnest of his political tenets. These tenets, so far as physical planning and reconstruction are concerned, have so far never been published in a coherent form, although Sir Richard is one of the very few M.P.s who have had some architectural training, both he and Lady Acland having been at the A.A. Lady Acland received her diploma in 1939. Sir Richard is thirty-six years of age. He was educated at Rugby and Balliol. He has three sons.

by

Sir Richard Acland, M.P.

ALMOST all architects are planners, in the political sense of the word. At any rate they are planners within their own sphere.

They see that towns have grown up under no conscious plan; that they have emerged "automatically" as a result of the uncoordinated activities of scores of thousands of individuals, each seeking his own self-interest. Most architects agree that this is no longer tolerable. Towns, to be worthy towns, must be consciously and deliberately planned, or replanned, as a whole by the representatives of the community.

Many architects realize that a further step is involved. It is not possible to plan our towns while leaving all the rest of our economic life where it was before. Towns cover so many things. Communal life, culture, education, recreation, transport, the location of industry, the interrelation of rural and urban life are all brought directly or almost directly within the orbit of town planning.

But on top of this it would be absurd to plan our towns and not to plan the nutrition of the people within the towns. And if we are going to decide that our industry is largely to devote itself to the work of building decent towns, then we have *ipso facto* decided that we will very substantially interfere with the right of industry and industrialists to pursue their own self-interest unguided by the community. If we want the flats demanded by the L.C.C. scheme, then steel must be directed to, say, the production of lifts even if steel manufacturers would have preferred to direct it to the production of expensive cars.

In other words, not only in relation to the building of towns but also in relation to our economic and industrial life as a whole, most architects agree that we must give up the present principle and accept the new. The present principle allows the general development of our whole economic life to emerge "sub-consciously" from what might be described as the "all-in wrestling match" between all the individual citizens. The new principle demands that the general development of our whole economic life shall be deliberately planned in the interests of the community by the representatives of the community.

Almost all architects agree.

But I doubt whether a majority of architects realize that in coming thus far they are taking up an impossible and untenable position.

They are rejecting one out of four basic principles of the present society, and are supposing that we can accept one out of four of the principles of the new society while retaining intact three out of four of the present principles.

No such thing is possible. Society must be based, in the last resort, either on all the principles of the present order, or on all the principles of the new. Let me then set out the remaining three principles of these two orders respectively.

THE PRESENT ORDER	THE NEW ORDER
1. *You shall promote your own self-interest.*	1. *You shall make the best of your abilities in the service of the community.*
2. *It shall be your own responsibility to carve out for yourself the biggest possible income, and if, through circumstances beyond your control, you are unable to carve out any income, we will give you a subsistence allowance (for instance, 40s. a week to a blinded soldier).*	2. *Your income shall depend on the judgment which your fellow men make as to (a) the value of your present personal services, (b) the value of your past personal sacrifices, and (c) the needs of your family.*
3. *You shall get hold of as much property as you can and on all this property you shall be entitled to 3 per cent. certain (subject to taxation) or a higher percentage if there is any substantial risk attached.*	3. *You shall not own any of the property which brings in an automatic income without requiring you to work on it.*

These new principles may seem drastic. Let me point out three things about them. Principle 2 (*b*) will allow us to pay income and capital to the small saver as a matter of principle. Principle 3 will allow the small man to go on running his small show because he makes no money if he stops working. In addition, as a matter of practice but not of principle, we will probably decide to pay a reasonable, but not excessive, compensation to the bigger owners to safeguard them from the intolerable hardships which would be involved if we forced upon them a complete and sudden change in their way of life.

Architects, both as architects and as citizens, should ask themselves whether there is any chance of our towns being properly planned in the life-time of any child now living, unless we make up our minds to reject all the principles of the present order and accept all the principles of the new. I believe there is not.

Rebuilding our towns is a straight production job requiring machinery, raw materials, and man-hours. In the last resort

the first two reduce themselves to man-hours, because, if we have too little machinery and too little raw material, we put man-hours on to the job and produce what we want. Fortunately, for building purposes, most of the natural and basic raw materials are within our own boundaries.

Now man-hours is the one thing of which we have a considerable supply. No one is afraid of work. It is unreasonable to wonder how we will rebuild our towns and simultaneously to wonder how we will solve the unemployment problem. More and better towns mean more work. And every man in the Eighth Army accepts the situation, not with regret but with exhilaration.

But, if we insist on maintaining the three principles of the present order, then we will find that the whole thing works out like Alice in Wonderland.

First, we will have to raise by taxation the money necessary to buy the land we need from the present owners at a full price. The Uthwatt Report suggests that we could *somewhat* reduce the price by buying it in big blocks and considering the value of the whole block rather than of each section of the block in isolation. But even if this report were accepted (and I do not believe it will be accepted) the price would be staggering. Then we have to raise, again by taxation, the money necessary to pay private building contractors 3 per cent. certain (or is it 10 per cent.?) on their costs. If our building programme requires a three-fold increase in cement output, instead of our thinking of the problem in terms of finding more men to produce cement, we have to think of raising money by taxation to subsidize, or " finance," the owners of cement into building new plant.

But unfortunately the prospect of high taxation—taxation to be taken off private balance sheets—always has a distressing effect on " business confidence." In fact it precipitates a slump and raises unemployment.

In short, within the principles of our present order the decision to build the towns properly means, not more work, but less work ; and we can only work on the rebuilding of our towns to the extent to which we can raise taxation without interfering with the operation of a system bounded by the present principles.

Now if we accept the principles of the new age the whole situation is changed. The land of even the biggest landlord in London is all ours for a payment of, at most, £1,000 a year ; and this payment probably ceases at his death. His complaint that this is robbery cannot be allowed. The whole community has democratically decided to accept new principles. Within these new principles the landowner is not entitled, as of right, to any compensation at all. We generously allow him just under £3 a day to safeguard him from intolerable hardship. Even if we could raise the blinded soldier's 40s. to £5 a week, the landowner, in comparison, would have very little to complain about.

Moreover all the capital equipment of all the main building firms and all the main industries producing raw materials is ours. Their previous owners draw the reasonable compensation, probably for life only. We now go to work, treating the job as a straight production job. Whether we produce dividends for anybody is irrelevant. We are producing houses, and we earn our " dividend " in the fact that our towns are being rebuilt on twentieth century lines. Our profit is not money ; it is an environment which makes modern life possible.

It may still be asked how this is " financed " ? It is financed, broadly speaking, in the same way as the Soviet Union financed the school-building programme in the first ten years of their experiment, and the armaments programme in the second ten years. Space does not allow to set this out in detail here. But quite clearly neither of these programmes could have been financed if the Czarist regime or some other capitalist regime had persisted, and had tried to finance these programmes by imposing capitalist taxation on Russian industry and agriculture as it was in 1913. What the Russians did was to survey their resources of machinery, raw materials, and man-hours ; and then to plan the allocation of their man-hours, for maximum social well-being, treating the matter as a production problem. They fitted their financial machinery on to the production plans *after* they had been made. Thus finance was made to serve full production ; and production did not wait upon finance as in our country under the present principles.

Now it would seem to me that architects can do one of two things in relation to this argument.

They can either accept it or reject it.

If they reject they can say that the argument is so unimportant that it needs no answer. Or they can reject, and give their reasons for rejecting. Either of these positions is theoretically tenable.

I want to consider, however, the position of the architect who accepts the argument which I have just advanced. Can he say : " As a citizen I accept it as unanswerable, but as an architect it is not my business to say whether it is true or not " ?

This position is only tenable if it is possible for a man to separate himself into his capacity as citizen and his capacity as architect (or coalheaver, doctor, fireman, clerk, lawyer, engineer, cotton operative, or what you will) and then to keep the two separated parts of himself in watertight compartments. The impossibility of this position is manifest the moment it is pressed to its conclusion. We live in a democracy ; and our good government depends upon the citizens mutually educating each other in the policies which should be pursued. But every citizen has a job or a profession. If each persuades himself that he must never speak on social economic or political matters in the capacity which his job or profession has given him, then we reach the fantastic conclusion that on every social economic and political problem we cannot expect any advice from the people who know most about it.

This absurdity is a natural consequence of attempting something impossible. No man can separate himself into watertight compartments. Architects are not only concerned to tell us about the physical requirements of decent towns. If they conclude that for decent towns we require so many bricks, so much steel and cement, so much plastics, glass and copper piping all assembled together according to a certain pattern, then, acting simultaneously as architects and citizens, they should say so. If they conclude that for decent towns we require to make certain changes in our social economic and political principles, then acting again simultaneously as citizens and architects, they should say so.

There is no such thing as silent neutrality.

Silence speaks as loud and clear as speech.

If an architect draws up plans for the new London, or if he draws up abstract plans for some hypothetical town, then perhaps he can say that he acts as an architect. But the moment he asks any member of the public to look at his plans, he cannot deny that he acts simultaneously as architect and citizen. If he exhibits his plans without making any social economic or political comment, he may think he is maintaining a neutral silence. But he is not. The very exhibition of the plans makes a most positive statement to all members of the public who come and see them. It makes the statement—" These are the towns you can have if you want them."

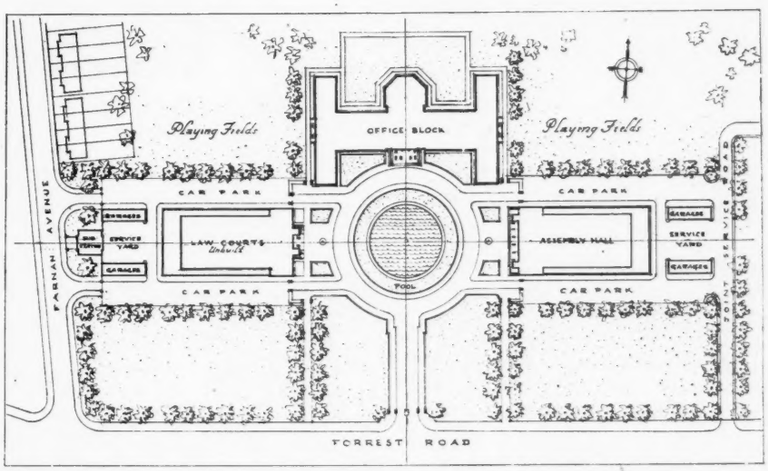
If any architect rejects my argument, then this statement is true. But if any architect accepts my argument, then the only true statement is—"These are the towns which you can have if you want them *and if you make up your mind to reject all the basic principles on which your society is now founded.*"

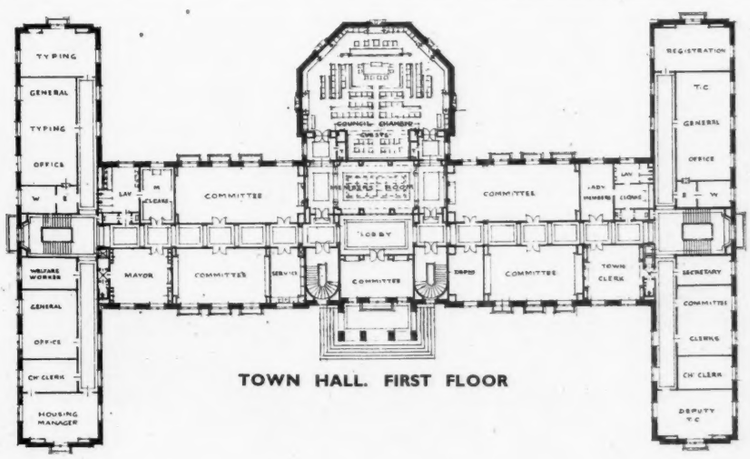
No lesser statement than this should ever be made by the citizen-architect who accepts the argument put forward here. And this statement, when made, either in speech, print or diagram, should be made so forcibly that it cannot possibly be misunderstood.

The Town Hall, **1**, *or actually the municipal office building is the centre of the Civic Centre composition. The building is faced with Portland stone and has a copper sheathed lantern. A circular pool, a hundred feet in diameter, is in front. The council chamber at the back juts out polygonally,* **2**.

1

CIVIC CENTRE AT WALTHAMSTOW





TOWN HALL. FIRST FLOOR

P. D. Hepworth

GENERAL—Walthamstow, one of the eastern factory and housing districts of Greater London, with a population of nearly 150,000—roughly the size of Norwich—decided in 1932 to build a civic centre. A competition was held, and Mr. Hepworth was commissioned. Three main buildings were required: municipal offices, assembly hall and law courts. Building did not start until 1937. When war broke out, two of the three buildings planned had been begun. But they were still empty shells with both roofing and walling incomplete. The office block—usually called the town hall—was occupied in an unfinished condition in 1941, the assembly hall, converted into a municipal meal centre, in 1942.

SITE—The site is north-east of the present centre of Walthamstow, adjoining the Essex Technical College. It falls steeply away from the main access road. The main entrances are as much as eighteen feet below street level. The land is boggy with several underground

2, 3

4

streams.

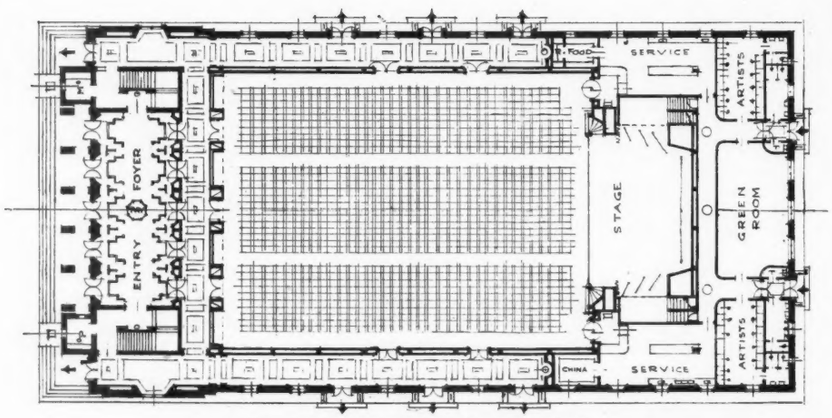
PLANNING—The three buildings (of which the left one will only be started after the war) are grouped according to the old Capitol principle : three sides of a rectangle, with the centre of the middle building emphasized by a tower ; the fourth side kept free for the main approach. Free circulating to all buildings has been obtained, by means of the central square with its circular pond, a hundred feet in diameter, and by means of a service road to the east. The town hall has council chamber, five committee rooms, and offices. The assembly hall holds 1,530 people. Projecting equipment is above the foyer, an exceptionally large practice room above the stage. Behind the stage are spacious dressing rooms, etc. Cloaks are in the basement and on gallery level.

CONSTRUCTION—Town hall with weight-bearing external walls, assembly hall with steel frame. Hollow block floors. Foundations reinforced concrete with internal waterproof tanking.

FINISHES AND EQUIPMENT—External finish was first planned in brick, but then at the request of the Council replaced by Portland stone. Internal finishes had to be simplified throughout, owing to the war. Plain plywood panelling is used in the committee rooms, plain painted iron where bronze had been projected. The lantern, however, is sheathed in copper, despite material shortages. It serves as an intake for the ventilation immediately below. It was found convenient to place the ventilation plant on the roof instead of into the basement. Hot water supply and heating are all-electric. Heating is almost everywhere by ceiling panels. Hot water is on the thermal storage principle. All furniture must be regarded as temporary.

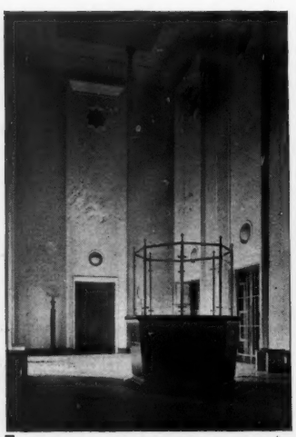
5

The Assembly Hall, **4-6**, *now used as a municipal meals centre, lies to the right of the Town Hall. A symmetrical Law Courts building will be added after the war. In the centre of the foyer,* **7**, *is a box office.* **8** *is an interior view of the hall towards the stage.*



ASSEMBLY HALL. GROUND FLOOR

6



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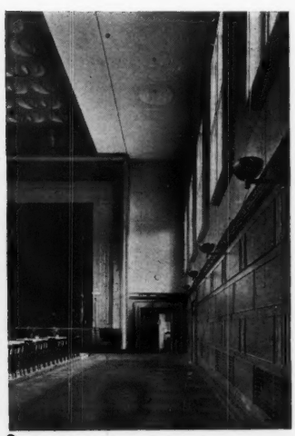


8

the wartime exhibition

by
G. S. Kallmann

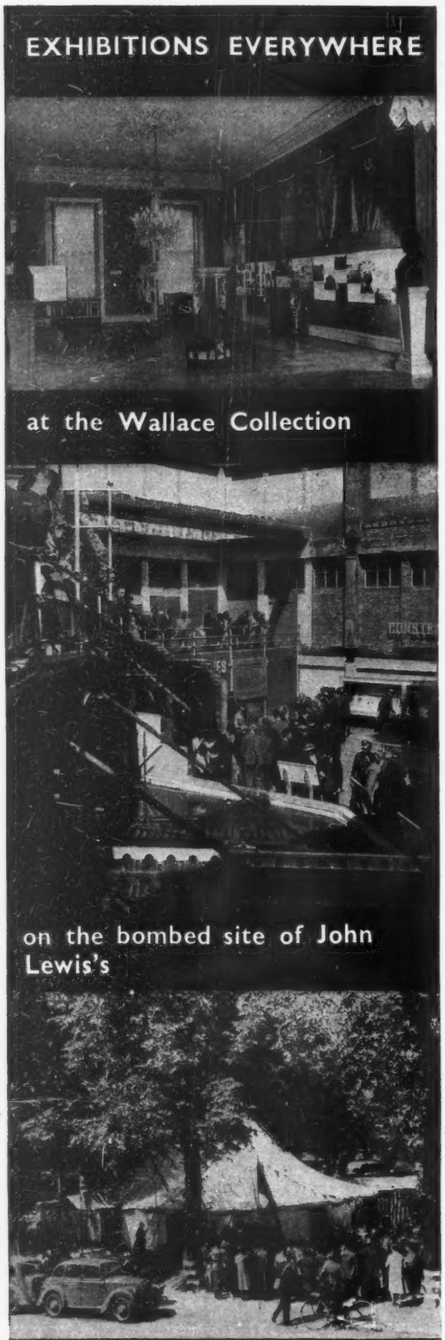
In no other field of art and architecture have the war years brought us so generous and so healthy a harvest as in exhibition design. Not only are there more exhibitions and larger crowds in the exhibitions than ever before, not only do they spread to the smallest country towns and villages, to stores and shops, canteens and British Restaurants, but their average quality is infinitely higher, their contemporary impact infinitely stronger than anybody could have ventured to hope in 1937 or 1938. And, to make the surprise doubly bewildering and gratifying, this achievement is due to a Government department, the Exhibition Division of the Ministry of Information. How can this apparent miracle be explained ? How is it that the same Government which must accept responsibility for the insipid and hackneyed new Whitehall waterfront and which always hesitated in international exhibitions to commit itself to advanced æsthetic standards, should now make it its official policy to canvass for ideas by means of the idioms of Stockholm 1930, and Le Corbusier ? In London, such a dynamic synthesis of drama and lightheartedness had, before the war, only been seen in the MARS Exhibition of 1938 and in exhibition stands of such enlightened firms as Venesta, Ascot Heaters, and a few others ? The answer to this question is given in the following pages, written by a young architect of special exhibition experience. He discusses in detail the hopes and pitfalls of the new exhibition technique, the collection of an exhibition from general idea via scenario to the finished show, the social implications of the propaganda and the educational exhibition, the various æsthetic approaches used, and the high standard achieved. The style of to-day's exhibitions will, it must be hoped, become an integral part of post-war visual planning. For here, evolved in the happy atmosphere of the ephemeral and none-too-serious, appears that very interpenetration of the Baroque spirit (with its frank delight in the spectacular) and a strictly contemporary idiom which will be needed to convert a style of a few intellectuals and artists into a welcome vernacular of the many. And, strangely enough, wherever in these wartime exhibitions the results have been most convincing, they fit curiously into the best and truest English tradition of Romanticism and the Picturesque.

Preamble

LARGE scale exhibitions as a hallmark and stocktaking of our civilization are less than a hundred years old. The 1851 paragon was the first-born of the new species. More followed, and as time went on, they recurred with increasing frequency. Paris came after London, then London again, Vienna, Chicago, St. Louis. In the years between the two wars we had an international exhibition every five years, and somehow there happened to be somewhere a fairly big exhibition every summer. These great peaceful contests of nations were lavish spectacles. The great powers bolstered their prestige with colossal structures, while some of the small nations put up smaller, more delicate and sensitive pavilions, and received the first prizes, the well-earned fruits of a higher civilization. We had the great trade shows, and those which advertised a profession, and then the art exhibitions in the museums, way off the track of ordinary people's lives and just a little aimless in a world that had not much use for what they offered.

When war broke out, it seemed only natural that the end of exhibitions had come, that they would go overboard together with all our other cultural activities. The Finnish and Swedish pavilions at the World Fair in a still peaceful America gave us a last nostalgic vista of an exhibition art developed to utter perfection, yet a flower of luxury with not a hope of survival in the frosty season of war.

But things did not work out that way. On the contrary, there are now more exhibitions than ever. Going through the streets, wherever we may walk in the familiar places, we find exhibitions of one sort or another, nearly all of them well attended, attracting the ever curious, who will go and see anything if it costs nothing, and those who will only go if it costs something. What is it



that caused this remarkable change? The answer is that the threat of siege and the test of mass destruction brought about a determined re-assertion of values. People decided that culture was not a luxury but a necessity of life, and they began to assert themselves as the carriers of a broader culture, which could no longer remain the prerogative of a small section of society. So shows of all kinds had to change to acquiring a meaning for a mass public; for the soldier on leave with the minutes to count, the clerk in the lunch-hour rush, the factory worker at his bench and in the canteen, and members of the forces at camp or in action.

To meet this new demand we have now a great general effort at popularization of culture. Exhibitions form an important part of it, side by side with lunch-time concerts, brains trusts, discussion groups, Penguin books. Whether we like the sixpenny culture or not, it is the foundation of what there will be tomorrow of knowledge and the art of living, the base on which the pyramid of our culture is to rest firmly, instead of balancing precariously and invertedly on its point.

Only if war-time exhibitions are seen as part of this great effort can their importance be understood and the vast amount of energy that goes into them at this moment be justified.

However, whilst trying to assess their cultural significance, we must not delude ourselves into believing that they are entirely the product of disinterested highmindedness. The times are too hard, the emergency too real for energies to be concentrated on a long-term idealistic programme. Exhibition production, on the scale we witness it now, was only possible because this medium was found to serve very real short-term interests. It proved an ideal instrument for mass propaganda, and this forms part of the immediate war effort. Yet it would be equally shortsighted to overlook the fact that beyond the immediate effects the exhibitions have to achieve, long-term results are produced of general education, understanding of world affairs, training for citizenship, and perhaps even of a greater æsthetic sensibility. It would not be the first time in the history of the West that arts and learning benefit from an enterprise conceived for quite different motives.

The Promoters: MOI

There is a great number of organizations which have used the medium of exhibitions for their ends. A complete list would be long and tedious, but one thing is certain: such a list would have to be headed by the Exhibition Division of the Ministry of Information. With almost its first exhibition, *London Pride*, it established its lead in the exhibition field. Employing designers, writers, photographers, architects, technicians, and businessmen, it has since become a great production centre mass-producing exhibitions with formidable efficiency. The quality of work throughout was of the same excellence as we know it from other M.O.I. work.

The Ministry exhibition section was created in November, 1940, at the initiative of the then Director General Frank Pick, and then Controller Sir Kenneth Clark. Its Director is now C. Bloxham. The design of M.O.I. exhibitions is the work of a team of well over a dozen excellent and experienced artists and architects. It has for civil service reasons proved impossible to obtain a Who's Who of the Exhibition Division. It is, however, known that the design team is headed by Milner Gray, Misha Black and Peter Ray. In some cases the Ministry has called in outside architects and designers. Their names will be mentioned in connection with the exhibitions on which they have worked.

The Exhibition Division of the M.O.I. has, probably because of the extreme youth of its parent body, succeeded in steering a most progressive course. It has not fallen back on the traditional or on what is safe, but has encouraged new talents to work in an imaginative way on the new problems. Since Britain is new to this game of centralized propaganda, there were no old prejudices to be overcome, and it is a tantalizing thought, what the Ministry of Town and Country Planning and the Ministry of Works could achieve for planning and building, if they were inclined to follow a similarly bold policy.

The exhibition artists and technicians in their turn have demonstrated that no one's art or skill need deteriorate because of a civil service job; a fact which augurs well for the future.

The Ministry's exhibition activities fall into three categories: Home Displays, Home Exhibitions, and Overseas Displays and Exhibitions.

The heading Home Displays covers all uses of display as a propaganda or information medium on a small scale, and comprises window and other display units as these may be required, and the following regular programme schemes: Retail Display Circuit, Picture Set Display Circuit, topical news photographs, and Window Display Scheme.

The Retail Display Circuit Scheme consists of small exhibitions circulating in series to fixed sites throughout the country. A permanent set of furniture is installed on 86 sites, and 12 sets of display material are circulated at three-weekly intervals. The furniture is designed so that site-owners can easily install the new material as they receive it, and dispatch it to the next site at the close of the exhibition. Sites are selected at points of large public assembly, chiefly in retail stores throughout the country. The subjects either support one or other of the Government's campaigns, or deal with matters of general war interest. The following is a typical selection: Private Scrap builds a Bomber (Salvage), Gangway Please (War Transport), Fire Guard (Home Security), The Story of Lin (a picture of China at war), John Olsson (the story of an average American), Comrades in Arms (a picture of Russia at war), The Unconquerable Soul (the story of resistance in occupied countries). Display is built up of photographic or other illustrations and short, crisp texts, supported by maps, charts, diagrams, models, etc., as required.

The Picture Set Display Circuit is identical in aims and subject matter with the Retail Display Circuit Scheme. The displays themselves are much smaller, and are shown on sites where they can be seen easily both by the general public and by industrial workers: in British Restaurants, public libraries, stores, cinema foyers, factory canteens, rest rooms and similar places. Several hundred sets are issued every two weeks to non-industrial and industrial sites.

Topical news photographs in sets of eight or ten have, in the past, been issued every week to three hundred sites—libraries, art galleries, museums, information centres, etc., and are mounted on screens provided by the Ministry. This scheme, invented and sponsored by the Photographs Division, is in process of being considerably extended.

Under the Window Display Scheme, a set of posters is sent out to over a thousand sites, every three weeks, for the site owner to display. Over a period it has been found that with today's shortage of material for screens, etc., individual site owners cannot make the best of these posters, and therefore arrangements have been made for larger windows in prominent positions to be supplied with sets of light and cheap display screens.

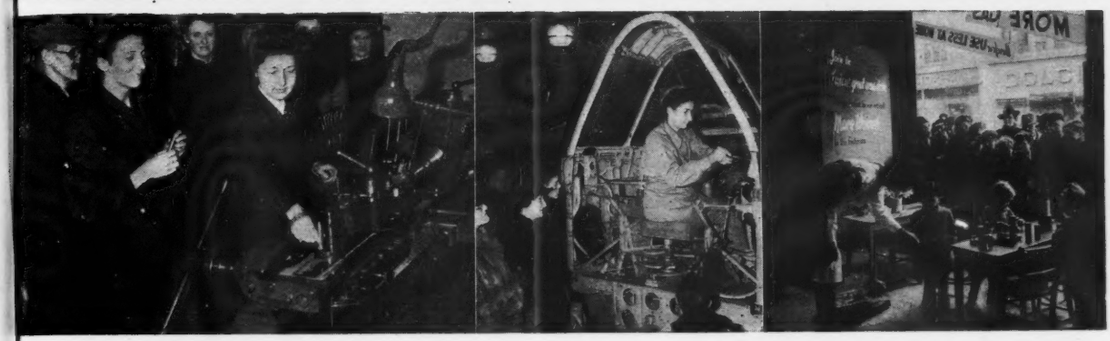
Home Exhibitions are on a larger scale and got up for the M.O.I., various Ministries who wish to reinforce an urgent campaign—Fuel, Salvage, etc. —or for any other Ministry which has a great deal to say or to show to the public that can be said in no other way—R.A.F. Bomb Damage, Army Equipment, etc. The sites chosen for these exhibitions in London are, as a rule, larger than any

The top picture is of Erno Goldfinger's Russia Exhibition with panels along the wall and centre screens suspended by means of string. On the Army Exhibition on John Lewis's site, see pages 99–100. Below is the M.O.I. Home Counties War Work Exhibition, looking like a wake by the parish church. At the foot of the page one of A.B.C.A.'s overseas minimum displays.

MOI

The first show

London Pride, at Charing Cross Underground Station, on a small scale, but already with the full orchestra of Corbusier—MARS effects.

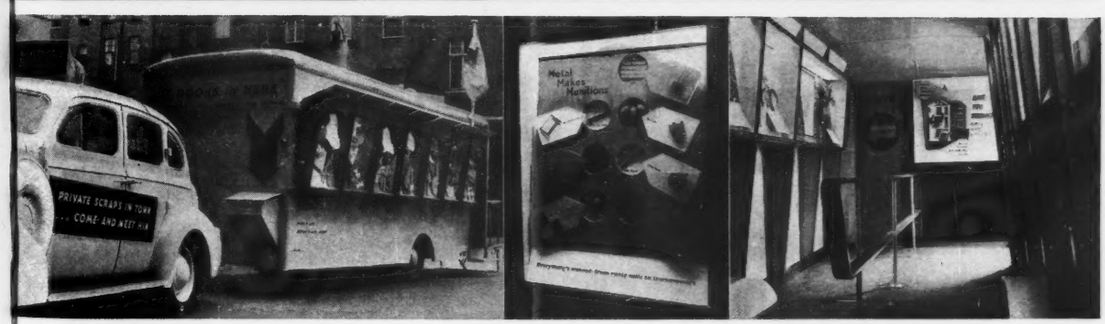


The smallest shows

Two scenes from an exhibition to attract women into part-time war work. The third picture is of a window display in a country town. It also canvasses for women's war work by showing public nursery school facilities.

Charing Cross

Used by the MOI for showing exhibitions in London before they go on into stores in the country. The site was already before the war familiar for exhibitions. Frank Pick had frequently permitted its use for campaigns with which he was in sympathy. For London Pride see above, for Fire Guard page 102; the Story of Lin was propaganda for China.



The show trailers

An experiment in minimum exhibitions and a most promising revival of the Renaissance Trionfo. The exhibition illustrated in the three pictures is advertising salvage. The outside panels are of the comic strip type, with cut-out figures.

others used by the Ministry—for example, Dorland Hall, or Lewis's bombed site. The exhibitions themselves always include a very large number of physical exhibits, sometimes special working models, and are full-scale design and construction jobs. Those suitable for travelling are shown in selected towns, and touring arrangements are made with the client Ministry. There is no standardized circuit.

Overseas Displays and Exhibitions have, during the last eighteen months, been prepared for the U.S.A. (at the request of various official and semi-official bodies), Latin America, U.S.S.R., China, Portugal, Sweden, the Middle East, French North Africa and Empire countries.

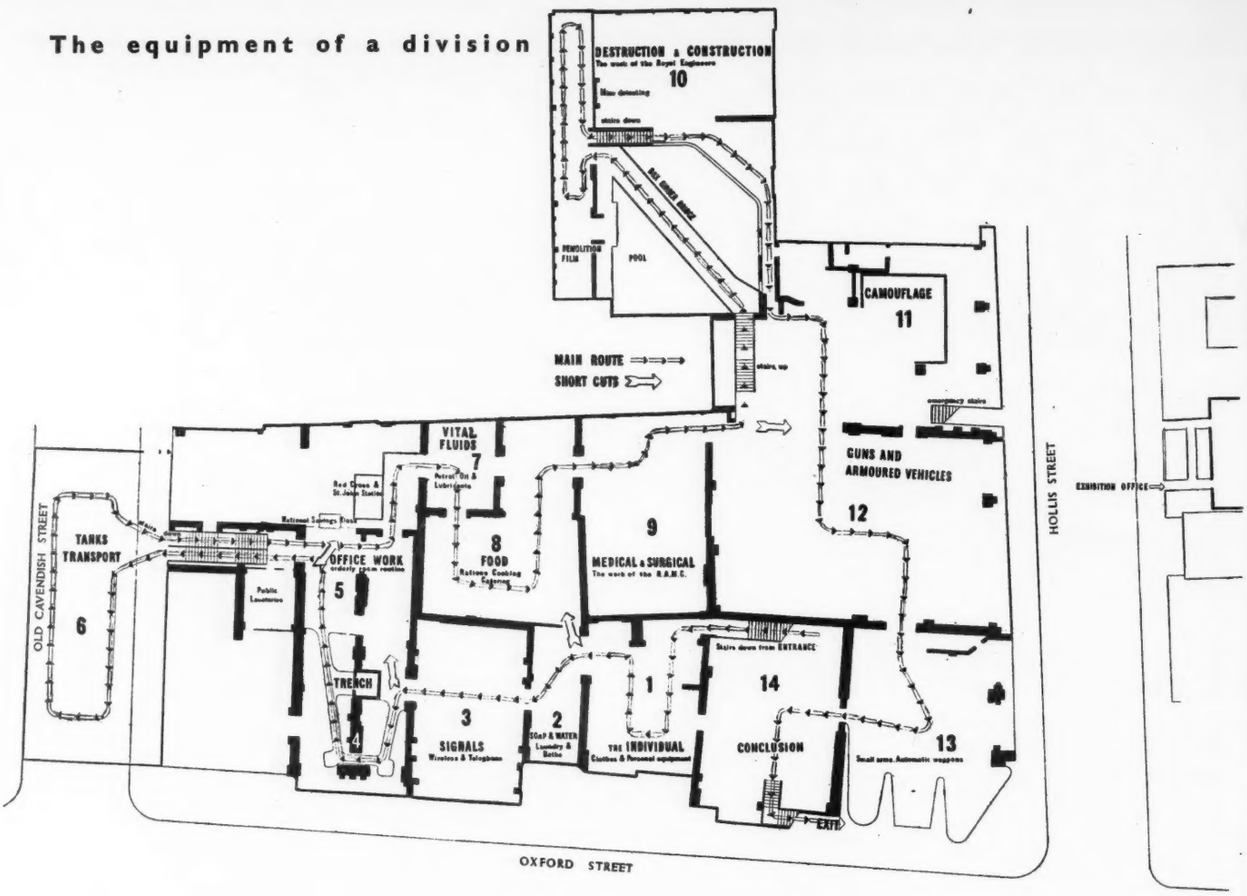
U.S.A. activities have consisted mainly of photographic exhibitions with physical exhibits where possible, and some twenty subjects have been dealt with in this way—Women of Britain, Nutrition in Wartime, Bomb Damage, Social Services in Britain, R.A.F. Exhibition, etc.

In Latin America and Portugal, shop windows have provided excellent sites for propaganda displays, and designs for these are sent out at regular intervals. Displays are constructed three-dimensionally in colour or in a simpler form for special arrangements of photographs on display screens. To overcome problems of war-time shipping, a system has been evolved of sending designs in colour, working drawings on thin tracing paper and photographs in the form of negatives or small prints. These small packages of material can be transported by air, and give the Press Offices overseas all they need for constructing the full-size finished displays or exhibitions. In this way the material for a large photographic exhibition can be packed into a parcel weighing no more than a few pounds.

If enlarging facilities in overseas countries are limited or congested, it is sometimes possible to send unmounted enlargements by air, and exhibitions of enlarged photographs of bomb damage in enemy territory were sent in this way to the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. As an experiment in the exploitation of a subject of topical interest, plans for a large-scale display illustrating with drawings, maps and photographs the campaigns which led up to the liquidation of the Italian Empire were sent by fast transit to Cairo for distribution to India, Abyssinia, Palestine, Iraq, Iran, and to New York for re-transmission to Latin America and China. To Canada, South Africa, Russia and some other countries material went by air.

Recently an exhibition giving a complete photographic story of R.A.F. activities has been sent to the U.S.A., Latin America, Cairo, Canada, New Zealand and India. Exhibits of R.A.F. flying equipment, rubber dinghies, aircraft cameras, and scale models of bomber types, etc., have also been provided for exhibition with the photographs.

The equipment of a division



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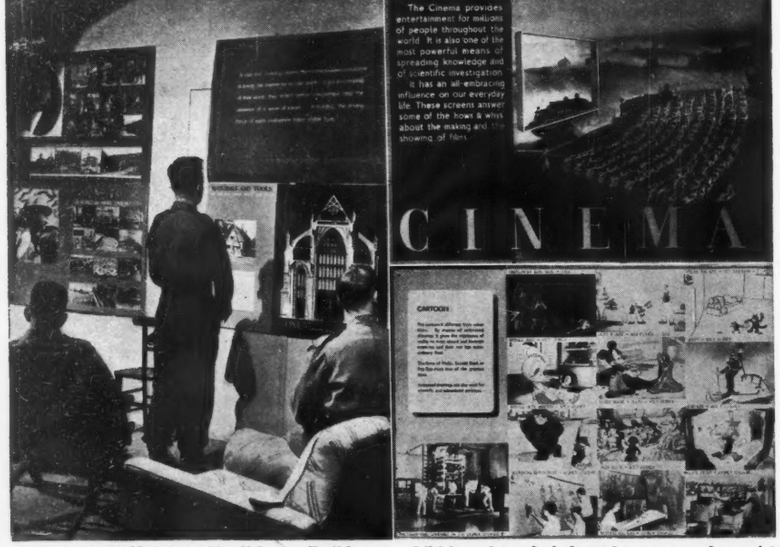


Left, Ralph Tubbs's The Englishman Builds, *an exhibition of evenly balanced screens, rather quiet for A.B.C.A. purposes, one would think. Right, Ernö Goldfinger's* Cinema, *screens one and eighteen. Screen one an excellent synopsis of audience screen and cinema themes, screen eighteen dealing with cartoons from* 1908 *to Walt Disney.*

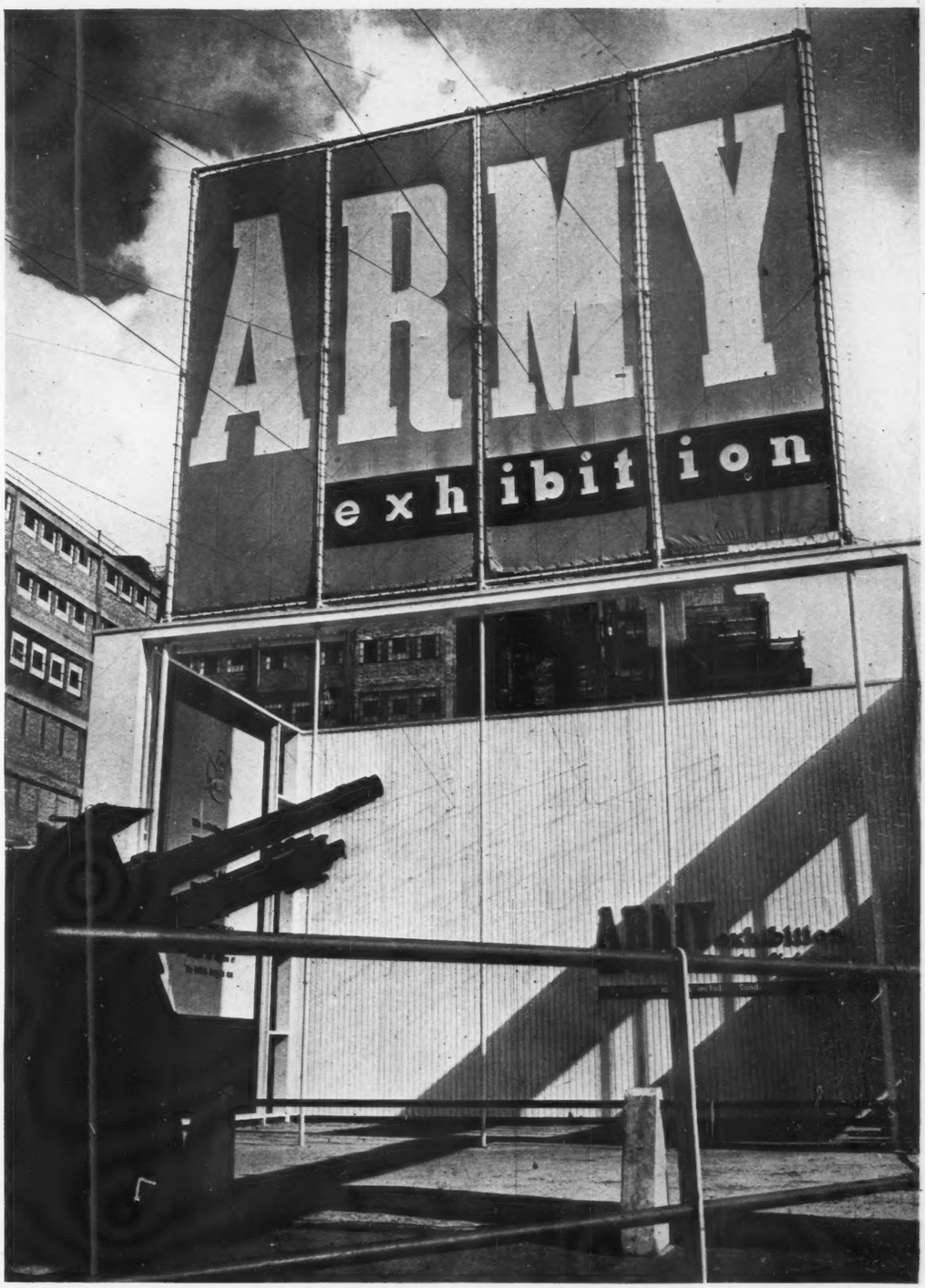
Other Promoting Bodies

Next to the M.O.I., A.B.C.A., the Army Bureau of Current Affairs, is the most important, at least socially important, promoting body of war exhibitions. A.B.C.A., only recently set up as part of the Army Education scheme, is over and above propaganda aspects interested in wider and long-term educational issues. Its exhibitions form an auxiliary method of disseminating knowledge of current affairs, its policy being that a more fully informed soldier is a better fighter and will be a more useful citizen in the future.

The Director of A.B.C.A. is Mr. W. E. Williams who, as Secretary of the British Institute of Adult Education and organizer of the *Art for the People* touring exhibitions for smaller towns, has greatly advanced the cause of popular education. The exhibition section of A.B.C.A., until recently under Major Robert Wakeford, has produced a hundred and twenty exhibitions on different subjects in the course of one year. Roughly ten copies of each go on tour to the Army commands, from where they are distributed to the various units. Every unit keeps such an exhibition for an average of a fortnight. If possible, explanatory talks and discussions are arranged in conjunction with the exhibition. The exhibitions have to be easily transportable; the education officer has at times to carry them in a small wooden box on the back of his motor bicycle to isolated units. The exhibitions usually cover fifty feet of wall space when hung in a single row, but they have to be accommodated sometimes in the cramped space of a lonely anti-aircraft site. They are now generally standardized to 20 in. by 15 in. panels on linen-backed cartridge, using photographs, text and a little colour.

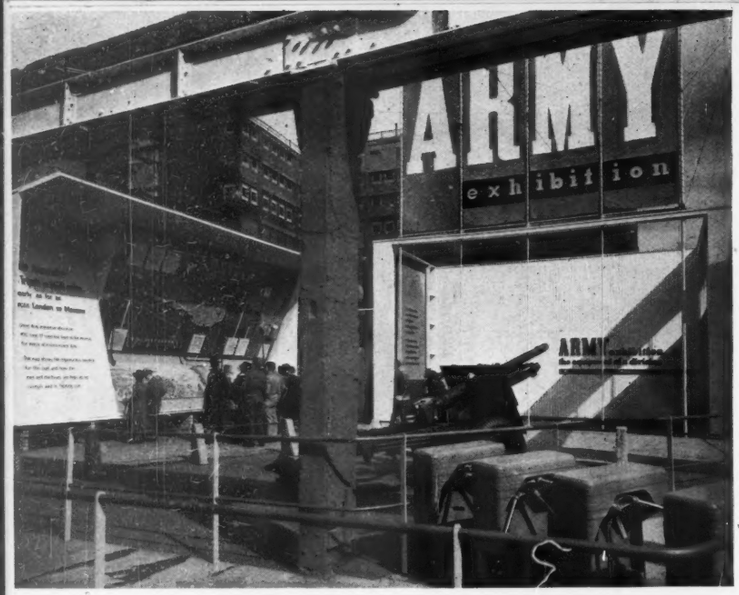
As can be gathered from reports of the reception they have had, only the most topical subjects concerning the war and the part that technics play in wartime are of immediate interest, subjects covering current events, like the Battle of Egypt, Gibraltar, Convoy to Russia, Japan, Landings in North Africa, and the Soviet Armed Forces; and

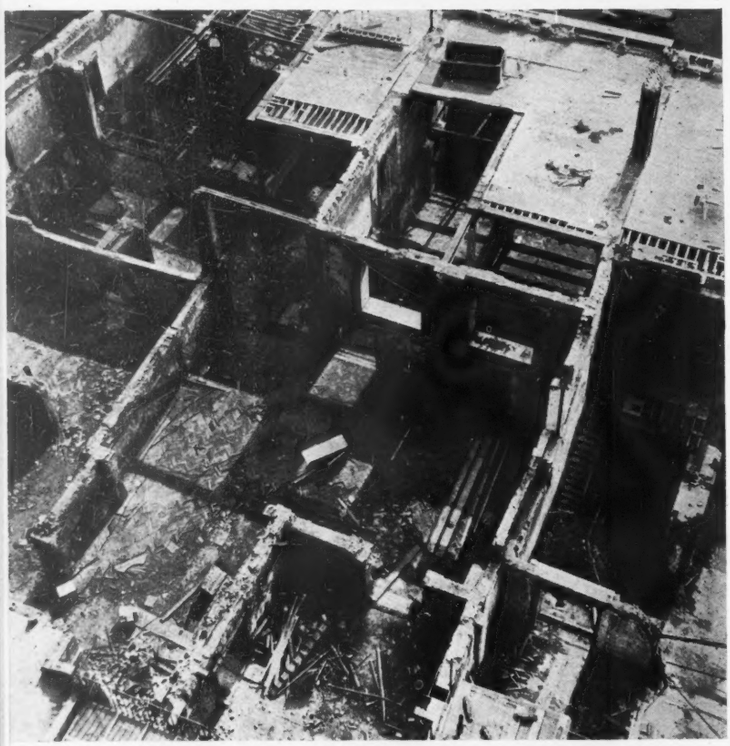
MOI



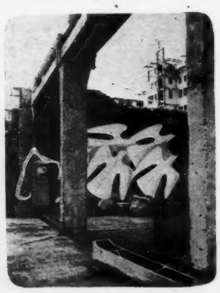
The equipment of a division

The MOI's largest and boldest enterprise up to date : 56,000 square feet, and 23,000 exhibits, ranging from Churchill tanks to optical lenses. The exhibition was designed by the Ministry's exhibition staff with the following architects collaborating : in the splendid exterior B. Katz, in the engineering section Frederick Gibberd, in clothing and signals Peter Moro, in the concluding section F. H. K. Henrion. The colour schemes not visible in the photographs deserve special praise. Below, left, the food section ; centre, the clothing section ; right, a screen of general introduction.

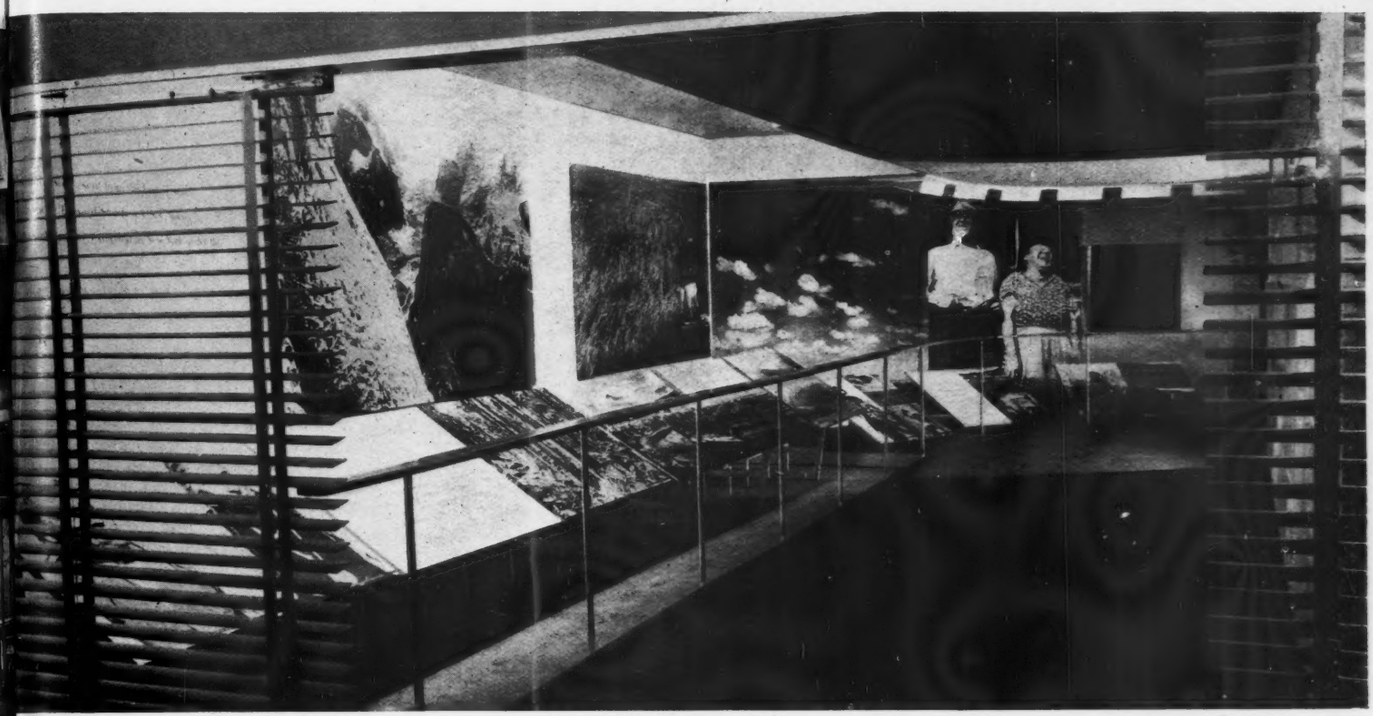




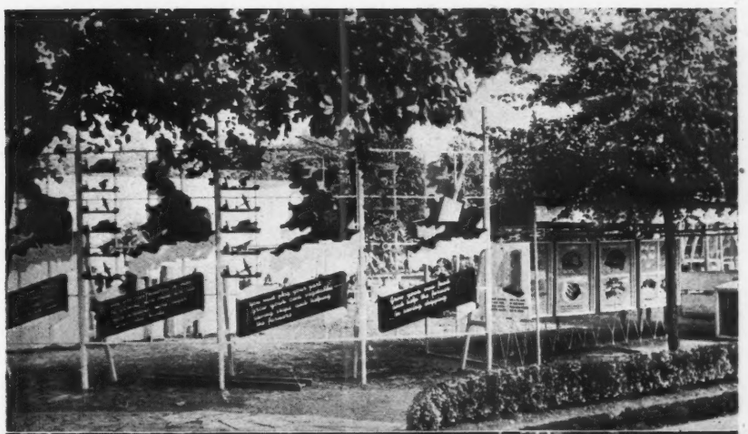
The centre picture is the site of John Lewis's bombed store in Oxford Street as it was, before the Ministry of Information got to work to convert it into the Army Exhibition—a pattern, yes, but a pattern of desolation, depressing to any but those artists who could visualize the spatial possibilities of such a site. Below is a glimpse of the food section in its finished state, with the complex intersections of show cases, and stands. The exhibition was developed on two levels, ground floor and basement, with occasional bridges across and plenty of unexpected vistas up and down. One of the most thrilling effects was its use of the blasted walls and bared girders to achieve a picturesque unity. The eighteenth century squire had to build them specially; to us the enemy's bombing has given them, and here is a way to make them a positive part of the urban scene.

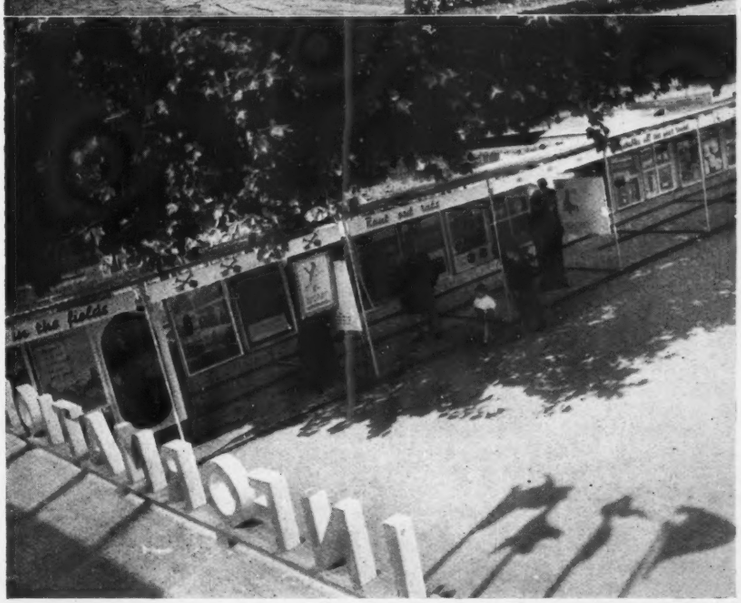


F. H. K. Henrion had done the same before and on the same site in the exhibition of the Artists' International Association. The light birds in their stylized shapes made a beautiful pattern on the wall—surrealism stripped of all that so often appeared to be bogus.

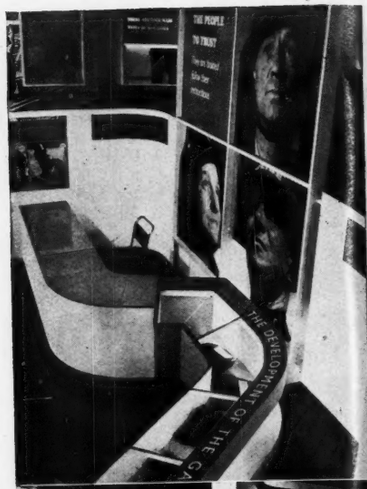


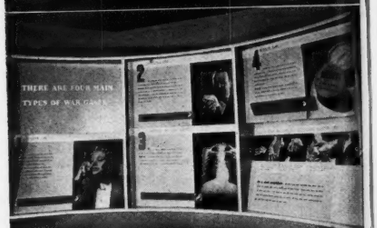
Four views of the American Exhibition at Dorland Hall, also designed and put up by the MOI.





Off the Ration, at the Zoo, one of the most successful of MOI shows. The transparency of the stands, the lightness of colouring, the sense of fun in much of the presentation, could vie with Asplund's 1930 Exhibition—which is saying very much indeed. Collaborators: F. H. K. Henrion and B. Katz.





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MOI display

The large photograph on the facing page is a good example of the MOI style at its best, a style imaginative and contemporary, somewhat aggressive, yet not without æsthetic delicacy. That all MOI shows adhere to this style is due to the team in charge of exhibition design : Milner Gray, Misha Black, Peter Ray, and many others of equally progressive views. The large picture as well as the first and second of the left strip are of the Fire Guard Exhibition at Charing Cross. Below, in the same strip, a photo of the Charing Cross Poison Gas Exhibition. At the foot of the strip, two characteristic views of the Fuel Exhibition at Dorland Hall. The highbrow and the lowbrow seemed neatly divided, highbrow on the first floor with such Moholy Nagy or Gabo contraptions of metal and string as those shown in the one picture (designer : P. Moro) ; lowbrow on the ground floor with jolly imitations of pit galleries and a real horse and miner. In actual fact, the highbrows enjoyed the ground floor just as much as the lowbrows the first floor. Above, on this page, top, a display map from America Marches; *second, one of the charming three-dimensional pictures from* Dig for Victory (*collaborators F. H. K. Henrion and B. Katz*); *third,* The Story of Lin, *Charing Cross ; bottom,* African Front, *also Charing Cross.*

those dealing with technical matters such as Warships, Secret Weapons, the making of guns, tanks and planes, and new ways of warfare—the Paratroops, the Army Gliders. Of geographical and social themes, *South Africa, Alaska Highway* and *Western Town* (China) seem to have been popular, because intimately linked with the present war ; *American Town, America and Britain* and *American Soldier* were also well received, whilst the wider *The Britain We Made* (the story of industrial Britain), *History of the last thirty years, Social History of Britain, American Wealth* and *Rights of Man* did, it seems, not meet with so much interest. Exhibitions on town-planning or architecture, *Living in Cities, Homes to Live In* and *The Englishman Builds* were described as rather too academic. Art, only very tentatively represented by *Army Poster Art,* had an indifferent reception, but an exhibition, *Stalin's Gift,* consisting of a number of brilliant Russian war posters presented to Lord Beaverbrook, was very popular. It may be well at this point to remember A.B.C.A.'s own efforts in this realm—its admirable posters, which form poignant miniature exhibitions in themselves.

A superficial analysis on the basis of very few data may not seem very conclusive. Since A.B.C.A. employs a great number of exhibition producers, popularity or cold reception may not only depend on the subject but also on presentation. However, one is probably not far wrong in assuming that the soldiers resent anything that looks like education. The war is their job and they are interested in " shop "—in methods of warfare or new weapons, as things that affect them and their lives most closely. They showed great interest in an exhibition entitled *Welfare of the Fighting Men,* and would no doubt welcome subjects dealing with the security of their families and of their own lives after the war. The situation is different in Young Men's Battalions, where exhibitions of wider cultural and sociological interest have been well received ; and here is promising soil for A.B.C.A.'s aspirations. Exhibitions on more complex subjects can be made more effective if accompanied by lecturers or discussions, and one feels, on the whole, that a closer integration of the general educational programme with the exhibition effort than has so far been obtained would bring great reward ; it would increase the potentialities of this form of visual education and make it an even more vital factor in A.B.C.A.'s important work of widening the orbit of understanding that the average soldier has of the world at war and of his position within it.

Amongst other promoters of exhibitions, C.E.M.A. must be mentioned : as alive in the exhibition field as in all other cultural activities, then the various propaganda sections of allied governments in this country, the Warburg Institute, the Royal Institute of British Architects, the D.I.A., the Housing Centre, and many others.

The style and skill of all these war-time exhibitions, of course, varies considerably. Generalizations are impossible, and it will be the scope of the following pages to analyse the most important of them, assess their value and derive some few conclusions from their successes and failures. The material is large—larger perhaps than any other visual material of war origin. What would be recalled at once, before conscious analysis starts ?

The excitement of the early M.O.I. Charing Cross exhibition, *Gas,* an excitement not entirely due to the horror of that particular subject, and the pleasure of C.E.M.A.'s two exhibitions on towns and buildings (*Living in Cities, The Englishman Builds*). While one enjoyed their polished balance and their emphasis on the splendours of architecture, one could not help wondering a little how they would fare in army camp and factory canteen. Of other impressions remain the gay elegance of the open air *Off the Ration,* with its swinging boxes and live exhibits, the fun-fair atmosphere of the *Fuel* exhibition, *Rebuilding Britain* with the much needed message struggling to penetrate its glossy shell and the respectable atmosphere of the National Gallery, the drama of *America Marches with the United Nations,* the heraldic *chi-chi* of the Polish exhibition at the R.I.B.A. which failed to convince that Poland was the only outpost of culture in the East, and the vision of the ruins of John Lewis's in Oxford Street, painted in clear contrasted colours to introduce an exhibition of the Artists' International Association. This trumpet call of colour made a direct emotional appeal of such poignancy that it will not be blurred easily by any exhibition work done since.

Centralization: Pros and Cons

Many as the promoters of exhibitions are, and varied as their approach is, a tendency towards concentration into big production units is evident, with the Ministry of Information's exhibition section enjoying in the field of large-scale exhibitions something like a monopoly position. However bravely the other organizations may be trying to launch enterprises of their own, none of them will be able to compete with the Colossus of Bloomsbury, who devours most of the available artists and the most prominent sites.

Exhibition potentialities are vastly increased by this centralization. The Ministry's exhibition effort is not only co-ordinated within itself in a comprehensive programme, but forms part of a far-reaching propaganda policy. The exhibitions are never isolated ; they provide the climax or the opening bars of a campaign which is staged by radio, press, film and posters. Whether it is a many-pronged attack with a number of small local exhibitions, or a massive monster show as a focal point, they always fit into the pattern of a wider strategy.

While we are impressed by the efficiency and dazzled by the artistic and technical achievement of the Ministry exhibitions, we can see certain dangers which, if today only existing as the shadow of a doubt, may become more marked in the future.

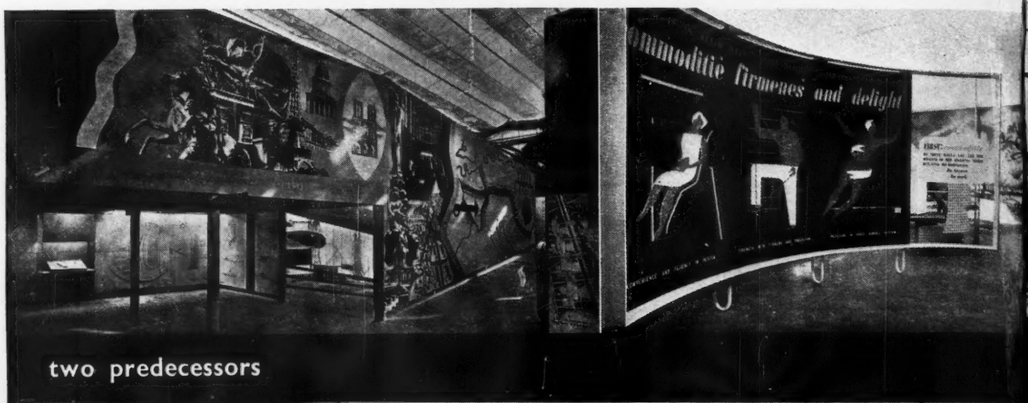
Ministerial exhibitions have developed as spectacularly as the propaganda machine of which they are part. There is a tremendous difference between the first *London Pride* or *Gas* and *The Equipment of a Division.* A weapon first handled tentatively is now used competently in full volume.

That is all as it should be ; and so far exhibitions, like the rest of the propaganda apparatus, have been handled wisely and with discretion ; they have remained servants of the people to help them understand the issues at stake, explaining the whys and wherefores of specific government campaigns, and as such they have been gratefully received. But if an ever-growing machinery is used to influence people's opinions, there may come a time when pressure becomes too strong and opinion is no longer produced democratically, but as the result of an all-pervading publicity campaign, which can release emotional forces to the exclusion of all critical reasoning. Such a form of propaganda must definitely be regarded as undesirable. Recent attempts to make people participate in a vast exhibition pageant, as at the Albert Hall, no doubt a tempting idea to exhibition producers, are well within the danger zone. The safety valve that exists against too much pressure is the critical faculty of the people. Exhibition producers will constantly have to keep in mind that too much cajoling may bring about a general apathy, if not in the end an animosity to all attempts at interference through any medium. This is a problem which State propaganda in democratic countries brings with itself, and it would be foolish to ignore its repercussions in the field of exhibitions.

General Conception

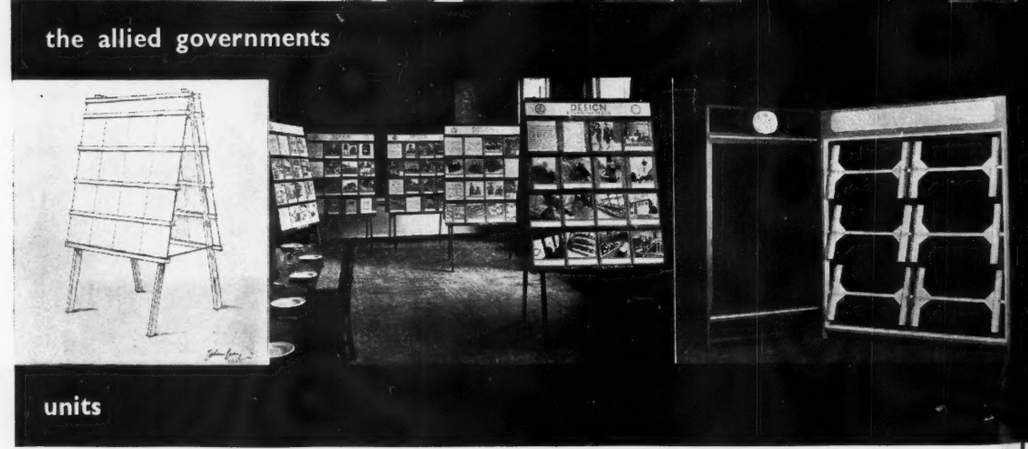
Broadly speaking, exhibitions may be primarily a matter of education or primarily a matter of propaganda. This applies in peace as well as war. But in wartime, exhibitions are naturally more of the propaganda than of the educational

From left to right: The two predecessors of to-day's exhibition technique are Le Corbusier's masterly Des Canons, des Munitions . . . *(at the Paris Exhibition of* 1937*), and the MARS Exhibition in London of* 1938. *Amongst other predecessors Gropius's Werkbund Exhibition of* 1930 *in Paris and Asplund's Stockholm Exhibition, also of* 1930, *must be remembered. The two contrasted techniques are that of balanced shape and that of dynamic impact at all costs. The screen from Ernö Goldfinger's Cinema exhibition for ABCA is exquisitely balanced, but perhaps unknowingly the onlooker may be more attracted by the pattern than by the story. F. H. K. Henrion on the other hand uses all effects to force home his message: surrealist shock-tactics, as well as cheap jokes.*



The allied governments also work in a technique very similar to that of the MOI—a gratifying fact, as it shows how this brilliant technique has become a universally accepted idiom. Top left: Poland, a panel somewhat chi-chi; *bottom, left and right: Czechoslovakia; top centre: Belgium; bottom centre: Norway; top right: Holland. On the facing page: the Albert Hall pageant of Anglo-Russian unity (collaborator Frederick Gibberd)—a splendid spectacle, but so crushingly competent with all the visual and acoustic lure of propaganda that it left rather a totalitarian taste behind.*

Well-working units have been developed by various bodies promoting exhibitions. From left to right: two photos of John Gray's simple wooden stands for the D.I.A., into which pictures of standard size slide in; then two photos of an MOI standard poster stand for shop windows. The pictures again are held in position without paste or drawing pins; on the right two photos of another MOI unit, easily transportable and suitable for certain kinds of three-dimensional exhibits.



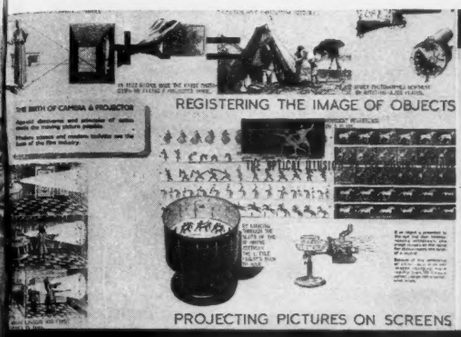
type. The main immediate job of the wartime exhibition is to canvass for an idea, to help in winning a campaign. Thus the tightness of conditions in a war, with the crowded shop-windows fast disappearing, is not really a disadvantage. The gaiety of exhibition frivolities, born from a spirit of exuberance, under the illusion of real plenty, had in pre-war days tended to make people look at exhibitions for the sheer pleasure of looking at them. This seemed now to have come to an end. There was neither material nor labour to waste, and with the mood for flippancy gone, exhibitions assumed a utility character, no more than fulfilling their immediate functions. This single-mindedness has more than anything else brought about a forceful impact characteristic of all the best wartime exhibitions.

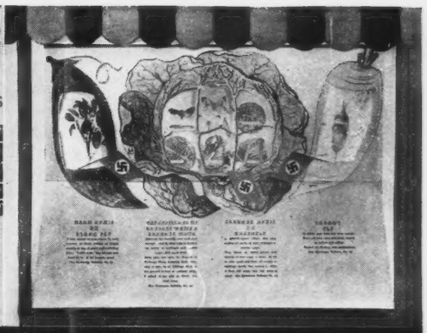
Yet what proved an advantage in propaganda work may constitute a danger in the more educational types, which, as has been shown, have also been taken up very seriously by the promoters of war exhibitions. However, for educational purposes, exhibitions, it must be remembered, are only complementary to other media, like books and lectures. Exhibitions will never be able to propagate encyclopædic knowledge. The exhaustive study of any subject falls outside their region, which can in the educational field attempt no more than to provide a stimulant to thought, to be fully nourished at other sources.

So much in a general way on educational exhibitions. As they are for the moment a secondary concern, we can for the rest of this article concentrate on propaganda by exhibitions. Before the war, as now, such propaganda could either be of a general kind (for instance, the beauties or the progressive statecraft of a country), or of a special kind (the importance of a certain idea or the advantage of a certain product).

The Predecessors

It is interesting to note that the most important pre-war forerunners of today's exhibition technique belonged to the propaganda type, and most of them to the sub-species advertising a specific case or product. Especially the canvassing for an idea has been done most successfully by architects of the modern school. No wonder, for, as these pioneers found themselves isolated from the public, and could not express themselves in the way most natural to architects, i.e. through buildings, they made deliberate use of exhibitions to fight for their ideas. They gave us, to name the most important, the *Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau* at the Paris Exhibition of 1925, and the *Werkbund* show at Paris in 1930, which rejected the conception of decorative art and stressed the totality of the new architecture, the Building Exhibitions at Berlin in 1929 and 1931, Le Corbusier's *Des Canons, des Munitions? Merci. Des Logis S.V.P.* at the Paris Exhibition of 1937, and the M.A.R.S. Group Exhibition in London in 1938, with its brilliant summing-up of the æsthetics of the new architecture. Amongst the exhibitions of a more general propaganda character, the Stockholm Exhibition of 1930 and the exhibition of modern





two techniques

too good to be democratic

units

architecture at the New York Museum of Modern Art in 1932 are the most important forerunners of our war-time shows.

Finally, there are such progressive commercial displays as those of Venesta Ltd., by Le Corbusier, and those by Wells Coates, at the British Industries Fairs about 1932-34, and the later exhibition stands of Ascot Heaters and a few other firms. They too have influenced today's exhibition technique.

The Psychology of Exhibitions

The production of all exhibitions, but particularly of those for propaganda purposes, is a problem of psychology, before it becomes a problem of visual realization. Success or failure of a war-time exhibition, whether propagandist in the widest sense (*America Marches*), or a specific campaign (*Fuel, Dig for Victory*), or informatory (*Gas, Equipment of a Division*), or educational (*Living in Cities, Rebuilding Britain*)—and more often than not they are a mixture of all these aspects—will depend entirely on whether the message gets across to the public. In some cases, for instance in local campaigns, where touring exhibitions are sent to special areas to promote a greater salvage effort or enrolment for service (e.g., *Recruiting Women for War Work* in 1942), the effect of the exhibition could be measured in terms of the tonnage of salvage collected or of the number of recruits at the local enrolment centres or at the exhibition itself. Where this form of check is not possible, attendance figures can to some degree serve the same purpose.

In addition to attendance figures, the Ministry no doubt has a system of checking public reaction (an organization like Mass Observation would find a rewarding hunting ground at exhibitions), and in the Services, Education Officers report back the reception to the exhibition section.

To give an idea of the importance of the exhibition medium, some of the attendance figures may be of interest. The most common type of Ministry of Information exhibitions, the ones which are shown in the big stores, are seen by four million people each. Of special exhibitions, *The Equipment of a Division* was visited by 1¼ million people in three months, *Fuel* by ¾ million people during six showings. Army exhibitions are also seen by millions during their 1½ years' tour.

The problem of appealing to a mass audience of this nature deserves a more careful study than is here possible. It presupposes a knowledge of mass psychology on the part of the producers which cannot be expected to exist on the basis of available data. Progress has to be made by trial and error, and the greatest difficulties are experienced by the producers of the more educational types of exhibition, like A.B.C.A. and C.E.M.A. The problem of registering with such an unknown mass audience is all the more difficult, when the appeal is not, as in the case of straightforward mass propaganda, to the lowest common denominator, but to the highest, an invitation to thought and learning. Perhaps the solution here lies in the production of many smaller exhibitions explaining the same subject on various planes and addressing itself to various audiences making use of the specific lines of thought prevalent amongst them.

An important factor in this connection is the choice of sites, and the success of an exhibition may depend on it. Large stores, as we have seen, have formed a good background; museums, including the National Gallery, tend to attract a much more limited public. *The Englishman Builds* was all right at the National Gallery, and *Rebuilding Britain*, too, once you admit that it was not designed and run as a show for masses. The Zoo for the *Off the Ration* exhibition is an example of a wise choice of site lying off the main traffic routes, and designed to attract a particular audience, in this case potential keepers of livestock at home.

The Scenario

Once the audience to be addressed has been clearly defined and the site chosen accordingly, the next task is to formulate the idea as a story, suitable for conveying the particular point of the exhibition to the particular public. The story will have to be "photogenic," but the fact remains that it is of a mainly literary character. It must be so conceived that barriers of apathy, lack of imagination, and ignorance can be overcome, detachment in the mind of the spectator broken down and a bridge built to evoke response, until the spectator identifies himself and his viewpoint with the argument of the exhibition. This can be done in many widely different ways. Thus the soldier, who in a conscript army develops a state of mind very different from the civilian, must be provided with an exhibition so worked out that it has a meaning for him in his special situation. A.B.C.A.'s exhibitions, therefore, have to be quite elementary in story and visual interpretation. The soldier in camp, after the physical strain of a day's routine, finds it a serious mental effort even to write a letter or study a newspaper; still less can he be expected to follow a detailed exposition on any subject. In contrast to this, bigger exhibitions to the general public can work in more than one way simultaneously; in a broad general one, by which the main message is conveyed, and a more differentiated one by which detailed information can be marginally provided for the more interested. In the literary sense the scale of the story also can be varied: in *America Marches* broad and epic, with the sentiment of a ballad, and narrowed down in *The Story of John Olssen* to man-size, and appealing through its ordinariness; in *London Pride* with terse pictures of word and photo; in *Fuel* with doggerel and rhymes matched by cartoons and gadgets. Particularly in exhibitions which sponsor Government campaigns on such anti-box-office subjects as fuel-saving or salvage, a humorist vein has done much to overcome antagonism and has made many inconveniences palatable.

Writing for Exhibitions

Supposing the story has been chosen, the next job will be that of wording it. Exhibition writing has on the whole been disappointing. This may be due perhaps to the notion that the pictorial material should be self-explanatory, with some form of text to help out if necessary. Yet it is one of the chief attractions of exhibitions to give prominence to more than one medium, thus

approaching the *œuvre complète* with all the major arts collaborating. In such a union with other forms of expression the written word has its own special job to fulfil. Its weight must be balanced by the weight of the pictorial material, its key must be tuned to that of the exhibition as a whole. Such synchronization, for instance, was achieved in *America Marches*, with the American poet, Carl Sandburg, " singer of songs and teller of tales," using a language of almost pictorial descriptiveness. This form of uninhibited writing, however, cannot be transplanted neat for the consumption of the British public.*

The simplification of complex facts, condensation, continuity, though an essential part of exhibition writing, are not enough. The words must register on the mass mind and set alight the imagination. Here it would be profitable to enlist the help of writers and poets. It is their domain and it has been their privilege to help create a new language to reach the mind which has been swamped by the vast flood of words poured out daily by the press and the radio. There are a number of talented writers with experience of the type of work required in exhibitions—poets like Cecil Day Lewis, who has been successful in other M.O.I. work ; Dylan Thomas, who wrote a brilliant commentary for the documentary film *New Homes for Old* ; and Louis McNeice, who wrote the script for the Albert Hall pageant ; writers like the late Eric Knight, who collaborated on the script for the documentary *World of Plenty* ; Arthur Koestler, responsible for the script of the documentary *Lift up your Head, Comrade* ; or Lewis Mumford, who wrote for the film *The Cities*. Potent writing of this sort is the professional's job, not at all easy in our time, when the strength of simple language is dissipated and the art of rhetoric has become the pastime of the megalomaniacs.

Visual Interpretation

In the actual process of realization the literary and the visual part would not be consecutive but simultaneous. So the consideration as to which of the available means of visual expression the designer chooses, will depend on how the story has been written—and *vice versa*. Of available means there are many and the vocabulary is practically unlimited. Nearly all the forces that have moulded contemporary art have contributed to it in some way or other : Picasso and the Cubists, the Bauhaus, and especially Moholy Nagy, Le Corbusier, the Russian film, the Constructivists, Ben Nicholson, McKnight Kauffer. For any form of pictorial representation : photo, colour and shape, painting or drawing any object, or model, screens, wall surfaces, and more recently film projections, light displays and sound lend themselves to use by the exhibition designer. Varying from the very simplest travelling types of exhibition to the most elaborate, any of these ingredients can be found and any combination.

The photograph is perhaps the most frequently used medium in any exhibition. It is safest because the representation of familiar objects of reality has an effect on the audience which is fairly calculable. Furthermore, the work of contemporary photo reportage is of such quality and so comprehensive in bulk that an abundance of material is available for all subjects. Therefore photo material has become the mainstay of any exhibition where speed of production is essential, and where the exhibition work itself has to be limited to the assembly and editing of " prefabricated " material. The limitations of relying on photo material entirely, however, are apparent. They lie in the fact that photos, however realistic, never seem able to achieve the plasticity of an object and even of colour, which can produce more sensation of body than any photographic perspective. Great scope, however, lies in the art of photomontage, a more flexible medium, where objects can be put into such relation towards their surroundings as needed by the story. Here photographic material can be so controlled that the spectator does not lose himself in perhaps diverting but irrelevant pictorial qualities. This latter technique of montage is of special importance for the " documentary " exhibition, where the significance in a context, rather than the accidental pictorial beauty of photographed objects, is of primary importance.

The same, shall we say journalistic, quality is desirable in colour and shape, paintings and drawings. Colour is most successful in exhibitions where it is used strictly functionally. Not much is known of colour psychology, beyond the most elementary receding, advancing, arresting qualities of colour and shapes, as demonstrated in the work of contemporary painters like Nicholson, who uses them constructively as potential forces. Now here in the region of colour and shape, exhibitions have been frankly unenterprising, perhaps because very little is known, outside a small circle, of the discoveries brought about by the new and more scientific approach to colour problems.

Drawings have been used with success, especially where they approach cartoon form, which can deliver the maximum punch with the simplest possible technique ; in the same way the sparse line of children's drawings combined with the simplified imagery of the child mind, have been found to possess great possibilities. This fact could be well exploited in exhibitions. Apart from these we have in exhibitions a wide choice of paintings ranging from the realistic, representational, decorative, to the Neo-Romanticism of the Surrealists.

Finally, the written word is joined to the visual picture by layout and typography, of which it forms an important part. Here the main criterion must always be legibility, but there still are great possibilities of shape and colour to be explored. A great help can be the semi-typographical, semi-representational symbols used to make statistics live. The idea originated in Vienna some fifteen or twenty years ago, and is most successfully handled in this country by the Isotype symbols.

However, in the orchestra of exhibition art, the booming brass will always be the architectural element ; by virtue of the third dimension it cannot help having the strongest effect. It appears in the unit, the screen, its material and the rhythm it provides, in the layout of even the simplest exhibition, in how the space is defined, divided up. Even with flimsy materials like wire, string, paper, architectural, that is to say three-dimensional, effects and a feeling of material can be achieved. While in travel exhibitions for canteens and camps very few of these effects can be aimed at, and a simple paper screen hung on to the wall may be all that economy in transport and erection allows, in the more lavish types, the design of screens, display tables, railed and wall structure to guide the circulation provide unlimited opportunity to interest the eye and help the visitor optically through the exhibition. One disadvantage of elaborate architectural designs is that they often tend to lose the possibility of easy travel. Only a few exhibition designers have been successful in making a virtue of necessity, and have achieved an attractive travelling dress rather than a party dress trimmed for the tiresome journey in the dusty railway carriage.

Displays of an automaton kind, models, and any form of gadgets also belong to the three-dimensional media. They are extremely popular with adults as with children, but, if they are overdone, there is always the danger of distraction from the story to the irrelevancies of technical ingenuity in the apparatus itself.

Synthesis

While in a discussion of exhibition technique, the individual means must be introduced one after another, in any major exhibition they will act together, and the final success lies in the merging of all the various elements, both visual and literary, into a homogeneous organism. Combined ops. give the best results, and where this is not realized, as for instance in the often employed " photo album technique," with a number of photos and titles each leading a dubious existence of their own, we get a feeble result of little merit. Also where more than one medium is used, but no proper union achieved, the message gets weakened, as a ray of light is broken by the surfaces of the various media it has to travel through.

This happens, for instance, where the designer's chief aim is the balancing of shapes against each other to form pleasing patterns. Most of these patterns are usually irrelevant for the story, and thus distract attention from the message of the exhibition. Balance, as a static quality, can never be the medium of a successful exhibition. The designer must at all cost preserve the dynamic qualities of the message, and let the contents shine through a transparent wrapping of form, so that the result will combine a poise in movement, similar to a spinning top, with the forcefulness of a rotating saw.

Its dynamic impetus has made one technique particularly successful, the one developed out of surrealism. The breaking-down of mental barriers, which the surrealists have developed to perfection for their anarchical ends, has in exhibitions been used to obtain instantaneously a state of mind fruitful for the reception of whatever is to be put across. Their shock tactics of baroque perspective, nightmare panic, and sudden illumination of subconscious contexts, their literary mannerisms and ability to tell a strong story strongly—all these are admirably suited to exhibition technique, which must be out for immediate results. Moreover, aloof as the surrealists seem, where their paintings, collages and objects are supposed to be appreciated as pure art, in a propaganda exhibition, their technique has proved to be able to bridge the gulf between æsthetic conception and mere receptivity.

They have in this probably been more successful than those higher-minded and less compromising designers who believe that through the criterion of æsthetic refinement alone exhibition art can gain sufficient appeal over the public. The sensitive approach of both E. Goldfinger and A. Games, for instance, works on these lines. They are well aware of the immediate functions of exhibitions, but through the medium of their subtle, intellectually purified art they keep simultaneously a feeler on a higher plane where they can follow their æsthetic ambitions. The very hiatus between artistic conception and the demands of the public has here produced work of a remarkable nervous tension, a quality that the highbrow has learnt to appreciate as one of the characteristics of contemporary art.

Yet the mere tendency to turn exhibitions to some higher æsthetic purpose than their original function necessitates, carries within itself the germ of defeat. For where exhibitions touch the heights of art, they withdraw, by the very nature of the contemporary artistic climate, into the rarified atmosphere where a general appreciation on the part of the public is no longer possible.

Other exhibition designers have been satisfied to borrow whatever seemed likely to appeal to a wider public, in the pattern-book of contemporary art. Thus they followed a course of popularization of modern art which will please those who believe that the battle for culture is won when a Picasso reproduction will adorn the mantelpiece in every suburban home. Yet exhibitions through this procedure tend to develop a distressing slickness, a stylism which petrifies all liveliness until a sickly *sauce exhibitionnaise* with all the well-known ingredients is poured over the lot.

It seems therefore the wrong way in exhibitions to go chasing after the elusive favours of the fine arts. Why not try the romantic way, the back door, perhaps a new vernacular ?

The folkloristic aspects of exhibitions should be made the starting point for the creation of a new medium. Its paraphernalia borrowed from the artistic half-world : the slogan, half-way between journalese and literature, the visual slogan, swaying from the depth of ordinariness to the boundaries of the beautiful (more in the nature of the Russian posters, or Walt Disney, if you must) used unashamedly to produce a medium similar to jazz and swing, a cinderella art more genuine than any diluted form of fine art.

If exhibition designers can abandon their prejudice of artistic respectability, they may achieve in exhibitions more than the ephemeral, an atmosphere where, as at the fun-fair, vulgarity becomes innocent, and, stripped of all pretence, the popular ballad is born ; the step-sister who may yet dance at the ball.

* The original script of Sandburg's, as shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, was toned down for the London showing, and had to be further revised before presentation to the public in the provinces.

***WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES** was born in 1762. When in 1804 he laid out his vicarage garden at Bremhill near Chippenham in Wiltshire, the landscaping style of the day was that of Uvedale Price and Humphry Repton. Price's* **Essay on the Picturesque,** *Repton's* **Sketches and Hints** *and also Richard Payne Knight's poem* **The Landscape** *all appeared in 1794. But Bowles, the honest and simple-minded eccentric, was not aware of such recent changes of fashion. His conception of the Picturesque was still that of William Shenstone's* **Leasowes** *and of the Wartons. For Joseph Warton taught him at Winchester, Thomas Warton at Trinity College, Oxford. And Joseph Warton he thanked in his* **Monody on the Death of Dr. Warton** *for unfolding to him the poetry of the Classics, of Shakespeare, and Milton, and Ossian's "Wild Song," and Warton's own poems—poems of "the grey ruin's shade" and the "ivy-mestling tower." Joseph Warton's* **Enthusiast** *of 1749 is in fact accepted as one of the earliest expressions of the new romantic mediaevalism. In it you find the props of picturesque scenery : the "pine-topt precipice, abrupt and shaggy," the "low, lonely cottages" and the "ordered tops of Gothic battlements." In the same year, 1749, Thomas Warton had written his* **Triumph of Isis** *with its praise of Oxford's "fretted pinnacles," "cloisters pale," "high-arched walks" and the "towers that wear the mossy vest of time." The sonnets of 1789 that made Bowles's fame as a poet and were Coleridge's first literary inspiration chiefly describe and paraphrase picturesque spots seen on his journeys. They are of gentle and simple diction. Tom Moore said of Bowles : "If it is not of Helicon that his spirit has drunk, it is at least of very sweet waters." Of his many other works only one need here be mentioned as of special romantic interest :* **Hermes Britannicus : a Dissertation on the Celtic Deity of Teutates.**

Vicarage Picturesque

By Geoffrey Grigson

TOM MOORE thought William Bowles's garden out of date. Certainly it was. Bowles was one year old when Shenstone died in 1763; and he did not come to Bremhill to remodel the vicarage garden with the winding line of Fancy, and make out of it a tiny miniature of the famous Leasowes, until 1804. But the spirit of Shenstone's work at the Leasowes, now a public garden, has vanished, and the garden at Bremhill has survived. It has been altered : brambles, nettles, overgrown laurel-trees ; and changes, since Bowles died in 1850, such as a rock-garden and a croquet-lawn. But the atmosphere is much the same. The house has been altered too, but not severely.

Bowles came to a good site. The church, of the massy, deep-shadowed kind that he liked, is on top of the hill, which is limestone, and not chalk ; the vicarage is a step lower, fifty yards away, and then the hill slopes down in front to give a wide, concave view of the chalk downs, the tall obelisk to Sir William Petty, and Lord Lansdowne's park at Bowood : a clear, smooth, wide-skied Wiltshire prospect. Bowles no doubt took in some of his own glebe. There was also a spring to play with, and a pond to adapt, roughly on a level with the house.

The house was easily fitted up, but not all at once, and not, I think, till after he had dealt with the garden. But you cannot get to the garden without first of all coming on to the gothicized vicarage. "The first idea which such a building ought to excite," says Bowles in the *History of Bremhill* (1828), "is its *unobtrusiveness*, justly characterized by Goldsmith . . . by the word 'modest.'"—*The village preacher's modest mansion rose.*

"Secondly, it seems obvious that it should, in outward appearance, harmonize with the church. . . . By parapetting the whole with a simple gothic ornamental railing, such as appears on the church at Stourhead, a unity has been given to the exterior, and the long low roofs have put on an ecclesiastical appearance."

This was at the back, where he also added first one, then a second turret, topped with a cross. The engraving in the *History of Bremhill* shows how this side of the house has been altered since 1828.

To the front, the drive seems to have come through a large arch (to the right of the present monkey-puzzle tree), which has now been pulled down, and so up to the gothic porch which Bowles added and which is still there with his initials and the date. The front of the house is decorated with a richer version of the Stourhead railing. One of two castellated chimneys which he added has remained, but the double entrance at the back has been covered up, and the long gothic window to the left of these doorways no longer comes down practically to the ground.

Now for Bowles's own tour round the two acres of garden. "A winding path from the gravel walk, in front of the house, leads to a small piece of water." This Bowles had had enlarged from the square pond. There are good trees, a plane, and pines, round it now. "This walk, as it approaches the water, leads into a darker shade, and descending some steps, placed to give a picturesque appearance to the bank, you

Bremhill, in Wiltshire, William Lisle Bowles's church and vicarage. The two engravings are from Bowles's History of Bremhill. *The photo of the vicarage from the church shows the alterations made since* 1828, *but also the improvements due to the spreading of the trees. The left-hand turret has the date* 1820. *In the picture of the other end of the house, broken pillars from Stanley Abbey appear in the foreground.*

My familiars visit the romantic caves,
The 1830 mansions, and the stuccoed lion,
Dive into the stump-speckled valley of Hafod,
Read Rogers on the robin, under the weed-
Surrounded urn.

Where they go, brambles bridge the ha-ha,
Joining, at last, exploited nature
To the uncultivated garden. Black leaves slime up
The ornamental water, choke the pipe to
The crusted fountain.

And the black-budded ash splits the Gothic
Summer-house. "Anno Pacis" on the obelisk,
written
A hundred years too soon. . . .

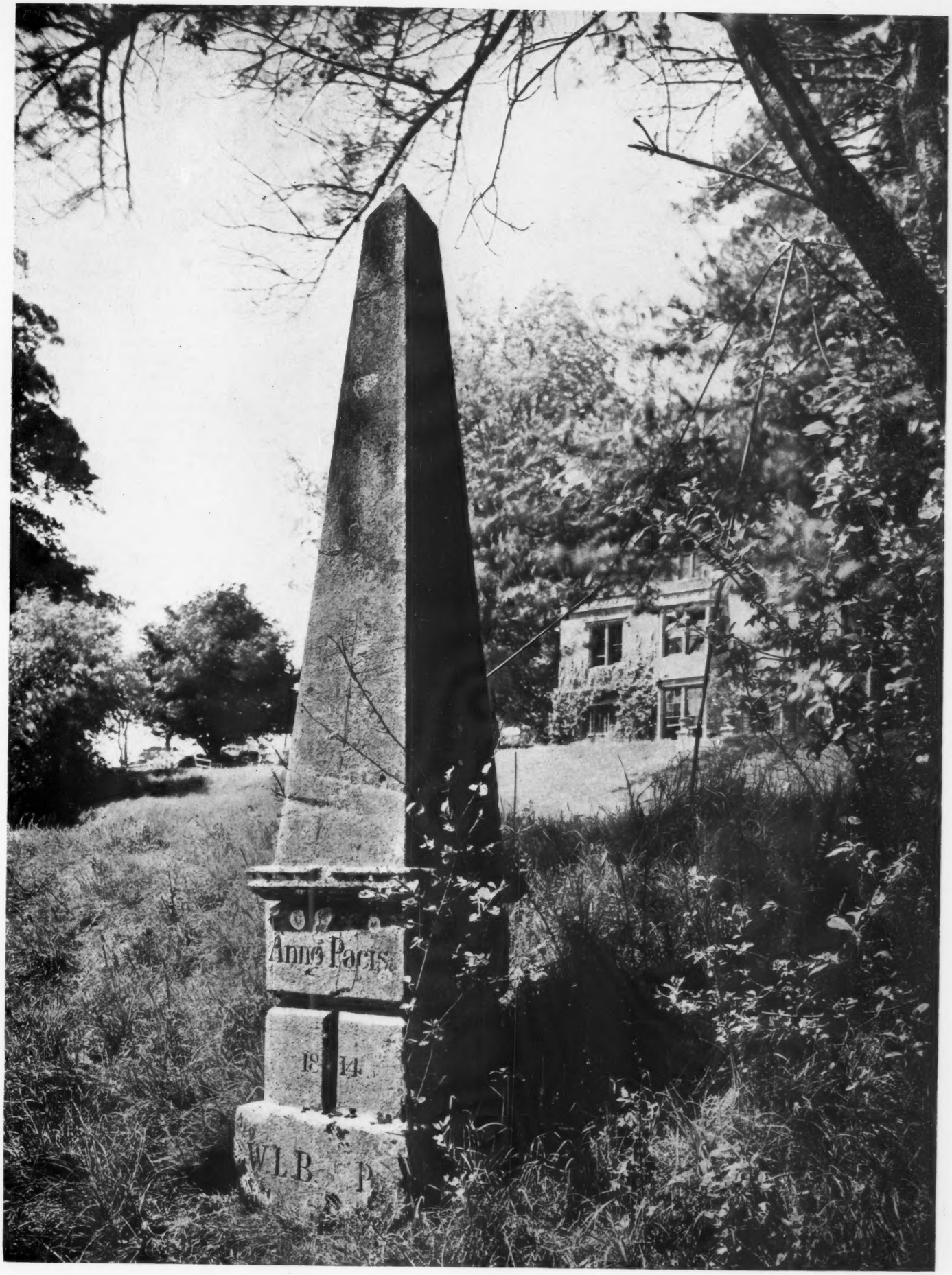
From Under the Cliff, *Geoffrey Grigson's new volume of poems, published last month by Routledge's. The photo on the right shows the view from the house towards the ha-ha, the obelisk—small between the two vases—and the Wiltshire downs. The photo below is of the fountain, crusted with carbonate of lime. The water was piped down from the ornamental lake above.*

enter a kind of cave, with a dripping rill." The dripping rill trickles, or now drains through mud, into the piece of water. But Bowles does not mention at this point what I am sure must have been devised by him, the number of "druidical" stones erect in front of the rill. Bowles was a Druid-fancier, interested in Avebury and Stonehenge, and believing in the serpent theories of Stukeley. "Here"—just beyond the rill—" an urn appears with the following inscription :—' M.S. Henrici Bowles, qui ad Calpen, febre ibi exitiali grassante, publicè missus, ipse miserrimè periit—1804. Fratri posuit.' This pious memorial stands there still under the blackness of a yew tree.

The path descended from the urn, circled to the other side of the water, and came back—comes back—down a hazel walk, to a vanished seat which looked on to "the magnificent line of Bowood park and plantations." Here was the first of the Shenstonian inscriptions around the garden which Tom Moore, in his journal for 1818, found so out of date. "The obvious thought," says Bowles, "could not be well avoided," and the inscription—all the garden inscriptions were probably on wooden boards and have now disappeared—began :

When in thy sight another's vast domain
Spreads its dark sweep of woods, dost thou complain ?
Nay ! rather thank the God who plac'd thy state
Above the lowly, but beneath the great. . . .

We are now below the house, below the green lawn in front of it ; and looking down hill " is seen a fountain, between a laurel arch ; and through a dark passage a gray sundial appears among beds of flowers, opposite the fountain." The fountain no longer works (though the pipes still run down to it from the "piece of water" up above), and its shape is concealed under drapings of carbonate of lime. The sundial, which Bowles assumed to have been monastic and to have told the time to the Abbot of Malmesbury in the garden of the farmhouse near-by, "which had originally been the summer retirement of this mitred lord," has been removed to Calne. It will be returned, I hope. "A step, into some rock-work, leads to a kind of hermit's oratory, with crucifix and stained glass." The rock-work remains. But not the crucifix, not the stained glass, or " the shattered fragments of the pillars of Stanley Abbey " (which was in Bremhill parish), or the large Indian shell, the present of Bowles's fellow-poet, Thomas Campbell, into which water dripped from the rock-work ; and not the inscription in verse by Peregrine Bingham the lawyer, which was placed over the shell. This is the oratory Tom Moore laughs about : " His parsonage at Bremhill is beautifully situated ; but he has a good deal frittered away its beauty with grottos, hermitages, and Shenstonian inscriptions : when company is coming, he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Left, one of the garden vases and, below, the memorial urn to Henry Bowles; right, the Gothic seat on the terrace above the ha-ha.

cries: ' Here, John, run with the crucifix and missal to the hermitage, and set the fountain going.' ''

I think the oratory must have been dismantled. The son of one of the 19th century vicars of Bremhill tells me that the shell is now up under the dripping rill by the lake, probably buried under the carbonate of lime which the rill deposits and from which the shell had to be chipped every few years. The abbey pillars are possibly the ones that now flank the path at the back of the house.

Down here by the fountain and the oratory, we are at the edge of the garden, where it is bounded, and at the same time joined to the view, by a long ha-ha. A terraced path skirts the ha-ha from end to end—a terrace of flowers in Bowles's time; at one end of this path is the obelisk he set up in 1814 to commemorate the end of the Napoleonic Wars—with sentiments we can understand—during the false lull before the escape from Elba, and Waterloo. At the other far end is the '' Gothic stone-seat,'' roofed over by holly and ash trees, and shut off by cow-parsley.

Along this path, an eye-link between the stone-seat and the fountain, stood on pedestals two of the big stone bowls, fluted and with handles, some of which still ornament the garden here and there. These, like the sundial, had been taken from the garden, but have been recovered by the present vicar.

Other things have gone, the gravestone, '' on which an hour-glass is carved,'' the root-house, with its inscription and old carved chair, and the vista from the root-house, back past the vicarage, through the entrance archway, over an old tombstone to the stone cross in the churchyard—a vista pointed by the root-house inscription:

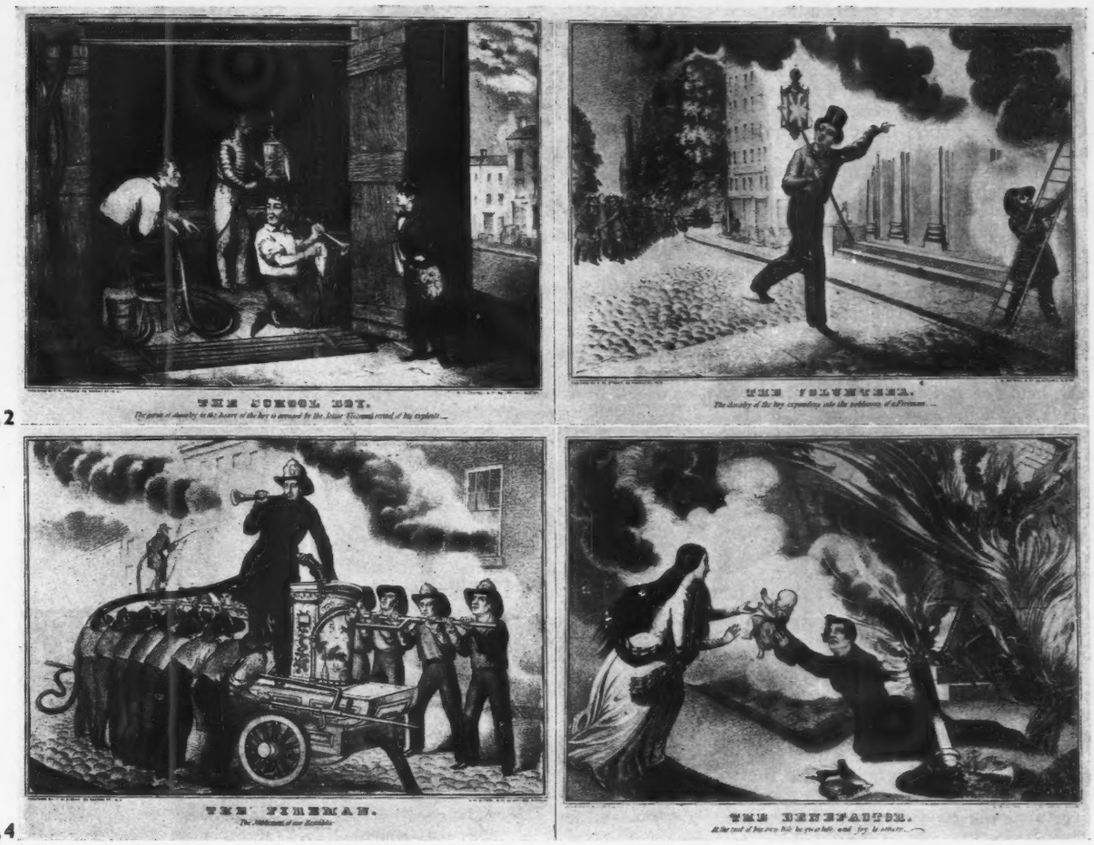
Dost thou lament the dead, and mourn the loss,
Of many friends, oh! think upon the cross!

Tom Moore, who was Bowles's neighbour and faithful though amused friend, was quite right in talking of Shenstone. Read Dodsley's *Description of the Leasowes*. There they all are, before Bowles was born—the inscriptions, the antiquarian taste for abbeys, the memorial urns to William Somerville and Shenstone's cousin, who died of the small pox, '' long urns that solemnize the shade,'' the Gothic seat, the dripping fountain, '' where a small rill trickles . . . through fern, liver-wort and aquatic weeds . . . and then empties itself into a small lake,'' the grotto, and the root-houses, the paths, the vistas, the union of concave and convex—everything to

Shew, to the pupils of Design
The triumphs of the waving line. . . .

Shenstone's hills were '' white-over with sheep.'' So was Bowles's glebe; and if Tom Moore told the truth, his sheep bells, to complete the sentiment, were '' tuned in thirds and fifths.'' The only difference in spirit was æsthetic paganism in Shenstone's mid-eighteenth century domain, and clerical morality, crosses over the garden-seat and the turrets, and a missal in the oratory, and no temples to Pan, in the garden of the vicar, where, in his root-house, he entertained poets and scientists and patrons, and philosophers, and refugees from France.

In substance and association, Bremhill is a notable garden. It has been preserved because Bowles lived so long, and because there have been only a few vicars spanning the ninety-three years at Bremhill since his death. I wish it could be made possible to maintain the garden, and restore it, as far as that can be done with any certainty.



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MAN AGAINST FIRE

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At a time when we are all fire-minded, when we are all potential fire-fighters whether we like it or not, it is interesting to look back to the Heroic Age of the Fireman, to a time when glamour was the normal accompaniment of deeds of valour and self-sacrifice.

The nine pictures on this and the following page come from an exhibition arranged some time ago at the Museum of the City of New York by Jerome Irving Smith, Curator of its Fire Collection. It gave a complete history of the New York and Brooklyn Fire Departments.

Among the documents shown, one of the most enjoyable was a set of four coloured lithographs of about 1844, **1–4**. The set presents the moving career of the born fireman, from the moment the germ of chivalry is aroused in the heart of the schoolboy by hearing the narrative of a fireman's exploits, to his beginnings as a volunteer running in front of the voluntary brigade, shouting and holding up a lantern, then to the great day that sees him in charge of the engine, and finally to his heroic death after the rescue of a babe.

Up to 1867 the fire service of New York was entirely voluntary; the rich and great were found in its ranks and, inevitably, others: members of such famous gangs as the Bowery B'hoys, the Dead Rabbits, the Old Maid Boys, and the Forty Thieves.

The engines themselves were simple affairs of the manual type, not unlike some still to be found in English country districts up till the War. **8** is a lithograph of a crane-neck engine of 1847, **9** shows the contemporary type used by the heroic fireman of **1–4**. It is made the centre of a curiously monumental picture with the men of the fire gang, as stiff and symmetrically placed as the miniature King's College Chapel behind—evidently the engine house.

What New Yorkers call their Great Fire took place in 1835. **6** and **7** are lithographs showing the conflagration and the firemen at work. This fire and the one of 1845 destroyed four and a half million pounds worth of property—an interesting figure to compare with our 1940–41 fires.

Most of the engines of the Volunteer Companies were elaborately painted and decorated. According to Mr. Herbert

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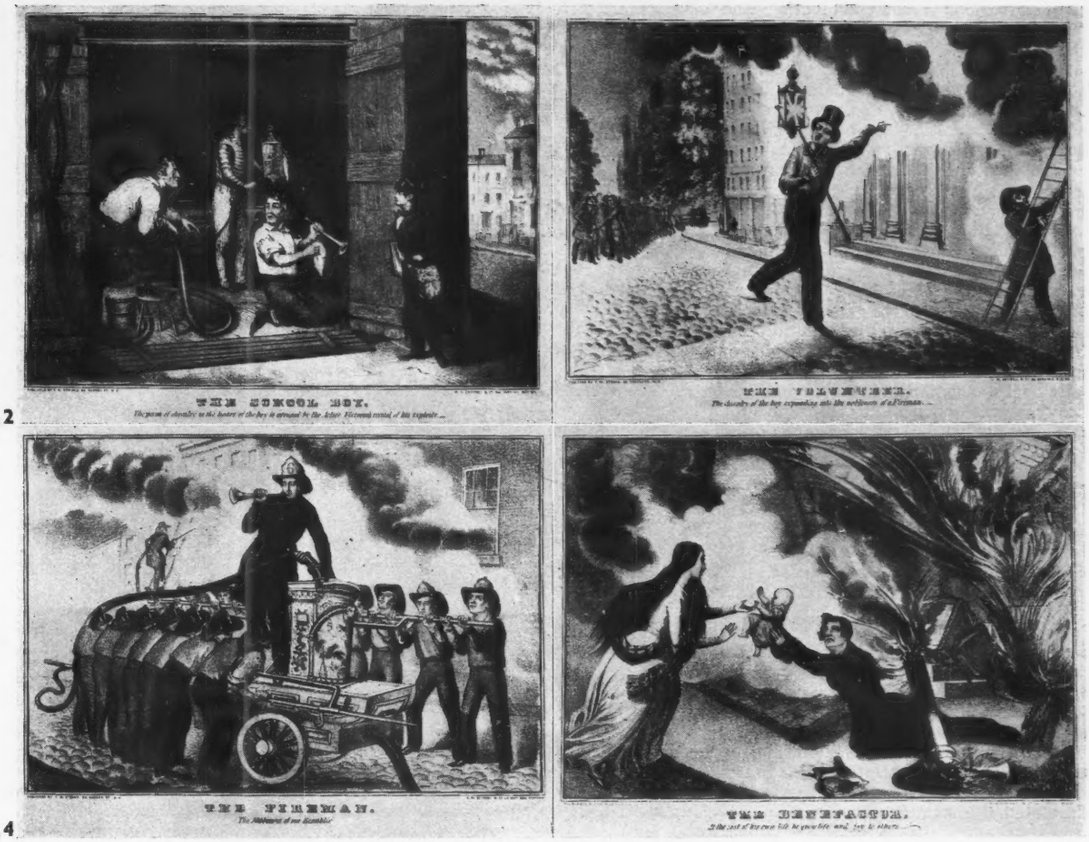

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Among the documents shown, one of the most enjoyable was a set of four coloured lithographs of about 1844, **1–4**. The set presents the moving career of the born fireman, from the moment the germ of chivalry is aroused in the heart of the schoolboy by hearing the narrative of a fireman's exploits, to his beginnings as a volunteer running in front of the voluntary brigade, shouting and holding up a lantern, then to the great day that sees him in charge of the engine, and finally to his heroic death after the rescue of a babe.

Up to 1867 the fire service of New York was entirely voluntary; the rich and great were found in its ranks and, inevitably, others: members of such famous gangs as the Bowery B'hoys, the Dead Rabbits, the Old Maid Boys, and the Forty Thieves.

The engines themselves were simple affairs of the manual type, not unlike some still to be found in English country districts up till the War. **8** is a lithograph of a crane-neck engine of 1847, **9** shows the contemporary type used by the heroic fireman of **1–4**. It is made the centre of a curiously monumental picture with the men of the fire gang, as stiff and symmetrically placed as the miniature King's College Chapel behind—evidently the engine house.

What New Yorkers call their Great Fire took place in 1835. **6** and **7** are lithographs showing the conflagration and the firemen at work. This fire and the one of 1845 destroyed four and a half million pounds worth of property—an interesting figure to compare with our 1940–41 fires.

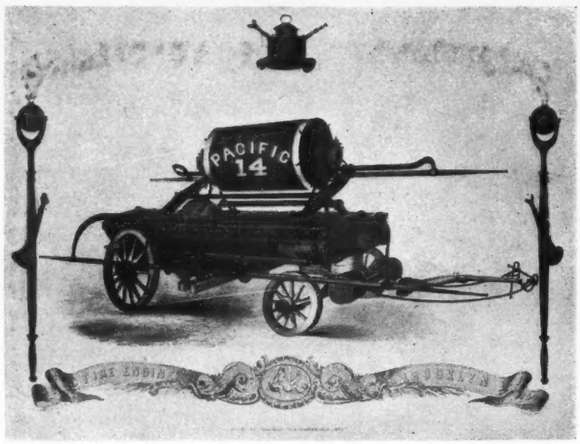
Most of the engines of the Volunteer Companies were elaborately painted and decorated. According to Mr. Herbert

6

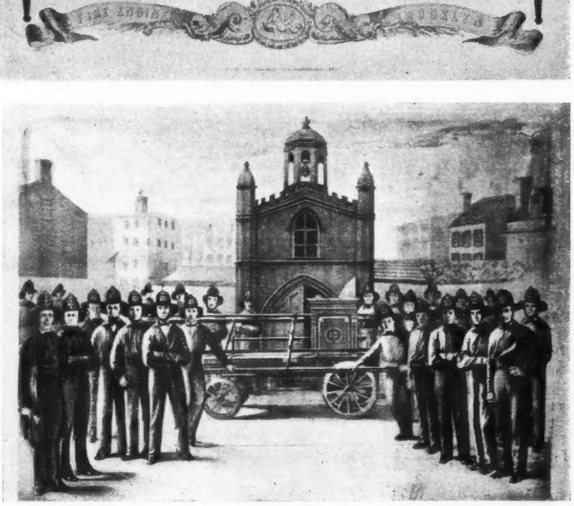
7

Asbury, the authority on their activities: "Special committees were appointed to consider various colour combinations and to make arrangements with an artist, and their reports were subjected to almost endless debate. Sometimes months elapsed before obdurate firemen would abandon their personal preferences. . . . Because of their construction the old engine and hose carts, with wide panels and backs and a considerable extent of surface, lent themselves admirably to decorative schemes, even when conceived on a grand scale; and until the formation of the paid fire department and the introduction of steam engines, which made fire-fighting more of a business and less of a romantic adventure, they were the gaudiest vehicles in Christendom. Many of the finest decorations were not painted upon the engine or hose cart proper, but were emblazoned on false backs of various fine woods and very heavy, which were attached to the machines only for parades and other exhibitions. . . . In time it became the custom to present them to expectant fathers, who made them into cradles." ("Ye Olde Fire Laddies," by Herbert Asbury, 1930). The panel, **5**, is from Niagara Fire Engine No. 4 of the New York Volunteer Fire Department. It was painted by Hoffman in 1853 and its subject is "Trojan Fugitives," an interesting survival of Baroque mythology. How many of the gallant firemen could know what these women and children were up to and what Troy was.

The engine itself was painted white and adorned with a great deal of scrollwork inlaid with solid gold. Carried out in gold, too, were the mottoes "Duty Our Pleasure" and "Ever Ready, Ever Willing," which decorated the condenser case.



8 *One of the crane-neck fire engines which the New York Fire Brigade used in the forties. The decorative composition of the lithograph with the fireman's implements displayed symmetrically is a sign of the pride the early nineteenth century took in its new machinery.*



9 *Another equally ornamental composition. This type of fire engine looks like a Greek altar or* rostra *on wheels. The engine house appears disguised as a Tudor Royal chapel with a William and Mary lantern.*

the gratuitous semicircle

By John Piper

Among devices for attracting the attention of the heraldic English, the semicircle has been well exploited by builders and decorators in rural places. Shops and public-houses which need to attract customers and do so by all possible means, including visual means, and nonconformist chapels that need to assert themselves without dwelling on beauty, have been its consistent users.

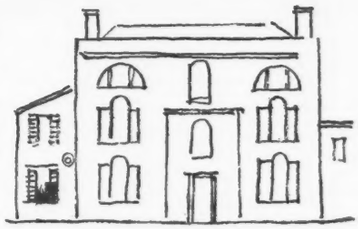
The semicircle with a horizontal diameter is a piece of plain-man's self-assertion. On a four-square building it asserts four-square character, by means of the simplest kind of contrast. It denotes a misunderstanding and approving nod at Classicism, and a disapproving nod at anything Gothic or "fancy." It is an enemy of good taste, and its allies are ungainliness and bad proportion, which add to its swaggering self-assurance. It has nothing to do with the refined fan-light over the front door (though it can laugh at it, and guy it) and it has little to do with the round-headed door and window (though it can mock them in a neighbourly way, as in the farm building near Ashbourne). As a decorative element it is both simple and vulgar, and as unfunctional as the top hat. (Consider the undesirability of the top-floor bedroom window, or passage window, at the Red Lion, Warkworth).

It has, in other words, all the qualities that simple, native English architecture has

NOTE: The semicircle with the two upright bars is a direct descendant of Palladio. It occurs in the facades of his churches of the Zitelle and S. Francesco della Vigna, and in several of his villas, for instance that of the Pisani at Bagnolo and that of the Zeno at Casalto. All these buildings were illustrated in Palladio's Quattro Libri dell' Architettura. *With the revival of strict Palladianism in Lord Burlington's circle about* 1710-25 *the semicircle began to spread in England. Lord Burlington's Chiswick Villa has it, and later both Adam in several of the engravings in his* Works in Architecture, *and Nash, for instance in Regent Street. No intermediaries need be presumed between Nash and the country builders.*

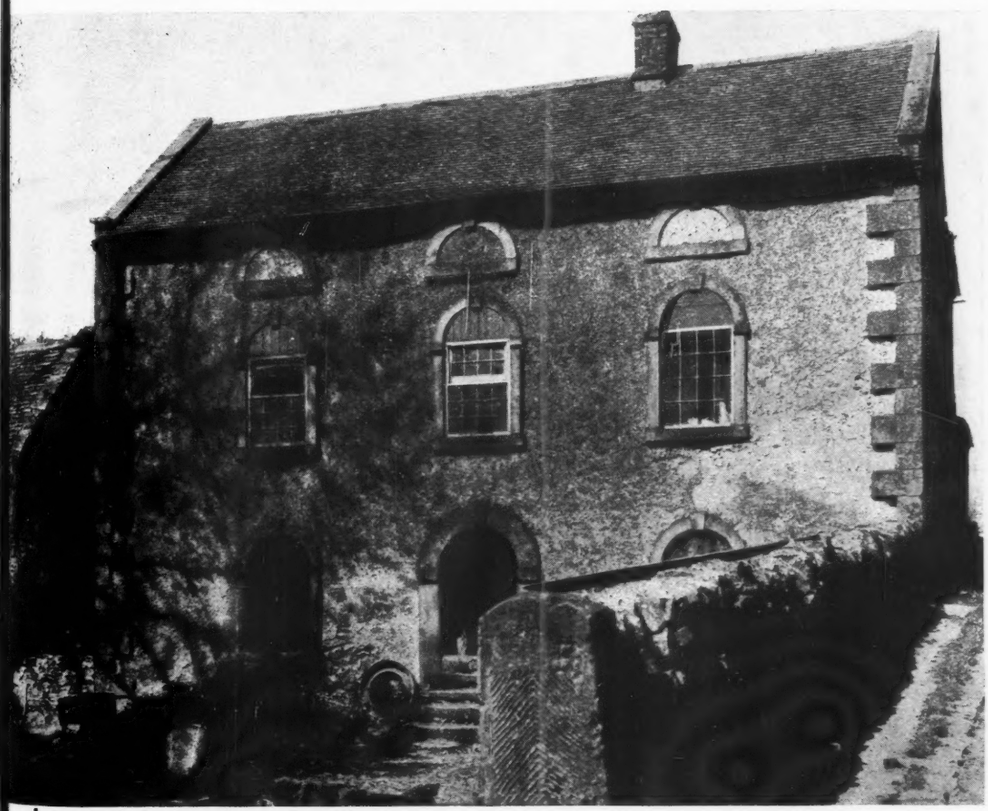
Central feature of Writtle, Essex — Ashbourne, Derbyshire — chapel, Llanon, Cardiganshire

lost. It should be painted, and usually is painted, in the national colours—light stone and mid-purple brown. Like the English themselves, it is heraldic rather than theatrical. It is conscious of not mixing with the best architectural styles, and secretly pleased with this. It has respectable relatives, who fail to acknowledge it (see *Note*). It is forthright, and of "good quality"; that is, it is plain, direct and proud of the fact.



The examples sketched and photographed, apart from those already mentioned, show characteristic manifestations. The black slate semicircle of the Baptist chapel at Llanon, near Aberystwyth, fills an odd central gap left by the round-headed doors and windows thrown on to the facade. It shows the chapel's name and gives point and even grace to the oddity and rusticity of the whole. The outbuilding at the Red Lion, Ockley, **3**, represents that large family of outbuildings and warehouses with semicircular windows that enliven so many English main roads, waste spaces, wharves and back alleys. The pictures from Ashbourne, **1**, and Mistley give two more instances of its fanciful domestic use.

If ever we become concerned again with cultivating a national style, the semicircle should, along with battlements and lettering with heavy serifs, be carefully studied. Or should it rather, in the English way, be accidentally rediscovered, and used without conscious refinement, or any apology for the lack of it?



1

2

The drawing above is of an anonymous garden front in Hertfordshire, the photograph of a house at Lechlade, Gloucestershire. The large picture on the left is a farm building near Ashbourne, Derbyshire. Below, **3**, *the Red Lion at Ockley, Surrey,* **4** *and* **5**, *the Red Lion at Warkworth, Derbyshire. There are many gradations in these pictures, from the sturdy gentility of the comfortably spaced house at Ashbourne, drawn on page* 112, *and the Warkworth inn, to the hefty absurdity of the Ashbourne farm building and the chapel at Llanon (page* 112). *The combination of the semicircular window, whose Palladian origin is pointed out in a note on the facing page, with the tripartite "Palladio" window seems to have been an irresistible temptation to builders. It occurs in these nine pictures three times: twice in Derbyshire and once in Hertfordshire.*

3

4

5

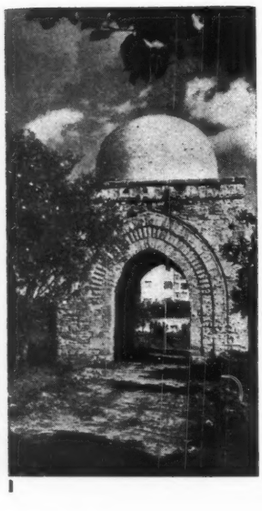
norman-byzantine in sicily

In the year 1943, Palermo was recovered from the Nazis and Fascists by the American General Eisenhower. In the year 535 it was recovered from the Goths and Vandals by the Byzantine General Belisarius. No one to-day doubts the significance of the more recent event; but the importance of the earlier occasion is apt to be forgotten. Sicily remained under Byzantine dominion for nearly three hundred years, leaving a legacy that developed, during a brief season of Norman kingship, into a splendid architecture of oriental magnificence.

The most interesting architecture of Palermo has a peculiar hybrid quality that is quite distinct from the pure Byzantine, though both have features in common. The Byzantine was a fusion of the styles of Greece, Rome and the Orient. The Sicilian added to the already perfected Byzantine something of the Norman west and some more from the Saracen east to produce a fine and remarkably coherent style. Remarkable perhaps because it is so coherent and so clearly defined; fine, because it has taken just those elements of Byzantine, Saracen and Norman which are the purpose.

There is a surprising number of monuments of the Norman period; each gives the impression of something exotic yet simple, both in line and form. Some are distinguished by domes, but domes unlike anything conceived at Constantinople. They do not have the same structural significance, appearing from the outside simply as upturned semi-spheres laid on top of the buildings, as though they were the result more of reasons design than of constructional or functional necessity. Plastered and painted a deep reddish brown, the colour of rust, they seem particularly vivid against the perennial blue of the sky. Other monuments of the period, like the great basilicas at Cefalù and Monreale, which in plan are more akin to the Western cathedrals, show the Byzantine influence by the wealth of mosaic which covers their walls. All merit the description of the Arab geographer Edrisi, quoted by Arnott Hamilton: "It has buildings of such beauty that travellers flock there, attracted by the fame of the marvels of architecture, the exquisite workmanship, the admirable conceptions of art." What stands of these buildings now, what has been damaged, and what destroyed, it has not been possible yet to ascertain.

Cecil Stewart



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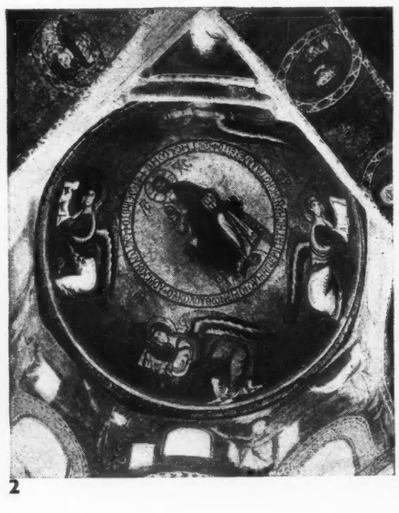

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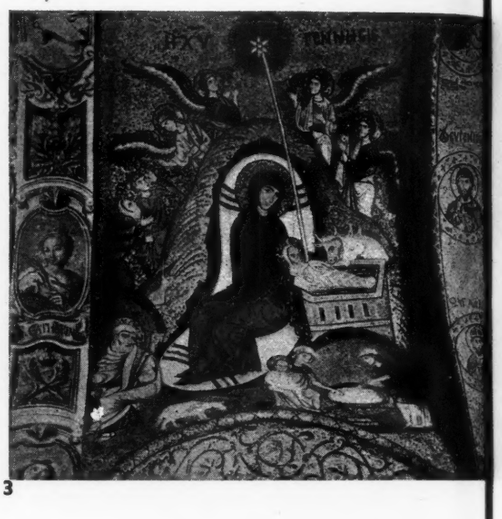


3

GOLD

By Lance Sieveking

Don't Go Down the Mine, Daddy.
Make it Come up to You.
(FROM THE MUSIC-HALL SONG).

ABITIBI, ONTARIO, is not altogether a Company Town. That is to say there are some houses not owned by a mining company. And as the little town is surrounded by limitless uninhabited land, the buildings in the little streets have bowed before some natural law and are cramped together like houses on a small overcrowded island. Every house and store on Main Street have an air of having arrived late and pushed its way in from the back, between two of its neighbours.

Why shouldn't they huddle together in the middle of the snowy plains? Poor things, they will be deserted in another thirty or forty years' time. Is it gold? Silver? Nickel? They rush to the new place. Tear it apart! Cut down all the trees; dig up all the minerals; destroy the soil. ZzzzzppP. A rape. Dig, dig, dig. Hoik it out. Build wooden houses, a wooden town hall, maybe a church, a few hotels. . . . What! Got it all out? Off they go, leaving a lot of holes in the ground. A devastated area. To hell with tomorrow. . . . And there will be one more ghost town.

But gold was still plentiful at Abitibi. Enough to last another twenty-five years easily. The first bit I saw was lying on the step of a wooden shack. It was a large gold brick which had just been cast and was cooling off. Flakes of brown and black discoloured its beautiful sides. I stopped and gazed at it. So this was gold. Gold. . . .

"Aw naw," said a brown and extremely wrinkled man in the doorway. "We doesn't worry. Nawone could dispose of it anywhere nawhaw. So what the hell?"

"Then you won't mind if I take a photograph of it?"

"Aw naw. Paint a picture if you want."

"What's it worth?"

"What would you say, Frederick?" my friend enquired of someone out of sight. "Fifty thousand? Yep. Aw yep. I guess that brick'd be worth fifty thousand dollars 'bout."

I stood and watched as they drilled a little hole to the centre to see if it was all it should be. I liked watching the drill going in and the slow little curl of pure yellow gold coming out above. For two weeks three hundred men had laboured to get this little lump of metal to the surface. Now it would be taken to the other side of the world and buried again, deep under the Bank of England, or some similar place, where it would rest in darkness, unseen, maybe for many years.

It was thirty degrees below zero as I drove in a brougham on skis to the office of the manager of the mine. He was a rather taciturn Cornishman, and that seemed right, the traditions of the Cornish mines being carried to far-off Ontario. We talked in a little wooden room, warmed by a furnace. He showed me diagrams giving the different levels of seams and the directions in which the workings were proceeding. He showed me a jagged lump of greenish stone in which one could see flecks and flakes of gold. And then we walked across the snow to the shaft-head where the lifts came up. It was like a rough cow byre, just log walls, and mud and snow for floor. There were two lift shafts. Suddenly chains began to revolve and swing and clatter, and with an iron clang a cage arrived from below. A man unhooked a bar and swung back a gate.

My heart missed a beat. I don't quite know what I had expected, but it wasn't this. Facing me in a close motionless group were eight or ten figures. They were dead bodies, rescued after an accident far down in the earth. Their clothes, their hands, their faces, and the queer round helmets they were wearing were all one uniform brownish yellow. A slimy, bright, brownish yellow. There was some sort of gold mud—a morass of gold, deep down there, and these unfortunate wretches had fallen in, or been sucked into it, and hauled out again. I stared, fascinated by the horror of their dead, slimy, yellow faces. I noticed that various tools, sharp-headed hammers and the like were still grasped in their hands. The iron cage in which they had come up was also dripping with the yellow slime.

Then, suddenly, they all began to move, and walked out into the shed.

I found my voice.

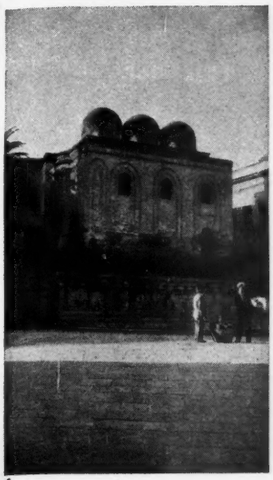
"Do they always look like that?"

"Oh yes," answered the manager. "Before they've been to the washhouses. Those have just come straight up from the six thousand foot level. It's a bit warm down there."

"Six thousand feet! Can I go down this morning?"

"Yes. But we must get you some rubber clothes and a helmet."

Before I went down in the cage, I was shown over the plant above ground. I saw the lumps of rock come up on great crude carriers and pass from stage to stage to be smashed to crumbs in an affair called a Swing Jaw Crusher, after which the fragments went tumbling into a Symous Gyratory Wobbling Crusher. Together these two machines made a sort of infernal syncopation which would soon have had me dancing like a mad marionette. I surged on to the next part of the works covering myself with mud and



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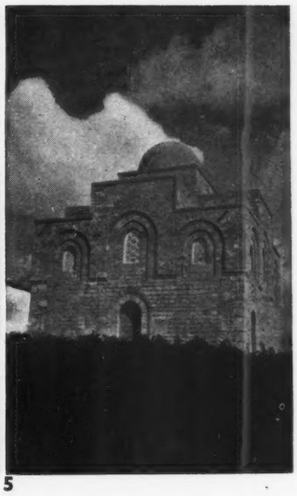

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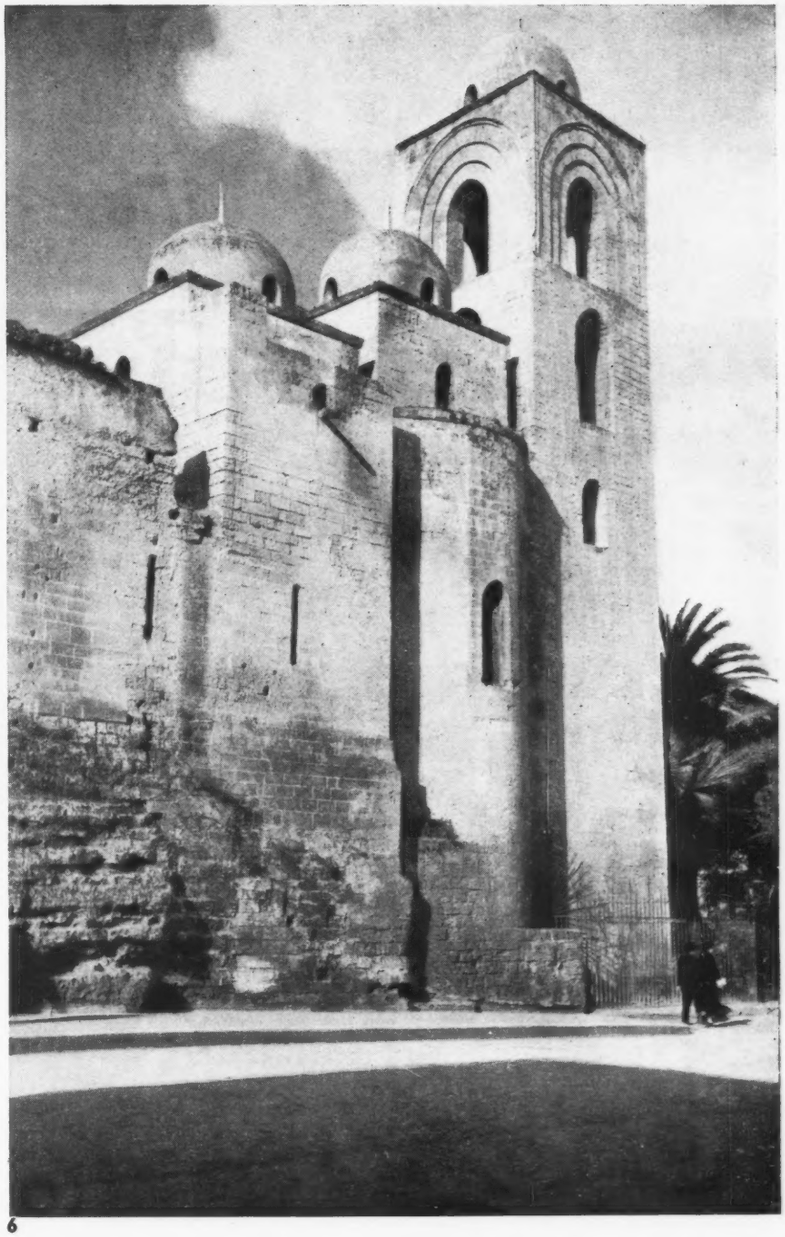

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The Church of S. Giovanni degli Eremiti, **6**, is by far the most picturesque of the Palermitan churches. It is surrounded by a charming garden and has a later cloister attached to the south side. Inside, the walls only show the bare bones of structural form. If it was ever decorated there is nothing to show. It has a long nave divided into bays, each with its dome set on squinches. S. Cataldo, **4**, also belongs to the Norman period, and although it follows the traditional Greek plan, it differs from the normal in having three domes in a row. The church of the Trinità di Delia near Castelvetrano, **5**, in south-west Sicily, is a more typical expression of the Greek cross in square plan. Here the dome forms an excellent culmination to the composition. Inside, there is little so see apart from the four columns and their antique caps that carry the dome. La Piccola Cuba, **1**, is an elegant little garden kiosk, especially important, because so few examples remain of Byzantine secular architecture. Of the mosaics illustrated, **2** is at the Palatine Chapel in the Palermo palace of the Norman Kings, **3** at S. Maria dell' Ammiraglio, Palermo. The church was drastically restored, and the photo shows the odd contrast of an arch with some casual light-tinted Baroque decoration against the rigid delineation and the luxuriant gamut of colouring of the Byzantine work. The grave danger which any bombardment means to mosaics is evident.

dust of every colour as I did so. By the time I arrived at the, by contrast, calm lagoon of peace where what had been hit, shaken, woggled, crushed, pulverized, shot up and down slopes into cauldrons, been blown upon, whisked and sifted, now finally dropped refined but exhausted into an enormous cylinder, full of opalescent liquid. As the particles fell into the chemical they sighed and became cooled and suffered a penultimate experience. They were precipitated, or rather everything which wasn't pure gold was given a tremendous shock, and instantly relinquished its hold, and the pure gold was precipitated. In sympathy I felt myself also precipitated, and the relief was delicious.

We got thick rubber pullovers and rubber trousers at the washhouses and I was given one of the helmets. It was light and tough, made of something like pressed fibre. After all it wasn't to protect you from bullets or shrapnel. Back in the lift shed I had an unpleasant anticipation of claustrophobia. We got into the cage, and stood, slightly bouncing off each other with the springiness of our rubber clothes. It was quite different from the lift at the St. Regis Hotel in New York. There had been no attempt made to conceal anything. There was the bare black rock, there the chains, and here the open cage, and me in my rubbers. Clank! went the slimy gate, deafeningly.

The iron box dropped like a stone. The first stop was two thousand four hundred and seventy-five feet down. I stepped out into a cavern measureless to man. My companion found a switch and turned on a single pale dusty electric globe high up on the black and dripping rock face. The cavern became less measureless and more like a forlorn station on the metropolitan railway. I half expected to hear the rumble of a train. And, sure enough, there it was. Some extremely iron trucks bashed their way along a reverberating tunnel, invisibly, followed by silence. The cavern was perhaps twenty feet high, and driblets of water ran down its black rocky walls. A group of four or five men were leaning against the dripping wall in a street-corner sort of way. There was nothing to sit on. The light was too dim to read by.

"A few armchairs would be handy down here," I ventured.

"A few——what did you say?" replied the manager in a startled tone.

"What is that curious roaring noise?" I said, changing the subject.

"That's the electric hoist. We'll go along this way. You'll have to stoop."

I had hoped to have a word with the group of men, but I followed my guide, without demur. As we walked along the curving tunnels I would not have been surprised to meet an immense rabbit, whose vast twitching nose and foolish protuberant eyes would block the entire space in front of us—a rabbit three times the size of an elephant. The walls were now a sort of greenish brown. A row of open trucks full of rocks came jaggling by. I pressed against the wall to avoid being hit, and my rubber clothes bunged against the inexorable surface. We came out into a sort of chapel with a rough Saxon chair standing on a raised dais. It looked like a cousin to the one with the pointed back in which so many Kings and Queens of England have been crowned. Before it was a high thin black piece of machinery which trembled petulantly all the time, and gave out a high irritated sound as though its patience was exhausted. From time to time a red light flashed and then a man I had not noticed till he moved, leaned forward and pulled a lever which caused the machine to exclaim: "Oh My Sacred Aunt! Now you've done it again!" and seize some great black cog wheels, and begin to revolve them with demoniac energy, waving itself about in a frenzy of annoyance. Then the red light went out and immediately the machine let go of the vast cog wheels and relapsed into its irascible trembling once more, uttering its high irritated sound with unabated despair. It would have been impossible to watch it for very long without qualifying for a rest cure. Miners must obviously be men who are unmoved by the agony of machines. . . .

"That's number three Winz air-driven hoist," observed my companion. "The signals tell him where the cars are so he knows when to stop. Hey, Kuzma! Commere!"

Kuzma came towards us wiping his hands on his sleeves.

"This is Nik Kuzma."

"Hujja!" exclaimed the youth, and we shook hands. That was all the

English he knew, so conversation lapsed into smiles and pointing. I pointed at the machine and trembled to show that I sympathized with it. Nik Kuzma grinned broadly and wagged his head knowingly. Ah, yes, damn funny machine! He worked it: it had to start and stop when he said so.

"Yugo-slav," he said, pointing at himself and grinning.

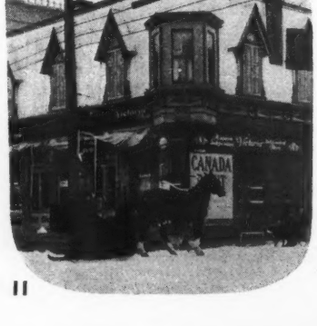
We left him seated in the coronation chair in the unconsecrated chapel and made our way to another shaft down which we dropped three hundred and fifty feet. Here a variety of noises assaulted my ears. The roar of the transformer, the electric drill being tested, the epileptic jangling of the chairing cage and somewhere in the distance an explosion. Also I began to feel stuffy. We passed men engaged on various tasks, but nowhere did we come upon children of three years old in scanty rags, or any pregnant women performing some little operation of endless monotony, as we should have done in an English mine seventy years ago. Nor did we come upon anyone of British origin in this large and no doubt important gold mine in the largest dominion in the British Commonwealth. I exchanged greetings with numbers of men, and they were all either Russians, Germans, Yugo-slavs, Poles, or Ukrainians, Serbs or Swedes. There was also a Jew, a Rumanian Jew. I looked him up next day in his little house and found that he had an Irish wife, and that his closest friend and good neighbour was a German.

"Now we'll get round down to where they're at work on the face," said the Cornishman, and we got into another cage and sank to six thousand feet. This time we didn't drop so rapidly, and I was glad, for the heat was becoming oppressive. I began to sweat. My rubber suit felt like lead. We got out of the cage. Everything was yellow and slimy and hot. A slow breeze blew along the slimy tunnels and a hot-sounding explosion reverberated round us as we started walking. At intervals there were bare electric bulbs, but it was not before my guide flashed his torch on to a patch of the rock face that I saw the flakes and wedges of gold that were everywhere about us. It looked impossibly hard and un-get-at-able. But another dull explosion followed by a rattle of falling stone told a different story.

I wiped my pouring face with the back of my yellow mud-covered hand and watched two electric drills piercing the rock, and on withdrawing, disclosing long round holes into which fingers of dynamite were pushed. Further along one of the tunnels the muckers were heaving the broken rocks into the cars. The Yugo-slav Russian Swedish Bavarian Poles sweated and shoved and hacked and grinned and nodded and wiped the mud round their faces, and later went up in the cages to five thousand, four, three, two thousand four hundred and seventy-five, to the surface where six feet of snow lay over everything and the temperature was thirty-five below zero. My God I was pleased—for a moment—with that temperature. "But don't they catch pneumonia or something?" "No, not much. They take care." And the bits of variegated very hard greenish brownish six thousand-feet-deep-in-the-earth rock, flecked with yellow gold, kept on being broken off like bits of tooth and hoisted up warm to the snowy surface and run down the moving tracks with lumps of snow on it, into the Symous Gyratory Wobbling Crusher, from whence it was flung out in smaller pieces, till hours later, after having been hit, woggled, pulverized, shot up and down slopes, poured through sieves into cauldrons, no more rock was left—and out of a tipped vessel a shining stream of celestial butter ran into a mould, and being tipped out again, was seen to have assumed the shape of a brick, and was set to cool, unguarded, on the step of a rough log shack.

"Gold, gold, gold," I repeated over and over in an earnest tone, hoping to hypnotize myself with the word and the idea. "Untold gold . . . treasure. Doubloons . . . riches . . . power . . . vast wealth . . . everything that money can buy. Pure gold. . . ." But I somehow didn't go into a trance.

I met a man called Zopilote in Mexico City, who had left his family on the hacienda somewhere down in the direction of Téhnautepec, and had come up to the capital to get a Government job. Lots of his friends had Government jobs, and he was tired of farming. Also he was tired generally. He had been in Mexico City for several months and still seemed as far from getting a Government job as when he had arrived. These things took time. Also one had to see the right people. Meanwhile one had to live. And his money had run out. So he sent a post card to the family: "Send the children down to the river to collect gold. I have no money." In a fortnight he received a lump of gold about the size of a tennis ball. He took it along to the bank and moved into the Hotel Isabel on the corner of the Calle Isabel la Católica and the Averrida República de Salvador, after which he rented a quite beastly villa in Aquascalientes, or Hot Water Street, from a German. Gold is the one thing they look for in your luggage when you leave Mexico. You may easily have spent a few pleasant afternoons scooping it out of a shallow river with a teacup, and they are very down on foreigners taking anything out of the country. . . .



11

BOOKS

HOGARTH AND REYNOLDS. A contrast in English art theory. By Joseph Burke. Oxford University Press. 2s. 6d.

This is the printed version of the twenty-fourth Charlton Lecture, delivered at King's College, Newcastle, in 1941. Mr. Burke emphasizes those aspects in Hogarth's theory which point forward, and in Reynolds's those which connect him with the past. Thus Hogarth is shown to stand for nature in all its peculiarities, Reynolds for *la belle nature*; Hogarth for *Einfühlung* and the expressional function of form, Reynolds for an ideal beauty of form. Manuscript material is used in the case of Hogarth; in that of Reynolds there is, of course, no new material, but the connection between the Discourses and *Rasselas* has never before been brought out so clearly. Mr. Burke's interpretation of the two æstheticist-artists is convincing, as far as it goes. But he leaves out of his picture—deliberately, perhaps—what ties Hogarth to the Rococo: his serpentine line of beauty, which is the dominant line of composition of the Rococo from Watteau to Tiepolo and Fragonard, and what ties Reynolds to the future: his recommendations of variety and Vanbrugh, as stressed so excellently in Christopher Hussey's *The Picturesque*.

THE HONEYWOOD FILE. By H. B. Creswell. Faber & Faber. Third Edition. 7s. 6d.

It is pleasant to meet Spinlove, Sir Leslie Brash, Lady Brash, Grigblay and Potch again. Here they are, as fresh and true to life as ever. Sir Leslie's house, if the book were written to-day, would probably be Georgian and not a Norman Shaw-Ernest Newton Tudor, but otherwise there is very little that would not do the A.A. boys of 1943 just as much good as it did their elders of the twenties. For however much they may now choose to think in terms of socialist realism, a considerable percentage of their work may well remain houses for private clients; and there is no better introduction to the manifold problems of a domestic practice than Mr. Creswell's classic.

PLANNING AND RECONSTRUCTION YEARBOOK, 1943. Todd Publishing Company. 21s.

This book with its 368 pages will prove extremely useful to all connected in some way or other with post-war planning work. It is certainly not a very dignified production, but it will serve its purpose effectively. Of the fifteen sections two only consist of articles, some evidently written by the way, others well thought out statements. Amongst the authors are, for instance, Mr. Henry Strauss, Dr. Dudley Stamp, William Holford, the indefatigable F. J. Osborn (who also signs as advisory editor), Lionel Pearson, R. Fitzmaurice. The themes of the articles range from Planning the Land and Replanning Central Metropolitan Areas to Wrought Aluminium Alloys and Noise Abatement. The articles fill about two-fifths of the book, the rest is devoted to short accounts of the Scott and Uthwatt Reports, of planning legislation and of planning abroad. These are followed by extensive planning directories, statements on reconstruction from some eighteen official and private bodies (for instance, the West Midland Group, the MARS Group, P.E.P., the D.I.A., the Nuffield College Reconstruction Survey, etc.), brief statements on the replanning position in sixteen cities and the steps so far taken by them, and lists of published regional planning reports. There is also a bibliography and a fifteen-page section of statistics.

PREFABRICATION IN TIMBER. A survey of existing methods. Part I. By C. Sjostrom. The English Joinery Manufacturers' Association.
PREFABRICATED TIMBER HOUSES. A statement of the principles and practice of prefabrication. The Timber Development Association.

These two booklets, the first of forty-six, the second of twenty-four pages, cover very much the same ground. They supply information as to the reasons for prefabrication, the various systems in use over here and abroad, the standard elements and finishes, etc. Mr. Sjostrom's is the more stimulating of the two. A section headed *Æsthetics versus Cost* comes as a surprise in what is, after all, a trade pamphlet. Especially interesting is an introductory page on the recent history of prefabrication, beginning with Hodgson's wall and roof sections for bungalows (1892) and leading on to Sweden's efforts since 1920. "Between 1924 and 1929," Mr. Sjostrom writes, "altogether nineteen prefabricated Swedish timber houses were imported into this country. Eleven of these were sold to the London County Council and erected on their Becontree Estate. After this, opposition from trade unions prevented the import of further timber house sections." The chief types of houses discussed are the frame type (braced, balloon, platform, unit), solid structural wall type, structural panel type, and—most important of all—stressed skin type.

ANTHOLOGY

Henry James and Wells Cathedral

The pleasantest thing in life is doubtless ever the pleasantness that has found one off one's guard—though if I was off my guard in arriving at Wells it could only have been by the effect of a frivolous want of information. I knew in a general way that this ancient little town had a great cathedral to produce, but I was far from suspecting the intensity of the impression that awaited me. The immense predominance of the Minster towers, as you see them from the approaching train over the clustered houses at their feet, gives you indeed an intimation of its character, suggests that the city is nothing if not sanctified; but I can wish the traveller no better fortune than to stroll forth in the early evening with as large a reserve of ignorance as my own, and treat himself to an hour of discoveries. I was lodged on the edge of the Cathedral lawn and had only to pass beneath one of the three crumbling Priory gates which enclose it, and cross the vast grassy oval, to stand before a minster-front which ranks among the first three or four in England. Wells Cathedral is extremely fortunate in being approached by this wide green level, on which the spectator may loiter and stroll to and fro and shift his standpoint to his heart's content. The spectator who does not hesitate to avail himself of his privilege of unlimited fastidiousness might indeed pronounce it too isolated for perfect picturesqueness—too uncontrasted with the profane architecture of the human homes for which it pleads to the skies. But Wells is in fact not a city with a cathedral for central feature; it is a cathedral with a little city gathered at the base and forming hardly more than an extension of the spacious close. You feel everywhere the presence of the beautiful church; the place seems always to savour of a Sunday afternoon; and you imagine every house tenanted by a canon, a prebendary or a precentor, with "backs" providing for choristers and vergers.

The great facade is remarkable not so much for its expanse as for its elaborate elegance. It consists of two great truncated towers, divided by a broad centre bearing, beside its rich fretwork of statues, three narrow lancet windows. The statues on this vast front are the great boast of the cathedral. They number, with the lateral figures of the towers, no less than three hundred; it seems densely embroidered by the chisel. They are disposed, in successive niches, along six main vertical shafts; the central windows are framed and divided by narrower shafts, and the wall above them rises into a pinnacled screen traversed by two superb horizontal rows. Add to these a close-running cornice of images along the line corresponding with the summit of the aisles and the tiers which complete the decoration of the towers on either side, and you have an immense system of images governed by a quaint theological order and most impressive in its completeness. Many of the little high-lodged effigies are mutilated, and not a few of the niches are empty, but the injury of time is not sufficient to diminish the noble serenity of the building. The injury of time is indeed being actively repaired, for the front is partly masked by a slender scaffolding. The props and platforms are of the most delicate structure, and look in fact as if they were meant to facilitate no more ponderous labour than a fitting-on of noses to disfeatured bishops and a rearrangement of the mantle-folds of straitlaced queens discomposed by the centuries. The main beauty of Wells Cathedral, to my mind, is not its more or less visible wealth of detail, but its singularly charming tone of colour. An even, sober, mouse-coloured gray invests it from summit to base, deepening nowhere to the melancholy black of your truly romantic Gothic, but showing as yet none of the spotty brightness of renovation. It is a wonderful fact that the great towers, from their lofty outlook, see never a factory chimney—those cloud-compelling spires which so often break the charm of the softest English horizons; and the general atmosphere of Wells seemed to me, for some reason, peculiarly luminous and sweet. The cathedral has never been discoloured by the moral malaria of a city with an independent secular life. As you turn back from its portal and glance at the open lawn before it, edged by the mild gray seventeenth-century deanery and the other dwellings, hardly less stately, which seem to reflect in their comfortable fronts the rich respectability of the church, and then up again at the beautiful clear-hued pile, you may fancy it less a temple for man's needs than a monument of his pride—less a fold for the flock than for the shepherds; a visible token that, besides the actual assortment of heavenly thrones, there is constantly on hand a "full line" of cushioned cathedral stalls. Within the cathedral this impression is not diminished. The interior is vast and massive, but it lacks incident—the incident of monuments, sepulchres and chapels—and it is too brilliantly lighted for picturesque, as distinguished from strictly architectural, interest.

HENRY JAMES (*English Hours*, Heinemann, 1905)

MARGINALIA

Forests of the Future

The Forestry Commissioners' report on post-war policy, which came out three months ago, suggests an early transfer to the State of one-half to two-thirds of the larger privately owned woodlands in the country, afforestation of three million acres of bare, and mostly hilly, land within the next fifty years, and powers to see that wooded areas remaining in private hands shall speedily be brought into full production.

That bold planning is needed in British forestry no one will deny. Until after the last war, things had been almost entirely left to themselves, with disastrous results, both in quantity and quality of wooded areas. Not much was done for agriculture either, but there was still infinitely more interest in, and understanding of, agricultural than of forestry needs. The Commission now tries to go the whole hog—a worthy companion to the Scott Committee. Both in their reports place war needs in the foreground, but both are really led by a faith in the wholesomeness of a well-worked and well-lived-in countryside. Three million acres sounds a lot. In fact it is not. The total land area of Great Britain comes to over fifty-six million acres. Of this only three million were wooded in 1938. That is 5.5 per cent., as against about 27 in Germany, 19 in France, 18 in Belgium, 8 in Holland, 7.5 in Denmark. With the proposed addition of acreage Britain would only just reach the Western average.

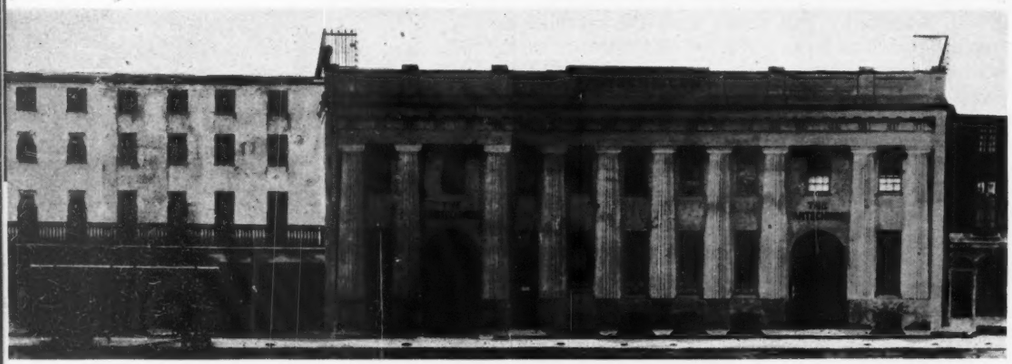
It seems a pity that security is so much emphasized in the Commission's report, instead of reasons of improved climate, health and amenity—which should surely, granted a reasonable foreign policy after the war, dictate home policy. Or is architecture going to be all underground, because A.R.P. has proved the wartime necessity for deep shelters? However, the programme of the Commission is bold and convincing. What will have to be watched is the way in which it is to be carried out. The period between the two wars has shown up a few mistakes in forestry administration and policy which must be avoided after this war. Not enough attention has, in a good many cases, been placed on strains, where new planting was begun by the Commission. Soil scientists and ecologists should be called in more frequently and heard more sympathetically. Low price of land should not decide purchases more than is absolutely necessary. With a view to the future of British forestry after fifty years, it may well pay to buy dearer but better land.

Finally, and this is what THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW is especially concerned about, the character of local landscape should consistently be considered, where new planting is started. Landscape specialists are as important from the point of view of a healthy countryside as scientists. The Forestry Commission proposes to plant mainly conifers. The argument in favour of them is strong: 96 per cent. of British timber construction before the war was met by imports; 94 per cent. of this was accounted for by softwoods. Still, a long-range policy could afford to think more of hardwoods, and conifer planting should, for reasons of æsthetic congruity, be excluded from certain parts of the country. Scotland has shown how well pine forests can look on British soil. The same success may be repeated in Lakeland and parts of Yorkshire. But when it comes to the Home Counties, even the most revolutionary innovator should think twice before he tries to combine the scene as developed by the eighteenth century landowner with the forestry pattern of conifer plantations. Maybe that by judicious siting more could be achieved than we now believe—the chief necessity is for supervision by trained landscaping specialists.

The End of Recording

The third and last Recording Britain Exhibition is now being held at the National Gallery. It will be remembered that the Recording Britain scheme was started at the beginning of the war by means of a grant from the Pilgrim Trust. The purpose of the scheme was two-fold: to help artists over a time when little work for them was (rightly or wrongly) anticipated, and to give the nation a record of, as it was originally intended, the changing face of the

Kenneth Rowntree : The Pantechnicon. This is Kenneth Rowntree's only London painting in the third and last of the Recording Britain exhibitions. A note on the exhibition appears on this page. The Pantechnicon was established in 1830. The designer of the building was Seth Smith. It was originally a bazaar to sell carriages and furniture, but also wines, a fitting commercial venture in the fashionable and flourishing district of Belgravia. Its seven Doric order is something of a shock between the restrained terrace houses of Motcomb Street—the very shock which the founders of the firm needed to advertise their service. Kenneth Rowntree has introduced variety into the otherwise monotonous theme he was given by avoiding symmetry and placing a copy of one of the original yellow vans in front of the houses on the left. The delightfully painted ancestral portraits appearing through the panes the ground-floor windows can hardly be distinguished in the photograph.



country, with a special view to places in danger zones. As it turned out, any motif in town and countryside, worthy of being placed on record, was acceptable. The fifteen hundred drawings done are of course an arbitrary collection. They come from thirty-six of the counties of England and Wales, and do not endeavour—fortunately for the artists—to cover them.

The scheme as such is splendid. Whoever conceived it deserves the gratitude of all those who believe that a sensitive artist can record more that matters than even the best photographer. Not all artists however who were asked to contribute to the scheme are amongst the sensitive. Far from it. The general standard of work exhibited is in fact distinctly disappointing. The Victoria and Albert Museum, to which the collection goes as a loan from the Pilgrim Trustees, and which is to circularize them to provincial galleries, will not always be happy to have its name attached to these drawings and water colours.

On the other hand, the request to report, set as a task to the painter, has here and there brought forces to the surface which had lain dormant and might not otherwise ever have been liberated. English art has for many centuries had a strong inclination towards matter-of-fact recording. The Pipers, Raviliouses and Bawdens had begun to revive it in terms of a twentieth-century idiom, before Recording Britain was launched. But take the case of Kenneth Rowntree. His Recording Britain drawings—a number was illustrated in THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW last February; the *Pantechnicon* is shown on this page—are a memorable example of how an intelligent patron can help to develop the painter's powers. Kenneth Rowntree had a love for the hum-drum and the home-spun, for the Victorian builder's vernacular and lace curtains, before he was sent on Recording Britain tours. But thanks to these tours he began to apply it consistently, and to apply it to a variety of themes. There are similar cases in this third exhibition, especially that of Barbara Jones, whose *Black Bear*, *Round House*, *Pendennis Castle*, *Euston Portico*, are of great architectural promise.

Cubism in Spain

The Editor has received from Raymond McGrath, at Dublin, the postcard reproduced on page xlii. It

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