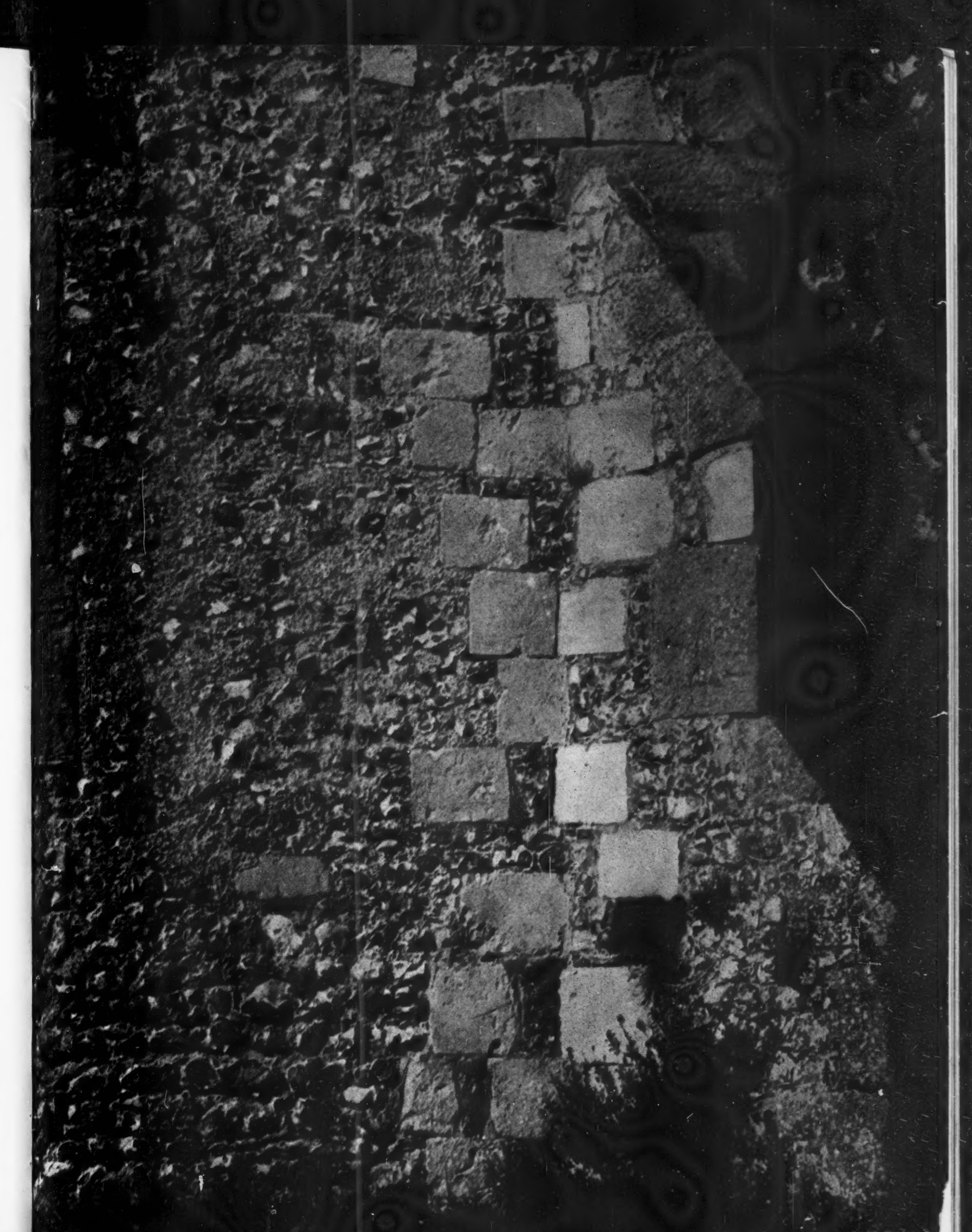




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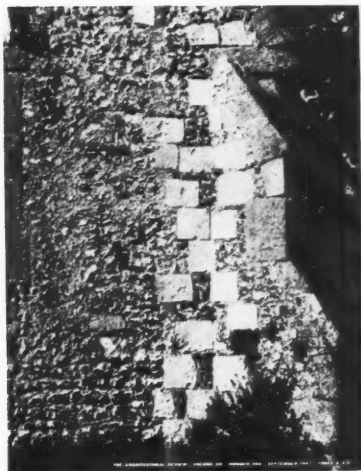
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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

VOLUME CII NUMBER 609

September 1947



The Cover is a detail of Hamsey Church photographed by John Piper, who, on pages 85-94 of this number, writes on the subject of "Pleasing Decay." The special quality imparted to old buildings by time and weather has long received the attention of romantic artists, and is fairly generally appreciated by the ordinary spectator. But hitherto the role which pleasing decay should have in relation to visual planning has never been properly considered; indeed, it has scarcely been recognized that it has a role at all. John Piper's article discusses this question and the correlative ones of how pleasing decay may be preserved or cultivated.

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- 74 The Reality and the Dream
- 75 The Significance of Paul Nash by Myfanwy Evans
- 81 Four Power Stations: architects, Farmer and Dark
- 81 Power Station at Stourport
- 82 Power Station at Hayle
- 83 Power Station at Llynfi
- 84 Power Station at Little Barford
- 85 Pleasing Decay by John Piper
- 95 House at Beaconsfield: architect, June Park
- 97 A Model Village in Upper Egypt by Raymond Mortimer
- 100 The Decoration of Food by Barbara Jones

BOOKS

- 103 Lavedan Continued by Nikolaus Pevsner
Review of 'Histoire de L'Urbanisme: Renaissance et Temps Modernes' by Pierre Lavedan
- 103 Planning the Survey by Aileen Tatton Brown
Review of 'County Town: a Civic Survey for the Planning of Worcester' by Janet Glaisyer, T. Brennan, W. Ritchie and P. Sargent Florence
- 103 First Principles by Lionel Brett
Review of 'Towards a New Architecture' by Le Corbusier
- 103 Plastics by Grace Lovat Fraser
Review of 'Plastics in the World of Tomorrow' by Captain Burr W. Leyson
- 104 The Need for Figures by Ruth Glass
Review of 'Estimating Housing Needs' by Alexander Block
- 104 Mainly Anglo-American by Marcus Whiffen
Review of 'The Mansions of Virginia, 1706-1776' by Thomas Tileston Waterman
- 104 Shorter Notices
- 104 Other Books Received

ANTHOLOGY

- 105 Against Restoration: 1841
From 'Transactions of the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture'

MARGINALIA

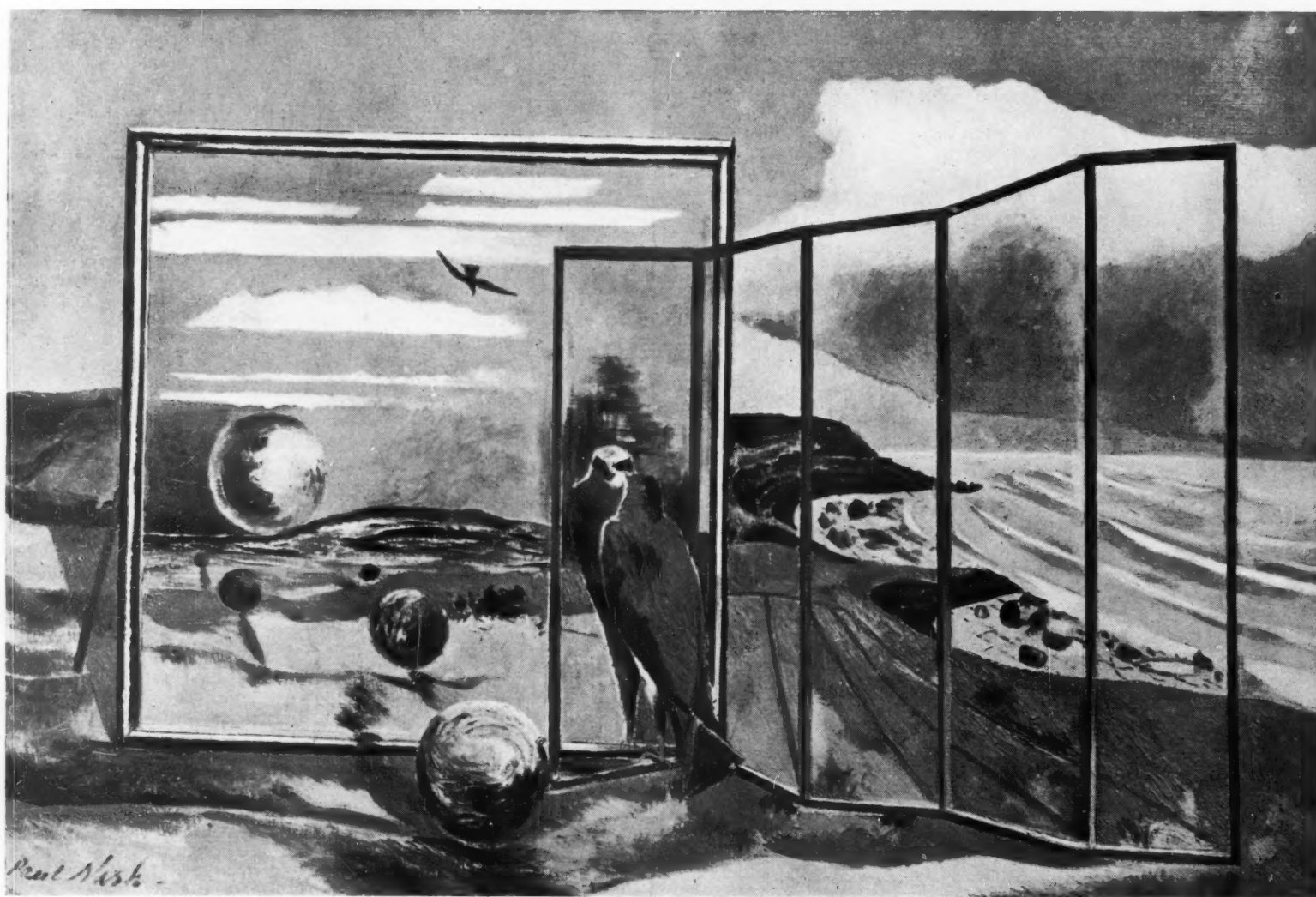
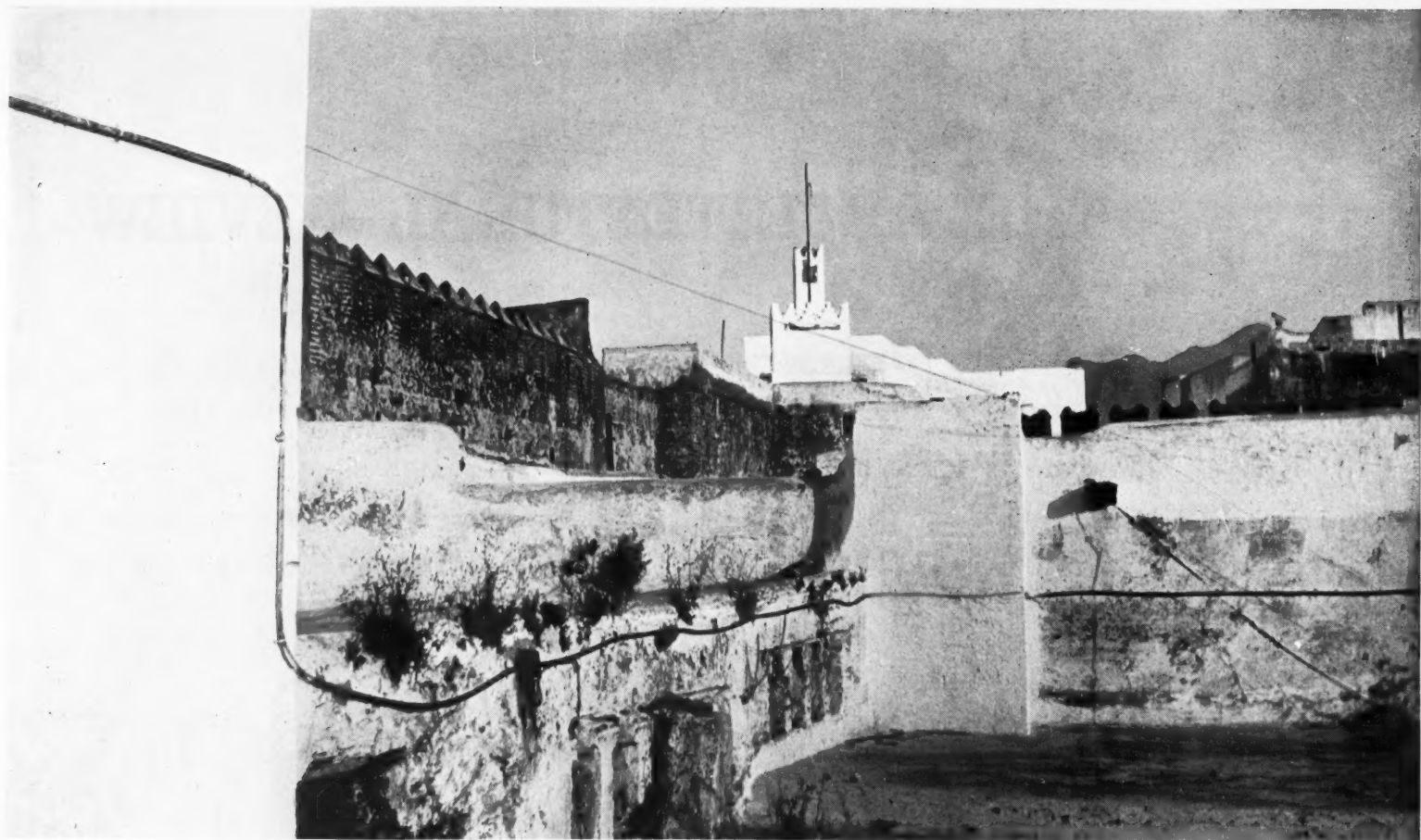
- 105 Translations

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THREE SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE



the reality and the dream

Above: North African City, by Paul Nash, photograph. Below: "Landscape from a Dream," by Paul Nash, oil.

The Significance of Paul Nash

by Myfanwy Evans

IT is impossible not to think metaphorically of Paul Nash's work since its often delicate and unassuming appearance is the expression of so much poetical intensity: impossible not to be a little fanciful because Paul Nash was fanciful—a Merlin of art. He thought out his activities with almost a pedantry of magic formulas, conscious all the time of the sleight of hand and thought needed to reduce his ambitious sense of the cosmos, as the sky is reduced to the eye's iris or the wing of a Holly Blue butterfly, to his own comparatively unambitious talent. But in his best work the sleight of hand is not obvious and the delicate result gains strength and conviction in its dilating, imaginative expansion out towards the universe again (the universe always rather than the universal).

Paul Nash was born in 1889. His family was prosperous English professional—the Navy and the Law. Neither following suited him, and though he went first to a boys' naval training college and then to St. Paul's School, in 1907 he determined to be an artist. He went to the Chelsea Polytechnic and afterwards to the Slade. As a young man he indulged in a certain amount of deliberate vision-making; "I imagined a wide slow-moving river, flowing between fields of poppies and orchard trees. The surface of the stream was covered with human heads upturned in sleep, carried along gently by the tide. The fields were being scythed by winged reapers, and above the distant hills a huge dolorous face appeared, with hair streaming across the sky and threading with the feathers of its flat outstretched wings. . . ." "In those days I knew nothing of the sea or the magical implication of aerial perspective across miles of shore, where the waves alternately devour and restore the land." Though this was the genuine youthful exercise of a poetical nature it was not his kind of imagination: he was far more akin to the creator of a planetarium than he was to the writer of the Book of Revelations. But he had a special and personal kind of vision which was the most exciting thing about him. While he was discovering what it was he schooled himself through a straightforward landscape art (that he never quite forswore) and claimed his right, and the right of other artists, to have a hand in the visual appearance of the modern world.

It is characteristic of his romantic view of himself that he should say of his early transition from making "visionary" drawings to making landscapes: "I emerged into open spaces. Led by the voice of *Lavengro*, I followed on to the heath;" a book was his companion even then. And that early landscape was indeed a heath; a heath with, in the middle of it, an elaborate tangled forest in black and grey, whose trees stretched wide branches against black skies. It had something of the character of a pre-Raphaelite wood and also of those areas round Aldershot that are less army-ridden. There were at any rate pine trees and a low horizon, and there was a vaguely supernatural atmosphere. Very soon this was succeeded by an elm-branched landscape, or by beeches surrounding still Chiltern hill pools. His first show was held at the Carfax Gallery in 1912 and was successful enough for him to be asked to exhibit with the New English Art Club. But when during the first years of the great war he did sketches and

water-colours in what time he could spare from his job as an officer in France, it was to the pre-New English Art Club work that he returned. That heathy landscape, now shattered, appears and the pine forest is there too, riven by war; shell-holes staringly reflect a hard sky under the splintered branches, where before pools had reflected the stars. When he was invalidated home in 1917 a show of these spare-time works was held at the Goupil Galleries and he was at once made an official war artist. (He was made a war artist too in the second world war, though during the period between the two wars he had latterly been forced to live in extreme retirement because of his health.)

After the 1918 war the elm-branched landscape might perhaps have re-established itself once more, but with peace there also came illness and it must have been then that Paul Nash first became fascinated with the window motive that appears again and again in the paintings belonging to the ten years following the end of that war. An open French window is very nearly a complete symbol for his work and attitude. The window, with its frame, corresponding to that ruler-and-compass rigidity, that strength through diagram that was so nearly a weakness of his more consciously modern work; the room inside, confined, known, man-made, playing a kind of cat's-cradle with the land- or sky-scape outside; now drawn into infinity itself by the outside, now arbitrarily confining and limiting nature by the frame of the window. The curious thing about his genius was that for us, as well as for him, in however faint a way, a comparatively simple picture of a room, a window and a piece of outside the window, suggests, without pretension, the ceaseless paradoxical game between man and nature. This was stated at once more clearly and more poetically in paintings where the window became a scaffolding, or a conservatory or a pierced façade. And these architectural objects, structural rather than sculptural, continually inviting and rejecting nature were especially exciting and suggestive for the young architects of the twenties and thirties. For them Paul Nash seemed to express, pictorially, and with extraordinary imaginative power, something of their own vision, a vision as yet uncertain and clouded. Here was an uncompromising girder-like rigidity that was yet fluid with the interplay of air and light. That series of pictures of which the *Soul Visiting the Mansions of the Dead* (one of the illustrations for Sir Thomas Browne's *Urne Buriall*) is perhaps the most moving example were expressive of a possible modern

PAUL NASH,
1889-1946

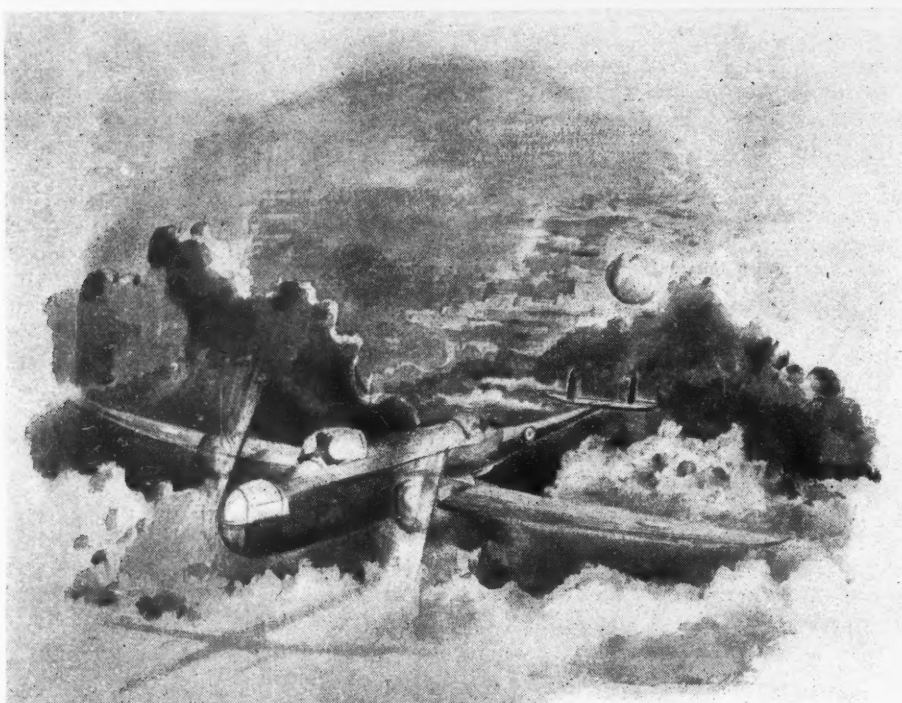


the reality and the dream

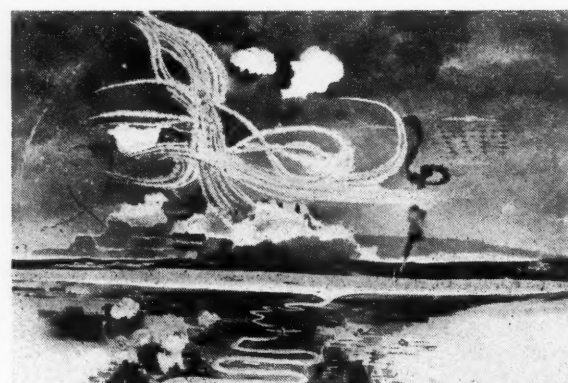
To some artists is given the ability to make manifest the super-real through the forms of everyday life; to others to reveal the pervasive strangeness of the actual. A few rare spirits have had both faculties, and among them was Paul Nash. Of the two works reproduced opposite, the lower, a painting, reveals the first at work; by imaginative juxtaposition, familiar objects are filled with new meaning, while the photograph above shows that the same effects are to be found in the real world for those that have the eyes to see them (consider the extraordinary effect of the piping). If architecture is to be revitalized as an imaginative art, a feeling for the strangeness of *things* such as Nash possessed must become a more common part of the architect's equipment than it is today.



TWO WARS



Upper left : *Sunrise, Inverness Copse, Zillebecke District* (pastel, 1918). Lower left : *Moonlight Voyage, Hampden flying above the clouds* (oil, 1940). Upper right : *The Mule Track* (oil, 1918). Lower right : *Battle of Britain, August-October, 1940* (oil, 1941). (All in the Imperial War Museum collection).



English architectural outlook. One of the great difficulties in following the new European architecture was that its urban, forward-looking romance was inclined to be too theoretical, too doctrinaire for our shifting climate and intellectually unimpressible population. Paul Nash like a fish could move up, down and sideways and his fluid yet mathematical organization of space seemed to give poetical justification for the hope that the new architecture could have beauties, different, but just as alluring as the mellow beauties of the architecture of the past.

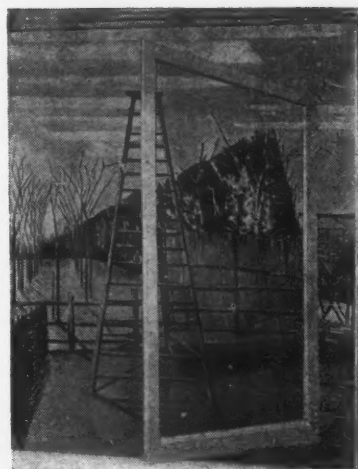
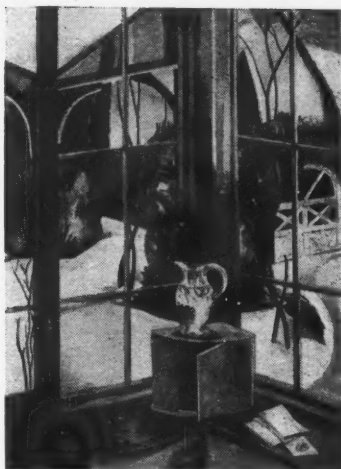
More encouraging even than all this was the fact that Nash was one of the very few artists who did not reject the architectural present. He was excited by it and used all his liveliness, wit and energy in encouraging it. He made public his affinities in his active association with Unit One : a group of artists, sculptors and architects who held an exhibition and published a book insisting on their mutual dependence.

Though in some senses Paul Nash was more self-sufficient

than many other painters, he had always been highly conscious of himself as a man of his own generation and aware of his capacity to be of practical use to it. He determined that neither he nor his fellow-artists should be rejected as impractical and insistently tackled the problem of designers in industry. The shouting and the cheers for artists during the forties have temporarily obscured the memory of the appalling struggle that they had to get taken at all seriously in the 'twenties and 'thirties. Paul Nash with his urbane, intelligent pigheadedness did more than anyone to gain some small foothold. Between 1920 and 1930 he had done several textiles for Footprints and for Cresta (which later absorbed Footprints) and he had had, in 1928, an article on his furnishing textiles in *THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW*, but he had still done nothing for a large commercial firm, and it still remained for him to persuade them that, with an intelligent understanding of the processes of reproduction, an artist could be as much value as a designer for the commercial market as he could for an exclusive, almost

WINDOWS AND LANDSCAPES

Upper left: *Window*, Iver Heath (oil, 1928, collection British Broadcasting Corporation). Upper right: *The Month of March* (oil, 1929, collection Felix A. Salmon). Below: *The Shore* (oil, 1923, collection City Art Gallery, Leeds).



"arty" market supplied by firms like Footprints. *Room and Book*, published in 1932, was a courteous cry of rage and despair—and as cries of rage and despair are often exaggerated so Nash's judgment here is affected by his need to be heard. There is a suggestion of *modernismus* about it, because, in order to make his point—that in the kind of world modern man was making for himself, a world in which people of taste and sensibility might find themselves occupying one room, instead of an elegant mansion, the modern artist ought to be consulted and used—he is forced to put forward the modern "thing," as he would have called it, rather more brutally than was natural to him: and he set up a modernistic book-end, for instance, as spiritually superior to a Victorian antlered chandelier. It had to be Modern against stuffy, new against dusty, the sun-room against the attic, but all Paul Nash's natural instinct was, and later he acted on it, to hurl the entire contents of the attic into the sun-room and there brood on such strange encounters as he found at leisure. He never,

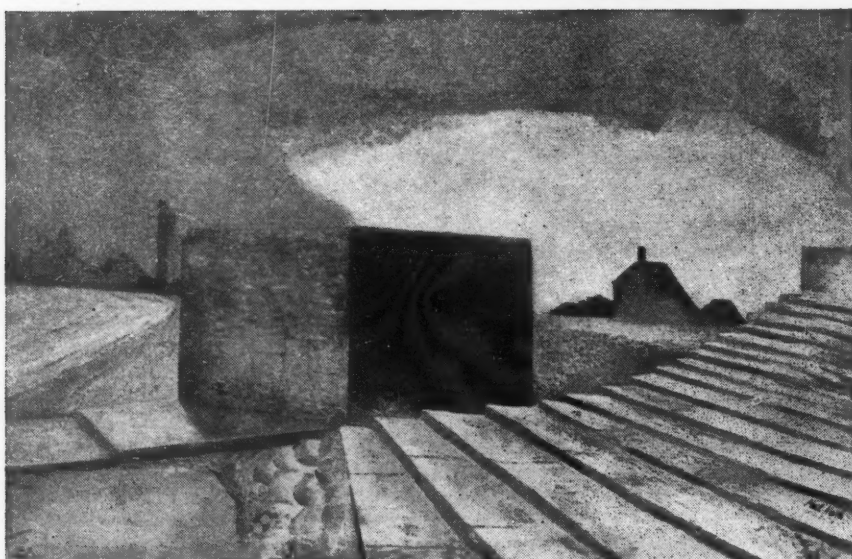
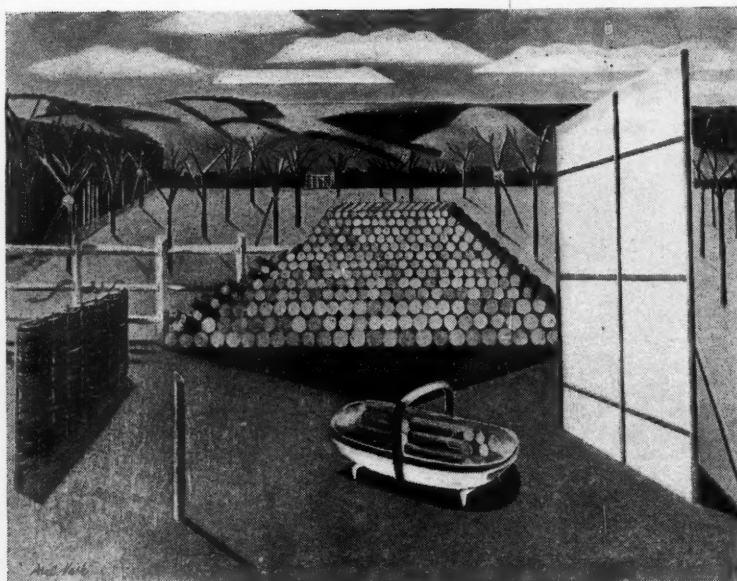
in his painting, subscribed to the entirely abstract.

His output of commercial design was not large, as can be seen from the catalogue of his design show: a textile for The Old Bleach Linen Co., a textile for the Calico Printers Association, another for the L.P.T.B., a rug for the Edinburgh weavers, and so on. But his influence was extremely pervasive, both on artists whom he taught that their commercial work should not be entirely separate from their painting, but should grow out of it and develop alongside it, and upon the more enlightened business men, employing artists, whom he taught to respect an artist's intelligence and accept more readily his flights of fancy. In all this his teaching at the Royal College of Art, at two different periods, in the mid-twenties and the early thirties, gave him the dignity of position (always important to the hesitant business man) and the opportunity to get at emerging generations.

I find Paul Nash's commercial work not quite as exciting as it ought to be because, by its nature, it cannot contain the

Upper left: *To the Memory of Brunel* (water colour, 1938, collection British Council). Upper right: *Landscape at Iden* (oil, 1930, collection Tate Gallery). Lower left: *Dymchurch Seps* (oil, 1923, collection National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa). Lower right: *The Forest* (oil, 1932, Leicester Galleries).

LANDSCAPES AND TREES

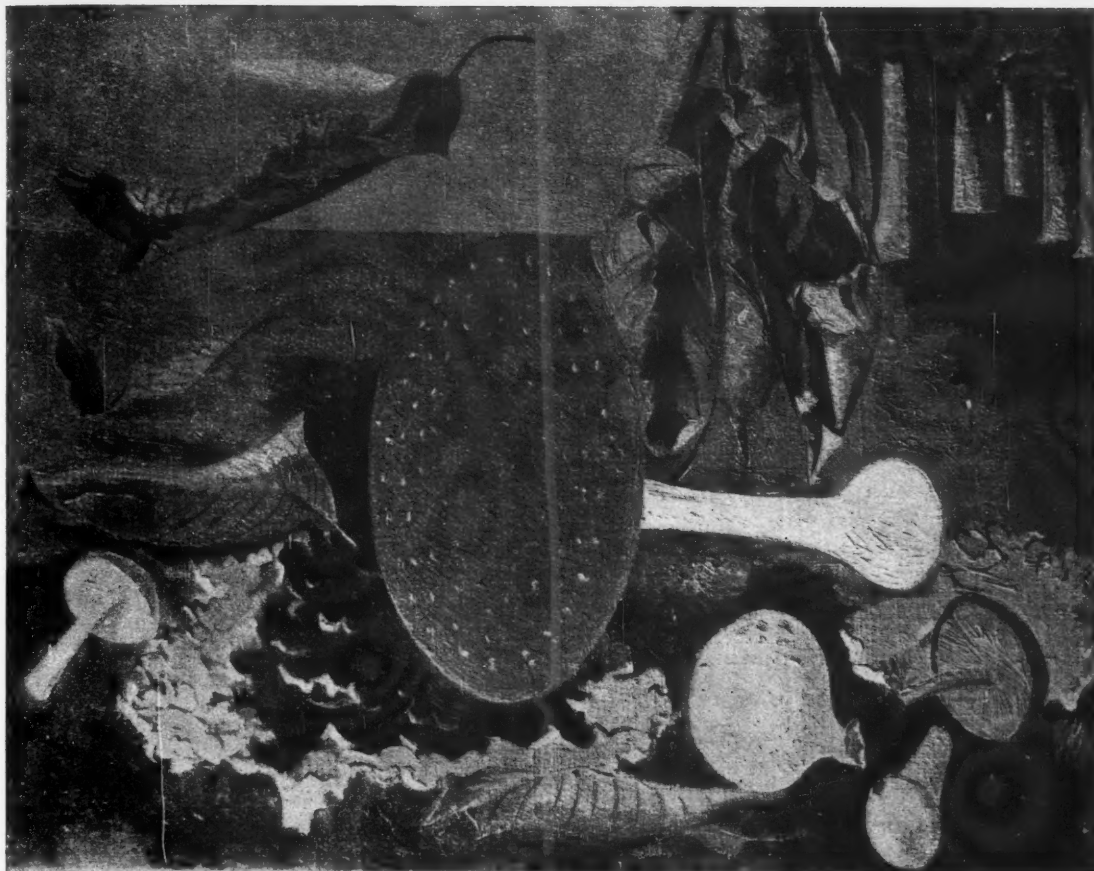


most important characteristic of his work. He treated painting rather as Empson treated poetry in "Seven Types of Ambiguity"—his slightest water-colour, at least after about 1930, is Hydra-headed. Furnishing, or dress-materials, or glasses, or even glass bathrooms (he designed one for Tilly Losch) cannot partake of this elaborate ambiguity—only Maria Edgeworth's Mr. Soho, furnishing for the glory of a single night, might achieve it. But where he was able to indulge this essential side of his genius was in book illustration, and it is typical of him that he should have chosen, in 1932—just when he was developing his elaborate play with objects—to illustrate Sir Thomas Browne.

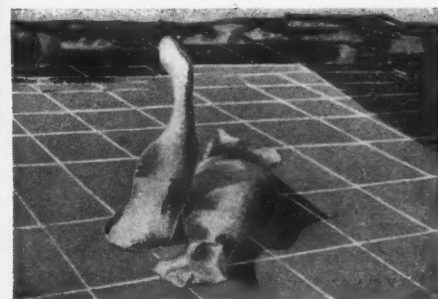
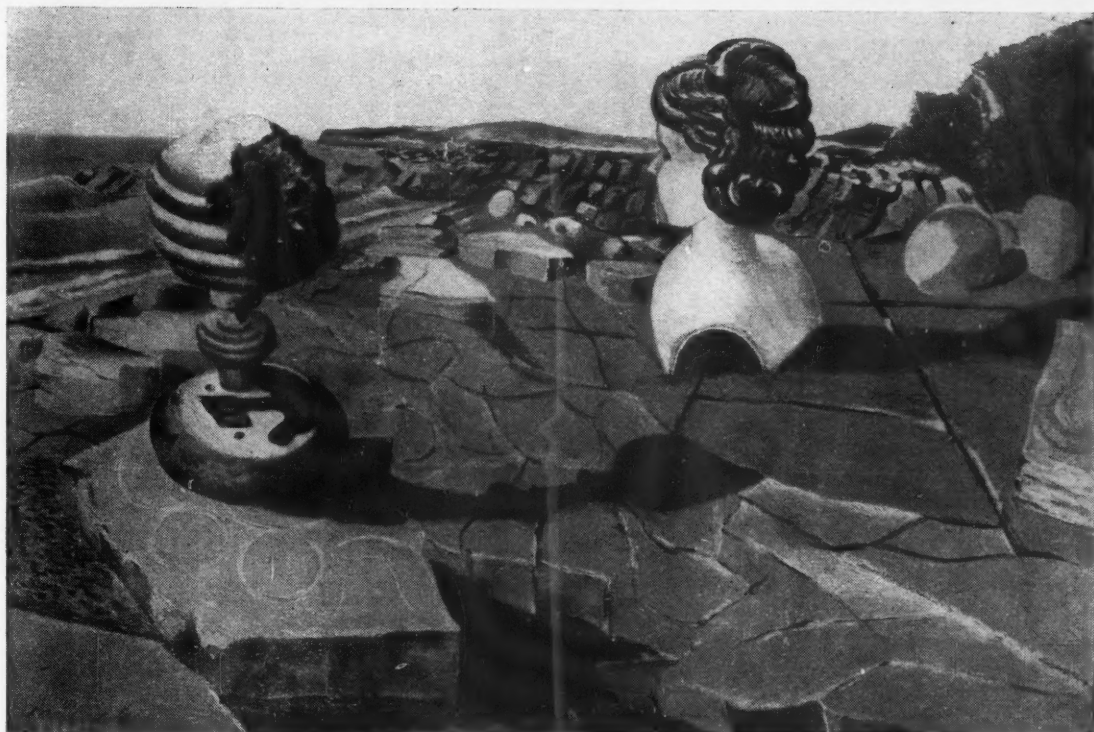
It was about the beginning of the 'thirties that Paul Nash began that symbolic representation of objects that have an inner personality, a presence and a character other than an immediately observable one. This private exploring of a new country led him to welcome, almost uproariously, the advent

of Surrealism in England and to take part in the Surrealist exhibition in 1936. But his was so extremely a personal pre-occupation and so extremely English in its nature that it was not really susceptible to the curiously rigid international code of official surrealism. And so Paul Nash pursued his own way, sympathetic to, but not attached to the Surrealists.

Objects and places: those two ordinary nouns would have to be stretched too far if they were to include all his ideas. The chief landmarks on the course have remained much the same, but he has changed the starting-point often; now using a likely object in a likely place to heighten an unlikely one that neighbours it; now depopulating the scene, laying it quite bare, and then re-peopling it. The object in Paul Nash's hands is never *only* the observed object in its expected surroundings. It can look as if it had been hired, or left stranded, or bought at a jumble sale or at Fortnum and Mason's; but it will look more like itself than ever, and in



THE OBJECT



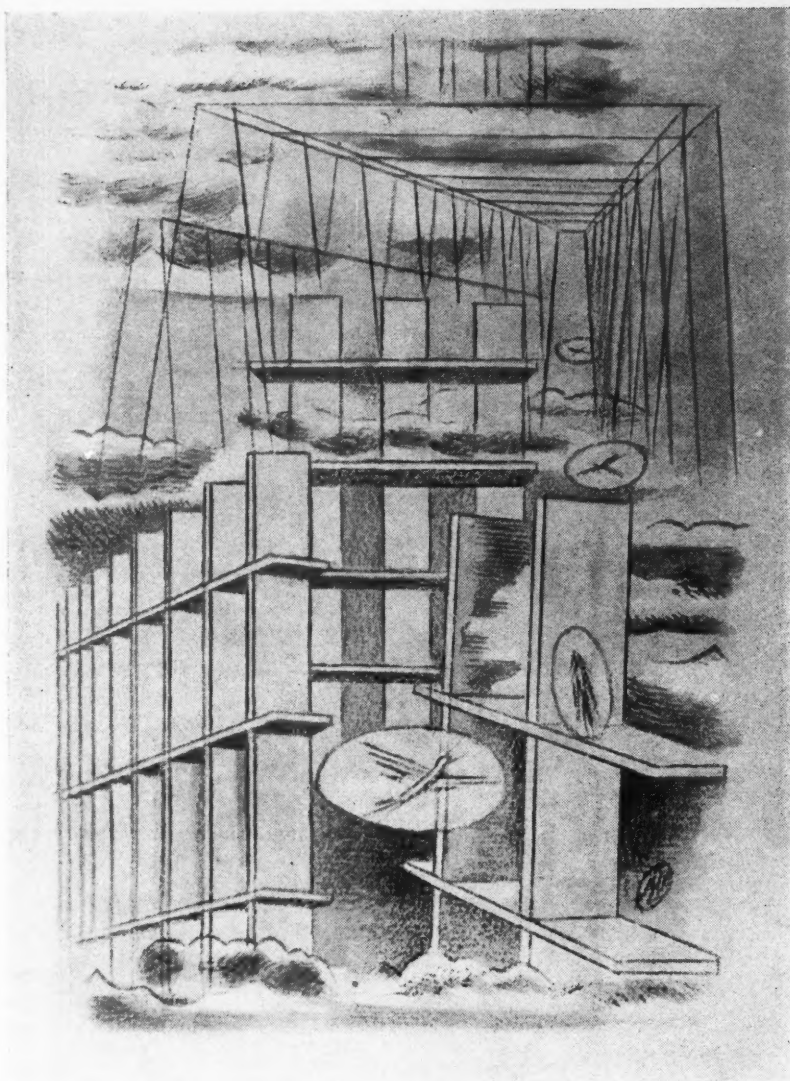
Upper left: *Swan Song* (oil, 1927-8, collection Mrs. C. E. J. Evershed). Lower left: *Environment for two Objects* (oil, collection Miss Valerie Cooper). Above: *Encounter in the Afternoon* (oil, 1936, collection Edward James).

looking like itself will generate more life in itself and a sense of heightened reality in a sympathetic onlooker. To this personal surrealism of his there have always been limits; objects and places have always remained objects and places, even when they are the wrong objects in the wrong places; even when he sees a molehill as an earth fortress, a mushroom as a forest tree, a forest tree as a benevolent monster, or a crashed German aeroplane as an evil one; even when for him the sea becomes a dark, curled terrace.

It has been my good fortune to explore a good many of the places where Paul Nash has worked. I have stayed on Romney Marsh and have watched the eastern sky darken across the dyked flats to Dymchurch and the Channel towards the French coast as the sun set at my back, and have noticed the strange unity of sea, sky and earth that grows unnoticed at this time and place. I have wandered in Savernake Forest and come, surprised, on the Grand Avenue with its immense

pale-trunked trees which, in the end, so little resemble the country-book writer's Gothic cathedral aisle. I have climbed the ramparts of Maiden Castle when a Dorset drizzle greyed the grass and sky, dispersing Dorchester's chimney smoke and dimming the distant land. I have drifted in a boat under Sinodun, that recurring landmark of such strong personality—as often recurrent in the landscape of Berkshire and South Oxfordshire as it is in Paul Nash's paintings and water-colours; and I have followed him to the Forest of Dean, the wild-daffodil-grown meadows of remoter Gloucestershire and to the Malvern Vale with its unlikely hills and sunsets. And what has always surprised me, looking at a Nash picture of any of these, is how much of the place, its presence and individuality and colour is registered there, without fuss, timidity or stridency. He has understood the *genius loci*—has for the time being become the *genius loci* himself.

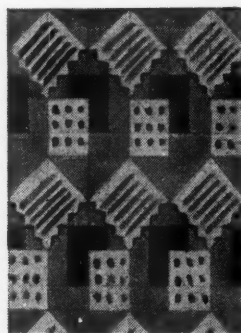
There is always some formalization in his drawings and



THE ARCHITECTURE OF SPACE

Nash's apprehension of space, at once poetic and architectural, is nowhere, perhaps, expressed more movingly than in this drawing. *The Soul visiting the Mansions of the Dead*, one of his illustrations to Sir Thomas Browne's *Urne Buriall* (Cassell and Co.).

DESIGN FOR REPRODUCTION



Above: Lozenge design for printed silk. Right: Terminus design for furnishing fabric. Below: Book cover for the Gregynog Press. Below, right: Romney Marsh printed textile design.

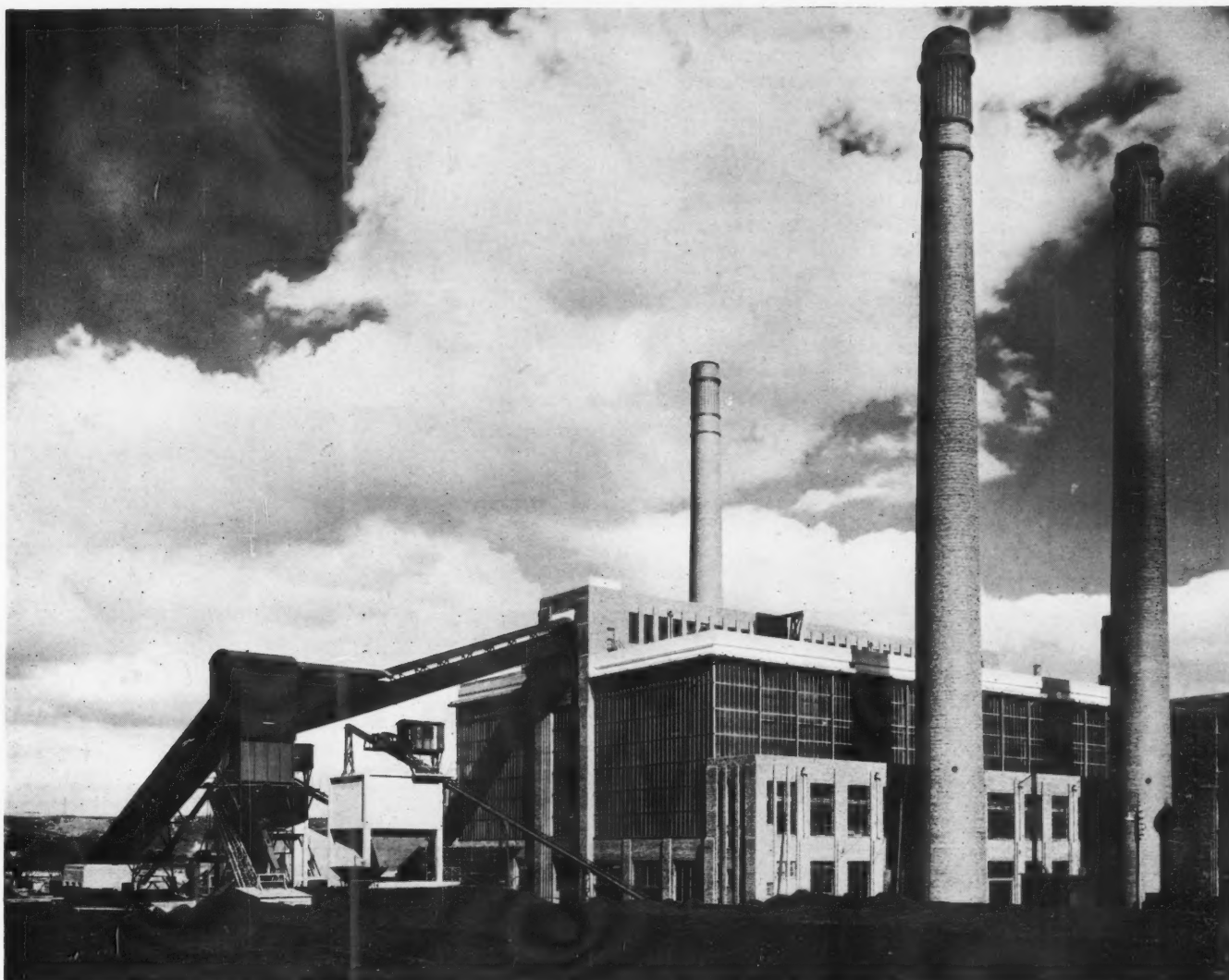


paintings, the personal system is always present, but one has the feeling that it is a personal system wide enough in range to receive any landscape's more quiet and subtle suggestions. I recognize the paths up the grass slopes of Badbury Rings that lead so vaguely and yet so purposefully, and I can climb again the ploughed-out and now again grass-grown cliff-backs at Worth Matravers against which, among the neighbouring stone walls of Purbeck, he saw in 1937 a great seaweed monster lying. I can still hear the waves washing on the terraced shore at Kimmeridge, that is so like and yet so much more beautiful than a man-made, bull-dozed terrace at a gigantic International Exhibition. When I look at those enormous coloured objects of still life, rectangles, solid cubes and cylinders that form such an unlikely equivalent for the megaliths, I am surprised (and in an unadjusted mood I may be annoyed) to find that they only intensify the smell of grass and stubble that blows across in the Dorset wind, and when Iron Age hill-forts and level lynchets become sites for formal agreements and disagreements between stones, I can still hear the sound of the dinner-hour hooter in the nearby town, and the faint whistle of a train as it disappears into its far-off single-line tunnel.

He has borrowed symbols from many arts and professions, and in doing so has not only widened his own field but has tied himself—and us, the onlookers—more firmly to everyday life. However preposterous his visions may seem they turn out at last to be heightened and specialized visions that belong to every man. He has dug into the ground of scientific workers, borrowing symbols from archæology, geology, botany, meteorology and nautical lore; and not superficially only, but often deeply. That serpent, for instance, that curls among the convolvulus plants before the parade of stones in the West Kennet Avenue at Avebury is not a common snake that has intruded for decorative reasons; it is the serpent of Stuke-

ley, the great eighteenth century antiquary and fantasy-monger, whose fantasies, scientific discoveries and observations are inextricably mixed, and whose familiar Paul Nash quite rightly sees as haunting those shallow depressions in the Marlborough Downs.

There are many views of his work that can be seen in focus with profit at different times. It is useful perhaps to see it sometimes as an Anglicized legacy of Cubism; or to look at his water-colours as a part of our native tradition pushed a step forward; to recognize him occasionally as an important photographer, who has made, by his own selective methods, forcible comments on what one may call field specimens, and on his own work; but for me, finally, Paul Nash is the artist of this century who has come nearer than any other to realizing the poetic force of objects when they are isolated in particular English places.



FOUR POWER STATIONS

F. QUENTERY FARMER AND FRANKLAND DARK: ARCHITECTS. EWBANK AND PARTNERS: CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Too many power stations in this country have been designed without employing architects—with results which justifiably cause public alarm. For in this sphere success can only be achieved by the closest collaboration between the consulting engineers, the architects and the civil engineers. The consulting engineers have to decide on the precise plant requirements, but it rests with the architects to determine the most economical siting, layout and construction. The glass-enclosed buildings at Stourport and Hayle constitute a new departure which, had it not been for the war, might have led to important developments. But the authorities controlling the erection of power stations had to make conditions which prevented this, and the architects responsible for work during that period had to design in brick. This has unfortunately encouraged the adaptation of traditional forms, with the object of creating large masses of monumental dignity. Buildings resulting from this procedure appear to satisfy the claim that a power station should express "power"; an implication that has nothing to do with generating electricity. Shortage of some materials perhaps necessitates this type of design, but one may hope that in future architects will have the free hand necessary to design forms which have a true relation to the problems involved—remembering that generating plant has a life of not more than twenty-five or thirty years. The use of glass and other large prefabricated units for external and internal cladding would make very considerable economies in time, labour and cost.



1, general view of Stourport station A from north west. 2, general view of the generating plant.

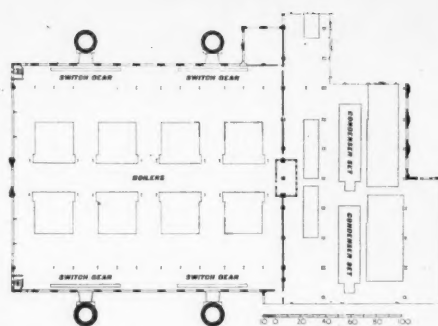


site plan

STOURPORT

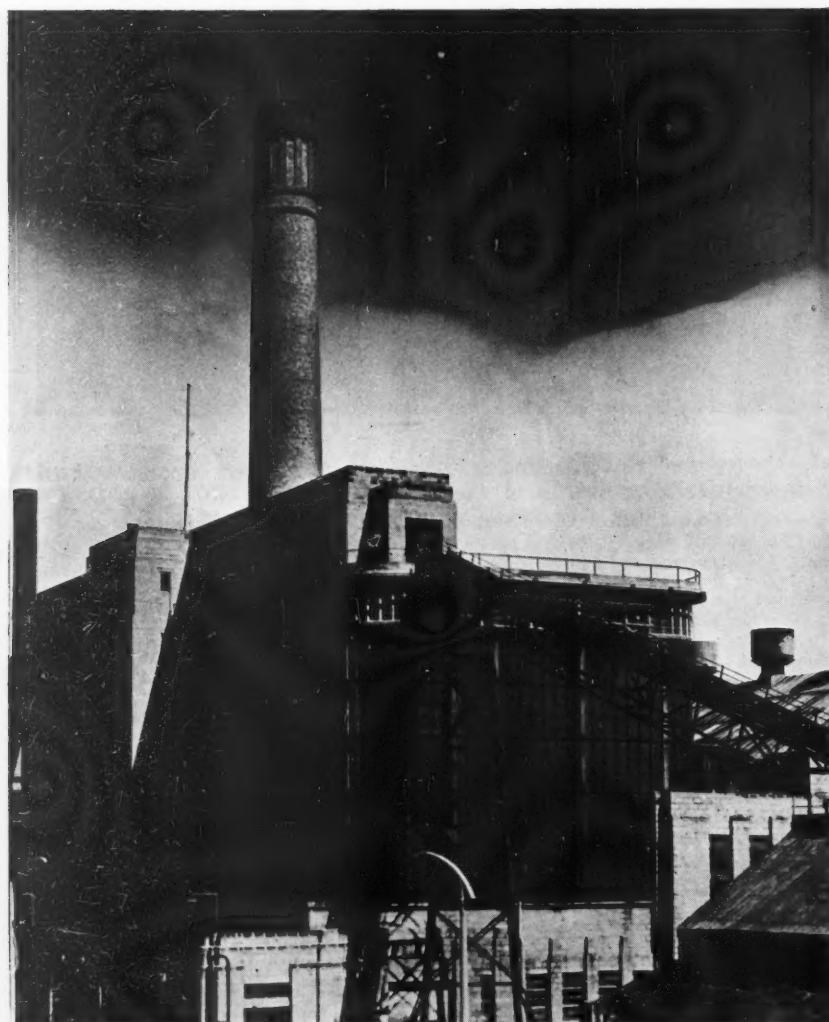
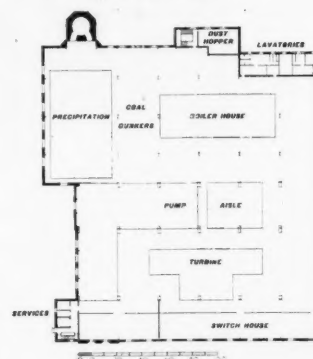
The original work completed by the Shropshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire Electric Power Company in 1925, comprises a boiler house and turbine house at right angles to each other, with a semi-circular office block at the end of the latter. In the 1936-7 work, carried out by Farmer and Dark, the same plant layout was adopted because the additions were extensions to the old buildings. The engine room was an extension of the steel frame and brick construction. Patent glazing was used for the wall finish of the boiler house, with glazing girts fixed 18in. from the stanchions and Georgian wired glass. The roof was in reinforced concrete which overhung the glazing sufficiently to allow a cradle to hang clear for washing. The water supply pipes formed the handrail to the roof balustrade. In 1944 designs were being prepared for station "B," which is now being built in two halves. The first half will be completed in 1948 and the other in 1950-1. The original office building in the 1924 building was obviously in the wrong place for the control of such a large plant and a new office building

has been erected between stations "A" and "B" with connecting bridges to the two operating floors of the turbine houses. Behind the office building is a large block of workshops and stores serving both stations. In front of the offices is a bowling green with a recreation building comprising a lounge with a bar, billiards room and card room on the east side and a mess rooms block on the west with kitchens. Wartime conditions prevailing at the time, the new station was designed with a brick facing to the steel frame construction. The two boilers will be the highest in the country and are housed in a building 127ft. 0in. to the parapet. The boiler house is open to the turbine house and the plant layout is based on the unit system of one boiler to one turbine. The turbine house is entirely top lighted because the side opposite to the boiler house is occupied by a multi-floored switch annexe necessitated by the cramped site. The walls and free ceiling space are treated acoustically. The bricks used are a brindled red and all windows are painted the same colour as the lime and red sand mortar. Internally the steelwork is painted orange-red and the acoustic cover sheets in a mushroom-pink glaze on aluminium.

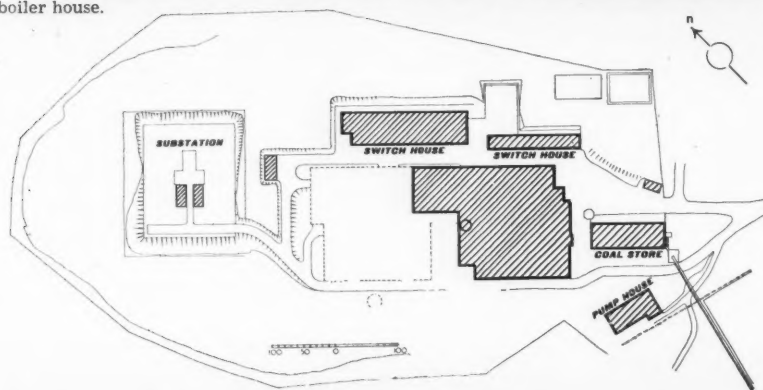


existing building firing floor plan

new building operating floor



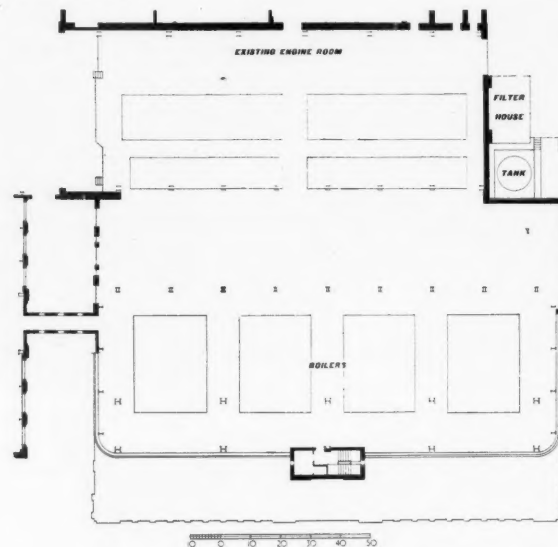
3, the boiler house.

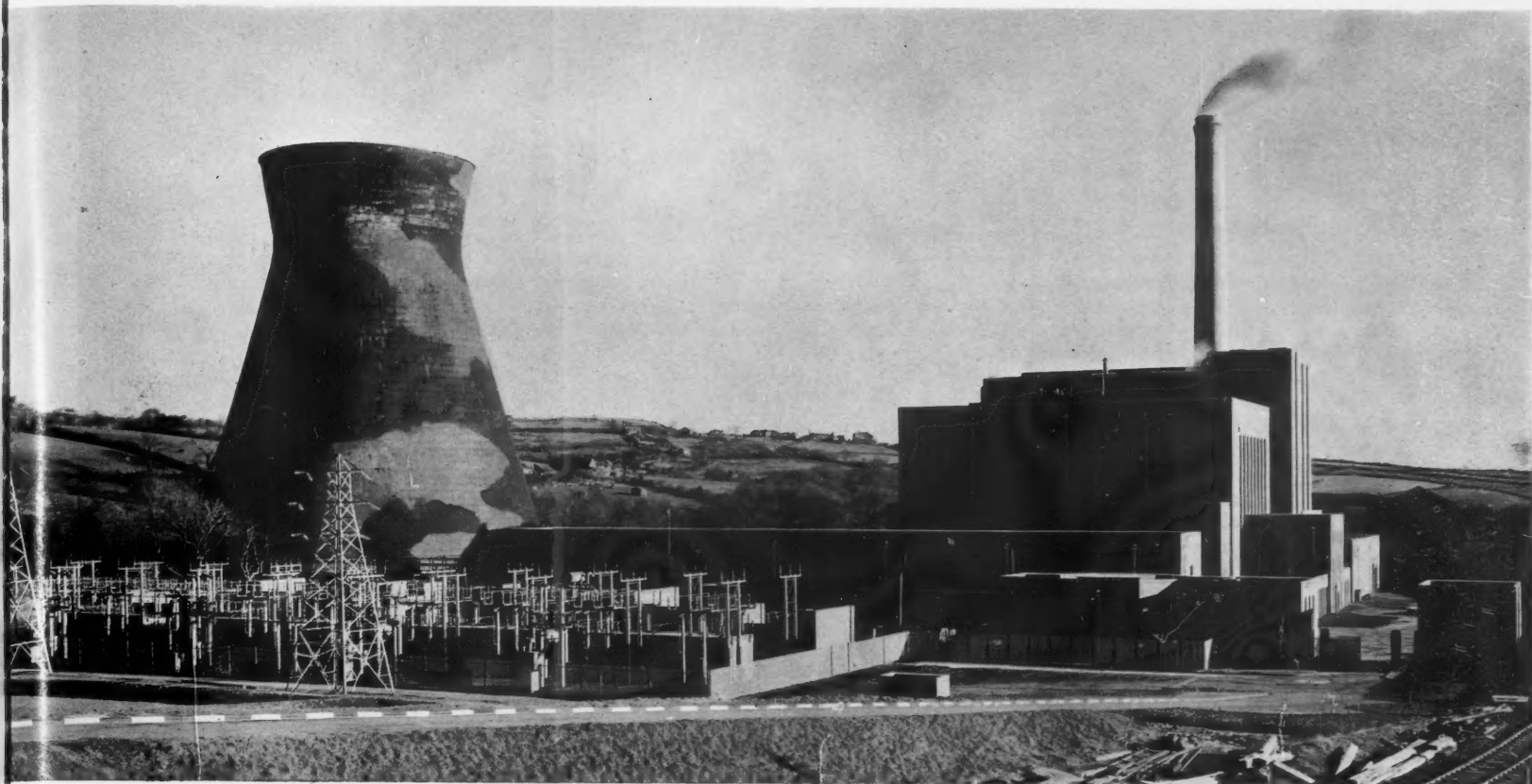


HAYLE

The station was first commissioned in 1910 and was built of local stone. After that small additions were made each year until 1916. In 1928 the architects built a new boiler house of steel frame with concrete block walls and large factory type windows. Stone was not used because of its cost and unsuitability for light construction, while bricks are not a local material. Larger turbines being required in 1938, the old turbine house was remodelled and a new boiler house planned, half of which was then built. The other half was completed this year. The operating floor is finished in light green tiles and the boilers and constructional steel in aluminium. A new switch house and control room building has also been completed this year, together with new mess rooms. The whole of the control room switch panels, mimic diagram panel and the control desks were designed by the architects. Considerable additions to the existing turbine house are now planned, together with another boiler house. When this work is complete, it will extend over the site of the 1928 boiler house, which will then be obsolete. The turbine house extensions will be a steel framed building with concrete block walls and large windows. The roof will be a concrete flat and not an extension of the original light steel truss roof with partial glazing. The boiler house will be similar, but larger than that recently completed, and the internal finishes throughout will be the same.

firing floor plan



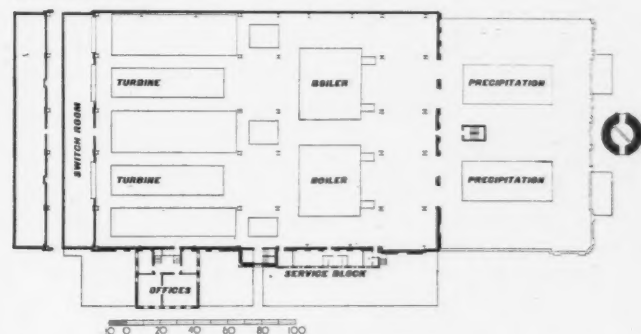


4, general view of Llynfi station from the west. 5, the west side of the main building; the three storey projection contains offices.

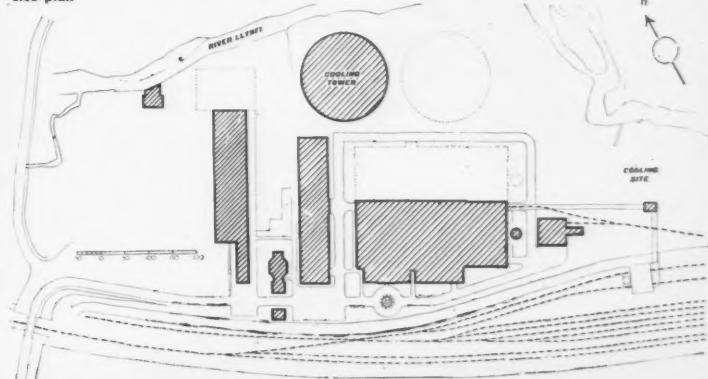
LLYNFI

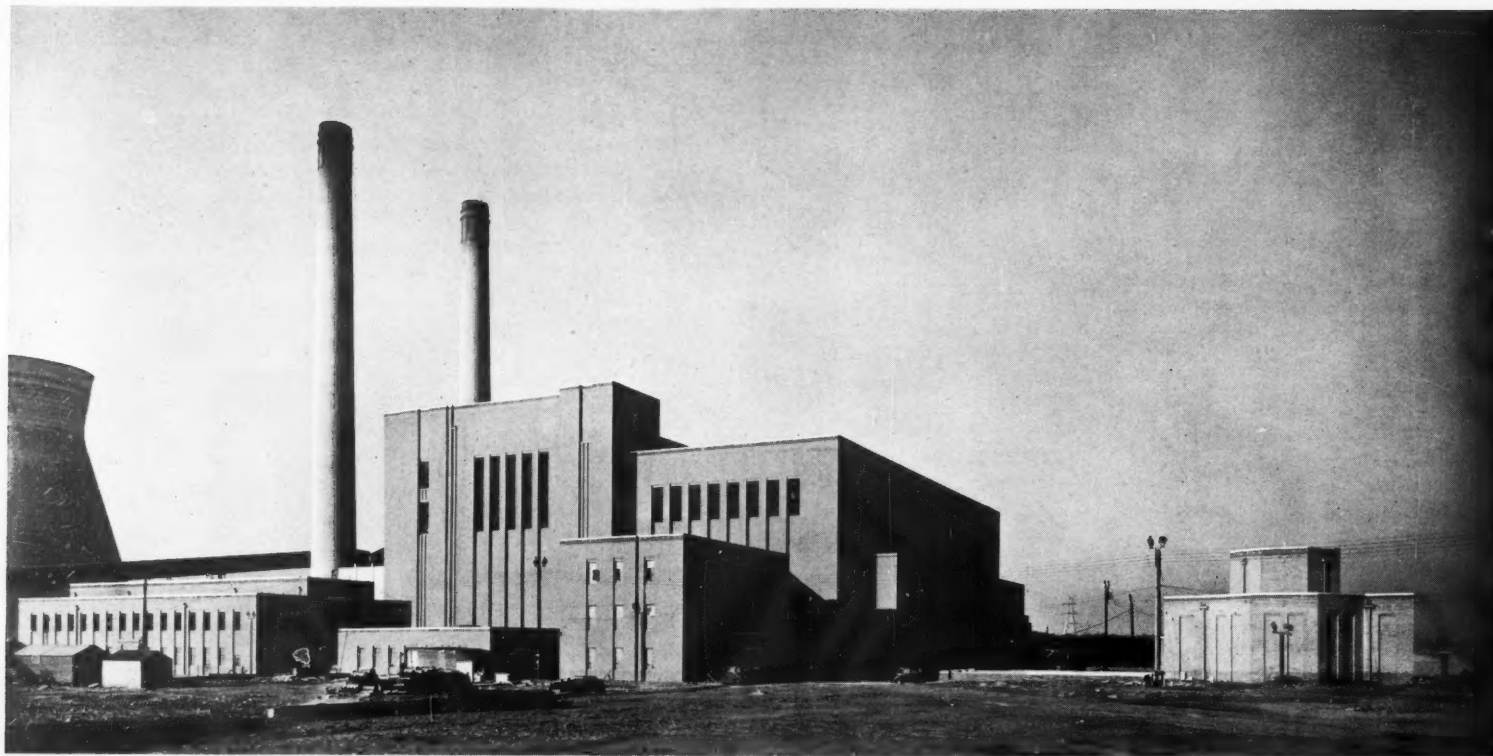
The station layout is the same unit system plant as used at Little Barford power station. Site conditions determined a different scheme for the subsidiary buildings and the offices and mess rooms were annexed to the main building. This station was erected during 1942-3 and electricity was being generated nineteen months after the arrival of the contractors on the site. Apart from the building of the station much level-ling had to be done and all the embankment, bridge, roads and sidings constructed. The walls are of brick with fawn and brown facings externally. Internally there is a blue brick dado to the operating floor with black tile skirting and the floor is finished with 12in. by 12in. compressed granite tiles. The more elaborate finishes adopted at Little Barford had to be omitted due to wartime conditions. The whole of the control room switch panels, mimic diagram panels and the control desks in this building and in the main station were specially designed by the architects.

plan at 20 ft. level



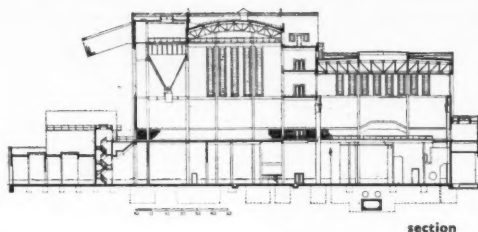
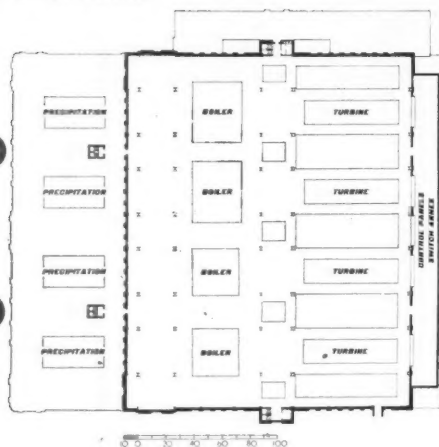
site plan





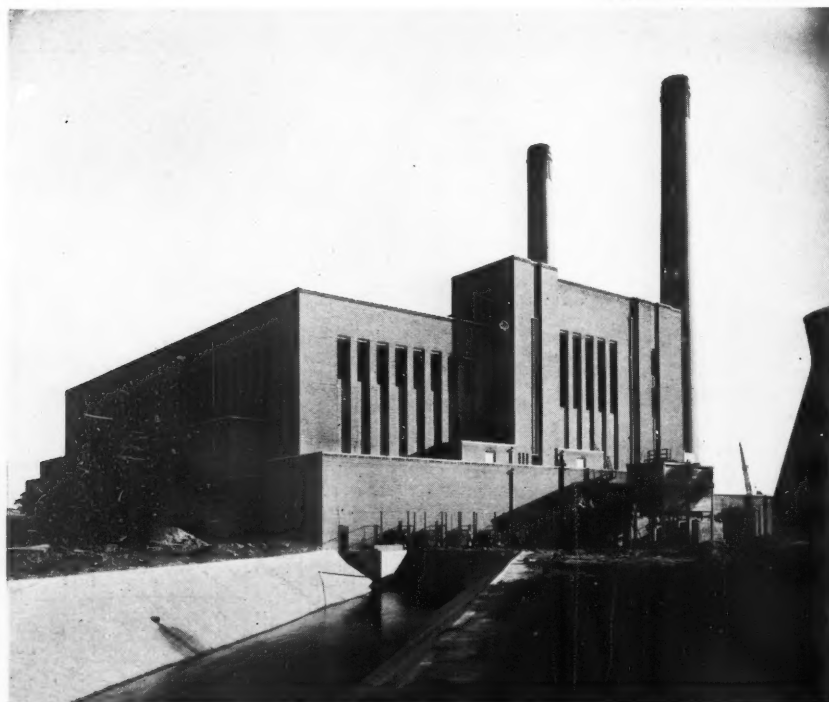
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plan at 28 ft. level



section

6, general view from north east; the site of the future extension is to the left.
7, from the north west.



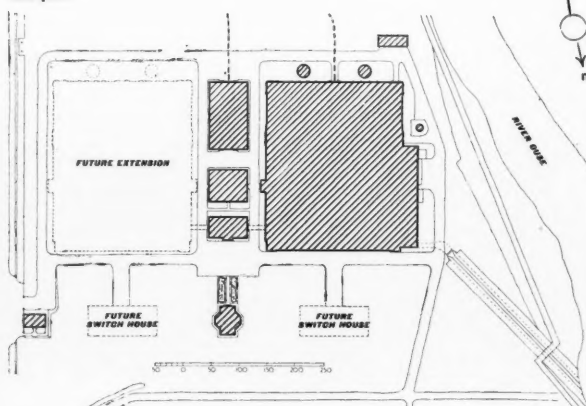
7

LITTLE BARFORD

Here there will be two separate stations, one on either side of a group of subsidiary buildings common in use to both. These consist of the control building, office buildings, mess rooms, together with lockers, lavatories and showers, workshops and stores. Centrally in front of the two stations and on the axis of the control building and gate house will be the two switch houses. In this power station the consulting engineers, Messrs. Ewbank and Partners, first introduced into this country the unit system of plant layout, i.e., one boiler and one precipitator to one turbine with each unit planned on a common centre line. The boilers were a specially encased pulverised fuel type which largely eliminated the dust problem and allowed the usual wall or screen dividing the boiler house from the turbine house to be omitted. In effect, the building becomes at operating floor one large generating house.

Construction is a steel frame with brick walls externally finished with hand-made golden biscuit and golden russet facings. Internally the walls are finished with white sand-lime bricks above an 8ft. high dado of black moulded faience and turquoise coloured eggshell finished tiles at operating floor level. The operating floor is finished in black, turquoise and fawn coloured non-slip tiles. The wells and staircases have a balustrade in wrought iron with an orange coloured handrail.

site plan



PLEASING DECAY by John Piper

Though the contemporary designer in setting out to impose modern buildings on the world justly shuts his eyes to the fact that it is full already of patterns hostile to the modern picture, it is out of the question for the contemporary planner to adopt the same attitude. A consistent plan will not spring from his own consistent loyalty to modern architecture, because the world is not consistent. Expediency suggests a visual theory which reconciles inconsistencies rather than rolls them out—i.e., the democratic approach, whereby all shades of opinion gain right of expression, on the principle that to give satisfaction is the quick way to make progress and that, given their heads, a surface variety of forms of expression will develop an inner consistency which leads eventually to a state of civilization. On this, the planner's as opposed to the designer's view, the social function of architecture as delight (quite apart from firmness and commodity) is to express and satisfy the imaginative life of an enormous variety of people in different stages of emotional education, and this means the requisitioning of all kinds of architecture and every available architectural resource as a means of stimulating the imaginative life of people living at totally different imaginative levels. Of these resources easily the most potent is that of the effects of time on

the works of man. By mere age a city or a building is able to evoke powerful emotions in primitive as well as sophisticated breasts, yet this, the most potent visual weapon possessed by the planner, is generally speaking not treated as a weapon at all. Old buildings are ruthlessly restored by those who cannot distinguish between the *fact* of age and the *effect* of age. The official friends of old buildings are often their worst enemies, in that on the plea of preserving it for posterity they will renovate a venerable building in such a way that the old building loses the one quality which made it venerable—the effect of age. But to prolong the life of an old building by removing the effects of its age is like prolonging the use of a pram by throwing away the baby. There are examples of pure architecture, like the Royal Crescent at Bath, which under rebuilding might gain in pure form what they lose in venerability, but in most buildings, from barns and farms to Westminster Hall and the Tower of London, their power to move us is enormously enhanced by the visible effects of history in terms of “decay.” In the article below Mr. John Piper discusses the attributes of pleasing decay with the object of suggesting how its visual charms and its appealing associations could be incorporated in the aesthetic repertoire of the modern planner.

BUILDINGS that are beginning to go “back to nature,” crumbling, growing moss and lichen, were so much admired by our grandfathers that we are still self-conscious about them. We are inclined to think it sentimental to admire cottages shaded by trees and matted over with ferns. So many bad artists (as well as good ones—but we forget those) have attended to them that it is hard to look at them sympathetically and admire them unaffectedly; and then we very often have a feeling, if the cottages are inhabited, that we ought to report the owners to the Housing and Sanitary Committee. The cottages are out of date and should be replaced, we feel, or at least they must be spruced up and have their faces lifted. Even if we allow that they are “beautiful” we are likely to decide that they are “monuments of no interest,” not worth railing off and protecting from vandalism as we would rail off a remote stone circle or a disused church with interesting associations.

Once we get finally beyond our conventional reaction against the nineteenth century's enthusiasms, and our distaste for the bad art that pleasing decay has nourished, we may be able to become ourselves again; designing with an eye to the beauty that our buildings may have when they get old. At the moment we are naturally over-concerned with what a new building shall look like *new*. Soane made drawings of some proposed buildings as they would look in a state of ruin; remembering that men made buildings, as God made men, to be beautiful in age as well as in youth. A building “built to last” has a visual future as well as a functional one, and a good designer will have half an eye on this visual future of his work, remembering that some people will see it as an aged warrior or matron, not just as a brave baby. The admiration of his great-grandchildren will be as important to him as that of his friends.

More important still, for the good town-planner decay—*present* decay, as well as possible future decay—should be one of the tricks in his box of tricks to be used, as the country gentleman used it in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, for certain specific purposes. For instance, the planner might find it sensible to retain the tower of a redundant church, and the fabric of a nonconformist chapel as visual points of interest in one new development scheme, a decayed warehouse or a terrace of houses of decayed charm in another. These in fact have a visual point, not only for their own sakes but for the sake of relief and contrast. The specialist must decide how far decay can go, how far it can be conserved, even cultivated, in such cases; always remembering that decay is not a stationary condition but a growing and continuing process that attacks all buildings in time—even the

Co-operative Stores built of shiny bricks in the High Street.

“The dainty weeds and wild flowers overlace the antique tracery with their bright arabesques and deepen the grey of the stone-work as it brightens their bloom. The thousand flowers which grow among English ruins deserve a chapter to themselves. I owe them, as an observer, a heavy debt of satisfaction, but I am too little of a botanist to pay them in their own coin. It has often seemed to me in England that the purest enjoyment of architecture was to be had among the ruins of great buildings. In the perfect building, one is rarely sure that the impression is simply architectural: it is more or less pictorial and romantic; it depends partly upon association and partly upon various accessories and details which, however they may be wrought into the architectural idea, are not part of its essence and spirit. But in so far as beauty of structure is beauty of line and curve, balance and harmony of masses and dimensions, I have seldom relished it as deeply as on the grassy nave of some crumbling church, before lonely columns and empty windows where the wild flowers were a cornice and the sailing clouds a roof. The arts certainly seem to hang together in what they do for us.”⁽¹⁾

Pleasing decay has formed a part of the vocabulary of English romantic painting for a hundred and fifty years. Those people who have no eye for it say that it indicates a decay of the mind to dwell on it; those who have an eye for it say that a weathered building can symbolize the whole of man's relation to nature. Much of Ruskin's time was spent in praising, and explaining his praise of, pleasing decay; much of Cotman's in recording it, much of Morris's in lamenting its disappearance and fighting for its conservation.

“I will only make these assertions: that ancient buildings, being both works of art and monuments of history, must obviously be treated with great care and delicacy: that the imitative art of to-day is not, and cannot be the same thing as ancient art, and cannot replace it; and that therefore if we superimpose this work on the old, we destroy it both as art and as a record of history; lastly, that the natural weathering of the surface of a building is beautiful, and its loss disastrous. Now the restorers hold the exact contrary of all this; they think that any clever architect to-day can deal off-hand successfully with the ancient

work; that while all things else have changed about us since (say) the thirteenth century, art has not changed, and that our workmen can turn out work identical with that of the thirteenth century; and, lastly, that the weather-beaten surface of an ancient building is worthless, and to be got rid of wherever possible.”⁽²⁾

Since Morris's day the situation has not changed much. The sensibility which he (through the S.P.A.B., and by other means) tried to awaken has been, to some extent, awakened. It has become more active in its expression, but it has not increased in quantity. Sensibility to visual excellence in old buildings—as opposed to practical, and historical-associational, considerations—is still thinly spread. Certainly, we love old buildings, but we love them for what they stand for rather than for what they look like. And alas, it is usually *after* an old building has been permed, and has had its eyebrows plucked, that we notice that its whole character has been changed. It is after the floodlighting and the new radiators have been installed in a church that we notice that the old oil lamps and the cracked Tortoise stove had a certain visual charm. Nor



Where medieval sculpture is concerned, the concept of pleasing decay is now generally accepted, and hardly anyone to-day would wish to “restore” this doorway at Lullingstone, Somerset, or deny that in its present state it has certain qualities which only time and exposure can give. What modern well-wishers might easily do would be to erect an ugly porch over it, or take it away to a museum.

is this sentiment only; they had the same visual charm, compared with the more labour-saving, up-to-date system, that an antiquated steam locomotive has on an electrified railway.

There are three existing general plans for dealing with a building in an advanced state of decay:

- (1) To leave it alone and let it fall to pieces. (The Picturesque way, taken to the extreme.)
- (2) To "restore" it. (The "Scrape" way.)
- (3) To "conserve" it, by arresting the decay. (The "Anti-scrape" way.)

There is a lot after all to be said against all three plans, and not much to be said in favour of any of them. Anybody who adopts any one of the three existing policies stands to be shot at. The Picturesque man will be called a vandal at once; the Scrape man will be called a vandal as soon as his fashionable method of restoration has "dated." The Anti-scrape policy, No. 3, sounds reasonable and sensible enough, yet a building in which decay has been arrested smells, however faintly, of the museum; and in a few years it has the "dated" look of somebody or something that has outlived its time. A sensitive conservator, like a sensitive surgeon, may perform remarkable operations, but until both perform miracles universally—so that they are miracles no longer—the subjects of their treatment must be regarded primarily as curiosities. Anyway, the Anti-scrape man will be hounded out as a sentimentalist, or at any rate will have an uphill fight all his working life (as had the late A. R. Powys, or the late Charles Canning Winmill—see the writings of the former, and the good recent biography of the latter by his daughter) until in the end he is in actual danger of being sentimental. Nobody has been bold enough to advocate the Picturesque plan loudly and openly for the past hundred years or more, while the current popular view of Gilbert Scott symbolizes the present attitude to the restorer; the present patronizing of William Morris, the general attitude to the conservator. The objections to Scrape and Anti-scrape can be paraphrased from the Belloc epigram:—

Scrape	...	Of old when folk lay sick and sorely tried The doctors gave them physick, & they died.
Anti-scrape		But here's a happier age, for now we know Both how to make men sick & keep them so.

The objections to the Picturesque plan—the plan of letting the building go to pieces—are obvious.

In fact, of course, there is no universal sensible policy for dealing with old buildings: there are only some warning echoes. *Perform the act with sensibility.* Sensibility can turn an act of "restoration" into one of conservation; it can even remove the inverted commas from "restoration." Secondly, *ignore fashion.* The appreciation of pleasing decay is not only a sophisticated pleasure; it is a public one (though an undeveloped public one), because a building in such a state looks "old," and has a "historic" atmosphere about it. But public appreciation is not a useful backing for the picturesque man any more than for the restorer or conservator, since it is guide-book-conditioned and altogether too wholesale. People tend to talk about all restorations as "tasteful" at the moment when they are done, and as "acts of vandalism" fifty years later. Guide-books are the slaves of fashion (there are individual exceptions, but they are lost in the crowd), and the man who deals with an old building must be above and beyond fashion. Any ancient building has as much individuality as any human being, and will not react favourably to any but individual treatment. So a general policy is no good; it is the holding of a general policy that invalidates the work of the more active and pushing public bodies in relation to old buildings, just as it is the lack of one that tends to eviscerate and sentimentalize the less pushing and more sensitive ones, such as the S.P.A.B. Thirdly, and all-important: *rely on the eyes.* The only hope is to open the eyes, and treat every building—every surface, even—on its individual merits. *To regard the present state of the building as, possibly, virtuous in itself, and to use it as an element of charm, or beauty,*

A firm distinction must be drawn between ruin and pleasing decay. Medieval ruins have an appeal which is none the less potent for having been exploited by a long line of romantic artists. (On the right is Colman's etching of the refectory at Fountains Abbey.) Later ruins too have their own melancholy beauty. The example shown below—the stables of the destroyed manor house at Wheatfield, near Oxford—has not long crossed the borderline between pleasing decay and ruin, but it has crossed it. (There has been recent repair work here, since the photograph was taken.) Of the trio of buildings illustrated on this page Wolfhamcote church, Warwickshire (bottom) is the only one which may be described as being in a state of pleasing decay as the term is here defined.



or even merely of contrast—if it proves to have virtues—in its present landscape or townscape, and to keep a weather-eye on it in the future development of these. When the eye has become accustomed to it, it accepts, gratefully and naturally, pleasing decay in old buildings. The tendency of nature is to induce every building to come back to her arms, sooner or later; rust, lichen, moss, the cracking and powdering of mortar in joints, of the stone and brick itself—all these are the forms of nature's expression of jealousy at the presence of man's creations. Nature never lets up on her passion to see buildings in her own image.

"But ere you enter, yon bold Tower survey,
Tall and entire and venerably grey . . .
And wouldst thou, Artist! with thy Tints and Brush,
Form Shades like these? Pretender, where thy
Blush?
In three short Hours shall thy presuming Hand
Th' effect of three slow Centuries command?
Thou mayst thy various Greens and Greys contrive,
They are not Lichens, nor like aught alive;—
But yet proceed, and when thy Tints are lost,
Fled in the Shower, or crumbled by the Frost;
When all thy Work is done away as clean
As if thou never spread'st thy Grey and Green;
Then mayst thou see how Nature's Work is done,

How slowly true she lays her Colours on;
When her last Speck upon the hardest Flint
Has Mark and Form and is a living Tint;
And so embodied with the Rock, that few
Can the small Germ upon the Substance view.
Seeds to our Eye invisible will find
On the rude Rock the Bed that fits their kind;
There, in the rugged Soil, they safely dwell,
And spread th' enduring Foliage;—then we trace
The freckled Flower upon the flinty base;
These all increase, till in unnotic'd Years
The stony Tower as grey with age appears;
With coats of Vegetation, thinly spread,
Coat upon coat, the Living on the Dead;
These then dissolve to dust, and make a way
For bolder Foliage, nurs'd by their decay:
The long-enduring Ferns in time will all
Die and depose their dust upon the Wall;
Where the wing'd Seed may rest, till many a Flower
Shew *Flora's* triumph o'er the falling Tower."⁽³⁾

When the eyes are opened to pleasing decay, in a church tower or in a field-wall, it is difficult to focus on anything else. In a field-wall pleasing decay can be appreciated in its pure state: here is no architecture, but youth or age in building, moss or no moss, an arrangement of stones by man partly, or largely, beautiful by reason of nature's help.

"Of their kind there are few things more beautiful than the field-walls in a stony country. . . . The walls of the moister West Country are the most beautiful of all, for innumerable plants take root in the earthy crevices and enrich the lovely grey stonework with a natural ornament that is entirely pleasing. Vivid green splashes of pennywort, yellow stars of celandine, clusters of violet, and the twisted cords of ivy are Nature's version of carved vine-scrolls and interlaced designs, with the added beauty of colour. Far be it from me to institute odious comparisons between the works of Man and of Nature; both are good to look upon, and I yield to none in admiration of the masterpieces of Anglian sculpture. But these, alas, are few and far between; they are not always accessible or easily seen; whereas there are, by way of compensation, hundreds of miles of most enchanting field-walls in Cornwall alone. I began my study of them without fully realizing their æsthetic qualities; when my eyes were opened I found it difficult to look at anything else."⁽⁴⁾

Pleasing decay is to be found everywhere, but not all decay in buildings is pleasing. What Ruskin would have called the "moral" aspect may override the æsthetic aspect. Here comes in the whole question of "right" building and "wrong" building, and it is tenable (to take a minor illustration) that a building that has had its stonework laid with the grain the wrong way may "peel" less attractively than one rightly laid. I say "may" (when Ruskin, and presumably many other people, would say "must") because I belong to an age that admires Utrillo as well as Cotman.

A large part of the Picturesque movement was an expression of the Romantic fuss about pleasing decay: the whole public appreciation of ruins to-day is merely an echo of it. An anthology in praise of it from among late eighteenth and early nineteenth century writings would be easy enough to make. One quotation is enough as a reminder of the attitude.

"We turn from neatness and regularity to what we must esteem a far more profitable subject—the neglected fast-ruinating cottage—the patched plaster, of various tints and discolorations, which, like the garments of Otway's witch, shall

'Seem to speak variety of wretchedness'
—the weather-beaten thatch, bunched and varied with moss—the mutilated chimney top—the fissures and crevices of the inclining wall—the roof of various angles and inclinations—the tiles of different hues—the fence of bungling workmanship—the wild unrestrained vine, whose "gadding" branches nearly deprive the chambers of their wonted light—the paper-pasted casement, with here and there a wisp of straw stuffed through a broken pane—the decayed bee-hive and the broken basket—the fragment of a chair or bench—the slatternry of tubs and dishes scattered about the door—the mischievous pranks of ragged children—the intrusion of pigs—and the unrepaired

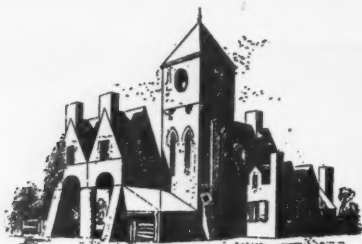
accidents of wind and rain—offer far greater allurements to the painter's eye, than more neat, regular or formal arrangements could possibly have done."⁽⁵⁾

It may be risky to build with an eye to future pleasing decay; and yet there is no building, whether built with an eye to beauty or no, that does not develop some unexpected charm with age. And a consciousness of this in the builder, an attempt at control, must be better than an absence of them. That which looks white and pristine and excellent when it is completed may look dreary and spotted and dirty when smoky rain has dribbled down it for ten years—and yet, at a second look, it may well reveal a delicate colour and a subtly-chafed form that was no part of its builder's intention. It remains to be seen so far as the most modern buildings go, but it is probably impossible to build so as entirely to avoid the ultimate effects of pleasing decay. Pause now and again and focus the eyes on buildings in the early stages of dereliction, on Georgian and Victorian buildings, even Edwardian ones; not Fountains, or Rievaulx or Glastonbury only, but



In the range of materials which lend themselves to effects of pleasing decay plaster is one of the most important. Above, a house at Elsworth near Cambridge. Below, in Strensham church, Worcestershire, where the ageing plaster walls catch the light from clear-glass windows in a way that enhances the umbers and greys of the well-carpentered fittings.





In 1854 the ingenious Mr. J. D. Harding went a step further than earlier generations of picturesque artists by deciding that decay was nothing less than the quality by which a building was to be recognized as real. He made his point by illustrating in his *Guide and Companion to the Lessons on Art*, first the imaginary edifice on the left and then his vision of it, below, when time and the weather had done their work.



on the unpainted railway station on a branch line, on the free house in a by-passed village in need of repair, on the unfashionable nonconformist chapel in a midland suburb. The non-stop, full-time battle between man and nature goes on: Crabbe's freckled flower is taking root on the flinty base all the time. And if the atmosphere is too sulphurous, it will be a carboniferous flower on a bricky one.

Public policy about our major ruins shows the recent ascendancy of the archaeologist's influence, and the diminishing influence of the artist. The artists have largely lost interest, having become otherwise preoccupied, and the excavators and preservers have taken over in default. The artist and the architect with an eye must regain interest or all will be lost. As an aside (for official policy about the treatment of ruins is not my immediate concern, and the decay that these notes point to as "pleasing" is not rightly regarded as the first stage of ruin, anyway) consider the present state of the city of Rome, and Rome's past beauty that has all but vanished. Rome, long before Mussolini, was becoming a "place of interest"—to be described accordingly on the travel posters, rather than as a "place of beauty." The books of engravings and pink-washed aquatints that the young men came home with from the Grand Tour showed galaxies of enormous whiskered ruins half obscured by a profusion of picturesque houses. Then, Rome was before all else a city of visual poetry. To-day it has been turned into a city of antiquarian interest and political propaganda. The normal energy of the late nineteenth and twentieth century clearers and excavators was redoubled between the wars. What had to be shown at all costs was Rome as the permanent seat of power and grandeur, as a creation of mental and spiritual giants, who incidentally—but only incidentally—built beautiful buildings. Much of Ruskin's writing is heavy with prophetic misery for the disappearance of picturesque beauty in Venice and other European cities.

In all European countries some variety of the policy has been operating for the past 80 or 100 years. In England, we have become so pre-occupied with having a "heritage" of the past, that the romance we like to dwell on is now a literary one (Walter Scott was its most popular early herald) rather than a visual one. The policy of the official bodies is one of preservation at all costs—even at visual cost, and sometimes unnecessarily so. And this is the reason we must re-establish the appreciation of ruins, and decay,

visually. Even pleasing decay is not allowed by the officials who look after a ruined building, because if they allowed it people would think they were not looking after the building at all. "There is only one Tintern"—but if we visit Tintern to-day, and then read a description of it that dates from the time when the rarer visitor was visually, rather than antiquarianly, conditioned we may well wonder whether or not—seeing what we do see to-day—there is even one Tintern left.

To level the ground round ruins, and then to mow it and roll it, is an entirely modern tendency, licensed by the English love of gardens and the English excavator's love of scientific tidiness. The tendency to surround the desirable object with iron railings is an understandable one, in these days of popular tourism and the scribbling of names, but anyone in the eighteenth century would have known that a hahra was better. Those cast-iron notice boards on durable poles that punctuate the best close-range views of so many of our national shrines always seem to be whispering: "This is an object of interest. This notice board, placed where it is, proves that we, the authorities, do not regard it as an object of especial beauty, otherwise we would not have defaced the view. Do not scratch your name, or deface the stonework; we do not mind ugly lettering—yours or our own—but you will be destroying a part of the historic English Heritage."

"To walk in quest of any object that one has more or less tenderly dreamed of, to find your way, to steal upon it softly, to see at last, if it be church or castle, the tower-tops peeping above elms or beeches—to push forward with a rush, and emerge and pause and draw that first long breath which is the compromise between so many sensations: this is a pleasure left to the tourist even after the broad glare of photography has dissipated so many of the sweet mysteries of travel; even in a season when he is fatally apt to meet a dozen fellow pilgrims returning from the shrine, each as big a fool, so to speak, as he ever was, or to overtake a dozen more telegraphing their impressions down the line as they arrive."⁽⁶⁾

To be faced, on one's final arrival, by a notice board, an iron railing and a turnstile is more than can be borne. On the whole, they manage the thing better in Ireland (though not at the Marino Casino), but even the Irish have shown a tendency lately to archaeologize and de-beautify their ruins.

"There are to-day few old churches but have had

their walls subjected to the excesses of experts; for the Gothic revivalists with hardly any exception turned their theoretical dislike of mortar and plaster surfaces, of limewash and of "good enough" masonry into the real excesses of an over-stressed virtuosity; parading their taste to the hurt of the buildings our forefathers made with an innocent, and perhaps even an ignorant pleasure."⁽⁷⁾

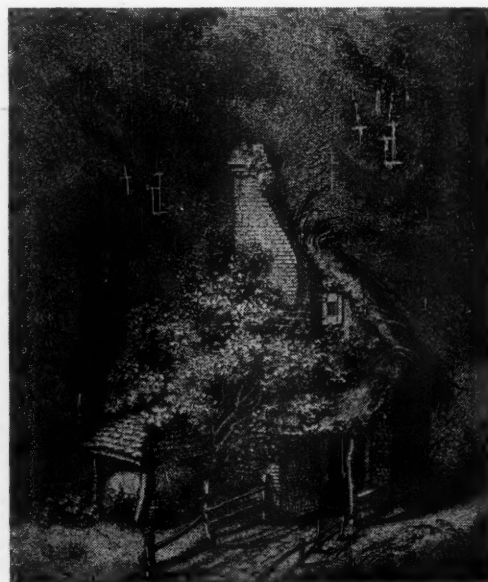
A. R. Powys, who wrote this, was secretary of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings for twenty-five years, until his death in 1936. The following extract is a reference to an "expert," in his late Victorian heyday.

"Sir George Farquhar, Baronet, builder of railway stations, and institutes, and churches, author, antiquarian, and senior partner of Farquhar and Farquhar, leant back in his office chair and turned it sideways to give more point to his remarks. Before him stood an understudy, whom he was sending to superintend the restoration work at Cullerne Minster.

"Well, good-bye, Westray; keep your eyes open, and don't forget that you have an important job before you. The church is too big to hide its light under a bushel, and this Society-for-the-Conservation-of-National-Inheritances has made up its mind to advertise itself at our expense. Ignoramus who don't know an aumbrey from an abacus, charlatans, amateur faddists, they will abuse our work. Good, bad, or indifferent, it's all one to them; they are pledged to abuse it."⁽⁸⁾

Guide-books and county histories to-day still reflect—except for a few sophisticated ones—more of the taste of Meade Faulkner's Sir George Farquhar than of the taste that the S.P.A.B. was founded to cultivate. Three per county is perhaps the average number of old churches that have not had their walls subjected to the excesses of the experts at some time in the past hundred years. The preservation, or the mere arresting, of decay in the walling and furnishing of old churches is, so people argue, an unworthy and discreditable ideal, the pursuit of cleanliness and tidiness so much more creditable a one, that few incumbents and churchwardens have had the sensibility and the tenacity to hold out against "expertly" conducted reforms. But plenty of romantic tourists are to be found who value the few examples that are left.

It is necessary to read between the lines of any existing description of churches—in the Victoria



An extreme form of decay consciously used as an element in the landscape. An etching from J. T. Smith's *Remarks on Rural Scenery of a cottage at Clandon, Surrey, which was formerly the residence of John Wooleridge, the Clandon Poet.* This volume, published in 1797, constitutes a handbook to the extreme forms of rural decay; in it Smith writes: "I am, however, by no means cottage-mad; and without entering into any idle competition between those major and minor beauties, am content that rural and cottage-scenery shall be considered as no more than a sort of low-comedy landscape..."

MOULDING OR MOULDERING

The decay of classical buildings presents special problems. In classical architecture, the argument runs, precision is all, every moulding should tell; therefore, decay can only detract from the architect's original conception. Nevertheless, time and weather may make a positive contribution to take the place of what is lost, a contribution which is to be accepted with gratitude for its own sake. And in some cases we may even feel that it has needed time and weather to realize the architect's conception as fully as it deserves; thus the charming little gateway in the Botanic Garden at Oxford, 1, is now rusticated with a richness and fancifulness beyond the compass of any human agency. The tower of St. Philip's, Birmingham, 2, is something of a borderline case, for although its present texture is delightfully responsive to the effects of light, the classical elements have lost nearly all their structural meaning. At Christ Church, Oxford, decayed and renewed classical architecture are to be studied side by side, in the library and the Peckwater buildings, 3.



FARM BUILDINGS

Farm buildings, for reasons part economic and part traditional, are often to be found in a state of pleasing decay. Those known as Bollitree Castle, at Weston-under-Penyard in Herefordshire, 4, are a rather special case, since they were obviously built (during the second decade of the nineteenth century) with an eye to the approach of that desirable state and incorporate decayed fragments of genuine medieval work. Nevertheless, farm buildings as a class show how the demands of function and of the aesthetic sense that takes pleasure in decay need not be in the least antagonistic; they can be, and are, actually maintained over long periods of time in a state of pleasing decay without their efficiency in the least suffering.



THE VICTORIAN ANTIQUE

7, Victorian decay at Louth, Lincolnshire. As yet, few Victorian buildings have attained to the state of pleasing decay, but in those that have the elaboration and "all-overishness" of Victorian architecture is productive of effects of exceptional richness. It follows from this that future generations, who will only know Victorian buildings as antiques, will make an entirely new evaluation of them.

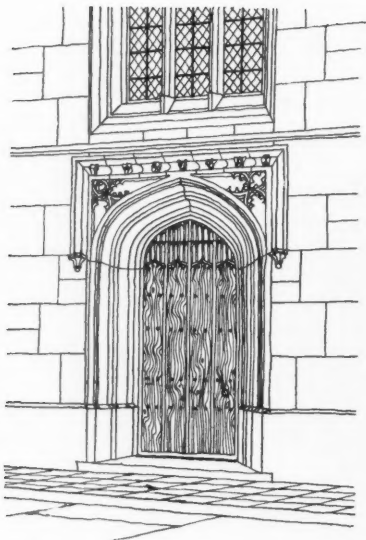


STONE AND STUCCO

5, a corner of Paradise Square, Oxford. Decayed stucco is often pretty—as here—but never practical; the nature of stucco demands that its surface be kept in perfect repair if it is to be kept at all. But it cannot be repeated too often that the same argument does not apply to stone, and 6 (opposite page) shows how the extreme decay of the masonry has invested Dr. Clarke's giant order in the library at Christ Church, Oxford, with a Piranesian grandeur and *terribilità* which mere size could never give it.







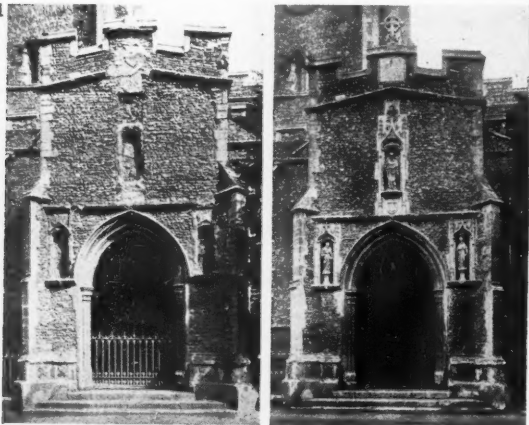
CONSERVING DECAY

8 and 9, restoration, new style. The Guild Chapel at Stratford-upon-Avon demonstrates to perfection how short a distance the process need go. Decay has been conserved without sacrifice of structural soundness. The restoration of the exterior of this building was brilliantly carried out on lines suggested by Norman Jewson, who reported "that the most satisfactory treatment for the general exterior of the building would be to rake out deeply and re-point all defective joints in mortar composed of one part Banow blue lias lime to seven parts of clear sharp fairly coarse sand to which one part of Portland cement has been added, and well mixed in just before use. The joints to be well wetted before pointing and the pointing scraped off with the edge of a trowel flush with the adjoining edges of the stone facing and kept damp for at least forty-eight hours after pointing. Loose surface scale should first be removed by a stiff fibre brush, and the whole building given two good coats of limewash, the lime having been slaked with boiling water and a proportion of Russian tallow added to it while hot and well mixed. If considered desirable the limewash can be slightly coloured.

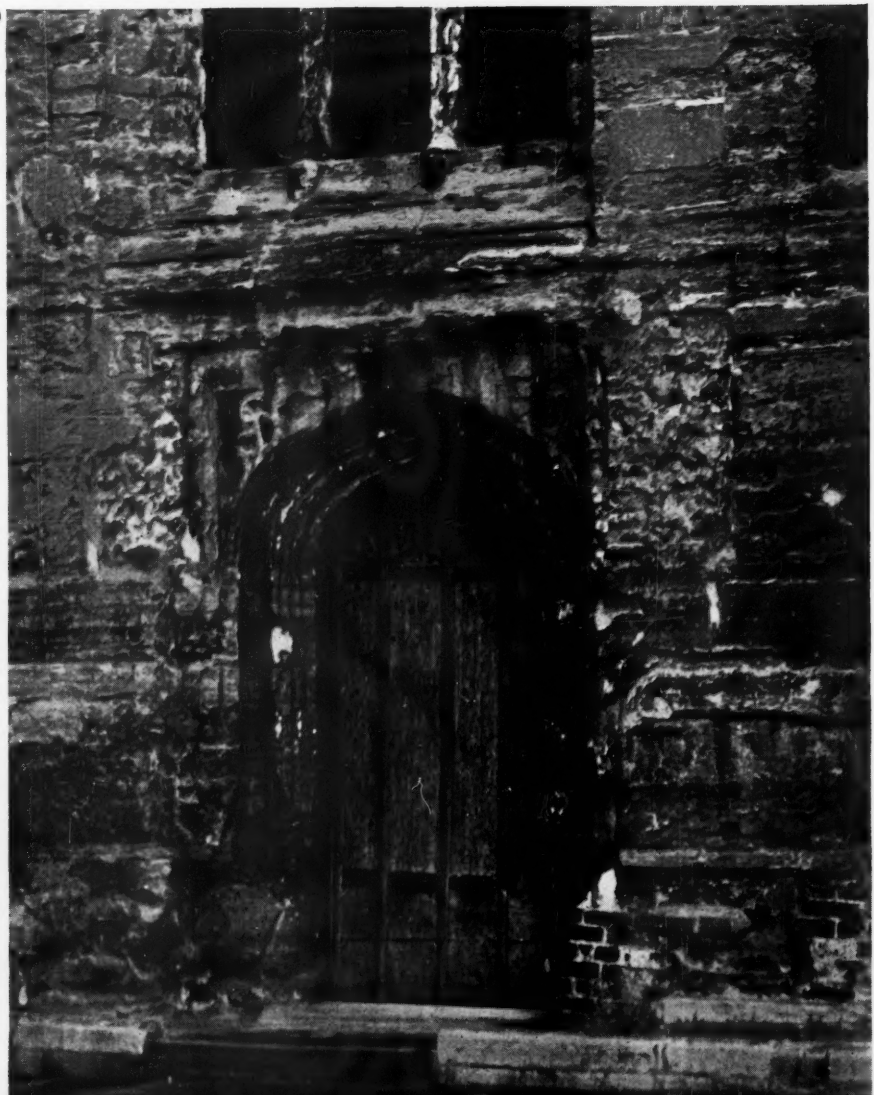
"The battlements of the parapets should be repaired in cement and sand, and in positions such as the top surfaces of these where the decay is considerable and there is plenty of 'key' to prevent portions of cement becoming dislodged and falling Dreyfus cement mixed with plenty of sand might be used, as also for small repairs to the tracery of the windows, though a closer inspection of these is advisable before deciding on the appropriate treatment."

The drawing by Gordon Cullen above shows the tower doorway of the Guild Chapel as it might have appeared after a conventional "restoration." As an actual example of such a restoration, 10 and 11, below, show the porch of Sudbury church, Suffolk, before and after it had been subjected to the process early in the present century.

10, 11



9



County History, in the Royal Commission volumes, in Kelly's Directory, the "Little Guides" or Murray's Handbooks—for a reliable indication of an unrestored, unreformed church. That particular evanescent, fortuitous-seeming charm that for some people makes church visiting such a delightful occupation, is a most difficult thing to describe. What has to be indicated has nothing to do with style, or architectural merit, or even age; though no entirely new building can have it.

"The new building is soulless until the 'cry of the human,' 'the communing of man, the murmur of the passions,' has been heard within and around it; it is void and nude until Time which makes History has clothed it with fact and fancy as with a garment, until life has crowned and death has consecrated it."⁽⁹⁾

Cotman was particularly susceptible to this charm, as were most of the nineteenth century water-colourists. Prout's work speaks of very little else, and the Pre-Raphaelites were always introducing it as a background; so were the wood-engravers of the sixties. English poetry since Tennyson is full of echoes and suggestions of it.

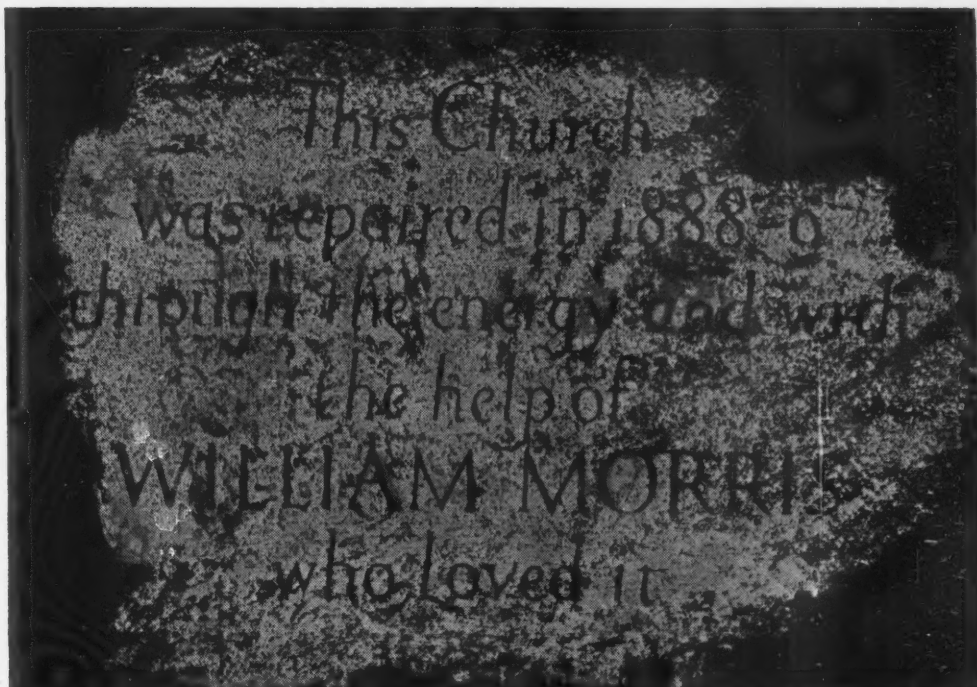
"The low depending curtains, gently swayed,
Cast over arch and roof a crimson glow;
But, ne'ertheless, all silence and all shade
It seemed, save only for the rippling flow
Of their long foldings, when the sunset air
Sighed through the casements of the house of
prayer. . . ."

(Jean Ingelow.)

"On afternoons of drowsy calm
We stood in the pannelled pew
Singing a Tate and Brady psalm
To the tune of Cambridge New. . . ."

(Thomas Hardy.)

In the sixth chapter of *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Ruskin defined the essence of picturesque character as *parasitical sublimity*; a sublimity not inherent in the nature of the thing, but caused by something external to it; as the ruggedness of a cottage roof possesses something of a mountain aspect, not belonging to the cottage as such. "Two ideas," he says, "are essential to picturesqueness—the first, that of sublimity (for pure beauty is not picturesque



Inscription commemorating the work of the great pioneer of anti-scrape in the church at Inglesham, Wiltshire.

at all, and becomes so only as the sublime element mixes with it), and the second, the subordinate or parasitical position of that sublimity. . . . Whatever characters of line or shade or expression are productive of sublimity, will become productive of picturesqueness . . . among these I may name angular and broken lines, vigorous oppositions of light and shadow, and grave, deep, or boldly contrasted colour."

Architects and town-planners have another task to add to their present ones: to re-educate themselves visually, taking note of these characteristics. But just as we have learned (as I have said) to appreciate Utrillo as well as Cotman, there are other characteristics that can, and must, be added to Ruskin's elements of "picturesqueness" to-day; and had he himself lived to-day he would certainly have added them. The incorporation of Picasso and Matisse, Ernst and Miró into our visual philosophy may mean an uncomfortable stretching of the word "picturesque" to embrace our beliefs; but it is certain that if the lessons of these painters are properly learned "pleasing decay" will be found to have a very large place in our present-day visual consciousness. Their works must have a strong bearing on architectural and planning practice in the long run, and the shorter we can make that run the better. They prophesied the beauty as well as the horror of bomb damage, and as visual planners they are at the moment unrivalled. Bomb damage has revealed new beauties in unexpected appositions—a rich source of information for the planner who would retain picturesque elements from the past that can be opposed in size, colour and shape to new buildings and groups of buildings, whether by way of contrast or agreement. As to texture, modern painters have left few possibilities unexplored: surely their works are source-books that can inspire architecture in the future, as great painters have inspired great architects in the past?

For the planner of the future, the visually re-educated planner, it will not be merely a question of retaining and incorporating the *best* existing buildings (meaning the acceptably beautiful buildings, the buildings by great architects and the buildings with historical associations and circular blue-and-white plaques on their façades) but a question of using existing buildings (whether they are by Vanbrugh or Butterfield, S. S. Teulon or an unremembered builder of a row of art-nouveau villas) that will be an enrichment, or will form a knot of interest, or allow an area of rest, or even a note of agitation, in a new planning and building scheme.

Visual education is in a neglected state. The

appreciation of pleasing decay is only one element in its large programme: but it is an important one, because it is so neglected. It is always worth looking at a building twice before pulling it down. A building in a state of pleasing decay should be looked at three times, in our present state ignorance to be sure, first, that it has no virtues in itself that will be sadly missed; second, that it will not be missed as an enrichment of its present surroundings, and third, that it might not form a useful point of focus, whether by agreement or by way of contrast, in future surroundings.

On visual matters, one can be sure that—whatever it is—Ruskin has said it before; and has often said it better. Just so, I rediscovered, when I had almost completed these notes, the following long passage in the fourth volume of *Modern Painters*, which (read in the light of a few necessary additions to human experience since Ruskin's death, and allowing for a few Ruskinian prejudices—that things abroad are automatically better and truer and righter than things in England, for instance) puts the whole case for the urgent necessity of visual planning as well as it ever can or ever will be put.

"For instance, I cannot find words to express the intense pleasure I have always in first finding myself, after some prolonged stay in England, at the foot of the old tower of Calais church. The large neglect, the noble unsightliness of it; the record of its years written so visibly, yet without sign of weakness or decay; its stern wasteness and gloom, eaten away by the Channel winds, and overgrown with the bitter sea grasses; its slates and tiles all shaken and rent, and yet not falling; its desert of brick-work full of bolts, and holes, and ugly fissures, and yet strong like a bare brown rock; its carelessness of what any one thinks or feels about it, putting forth no claim, having no beauty or desirableness, pride, nor grace; yet neither asking for pity; not, as ruins are, useless and piteous, feebly or fondly garrulous of better days; but useful still, going through its own daily work—as some old fisherman beaten grey by storm, yet drawing his daily nets: so it stands, with no complaint about its past youth, in blanching and meagre massiveness and serviceableness, gathering human souls together underneath it; the sound of its bells for prayer still rolling through its rents; and the grey peak of it seen far across the sea, principal of the three that rise above the waste of surfy sand and hillocked shore—the lighthouse for life, and the belfry for labour, and this for patience and praise.

"I cannot tell the half of the strange pleasures and thoughts that come about me at the sight of



Ruskin's sensitivity to the qualities of pleasing decay comes out as clearly in his drawings as in his writing. A detail of the Cathedral of St. Lo, Normandy, from *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*.

that old tower; for, in some sort, it is the epitome of all that makes the Continent of Europe interesting, as opposed to new countries; and, above all, it completely expresses that agedness in the midst of active life which binds the old and the new into harmony. We, in England, have our new street, our new inn, our green shaven lawn, and our piece of ruin emergent from it—a mere specimen of the middle ages put on a bit of velvet carpet to be shown, which, but for its size, might as well be on a museum shelf at once, under cover. But, on the Continent, the links are unbroken between the past and present, and, in such use as they can serve for, the grey-headed wrecks are suffered to stay with men; while, in unbroken line, the generations of spared buildings are seen succeeding each in its place. And thus in its largeness, in its permitted evidence of slow decline, in its poverty, in its absence of all pretence, of all show and care for outside aspect, that Calais tower has an infinity of symbolism in it, all the more striking because usually seen in contrast with English scenes expressive of feelings the exact reverse of these.

"And I am sorry to say that the opposition is most distinct in that noble carelessness as to what people think of it. Once, on coming from the Continent, almost the first inscription I saw in my native English was this:—

To Let, a Genteel House, up this road.

And it struck me forcibly, for I had not come across the idea of gentility, among the upper limestones of the Alps, for seven months; nor do I think that the Continental nations in general have the idea. They would have advertised a 'pretty' house, or a 'large' one, or a 'convenient' one; but they could not, by any use of the terms afforded by their several languages, have got at the English 'genteel.' Consider, a little, all the meanness that there is in that epithet, and then see, when next you cross the Channel, how scornful of it that Calais spire will look.

"Of which spire the largeness and age are also opposed exactly to the chief appearances of modern England, as one feels them on first returning to it; that marvellous smallness both of houses and scenery, so that a ploughman in the valley has his head on a level with the tops of all the hills in the neighbourhood; and a house is organized into complete establishment—parlour, kitchen, and all, with a knocker to its door, and a garret window to its roof, and a bow to its second story, on a scale of 12 feet wide by 15 high, so that three such at least would go into the granary of an ordinary Swiss cottage: and also our serenity of perfection, our peace of conceit, everything being done that vulgar minds can conceive as wanting to be done; the spirit of well-principled housemaids everywhere, exerting itself for perpetual propriety and renovation, so that nothing is old, but only 'old-fashioned,' and contemporary, as it were, in date and impressiveness only with last year's bonnets. Abroad, a building of the eighth or tenth century stands ruinous in the open street; the children play round it, the peasants heap their corn in it, the buildings of yesterday nestle about it, and fit their new stones into its rents, and tremble in sympathy as it trembles. No one wonders at it, or thinks of it as separate, and of another time; we feel the ancient world to be a real thing, and one with the new: antiquity is no dream; it is rather the children playing about the old stones that are the dream. But all is continuous; and the words, 'from generation to generation,' understandable there."⁽¹⁰⁾

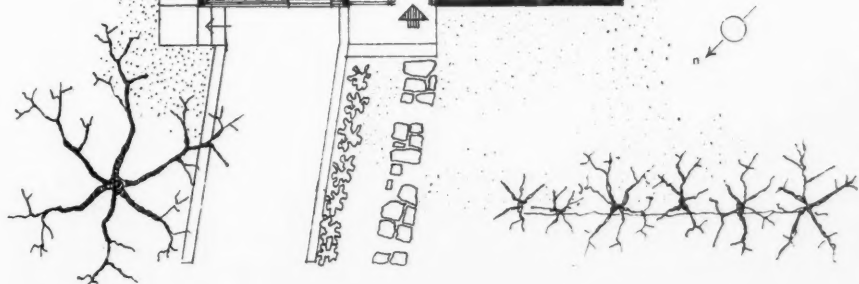
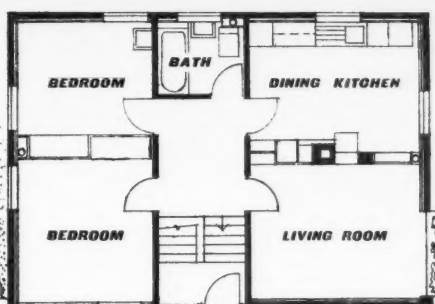
Sources of the quotations

- (1) Henry James, *English Hours* (1905).
- (2) William Morris, *The Beauty of Life* (lecture delivered at Birmingham in the 'eighties).
- (3) George Crabbe, *The Borough* (1810).
- (4) O. G. S. Crawford, "The Work of Giants," *Antiquity*, 1936.
- (5) J. T. Smith, *Remarks on Rural Scenery* (1797).
- (6) Henry James, *op. cit.*
- (7) A. R. Powys, *From the Ground Up* (Essays posthumously published, 1937).
- (8) J. M. Faulkner, *The Nebuly Coat* (1903).
- (9) Lucy Elizabeth Beedham, *Ruined and Deserted Churches* (1908).
- (10) John Ruskin, *Modern Painters* (1856).

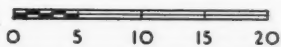
Above: the Peckwater quadrangle at Christ Church, Oxford, before and after the renewal of the stonework in what amounts almost to a complete rebuilding. Below: the Bodleian Library, Oxford; partial restoration has here produced contrasting textures infinitely preferable to the mechanical deadness of the Peckwater to-day.



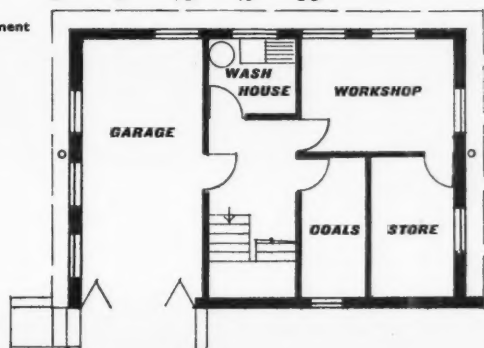
ground floor



FEET



basement



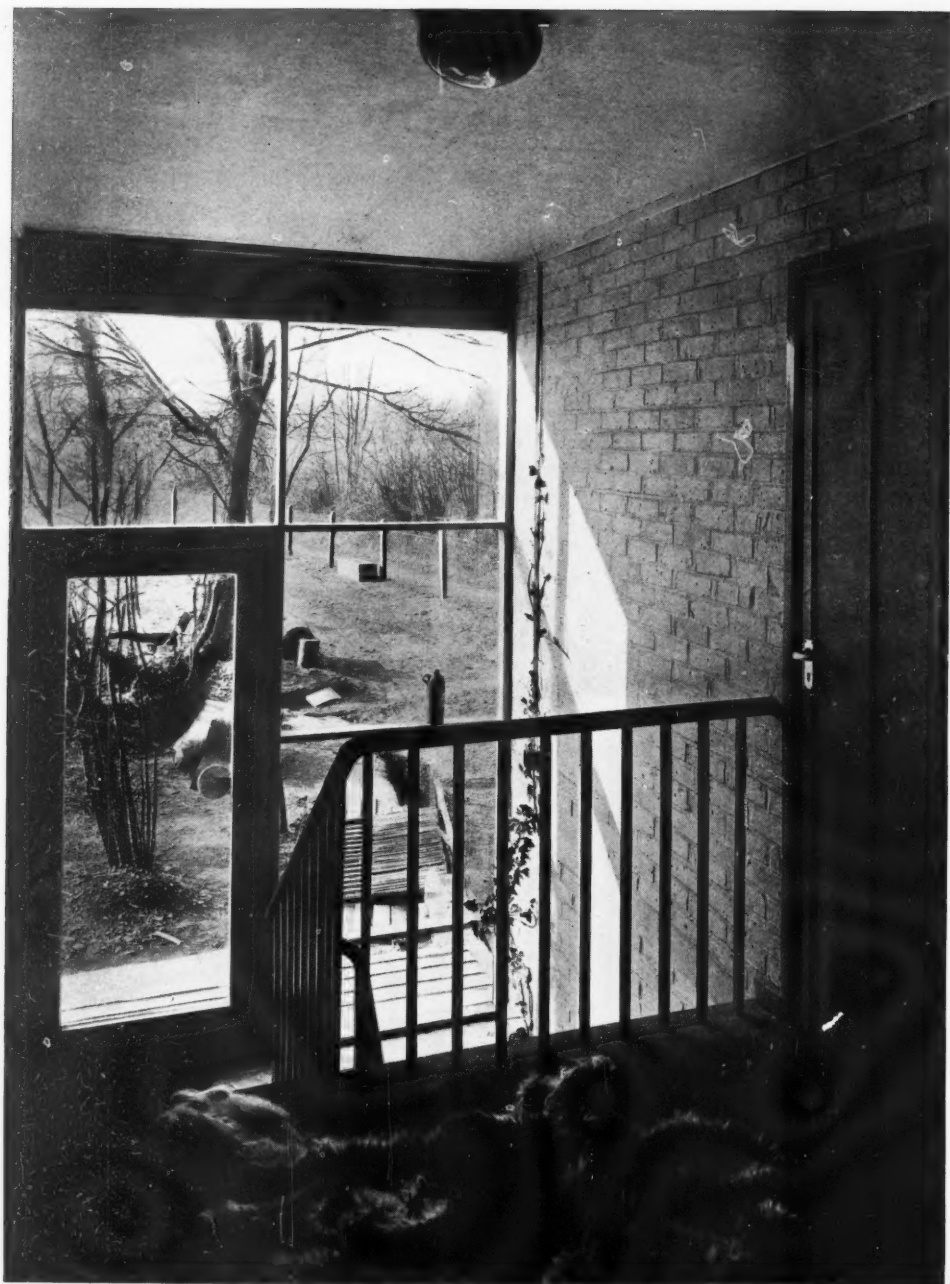
HOUSE AT BEACONSFIELD

JUNE PARK: ARCHITECT

The house has been built as a lodge to the owner's house and is at the bottom of his garden. The south-east elevation looks out across the orchard and garden towards the house. The basement is built in 9 in. brickwork and is tanked below ground level. The walls above the basement rest on a 5 in. concrete slab and are of 4½ in. brickwork with creosoted battens and an inner lining of 2 in. boards of paper-covered compressed straw. The wall above the garage opening is of two skins of similar boards with battens between, the external skin being rendered. (A key for rendering is obtained by tearing the paper). The roof is flat and is constructed of 7 by 2 in. joists covered with ½ in. diagonal boarding to give stability to the building and this is covered with sheet asphalt roofing. Most of the window and door fittings came from Sweden. The external brickwork is of second-hand stock brick. The paintwork externally is white except for certain parts on the north-west and south-west elevations which are picked out in pure red oxide.



north-west elevation



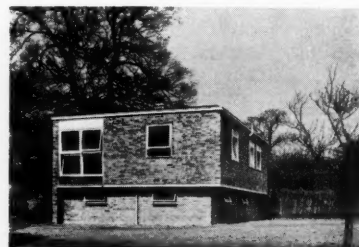
2

HOUSE AT BEACONSFIELD



3

1 (on the previous page), the house from the west. 2, looking out from the landing of the main living floor to the entrance, with the door to the larger bedroom on the right. 3, the north-west elevation, with contrasted textures in the wall over the garage (rendered strawboard) and living room wall of stock brick. 4, the south-west elevation; living room and dining kitchen above, store and workshop below.



4

A MODEL VILLAGE IN UPPER EGYPT

By Raymond Mortimer

AN architecture in which the claims of convenience, hygiene and economy have been so imaginatively satisfied that the result is beauty—this, though it sounds too good to be true, is what I found last Spring in a village now being constructed in Upper Egypt. Returning to Cairo after twenty years, I was appalled by its changed appearance: skyscrapers that are at once coarse and mean-looking, built in a style that pretends to be modern and succeeds only in being already old-fashioned, have destroyed the once beautiful silhouette of the city. Though most of these are designed by foreigners, the Cairenes seem to regard them with a complacency all the more shocking, because they have under their eyes Islamic monuments that are among the supreme masterpieces of architecture. The richer Egyptians seem to despise their own civilization, once so nobly expressed in buildings, furniture and clothes; yet they take from the West chiefly what we Occidentals deplore as vulgar and ridiculous. They revel in Swiss chalets, Gothic palaces and Germanically modernistic tenements, which they proceed to adorn with sham Renaissance furniture, oil-paintings from the *Salon*, half-timbering in the roadhouse manner and ornaments from the Paris Exhibition of twenty years ago.

It was a surprise, therefore, as well as a delight to come upon a village in course of construction near Luxor, that revealed conspicuous imagination and good taste. I succeeded in meeting its architect, an Egyptian named Hassan Fathy Bey; and I spent a night in one of its houses, which enabled me to appreciate the refinement in the proportions of these apparently so simple buildings.

The history of this building-scheme is singular. The limestone hills on the western side of the Nile valley opposite Luxor are riddled with innumerable tombs, many of them royal. This is the necropolis of Thebes, the capital of the Pharaohs, and the chief source of the fantastic treasures by which ancient Egyptian civilization is known to us. The site still offers to archaeologists the promise of marvellous discoveries. On the lower slopes of these hills are five hamlets that form one village of some six thousand inhabitants, which is called Gournah. The Egyptian Service of Antiquities wishes to remove these hamlets in order to excavate the site. Some of the houses actually open into tombs, and animals are stabled among wall-paintings thousands of years old. In the past, moreover, the villagers have profited by their peculiar situation, digging through their floors to the ancient burial-places and removing treasures from them for illicit sale. Rather than provide an indemnity in cash for the dispossessed inhabitants, the Department wisely obtained the consent of the Government to build a new village in the plain, where the people would be close to the fields they cultivate. The design for this new Gournah was entrusted to Hassan Fathy Bey, a lecturer in the Cairo Ecole des Beaux Arts. In the design of various private

houses he had shown an understanding, all too rare in Egypt, of the local tradition of design.

He began by getting to know the villagers individually, discussing their needs and their wishes. Then he produced his scheme for the new Gournah. This consists of a single agglomeration, divided into five quarters, corresponding to the five existing hamlets; and a centre which contains the mosque, the town hall, the bazaar or shopping-place, the Sheik's house and a Khan. (In this Khan artisans will live and work, weavers, potters, carpenters—craftsmen who will have to be imported since the villagers have hitherto neglected these useful activities.)

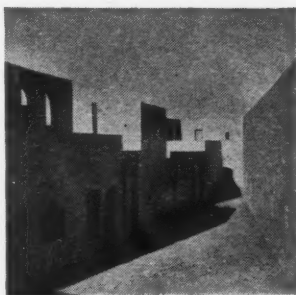
At the corner nearest the station of the little local railway is the market-place, planted with trees, with an arcade at one end and a café nearby. Here, except on market days, the children will be free to play. Shade is a prime necessity in Upper

Egypt, where the sun blazes, with a ferocity almost unendurable in summer, from a sky that seldom knows a cloud. The orientation of the streets and the provision of arcades make it possible to walk through the village in the shade, and the houses are designed to catch the prevailing wind.

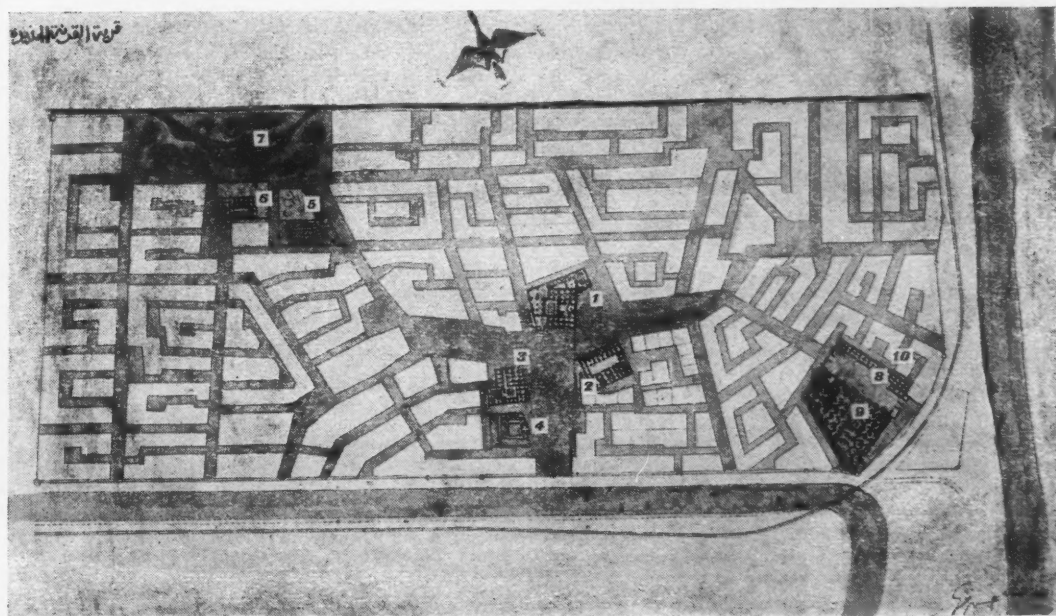
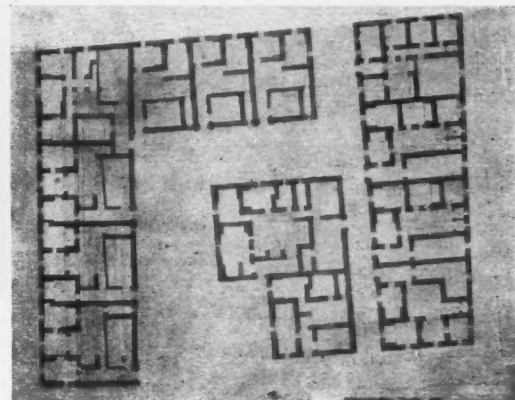
At another corner there is to be a large pool, with stone sides, to cool the air and to provide healthy bathing. (The Nile water with which the fields are irrigated is infested with an organism that produces bilharzia, the most widespread disease in the country.) Every precaution against malaria is also arranged: a few years ago an epidemic of malaria killed a quarter of the inhabitants of Gournah.

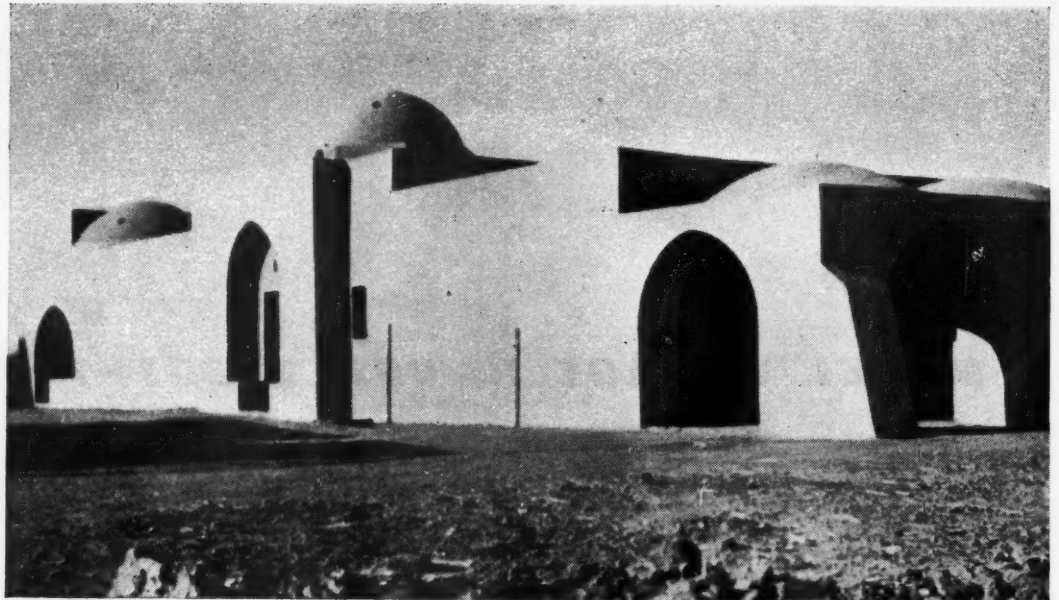
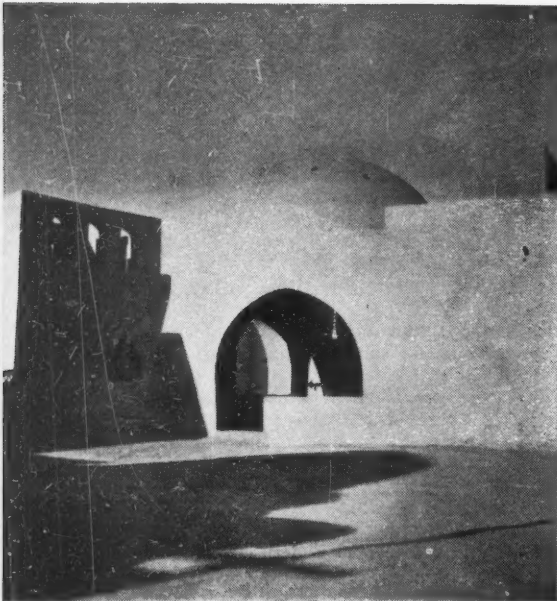
The architect decided that the most practical and economical method of construction would be the method that has been used locally for centuries. (Who except a German could be astonished at this?) The material is the sun-baked brick with which men have built in the Nile valley since before history. The mud is taken from any adjoining field, mixed with the straw mentioned by Moses, and with cattle-urine; it is then hardened by exposure to the sun into bricks of three sizes, for walls ($26 \times 12 \times 7$ cm.), for vaults ($27 \times 15 \times 5$), for domes ($23 \times 14 \times 5$). The exorbitant price of wood in Egypt makes the use of domed

Right, a street of houses in the completed portion of the village and a plan of a group of typical houses. Most of the houses consist of two domed rooms, a courtyard and a stable, but some are larger. Below, a plan of the whole village, showing the subdivision into five sections and the placing of the various public buildings. The village is bounded on the south, east and north by an existing canal and a new subsidiary canal.

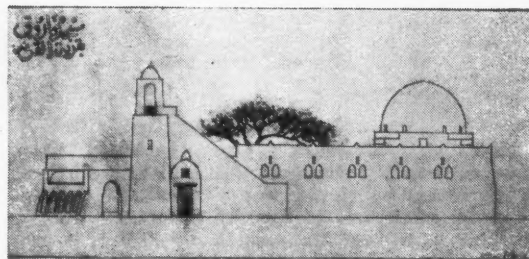
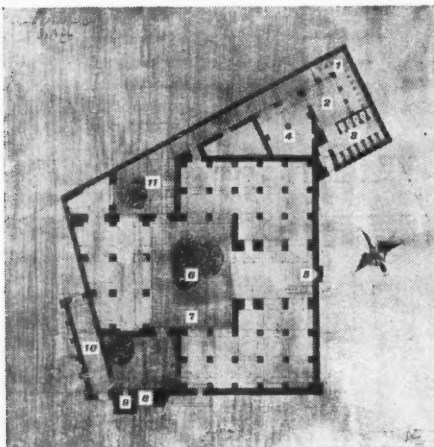


Key to plan of village: 1, mosque; 2, khan (or shopping centre); 3, mayor's office and village hall; 4, police station; 5, school; 6, school-master's house; 7, artificial lake; 8, market-place; 9, cattle-pens; 10, market-stalls.



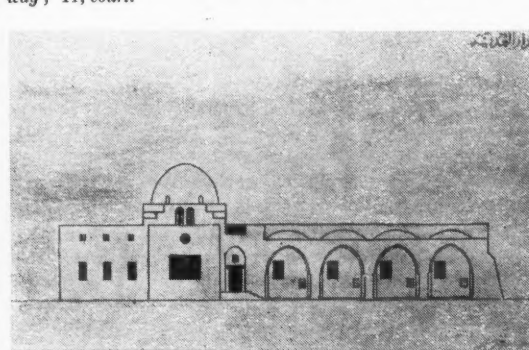
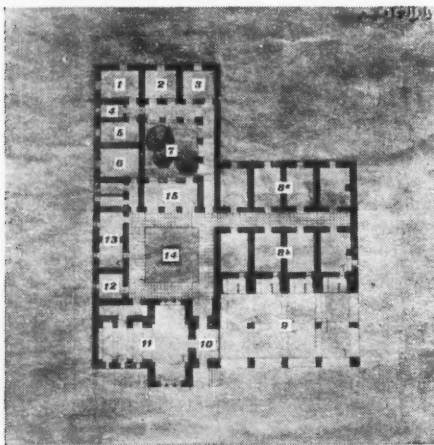


Above left, a covered well. One of these is provided in each of the five sections of the village. The area beneath the mud-brick dome is sunk to prevent flooding of the street. Within the archway are benches where the women can sit while awaiting their turn to draw water. Above right, the khan or shopping centre with its domed arcade (see plan on this page). Below, a staircase in construction: the pure geometry of mud-brick architecture.



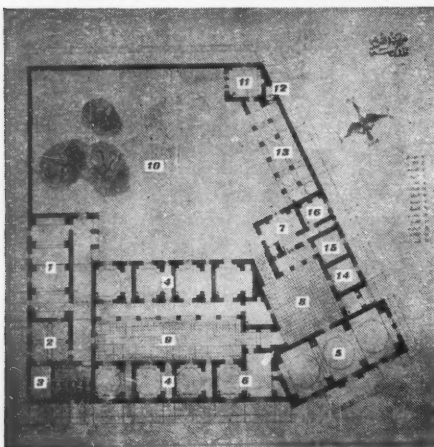
Above and left, entrance elevation and plan of the mosque in the centre of the village (see village plan on preceding page). The covered way on the left has seats for passers-by and is designed to catch the prevailing wind. The tree is in the enclosed courtyard. The large dome marks the position of the mihrab, the niche which is always orientated towards Mecca.

Key to plan of mosque: 1, ablutions; 2, ablution court; 3, latrines and shower-baths; 4, subsidiary mosque; 5, mihrab; 6, pool; 7, open court; 8, entrance; 9, minaret; 10, covered way; 11, court.



Above and left, elevation and plan of the mayor's office and village hall, across the central open space from the mosque.

Key to plan of mayor's office and village hall: 1, 2 and 3, guest rooms for visiting inspectors and government officials; 4, w.c.; 5, bath-room; 6, kitchen; 7, open court; 8a, offices; 8b, offices serving the public (post, telegraph, taxes, rationing, etc.); 9, public vestibule opening on to main square; 10, entrance; 11, mayor's office (used for hearing local cases); 12, clerks; 13, co-operative society's offices; 14, open court; 15, arcade.



Left, plan of village school (see general plan of village on preceding page). Key to plan: 1, dining-room; 2, kitchen; 3, store; 4, class-rooms; 5, assembly hall (which can also be used as a public assembly hall for the village); 6, master's room; 7, head-master's room; 8 and 9, courtyards; 10, main courtyard; 11, small mosque; 12, store; 13, open shed; 14, visiting doctor's room; 15, visitors' room; 16, secretary and clerks.

ceilings an economy; and these domes, pierced with small openings, give dignity to small rooms, making them seem more spacious. The masons, brought from Assouan, are remarkable hereditary craftsmen, who construct vaults and domes without centering; and these will support a great weight so that the villagers can use their roofs for storage. The foundations are of rubble, the doors of wood; otherwise the whole building is in brick, including raised recesses that serve as tables, seats and cupboards. The houses are plastered and white-washed. Their only ornaments are little balustrades of open brickwork, but the mosque will be appropriately embellished.

The houses are designed to preserve the privacy demanded by Moslems, with an angle in the entry-passage, and a small interior *patio*, planted with a tree. The houses have two stories, the upper one containing a terrace. The ground floor includes a space for cattle, which the fellaheen like to keep under their eyes, and this is so arranged that they cannot bring them into the rest of the



house, as is their unhygienic habit. Each family from old Gournah will find in the new village a house suited to their numbers and requirements, and near their old neighbours.

The signal interest of the scheme lies in the art with which Hassan Fathy Bey has used the demands made by economy, hygiene and social custom to produce architecture that is aesthetically excellent. The part of the village that has already been built affords intense pleasure to the eye by its variety, simplicity and harmony. A limited number of forms have been so orchestrated as to produce an effect that one feels to be natural as well as picturesque. Here the functionalist and

the traditionalist can for once agree in admiration.

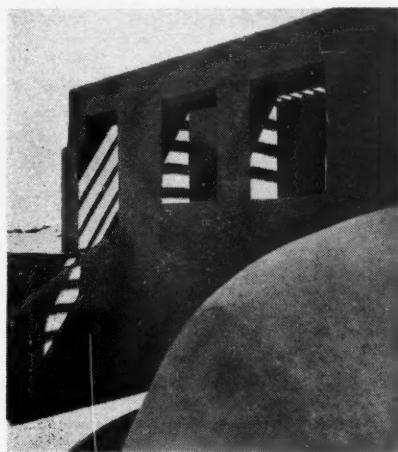
Nowhere in Egypt did I discover a more impressive proof of continuing vitality: this comparatively modest scheme reveals a sureness of taste that reminded me of the fine Islamic art of the Middle Ages. Indeed I know of no other new housing scheme in any country that so well combines simplicity with elegance, usefulness with variety. This is an unmechanical, essentially human architecture, which suits the landscape and will positively improve with time.

When the village is completed, it will provide a model for the rural housing that is needed throughout Egypt to meet the growth of the population, to raise their standard of living and to improve their health. It will incidentally attract visits from experts from every country who concern themselves with contemporary architecture. But will it be completed? The scheme, which in England, France or the United States would excite widespread interest, has received comparatively little attention in Egypt, except from foreigners. The very fact that it employs traditionally Islamic idiom seems to diminish its attractions, although the Egyptians are passionately nationalistic. This is paradox of which I shall not attempt an explanation: it would

carry me too far from my subject. I am now concerned only to provide a short description, and to express the delight I received from a remarkable work of art. After sleeping in the vaulted recess of a square, domed room, I rose early, and from the roof watched the dawn bright above the other side of the Nile, and then the majestic hills above old Gournah rose-coloured as they caught the sun. This is one of the most numinous sites the world contains, and what wonder that the Pharaohs chose it for their temples and their tombs? A huddle of shacks here in the foreground would be a disgrace to Egypt. The village that has begun to rise, so far from disfiguring the landscape, will take its place serenely on the road between the river and the Ramasseum, and foreign visitors will realize that Egyptian art has a present as well as a past.

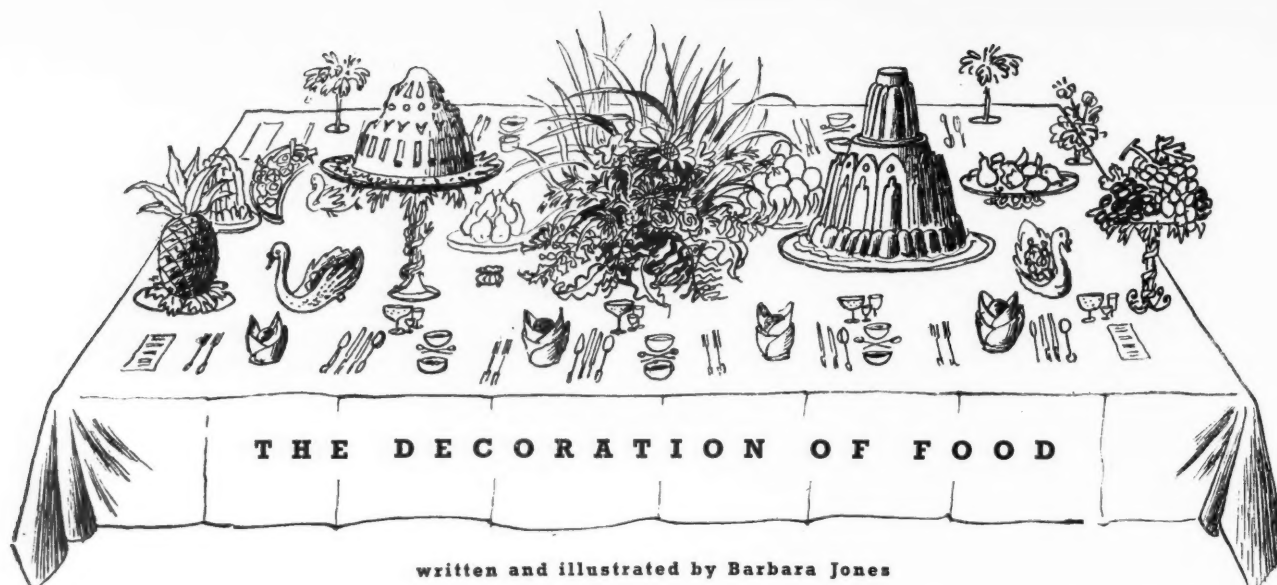
acknowledgments

Acknowledgment for information on which parts of this article are based is due to Mr. Villiers Bergne and Mr. Austen St. B. Harrison. The illustration material was provided either by Mr. Bergne or by Mr. Harrison, and the plans are reproduced by courtesy of the architect of the village, Hassan Fathy Bey.



Left, simple geometrical forms produced by using mud brick in traditional Egyptian style. Below, the first section of the village to be almost completed, seen across the rough ground on which another section will shortly be built. The nearest building, with a row of small domes, is the khan or shopping centre. It is marked 2 on the general plan of the village on page 97, and shares the central village square with the mosque, the police station and the village hall.





written and illustrated by Barbara Jones

Cookery is the most ephemeral of the arts; prepared and adorned through patient hours or even days, its most exquisite results are gone for ever in a few moments. All that can be hoped is that a few bones may remain to make a foundation of stock on which to build the balanced hot and cold, sweet and sour, of a future menu. All the interpretative arts fade on the instant of the falling voice or the closing piano, but most of them are capable of excellent preservation by gramophone record or film, while good cooking has only the savourless echo of the receipt book. And however accurate and careful this may be, the cookbooks of the last forty years have had very few pictures and have paid little attention to the look of the thing.



The great volumes which guided cooks throughout the last century were mostly there to give new hints to professionals, and since the writers could confidently expect the professionals to be bolstered up right and left by kitchen-maids, the books were most wonderfully illustrated with engravings of fine effects for all occasions—no cake that was not all baroque, no pie without its encrustations. It is impossible to estimate the change produced by the last fifty years in the percentages of private families employing cooks, but the drop in numbers must be enormous, and most homes to-day are not merely without a cook but without any servants at all, so that the more complicated methods of cooking go to the wall. Surprisingly, though, there survives into this age of hurried meals and shop-preparation, an iron hard tradition of food decoration so deeply inbred that the rawest novice making his first pie finds his fingers tweaking pastry into instinctive ornamental shapes as old as flour and water. Within the rigid limits of the tradition, no two people twiddle pastry in exactly the same way, as can be seen if the long succession of family pies is broken by an interloper, "home-made" still, but by another hand. They are poles apart.



This tradition has not only survived the rationing of two wars and a terrific drop in time spent cooking, it has also survived a far more insidious evil—refinement. For most of this century, housewives have been subjected to powerful journalistic direction towards wispiness and gracious living, towards the embroidered crinoline-lady and the little mat; in the decent interval which must elapse in any home magazine between the publication of two articles on "Flower Arrangement," we may frequently still find similar pleas for the artistic arrangement of food; vegetables and salads, difficult though they are to spoil, have probably suffered most in this way, new shapes for the dicing and mangling of vegetables being invented almost monthly. However, common sense seems to be winning, as some of the writers have retracted, and taste now permits all the more wieldy vegetables to be served in their natural shapes. Turnips and swedes can be sensibly mashed. (Nobody ever managed to think up much to do with peas.)



There are, of course, many foods such as butter which are easier to handle as well as prettier to look at when art has

played its part, and tradition is strong in most of them, beautifully adapted to different foods and occasions; the most ancient designs still adorn the humbler food for every day, and the more recently adopted fantasies of rococo rise in sugar for festivals. The decoration takes various forms—colouring, moulding, piping and modelling, cutting, stamping and graffiti, or several all together. Moulds are used to shape such things as blancmanges which are liquid when made and later set solid as they cool. They come in very fine effects, halfway between a baronial hall and advanced geometry. Stamping works wonders with butter; earlier ages, less rushed, impressed its surface for every public appearance with the lovely rural shapes of cow and swan and rose, and even to-day it appears in little balls and rolls. Only our really ambitious attempts at sculpting it fail dismally—there was a life-size yellow Test Match at Wembley in 1924 that made grisly comparison with the butter-sculpture produced in Tibet. Piping is done by filling a forcing-bag with something malleable which will set hard, such as icing-sugar, and squeezing it out of the bag through one of a series of shaped nozzles. Great skill can be employed here, and cakes, biscuits and puddings provide the finest opportunity for culinary fireworks.

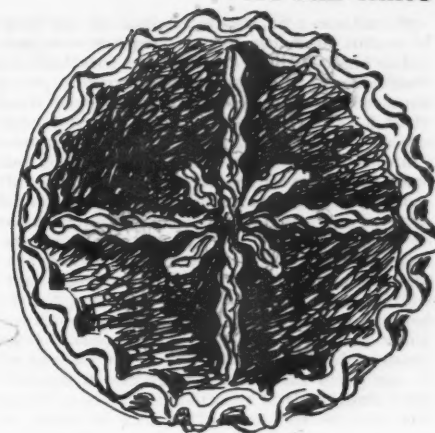
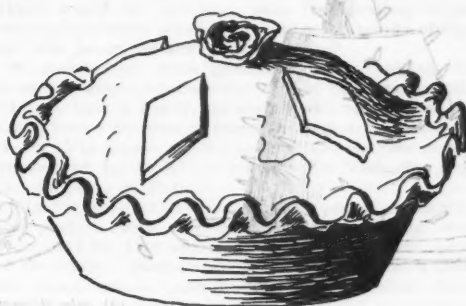
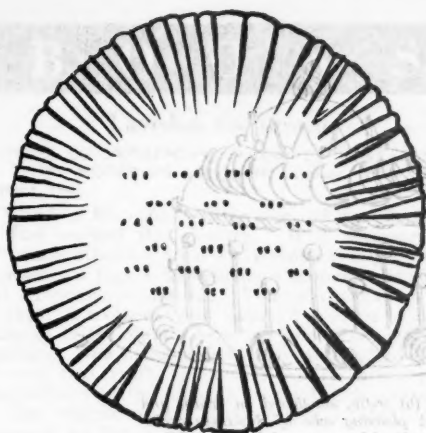


At the present time, cakes for weddings and birthdays show the most elaborate invention, as these can be ordered from a shop and made by experts, but a glance into Mrs. Beeton's *Household Management* for, say, 1880, will show how sweets and desserts once rivalled the most complicated of cakes, and stood in the centre of the table so rich and high that one row of diners must have been quite invisible to the other. Let us hope that one day when our present state of transition between a complicated home with a lot of servants and a truly labour-saving one with none at all is safely over, we shall have time ourselves to create a cottage orné in sugar, or even a Venetian villa in marzipan.



Some brilliant colours are used in cooking, anciently governed of course by the possibility of using only edible dyes, and we have such vivid foods as Dutch cheeses (dyed specially for sale to the English with their well-known flamboyant tastes), eggs coloured at Easter with onions, beetroot juice or cochineal, bright saffron cakes in Cornwall, and all the array of jellies, fondants, icings and blancmanges. Probably to-day almost any colour could be safely produced, but the old dyes were in ranges of reds, yellows and greens, and there seems to be no disposition to go further; apart from the fact that many preparations are coloured to support a claim to "fruit flavourings," no one seems to want to eat blue food. This must be because of some inherent wish in all of us to keep so basic a function as eating within some sort of natural bounds, and blue occurs very, very rarely in natural foods—veins in Stilton, and the uneaten skins of fish and grapes, and then not brightly—so, although we now accept such artificial creations as black tulips to look at, we are more conservative about things to eat, and shrink nervously from the thought of even blue cocktails. Blue soup seems beyond conjecture. How strange, then, to remember that when we wish to praise a chef we say that he is "cordon bleu."

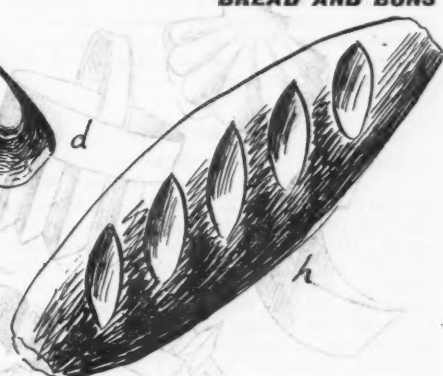
PIES AND TARTS



First, the graffito-with-a-fork technique for small pies, then the modelled decoration method for large ones, and lastly, the spiral twist convention for open jam tarts.

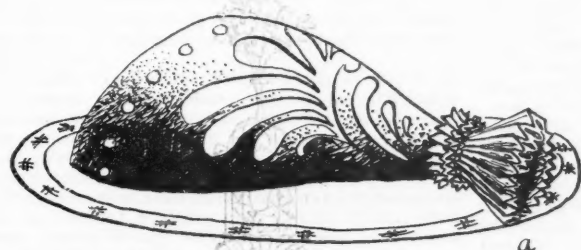
MOULD AND CUTTERS

BREAD AND BUNS



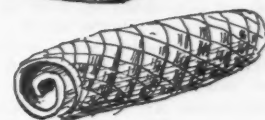
(a) a loaf with a dough plait. (b) crescent roll with currants. (c) Chelsea bun. (d) sugar-lick bun. (e) hot cross bun, made on Good Fridays. (f) Russian slice. (g) sugar bun. (h) a loaf with slashes like Elizabethan clothes.

COLD FOOD



(a) ham; this sort of decoration can be made either by slashing the bread-crumbs to show the white-fat shirt, or by squirting melted butter on to it. (b) tongue; decoration in two tones of glaze. (c) radish slit to make a flower for salad decoration. (d) game pie (some nineteenth century dishes were a little insensitive).

BUTTER

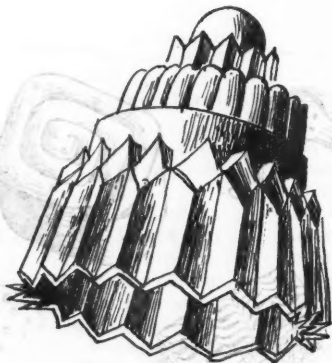
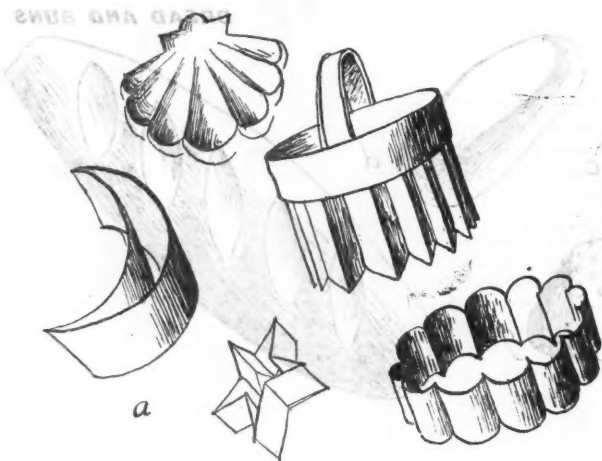


Swan and cow, balls and roll. The modelled rose is placed on a real leaf.



(a) cake decorations. (b) trifle, smothered in cream and stuck with almonds. A pleasing echo of Sudanese architecture. (c) apples à la Parisienne, an elaborate pudding.

MOULDS AND CUTTERS



(a) pastry and biscuit cutters. (b) moulds in copper and earthenware for jellies, creams and blancmanges. (c) fancy biscuits.

CHEFS D'OEUVRE



(a) cottage orné for a centrepiece at a dinner party, made of hard paste and marzipan. (b) alternatively, a pagoda. (c) a wedding cake. Usually white, and may be anything up to four feet high.

BOOKS

Lavedan Continued

HISTOIRE DE L'URBANISME. Volume 2: RENAISSANCE ET TEMPS MODERNES. By Pierre Lavedan. Paris, Henri Laurens, 1941.

ONLY a few copies of this splendid work have so far reached this country. It is necessary to draw attention to it most emphatically; for it represents a high achievement of prolonged research and scrupulous scholarship. Volume I had come out in 1928. Its original and balanced account of town planning in the Middle Ages had proved the author's qualities. Now he has added some five hundred pages of solid text (with about 300 mostly rather poor illustrations) on the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. A third volume on the nineteenth and twentieth is promised for future publication.

Professor Lavedan's main subject in the second volume is the planned town or town quarter from the beginning of the Renaissance to the French Revolution—star shapes designed for aesthetic or fortificatory reasons and chess-board grids designed for aesthetic or utilitarian reasons. The arrangement of his chapters does not always make it easy to follow the precise course of the development and what influences and counter-influences connected the various countries. The reader is well advised to make up his own charts if he wants to see how certain Italian and French formulas were adopted, and adapted, by the other nations.

What he will not see—and that seems to me the one major criticism of the book—is wherein precisely Britain's contribution lies. He will find some twenty pages on London (not without some of those minor mistakes which it is almost impossible for the foreigner to avoid*), and a few competent paragraphs on Bath and Edinburgh. But he will not get an idea of the English principle of informality and the free grouping of isolated units which is the clue to Oxford and Cambridge, and also to London and Bath. It is the principle which THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW some years ago decided to call Exterior Furnishing.† But then what English book would expound that principle either? The truth of the matter is that it is high time for a book on visual planning in England.

Meanwhile the rest of this review can be devoted to a miscellany of curious facts from Professor Lavedan's book.

A contemporary pamphlet against Bramante's metropolitan improvements in Rome represents him after his death suggesting to St. Peter that the narrow way should be replaced by a wide, straight and well-paved road.

The plan of 1545 for Vitry-le-François drawn by the Italian engineer Marini, shows an undeniable appreciation of the differences between A and B roads, that is main traffic arteries and residential roads with their entries and exits arranged so as to discourage through-traffic.

The mechanical American system of street denomination is heralded at Vitry too: North Street, East Street, South Street, West Street; and in between January Street, February Street and so on.

Separation of horse traffic from pedestrian traffic by bollards dividing off special pavements appears for the first time at Ferrara in 1492. The earliest real raised pavements in Paris were built on the Pont Neuf, opened in 1606. After that time London took the lead in this as in so many other matters of practical city improvements.

The idea of the precinct in our sense is formulated by Palladio: "Large squares are introduced in cities to allow people to walk about and talk. . . . There should be several such in a town, and one should be the principal square which might be called the public piazza."

Street widths are an interesting chapter. There was a dispute in Paris in 1507 whether a main road was to be 18 or 20 feet wide. The new thoroughfares of Julius II in Rome (Via Lungara, Via Giulia) had widths of 13 and 25 feet. But Ferrara laid out its two new main corsos in 1492 with a width of about 50 feet. Even that, however, appears of a pleasant human smallness compared with Louis XIV's three main roads of Versailles with their megalomaniac 225 and 275 feet width.

The earliest master-plan for a whole new district to be opened up is that for the Norrmalm in Stockholm, drawn up in 1640. A master-plan to cope with all building problems of Paris was demanded by Jacques François Blondel in his *Cours d'Architecture* of 1773:

* Gwynn's brilliant *London and Westminster Improved* of 1790, duly emphasized in its importance by Mr. Summerson in his *Georgian London*, seems to have escaped Professor Lavedan's notice, although he would no doubt have been specially interested in its dependence on Patte d'Oie.

† Professor Lavedan has incidentally found for himself the same word—"le décor urbain meuble"—but without putting it to the best use.

"Of what immense advantage would it have been for Paris, if fifty years ago a plan of the whole city had been drawn up and lines traced on it to indicate where people should put up new houses, and where would be the best sites for erecting those monuments which should not only serve public utility but also be an ornament to the city."

Semi-detached working-class housing existed in Versailles already before the end of the seventeenth century, that is before our own model villages began. Tree-planted avenues in towns go back to the time of Henry IV in France and were one of the most prominent features of Louis XIV's schemes for Versailles and the ramparts of Paris.

Finally, two quotations of a more general significance. The perfect motto for Baroque town-planning was discovered by Professor Lavedan in the second part of Descartes's *Discours de la méthode*. He says that old towns which have gradually grown into their final shape are as a rule badly arranged, and adds: "In considering their buildings individually one finds often much art in them, but if one looks at their grouping with a large house here, a small one there, and with twisted and uneven streets, one would say that accident rather than been responsible for them than the will of particular people using their reason."

This passage from Descartes gives the positive aspect of French formal planning. Mme. de Maintenon in a casual remark about Louis XIV gives the negative. She is talking of his favourite arrangement of rooms in a palace *en suite*, that is with one axis for all doors: "With him grandeur, magnificence and symmetry is everything. Never mind if we catch all the draughts, as long as the doors are in a straight line. *Il faut périr en symétrie*."

NIKOLAUS PEVSNER

Planning the Survey

COUNTY TOWN: A CIVIC SURVEY FOR THE PLANNING OF WORCESTER. By Janet Glaisyer, T. Brennan, W. Ritchie and P. Sargent Florence. John Murray. 21s.

COMMISSIONED on behalf of the City of Worcester, this Survey was undertaken by a team of research workers directed by Professor P. Sargent Florence, from the Faculty of Commerce and Social Science of the University of Birmingham. Mr. Tom Brennan deals mainly with questions of Population, Industry and Housing; Miss Janet Glaisyer with Sociological Aspects; Professor Sargent Florence with the Physical and Economic structure; and Mr. Walter Ritchie with the illustrations and presentation.

"County Town" forms part of a trilogy with the West Midland Group's study of the rural pattern in the neighbouring county of Herefordshire, and the urban way of life in the regional capital Birmingham.

Some architects will greet the appearance of this book with scant enthusiasm. "One more survey," they will yawn. "Yet another group of would-be planners trying to bury their frustration in deeper and deeper researches into the way other people eat and drink and live and die. An architect, if he is worth his salt," they continue, "does not need all this information. It is in the air he breathes, the sounds he hears and the things he sees. There's more in the smell of the main street of a town on a Saturday afternoon than in hundreds of pages of statistics and figures and answers to Gallup polls."

But the authors have their answer ready. "Our Civic Survey," they say in the introduction, "presents facts, and on the basis of certain objectives that meet social and economic needs, puts forward recommendations. Architects then make use of these facts and recommendations in building up the detailed town plan." They go on to define Survey on page 286 as "a continuing process in the life of a community, a stocktaking of resources and conditions that allows the citizen to have a comprehensive understanding of the life and activity in which he participates."

It would be foolish to reject Surveys carried out on this basis. Nothing but good can come from a publication which results in increasing our knowledge of the many-sided life harboured within the walls of a county town. The information collected by the authors is admirably documented and the illustrations are clear, concise and in many cases the presentation is original. In particular Fig. 70 should be mentioned, illustrating the Scatter of Factories by picking them out in red on a half-tone aerial photograph. Another commendable feature is the italicized introduction to be found at the head of each chapter which gives a summary of the argument and the practical conclusions to which the Survey leads.

There can be no quarrel with the quantity of material assembled. The general conclusions arrived at approach sometimes a glimpse of the obvious, but the particular and vital piece of information is often lacking. This criticism can be illustrated by a single example.

On page 95, the authors, advancing a case for a by-pass, analyse a transport map on which the volume of traffic is illustrated by the width of a band and state: "It is not, of course, possible to say with exactitude how much weight of traffic was regional and how much was through-traffic, but the fact that a band of fairly continuous width is shown north and south of Worcester indicates the probability that there was a constant flow through Worcester." Now this particular piece of information is of vital importance to the planner. It would determine the need or otherwise of a by-pass. But, as the authors point out, it is not possible to make any precise deductions from the map illustrated. Even their surmise that the bulk of traffic was through-traffic is not justified by the evidence presented. The question can only be answered by a special Origin and Destination Census which would show just how many vehicles have some business in the town and how many pass through it without a stop. This one piece of information is of more importance to the planner than all the pages of information on bus services and bicycles that fill up the rest of the chapter.

To sum up. Surveys of the type of "County Town" are interesting and valuable as social studies, but as a contribution to planning they are as yet too diffuse in the fields that they cover and too generalized in their deductions. A more profound diagnosis, laying its finger on the critical aspects of a town's condition, is what is wanted. In fact, the first stage in planning should be Planning the Survey.

AILEEN TATTON BROWN

First Principles

TOWARDS A NEW ARCHITECTURE. By Le Corbusier. Architectural Press. 15s.

THIS is a facsimile reprint of Le Corbusier's masterpiece *Towards a New Architecture* in Mr. Etchell's translation. The publishers have (rightly I think) accepted the inevitable muzziness of the half-tone blocks in order to retain all Le Corbusier's original illustrations. These are bound to be the main attraction of the book to those familiar with the gospel as a whole. Particularly interesting to our eyes are the early aeroplanes, cars and steamships, both for their remarkably close affinities with Le Corbusier's architecture and in their own right as objects. One is inclined to guess that when the aesthetics of early machine-design come to be studied, this period, coming between the final shedding of all hangovers from handicraft and the triumph of streamline, will seem specially valuable and receive the same sort of attention as the fifth century B.C. in Greece and the twelfth A.D. in France. Certainly one cannot imagine Le Corbusier finding the same significance for architecture in the latest Buick.

This short note is no place for a revaluation of Le Corbusier's work as a whole, but even a casual flip through the familiar pages shows how much the cultural climate has changed since the twenties. Words like cell, mass-production and standardization no longer have quite the magic they had after the first war, and even architects have come to realize that the present dilemma is not as simple as "Architecture or Revolution."

The modern architect should not assume that he knows his Corb and can afford to do without this book if he does not possess it. These illustrations should be for ever beside him to remind him at intervals of how unoriginal he is and of the real difficulties of being creative. Indeed as the years pass and we begin to look over our standards afresh I think we shall realize more than ever the real greatness of Le Corbusier.

LIONEL BRETT

Plastics

PLASTICS IN THE WORLD OF TOMORROW. By Captain Burr W. Leyson. Paul Elek. 10s. 6d.

THERE exists today great interest in the subject of Plastics but the general public has, on the whole, a very hazy idea as to just what these materials are and what they can and cannot do. They have for the last few years been such a constant subject for various types of news-stories, many of them hastily and un-informally written, that all sorts of misconceptions about them are to be heard whenever the subject crops up. These misconceptions range from a devout belief that they are some kind of magic new material which can do anything, to an equally firm conviction that they are shoddy and unpleasant imitations of better materials and that objects made from them are bound to be both cheap and fragile. Both these poles of belief are equally incorrect and do the industry as a whole a great deal of harm, so that a book such as this one of Captain Leyson's is a welcome addition to the material available for the education of the public as to the real nature and functions of plastics in the modern world.

Captain Leyson has set himself a double task—to explain to the lay reader the nature of the various plastics and the uses to which they can be put, and to examine what are the possible openings for careers in the industry and the equipment of knowledge needful to these. The book is written in as simple and non-technical a manner as the subject will allow, and a great deal of ground is covered; but the book is extremely short (90 pages only of text) and it is obviously a difficult, if not impossible task to compress so huge and intricate a subject within these narrow limits. However, it should serve as a useful introductory primer and as there exists a very considerable body of more specialised literature, the interested reader can easily continue the subject after this preliminary introduction to it.

The book is divided into five sections: I. Careers in the Plastic Industry; II. The Principal Plastics, Characteristics and Industrial Uses; III. Plastics in the Aircraft Industry; IV. The Fabrication of Plastics; and V. Specific Uses of Plastics in Industry. It is completed by thirty-two pages of half-tone illustrations drawn from both British and American sources, a brief and somewhat incomplete bibliography (for instance, the valuable American annual, *Plastic Catalog*, is not listed), an Appendix of British trade names, and an Index.

Section I, Careers in the Plastic Industry, consists of two chapters: "A General Survey of the Uses of Plastics in Industry" and "The Fields and Opportunities of a Career in the Plastics Industry." The first chapter briefly surveys the various industries in which plastics are used, and the information given is, to a certain extent, repeated in another part of the book. One cannot help feeling that this chapter could well have been omitted as the information contained in it is lucidly set out in the Section on Specific Uses of Plastics in Industry in a way which makes quick reference easy. The actual chapter devoted to careers is disappointingly brief, consisting as it does of only two and a half pages; this subject is one which has received all too little attention to date, and it is a pity that, having devoted a whole section to it, the actual subject matter should be dismissed in so cursory a manner. Captain Leyson makes an excellent point as to the different types of knowledge required for the technical and practical aspects of the industry, but he also makes a most curious omission—nowhere is there any mention of the possibilities which the industry affords the industrial designer. True, he says "that for the person who has the knowledge of where plastics can be used there is an excellent field of endeavour, even if he is not equipped with a technical knowledge of plastics. But he must be able to make a practical application of them." But the word "designer" is sedulously avoided, yet this is one of the most interesting and important careers in the plastics industry. He discusses as a second field of activity the selling of plastics as materials and says that this overlaps with the first field which he defines as the "selling of the idea" of the plastics to be used. But how the plastic objects are to get themselves made after this idea has been successfully "sold" and to reach the point of sale of the second field of activity, without either design or designer, remains wrapped in mystery. Altogether, this section shows considerable confusion both of thought and expression which, happily, is absent from the rest of the book. The sections on the nature of the various plastics and on fabrication are both lucid and, within the limits of space, admirably comprehensive, though there are a few odd omissions. For instance, the section on fabrication describes the four most important methods—Compression, Injection, Transfer and Extrusion Moulding—in an interesting and easily understood way; but there is no mention of Casting, nor of the simpler methods of heat-forming Thermoplastics which offer such possibilities for inexpensive production of many popular articles. Again it is disappointing to find no description of the production of the newer plastic textile filaments or of the extremely important plastic coating of textile threads such as cotton or rayon which is used in the United States for such a large variety of industrial and consumer goods. Against these omissions there is an excellent chapter on the electronic bonding of plastics.

GRACE LOVAT FRASER

The Need for Figures

ESTIMATING HOUSING NEEDS. By Alexander Block. The Architectural Press. 10s. 6d.

At first sight, Mr. Block's theme might appear to be a very simple one. He is convinced, first, that housing needs should be and can be scientifically estimated; second, that so far this has not been done in this country. If Mr. Block were not so fully justified in his views, his work might be merely an academic exercise. In fact, however, such a book was

urgently required. The demographic aspects of housing, that is, the total number of dwellings required, and their distribution by type and size, are still arbitrarily, not scientifically determined, nor is the need and the capacity for research in this field generally appreciated. In part, as Mr. Block shows, this might be due to the fact that existing population statistics are inadequate for estimating housing needs. Pre-war census information, in its published form, is ambiguous and thus subject to faulty interpretation.

Mr. Block exposes the misconceptions which have arisen and shows the way towards a more exact measurement of housing requirements. Housing needs are determined by the differentiation of the population into units, not by the total number in the population. Such differentiation does not run exactly parallel with population trends, nor is it entirely determined by them. The total number of units formed by a declining population will continue to increase for the time being. Moreover, the number of units formed is also dependent on the number of dwellings available. There is an optimum number of potential units, many of which remain "concealed" as long as houses are scarce. There is thus a marginal demand for dwellings which is conditioned by the supply of them.

The population unit which is relevant in this context is the household, not the biological family. Many families do not establish separate households, whilst many households, for instance, one-person households, are not identical with biological families and yet require separate dwellings of their own. A great deal of confusion has arisen because in census terminology "households" are referred to as "private families," and, moreover, because only existing but not "concealed" households are recorded separately by the census. Details of household composition are contained on the census schedule, but in 1931 these were briefly analysed only for two sample areas. As, therefore, the process of household formation is still unknown, the total number of households requiring separate dwellings and, in particular, the number of small households has been consistently underestimated.

Mr. Block has indicated the kind of facts which are required for an appraisal of housing needs. His critique of the old approach to the subject is thoroughly convincing. It is to be hoped that he will now give us a detailed exposition of the practical application of his new approach to the present housing programme.

RUTH GLASS

Mainly Anglo-American

THE MANSIONS OF VIRGINIA, 1706-1776. By Thomas Tileston Waterman. North Carolina University Press. (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege). 55s.

THIS is a work of scholarship, describing and discussing individual buildings and making attributions on the strength of evidence produced by documentary research and comparative study. Confronted with a book of this sort the reviewer who has no first hand acquaintance with the documents and buildings concerned must try to estimate the reliability of the author's observations and the soundness of his theories from internal evidence. He may then decide where the significance of the total impression gained lies in relation to his own, and his readers', general knowledge.

The first part of the programme may be quickly disposed of. Mr. Waterman is obviously well qualified for the task he has set himself; he is very thorough, he has a sharp eye for detail, and when he leaves fact for supposition he is duly circumspect. Lavishly illustrated and well got up in general, his book will, one may assume, remain the standard work on the subject for many years to come.

In tackling the second part of the programme the English reviewer is at an advantage. For American architecture of the earlier periods, whether it had travelled between the boards of pattern books or in the heads of emigrating carpenters, was of course an English export, which can only be studied properly against the background of the English—or should one say British?—architectural scene. It is one of the special virtues of Mr. Waterman's book that this fact is brought out very clearly. He illustrates many houses by the side of their prototypes in Gibbs's *Book of Architecture*, William Adam's *Vitruvius Scoticus*, and Robert Morris's *Select Architecture*; he points to suggestive resemblances between the Governor's Palace at Williamsburg and Ashburnham House, and between the house called Rosewell (building in 1726) and Count Hall, Shropshire (designed by the mysterious John Prince, of Shrewsbury, in 1704); and he shows us John Ariss, one of the most important American builder-designers of the mid-Georgian period, advertising in the *Maryland Gazette* his readiness to undertake buildings "either of the Ancient or Modern Order of Gibbs' Architect."

However, the main interest of any regional development resides not in resemblances but in differences.

Where then do these Virginian houses differ from their English counterparts? In early- and mid-Georgian times in no very important respect. In Virginia, the brick parapet never ousted the eaves cornice, under a hipped or gabled roof; the chimney was often treated in a rather more monumental manner than was customary on this side of the Atlantic; a slave-owning society equipped comparatively modest dwellings with dependencies corresponding to the service blocks of English country houses, but sometimes entirely detached from the *corps de logis*. And yet, to judge from the photographs in this book, not one Virginian house actually completed before 1765 would look out of place in Kent or Hertfordshire.

It is in the houses described in Mr. Waterman's last chapter that Virginian architecture comes of age. Paradoxically enough, the pattern book played a larger and more obvious part than ever before. But the transmutation of what it contained was complete, and the small-scale Palladianism that culminated in Jefferson's Monticello—reticent, gentlemanly, yet not without a certain lyrical quality—constitutes a development unlike anything to be found in England.

MARCUS WHIFFEN

SHORTER NOTICES

BLACK COUNTRY. By Walter Allen. "Vision of England" series edited by Clough and Amabel Williams-Ellis. Paul Elek. 9s. 6d.

Mr. Walter Allen writes of the Black Country with the intimate knowledge of one who has grown up there, and the affectionate irony of an old friend. While admitting the haphazard hideousness of areas built over during the fantastically rapid industrial development of the nineteenth century, he reminds us of the many benefits, now taken very much for granted, which we owe to the pioneer achievements of these first industrial towns, and introduces us to sights of beauty, or of historical interest, still surviving in the most unpromising places. Even those who know the Black Country well may learn of unsuspected relics of a more gracious, if less influential, past, and they will agree with the author's belief that the growing interest in the arts shown by the people (whose sturdy and enterprising character he illustrates by pithy anecdotes) promises a much fairer future.

The drawings by Malvina Cheek are less effective than Mr. Allen's words in conveying the sombre subtleties which make the Black Country beautiful or repellent according to the vagaries of the light and the mood of the beholder. Some of the many photographs are beautiful and aptly emphasize the contrast between squalid factory areas and the architectural grace or unspoilt natural beauty found only a few miles apart, but others have so little individuality that one wonders at their inclusion when more interesting subjects, described in the text, are not illustrated. A map completes this welcome guide to a district which is not nearly so black as it is often painted.

HOUSING DEMAND AND SUPPLY. By Herbert Ashworth. Published for the Building Societies Institute by Franey & Co. 3s.

A clear though somewhat superficial factual survey of housing needs and the agencies by which they will be met. The facts given might well have been more complete. For instance, the figures of the number and size of building firms are from the 1935 Census of Production; more recent figures would have shown a much worse state of affairs. In a reference to the effect of bad weather on the building industry, one might surely expect a mention of the "guaranteed week."

Other Books Received

GOTHIC ENGLAND. By John Harvey. B. T. Batsford. 21s.
THE PUBLIC'S PROGRESS. Contact Publications. 5s.
HANDBOOK OF STRUCTURAL DESIGN IN ALUMINIUM ALLOYS. By J. E. Temple. James Booth. 21s.
LAND CLASSIFICATION: GLOUCESTERSHIRE, SOMERSET AND WILTSHIRE. J. W. Arrowsmith for University of Bristol. 12s. 6d.
ALPHABET AND IMAGE 4. Edited by Robert Harling. Shenvall Press. Phoenix House. 21s.
MIDAEVAL CHANTRIES AND CHANTRY CHAPELS. By G. H. Cook. Phoenix House. 21s.
ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA: A PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT. By C. H. James and S. Rowland Pierce. 7s. 6d.
PATRICK GEDDES IN INDIA. Edited by J. Tyrwhitt in co-operation with H. V. Lancaster and Arthur Geddes. Lund Humphries. 10s.
YOUR HOME. By Francis Rose, Nicholson and Watson. 5s.
KINDERGARTEN CHATS AND OTHER WRITINGS. By Louis L. Sullivan. Wittenborn & Co. \$4.50.
RECORDING BRITAIN, Vol. 11. Edited by Arnold Palmer. Oxford University Press. 105s. for set of four volumes.
COMMUNITAS. By Percival and Paul Goodman. University of Chicago Press and Cambridge University Press. 33s.
LOST TREASURES OF EUROPE. Edited by Henry La Farge. B. T. Batsford. 30s.
RUSKIN AT OXFORD. By Sir Kenneth Clark. Oxford University Press. 2s.
FLATS. By H. Kamenka. Crosby Lockwood. 15s.
CATALOGUE OF MAPS IN THE ESSEX RECORD OFFICE, 1566-1860. Edited by F. G. Emison. The Essex County Council, Chelmsford. 21s.
VINCENT VAN GOGH: THE POTATO EATERS. Gallery Books No. 17. Percy Lund Humphries. 4s. 6d.
OLD CHESHIRE CHURCHES. By Raymond Richards. B. T. Batsford. 12s.

[Inclusion of a book in the above list does not preclude its being reviewed in a future issue. Nor is the list necessarily complete up to the publication date of the current issue.]

ANTHOLOGY

Against Restoration: 1841

Societies, no less than individuals, when much interested in one object, are apt to become either microscopic or one-sided in their views; both these tendencies are a kind of pedantry, a fault to which all persons are liable who confine their views too much to one object, and against which it may be useful to warn this and other similar Societies. We must remember how liable every man's mind is to be biased and warped by systems of exclusive study, and that antiquarians are peculiarly open to this failing. Let us therefore take warning, and not set our affections on one style only, or on absolute uniformity in each style. This is the pedantry of architecture; this is the one-sidedness we must guard against. Many people, who, to avoid offence, may be called not Pedants but Purists, seeing a fine old Church disfigured, as they would say, by alterations, would begin sweeping all such disfigurements clean away and restoring the Church just as it stood when built. But the alterations of old buildings are in great part their history, and however much you may restore, you cannot recover the original work; and so you may be removing what is of the highest possible interest, to make room for work, correct indeed as a copy, but in itself of little or no value.

REV. H. G. LIDDELL (*On the Restoration of Old Buildings, as reported in the Transactions of the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture, 1841*).

MARGINALIA

This Month's Anthology

Charles Eastlake, in *A History of the Gothic Revival*, quotes the passage that forms this month's Anthology piece as a verbatim extract from Dean Liddell's paper. In point of fact it is part of the summary of that paper printed in the Transactions of the society to whom it was read, and presumably written by its then secretary. One should remember that restoration does not here mean quite what we mean by the term to-day; in the 'forties restoration was not the process the S.P.A.B. was formed to combat, but a much more thoroughgoing affair in which a "debased" chancel might be rebuilt in Early Middle Pointed on the strength of a fragment of Geometrical tracery found built into the parapet of the tower. Nevertheless, the passage as a whole makes a point which is just as important to-day as it was 106 years ago.

Coventry Cathedral

That the battle of the styles which raged round the question of the new Coventry Cathedral ended in a defeat for the Gothic faction is a matter for qualified rejoicing. Qualified, because the avoidance of a patently absurd situation is hardly the occasion for throwing one's cap in the air, and because the results of competitions in the past have done little to convince one that the competition system is more than a poor substitute for enlightened patronage. However, this does not lessen one's gratitude to the R.I.B.A. for the firm stand taken.

The different turns in the affair succeeded each other with such rapidity that a brief recital of them may have its uses. It will be remembered, then, that last December, after the rejection of Sir Giles Scott's design by the Royal Fine Art Commission, a commission was appointed under Lord Harlech to examine the whole question of the rebuilding. In July this commission, whose only architect member was Sir Percy Thomas, reported, and among its recommendations was one that the cathedral "should be built within and without in the English Gothic tradition in good weathering red sandstone." The R.I.B.A. forthwith made a protest to Coventry Cathedral Council against this limitation, but although news of this had leaked out and the matter was referred to by Lord Harlech in the course

of the proceedings, a special session of the Coventry Diocesan Conference unanimously adopted the commission's report and recommendations. Four days later, however, it was announced that the Cathedral Council had considered the letter from the R.I.B.A. and a statement was issued substituting for the recommendation quoted the words "the new cathedral should be built in good weathering red sandstone, the architect being left free to make his own choice of style, provided that the new cathedral is built in continuity and harmony with the tower and spire."

New Contemporaries

Among recent publications received, two of the most interesting have been new architectural magazines, one from New Zealand and one from India. The former, called *Planning*, is published by The Architectural Group, whose membership consists of recent graduates of, and students at, the School of Architecture, Auckland University College. It is described as an "effort to fill in the vacuum existing, as far as criticism is concerned, in the architectural circles of New Zealand." To judge from number one it should do this admirably; all the contents have point and pith, and a pictorial analysis of the design for the new Wellington Cathedral into its component *clichés* shows up the fatuity of contemporary eclecticism in a particularly telling manner.

The Indian magazine is called *MARG*, which stands for Modern Architectural Research Group and in Sanskrit, as it happens, means "the way forward." The first two numbers will be reviewed at length in a future issue of the REVIEW. It is in English and arrangements have been made for it to be stocked by booksellers in this country.

The Housing Programme in Vienna

According to figures compiled by the Vienna County Council the population of Greater Vienna in March 1947 numbered 1,686,491. They were housed in 584,000 households, i.e. at 2.82 persons per dwelling. Assuming a population of 1,700,000 by 1951, and a reduction to 2.79 persons per dwelling, the housing need for the next four years including replacements amounts to 70,000 dwellings.

One half of these will be flats, the other houses. The majority prefers flats, which are easy to run, and near the workplaces. But since the last war there has been a housing estate public, consisting of enthusiastic and successful gardeners. The flats will have two rooms, but one- and three-room types will also be provided. The two- and three-room flats will have a hall, bathroom or shower room with W.C. The area will be 200 cubic metres per flat. About one-eighth of the dwellings will be for single people. The houses are to have a living room, cooking recess, or kitchen, and W.C. on the ground floor, two bedrooms and bath or shower room with handbasin upstairs. Here also the area is assessed at 200 cubic metres.

It is assumed that the problem can only be efficiently tackled in large projects rather than in piecemeal fashion. Experimental building sites as in France and Great Britain are to be set up. The immediate programme will consist of 3,000 flats in brick, 3,000 houses in vibrated and hollow concrete construction, and 10,000 dwellings to be repaired.

The greater part of damaged property is in private hands, and a legal basis for their repair does not exist as yet. If no other way is found, the local authorities will have to make repair obligatory for the owners.

At present there is a labour force of 50,000 in the building and allied industries. For the immediate housing programme 16,000 will be needed.

Building cost is assessed at 126 Austrian shillings per cubic metre. One milliard shillings will be needed for a programme of 40,000 new dwellings. Since the housing of Vienna's inhabitants is an important factor in the reconstruction of Austria, UNRRA is to be approached for a grant of 200 million shillings out of funds destined for social purposes. A 3 per cent. mortgage on all Vienna's owned land is to yield another 100 million shillings. The Austrian land-owners, in so far as their houses were not destroyed, have made a tremendous profit out of their property. Whereas the mortgages on Austrian property amounted to 765 million shillings in 1937, by 1947 they amounted to only 259 millions, thus representing a profit of 500 millions. Further funds necessary for the housing programme will be raised by loans and taxes.

RÉSUMÉS

For the convenience of its foreign readers THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW now contains synopses of its principal contents in French, German and Russian. Other languages are used when the contents of any particular issue are of special interest to those speaking them.

Septembre 1947

Page 74 : *La Réalité et Le Rêve*—photographie et tableau, tous deux par Paul Nash—où la photographie prouve que le monde qu'il a créé dans ses tableaux est prêt à se laisser découvrir par quiconque possède des yeux pour voir. Chacune des photographies de Nash est conçue dans le but de fixer ce point.

Page 75 : *L'importance de Paul Nash*—par Myfanwy Evans. Paul Nash, mort le 11 Juillet 1946, fut l'un des plus grands peintres anglais de sa génération. Mia Evans analyse son sens particulier "d'espace fluide" qui s'accompagne d'une "rigidité de structure qui sert de guide," oeuvre d'un homme qui ressemble plutôt à un créateur d'une carte céleste qu'à l'auteur de l'Apocalypse.

Son sens de l'architecture et ses préférences pour l'architecture moderne lui ont permis d'exprimer son idéal en peinture mieux que ne l'a accompli aucun peintre anglais et c'est en vertu du même stimulant qu'il est devenu dessinateur industriel et s'est spécialisé dans le dessin textile. Plus tard, il a évolué vers un surréalisme entièrement personnel qui le portait à l'expression du "genius loci" (sens de l'atmosphère) et de la valeur propre de chaque objet individuel.

Son art a parfois l'aspect d'un "cubisme anglicisé" et se rapproche d'une part de la grande tradition des paysagistes anglais—d'autre part d'une photographie conçue pour justifier son rêve du monde sensible.

Page 81 : *Quatre Généralités à Stourport, Hayle, Little Barford et Llynfi, Angleterre*. Architectes : Farmer et Dark.

Page 85 : *Le Charme de la Patine des vieux Bâtimens* par John Piper. Voici un plaidoyer de l'auteur—l'un des plus brillants peintres anglais de la nouvelle génération, pour l'inclusion de ce qu'il appelle le "Charme de la patine des vieux bâtimens" dans le répertoire de l'architecture moderne et du traceur de plans. Il fait face au conflit entre les revendications de l'Hygiène et de l'Histoire. Il blâme les éducateurs de se soucier trop peu de l'éducation visuelle; il analyse le charme des textures, de la mousse et du lichen, et révèle les beautés nouvelles dont les dégâts de la guerre sont responsables; il implore les architectes modernes de considérer les vieux bâtimens en tant que devant mettre en valeur et compléter les nouveaux—et non comme appartenant à un monde différent et hostile; il rappelle à ceux qui s'occupent de travaux de restauration qu'un vieux bâtiment ou une cité dont la structure ou la patine du temps s'évanouit, de quelque manière que ce soit, au cours de cette restauration, cesse de pouvoir revendiquer le droit de passer pour un vieux bâtiment. Ce qui importe à un architecte doué d'un concept visuel, c'est le résultat et non le fait de l'âge. L'effet du Temps devrait constituer l'une des ficelles de son art visuel d'une part—et l'effet du nouveau, d'autre part.

Rome peut servir d'exemple du destin qui s'abat sur toute une cité lorsque des architectes bien intentionnés, mais de peu de sens, s'emploient à capitaliser des ruines. Afin de les mettre en valeur conventionnellement, il a fallu bouleverser l'ancien cadre accidentel du XVIII^e siècle et le remplacer par des monuments conçus par des ingénieurs de la municipalité, ce qui a permis de réaliser la ruine visuelle des ruines. C'est dans le même ordre d'idées que l'administration du gouvernement britannique entoure Stonehenge de grilles de fer.

Page 95 : *Maison à Beaconsfield*. Architecte, June Park.

Page 97 : *Village Égyptien*, par Raymond Mortimer. Gournah, nouveau village édifié sur un plan intelligent, en murs traditionnels de torchis, le tout d'excellentes proportions—montrant de quelle manière l'Égypte devrait s'attaquer à ses grands problèmes d'élimination des taudis et comment il est possible en certains cas de réconcilier et même de fusionner les méthodes visuelles de l'esthétisme contemporain et de l'esthétisme traditionnel. Architecte, Hassan Fathy Bey.

Page 100 : *L'Ornementation Gastronomique* par Barbara Jones. Les vicissitudes de l'ornementation gastronomique, spécialisée et professionnelle aussi bien que familiale



DISPLEASING DECAY

The recently issued Report of the Georgian Group for 1946 notes that Appuldurcombe, in the Isle of Wight, is threatened with demolition. Appuldurcombe, by far the largest eighteenth century house in the Isle, and in point of craftsmanship one of the finest in the South of England, has been unoccupied, except by troops, since 1909. It was built in 1710 (according to Vitruvius Britannicus) by Sir Robert Worsley, fourth baronet, and added to and altered internally by the seventh baronet, Sir Richard. Sir Robert's architect is not known; probably the elevations represent the sketch designs of a London man interpreted by some provincial builder-architect of the attainments of John Bastard of Blandford or Francis Smith of Warwick. For the alterations Sir Richard Worsley is said to have employed James Wyatt. The photographs here reproduced show the condition of the house last spring; one can but hope with the Georgian Group that it may find a purchaser who will recondition and maintain it.



et à l'usage des amateurs—sont traitées comme une autre manifestation de l'art populaire—par une artiste qui s'est spécialisée pour la Revue d'Architecture, dans l'étude de l'art urbain, surtout celui du siècle nouveau.

September 1947

Seite 74: Wirklichkeit und Traum, eine Photographie und ein Gemälde, beide von Paul Nash. Die Photographie zeigt, dass die Welt, die der Künstler in seiner Malerei schafft, fertig für den bereitliegt, der sie sehen kann.

Seite 75: Paul Nash's Bedeutung. Von Myfanwy Evans. Nash, der vor einem Jahr gestorben ist, war einer der wesentlichsten englischen Maler seiner Generation.

Miss Evans betont die Verbindung seines fließenden Raumsinnes mit seinem starken Gefühl für Stahlgerüst-Härte. Er war mehr "ein Planetariums-Ingenieur als ein apokalyptischer Dichter." Sein Verständnis für den modernen Baustil erlaubte es Nash schöpferisch für die Industrie, besonders die Textilindustrie zu arbeiten. In seiner Spätzeit entwickelte er einen ganz individuellen Surrealismus mit der feinsten Reaktion auf den *genius loci* und den Genius jedes einzelnen Gegenstandes. Seine Werke scheinen einem manchmal als eine englische Version des internationalen Kubismus und manchmal als Erben der besten englischen Traditionen.

Seite 81: Vier Kraftwerke in Stourport,

Hayle, Little Barford und Llynfi, England. Von Farmer & Dark.

Seite 85: Der Reiz des Verfalls. Von John Piper. Der Autor, einer der fasziniertesten unter den jüngeren englischen Malern, stellt hier das Ersuchen an Architekten und Städtebauer, den Reizen des Verfalls in ihren eigenen Werken Beachtung zu schenken. Mr. Piper umgeht keineswegs den Konflikt zwischen den Anforderungen der Hygiene und der Geschichte. Aber er wirft den Kunst-erziehern vor, sich zu wenig um die Erziehung des Auges zu kümmern. Er analysiert die Schönheiten der verschiedensten Bauoberflächen, und der Moose und Flechten, die sich auf alten Gebäuden finden. Er erkennt auch die neuen Schönheiten kriegsverwundeter Bauten an. Er verlangt von Städtebauern, dass sie das Alte als Hintergrund und Ergänzung des Neuen ansehen und nicht als etwas ihnen Feindliches. Ein altes Gebäude oder eine alte Stadt, deren äussere Anzeichen echten Alters im Verlaufe einer Wiederherstellung verloren gehen, hat kein Anrecht mehr als alt angesehen zu werden. Der Planer muss die Wirkung mehr als die Tatsache des Alters bedenken. Verfall muss ein Kunstmittel sein ebenso wie Frische. Mr. Piper bespricht Rom als das Hauptbeispiel dafür, wie wohlmeinende aber unsensitive Restaurierung eine Stadt verderben kann. Hier sollten Ruinen zur besten Wirkung kommen. Um das zu erreichen wurde die malerische Kleinwelt des 18. Jahrhunderts, die sie umgab, niedergedrückt und durch offizielle Monumentalität von heute ersetzt. Die Wirkung der Ruinen wurde dabei wesentlich zerstört. In England ist es dasselbe, wenn Ruinen der Vorzeit oder des Mittelalters säuberlich mit Eisenzäunen umgeben werden.

Seite 95: Haus in Beaconsfield. Von June Park.

Seite 97: Ein ägyptisches Dorf. Von Raymond Mortimer. Gournah ist ein neues Dorf, geplant von Hassan Fathy Bey nach vernünftigen modernen Prinzipien aber mit der traditionellen Lehmziegel-Technik. So wie in Gurnah könnte Ägypten sein gewaltiges Sanierungsproblem auf dem Lande lösen.

Seite 100: Speisenverzierung. Von Barbara Jones. Die vielen Möglichkeiten der Dekoration unseres Essens, zu Haus wie im Restaurant werden als Beispiel lebender Volkskunst von der Autorin einer Artikelserie über englische Volkskunst vornehmlich des 19. Jahrhunderts, besprochen.

(„Architekturelle Rezension“)

Стр. 74. ДЕЙСТВИТЕЛЬНОСТЬ И МЕЧТА (ФОТОГРАФИЯ И КАРТИНА)

Как фотография, так и картина исполнены Нэш'ем. С помощью своих фотографий художник показывает, что мир, претворенный в его картинах, оживает быть найденным теми, чье зрение достаточно восприимчиво.

Стр. 75. МАЙФОНВИ ЭВАНС. ЗНАЧЕНИЕ ПАВЛА НАШ'А

Павел Нэш, скончавшийся 11-го июля 1946-го года, был одним из наиболее выдающихся английских художников своего поколения. Мисс Эванс анализирует особенное его ощущение „текущего пространства“, соединенное с жесткостью структуры. По работе своей художник кажется ближе к создателю планетария чем к автору Книги Откровений. Его архитектурное чутье и сочувствие новому направлению в архитектуре дало ему возможность выразить в живописи ее задачи совершенно новым, еще никем из английских художников не изведанным путем. Эта черта его творчества толкнула его в область художественного оформления промышленных изделий, главным образом, тканей. За последние годы он выработал совершенно особый, лично ему присущий, сюрреализм с сильно выраженным ощущением духа отдельной местности и духа каждого отдельного предмета. Искусство его проявляется иной раз в форме ангажированного кубизма, иной раз в традиционной форме английской ландшафтной живописи, а иной раз в форме фотографии, предназначенной для оправдания его зрительного восприятия физического мира.

Стр. 81. ЧЕТЫРЕ ЭЛЕКТРОСТАНЦИИ, В СТАУРПОРТ'Е, ХАЙЛ'Е ЛИТТЛ БАРДФОРД'Е, И ЛЛЫНФИ (АНГЛИЯ). Архитекторы: Фармер и Дарк.

[continued on page 108]

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A.R. 1:9:47

continued from page 106]

Стр. 85. ДЖОН ПАЙПЕР. КРАСОТА УВЯДАНИЯ

Автор, один из наиболее выдающихся молодых английских художников, горячо настаивает на включении того, что он называет "красотой увядания" в программу современного архитектора и планировщика. Он становится лицом к лицу перед конфликтом между требованиями гигиены и требованиями истории. Он ставит в виду педагогом их слишком малую заботу о воспитании зрительного опущения. Он анализирует эстетическое наслаждение, доставляемое тканями, и мхом, и лишайем на стенах. Он указывает на красоту, вышедшую наружу благодаря военным разрушениям. Он умоляет современных планировщиков смотреть на старинные постройки скорее как на опору и дополнение новых построек чем как на нечто принадлежащее к иному и враждебному миру. Он напоминает реставраторам, что старинная постройка перестает по существу быть таковой, если ее узор и вековое окружение каким бы то ни было путем рассеивается в процессе восстановительной работы. То же самое относится к старинным городам. Для планировщика с воображением важен не самый факт старинности, а последствия этого факта. Увядание должно служить ему для достижения одного эффекта, а новизна для другого. Рим служит примером возмездия, постигающего целый город, когда планировщики с благими намерениями, но недостаточной продуманностью берутся за использование эффекта развалин. Вместо того чтобы выявить развалины надлежащим образом, постройки, органически составлявшие фон для старинного города XVIII-го века, были подвергнуты слому и заменены монументальными гражданскими сооружениями городских инженеров. В результате получилось уничтожение развалин как зрительного объекта. В таком же роде действовали подлежащие ведомству в Англии, окружившие железной решеткой развалины древнего храма друидов в Стоунхендже.

Стр. 95. ДОМ В БИКСОНФИЛДЭ (АНГЛИЯ). Архитектор: Джон Парк.

Стр. 97. РЭЙМОНД МОРТИМЕР. ЕГИПЕТСКАЯ ДЕРЕВНЯ

"Гурнах"—это новая египетская деревня, построенная по хорошо продуманному плану из необожженного кирпича, но с соблюдением великолепных пропорций. Это пример правильного решения огромной задачи ликвидации "слам'ов" (построек, не ремонтируемых в течении многих лет, где ютятся беднота) в Египте. Это представляет также интересный пример примирения, или даже взаимного сращивания, современной и традиционной зрительно-эстетической политики. Архитектор: Хассан Фатен Бей.

Стр. 100. ВАРВАРА ДЖОНС. УКРАШЕНИЕ ПИЩИ

Автор, художница по профессии, изучавшая по поручению настоящего журнала городское народное искусство (главным образом, XIX-го века), обсуждает здесь историю украшения пищи, как профессионально-честолюбивого, так и любительски-домашнего, рассматривая это как одно из проявлений народного искусства.

A New Plan for Berlin

Karl Schneider, in a communication dated Hamburg, July 5, writes of the planning position in Berlin:

"Prof. Scharoun, who dealt with the first official general plan for Berlin after the war, has been replaced in the management of Berlin City Planning by Stadtrat Karl Bonatz, brother of the well-known architect Paul Bonatz. The change in the management of the Planning Office at the same time constitutes an altered course of Berlin Planning. In his Berlin Plan Scharoun has proceeded in a definitely modern direction on the lines of the Dessau Bauhaus. The Scharoun Plan is characterized by Bonatz as utopian, and excessive in its aims as compared with the London plans. Bonatz holds that the radical alteration of the traffic system (involving, for example, transition from a circular-radial system to a grid system of 64 clover

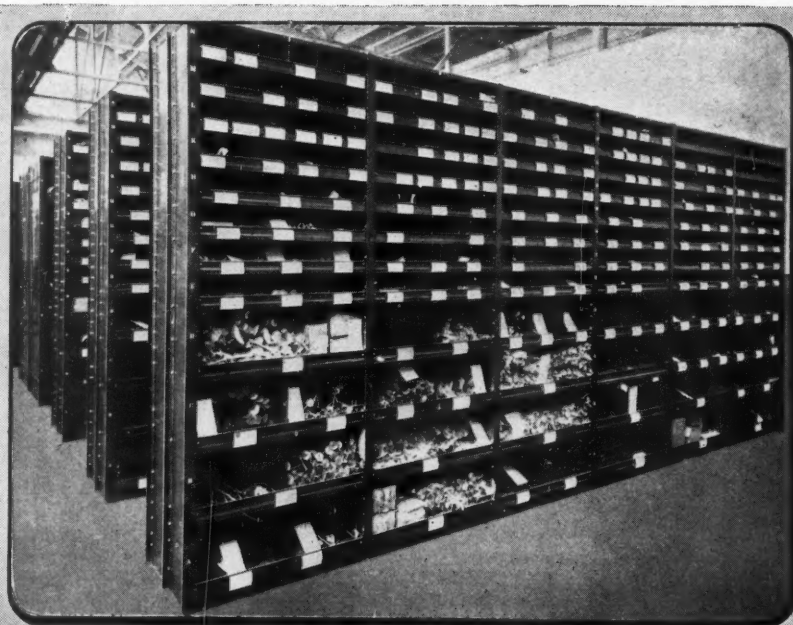
leaf crossings) is impossible to implement and unnatural.

"The counterpart of the Scharoun Plan is formed by the draft of the Zehlendorf (U.S. sector of Berlin) Planning Office, and characterized by the proposal to divert all railway traffic of Berlin to an East-West band in the course of the Stadtbahn (Urban Railway System). This solution likewise has been turned down by Bonatz on the grounds that the heavy load of such a band would require extraordinarily large railway installations. Excessive independence between the urban districts is opposed by Bonatz, who points out that it would make the development of the city as a unit impossible. Under all circumstances the centre should remain indispensable to the urban districts.

"Bonatz holds that the ruling principles in the reconstruction of Berlin should be to spare if possible what has been preserved if it is worth preserving, and not to sacrifice valuable substance merely in order to implement a theory."

Acknowledgments

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