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THREE SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

THE COVER. The bell tolls on Monte Oliveto for the deliverance of San Gimignano, the famous medieval town in Tuscany. It rings out in grief and joy for many other places also, the nodal points around which our civilisation has crystallised in memorable form, and which, engulfed in war for so long, can now see it recede from their precincts. Thus the bell sounds for Rome, for Florence ; for Athens, Paris, Chartres ; for Bruges and Ghent, Brussels and Antwerp ; for Colmar of the invaluable shrine and Strasbourg's minster. It grieves for the memory of Cassino and for the ruins of London's old city, its burnt-out churches. In notes of sombre warning the bell tolls for those who brought ruin on the cities and the sacred places. A mixed song this, of thanksgiving, of anger and judgment, but also an augury for the year which may see the reinstatement of a civilisation in Europe, which was but young when the tower was built on Monte Oliveto.

LEWIS MUMFORD

on the future of London

In the following article Lewis Mumford, author of *Technics and Civilisation, The Culture of the Cities,* and the *Condition of Man* discusses the future of London in the light of the county's great new plan. He does not give a detailed criticism but rather a restatement of his famous thesis of city decay and possible reprieve through regional decentralisation. Though full of praise for the humanity and vision of the London planners, Mumford believes that the partial evacuation of a few thousand souls will not solve the city's problem. He has to admit, though, that the L.C.C. within its narrow administrative boundaries cannot possibly carry out a decentralisation policy on the scale envisaged by him. The Mumfordian attitude will, of course, be passionately opposed by a section of the young planning movement, which though in many respects admitting their discipleship to Mumford, do not share the Neo-Spenglerian gloom of his predictions nor his faith in the remedy of decentralisation. This point of view was voiced in Mr. J. M. Richards' article *Towards a Replanning Policy*, published in THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, July, 1941, and is perhaps the only planning theory put forward to oppose the Mumford thesis. Nevertheless there can hardly be a more fitting epilogue to the American reactions to the County of London Plan (published in the September issue of the REVIEW), than the words of Lewis Mumford, who once again emphasises the ends of planning, which all too often become obscured in the tenacious struggle over the means.

1. INTRODUCTION

UNDER any circumstances, the County of London plan would stand forth among the important documents of the town planning movement. But the tragic necessity that has made planning on a great scale imperative need not have summoned up a commensurate vision; and the remarkable thing about Messrs. Forshaw and Abercrombie's plan is that the physical immensity of the task has not obscured the human sympathy, the human insight, of the planners.

Regrettably, the planners have not fully lived up to their vision; on certain matters, indeed, the superstructure they have erected denies their fundamental convictions. But even when the planners have erred, they have done so out of love for their city and out of a desire not to lessen the number of Londoners. Those of us who have admired from a distance the fortitude and gallantry of this great urban populace are also tempted to pray that their numbers shall be increased, not diminished: so the world must honour the planners' impulse, even if a consideration of the larger issues prove that it is self-defeating.

Among the big cities of the world London cannot perhaps claim to be the most beautiful, the most efficient, or even the most dignified; but it is surely the most lovable, and the men and women of London make it so. Millions of them have lived under sordid, sometimes brutal conditions, but they have not at bottom become brutalized. They still have some of the mottled innocence of Sam Weller, the moral tenacity of Meredith's Skepsey; in short, they are lovable. Perhaps, they have actually been sweetened by their physical handicaps, like the survivors in a blitzed area. Such a city the planner improves at his peril: not entirely sure but that some of its finer human qualities have proceeded from the very conditions that cry, it would seem, for correction.

Before I discuss this planning report in the rigorous fashion its great qualities deserve, I should like to add my personal tribute to the spirit in which it has been written and to its many positive achievements. My copy is full of annotations, and the words, "admirable," "sound," "excellent," appear on almost every page. As one has learned to expect from any work with which Professor Abercrombie is associated, this report has the great merit of taking an extremely complex collection of data, reducing it to manageable proportions, and using it as a basis for clear-cut and reasonable proposals that can be followed step by step.

These planners understand that a city is not a purely physical structure. They see that the city is an historic organization, almost an organism, rich in traditions, full of memories, guided by processes

SAN GIMIGNANO

The unique hillside town of the thirteen Gothic towers in the province of Siena, Central Italy, has survived its latest siege. Though shelled by the retreating Germans it stands much as before, "a skyscraper city in miniature" with its numerous churches and palaces built in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Once a sovereign republic, it fell to Florence in 1353. The passage of time has enhanced rather than destroyed the appearance of San Gimignano. It has been preserved to our day, as an example of almost faultless urban design, an *objet d'art*, planted in the hills of Tuscany.

that are sometimes too obscure to be rationally analysed or too subtle to be arbitrarily guided. Instead of flouting such traditions as Le Corbusier once proposed to do in his ruthless geometric reconstruction of Paris, the authors seek rather to make use of London's past. They summon up borough loyalties almost as resolutely as did Adam Wayne, the Napoleon of Notting Hill—not, like him, to resurrect archaic costumes and moribund interests, but to revitalize the social order by which men live.

If any group of men were capable of planning single-handedly London's future, it would be the County Council that has enlisted such able professional aid and that has been, within the limits laid down, so well served by it. But that "if" raises a doubt, and on inspecting the report carefully the doubt becomes a challenge.

At this point my all-too-brief eulogy must come to an end. For ultimately I must raise the question as to whether the London County Council, great as it is, has the power to prepare an adequate plan for the future of London. I must ask if a plan for London—or any other British city—can proceed without taking its place in a larger scheme of regional and national development. While many of the proposals in the L.C.C. Plan have permanent value, I must finally suggest that the most fundamental problems have been neglected, because the future of London has been looked upon as a matter for self-determination. As a series of well-organized planning schemes, the report is in many respects admirable. What is lacking is not planning skill but something that must precede it: urban statesmanship. In the haste to rebuild London, this plan might unfortunately serve to hasten its downfall and complete its destruction.

2. APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM

Under the above heading, the London plan discusses three possibilities. First: "unrestricted planning." Such planning would follow the lines taken by the M.A.R.S. group, by considering the city as a formal physical structure and changing every characteristic except the name. The L.C.C. planners wisely dismiss this possibility; yet perhaps they do so too completely; for when it comes to the detailed planning of neighbourhoods they fail to consider sufficiently the guiding lines provided by an adequate theoretic solution and have not fully availed themselves of the precedents for sound modern standardization that have been partly worked out during the last generation.

As opposed to "unrestricted planning," the L.C.C. approach has been based upon an "endeavour to retain the old structure, where discernible, and make it workable under modern conditions." Having decided upon this course, the authors have also decided to retain the existing population for the county at large: their proposal to remove half a million people from the centre, so far from being a revolutionary one, would actually lessen the number that was thrown on to the periphery of London during the nineteen-thirties.

Now this effort to retain London's existing population was a major decision. The whole plan depends upon it: in fact, the whole plan falls by it. But one looks in vain for any discussion of the considerations that governed it, or for even a recognition of the fact that it is the most debatable assumption in the whole report. Is it possible that this decision was determined for the planners before they were even called in to make their survey and prepare their report? If so, it was still subject to criticism, for the first duty of the architect and planner—little though the schools of architecture may teach it—is to scrutinize the programme of his client and to make sure that the client has a correct insight into his own needs and has embarked upon an enterprise he is capable of carrying out.

Apart from the lovableness of Londoners, what reasons exist for retaining in the County of London most of its pre-war population? Of political and economic motives there are many: habit, convenience, inertia all tend to make any existing set of institutions perpetuate themselves, even after the original causes and motives for their existence have ceased to operate. Plainly, an enormous amount of capital has been invested in the mere massing of London's population: its elaborate and efficient transit system, its sewers and water works, a host of secondary service industries all depend for their existence upon keeping up the population of London.

With these trades and industries and public works go the rateable values that their presence maintains. The ability of the London County Council to keep up its admirable educational and health services rests, in part, upon maintaining congestion. In addition, the very human love of power and prestige contributes to this decision: since the seventeenth century the great capitals have monopolized the cultural resources that once were far more widely distributed and the very conception of metropolitan greatness has been associated with purely quantitative estimates of population and wealth.

Yet the pressure to maintain the physical greatness of London works contrary to the desire to produce a more liveable environment. Against this desire for mere numbers, stand certain indisputable facts. First, inner London has been emptying out since as far back as 1861, when Holborn showed a decrease in population: even the County of London has lost population to the outer London area; so that while the population of the Home Counties has gone on massing and congealing, London as a city has shown the same symptoms of blight and disorder and depletion that the great cities have borne witness to all over the world. Merely to maintain the pre-war population of London, Messrs. Abercrombie and Forshaw have to reverse two tendencies: the original tendency toward an expansion which sacrificed the rest of Britain to London's imperial monopoly, and the secondary local tendency to compensate for the disasters of this expansion by escaping to suburban areas on the margin.

The planners of London are correct in thinking that the time for urban stabilization has finally come. But they are wrong in thinking that their plan for retaining the existing population of London will effectually aid this stabilization: it would rather, as I shall show later, continue to have most dire results upon the whole population structure of Great Britain, and so, ultimately, upon London.

3. THE THIRD APPROACH TO PLANNING

There is a third approach to the problem, which the authors mention only to caricature, and caricature only the more easily to dismiss. This is what they call dispersal: they refer to it in terms that make it similar to the half-baked fantasies of certain American planners and industrial designers, people who are so enamoured of the devices of rapid transportation that they would retain the centre of the cities only as a daily gathering place for business, pretty much like the City of London itself, whilst every other function would be dispersed over the wide landscape.

Conceived on those lines, "dispersal" is only another megalopolitan attempt to simplify the problem of life in cities by translating every element into purely physical or technological terms. This particular approach was first sketched out, I believe, by Mr. H. G. Wells, in his *Anticipations:* at bottom it belongs to the same order of thinking as that which has already created the existing mesh of cumbersome mechanical services. The only difference between this method and the actual dispersal of pre-war London would be in the degree of urban dilution that the motor car and the airplane and the helicopter would make possible in the future. No one who understands the role of cities in civilization could possibly look forward to the extension of that process.

But in the curt five lines in which this alternative is broached and dismissed, Messrs. Forshaw and Abercrombie mention quite another consideration. "Should we," they ask, "agree with those sociologists and technicians who declare that Megalopolis must end in Necropolis, killed by its own atrophy?"

That is another question. And since I am on record as one of those sociologists, it is precisely at this point that I would halt the authors and challenge them to re-examine their choice. Have they perhaps not made it a little too peremptorily? Have they been blind to the sights around them, or rather, blind to their significance? Have they failed to read the hand-writing on the wall for the reason that the wall itself has already been bombed into rubble. Unfortunately, the bombing itself points to the message.

When Sir Patrick Geddes generalized the development of cities into three stages of growth, followed by three stages of decay, it was open to his critics to say that this historic summary was not necessarily valid for our own civilization. Had we not possibly found a way out of that impasse through the use of a science and a technics that no other age had possessed? Perhaps the death of the big city was as avoidable as the death of modern child from diphtheria.

But however pessimistic and premature Geddes's summary might have seemed a generation ago, one must rather be struck by its extraordinary realism to-day. If anything, one is disturbed by the essential lightheartedness of his study of the growth of conurbations in Cities in Evolution: so deeply engrained in him was the hopefulness of the nineteenth century that, biologist though he was, he did not utter a sufficient warning against its biological and social consequences.

That optimism and that oversight should not be repeated in the present generation; for we have come face to face with the lethal end-products of megalopolitan civilization: the misuses of mechanisms, the de-humanization of personalities, and the actual breakdown or obliteration of even sound urban structures in the ferocious interchanges of totalitarian warfare. Only with sadness and extreme reluctance does one who has lived remote from the bombed cities of Britain remind the planners of London that every bombed area is *ipso facto* a fragment of Necropolis: where men once crowded together strange plants now

grow and birds nest, precisely as if Bloomsbury were Baalbec. Necropolis in our time has become one of the consequences of "peace in our time." What was once prophecy is now history. And those who have stood up so bravely to the bombing itself must carry their courage one step further and face the meaning of this unrestrained orgy of destruction.

Is the present breakdown of our civilization an accidental fact? There is massive evidence at hand for thinking that it is not: some of that evidence I have endeavoured to collect and interpret in *The Condition of Man* (New York: 1944). What we have experienced in the last thirty years has been repeated in each of the twenty other civilizations that Mr. Arnold Toynbee has analysed in his *A Study of History*. At a certain stage in every civilization's development, the processes of expansion and conquest over-reach themselves: the vital interests of man are set aside and his moral and political discipline become inadequate to control the forces that are his to command. This failure to maintain the human measure leads in time to social disintegration, marked by a wholesale flight from reality, and it brings about a reliance upon palliatives and evasions which only further hasten the decay of which they are a grave symptom.

The uncontrolled growth of the big cities is as much an anti-vital process as the uncontrolled destructions of totalitarian warfare: they are both symptoms of a deeper disorder. In the new plan for London I find the same failure to come to grips with reality that one finds in the political behaviour of all the democratic peoples—not least of course isolationist United States—during the nineteen-thirties. And this failure would still be serious even if the war had not broken out and even if obliteration bombing had not been practised.

For the death of the overgrown city has been written in two ways, and both spell the same word: Necropolis. Megalopolitan civilization itself on one hand fosters pathological reactions in many areas that it touches: its machine-centred economy is hostile to no small part of man's essential needs, and even the deep vitality and tough humanity of the British peoples has not been able to overcome that fact. Not accidental, but typical, were the reactions produced in the ugly mind of Hitler by his experiences as an outcast in Vienna, for the absence of organic groupings and effective fellowships gives rise to a demand for mechanical compulsions and unanimities; and normal impulses, suppressed and frustrated in Megalopolis, return in the form of collective aggressions. What is the result? A totalitarian religion that degrades the personality: a totalitarian tyranny that violates the most sacred attributes of civil life: a totalitarian war that brings the whole process to its final consummation of evil. All these phenomena have their somewhat disguised counterparts in non-fascist countries.

Fortunately, even in the biggest of cities, there remains a large residue of deeply human impulses, welling up with each new generation of children not yet subdued to their social environment: hence Spengler's prediction of the abject cowardliness of the urban proletariat has proved untrue, from Madrid to London; and hence, as I pointed out in the *Culture of Cities, the processes of renewal may even at a late stage of decadence cut short the downward movement and initiate a fresh cycle of development.* But such an initiative demands an effort as heroic and as drastic in its displacement of past interests and past routines as that required by war itself. The attempt merely to patch and repair the existing structure of society, under the illusion that its dominating forces are benign and are pointed in the right direction can only lead to the extension of ruin. Everywhere that ruin has now become visible.

But totalitarian war is not the only lethal product of our megalopolitan culture. Even had "peace" prevailed, the growth of the big city was self-limited; for the same result would have been reached presently in a no less inexorable fashion, if over a somewhat longer period. We are faced not only with *premature* death but with death *at the source* by the shutting-off of new births. The greatest nineteenth-century achievement in mass production, the mass production of human beings, has come to an end.

The big city grew originally, and continued to grow, chiefly by immigration. Even now it remains the least successful environment for reproducing men. Despite the increase of sanitary services, hospitals, and clinics, despite the lowering of its infant death rate, the population of the big city cannot be maintained without a steady import of people from more fertile areas: even to maintain their existing population the distended city must deplete the hinterland of men.

Now two great facts about population growth must be borne firmly in mind. First: after corrections for age differences are made, the big city compares unfavourably with the small town, and still more with the open country, as an environment helpful to reproduction. The statistics on this are perhaps clearer in the United States than in England, because in the latter country a higher degree of urbanization exists, and the entire country has been more deeply affected over a longer period of time by the dominant metropolitan pattern. Second: there is a differential fertility between economic classes, with a higher degree of reproduction among the poor: so that any mere improvement in economic well-being itself is not in itself likely—without a change in social customs and purposes—to raise the birth-rate; on the contrary, it would probably tend to lower it further.

Under present circumstances, the greater the portion of a country's population that is retained in big cities, the surer becomes its biological doom. That is what one means when one says that the growth of the big city is self-limiting. Megalopolis is both a symptom and an instrument of biological failure; and it is perhaps no accident that the first city of this name was established on "modern town planning lines" precisely in the age of decadence in Greece, by deliberately moving the population of the surrounding villages into a single centre. Even in the United States with a larger rural population than England the continuance of the big city in its present form must be viewed with unconcealed alarm. But in England the danger is more critical because of the higher degree of general urbanization and by the relatively small margin of difference between the rural and the urban net birth-rate.

With the rural reservoir of population falling, London faces a shortage of inhabitants. This can be overcome only by depopulating the rest of Britain. That is a favourable condition for re-planning all the cities of Britain on lines that will make them adequate biological environments. So far from taking advantage of that opportunity, the L.C.C. planners have ingeniously attempted to combat it. This effort has been fatal to most of their palpable good intentions.

Let us be clear about what is happening to London and indeed to urban civilization generally. The sterility of the big city is a purposeful sterility: it is due to the essential failure of this civilization to arrange the goods of life in a rational order, and to put biological and social purposes above those mechanical and financial achievements—with their complementary "diversions"—which have become emblems of megalopolitan success. The mischief is not due solely to the physical ills produced by a wasteful and over-complicated urban routine: it is due to a growing concern for the inessential, the trivial, the glamourously empty, which Paul of Tarsus found, in a similar period of decay, among the Corinthians and Athenians. This wholesale perversion of values is fatal to life: as fatal if carried to the extreme as the demand of a starving man for cigarettes instead of for food. Any plan that accepts the current scale of values can only give a durable form to a pervasive, though perhaps unacknowledged, death-wish. The forgetfulness of these essential biological facts has been partly responsible for the death of most past civilizations.

4. THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING BORN

How many people should the planners of London endeavour to retain? A short-sighted prudence, desiring to retain the existing structure of land values and rates, would say: substantially all the pre-war inhabitants. But that answer is an arbitrary one. In terms of Britain's needs and responsibilities a more reasonable answer must be made: fortunately, it may be put with some precision. The ability of any group or community to reproduce itself is a measure of its biological health. The present area of London County should hold no more people than will enable it to have a net reproduction rate of at least 1·0. That answer should modify every detail of the planning.

To achieve the net reproduction rate of 1·0 involves a very comprehensive programme of institutional and personal changes, as Alva and Gunnar Myrdal have made plain in their examination of Sweden's parallel problem. These changes cannot be reduced purely to physical or environmental terms. And yet, within the wider processes of our civilization as a whole, certain urban patterns, certain densities, certain opportunities for human expression are plainly helpful to a high birth and survival rate, and certain others, we know definitely, are hostile.

When life is reduced to its lowest primitive level of eating, working and copulating the population will tend to rise: that is equally true on a Russian farm or in a London slum: hardship, desperation, and even brutal conditions tend, it would seem, to produce a compensatory vitality. *What are the equivalent conditions on a high level of culture?* That answer has not yet been satisfactorily made: the two Englishmen who attempted hardest to understand and body forth some of these conditions, D. H. Lawrence and Havelock Ellis, were handicapped by the nature of their own marriages and their personal failure in parenthood. But the Chinese and the Jews, those tough survivors of so many worn-out civilizations, provide us with a real clue: parenthood itself must become a central interest and duty; and the family and the primary group of workfellows and neighbours must become a vital core in every wider association. The rural conditions of stability and continuity, the rural association with the facts of growth and reproduction, of life and death must become an intimate part of the environment of the modern city—not restricted to mere weekend excursions

and summer holidays, not thrust far out of sight and mind, like a suburban cemetery. Not least must we plan so that the rural sense of process, on which Miss Rebecca West has written,* will permeate our entire life, counterbalancing the mechanical tendency to make the process mysterious, the results magical, and the sense of personal responsibility quite absent.

The peasant, the shepherd, and the fisherman dare not lose this saving sense that life is important: life above all; so that they will forgo comforts, forgo security, even forgo freedom of movement in order that the life-processes themselves shall go on. That sense of the importance of life is paradoxically fostered by war, not only in the soldier, but in every civilian who has actively participated in its hardships and duties, in rescue and salvage. But our cities have not been planned with any such insight or any such scale of values. Even our suburbs, no matter how openly planned, only accentuate in the routine they impose that contempt for vital processes and that worship of the non-essential out of which fortunes in perfumes and drugs, in trashy magazines and brightly wrapped packages, have been made. Fortunately, the terrible necessity that has made it imperative to cultivate every square foot of soil in Britain has brought about an at least temporary transvaluation of values. Every new plan for city development should seek to conserve these values.

Two men above all others understood the vital promise of modern civilization over a generation ago, and took steps in thought to transform our money economy into a life economy: Peter Kropotkin and Ebenezer Howard. Those who assume that their proposals have become out of date during the last twenty years have not yet caught up with them; for nothing should be plainer now than the fact that *Garden Cities of To-morrow* and *Fields, Factories, and Workshops* have laid a sound basis for the approaching age of stabilization, of integration, of balance. The forms of industry and agriculture, and the forms of urban living put forward by these two thinkers are capable not only of neutralizing the evils in our past but of making the fullest use of all the positive contributions of modern science and technics. Howard's grand plans for canalizing the flow of population, diverting it from the congested centres to balanced communities, his plan for decentralizing industry and setting up both city and industry within a rural matrix, the whole conceived on a human scale, is technologically more feasible to-day than it was forty or fifty years ago; and the need for such political action, in order to ensure survival, is even more bitterly imperative.

Unfortunately, most of the current schemes for urban reconstruction rest upon the continued acceptance and further projection of a pattern of life that was already obsolete and inefficient, as well as sterile and inhuman, in Howard's and Kropotkin's day. For all their appearance of technical adroitness and formalistic modernity, such plans are really backward looking: filled with a smug, uncritical love for the dead forms of a mechanistic ideology. And for all their human interests, Messrs. Forshaw and Abercrombie have fallen into the same mechanical trap.

Now these considerations, remote though they may at first seem, have a direct bearing on the new plan for London. For nowhere have the authors asked themselves the fundamental question: what price must be paid in the re-making of London for the privilege of being born? If the people of England are willing to pay the price, London and England will survive—London with a smaller population, England with a bigger one; whilst centres like New York, which continue to pyramid their mistakes, will descend with Gadarene swiftness into the abyss. But if the price seems too high, as it may very easily seem in purely financial terms, then both London and England will dwindle; and the whole process of reconstructing London, even if physically achieved, will result in a magnificent—or perhaps not so magnificent—urban mummy, surrounded by a sumptuous tomb.

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5. PLANTING MEN: THE POPULATION PROBLEM

What I have said so far amounts to this: the conditions for London's survival, to say nothing of its re-building, do not lie primarily in the hands of the London County Council. But this makes it imperative for the Council to frame its programme for reconstruction with a view to the larger whole, and to demand that certain great national decisions first be made, in order to lay a firm foundation for its own plans.

In a country whose net reproduction rate has been so low that it threatens a considerable decrease of population by 1970, the failure to face the problem of population as an essential key to the correct design of cities is, quite literally, suicidal. This is not a matter in which any personal preference for existing land ownerships or high densities has any more validity than a personal preference for arsenic or carbon monoxide. If the biological problem of survival is not solved, the most elegant technological innovations, the most humane social provisions, will turn out to be frivolous diversions: diversions that kept people from facing their true plight: a final flight from reality.

So the great question that underlies the planning of London, and indeed every other urban centre in Britain from Glasgow and Birmingham down, is just this: how completely must current megalopolitan standards of living be changed before the city becomes a favourable biological environment. That answer must be worked out experimentally. No one can yet say if two million or three million people must be emptied out of the present County of London area before the constituent boroughs become capable, severally, of reproducing their population from generation to generation. But one thing is sure: this end cannot be achieved by endeavouring to maintain most of the existing population, still less by doing this in schemes that raise the density of population in its central areas, subsidizing ground landlords instead of fathers and mothers.

There is a school of planners who would solve the problem I have put by emphasizing and perpetuating the present difference between megalopolis and countryside. This school is represented by Mr. J. M. Richards, in his writings in THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW; and though I do not suppose Messrs. Forshaw and Abercrombie share his convictions, I would anticipate such criticisms here and now. This school thinks of the metropolis as constituting a special system of life, formed chiefly by forces and processes that operate over the entire planet, insulated from the countryside, the village, the region: insulated and essentially antipathetic. It would be logical for those who held such views to say that metropolitan sterility must be counterbalanced by rural fertility: let the country devote itself to breeding men and let the big city continue to consume them.

This was, in fact, the practical arrangement that held during the nineteenth century, before the habits and interests of megalopolitan civilization consolidated to form the dominant culture of our age. But the insulation which Mr. Richards attributes to the metropolis is a special historic phenomenon: a phenomenon based upon a one-sided exploitation of the many by the few, with the creation of an internal proletariat within the big city and an external proletariat, also exploited without mercy, overseas. Except when this decadent state has been created, the countryside has never been outside the currents of international life and the great city has never severed the umbilical cord that binds it to its hinterland. Take the handsome stone villages of the Cotswolds: these thriving villages and towns were a by-product of the international woollen trade; and the buildings of Burford and Bibury, for all their subtle regional flavour, were done in the international style of their period: a style visible with local variations in Oxford and Canterbury and Antwerp and Geneva. Mr. Thomas Sharp is correct in admiring the urbanity of the pre-industrial English village: that urbanity was the emblem of a common culture it shared throughout Europe with the biggest centres.

But the reverse process now holds. In our age, megalopolitan standards have become dominant; and the mode of life London has made fashionable dominates even the remotest country district, not merely because trippers and tourists bring these standards with them, but because the natives independently are seduced by them, since they breathe them in with their school education, with their newspapers, their advertisements. Hence the countryside itself now shows the same recession of population as the big cities: not so drastically perhaps but in the long run just as fatally.

Theoretically, London might hold its own by importing population from existing world centres of high pressure. But the decision of the 1906 elections over the importation of Chinese labour into South Africa should not give much encouragement to those who would maintain London's population by a similar method; and even were it instituted, it would hardly answer the problem of the British people's survival.

Within the British Commonwealth, the rural reservoir is running dry. If even the present population of Britain is to be maintained, the sterility of the big city must be overcome. And since Greater London contains almost one-quarter of the population of Great Britain, any plan for rebuilding a large part of this area, which ignores the basic facts of population, and fails to encourage fundamental changes in the life-aims of its citizens, must be condemned for its negligence of essentials. The complacent neo-Malthusian bias that still prevails is based upon nineteenth-century population statistics; and we have still to cultivate a more reasonable attitude toward birth and survival, based on the statistics of the past thirty years.

In these facts and principles we have, then, a positive criterion for measuring any scheme of urban reconstruction. Does it recognize the need for a life-centred environment? Does it make possible a biologically more satisfactory mode of existence than the megalopolis has fostered? If so, its foundations are at least sound; if not, then its foundations are shaky, and the possibility that the planners of London so lightly dismiss, that the "Megalopolis must end in Necropolis, killed by its own atrophy" will presently become an inescapable reality. For mark this: a plan may do away with traffic congestion, provide on a large scale for amusements and open-air recreations,

* *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon.* New York, 1941.

supplant every slum that needs demolition with a mechanically modernized group of flats, increase the provisions for sanitation and disease prevention and help lengthen the life of the existing population —and yet it may fail to encourage what is now a primary condition for the good life: the reproduction of children. The place where the great city stands, as Walt Whitman reminds us, is not the place of stretched wharves and ships bringing goods from the ends of the earth: it is the place of-the best-bodied men and women.

Here I would turn against the Plan of London the Chinese proverb that Mr. Abercrombie has so effectively used as a preface to his report on Plymouth. "If you are planning for one year, plant grain; if you are planning for ten years, plant trees; if you are planning for a hundred years, plant men." My capital criticism of the County of London Plan is that in the very face of their own obvious sympathies and interests, the authors were not planning for a hundred years. Had they done so, they would have put men first. On the contrary, they were planning in the hope that they could somehow hold the pre-war population of London a little while longer, without disturbing drastically the conventions—economic, political, legal, social—that have been so steadily depleting the man-power of the country as a whole. They asked themselves in effect how far London must be changed in order to remain the same. And they forgot, when they asked that question, that if it actually could be made to remain the same it would, by that very fact, dwindle away: doomed by its sterility.

That dilemma is an inescapable one. On the willingness to face it and deal with it forthrightly the very survival of the British people, and incidentally the survival of these lovable Londoners themselves, depends. The heart of the Commonwealth and Empire is failing: and should it continue to fail the great polity it built up since the times of Elizabeth will vanish. But, just as in the formation of the British Commonwealth of Nations, England has effectively divided its power and dispersed some of its political initiatives in order to maintain the integrity of the whole, so in the case of London: that city must become less in order to become more. Much that London held merely by topographic and political monopoly must now become the equal possession of every other city and village in the kingdom. Here plainly the first shall be last; and the willingness to make this so will eventually save the first too.

Behind this change is a fact that the admirers of megalopolitan concentration steadfastly refuse to face: the form of megalopolis has been made obsolete by modern innovations in swift transport and instantaneous world communication and the rapid manifolding of records. Under present-day technics, congestion is not a necessary condition for communication and co-operation. Even the inertia of a great past cannot maintain in indefinite existence a mode of life and a civic structure which fails both to satisfy our constant needs and to make the most effective use of our new instrumentalities. The smallest village is once more part of a whole that includes the world at large and all its varied resources; and the largest agglomeration must have within it, as a condition for survival, those fundamental sanifying contacts with earth and sky, those securities that are based, not on impersonal mechanisms but on the organic co-operations of parents and children, of household and neighbourhood, which account for the continued survival of peasant stocks through all manner of natural and human catastrophes.

This does not mean that London should vanish or shrink to a mere shadow of its former self: quite the contrary. Only the stubborn worship of London's dead self, only the desire to maintain an obsolete social and economic structure, will make its extinction inevitable. If on the contrary the will-to-live prevails, if the people of Britain are ready to stop at no measures that are necessary for the survival of all that is historically and socially important in London, then its dropsical organism may be drained and the city, reduced to a human scale once more, may start a new cycle of balanced development. But one outstanding fact must first be frankly acknowledged: the Parasitopolis of the late nineteenth century has already become the spectral Necropolis of the mid-twentieth century. Every sound proposal for re-building and re-ordering London must correctly interpret that grim fact and use every political and educational power the community possesses to circumvent it and triumph over it.

6. THE CONSEQUENCES OF INERTIA

Presently, I shall discuss further the political pre-conditions of re-planning London. Here I wish to follow out briefly the consequences of ignoring these pre-conditions and of complacently continuing those processes in modern civilization which have already brought us as close to wholesale disintegration as were the contemporaries of St. Augustine.

Let us ask, then, how the planners would deal with the reconstruction of Central London on the basis they have laid down for themselves. The chapter in which the basic policy is discussed is headed "Decentralization," but on examination this decentralization turns out to be so limited as to be unworthy of the name: what the scheme actually proposes is mainly a re-grouping of population and industry within the London area. Out of the overcrowded centre of London, the planners propose to remove a mere five hundred thousand people. Does such an exodus give them an opportunity to provide enough open spaces, enough housing quarters that conform to family needs? Not at all: the park space provided for the inner ring of the city is not merely below any decent modern standard: it is below that which resulted from happy historic accidents in the West End. As for population, after the exodus has duly taken place, it leaves the planners providing a standard for the internal housing of London of 136 people per net housing acre; while admittedly they regard 100 as desirable.

Both these standards of open space and density are arbitrary. What considerations governed them? First: inertia, the tendency to continue smoothly the past errors committed by the London County Council, particularly during the nineteen-thirties. Second: economic prudence and historic pride: the desire to retain as many of the pre-war population within the existing county area. Third: the desire to frame a solution that made a minimum demand for national action: the five hundred thousand people they propose to remove represent the top number that would go with the amount of industry that—in the planners' words—could be *expected* to migrate. I underline the word expected; because if the desire for adequate standards were pressing enough, the number of industries that could be *persuaded* to leave London through the provision of more adequate quarters elsewhere and through a policy of controlled industrial decentralization, as proposed in the Barlow Report, is obviously far greater than any merely local effort could *expect*.

Failing to see that the problem demands a wider authority than the London County Council can exercise, the planners have trimmed their standards to the Council's powers. In establishing this high density of housing they sanctify and enlarge the mistakes, like the White City at Hammersmith, that the L.C.C. has already made: mistakes that call for self-criticism, repentance, and correction. Instead of treating the present relatively plastic situation, with the great demolitions of buildings, and the great displacements of population, as a means of making a fresh start, L.C.C. here proposes to act as if nothing had happened—as if the war itself, and all that it has revealed about the weaknesses of our civilization, were a wholly accidental phenomenon which called only for somewhat larger slum replacement schemes on a model similar to those of the past.

Unfortunately, to maintain the density the planners propose to maintain a corresponding scheme of life: a scheme in which it is easier to keep a dog than to raise a baby, in which one is more tempted to flee from the city on every possible holiday than to dream of enjoying the great social and cultural resources it actually possesses; in which the improvement of the housing conditions of the less skilled workers will only make them the victims of what Shaw's cockney Dustman properly rejected: "middle-class respectability."

In this scheme of life, the mechanical means of existence become ever more elaborate and compulsive, while the human ends become ever more remote and dim. In the human personality, accordingly, nature, habit, and reason—to use Aristotle's terms—are divorced: the instinctual man, the social man, and the ideal man are set at odds instead of being reintegrated within the city on a higher level. Such an urban culture is equally far away from the basic realities of animal existence, with its alertness to danger and its allegiance to the needs of the group, and from the higher realities of the personal life, with its capacity for universal interests and for co-operation with groups remote in time and space. That devitalized culture almost willed its own annihilation when fascism threatened it; and there is little hope for a post-war world in which its meretricious ideals continue to exercise a dominant influence.

By the premises it has laid down, the Plan for London would consolidate what was weak in London's past and neglect certain very vital parts of that city's great traditions. What, for example, is the most important feature of London's housing, a characteristic that makes it so different from Berlin, Paris, Rome, Vienna, or Manhattan, a tradition deeply responsible for its essential humanness? Surely it is the fact that London is an open city; a city wealthy in open spaces and small houses, acre upon acre of park in Westminster, Bloomsbury, and South Kensington, mile upon mile of modest homes, standardized, often cramped, unfortunately not seldom sordid; but nevertheless built on a human scale, with just enough backyard space to make the care of little children pleasanter and easier. Humanly speaking, Mr. Wemmick's villa with its moat and drawbridge was not as ridiculous, in terms of family needs, as a ten-story apartment house. The Old'un's crotchets are essentially closer to man's impulses than the modern rationalizer's calculations.

Who can doubt the sanity and wisdom of this original urban structure

—one of low buildings, individual houses, and a private life counterbalanced by the amiable gregariousness of the street markets, the parks, and the pubs? Is it only a Dane like Rasmussen or an American like myself who beholds this characteristic fact of London's life and says: "*This* is London?" Surely not: the Londoners themselves, in common with all other Englishmen, are agreed about this: every survey that seeks to find out the preferences of the common man and woman in housing, reveals that they are overwhelmingly in favour of the single family house: even when the person who conducts the survey is, like Mr. Arnold Whittick, openly trying to prove just the opposite. Many Londoners are willing to put up with discomfort and tedious travel in order to provide individual houses for their families.

That tradition cannot be ignored on the ground that the Londoner has never seen a modern well-built flat with all its conveniences. With incredible obstinacy housing reformers, from my philanthropic compatriot, Peabody, onward have been presenting Londoners with model flats. The County Council itself has put up row upon row of these tall buildings, often handsomely designed and ably planned: the well-to-do middle classes, from Queen Anne's Mansions on, have lent to the mode all their prestige, even the holy name of Park Lane itself. And still the desire for the one-family house remains: even the boxlike caricature of that ideal produced originally by the seventeenth-century jerrybuilder and standardized to its last degree of drabness and muddled insufficiency in the nineteenth century by-law street does not dampen that desire.

The saving life-sense of the cockney was never better illustrated than here, unless maybe in East London's summer pilgrimage to the hopyards of Kent. One would think that a tradition as deeply rooted as this would be respected in any plans for the future of London: they constitute a basic human minimum. The real problem is to combine this desire for the one-family house with a modern neighbourhood plan that will have no less spaciousness and beauty than Bloomsbury in the eighteenth century or Hampstead Garden Suburb in the early twentieth. It may be a little while yet before the future Londoner can make love to his wife in a summer house in his garden as William Blake, certainly no man of affluence, did; but that might at least be held up as an ideal, if we are as earnestly committed to the rehabilitation of family life as we ought to be.

It is, then, with surprise, indeed with dismay, that one finds that the planners of London have given little thought to the terms on which the one-family house may be rehabilitated. They have done just the opposite: the plans for repopulating Hackney, Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, contemplate making more than half of the new structures flats: some of them eight and ten-story flats. It avails not that these flats will have "sufficient" open spaces around them or that their inhabitants will reach the upper floors in lifts: that does, indeed, distinguish these dwellings from those of Edinburgh or Glasgow; but it hardly makes any less serious the outright breach with an old and healthy tradition.

Whatever poverty England may encounter after this war, whatever burdens its reconstruction may impose, it cannot afford this kind of re-planning. Even if it were economically cheap, it would be humanly wasteful; and the fact is that—land values apart—it is the most extravagant method that could be applied. Even if London were to be made partly bankrupt through a loss of rates by an adequate provision of open spaces and family houses, the country could well afford to redeem that bankruptcy by reason of the annual flow of vital wealth it would be securing, in new citizens, keyed to live and love, to work and invent, to take over a larger range of political duties and civic tasks, by the fact that they at last had a city designed to satisfy the vital needs of its citizens. There is no mechanical substitute for such an order, and there is no financial equivalent for the wealth it can produce.

If Messrs. Forshaw and Abercrombie's Plan defies the tastes and traditions of London in reducing the proportion of single-family houses to apartments, it likewise falls short in setting a standard for open spaces. Whatever criticism one might make of the housing of the West End of London, one could at least say that its park spaces, thanks to the chain of Royal parks, rounded out by the Thames and Chelsea Embankments, were near to a desirable level. Perhaps no parks in the world are better placed or more fully used than this beautiful central greenbelt. This system cries to be completed, not to be reduced.

But what actually does the plan propose? Because of the dismal lack of open spaces in the East End and most of post-Regency London, the planners put the standard as four acres per thousand inhabitants, with three more per thousand to be provided for Sunday use outside the county area. For everyday use, then, four acres is the standard. This proposal is accompanied by many wise suggestions for retaining green wedges that surround London and opening much longer stretches of the river front for recreational uses. But instead of lifting London as a whole to the original level of the West End, the plan sets a low level for the City and then congests the West End parks by proposing to raise the density of population in that area to 200 per acre. Here "expediency" has governed: but what kind of expediency is this that fails to take advantage of the opening-up of London by the Blitz, and that governs its calculations by compromising with an undesirable past, instead of working toward a desirable future?

As to the immediate purpose that has made the Council planners decide to increase the density of population in Westminster and nearby areas—to enable a large number of people to live closer to their place of work and to decrease traffic congestion—I am naturally in complete agreement. That end is desirable. But there are other ways of arriving at it than the planners have considered. If I mention them here it is only to point out how the planners, once they chose the path of congestion, automatically shut their eyes to other modes of development, even when they might have contributed to the very renovation of the constituent boroughs that they consciously favour.

The guiding principle of decentralized planning for industry is that the worker should not be too far separated from his work. Why should this principle not apply to the most characteristic work of London, that of government and business administration?

The piling of government offices in Whitehall and the neighbouring areas has long passed the point where any efficiency is to be gained by it: not merely that, but the intrusion of big business into this area, as in the case of great office buildings of the oil and armament corporations, is against public policy: if only because the pretentious buildings of these corporations, besides spoiling the river skyline, blotted out so much necessary housing space. If the City of London cannot hold such enterprises, the latter should have a place in the development that the Plan proposes for the South Bank.

Now I submit that any plan for regrouping industry within London should begin with government itself: this should follow the internal decentralization of educational facilities that originated with the building of new museums and colleges in South Kensington. There are many great offices of government that need not crowd around Whitehall: functions that could serve and intercommunicate quite as well as they do at present if they were decentralized to their appropriate boroughs: the Colonial Offices to the neighbourhood of South Kensington, perhaps, the Education Offices to Bloomsbury, the Labour Offices to Battersea or Bethnal Green. Such a dispersal could be made without putting any office further away from the Houses of Parliament or any other office than thirty minutes by underground or taxi. The telephone, the teletype, and the pneumatic tube would bind such offices closer together for practical purposes than they were at the extremities of Whitehall up to 1890. Moreover, the diffusion of government workers as residents in these boroughs would create better balanced communities.

7. GUIDING LINES FOR A TRULY GREAT PLAN

In all these criticisms, what I am proposing as an alternative is not contrary to the authors' declared intentions, but rather an attempt to suggest a more adequate scheme for carrying them out. For the governing insight of this plan, the basic idea which gives it vitality, is the "recognition of community structure." London's great effectiveness as a city, as a complex political and cultural organism, rests partly on the fact that it has escaped the disease of one-sided centralization and that it has not completely wiped out its constituent boroughs as either political or social entities. London is a federation of historic communities. With admirable insight the planners have proposed to emphasize these existing communities, "to increase their degree of segregation, and, where necessary, to reorganize them as separate entities."

In that statement the authors laid down the guiding lines for a truly great plan of London: one capable of surgically removing its undifferentiated cells and creating groups of organic communities, each with a balanced internal life, each a co-operating member in an interdependent and equally organic whole. Such a London would become in effect a constellation of garden cities, a "town cluster" in Ebenezer Howard's words; but it would have many definite advantages over newer communities by reason of its historic momentum, its political and cultural continuity. The restoration of the human scale within the component parts of the present County of London is a first step toward initiatives and co-operations which will have to be carried on over a much wider area than the County of London. As to the extent of that wider area, one can perhaps get a rough view of its nature by comparison with Holland: the one advanced country in Europe which has shown a reproduction and a survival rate that compares favourably with peasant cultures.

Holland has almost the same population density for the country as a whole as England and Wales: 687 per square mile as compared with 668. Greater London has roughly the same population as Holland; but Holland has *twice* the number of square miles. In this area, there

is an almost even balance between the rural and the urban populations. Allowing for the special physiographic reasons for urban density in Holland, and apart from the overgrowth of Amsterdam and Rotterdam as unitary cities, Holland presents an adequate general pattern for both rural and urban development. Any plan for London that is framed in terms of human welfare must be on a comparable scale and must call for comparable opening-up of congested areas and a comparable development of agriculture within the greater regional unit.

Metropolitan London, even the County of London, is too small a unit for re-planning and re-building; indeed, the essential provincialism of the metropolis is one of the chief obstacles to its reformation. If London is to remain great, its public servants must overcome this provincialism. What they propose for London must be capable of universal application: it should become a pattern for every other urban community, for every other region in Britain. Thus London, instead of further weighing down the whole Commonwealth with its burdens, would set a pattern for what in time would become a world-wide renewal of civilization. In that act, the great qualities London has shown in war would be carried over into the peace.

8. PRE-CONDITIONS OF URBAN REBUILDING

What is the most essential fact that must be recognized in the re-planning of London and every other great area in Britain? The most essential fact is that which the Plan of London lightly sets to one side: the fact that we have reached a declining phase in our civilization, in which every effort to continue living and building on past lines must lead to that final end-product, the Necropolis. If that be so, no little local measures will serve to restore life-processes. Before local improvement can be engineered, the broad outlines of new national policy must be established, and a new cycle of growth must be started.

In endeavouring to outline the most important aspects of a national policy that will further civic reconstruction, I must raise many debatable issues without having the time or space to go adequately into their merits: whatever use the following suggestions may have will be mainly in putting the discussion of urban rebuilding within a more adequate political and social frame.

The first governing consideration, it seems to me, is the framing of a positive national population policy. If the British people are not in the least concerned for their survival, the present Plan of London will perhaps serve to keep them brightly occupied for a few generations, until sterility and inanition cause them finally to disappear. Otherwise, the first consideration of town planning must be to provide an urban environment and an urban mode of life which will not be hostile to biological survival: rather to create one in which the processes of life and growth will be so normal to that life, so visible, that by sympathetic magic it will encourage in women of the child-bearing age the impulse to bear and rear children, as an essential attribute of their humanness, quite as interesting in all its possibilities as the most glamorous success in an office or a factory.

Now, population growth will not come about solely from the better planning of cities: that goes without saying. The relations of urban size and density to the rates for fertility and survival are very complicated; for the apathy toward reproduction which during the last generation has resulted in a tapering-off of vitality in the more "advanced" countries is the product, not of environmental factors by themselves, but environmental factors as the physical expression of a pervasive megalopolitan mode of life: a mode that has ceased to be life-centred and life-directed. Let us take an example: If a young couple have established themselves in a small apartment and have a single child, they may well be reluctant to have three or four children, when the addition of so many would involve, not merely a removal to poorer quarters, but a definite lowering of the whole level of life, as Alva Myrdal has demonstrated. Unless greater opportunities, greater interests, greater incentives can be offered to the child-bearing couple than to those who refuse parenthood, unless the former win social approval and social encouragement, child-bearing will remain unfashionable.

Now one of the first steps within the province of democratic political effort is to provide, for the mother confined to the home by her domestic duties, a domestic environment that is adequate to her needs. This means plenty of space within the house itself, so that a family of three or four children will not automatically become disorderly and distracting; it means an immediate play space for the younger children within sight of the mother at work, not eight stories below; it means opportunities for social meeting within her immediate neighbourhood, with people of her own kind; it means the possibility for an active life of wife and husband together, also within the local community, through the provision of recreation grounds, public meeting rooms, opportunities for art and craft of all sorts; it means, for the continuity of the family itself, plenty of storage space for possessions and records; it means the provision of gardens for flowers, fresh greens, and even fruits, as a normal addition to the family income.

All these provisions demand a re-apportionment of the national income by either direct or indirect subsidies to families; but the most powerful form of support and encouragement to the acceptance of normal family responsibilities by all healthy parents—in contrast to the reckless encouragement of large families for the few—would be in the adequate provision of houses, gardens, and playing spaces. Here the standards that must be set down as a minimum demand low density and an open plan: somewhere between 36 and 84 per acre, depending upon the distribution of adults and the extent to which industry is combined with housing.

Most present urban reconstruction, I must repeat, is based upon subsidizing the ground landlord whose putative values have been brought about by the blind over-massing of population in limited urban areas. This explains why the provision of model tenements in London has steadily raised the density per acre, and now, in the latest plan, continues this process. A national population policy will have to make a radical, indeed a revolutionary, departure here: it will have to reduce the present structure of urban land values and create a new structure which will be more favourable to human reproduction.

But it is important to recognize that new babies will not probably be brought into the world, the way in which predatory animals are exterminated in some countries, merely by offering direct bounties per head. What is needed is a more general re-orientation of values, an increase of animal vitality and self-respect, a scheme of living which places love and parenthood at the very core of the community's activities. City-building must embody, in rational terms, the collective "life-wish." When the prospect of children is looked upon as "too, too sick-making," to use the horrible words of one of Evelyn Waugh's Bright Young Things of the 'thirties, the race, in every sense, is finished. Now, among university students in America, particularly among the girls, not least among the most able and promising ones, I have observed a radical change in attitude from their mothers' generation: babies and family life have become central again, and the attractions of a professional career, though not disdained, have become secondary. If that change has been taking place in England, it will set the stage for a positive population policy.

No country like Britain can afford a scheme of urban reconstruction which promises only to carry further its present tendencies toward sterility. If I am right, the distribution of houses and flats in the rebuilding schemes for the East End would be a positive population check. That kind of reconstruction, however bold in appearance, however satisfying in its esthetic order, would be fatal.

The second step that is preliminary to the re-planning of London, therefore, is the deliberate alteration of the present structure of urban land values, not alone in London, but throughout Britain. Important steps toward this end have already been taken, beginning with the Town and Country Act of 1932, and carried further in principle by the more recent proposal in the Uthwatt Report to ensure the state acquisition of development rights to prospective building land around cities. But these are only beginnings. To reduce the level of London's land costs to a point at which it would be possible to build family dwellings and balanced neighbourhood communities, there must be a large-scale movement of population and industry from London to other centres, mainly new, or partly new, centres. This movement may conceivably be conducted in such a way as to serve a double economic purpose. First, by lessening the pressure on London's urban space it will, by quite normal economic processes, tend to lower land values there; and second, by the eventual rise in the economic rent of land in the new centres it may—provided the movement be conducted under a national authority—conserve the increment from the new centres and apply this toward relieving the burdens of compensation in London itself.

When I speak of compensation I mean only partial compensation: not alas! the "fair compensation" envisaged by the Uthwatt Report.* Frankly, I do not believe that urban England can be properly rebuilt within a reasonable time without the existing landowners having to take a loss. On principles of "fair compensation" at the 1939 level, no National Exchequer could, at the end of a long, gruelling war, also pay off its landlords on the scale needed for comprehensive urban reconstruction. The only question, then, is whether the change is to be fraudulently accomplished, as in Germany after the last war, by a ruinous wholesale inflation, or whether it is to be honestly managed on the principles of normal commercial bankruptcy, by persuading the creditors (the landowners) to take a fraction of the original land values. Nationalization of urban land on these latter terms seems to me the only alternative to permitting the present structure of land values to serve as a barrier to any effective planning and building. From the human standpoint, the great mass of England's urban communities are bankrupt: they share this fatal heritage with the

* Let alone the compensation rate now envisaged by the British Government.

rest of Western Civilization. The sooner that impossible and insupportable debt is cleared off, the sooner will the processes of life be resumed.

This brings me to the third step preliminary to re-planning London. Along with the removal of large increments of population to new centres must go the removal of industry: town building and industrial resettlement must be co-ordinated. That is the burden, of course, of the Barlow Committee's recommendations; and the Barlow Report is the most fundamental contribution to the planning movement that has yet been made by any public body. To reap the full benefits of industrial decentralization new cities must be founded, old ones must be reconstituted on a more open and organic pattern, and existing small centres must be rehabilitated and rounded out. In short, three different modes of planning will work to the same general result: balanced communities, limited in size, yet many-sided in their industrial and social activities, capable of making available to their citizens all the resources needed for a balanced life.

On this matter of industrial decentralization I have but two suggestions to make. The first is a minor one. With the experience the war has brought, why should it not be possible, in planning a large-scale emigration from London, to keep together at least part of the population of a borough or a group of related boroughs; to retain as much of their social identity as is possible in the new situation, moving pubs and publicans, no less than factories, schools and teachers no less than works managers and factory hands; one might even establish a continuity of name between, say, Stepney in the East End and "Stepney-in-the-Wold" or "Stepney-under-the-Hill." The city would be different, but the people, at first, would be the same, and the transition would be humanly a little easier than in the more random regroupings of industry. The other suggestion is that the strategy of industrial decentralization should be the product of a central staff, directly responsible through its appropriate ministers to Parliament; but the actual carrying out of the programme of industrial decentralization and urban re-centralization should be in the hands of an Authority capable of dealing with every aspect of the problem, from the preservation of good rural land from urban encroachment to the actual planning of communities.

Hence the fourth and final pre-condition to re-planning London is one I have already touched on: the creation of a Regional Authority capable of acting over a much larger area than the London County Council, and of exercising an over-all control on the entire process of building. The division of Britain itself into regional administrative areas and the creation of a new pattern of decentralized government and administration mid-way between national and municipal authorities, with closer knowledge of the region and closer affiliations to it than Whitehall can presume to have, and yet armed with the authority and power to consider every local measure in its relation to broad national policy, seems to me an essential political step toward any particular city's reconstruction. Here, again, the admirable political inventiveness which originally created the great Port of London Authority need only to follow its own bold precedents to provide both individual industries and individual municipal and county authorities with the very implements they need if they are to carry out measures which exceed, in their scope and intention, the limits of their own natural capacities. Even the County of London, as I have tried to show, is as limited as its most feeble borough in trying to meet out single-handed all the conditions needed for its own rehabilitation. As the scale of communication and co-operation has increased, such Regional Authorities have become as essential to local government as the municipality itself was a hundred years ago.

Let me sum up. The pre-conditions for the re-planning of London are: 1. A National Population Policy, looking toward its stabilization, if not its increase, instead of permitting the threatened decrease of population to go on unchecked. 2. A Policy of Urban Land Nationalization which will liquidate the present structure of urban values and permit large-scale reconstruction to be economically carried on, in a fashion favourable to family life and balanced communal relationships. 3. A National Policy of Industrial Decentralization along the lines laid down in the Barlow Report: a policy which will progressively move population out of London and other large centres *until a net reproduction rate close to* 1·0 *is achieved.* 4. Regional administrative units that will undertake the task of resettlement and building outside the existing municipal or county areas and will co-ordinate the work of the municipalities themselves.

Planning in other words is a twofold process: one part of it is national in scope and rests upon the formulation of national policies; the other part is regional and local. Ideally the two should converge toward a common point. Urban plans that are now being framed in a more or less independent fashion, even when the work is conceived by the puissant London County Council, will, in the very act of being practical and keeping their nose to the ground, serve the country ill. The most practical plans that can now be conceived are those ideal schemes which deal with the realities of survival and renewal, schemes which depart from the blind tendencies that prevailed before the present catastrophe and that do not hesitate to pay the price for renewal, knowing that no price is too high for life itself, if it be an honourable bargain.

Urban planning to-day is nothing if it is not a plan for leaving behind the doomed Necropolis, or rather, for saving it from doom by opposing all the processes that stifled life there and by opening up a fresh field for initiative and work even within the old metropolitan areas themselves. To build intelligently to-day is to lay the foundations for a new civilization. The working out of that change will be a long process: not done in a day, not perhaps in a century. But even the first modest steps toward reconstruction, to be effective, must point clearly to that end.

SERVICES CLUB IN LONDON

THE PROBLEM—No. 22 Lower Regent Street, an existing building, largely unused for some years owing to war damage, was to provide a home for a Services Club, sponsored by the Government of Ontario. The building, which includes a basement cafeteria, lounges, writing rooms and a women's club (architects: Messrs. Reid & Paisley), needed a new exterior and a ground floor designed to serve as introduction and foyer to the club.

The aim of the designer was to produce, with two street frontages and the ground floor, a background for leisure, as far removed as possible from

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Misha Black (Design Research Unit)

Associated Architects : **BRONEK KATZ, KENNETH BAYES**

barrack hut conditions, while working within wartime restrictions on materials and labour.

THE SOLUTION—Colour was the most effective and economic means to obtain a sense of gaiety and, at the same time, to achieve some feeling of architectural form. It is used to accentuate the decorative elements, for example, the flags along the Jermyn Street elevation, the initial letters on the outside fascia, the dead-white coat of arms on the red wall of the waiting-room, the frieze of painted ply flags in semi-relief above the cafeteria servery, and the mural by Tom Gentleman in the snack bar.

Colour employed also in a more subtle way helped to co-ordinate the series of oddly proportioned rooms which resulted from the specific planning problem within an already existing structure (only in the case of the cloaks lobby was it practicable to adjust the proportions by construct-

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Wartime scarcity of metal and wood normally used in such a job has led to the use of unrationed fibrous plaster in many novel ways. The breakaway from the by now traditional timber, metal and tiles in modern interiors has created a precedent important for future building. **1**, the "stand-up" snackbar raised by a few steps above the level of the cafeteria floor. The painted ply flags, and the mural on a "soldier theme" provide the decorative accents. **2**, close-up of the snackbar showing the "stand-up" tables of rendered brick and concrete slabs edged with terrazzo and topped with tiles. Ceiling, cove and end wall terracotta. Side wall light grey. Light fittings of plaster in white. **3**, entrance Lower Regent Street. Coat of Arms in white plaster. Lettering of 1 inch resin bonded ply, fixed on tubular distance pieces. **4**, waiting room looking towards the cloaks lobby. Serrated plaster wall coloured bright red with white plaster coat of arms. Main wall surfaces light grey. Blue hessian seat cushions with red buttons.

ing a false ceiling). The lightness of the information-waiting space and its loftiness, of which advantage is taken by the large map mural, are contrasted in the adjoining cloaks lobby by a low blue ceiling and sombre wall colouring. This again leads, through a glazed screen, into the cafeteria which, by contrast to the lobby, gives the impression of being light and airy. Off this, with further contrast, is the snack bar with its warm light reflected from a terracotta ceiling, coved down to end walls of the same colour.

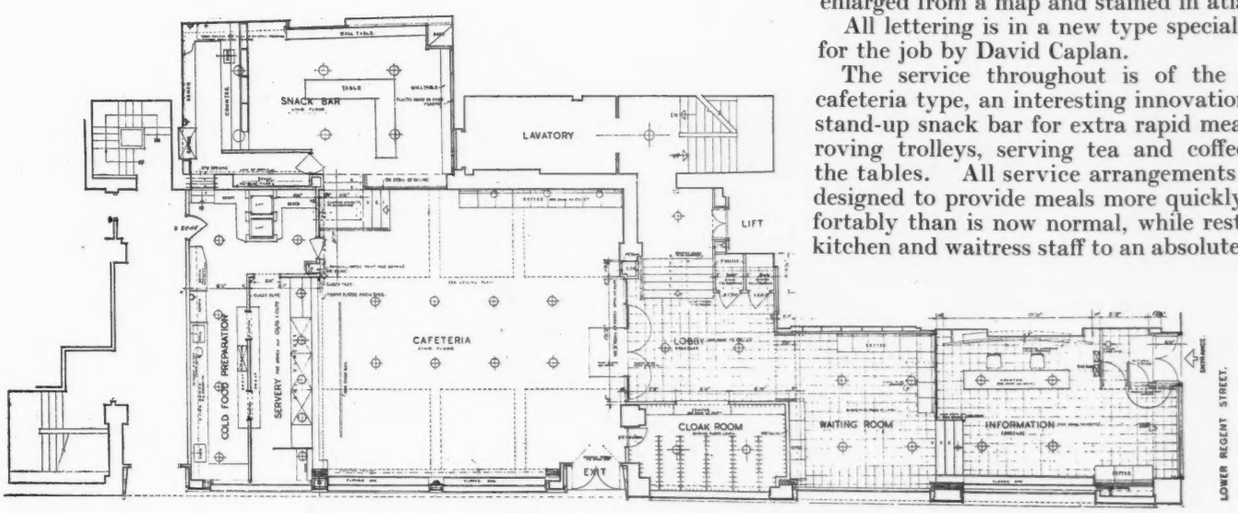
Wartime restrictions necessitated the minimum use of timber and the elimination of all materials which could not be obtained from stock without having to apply for licences for replacement. This has caused a divergence from normal structural methods to the extent of using fibrous plaster, instead of wood or metal, for such varied elements as flower boxes, counter fronts, light fittings, jamb linings and architraves. Plaster has also been used as a decorative material for coats of arms in low relief and for wall surfaces of various finishes, for example, the horizontal louvred texture of the walls in the information-waiting space, saw-toothed in section. The stand-up counters in the snack bar are of rendered brick with 2 in. concrete slab tops, faced tiles and edged in terrazzo.

The minimum of new work was done on the outside elevations. The existing plate glass windows were left where possible, new standard steel windows being inserted where ventilation was required. To limit the interest of the elevations to the lower part of the building, and to produce some kind of order, the elevations were divided into units, each containing windows and cement rendered infilling, set into the existing stone surround, and plinth painted "back" in dark brown.

Polished cork has been used for floors, internal window sills and notice boards. Built-in settees have cushions of blue hessian with red buttons. The large mural of Canada is photographically enlarged from a map and stained in atlas colours.

All lettering is in a new type specially designed for the job by David Caplan.

The service throughout is of the self-service cafeteria type, an interesting innovation being the stand-up snack bar for extra rapid meals, and the roving trolleys, serving tea and coffee direct to the tables. All service arrangements have been designed to provide meals more quickly and comfortably than is now normal, while restricting the kitchen and waitress staff to an absolute minimum.



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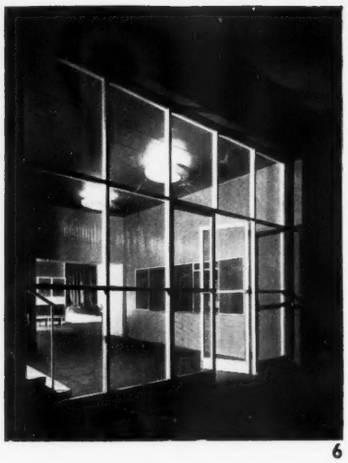

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5, information room. Detail of desk and mounted coloured map mural. **6**, glazed screen of Georgian wired glass between cafeteria and lobby. **7**, information room looking towards entrance. A blind covers window to Regent Street. Cork faced notice board wall to blackout lobby. Serrated plaster wall coloured terracotta. Counter faced with plaster, cork topped.

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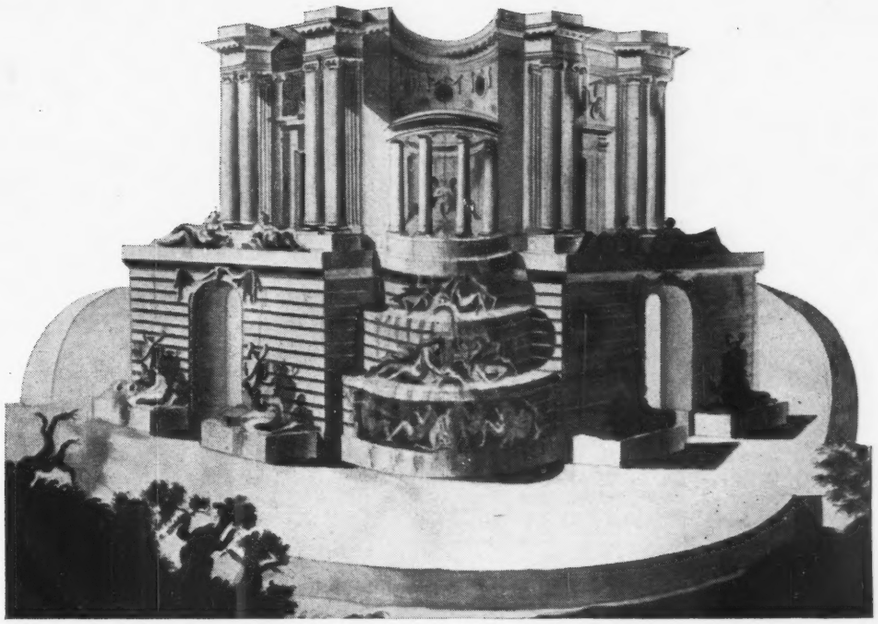


VASSILY BAZHENOV

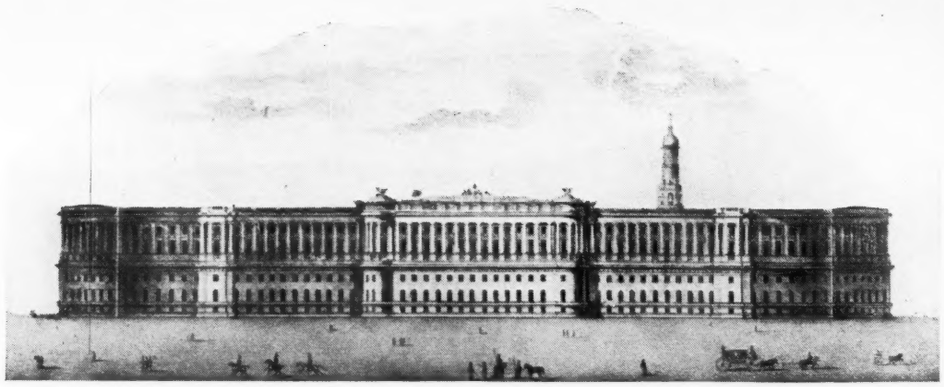
From the Western point of view Russian architecture before 1700 is exotic; after 1700 it becomes "Colonial"; with the Classical Revival it merges with the main stream of Western development. The Rastrellis, Rinaldis, Delamottes, Quarenghis and Camerons design Western buildings on alien soil, even if such sensitive architects as Rastrelli and Cameron succeed in Russifying the elements and motifs of their designs (see THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW January, 1943, on Cameron). Kokorinov, Starov and Bazhenov are the first Russian names of importance. They learnt abroad and from foreigners in Russia, and tried to out-Westernize their masters. Bazhenov is an outstanding example of native genius under conditions unfavourable to a native idiom. His work has been discussed and to a certain extent illustrated in Grabar's classic *History of Russian Art*, but the volumes of this book are written in Russian, and do not incorporate research done after the last war. Thus the time has come for a more up-to-date article with adequate illustrations. It appears here, based on pictures and text material supplied by V.O.K.S. The greatest interest for us however is not Bazhenov's grandly Baroque plans for a re-building of the Kremlin, but his delightful summer palace of Tsaritsin which, in spite of its modish Gothick trim, is not really an example of the Gothic Revival, as it was meant to be, but a very interesting revival of the Russian seventeenth century Vernacular.

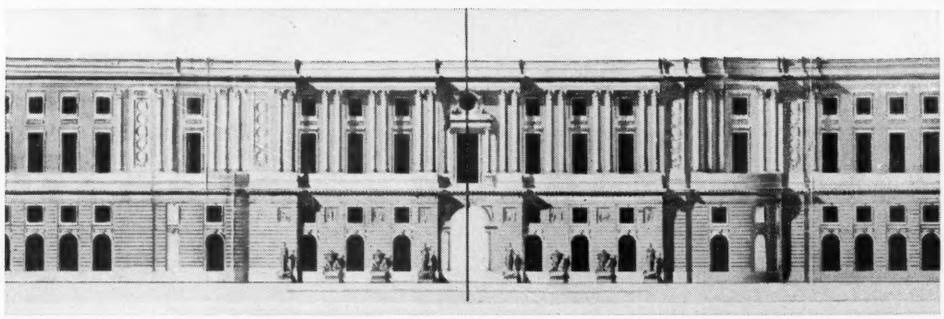
VASSILY BAZHENOV was born on March 12th, 1737. His father was deacon in one of Moscow's many churches. The boy grew up in Moscow, where his first impressions were associated with the old buildings that had embellished Moscow since the fifteenth century. At the age of ten Bazhenov entered the Slavonic-Greco-Latin Academy, but his unusual drawing talent led to a transfer in 1751 to the "architecture school" conducted by Dmitri Ukhtomsky, the leading Moscow architect of the time. In 1754 Ukhtomsky helped him to matriculate at the newly established Moscow University where there were special classes in art. Four years later Bazhenov was admitted to the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts as a student "displaying ability for the fine arts." There he studied under such outstanding architects as Rastrelli, Savva Chevakinsky, Alexander Kokorinov and Vallin Delamotte, the latter two being the architects who designed the Academy of Arts building. After leaving the Academy with a brilliant record, Bazhenov was sent to Paris in the autumn of 1760 to continue his studies there at the expense of the Academy. In Moscow and St. Petersburg Bazhenov had been introduced primarily to the Russian Baroque style. In France he was to come into contact with a new tendency in European art, that of the Classic Revival. He worked under the royal architect Charles de Wailly, who designed the Odéon, and under Soufflot, the architect of the Panthéon. One of the most noteworthy of Bazhenov's designs of this period is his project for the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris. At his own wish he took the public examinations at the Paris Academy and passed them so successfully that he was given his diploma in architecture with a Prix de Rome Gold Medal. This distinction prompted the Petersburg Academy to confer the title of Associate upon Bazhenov and to send him to Italy for further study.

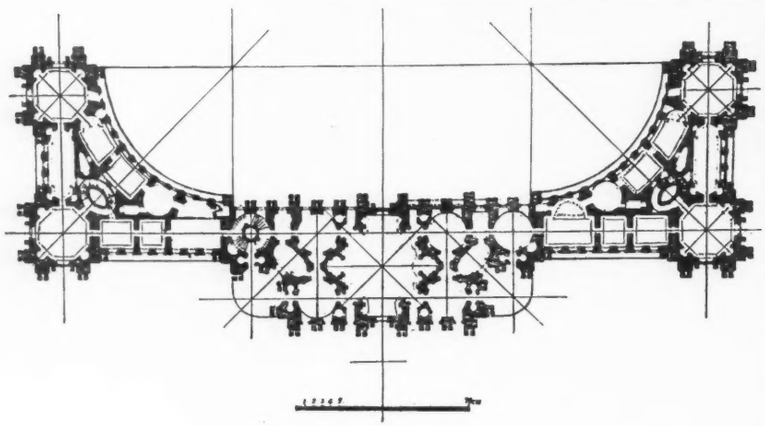
His two years in Italy from 1762 to 1764 were a triumph. Within a short time he was elected to the Roman, Florentine and Bologna Academies. The Academy of Rome, moreover, conferred a special privilege upon him in inviting him to give a course of lectures. His design for the staircase in the Capitol was considered the best in Rome. The design for a fountain, which appears as the head-piece to this article, dates from 1764. At that time the young artist also tried his hand at engraving, his etching "The Dancing Bacchante" of 1764 being a characteristic example (illustrated below). During his stay in Italy he also studied and measured many antique monuments, and created a whole series of designs for their reconstruction which aroused universal attention.

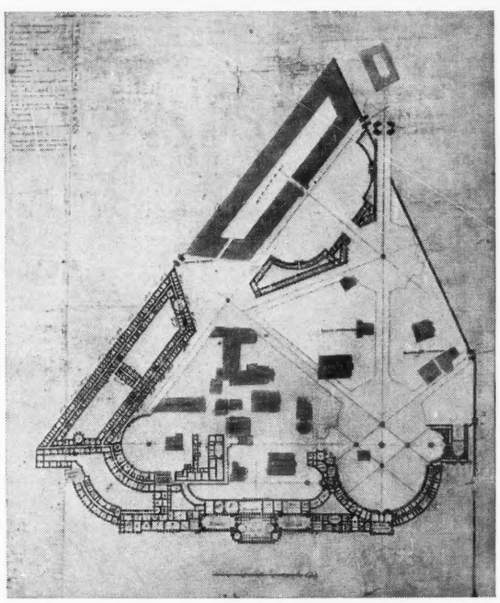
Upon his return to Russia in 1765 at the height of his fame, Bazhenov was made an Academician, but despite his successful design submitted for the Ekaterinhof Palace, he was not given a professorship. In the years immediately following his return he executed his magnificent design of the Smolny Institute which intrigues prevented from being realized. At this time he built the Kameny Ostrov Palace (see page 19) and the Arsenal, both bearing the imprint of classicism.

Shortly after entering the service of the Artillery Department, Bazhenov was sent to Moscow on a government commission in 1767. In connection with the proposed re-planning of the old capital, Bazhenov conceived the idea of building a huge palace that would occupy the better part of the Kremlin grounds. According to Bazhenov's plan, many of the old









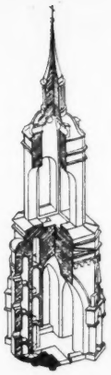
Rebuilding the Kremlin In 1769 Bazhenov began the rebuilding of the Kremlin—a huge project, worthy of Versailles, Caserta, Schönbrunn and similar palaces. The ceremony of the laying of the foundation-stone is illustrated on page 20. It must have been the most fantastical of pageants—*Montagnes Russes* all over. However, the work was stopped in 1775, and never taken up again. This preserved us the Kremlin, but deprived us of a truly magnificent display of international Baroque, as the plans above and the model on the facing page show. In the plan the preserved old buildings are marked in grey.

buildings were to be razed and the new palace was to dominate the whole Kremlin, transforming it into an immense Baroque ensemble. Not at all daunted by the incredible expenses involved (the cost of the main staircase alone was estimated at five million roubles), Empress Catherine II gave her full approval to Bazhenov's project. Preliminary work, selection of his associates, etc., engaged Bazhenov's attention from the beginning of 1769. In the spring of 1773 the ceremony of laying the corner-stone of the new palace was held with pomp and celebration, and Bazhenov made an ardent speech on the greatness of Russia. Catherine II, however, soon lost interest in the project; the work was delayed and finally in 1775 orders were given to discontinue it altogether. This decision was evidently a result of the difficult financial position in which Russia found itself after the conclusion of the war with Turkey.

The cessation of construction work on the palace was a terrible blow for Bazhenov who had devoted all his thoughts and efforts to the Kremlin project. The large model of the palace (see facing page) executed under his personal supervision remains as a monument to this splendid project.

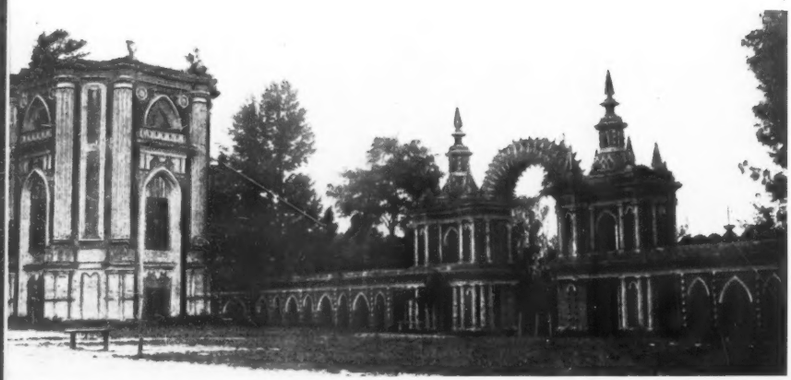
In 1775 Catherine commissioned Bazhenov to build a luxurious country residence for her on her estate at Tsaritsin (now Lenino), near Moscow. The plan called for a palace with a large park, fountains, auxiliary buildings, etc. All the buildings were to be erected in the new Gothic fashion. Russia at that time was still ignorant of Gothic architecture in the sense in which we use the term now. The Cathedrals of the Vladimir-Suzdal Princes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Pokrovsky Cathedral in Moscow, also known as the Church of Vasily Blazheny, of the sixteenth century, the Kolomenskoye Palace of the seventeenth century, and others, were all called Gothic. The only trait that they all possessed in common was that they did not adhere to the system of orders as laid down by Vitruvius and Vignola, and considered obligatory in the eighteenth century.

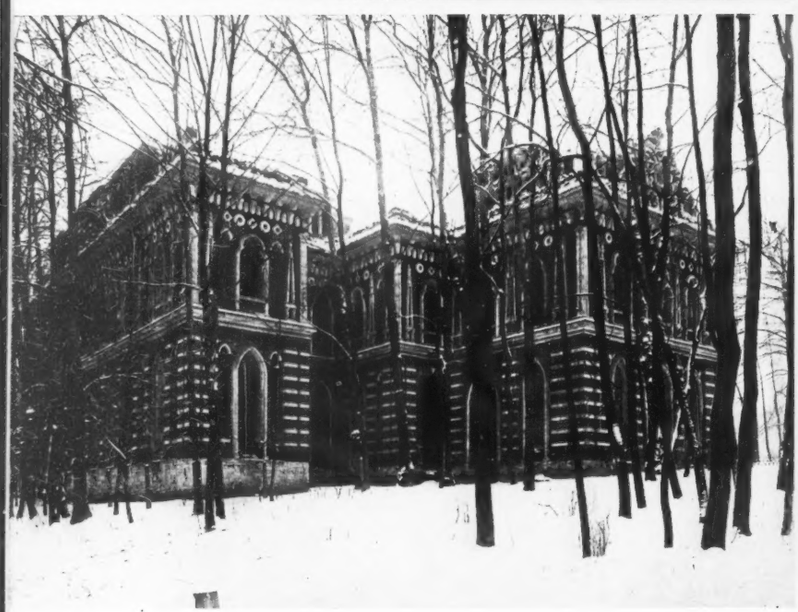
Bazhenov threw himself heart and soul into this new project. Judging from his design for the church in the village of Starki he had shown an interest in the problems of the Gothic style

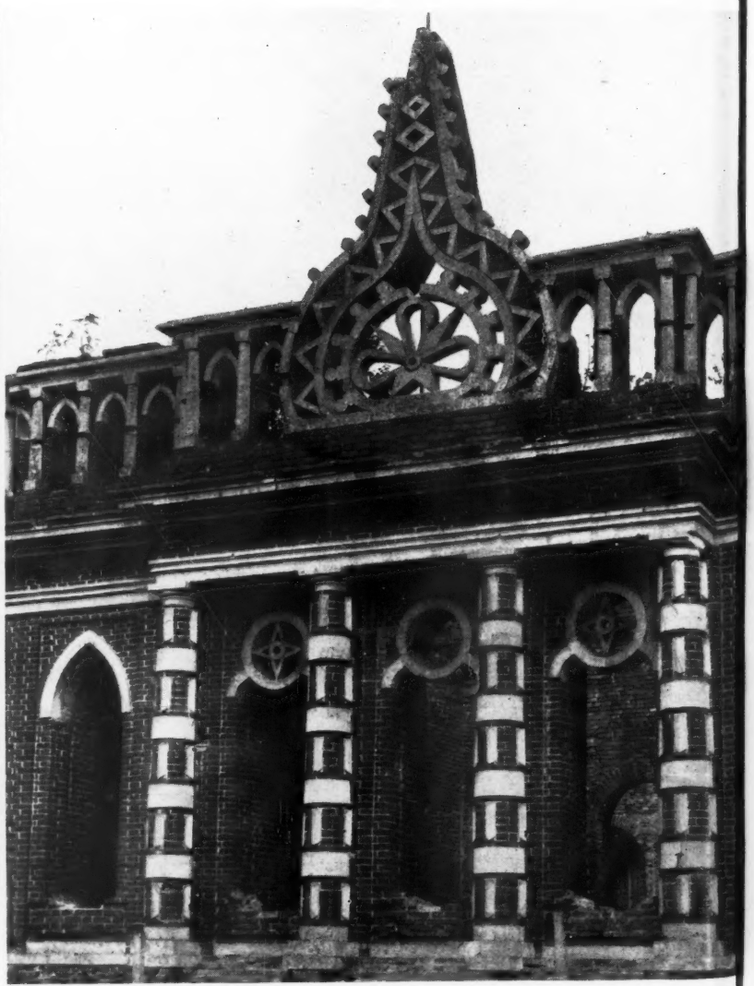


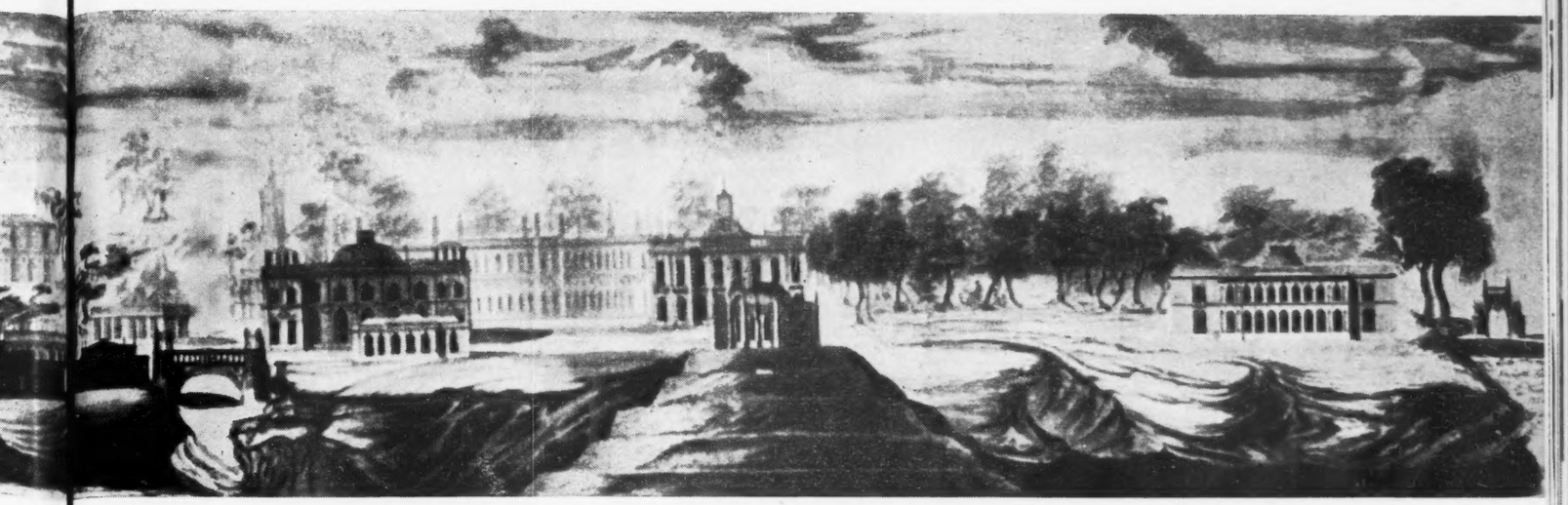
Gothic and Baroque

In the same year in which Bazhenov had to give up the proudest hope of his life, the re-building of the Kremlin as a Western palace—nothing now survives but the model, illustrated below—he was commissioned by the Tsaritsa Catherine to build for her a huge and luxurious country palace near Moscow. Tsaritsin is now called Lenino. The general view on the following pages shows a whole group of palaces with many out-buildings. What singles out Tsaritsin from other large-scale Imperial country palaces such as Tsarskoe Selo and Peterhof is the style chosen for its facades by the Tsaritsa. The palace was to be Gothic. Now the Gothic Revival was an English conception, and it was not ready for export before, say, Strawberry Hill (c. 1750–60). There is little domestic Gothic on the Continent of an earlier date than 1765. So Russia with Tsaritsin is early in the field. The style of Tsaritsin is, moreover, a most original brand of Neo-Gothic—a mixture, both quaint and inspired, of Russian seventeenth-century Vernacular (the brick and stone, the stars and zigzags, etc.) with pointed arches and Gothic shafts. A first indication of these motifs appears in Bazhenov's work even before Tsaritsin: in the designs for the village church of Starki (see the drawings on the left). The palace was designed and started on a truly Russian scale only to be pulled down by the Tsaritsa a few years later, because she found she did not like it as much as she had expected. The remaining parts are shown on this and the following page.









even earlier. Bazhenov's Gothic is a curious mixture of Western mediæval and national Russian elements. From Russian custom of the seventeenth century he takes the combination of brick and stone and the zigzag and star motifs. Pilasters, columns, and cornices are not banished either.

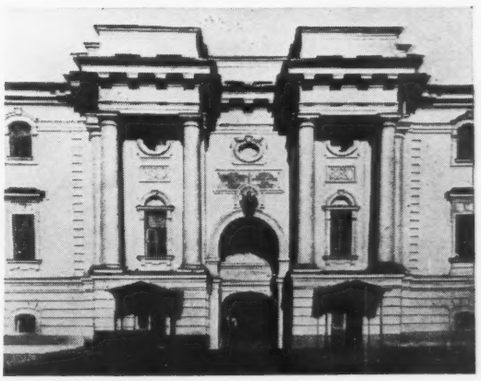
By 1785 the palace was complete except for the roof; the bridges were already built, the ornamental gates, the Opera House and other parts of the residence were also finished. That same year, in 1785, disaster again overtook Bazhenov. The palace, although called " incomparably lovely " by contemporaries, did not suit the Empress's fancy; she gave orders for it to be pulled down, and commissioned the architect Matvey Kazakov to design a new one in its place. The Empress's decision in this case was undoubtedly prompted by the fact that Bazhenov belonged to the Masonic Order which was being persecuted at that time.

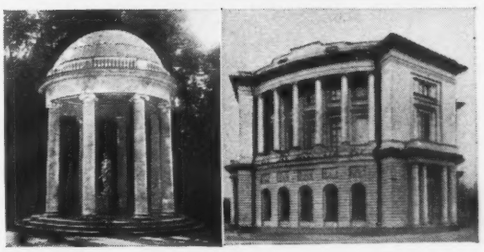
In this way Bazhenov's most important government commissions both ended in failure, and his most ambitious designs never carried out or after completion partly destroyed.

In disfavour from the end of the 1770ies to the beginning of the 1790ies Bazhenov found himself in great need, and executed a number of designs in Moscow and the provinces for private clients. There is no certainty, however, that many of the buildings attributed to him are really his. During this period Bazhenov also opened an art school at his home where instruction was apparently on a high level.

In 1792 Grand Duke Paul, heir to the throne, who had always had the greatest admiration for Bazhenov as an artist and a man, and who was also associated with him through the Masons, summoned Bazhenov to his residence in Gatchino and installed him as architect of the " Small Court." Due to the lack of adequate documentary evidence, however, we can only conjecture as to Bazhenov's activities before Paul ascended the throne.

The last major undertaking connected with Bazhenov's name was the so-called Mikhailovsky Palace, the private residence of Paul I. The corner-stone of this huge edifice was laid in February, 1797, when the new favourite, the Italian architect Vincent Brenna, had supplanted Bazhenov as court architect, but the initial design was executed by Bazhenov. There are unmistakable traces of the great master in the general lay-out of the building as well as in many of its details. Brenna introduced essential changes into Bazhenov's design, particularly in the interior decorations, but he preserved certain parts intact. The octagonal courtyard and the two exit pavilions (see photograph on the right) were left just as they had been in Bazhenov's design.





Classicism The contrast between Bazhenov enjoying himself at Tsaritsin, and Bazhenov doing the accepted thing: Russian classicism, is striking. The Kameny Ostrov Palace at Leningrad of 1765, top, is just as conventional as the Mikhailovsky Palace of the 'nineties, bottom right. In the very park of Tsaritsin is a Temple of Ceres, bottom left, with the plain, unfluted columns so popular in Russia and not a touch of fantasy. The Arsenal at Leningrad, centre picture, is more of the Baroque of Bazhenov's Kremlin model. It dates from 1765-69.

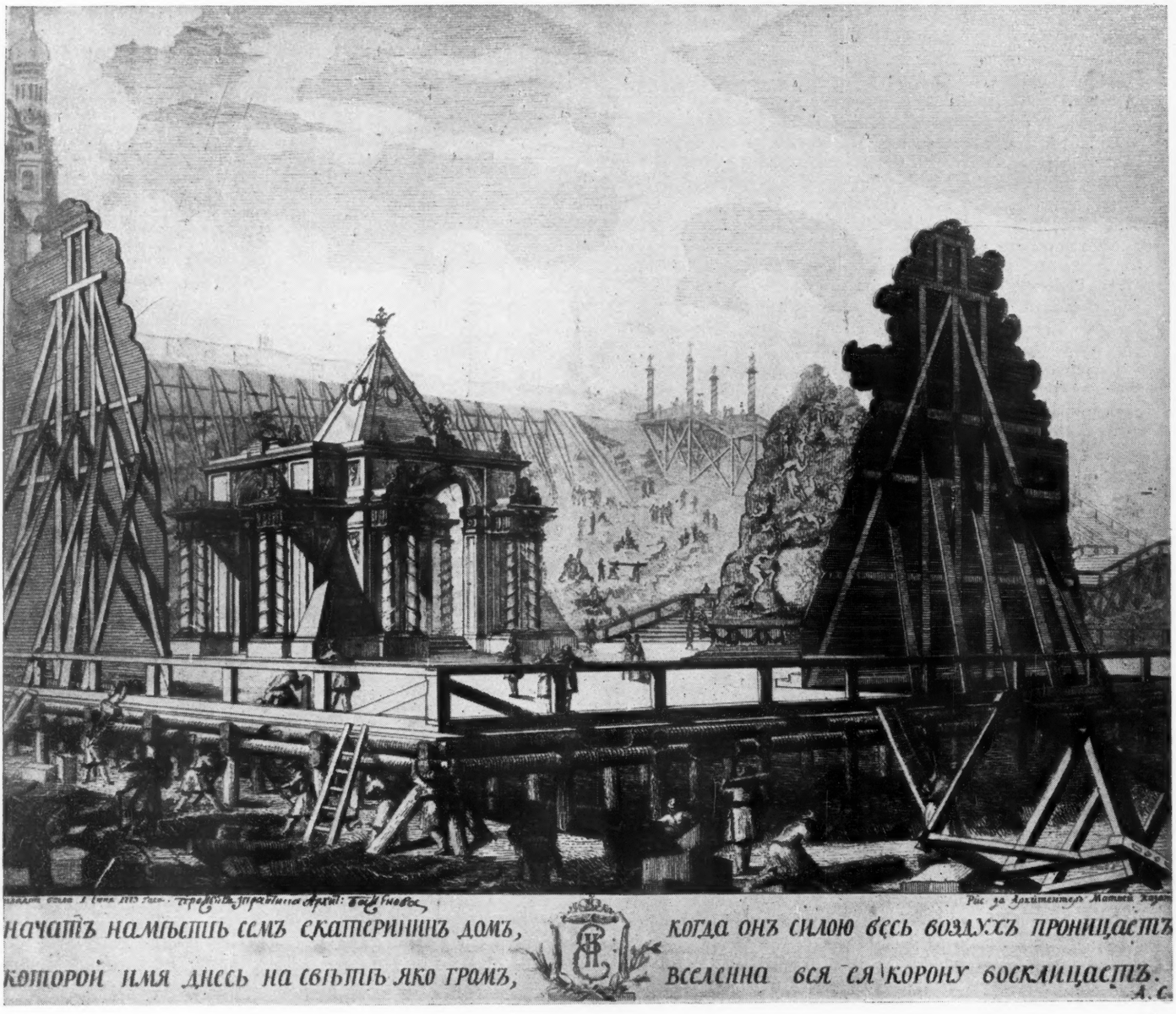
Thus it was Bazhenov's bitter lot to see this last design of his also spoiled, and spoiled by an architect who was infinitely inferior to him in talent and creative force.

One year before his death Bazhenov was given a professorship at the Academy of Arts and was made its first vice-president. He held this office long enough to submit a remarkable memorandum to Paul I (*Notes on the Imperial Academy of Arts*). Even to-day the reforms suggested in this report amaze one by their progressive trend. At the instance of Bazhenov, work was begun on compiling material (designs, plans, measurements, drawings, etc.) for a monumental work in many volumes to be entitled *Russian Architecture*. In the opinion of Professor Igor Grabar, if this last project of Bazhenov had been realized there would now be no need for so much unrewarding research to prepare a history of eighteenth century Russian architecture.

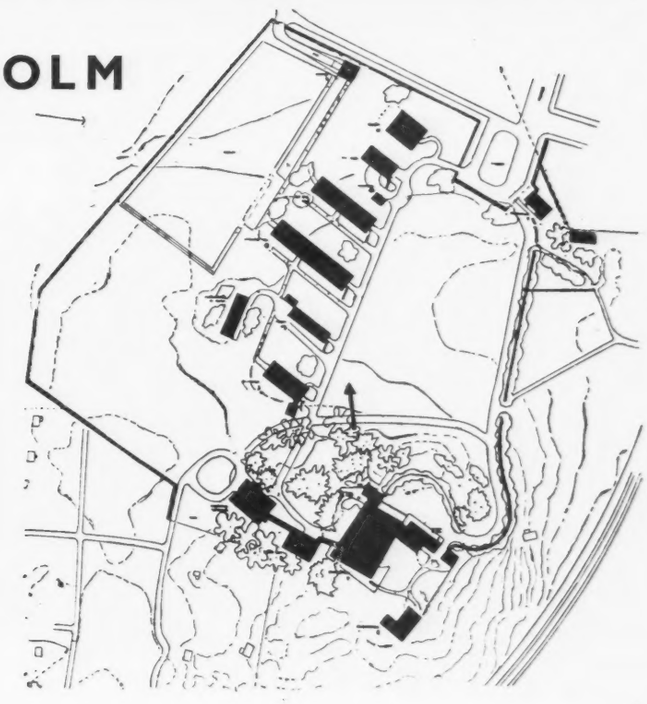
Bazhenov's death on August 2nd, 1799, put a stop to the work on this proposed History of Russian Architecture as well as to the reforms then being introduced in the Academy of Arts. He was buried near St. Petersburg on his estate of Glazovo, presented to him by the Tsar Paul.

Bazhenov was astonishingly versatile. Besides proving himself one of the best Russian architects of his century, he was an excellent linguist, a painter—he executed frescoes in several Moscow churches and many easel pictures—an engraver, a teacher and a writer of uncommon merit. This is witnessed by the diary of his travels abroad, his translation of Vitruvius, his speech at the laying of the corner-stone of the Kremlin Palace and his memorandum to Tsar Paul. In addition to all this he managed the Masonic printing house.

Yet, in spite of his universal mind and his surviving buildings and designs, Bazhenov was forgotten soon after his death, and only restored to the position which he deserves within the last twenty-five or thirty years.



LABORATORY IN STOCKHOLM



The Stockholm City Bacteriological Laboratory, built in 1937, consists of a group of buildings which contain the administrative offices, the laboratories and stables needed for the production of serum and antitoxin derived from horses, guinea pigs and other animals. The two photographs show, **1**, a general view of the stable group as seen from the main block in the direction indicated by arrow on the site plan, and, **2**, a close-up of the central hall in the main block with the spiral stair which links the access galleries off which lie the laboratories. More illustrations can be found in THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, September, 1943.

Gunnar Asplund

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Detail of stairs and galleries in the central hall. The staircase is graduated in width; the treads at the top, where there is less traffic, are narrower than those serving more floors below. They are of reinforced concrete, edged with wood and covered with brightly coloured rubber.

THE GEORGIAN THEATRE AT RICHMOND, YORKSHIRE

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW has for some years taken a special interest in the few Georgian theatres surviving in this country. In December, 1943, Mr. John Summerson published an authoritative account of the Theatre Royal in Bristol which had just then been restored for C.E.M.A. Mr. Richard Southern, the author of this article, then wrote in May, 1944, on some interesting stage equipment at the Theatre Royal. In the following article Mr. Southern introduces a building that appears to have had no critical examination or reference whatever in the century and a half of its existence. The presence in our country of yet another Georgian theatre, possessing still in very great measure its original form and details, is in itself worthy of immediate record. That such a building should have had till now no proper survey, has to-day no especial protective body, and lacked, till recently, the slightest informed attempt to note and assess the extent and effect of such alterations as have been made to it, are all matters which it is hoped will soon be put right. Mr. Southern's research is still in progress on the building, and certain points still under examination have not been included in the plans.

WE in Britain have formerly concentrated on the literary side of our theatrical tradition, and have had little to say about the architectural. We have, it is true, many theories of the physical Elizabethan playhouse, and some recollections of the Victorian theatres, but about the design and nature of the Restoration and Georgian playhouses in between, we remain comparatively silent—possibly supposing there is no surviving evidence.

The Continental theatre of the periods corresponding to the Restoration and post-Restoration is better documented. It has been possible for some time to sketch a picture, based on creditable evidence, and a highly interesting department of the architectural art—with its own very characteristic specialities and its own progressive development through the periods—comes to light.

But until recently Britain suffered from poverty in this branch of her theatrical and architectural stories. Neither the theatrical historian nor the architectural historian could give you much information on which to build a picture of the playhouse's development between the innyard and the finished and elaborate compositions of Victorian times.

The desert had one oasis in the discovery of Wren's section for the Drury Lane of 1674, but there still remained no physical evidence of fabric itself to illustrate the gleanings of information drawn from scattered literary allusions. We had no building in which we could recapture the authentic architectural feeling of a Georgian playhouse as it enclosed a watching spectator, and imagine how it presented the spectacle of the Georgian drama to him.

Fortunately this obscurity is lightening now. Bristol, though obliging us to much research work on the authenticity of details, has given us our first actual historic theatre monument. And now that the British have at last had brought to their attention and pride their first historic theatre building, to illustrate their native dramatic tradition, in this eighteenth-century Theatre Royal at Bristol it would seem that the student of stage history had been offered a sufficient field of study to occupy him for a great while without any distractions.

But a distraction has arisen. There is another historic British theatre.

It may be a surprise to many to learn that there is, in England, a building comparable to Bristol, related in many generalities, and admirably contrasted in many details. The purpose of this article is to introduce what is, from the historic point of view, the second most important theatre building—so far as present knowledge goes—extant in Great Britain.

In fact, one pauses over the qualification "second." For Bristol, unfortunately, is clearly modernized, and that to a very great extent—how far this modernization is superficial, and how far integral, it is one of the first duties of our research student to discover, but, at all events, it is considerable. And, further, Bristol is still a working theatre, with the hands of theatre-people still operative upon its features.

But at Richmond, Yorkshire, there is another theatre, only twenty years junior to Bristol, which is in the main unchanged, save by decay, since it was built, and has been for many a year abandoned (as a theatre) to preserve and embalm in disuse the simplicity of its original character. It has suffered from the ravages of time, of opportunists, and of bit-hunters, but in the main, so far as the preservation of original form and atmosphere is concerned, Richmond may claim an almost perfect Georgian theatre.

It would be not unhelpful for the student of Bristol to study Richmond for comparison alone. Here are the two earliest British playhouses left to us, and their contrasts are striking indeed. Primarily, Bristol is (comparatively) large: Richmond is tiny. Bristol stood as, and possessed the machinery of, a metropolitan theatre: Richmond was a very simply equipped house. Bristol was richly decorated: Richmond is almost naively plain. Bristol was for the sophisticated of the town: Richmond, for country-house folk. Bristol had its gallery altered and added to: Richmond preserves its original shape. At Bristol, the Proscenium is of recent work: at Richmond it is original.

But both are theatres; both evidence the old disposition of the boxes, both exhibit the typical British proscenium sides, with their doors and balconies (and, so far as present knowledge goes, the two buildings are unique throughout the world in this possession), and both have unmistakable signs of the Georgians.

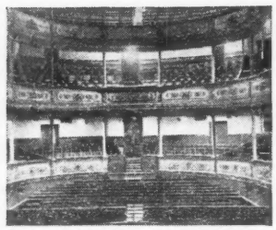
The two are complementary to a full understanding of the British eighteenth-century playhouse.

The building itself at Richmond is interesting. It owes its form to Samuel Butler, an actor and manager, who obtained, on Thursday, November 1, 1787, lease of the premises "on condition that the said S. Butler shall at his own expense pull down the present buildings and in the place thereof erect a proper theatre according to some plan and elevation in the meantime and without delay to be delivered . . ." On or about September 2, 1788, the theatre was opened.

Upon entering the auditorium to-day one has a sense of bareness; there seems to be nothing but four empty walls, with a gallery running half-way round. One's first impression is that a vast number of the essential parts of a theatre are missing. Upon examination, however, one is surprised to see how complete it is. But it has one especial, apparent, major discrepancy, and that itself proves to be a matter of considerable interest. It concerns the greatest "emptiness" of all those that at first disappoint the spectator—for in this theatre the visitor will see no stage.

The psychological effect of this apparent hiatus is very remarkable. It makes an unavoidable and immediate impression upon every visitor. A theatre without a stage is indeed an unusual thing. And one can well understand this resultant feeling of emptiness, and, moreover, understand it giving rise to comment. In this case the comment has started a rumour, and among the few who know of Richmond Theatre (see for example the letter in *The Times*, dated July 25, 1943), the place had come to be spoken of as one where shows were performed *on the same level as the audience*—in fact it was claimed as a *stage-less theatre*, and as such it would be indeed unique among British playhouses. Hearing this rumour, the student, then, approaches with special attention. Will this rare little English theatre prove a freak after all, or will it take its place in the legitimate tradition as one of the steadily developing line of British playhouses—springing from Davenant's first Duke's Theatre (just after 1660), budding into Wren's Dorset Garden and Drury Lane, and continuing unbroken into our own time—so that instead of a freak, we have a true form, embodying the traditional characteristics, and, thus, a building of national importance? Clearly, before such a question this building is indeed worth examining, and stands to turn out of first interest.

Its plan is a simple rectangle, save that one of the ends is slightly diagonal owing to the shape of the site. Into this end have been ingeniously fitted a small vestibule (with the pay-box) and a corridor, giving access to the two sides of the auditorium. Apart from this small subdivision, the interior of the building is, to-day, one unbroken space. The stage portion reaches from floor to roof and occupies about three-eighths of the rectangle; the pit and the boxes along the three sides lie between stage and vestibule wall (which latter is curved in an arc centred on the middle of the stage front). The roof is ceiled over the auditorium space; and over the boxes and vestibule rests the gallery, the back



Left: Auditorium of the Theatre Royal, Bristol, before its present-day redecoration was undertaken. Right: Fire at a bal masqué, Covent Garden, 1856

of which is the end wall of the house.

The Boxes

Along the sides of the pit space and along its back run the boxes. So essential and so characteristic a feature of the early British playhouse are these that some detail is called for in their description.

In the Restoration theatre, the boxes, those small collections of seats enclosed in their own compartment, were not, as to-day, limited to two, or four, flanking the proscenium. They ran in a row round the whole auditorium, from the proscenium in front to the back of the house, and round to the proscenium again. There were extensions and modifications of this arrangement, but the principle was general—boxes were to be found along the sides of a theatre and across the back, as well as at the front.

The second point about this ring of boxes was that it was at stage level. The first box was actually on the stage—deriving from a fencing-off of those spectators who formerly would occupy stools upon the boards—and the rest ran round level with the first.

Nothing like this arrangement is to be seen in any English theatre to-day, save those at Bristol and Richmond, but the feature is one of the most characteristic of Restoration and Georgian playhouses. This it was that made it possible for Pepys, and his contemporaries, to converse from a pit seat with the occupant of a box. So close were boxes to pit that a gentleman who rose to his feet in a side pit seat might, with little effort, exchange whispers with a lady leaning over in the adjacent box.

Both at Bristol and at Richmond the floor of the boxes is stepped. At Richmond, there are two levels, each with its length of bench (or with signs of a once existent bench). These steps are, at Richmond, continuous along the whole row of the boxes on either side of the theatre. And to-day there exist only two features to show that formerly here were boxes and not continuous rows of seats. These are diagonal notches in the edge of the upper step, and signs of fixings in corresponding positions on the back of the box-fronts below each column. Here there once stood dwarf partitions, dividing each inter-columnar space from the next, and so forming separate boxes. Presumably the partitions stopped at the rise of the second step to allow free passage along the top step from box to box, thus providing access—though access that must have been hampered by the knees of the occupants of the upper bench. There are four boxes a side at Richmond and three across the back.

But the back trio have suffered one piece of misleading adaptation. Not only have the internal partitions been removed as on the sides, but, from the centre box, the box-front itself has been removed making a direct way of access from the box door to the open floor of the house. Traces of a similar barrier to the others are, however, clearly visible in the sides of the opening, below the columns. The above fact has a very important bearing on any proper understanding of the original disposition of the house, as will be shown later.

The box-fronts are very simply panelled, and are surmounted by wooden Doric columns, which themselves support the gallery above.

The gallery contains similarly two steps at the sides, but has no subdivision into boxes. At the back the gallery rises into eight steps. Access to the gallery is by a stair from the vestibule, turning over the pay-box.

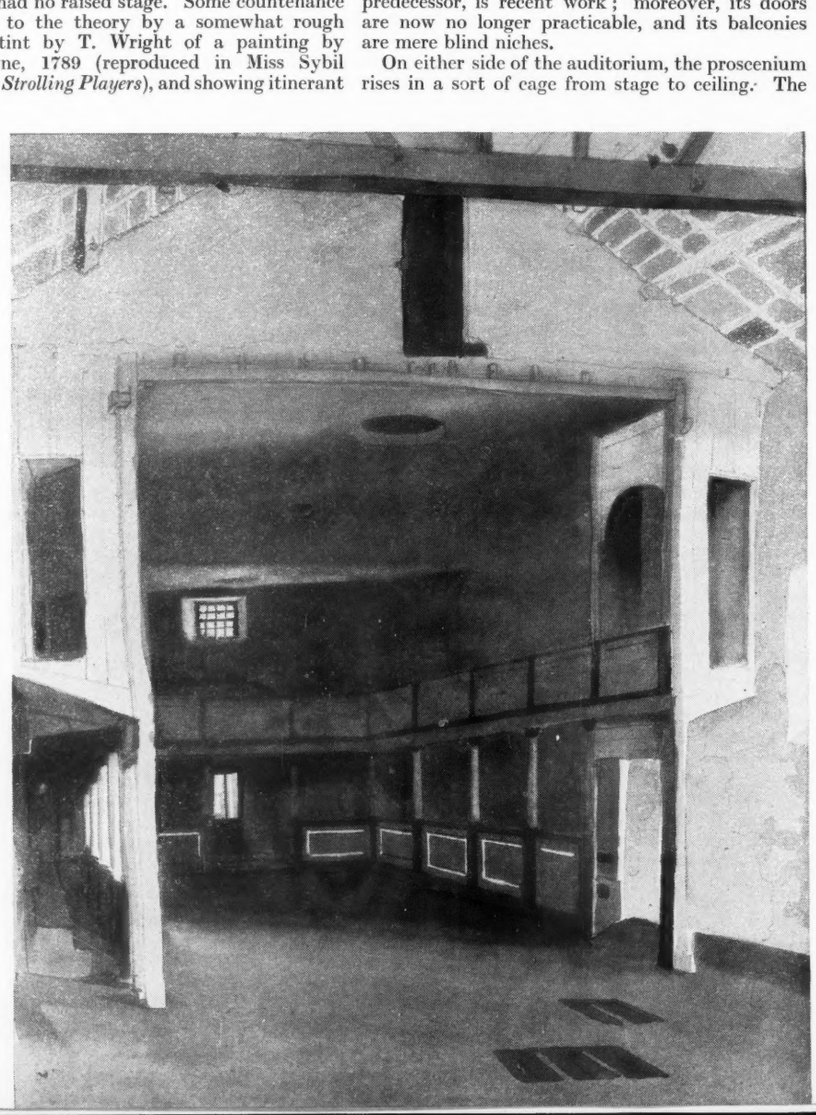
Returning to the lower level, a step to-day leads down from the centre back box—where the front is missing—to a main floor stretching throughout the remainder of the building. This floor is continuous to the far end, and only varied by a slight change in direction where, at a point about the centre of the first, or stage, box it takes an incline and thence proceeds upwards in a rake to the back wall of the stage. It is this continuous floor that has given rise to the theory that Richmond had no raised stage. Some countenance is afforded to the theory by a somewhat rough sepia aquatint by T. Wright of a painting by W. R. Pyne, 1789 (reproduced in Miss Sybil Rosenfeld's *Strolling Players*), and showing itinerant actors performing in a barn not dissimilar in arrangement to this theatre. It shows them acting on the same level as the floor of the pit where are the audience's seats. We have to test the truth of this theory.

At first sight, definite confirmation seems offered by the position of the proscenium doors, or doors of entrance, to use the older term. These doors open on to the level of the existing floor, of that there is no shadow of doubt. The existing floor, then, is the original acting level, and there was at no time a stage raised above the level of the present floor.

The Proscenium

The proscenium itself is a highly interesting and indeed unique feature, which alone would justify study of this building. So far as is known at present it is the only authentic Georgian proscenium in existence, since that at Bristol is made of plywood and, however closely it may reproduce some predecessor, is recent work; moreover, its doors are now no longer practicable, and its balconies are mere blind niches.

On either side of the auditorium, the proscenium rises in a sort of cage from stage to ceiling. The



The Georgian Theatre, Richmond, as it is to-day, with the new floor instead of the original sunk pit.

face of the cage carries on the fronts of the boxes below, and the gallery above. That side separating it from the auditorium is set at an angle parallel with the indications of the box partitions, while on the other side, by the stage, it returns at right-angles to the wall of the house. The chief feature of the proscenium is its two storeys, containing respectively the famous Proscenium Door, or Door of Entrance, and above, the Proscenium Balcony. So noteworthy and essential parts were these of the Restoration theatre, and the presentation of the Restoration show, that the discovery of an architectural example, in however dilapidated a state—but free at least from addition or modernization—is a matter of the highest importance.

In Richmond, the proscenium balcony above is separated from the gallery by a wooden partition. Below, the space behind the door was separated from the stage box by a similar partition, but, in this case, containing a narrow double door, or pass-door, by which the stage could be reached from the auditorium.

On the stage side, the space behind the door was open and of free access, while the balcony above has a partition with a narrow opening, at the foot of which are signs of the fixings of a ladder.

Much of these partitions is to-day, sadly enough, missing. And, greatest depredation of all, the proscenium doors themselves are now no more, and their frames gape empty. This is especially to be regretted, since one at least was present even so late as the early part of the present war, when the house was used as a depot for salvage. During this period a small fire occurred which blistered the stage-right auditorium post, with its door and doorhead. The damage was, providentially, slight, but during, or round about, the time of repair, the remains of the door were taken away and have, to the present time, not been recovered.

It is interesting, though very sad, to note that one of the reasons reported for the removal of the door was that it was clearly not the authentic, original door *since it bore signs of a front door knocker and furniture*, and was hence some imported feature! To any student of the stage, the existence of normal street door furniture upon a proscenium door is, of course, very positive evidence for the authenticity of the door, since these can be well proved to have been essential, traditional, characteristic features.

But the nearest we can do to repair this sad loss is to attach the present photo of the house in its salvage days, which now attains a very high, if melancholy, interest as the only photograph yet published of an authentic English Proscenium Door. Something at least of its character may be gleaned from the print.

The Stage

Of all the features of Richmond Theatre, the stage seems the barest. Practically no sign presents itself at first glance to witness the existence of any machinery, or fixings for scenery, or any sophistication at all beyond the bare boards.

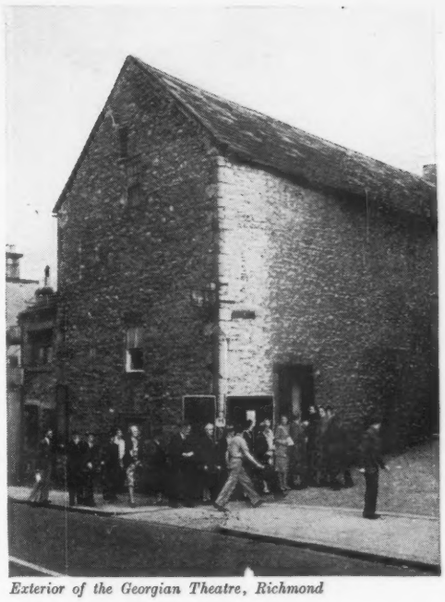
Those boards do, however, contain signs of three insets, two practically square, and one oblong. Their positions are indicated on the plan. To the stage student these positions are at once significant. They coincide exactly with the traditional position of the two " corner traps " and the central " grave trap." But the boards are nailed down. With a possibly excusable eagerness we begin to raise one of the boards.

The immediate result is disappointing. A few inches below the joists is the brick vault of a cellar. There is, beneath the theatre at Richmond, a cellar extending under the whole building. The cellar space itself is as old as the building, but the cellar to-day is used as a wine cellar, and the space is divided down its length by a central wall, on either side of which is a vaulted aisle, each flanked on either side in turn by the bays of wine bins. The whole is constructed of brick and stone, and fills practically the entire space of the original cellar, and reaches up to within a few inches of the floor joists of the existing theatre floor above—those intervening inches being occupied by sleepers immediately over the upper surface of the vaults, and carrying the joists above.

It seems now that a final period is set to any possibility of further interest in the building—it seems the traps lead nowhere, the cellar of the theatre does not belong to it, the place is an unorganized shell.

One feature, however, remains to be mentioned before we see ourselves in a position to rewrite our opinion and review the whole theatre in a new light. This pivotal feature becomes apparent from the existence of a groove in a floor joist.

Returning to the apparently blind trap, we notice a slanting groove on the inner faces of the two joists flanking the opening. There can be no escaping the fact that here is something so like the traditional guide-ways in which the door of a stage trap is slid away when the opening is needed, that the resemblance cannot be fortuitous. Moreover, the arrangement can be given no other explanation. This groove could here serve no other purpose than to take a sliding door. Therefore there was a trap-door here. Therefore there was an opening, and therefore there must have been a cellar space below with which the opening communicated.



Exterior of the Georgian Theatre, Richmond

And therefore the whole of the present vaulted cellar below the building, on which the auditorium now rests, is a late addition!

It needs a little temerity to affirm that these vaults which are to-day the sole support of the whole floor of the building, and of the boxes and gallery (save the support afforded by the outside walls themselves), are additions, built under an older structure. How were the floor and the boxes and the stage supported before the vault was built?

Reference to any early stage plan shows that the procedure was to support the stage-floor joists on a forest of posts rising in the cellar. But if that were so at Richmond, all have been cut away and the cellar built-in under.

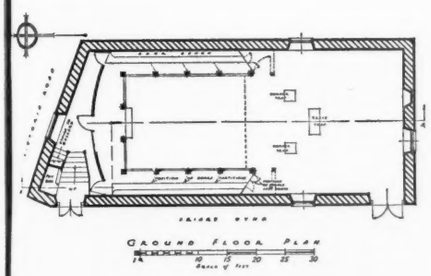
The question of the support of the auditorium floor, on the other hand, and of the boxes, brings us to another matter, which, since it is perhaps the most important point connected with the proper understanding of the original shape of the theatre, and since it throws an entirely new light on the no-stage theory, deserves special consideration.

The Pit Floor

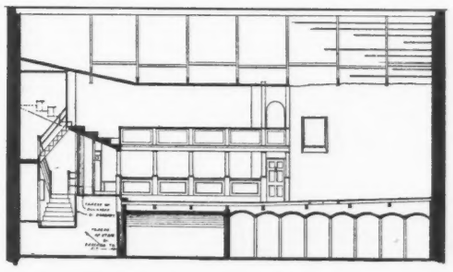
Let us return to the auditorium floor. We enter the central back door, pass through the one-time centre box, and descend the step to the main floor. Now at length we may voice a question which we have been suppressing for some time—suppressing perhaps because to ask it would betray a disappointment in, and dissatisfaction with, the theatre shape as it stands at present. We realize an element of authenticity, but we hesitate before affirming the building's completeness as a traditional theatre form. Why? The fact must be faced—it does not have the authentic feeling of a proper theatre. There is a catch somewhere. Something is wrong. What is it?

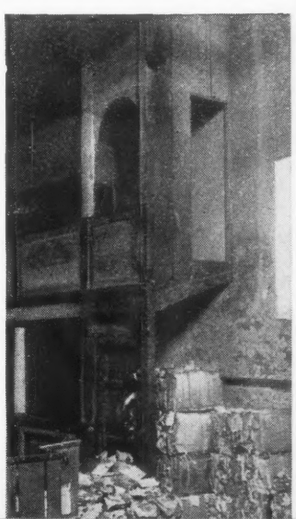
At first one is inclined to settle the problem by denying the building any real importance. It is a mere temporary theatre, a substitute—authentic, maybe, in date, but of a form so improvised as to be unworthy of study or instancing as an example of traditional development. It is a mere fitted-up room.

It is clearly of the first importance that this doubt be verified or relieved—one way or the other. We cannot go on in uncertainty. One way the house takes its place in architectural history as a rare survival of a type of building specially designed in a certain tradition and for a special purpose, and illustrates a hitherto unexampled stage of that tradition. The other, it is simply a

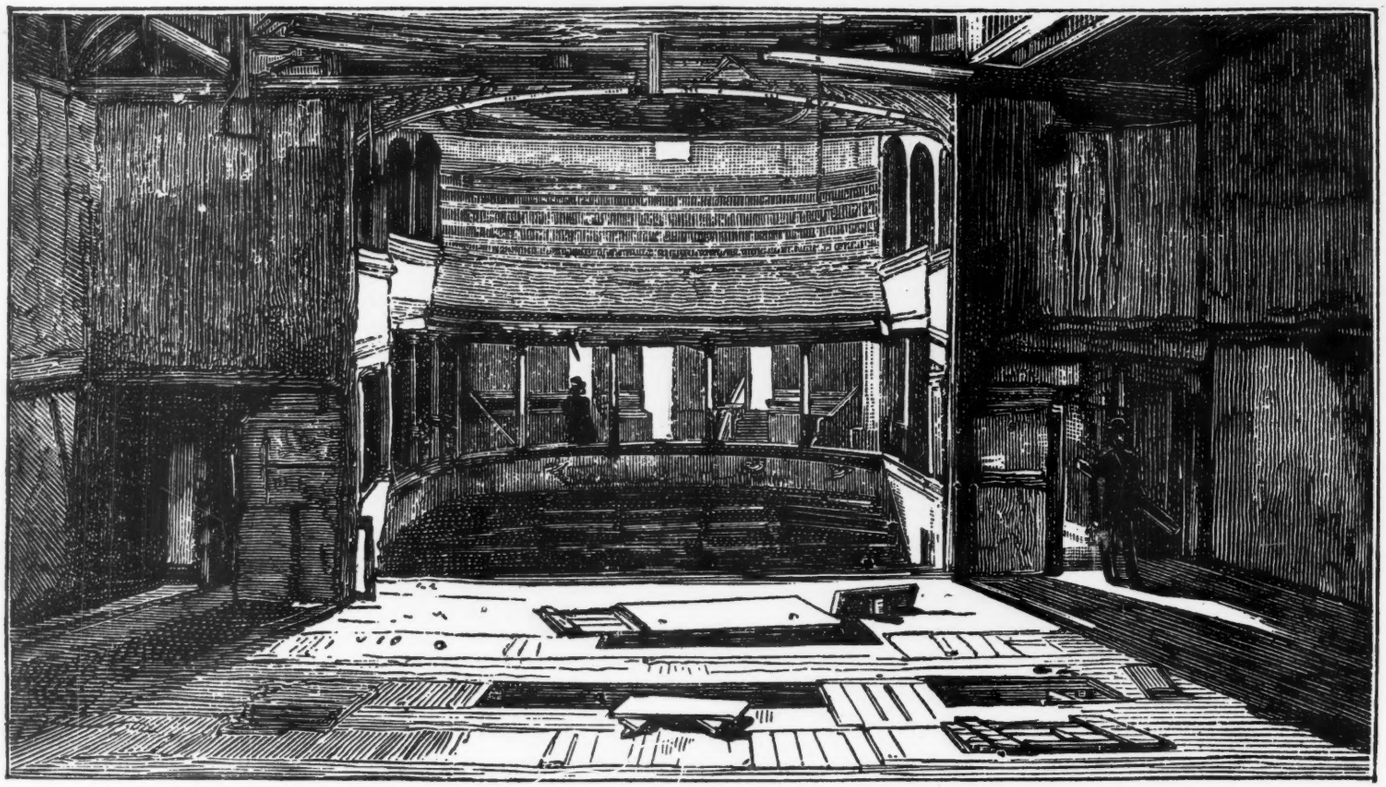


GROUND FLOOR PLAN





The proscenium door and balcony, essential parts of the Restoration Theatre, and the paybox.



Georgian Theatre, Richmond, auditorium from stage

normal building, containing a gallery and a few associations.

Again, then, we ask whence came this feeling that something is wrong in this theatre?

One walks to the box barriers. What is out of proportion about them? They seem in some sense ineffectual—ill-based. They remind one of the rails round a skating rink. Yet the line of their base—the present floor line—is an authentic architectural line; it seems highly unlikely that they were ever in any other position.

Another and more trenchant question suddenly presents itself. How, if, as seems certain, the central box originally had its barrier with the rest, *was access obtained to the original pit space*? The surprising fact stands out that this theatre provides, in its present form, no means of access to the pit at all, save one that formerly did not exist!

Immediately this realization is clear, the whole problem shifts. The building has to be examined again with an entirely new eye.

To put the result of the fresh investigation in a few words: A doorway, now bricked up, is traceable in the vestibule opposite the pay-box. Behind it are traces of a flight of steps into the cellar; underneath the joists bearing the side boxes, and above the cellar vault, are traces of laths and the plastering of a former corridor ceiling; at a point just short of the proscenium, the traces stop, and indication of a doorhead is present, turning out from underneath the boxes into the pit, but *under the present floor*.

Further examination brings the following: This is the former entrance to the pit. The former pit was lower—was, in fact, a sunk *pit*—and the existing level floor is a late addition, like the cellar below, and both floor and cellar must be mentally removed before one can estimate the original form of the house.

Once that is done, however, the first and main problem of the whole investigation is solved. Here, it can be seen, was originally a normal theatre, with every part present in traditional relation, though all on a tiny scale. The cellar space originally held two things—the pit, and the understage machinery—and the floor of the pit was sloping, as is suggested by an old play-bill announcing the price of the *upper*, as against the lower, pit seats. So Richmond, though it never had a stage raised higher than the present, did have what few have thought to put as an alternative—a pit floor sunk *below* the present; and so, in effect, the original stage was in normal relation of height to the rest of the building. And, thus, Richmond did possess a normal stage.

There is a photograph of the Theatre Royal, Bristol, which it is very interesting to compare with this water-colour sketch of the Richmond Theatre. It appeared in the *Illustrated London News*, and shows the theatre at Bristol before the present redecoration was undertaken. It explains why the floor in its present position at Richmond has a certain misleading appearance of authenticity, that prevents one suspecting it at a merely casual glance. This is because the floor comes at an already existing architectural line, from which all the superstructure springs naturally as from a designed base. Examination of the Bristol photo (and of other records of early theatres), shows clearly how marked a feature of playhouse design this architectural line was. It is seen very clearly running along the base of the bottom row of boxes, and one may note very distinctly how the pit was separate in respect of architectural features from the body of the house above it. The features of the house proper run down to this line and stop—or begin at this line and rise from it. The pit has no relation to the decorative scheme, and is very sharply distinct in treatment. And the reason for the existence of this line is clear; it is the line of the stage level, the master line of the whole conception of the early playhouse, about which the whole perspective composition was hinged.

In Wren's design for the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, this line itself was actually sloping in the artificially-intensified perspective of the building, as may be seen by a glance at the section reproduced in Mr. John Summerson's article in December, 1943. But in later theatres it was more common for it to be established with emphatic horizontality. That the whole design of the Richmond house should stop at the present floor level is, then, no argument for the authenticity of the floor; rather it is further evidence of the association of the building with established theatre tradition.

Lastly, in this connection, one has only to look at the print of the fire at the Bal Masqué at Covent Garden, in 1856, to see complete evidence of a current tradition to floor-in the pit of a theatre at need, so as to bring stage and auditorium into one great plain.

Upon a further matter, comparison of the Richmond drawing and the Bristol photo is interesting in that it shows how an exactly similar removal of the centre-back box-front has taken place in either case, to provide an extra means of access to the pit.

It requires but the knowledge of the above points to make the matter of studying the smaller details at Richmond a matter of high interest. But it is not the purpose of this article to touch the subject now; sufficient has been done in local research to provide full proof of the above. When conditions will permit free research, many particulars still needing fuller study have to be related to the whole. Work on these must at present be slow.

But the main point is established. Here is a theatre building of the true English tradition, a monument of first—indeed of unique—importance. It contains a superfluous cellar and lacks an essential pit, but apart from this it is as near perfect as any hard-worn relic in daily use may well be to-day, after a century and a half of wear. And it is without a doubt, as far as present knowledge goes, the nearest approximation to an unspoilt Georgian theatre—though not quite the oldest, and not by much the largest—in Great Britain. And in every particular it instances, in its small scale, the traditional features of the British playhouse half-way through its development.

Butler carried out the letter of his conditions and built a "proper theatre." To state its value in a sentence—it is the most perfect known Georgian Little Theatre in existence.

RICHARD SOUTHERN

[*Acknowledgments are due to the following: To the Town Clerk of Richmond, to Messrs. E. Bush and H. R. Vernon for assistance in research, to Mr. A. J. Glover for permission to use the photograph of the paybox, to Mr. W. Cooper for that of the proscenium side, to Messrs. Hulton Press for the photo of the exterior, and to Mr. J. Ravens for work on the measured drawings.*]

DESIGN REVIEW

for a discussion of new designs, new materials and new processes, and as a reminder of the specific visual qualities of our age which war necessities are bringing out in their purest form, and which a more carefree and fanciful post-war world should not forget.

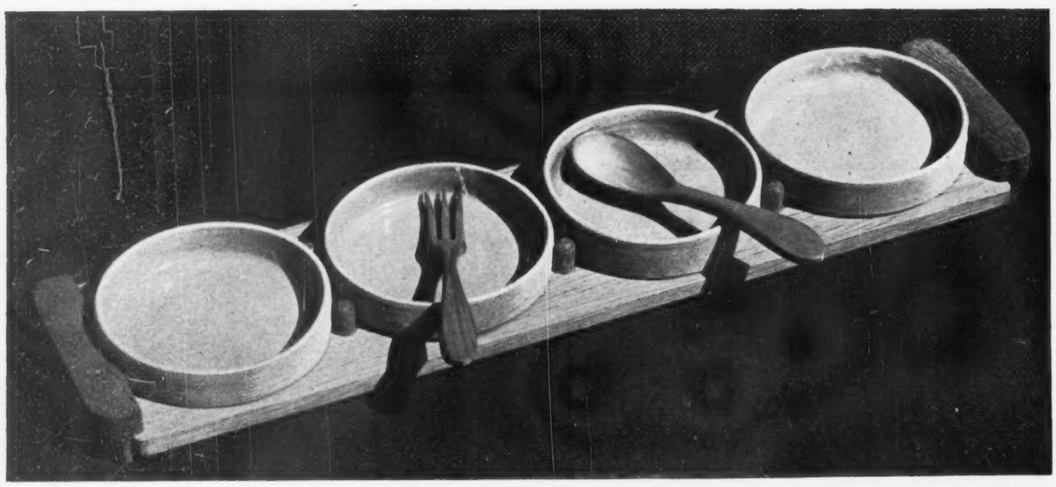
TABLEWARE IN WARTIME

Before the war it was not difficult to select good British produced tableware. A dozen firms were producing pottery of a very high standard, ranging from the work of the individual craftsman like Bernard Leach or Michael Cardew down to the anonymously produced pint mugs obtained at the country ironmonger's store. Glass of an equally high standard was also readily obtainable. In cutlery, turned woodwork, basket work, etc., master craftsmen still continued on the lines of sound and live tradition. That is not to say that the standard of all tableware was universally high ; the vast majority was, of course, commonplace or vulgar, but in spite of that the traditional talent for making well-designed simple utensils was never submerged. It is no accident that the utility designs for tableware have probably reached the highest standard of any utility products ; and these have been produced quite naturally within the industries themselves without any of the " sweat and toil " which unavailingly has been expended in many other fields. The following illustrations give a few examples of tableware, a random collection, all of which has been obtained since the war and most of which will be obtainable in larger quantities in the early post-war period.

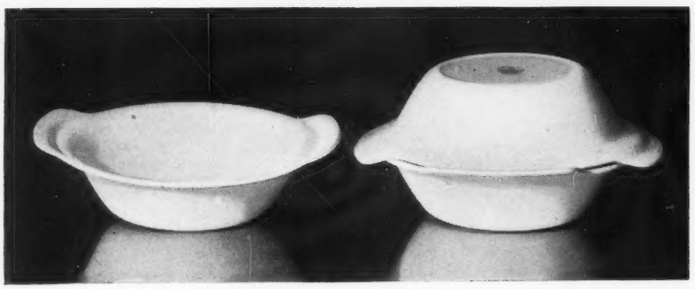
45 *In these days of quotas and restrictions it is rarely possible for the individual to obtain exactly what he wants. Here is a number of oddments bought within the last few months. The oval plate (" Kockums " Staines Kitchen Equipment) is white enamelled iron with a red rim ; circular plates, jugs and mugs to match are also produced. The tendency to chip is always a defect in enamel ware, but " Kockums " is a particularly good quality and for shapes they are unsurpassed. The shiny black earthenware jugs are now fairly commonly available, and look particularly well if used for milk. The burnt sienna colour pint mug was discovered in a country ironmonger's store as also were the superbly designed cups and saucers (Johnson Bros.) and the white jar. The egg-cups are in turned whitewood. Wood as a material for egg-cups is questionable as it is so much more difficult to keep clean than ordinary earthenware.*

46 *At the opposite end of the scale Leach domestic pottery is still in production. In the egg baker set illustrated the individual pieces are finished inside with different stoneware glazes, cream, celadon or dark brown. It is impossible to do justice to Leach's pottery in a photograph without colour. The changes of colour and texture are so subtle and express so well the years of experience which have gone with the making of such simple objects.*

47 *Here are shown beakers and a jug, again Leach domestic pottery, obtainable in cream, celadon, or dark brown glazes.*



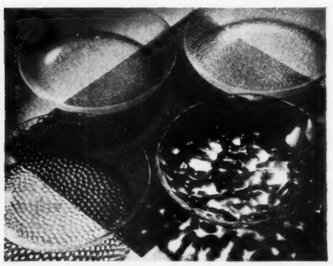
48 *The same potter's hors-d'œuvre set is in stoneware on an oak tray. As the dishes are held in position by the wooden knobs, no side rim is needed to the tray which makes for easy cleaning.*



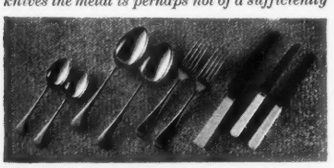
49, 50 *Above are examples of "Utility" ware, off white—Poole utility pottery by Carter, Stabler and Adams, Ltd. The teapot and cup are probably the best of all the Utility designs, or indeed of any design at any time, and make the jug handles appear rather awkward in contrast. On the right the "Utility" ware produced by Josiah Wedgwood and Sons, Ltd.*

51 *"Radaware" by Radiation Ltd. These are enamelled cast-iron cooking utensils. As they can be used for almost all types of cooking, for example, frying, grilling, baking, stewing, boiling, etc., and can be then taken straight from the stove to the dining table, they lessen considerably the handling of food and washing up and eliminate the heating of extra dishes. They are smooth inside and outside for easy cleaning. There is a good recess in the lid so that the knob does not project, and their handles are most convenient for carrying and at the same time are designed for saving space when the utensils are packed in the oven. They are of robust construction and will not dent and are flat underneath to suit any type of cooker, gas, coke, electricity, or coal. The deeper pans can be used as saucepans, casseroles, vegetable or meat dish, etc., and the shallow pan can be used as a plate for baking jam tarts or as an entrée dish and for many other obvious uses. With such a background of practical satisfaction, pleasure in the shapes as such can rest securely. Produced originally in pastel shades of buff, green or blue, though not at present in general supply, they will be obtainable again after the war when their colour range will be extended.*

52 *Four bowls of Aqualux glass, designed by Miss Dunbar Kilburn (Chance Bros., Ltd.); the top left is in "Stippolyte" pattern; top right "Pink Maxine"; bottom left "Hammered Cathedral"; and bottom right "Flemish." They are the result of a new technical process. The rolled patterned sheets which are normally used for translucent window glazing are cut and then pressed into shape in a mould while the glass is still hot, so that any standard rolled plate pattern might be used or plain clear translucent or coloured glasses.*



53 *Stainless cutlery from Messrs. Woolworths. It is difficult to find any criticism for such well-designed pieces as these, perhaps the fork and spoon handles might be a little wider across to prevent swivelling round while being held, and in the knives the metal is perhaps not of a sufficiently good quality to taper to so fine a point without danger of bending or even breaking off. All the shapes used are specially easy to keep clean. There are no ridges anywhere to hold the food and at the same time the smooth rounded shapes are most pleasant to hold. All the knives have the scimitar shape blade introduced first from France by Messrs. Heal and Son. In those shown the tea knives have the better handles than the table knife as rounded edges are always more comfortable to hold than straight edges.*



54 *A cruet set in turned wood by Ernö Goldfinger. This is now no longer in production but supplies will again be available after the war. Turned wood of this type is a well-known British speciality and provides interesting colour and texture for the table without any applied patterning.*

DESIGN REVIEW

next instalment

ingenious solutions

SAN GIMIGNANO

It is always a consolation to know that this or that masterpiece has escaped damage but in the case of cities like San Gimignano, which have remained intact for so many hundreds of years, any damage to the place as a whole is grievous. We are all aware that the character of the places which have left lasting impressions on us depends as much upon the simple things as upon the masterpieces.

The word "city" conjures up anything but a true impression of San Gimignano. City-in-miniature, if you like, for the whole of it could be comfortably laid out in Kensington Gardens. I remember a visit made to it from Florence in 1928. Our route was through Lastra, Certaldo and Poggibonsi, to San Gimignano. The little town of Lastra complete with its mediæval, machicolated walls might have been straight out of

Cloister of the Collegiata and Tower of the Palazzo antico del Potestà. Piazza della Cisterna on previous page.

Hollywood. The hill town of Certaldo is celebrated as the home of Boccaccio. Poggibonsi I remember for its beautiful church of S. Lucchese, near the Siena road. But it was San Gimignano that excited us from the first sight of its towers across the patterned vineyards and olive groves of the Tuscan country-side. It stands terraced on the hilltop containing, though no more than half a mile from gate to opposite gate, four piazzas, ten churches, town hall, theatre and museum, as well as the many family palaces which are remarkable for their thirteen towers which crown the hill of San Gimignano in a compact group. In the distant view these towers might be the skyscrapers of Corbusier's " Ville Contemporaine."

The buildings of San Gimignano mostly date from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Many are in brick. Most are extremely simple, even severe, and appear monumental only because streets and piazzas are in scale with the comparatively small buildings. The buildings which surround the Piazza della Cisterna are three and four stories high, yet this little piazza looks immense. Skyscrapers as the towers of San Gimignano may appear the loftiest of them, the Torre del Commune, is only 175 feet high.

This quality of monumental miniature is indeed the great charm of the place, this and its roof-scapes. Buildings overlook each other on the hill slopes and when the towers are climbed the city becomes a sunny mosaic of pantiles.

Raymond McGrath

OLD TOM OF CHRIST CHURCH

Here is yet another bell, " Old Tom of Christ Church." Bells, apart from their seasonal importance as the old year passes and the new is rung in, have always a curious appeal for the imaginative person. They sound magnificent to the ear, and are beautiful to look at. Rarely does function express itself in so satisfactory a shape, which, echoing that of a common plant form, for that very reason possesses none of the austerity of the machine form. Yet the strong fascination of the bell lies in that it, like the monument (without its imposing uselessness), lives to a rhythm different from its maker, counting decades for mere seconds in its life. Cast and recast, passing through innumerable hands in the various centuries towards greater perfection, the bell takes on a personality (sometimes mischievous) which is usually denied to inanimate objects, and which puts it almost side by side with the piece of art.

The main incidents in the life of Great Tom are well known: how he was moved in 1545 from the centre tower of Osney Abbey to St. Frideswide's steeple—now the Cathedral spire—at a cost of twenty shillings; the recasting in 1612 as told in Richard Corbet's poem *On Great Tom of Christ Church;* the 1654 recasting by the itinerant bell-founder Michael Darby; the triple failure of Richard Keene of Woodstock to recast the bell in 1678 and 1679; the success of Christopher Hodson at his first attempt in 1680; and the ringing of the new Great Tom on May 28, 1684, the anniversary of the Restoration of the House of Stuart.

In 1888, when Lord Grimthorpe, the eminent horologist, was supervising J. B. Joyce's specification of Great Tom's clock, he increased the weight of the hammer from 200 to 300 pounds, saying: " If vile Tom should ever be recast into a stronger and better bell of the same weight it will bear and want a hammer nearer 3 cwt." Lord Grimthorpe's epithet may come as a surprise to many of my readers. But if we look into the details of Great Tom's eventful career, it will be acknowledged as just; and the college account books supply some hitherto unknown sidelights on this recalcitrant bell.

In the sixteenth century Great Tom was hard on his clapper; every few years the college smith was " new casting the clapper of ye great bell." The hundred strokes at nine (increased to 101 in 1663) were a test of endurance between bell and clapper. Probably the weight of the clapper was increased with the years; in 1599 it was no less than 211 pounds as made a year or two earlier by Thomas Mathew of Chesterton and Nicholas Nicols, an Islip blacksmith. For a few more years Great Tom suffered this heavy " clocking," and appeared to be winning the battle; in 1602 there is an entry " For newe bowlinge the great bell clapper, £2," and again in 1607 Great Tom was holding his own when the college smith was paid twenty-five shillings " for newe making the great bellclapper agaynst the Act." In 1610 yet another was necessary, this costing five pounds. In 1612, however, Great Tom must have been wounded, and had to be recast. But there was great fight in him still, as Corbet depicts:

> They drew his brown-bread face on pretty gins,
> And made him stalk upon two rolling-pins:
> But Sander Hill swore twice or thrice by heaven,
> He ne'er set such a loaf into the oven.
> And Tom did Sanders vex, his Cyclops maker
> As much as he did Sander Hill the baker.

Obviously, the recasting was a task almost beyond their resources. No identification of Sanders the bell-founder has so far been suggested—not even by Raven in his *Bells of England*; doubtless he came over from Reading where John Saunders the bell-founder died in 1559, and I think it probable that the 1612 Sanders was a descendant of his, either John or William, of whose other work nothing is known. Unfortunately there is no record of his payment in the college accounts.

Raven's note that Sander Hill was the Christ Church butler is wrong: the butler of the day was John Dawson, the subject of another of Corbet's poems. Sander Hill was a Chamberlain of the City and one of the twelve or so Oxford bakers supplying bread to the college, and his bakery may have been used for the recasting.

Great Tom was also hard on leather; the entry " For mendinge greate toms baldricke " appears very frequently, as does the fine Shakespearean-like phrase " Bend leather for the baldricks."

Perhaps the most interesting fact in Great Tom's history furnished by the account books is the completely unknown recasting in 1626, for which Humphrey Keene of Caulcott, near Heyford, and James Keene of the famous Woodstock foundry were responsible. £74 4s. 0d. was the sum paid, signed for by Humphrey. This major work adds something substantial to the little known work of Humphrey (who is known chiefly as the father of the unlucky Richard), as according to Cocks in his *Bells of Buckinghamshire*, p. 165, a bell inscribed by him and James Keene in 1640 at Stanton, Gloucestershire, is the sole record that Humphrey ever existed. Six years earlier, in 1620, he was employed by Christ Church in " hanginge and mendinge the bels." Cocks tentatively gives the establishment of Keene's foundry at Woodstock as taking place between 1622 and 1631—having moved from Bedford—but the appearance of Humphrey's name in the Christ Church records as early as 1620 points to his being at Caulcott in that year.

Tom's new stoutness demanded another clapper in 1631, which gained the best of the contest in 1654, when Michael Darby recast the bell.

In 1667 the catch " Great Tom is cast " was published in Playford's *Musical Companion*, as being by Mr. White. Grove's *Dictionary of Music* tells us that there is no evidence that Matthew White—who is generally credited with it—was the composer. His connection with Christ Church was the taking of his B. and D.Mus. degrees in 1629. For the composer of the Catch I would suggest the name of Blaze White, King's Scholar of Westminster, Christ Church 1651, B.A. 1652, M.A. 1654, this last in the year of Darby's recast. He was a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal 1664-75 and Vicar Choral of Lichfield Cathedral; he died in 1699.

There is a local tradition referred to by Cocks, *op. cit.*, and by Caröe in *Wren and Tom Tower*, that Richard Keene attempted to recast Great Tom in his foundry at Woodstock. In this there is no truth, for in his Articles of Agreement dated August 5, 1678, are the words: " that Keene shall have the use of the work house in Christ Church for the casting." This site, subsequently known as Bell Yard, was on the north side of the Great Quadrangle, and so called till 1737 when Dr. David Gregory —then Canon of Christ Church—was given the use of that piece of ground. Furthermore, no items of expenses for carting are recorded.

Now let us see whether it is possible to compute the weight of Great Tom, in the matter of which all previous writers are at variance. H. B. Walters says 6 tons, Browne

Willis c. 7½ tons, Caröe, 7 tons 16¼ cwt., Add. MS. 6768 gives 9 tons, and the *Oxford Journal* extracts, ed. Ellis, not quite 10 tons ! Several papers left by Henry Smith, the Christ Church Treasurer of 1678, and some overlooked bills in the college Muniment Room, enable a fairly reliable estimate to be made. The weight of the bell as cast by Michael Darby in 1654 was 2 tons 13 cwt. 1 qr. 9 lb. The weight of metal added by Keene in his first two attempts was 2 tons 2 cwt. 2 qrs. 23 lb., and after these two failures caused by not allowing metal enough the imperfect bell was " weighd in peeces " on August 12, 1679. Here is the Treasurer's sum, after the second failure :

	c.	qr.	lb.
Due to Keene			
The imperfect Bell ..	93	0	23
The old bell weighed	53	1	09
So Keene added then	39	3	14
Keene added at last cast	2	3	09
Due to Keene ..	42	2	23

For this metal Keene was paid £199 5s. 10d., that is, tenpence a pound. His total bill in August, 1679, came to £252 9s. 3d. An extra bill for his workmen's charges for " work done at his furnises in Christ Church " includes " For takeing the bell out of the pite, three men one day £3 4s. 8d."

Meanwhile the college bought £348 of bell-metal at London through John Paine, an Oxford brazier, for Keene's third attempt. Unfortunately there is no indication of the quantity used of this London metal. Whatever it was, it was too much, for " the mould burst and the metal ran all over the place." So said Raven. What consternation in Bell Yard ! Surely Keene thought Tom was vile !

His own bill for metal and work paid on January 31, 1680, cost the college another £153 13s. 3d. At tenpence a pound this represents an additional 33 cwt. of metal to the bell. The approximate weight of Great Tom as left by Keene may therefore have been :

	c.	qr.	lb.
Darby's bell ..	53	1	09
Keene's 1st and 2nd casts	42	2	23
Keene's 3rd cast ..	33	0	0
6 tons	9	0	4

As Keene's last bill includes charges for work as well as metal, this estimate is on the high side, but it may be more than balanced by the London metal used. Keene went back to Woodstock a sadder and a richer man by over £400.

By December 17, 1679, the Treasurer had signed Articles with Christopher Hodson of London's leading foundry, to " cast and make a good and sufficient new Bell of seaven foote diameter and dimensions of hight and thicknesse according to the proportions of Bellfounding." His fee was fixed at £180, which was, however, increased by the elated Treasurer to £190 when paid on May 4, 1680. His bill for metal and tin was £78 9s. 6d., and his miscellaneous expenses for such commodities as brick, clay, wax, " rozen," tanne ashes, horse-dung, etc. amounted to £62 0s. 6d. Allowing his metal to be paid for at tenpence a pound, another 16 cwt. 3 qrs. 7 lb. would be added to the bell ; and there was an additional 2 cwt. of metal in his miscellaneous expenses. So if this were all used, Great Tom's weight will be, approximately, 7 tons 7 cwt. 3 qrs. 11 lb. The diameter became 7 ft. 1 in., the height 5¾ ft., and the thickness of the sound bow 6 inches.

For the hoisting of the bell into the newly completed Tom Tower, Wren's mason, Christopher Kempster, and his right-hand man Thomas Robinson, were paid £50. The new clapper—costing £12 12s. 6d.—treated the new Great Tom with respect from the first. But Great Tom did not at once cease to give trouble ; he was somewhat reluctant to take to his new quarters. Hodson had died c. 1687, and in 1692 it was necessary to call in Abraham Rudhall, senior, the prolific Gloucester bell-founder, to re-hang pernickety Tom, a task which kept him and two carpenters busy for ten days. Rudhall's bill of £20 included some amusing phonetic Gloucestershire dialect : " Had for gret tom fife gret pesis of solde that cooms to 7s. 6d."

With the beginning of the eighteenth century, Great Tom's adolescence may be considered to have come to an end. Certainly at this present stage of his career we can no longer say with Corbet : " You ne'er saw prettier baby of his age." Since 1692 he has never cried for a new clapper, and only once—in 1847—has he been rehung.

Tom's voice, however, has not yet really settled down ; his note of B flat booms from a cracked diaphragm ; on the upper surface is a superficial right-angled crack measuring about fifteen inches which may affect the pitch of his note. When he approaches manhood we shall, presumably, hear a still deeper note.

W. G. Hiscock

BOOKS

Moses and Mendelsohn

THREE LECTURES ON ARCHITECTURE. By Eric Mendelsohn. University of California Press. $2.50.

THE *New York Times Magazine* of June 25th, 1944, published an article with the title " Mr. Moses Dissects the Long-Haired Planners." Mr. Moses is New York's Commissioner of Parks, a busy, practical, planning go-getter. He believes that " in municipal planning we must decide between revolution and commonsense—between the subsidized lamas in their remote mountain temples and those who must work in the market place." There is abundant evidence that Mr. Moses has achieved results in the market place. As he characteristically puts it " the fourfold expansion of New York City's recreation system in the last decade and what is planned immediately after the war . . . has not been made by the Vestal Virgins of long-haired planning, but by administrators driving persistently at limited objectives and reaching them." Concrete results are his answer to the critics who brand his planning as tactics rather than strategy.

The " Beiunskis " are his *Bêtes Noires*. " The ' Beiunski,' " he says, " is usually a refugee whose critical faculties outrun his gratitude to the country which has given him a home." The nickname is derived from their habit of saying " Bei Uns, they did it this way." To counter these and other long-term planners he even dresses up the Bolshie scarecrow in its, now rather tattered, red rags, and waves it in the faces of conservatives who may have been misled into thinking the message of Mumford and Uthwatt commonsense. His technique of argument must sound unpleasantly familiar to " Beiunskis " who have recently escaped from countries where similar emotions have debased intellectual discussion. It is a pity that the question was not aired more objectively, but it is perhaps futile to hope that it might have been, in that great country where temple and market place stand so close and yet so clearly apart. The problem of long and short-term planning ; of combining the eyes of the practical visionary with the energetic hands of the local administrator and constructor, is one that taxes the patience and ingenuity of ourselves too—a nation of prize compromisers, who, after years of planning labour, have produced but one Abercrombie.

In the list of illustrious names whose words are quoted to give substance to Mr. Moses's tirade, there is Eric Mendelsohn. His words are quoted from one of three lectures on architecture delivered under the auspices of the School of Architecture of the University of California, which have now been published by the University of California Press. These lectures may well be taken to represent the type of outlook which is Mr. Moses's target. The first, *Architecture in a World Crisis*, surveys the position of architecture and the arts in the period of time immediately preceding and following the Great War of 1914-1918. The second, *Architecture To-day*, is Mr. Mendelsohn's confession of faith in the art of architecture. The third, *Architecture in a Rebuilt World*, tries to combine, imaginatively, " the effective constituents of the past and the necessities of the present into the vision of a plausible and healthy future." All three are furnished with an erudition, brilliantly controlled, and directed to the end of proving the supreme importance of the architect whose " calling predestines him to be the creator of the visible, the man-made world." They express the belief that " out of the great depth of our present " and through a new synthesis (not very clearly defined politically, economically or philosophically) which he believes to be clearly recognizable in true contemporary architecture, a new world is born " which shall live to the great height of a new conception of art, religion and society, will unite art and religion to equal the eternal wonders of the past ; will embrace society with candour, self-respect, and universal

obligations; will protect the individual under the happy shades of health and security—because man will have returned, once more, to the oneness of nature, the secret of creation—the universal rules, from where he started."

A strong case is thus made for to-day's optimists, for those who, in face of widespread physical destruction, of a dangerous transitory phase of partial education, of a retreat from ethical values, and of an unparalleled complexity in human relationships, nevertheless see in science, in art and in philosophy, not only an harmonious pattern and a new faith for world society, but also the likelihood of their early acceptance. There are few who will deny the possibilities of such a new structure for society and faith for living as Mr. Mendelsohn sketches, but many will find it hard to feel the same buoyant optimism with regard to their early emergence in the realm of politics, of economics or of human relationships. Nevertheless for the students to whom these lectures were addressed, and for many of whom a long period of professional strife in the market place is waiting, it must be superbly encouraging to be shown so clear a vision of the temple which enshrines one person's exceptionally ardent faith in their calling.

It is in the consideration of architecture and the architect that Mr. Mendelsohn is at his best. The familiar story of the revolution which has produced the new architecture is retold and revitalized by a rare perception. The unique position of architecture is described and shown as distinct from sculpture, painting or music " because the architect has to deal with both the forces of nature and nature's phenomena." Those qualities are listed without which the architect is not complete, that he should react " *intensively* to the connection of man with life and work . . . *sensitively* on man's relation to a higher plane . . . *socially* on the connection of man to man . . . and *psychologically* on the character of his client; " a quartet before which the most confident of " complete architects " should hesitate and take stock, and which should encourage him, on Mr. Mendelsohn's recommendation " to endow his shrines with sacred timidity." This encouragement is valuable (although it may prove unpopular), because a certain professional arrogance, not entirely absent in these lectures, is evident within architectural and planning spheres, which presents a serious obstacle to the construction of a bridge between temple and market place; between Mr. Moses and Mr. Mendelsohn. However difficult Mr. Moses's particular aggressive arrogance may make it seem, the construction of this bridge is a necessity; without it the realization of a living architecture and a satisfying physical environment in our day is an impossibility.

Finally, concerning the book itself. We have come to expect a lavishness and sometimes even an originality, in recent book productions of the United States, which contrast strongly with our own austerity standards. This one is no exception —although format and typography are far from unusual—an interesting use being made of very small illustrations inserted, appropriately, like lantern slides along one border of the text. Only in very few cases has reduction rendered them meaningless. Their main advantage, which should be to marry the illustration to its reference in the text, has, disappointingly, not been realized.

IAN McCALLUM

A worthwhile Chronicle

ST. MARTIN IN THE FIELDS, New and Old. By Katharine A. Esdaile. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1944. 5s.

MRS. ESDAILE is the one recognized authority on British sculpture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, untiring in her research and always reliable in the communication of her results. St. Martin in the Fields possesses plenty of records referring to lost monuments of Mrs. Esdaile's centuries and, furthermore, drawings by Gibbs, the architect of the church, of ten of the most important of them. This is, it seems, how Mrs. Esdaile came to take a special interest in St. Martin's. The result is this little book, meant—as the foreword says—for the many visitors to the church.

Yet its qualities are not those of the guide-book or the sightseer's souvenir. The chief job of a guide-book is to describe the building which you visit, and a souvenir must be fully illustrated. Mrs. Esdaile's book has only four plates, only a few lines of description of Gibbs's immensely interesting exterior and interior, and nothing at all to make visitors appreciate the æsthetic qualities of the personal style of Gibbs—a curious blend of inherited English Palladian traditions with Roman Baroque innovation learnt from Fontana in Rome.*

The forte of the book is a long, detailed and well-told history of the church. Two-thirds of the book deal with the pre-Gibbs building, the remaining third with 1722 and after. The history is seasoned with such palatable bits as that after the Gordon Riots tradesmen in the parish hung out boards saying " Burnt out from over the way," or that on June 1, 1727, an Italian slid head foremost down a rope, his legs and arms extended, from the top of the steeple over the houses in St. Martin's Lane to the far side of the Mews which stood where now Trafalgar Square is. It is also interesting to learn that Gibbs's whole fee was £632 4s. 6d., as against a total building cost of £33,661 16s. 8d, that two foundation stones were laid, one by the Bishop of Salisbury for the King (whose parish St. Martin's is), the other by the Grand Lodge, that the church was the first in London to introduce electric light (in 1888), and that barbers in the seventeenth century provided not only musical entertainment for their customers (*vide* Pepys) but also bowling greens. There was one in the Covent Garden Piazza and one in Leicester Square.

Such details may in themselves not be of great value, but their accumulation always repays the patient scholar in the end, and there are others in the book which are of far-reaching importance, especially the account of the re-built church of 1544. It shows to the surprise, no doubt, of most readers, that such a post-reformation but pre-Somerset church would still have a rood, carved images, censers, altar linen and rich vestments. All that had apparently been done in the 'thirties was to remove the candles before the statues of saints and cut out of the altar cloths " Certayne Images."

N. PEVSNER

* Who incidentally did not build the facade of St. Peter's, as it is erroneously stated on page 10.

SHORTER NOTICES

BUILDING REGULATION IN NEW YORK CITY. By Joseph D. McGoldrick, Seymour Graubard, and Raymond J. Horowitz. The Commonwealth Fund. $4.50.

The successful post-war reconstruction of our cities and towns will depend in no small measure upon the administrative machine and in particular upon the manner in which planning and building regulation authorities exercise their powers. Adequate arrangements for dealing speedily with proposals for re-development and for securing compliance with special requirements in the construction of buildings will be a matter of first importance in view of the unprecedented volume of such work which will be unleashed as soon as circumstances permit.

All who are associated with such controlling authorities whether as members or officials, and the building public in general, cannot fail to be interested in the above-mentioned study in administrative law and procedure recently published in America. It includes a historical survey, extending through three centuries, of building regulation in New York City—a city which at present requires 10,000 public employees to administer a process which covers all details of the construction and maintenance of more than 670,000 buildings.

The authors have made a close study of the various controlling agencies which have been " created, consolidated, abolished, revised, reorganized and rearranged in endless quest for administrative integrity." They indicate in considerable detail why it was found necessary (mainly owing to conflicting decisions) in 1938 to reduce the number of agencies and to vest a " Building Superintendent " in each of the five boroughs with broad powers; they discuss the advantages or otherwise of the present organization and mention amongst other things, the growing demand for centralisation and uniformity.

It is interesting to note that there are indications of a trend toward placing quasi-official responsibilities upon the licensed persons engaged on construction work and that the Building Code now provides that no building plans may be submitted for approval unless a licensed architect or engineer first certifies that they are in accordance with the law.

A SHORT DICTIONARY OF ARCHITECTURE. By Dora Ware and Betty Beatty. With an Introduction by John Gloag. George Allen and Unwin. 6s.

This little book fills a very real need. What had we to go to? The appendixes to old-fashioned text-books, and besides them only Atkinson's or Parker's Glossaries. Miss Ware and Miss Beatty are much crisper, and the publishers have made their text and pictures easy to handle. Of course every reader will have his private grievances. You may say that a cross-vault should be illustrated, and perhaps a domical vault too, that galilee should be explained, that the definition of basilica is inadequate, that an ambulatory is not "the cloisters surrounding the choir of a church," that the Gothic Revival did not " take place " in the middle of the nineteenth century, and probably many more such things. But that does not materially reduce the value of such a compilation. Mr. Gloag's introduction is the most original part of the book. He succeeds in condensing the history of architecture into eight pages and in doing so is, needless to say, as provocative as ever.

HOW TO STUDY AN OLD CHURCH. By A. Needham. With an Introduction by J. Littlejohns. B. T. Batsford. 6s.

The title-page of this book tells you the surprising fact that for your six shillings you get 450 drawings besides the text. The answer how that is possible, lies in the fact that the technique adopted is that of modern pictorial systems of language-teaching. Each page of text (or nearly) is accompanied by a page with anything up to thirty-five little drawings. Thus you are taken through church and churchyard and learn about graveboards, tracery, fonts, chairs and tables, costume, musical instruments, pews and all the rest. A good idea—only unfortunately done in a drawing technique of fifty or more years ago. The book-jacket is by S. R. Badmin and in a quiet way delightful.

THE FACE OF RUSSIA. By Georges Loukomski. Hutchinson. 12s. 6d.

This book deals with Russia as a whole, not with Russian architecture or scenery specially. The majority of the 223 illustrations—an amazingly great number for the price of the book—is devoted to the Russians and their work. Readers of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW will be specially interested in the pictures of Baroque architecture. There seems to be plenty of *Cubist Folk Art* about. Two examples are illustrated on the next page. Wall-paintings of the same period are shown of a convincing surrealism and modern wall-paintings curiously reminiscent of the Sienese Trecento. Modern architecture is shown regardless of its brand of style (see the photographs below). Does the author who cannot have seen many of these buildings conceal his preferences, or has he none? His choice of eighteenth and early nineteenth century photographs is especially careful; no wonder, considering his special field of studies. Of Russian Victorian architecture, which is supposed to be as wild as Russian Baroque, we do not, alas, see more than one building in the background of Fig. 31. The most serious snag about the book, however, is the lack of any notes on the pictures, except for a few rather brief captions in a stop-press style (" By Charles Cameron, Scott. Archit.") What does it help readers to see *View of the River Kama*, if they don't know where it is, or *Painting at Rostov*, *Church of St. John Baptist*, if they don't know when it was done? An index would also be welcome in a book of this kind.

ANTHOLOGY

Palazzo Rothschild or City v. West-end

What is most striking in London is its vastness. It is the illimitable feeling that gives it a special character. London is not grand. It possesses only one of the qualifications of a grand city, size ; but it wants the equally important one, beauty. It is the union of these two qualities that produced the grand cities—the Romes, the Babylons, the hundred portals of the Pharaohs ; multitudes and magnificence ; the millions influenced by art. Grand cities are unknown since the beautiful has ceased to be the principle of invention. Paris, of modern capitals, has aspired to this character ; but, if Paris be a beautiful city, it certainly is not a grand one ; its population is too limited, and, from the nature of their dwellings, they cover a comparatively small space. Constantinople is picturesque ; nature has furnished a sublime site, but it has little architectural splendour, and you reach the environs with a fatal facility. London overpowers us with its vastness . . .

But, . . . though London is vast, it is very monotonous. All those new districts that have sprung up within the last half-century, the creatures of our commercial and colonial wealth—it is impossible to conceive anything more tame, more insipid, more uniform. Pancras is like Mary-le-bone, Mary-le-bone is like Paddington ; all the streets resemble each other, you must read the names of the squares before you venture to knock at a door. This amount of building capital ought to have produced a great city. What an opportunity for Architecture suddenly summoned to furnish habitations for a population equal to that of the city of Bruxelles, and a population, too, of great wealth. Mary-le-bone alone ought to have produced a revolution in our domestic architecture. It did nothing. It was built by Act of Parliament. Parliament prescribed even a façade. It is Parliament to whom we are indebted for your Gloucester Places, and Baker Streets, and Harley Streets, and Wimpole Streets, and all those flat, dull, spiritless streets, all resembling each other, like a large family of plain children, with Portland Place and Portman Square for their respectable parents. The influence of our parliamentary government upon the fine arts is a subject worth pursuing. The power that produced Baker Street as a model for street architecture in its celebrated Building Act, is the power that prevented Whitehall from being completed, and which sold to foreigners all the pictures which the King of England had collected to civilize his people.

Where London becomes more interesting is Charing Cross. Looking to Northumberland House, and turning your back upon Trafalgar Square, the Strand is perhaps the finest street in Europe, blending the architecture of many periods ; and its river ways are a peculiar feature and rich with associations. Fleet Street, with its Temple, is not unworthy of being contiguous to the Strand. The fire of London has deprived us of the delight of a real old quarter of the City ; but some bits remain, and everywhere there is a stirring multitude, and a great crush and crash of carts and wains. The Inns of Court, and the quarters in the vicinity of the port, Thames Street, Tower Hill, Billingsgate, Wapping, Rotherhithe, are the best parts of London ; they are full of character : the buildings bear a nearer relation to what the people are doing than in the more polished quarters.

The old merchants of the times of the first Georges were a fine race. They knew their position, and built up to it. While the territorial aristocracy, pulling down their family hotels, were raising vulgar streets and squares upon their site, and occupying themselves one of the new tenements, the old merchants filled the straggling lanes, which connected the Royal Exchange with the port of London, with mansions which, if not exactly equal to the palaces of stately Venice, might at least vie with many of the hotels of old Paris. Some of these, though the great majority have been broken up into chambers and counting-houses, still remain intact.

In a long, dark, narrow, crooked street, which is still called a lane, and which runs from the south side of the street of the Lombards towards the river, there is one of these old houses of a century past, and which, both in its original design and present condition, is a noble specimen of its order. A pair of massy iron gates of elaborate workmanship separate the street from its spacious and airy courtyard, which is formed on either side by a wing of the mansion, itself a building of deep red brick, with a pediment, and pilasters, and copings of stone. A flight of steps leads to the lofty and central doorway ; in the middle of the court there is a small garden plot, inclosing a fountain, and a very fine plane tree.

The stillness, doubly effective after the tumult just quitted, the lulling voice of the water, the soothing aspect of the quivering foliage, the noble building, and the cool and capacious quadrangle—the aspect even of those who enter, and frequently enter, the precinct, and who are generally young men, gliding in and out, earnest and full of thought—all contribute to give to this locality something of the classic repose of a college, instead of a place agitated with the most urgent interests of the current hour ; a place that deals with the fortunes of kings and empires and regulates the most important affairs of nations, for it is the counting-house in the greatest of modern cities of the most celebrated of modern financiers.

BENJAMIN DISRAELI, EARL OF BEACONSFIELD (*Tancred*, 1847).

MARGINALIA

Duncan Sandys

We have a new Minister of Works. His age is thirty-six ; that is promising. He is Mr. Churchill's son-in-law ; that is very promising indeed. And he has proved an active, even impetuous politician. So we are looking forward to great things in housing for 1945.

The first thing that has happened is that the Portal house has been shelved. Three other types are, however, permitted and will be with us this year: the Uniseco and the Tarran houses and the new, much more promising, Arcon Mark V.

Our Sir William

It is gratifying to those of us who are anxious to see planning done in accordance with (or beyond) the Barlow, Scott and Uthwatt Reports, that Sir William Beveridge in his new book *Full Employment in a Free Society* is staunchly on our side. This is, for instance, what he says on the subject of the Barlow Report :

> For an effective attack upon mass unemployment, as much as for an effective attack on the evils of urban congestion, control over the location of industry is indispensable. This control must be both negative, prohibiting undesirable location, and positive, encouraging desirable location. The control must be exercised ultimately by a central authority, making a national plan for the whole country but using local authorities for the local execution of the plan and the adjustment of the plan to local conditions.

Sir Giles, Sir Charles and the Commons

Sir Giles Scott's design for the new House of Commons has been published in the newspapers. Sir Giles—and Dr. Faber for heating and ventilation problems—were chosen by the Select Committee in co-operation with the Minister of Works. The Committee, following the very clearly and very publicly expressed views of the Prime Minister, asked for designs keeping the present intimate and traditional style of debate, and the present dimensions too. Sir Charles Reilly is very grieved by these terms of reference. In an article in *The Evening Standard* of Nov. 16 he asks for " 20th century scientific architecture " instead, meaning probably what Sir Giles in his report called " modernist architecture in its present state," and dismissed as " quite unsuitable." Sir Giles defends himself, however, against reactionarism and emphasizes that no attempt has been made to imitate the old woodwork and stonework. Sir Charles replies that the " old fancy dress " had at least " a good deal of . . . full-blooded Victorian exuberance," while the new is only " a paler edition " of the old. So these are the two fronts at present. Neither quite sees what is the real solution to this intractable problem: to keep the character of the accommodation as established by the longest parliamentary tradition on which any nation in the world can look back, but to express that character in contemporary and in English (that is informal) terms.

Saving the Ruins

Work for the good cause is going on. *The Times* had a letter on November 25 in which Lord David Cecil replies to the recent interim report of the Bishop of London's Commission on the City Churches. The report does not take notice of the suggestion to keep some of the churches as picturesque ruins and war memorials, in spite of the strong backing which this best of all suggestions has found. It recommends that all churches not destroyed beyond hope of restoration should be restored, and the others—about eight or nine in all—should either be replaced by church

institutes and social centres under church guidance or sold to equip from the proceeds the institutes and increase the emoluments of the parishes affected by the scheme.

There is no reference in all this to the æsthetic questions involved, and Lord David Cecil reintroduces them by writing:

> The roofless colonnades and broken cornices of the City churches have still a fragmentary beauty about them that strangely stirs the heart. They stand out against the background of modern London as picturesquely as does the ruined temple of Jupiter against that of modern Athens: and, surrounded by lawns and softened perhaps by a trail of creeper, would provide a delightful sanctuary where the wayfarer of the future might pause amid the rush of the metropolis to meditate for a moment on the heroic spirit of his forefathers.

The Future of the Clarendon Hotel

The Undergraduate Representative Council pleads that the Clarendon Hotel at Oxford should be spared by Woolworth's. The war has, it seems, postponed the issue. If it is not too late, let all bodies concerned, led by the National Trust, the National Buildings Record and the Georgian Group join in. The Georgian Group has already put up a good fight for the Clarendon when the building was sold before the war. A new letter has now come out in *The Times*. Surely, Oxford cannot afford to lose the Clarendon.

Planning and the Forces in Palestine

Letters have reached England about a small show got up for the Army Educational Corps in Palestine, apparently with no financial means at all—night and Sunday work of sheer enthusiasm: posts standing in oil cans and painted red, panels of millboard with coloured strips and rope. The captions and explanations are good stuff, intelligently and knowledgably written, and all the illustration material was cut out of *Living in Cities* and similar easily get-at-able publications, and arranged in a cheerful montage manner. The *spiritus rector* was Lieut. A. B. R. Fairclough of the Army Printing and Stationery Services. It is good to see that as a result of his effort he was transferred to the Army Educational Corps.

Brazil Sets Examples

A selection from the photographs of new Brazilian buildings which made the March, 1944, issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW has been shown at Burlington House together with 168 paintings and drawings by Brazilian artists. These are to be sold for the R.A.F. Benevolent Fund. The gift is remarkable especially in that, although presented with all due official blessings, it is strictly modern in spirit. Not one work is included that would normally find its way into the hallowed halls of the Royal Academy. Somehow it is difficult to imagine that such a gift handed over by British authorities to a foreign country would be anything like as uncompromising. A few names especially worth looking for are: Burle-Marx, Da Silva, Gross, Guignard, Haberfeld, Portinari.

Colour in the Home

This is the title of a folder issued by the British Colour Council. Its purpose is to show to whomever it concerns complete colour schemes of interior decoration, say cream ceiling, buff walls, rust skirtings, a dark mushroom floor and sand dado and doors. The colours are marked with B.C.C. numbers. There are printed notes with them, elementary explanation which will be useful to housing authorities as well as to manufacturers who want guidance in the production of coloured materials. Remarks include such advice as that surfaces in a passage should be easily cleaned, that decoration should be considered in conjunction with the prevailing light in a room, that colours in a bedroom should look well in daylight and electric light, etc.

National Buildings Record, 1943-1944

The Third Annual Report proudly mentions that the Treasury Grant has gone up by fifty per cent., and that considerable sums have been given by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Pilgrim Trust. The Warburg Institute has photographed for the N.B.R. Greenwich Hospital, Bridgewater House, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and Christ Church, Spitalfields. The Scottish Royal Commission has at last decided to help in the N.B.R.'s work. Of measured drawings not very much could, owing to war conditions, be done, but photographic accessions of the year amounted to nearly 45,000. The lists of buildings yet to be recorded are growing apace.

Edward Johnston

Edward Johnston has died at the age of seventy-two, the greatest British typographer of his generation. THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW pointed out in 1942 that by his development of the Johnston Sans for Frank Pick and the L.P.T.B. in 1915-16 he started that revival of sans-serif types which, after the war, changed the appearance of modern printing on the Continent, and, by Eric Gill's adoption and adaptation of it for the Monotype Corporation, changed the appearance of English printing, public and private, more thoroughly than any one type had done for a hundred years or more. Of Johnston's exquisite penmanship nothing need here be said.

Well Walk

The Borough Council of Hampstead proposes to pull down Wingfield House,

[continued on page lvi

No. 9, Well Walk, Hampstead ; to be pulled down by the Borough Council.

continued from page liv]

Weatherall House, Nos. 7 and 9, Well Walk, and Nos. 7, 9, 11, 13 and 17, New End Square to build flats "which would harmonize in design and character" (Mr. S. B. Morgan, Chairman of the local Housing Committee in *The Times*, November 6). Nos. 7 and 9, Well Walk are the only remaining parts of the Hampstead Assembly Rooms, and delightful cottages they are—see the photograph by G. Wren Howard on this page. May it not be too late to prevent this act of destruction.

Kharkov Restored

The population of Kharkov has gone down from 960,000 to 200,000. But another 150,000 will, by the end of this year, probably have returned. The worst damage to buildings was, of course, done when the Germans knew that they were retreating for good. That was in August, 1943. Since then architects have been working on new layout and restoration. The layout was complicated by the fact that a good deal of Kharkov had already been replanned by earlier Soviet architects. Its centre was a group of two squares, one circular with a diameter of 360 metres, the other adjacent and rectangular. The new plans are more in sympathy with the old town of Kharkov than with the Early Soviet one ; for A. J. Dimitriev, the architect in charge of Kharkov, says : "Functionalism in architecture has gone out of date." So the Early Soviet parts, huge as they are, are going to be left alone "as typical of a bygone stage." But is the rond-point, if 1,200 foot diameter can be called a point, really a monument of functionalism ? Oh, Ecole des Beaux Arts, thy sins will find thee out.

William Wilson Wurster

Mr. Wurster, the new professor of architecture in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, wishes us to point out that not he but Vernon De Mars designed the cafeteria at Vallejo, illustrated August, 1944, page 41, that the Stran Steel houses, page 55, are those which he designed for Vallejo, and that this Vallejo project of his (called, in fact, Carquinez Heights to distinguish it from others at Vallejo) is by no means carelessly or thoughtlessly planned. It certainly is not ; it was neither Mr. Sheppard's nor the REVIEW's intention that it should be regarded as such. "Every house," Mr. Wurster writes, "is arranged to have east and west sun, every house is arranged to have one side free of the violent wind which comes up every afternoon, and practically every house has a wonderful view either over the water or the hills to the east. It is a much sought after project, and only recently there was a survey in collaboration with one of the foundations which voted this the *best* of the temporary projects in which to live (many projects over the U.S. were visited)."

It is good to hear that ; all the same the photographs published by the REVIEW and in the States do look bleak and not very lovable. Otherwise, the detailed illustrations of the project in *California Arts and Architecture* fully confirm Mr. Wurster's points.

B.E.D.A.

B.E.D.A. stands for British Electrical Development Association. This body, like so many others, has worked during the war on preparing the ground for post-war improvements. One result of their work has now been brought out as a booklet. It is the complete design and equipment of four all-electric kitchens—two for houses and two for flats—all suitable for the requirements of housing authorities. On the panel of advisers appear the names of Mr. Gibberd, Mr. Howard Robertson, and Mr. de Soissons. Full-size models of the kitchens will be on show very soon.

The Building Illustrated

SERVICES CLUB IN LONDON

Architect : Misha Black (Design Research Unit).

Associated Architects : Bronek Katz, Kenneth Bayes.

The general contractors were J. P. Williams, Ltd. Principal sub-contractors were as follows : F. W. Clifford, Ltd., joinery ; Stucco, Ltd., plasterwork ; Strand Electric Co., Ltd., electrical contractors ; Benham & Sons, kitchen equipment, heating and ventilation ; J. F. E. Bartlett & Sons, Ltd., kitchen equipment ; Crittall Manufacturing Co., Ltd., windows ; Armstrong Cork Co., cork ; Korkoid Decorative Floors, Ltd., linoleum ; Art Pavements, Ltd., terrazzo ; Carter & Co., Ltd., wall tiling ; A. J. Binns, Ltd., ironmongery ; R. Fox, Ltd., map mural ; Piggott Bros., & Co., Ltd., settee cushions and flags ; Accordo Blinds, Ltd., blinds ; Harker Bros., mural in snack bar ; J. Westby & Co., signwriting.