

THE
OCTAGON

A Journal of The American Institute of Architects



*The Outlook
On to Williamsburg
Comments on Rendering,
and on Architecture
Advertising
With the Chapters
As of Interest*

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THE OCTAGON

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The Outlook

ALL of the Officers and Directors met in Washington during the first week of December in the semi-annual meeting of the Board of Directors. And all of them reported that conditions in the architectural profession are much improved over the low period of 1932-34. In many areas the architects are busy, and in some there is even a scarcity of draftsmen. Part of this activity undoubtedly is due to the pressure on PWA housing projects, but in addition private work is on the increase. In any event, it was the positive opinion of all those present that the "state of mind" is much better—that confidence is returning—that the 1936 outlook for the architect is one of encouragement.

When I was in Memphis in November, attending the convention of the Tennessee Chapter, I heard the same story and was assured repeatedly that prospects have greatly improved, and that the mental state of the profession had changed from one of despair to one of decided hopefulness. In this center of depression—New York City—at a meeting of the New York Building Congress a few days ago the President of the Congress suggested that the theme song of the meeting should be "Happy Days are Here Again." The suggestion was greeted with tremendous applause. I did not hear anyone sing the song, but it certainly represented the attitude of the meeting—the largest one for many years with over seven hundred in attendance.

So, I believe when we assemble in convention, at Williamsburg in May, that we will find renewed confidence in the future of the Institute and the profession, and that there we will wipe out the last vestiges of depression psychology. The whole theme of the Convention program is to be "looking ahead."

The responses that I have received from my communications to the Chapter presidents indicate clearly that the local groups of Institute members are finding it beneficial to get together, to plan for

future activities, and to take action on various immediate problems.

There is a challenge to all of us in the small house field. The difficulties of bringing adequate technical service into this field are great but none the less worthy of solution. There are now instrumentalities available that have never existed before—one of which of course is the FHA. Several Chapters have already developed group schemes for meeting this problem. Of course they are experiments, but men must be optimistic even to undertake experiments.

Then, there are new materials and new forms of construction entering the building field—directly challenging the architect's skill and ingenuity in their proper use. The subject of town and community planning should receive much more attention from the architect than he has ever given it before. In many communities he will find the layman ready and willing to go along. There are other factors and conditions which might be described, all of which are contributing to a much better situation for the profession.

Now, of course, *all* is not well. There is still much that is discouraging and still much hardship, many things not as good as they were ten years ago. But, on the other hand, conditions are very much better than they were two years ago, and as confidence returns in the profession and generally throughout the country, the situation of the architect will certainly continue to improve.

Personally, I am optimistic about the future of our profession and the Institute. I trust that all the delegates to the Williamsburg Convention will be able to bring with them good tidings of better things, and that through the Convention, we shall be able to give impetus to Institute activities by inspiring the delegates to return to their Chapters with renewed determination, and with the message to "go ahead."

STEPHEN F. VOORHEES.

On to Williamsburg!

THE Board of Directors have adopted the recommendation of the Convention Committee that the 68th Convention be held at Williamsburg, Va., May 5 to 8, 1936.

Hotel accommodations in Williamsburg are inadequate for an Institute Convention; but at Old Point Comfort, 38 miles distant over good roads, the modern Hotel Chamberlin has adequate accommodations. It is proposed to establish Convention headquarters at Old Point Comfort and hold sessions there and at Williamsburg, using automobile buses for transportation between the two points.

The significance of Williamsburg as a center of historical and architectural interest may be recalled by the following brief description:

In 1699, following the burning of Jamestown, the General Assembly passed an Act directing the building of a Capitol and the City of Williamsburg at what was then known as Middle Plantation. Previously, the main building of the College of William and Mary, designed by Sir Christopher Wren, had been built at Middle Plantation. This building became the western terminus of the main axis of the city plan, the new Capitol building forming the eastern terminus. A cross axis is terminated at the north by the Palace of the Royal Governors. The plan is notable for its openness and for the effective placing of its public buildings.

The city thus founded grew rapidly and soon became the center of the political, educational and social life of the Virginia colony and held this preeminence until 1780, when the seat of government was removed to Richmond. Virginia during this period was the most wealthy and

influential of the colonies and its Capitol City reflected in its architecture and its gardens the culture and refinement of the best element of the colonists.

The Civil War and a period of prolonged depression thereafter contributed largely to the decline of this once distinguished city and many of its precious buildings and gardens disappeared.

The story of the restoration of Williamsburg is too well known to require retelling. Begun in 1927 at the suggestion of Dr. W. A. R. Goodwin, rector of Bruton Parish Church, and carried forward with funds provided by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., it is now substantially complete as to form, but additions and improvements will continue to be made.

The Directors believe that the holding of the Convention in this environment will make a strong appeal to the membership. The co-operation of Williamsburg Restoration, Inc., and the College of William and Mary is assured. The latter has reserved Phi Beta Kappa Hall for the Convention meetings and has invited the Institute to be their guests at luncheon on one of the convention days. It is expected that arrangements will be made for those who desire to do so to visit the James River plantations—Westover, Shirley, and the Brandons.

Details of the Convention arrangements and information regarding the program will appear in subsequent numbers of THE OCTAGON. It is not too soon for Chapters to make their plans for representation at this Convention, which promises to be of surpassing interest and accomplishment.

CHARLES T. INGHAM,
Secretary.

A Memorandum Sent to Chairmen of Chapter Committees on Public Information

BY JAMES T. GRADY, PUBLICIST OF THE INSTITUTE

THE end of the year presents an exceptional opportunity for public statement on behalf of your Chapter of the Institute. At this time the press of the country prints reviews of what has been accomplished during the preceding twelve months in science, in commerce and industry, in the public service, in education, and in other fields.

An optimistic forecast for 1936 with respect to architecture and the building industry is now possible.

The statement we have in mind should be primarily a report on current activity with an informing description of the needs, both specific and general, of your community. Everywhere we read of the necessity for city planning, for better housing, for higher standards of living. Much of this discourse is loose and ineffective. A precise declaration of the real problem which confronts your locality and of how the architect may aid in meeting it

would without doubt be gladly accepted by your local newspapers.

The architect should assume leadership in the recovery movement. Only by cumulative effort on the part of Chapters to publicize the ideas and activities of the local group can such leadership be effected.

The Publicist would be glad to advise you and to receive a copy of the article which you prepare in order that he may consolidate the Chapter material into a digest of nationwide progress in architecture and the allied arts of design.

The Officers and Directors of the Institute are being asked to share in this cooperative publicity

enterprise by preparing articles applicable nationally and regionally. The article for your Chapter might well be written by the President, or by the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information. It need not be restricted to local problems, but could also include national aspects and indicate Chapter participation in the wider activities of the Institute and allied organizations.

The Publicist strongly urges you to prepare this material without fail, and to make this effort the beginning of a continuing publicity program for 1936. Apathy has ruled too long. The spokesmen for architecture should convincingly assert the claims of their profession.

Advertising

At the recent meeting of the Board, the Chairman of the Committee on Practice, John P. B. Sinkler, in reporting upon the work of his Committee, said:

"A number of times in recent years the question has been raised as to the intent of the Principles of Practice relating to the subject of advertising, and the Committee has found it difficult to draw a line which clearly defines the unethical features of advertising. The subject seemed to be so important that the Committee has spent considerable time analyzing the various phases of advertising, and has drafted a statement which will be enclosed herewith with the recommendation that if approved by the Board of Directors it should be published in *THE OCTAGON* for the guidance of the Membership."

The Board approved the statement above mentioned, and it is published as follows:

THERE is evidence of doubt in the minds of members of the Institute as to the intent and meaning of Article 6 of the Principles of Professional Practice relating to the subject of advertising. The Committee on Practice has determined that this matter of advertising should be cleared up and, therefore, sets before the members the following conclusions:

First: The reproduction of an architect's work in what is ordinarily called an Architectural Magazine is in principle like "News" to newspapers; it is publicly conveying the news or progress of the profession to its members and to the general public; it is not published for the benefit of an individual architect, as usually more than one architect is represented in each number; it is impersonal and carries no self laudation and above all does not convey the sense of the architect being the advertiser. This type of publication is educational, and therefore, is a service for the general benefit of the profession.

Second: The publication of a book or catalogue illustrating the work of one architect and supported by advertisements is distinctly a one-man affair, pub-

lished for his own advancement at the expense of the advertisers.

In the case where the architect instigates the publication, he is undoubtedly depending on the contractors, materialmen, *et al.*, to carry the cost of the publication by paying for the advertisements; this offers the suggestion of coercion, to say the least, and in some cases that have come before the Committee on Practice in the past, there is a semblance of outright blackmail.

In the case where a publishing company produces the work of an architect in a brochure form, supported by advertisements, this spirit of coercion is not so evident, but there remains an unsavory impression that the advertisers are persuaded by the publisher that it is politic for them to support the publication. It was for this reason that Article 6 of the Principles of Professional Practice was amended at the last convention of the Institute by the addition of the following:

"He will not sanction the publication of a brochure or catalogue illustrating his work, when the cost of such publication is paid for by advertisements, regardless of whether he takes part

or gives any assistance in obtaining such advertisements."

Third: An Architectural Monograph in which no advertising appears is in a different class, for here the architect grants a publisher the privilege of reproducing photographs and drawings of his work solely at the expense of the publisher and for his profit only, with the expectation of a demand for the book from the general as well as the architectural public; in other words, the book is published and sold just as any other book is published. It conveys the impression that the work of the architect has been considered by the public of such merit as to create the demand for a reproduction of it in book form; therefore, such a publication may be considered as being intended to advance architecture and the profession on a whole.

Fourth: The question of "Chapter Year Books" or catalogues of exhibition, comes in still another class and borders closely on the second of the examples here mentioned; the principal difference being that while the advertisements are solicited for publication, behind which the motive is to promote an exhibition for public edification and professional

advancement, they have been excused on the ground that no one individual profits therefrom. Many members of the Institute have felt that the publication of Year Books supported by advertisements is a hold-up and a mild form of blackmail. Prospective advertisers, who have been consulted, have frankly admitted that this was the case. Some of the Chapters have recognized this situation and have discontinued the practice and have defrayed the expense of the exhibition by charging the exhibitors for the exhibiting space they require for their drawings. The Committee recommends to the Chapters that all paid advertising be omitted from Year Books or catalogues of exhibitions, and that some other means be found to support the cost of the exhibitions.

* * * * *

The Institute has declared itself as looking with disapproval on the publication of the work of its members in any publication supported in any way by advertisements, except in regular magazines, and the Committee on Practice must henceforth consider such practice as unprofessional conduct and so report to the Judiciary Committee the cases brought to the attention of the Committee.

Increase in Dues

THE Sixty-sixth Convention (1934) reduced drastically the amounts owed by members in default for dues for the three-year period of 1931 to 1933, inclusive. It also reduced the dues for 1934 from \$25.00 to \$15.00. This reduction was continued for the year 1935.

During this period of greatly reduced income the Institute has operated with the strictest economy. The Executive Secretary and his limited staff at The Octagon have given unsparingly of their time in handling the work at minimum expense. No funds have been available for traveling expenses of Regional Directors in visiting the Chapters in their districts. It has been necessary to forego the semi-annual meetings of the Board of Directors. Publication of Convention Proceedings and of the Annuary was discontinued with the exception of the 1934-35 Annuary, the publication of which was made possible by a gift for the purpose.

The generous response to the appeal for contributions of two dollars per member, auth-

orized at the last Convention, and additional contributions from Chapters, have enabled the Institute this year to provide needed assistance at The Octagon and to hold the semi-annual meeting of the Board of Directors.

Manifestly, the Institute cannot continue to operate in this manner on inadequate dues supplemented by solicitous gifts. At the meeting of the Board on December 6th full consideration was given to all the factors involved in the financial condition of the Institute and it was unanimously voted to restore one-half of the reduction made in 1934, thus making the dues \$20.00 for the year 1936.

Evidence of improved conditions in the profession supports the belief that this increase over the present dues will not be burdensome to the members. It is expected that it will provide sufficient revenue to enable the Institute to render the service for which it exists without dependence upon contributions from friends within and without the membership.

Architectural Education

A REPORT TO THE DETROIT CHAPTER BY EMIL LORCH, A. I. A.

INSTITUTIONS, like individuals, have been seriously affected by the depression, but our schools are beginning to reflect the improvement which the profession is experiencing. However, in the Report of the Committee on Education of the Institute at the recent Milwaukee convention it was strongly urged "that the creation of new schools of architecture be definitely discouraged, and that the standards of education be raised in existing schools."

At the preceding Institute convention, the same committee urged the enforcement of high standards for admission to architectural practice through state examining boards and full cooperation with the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. The Mentor plan endorsed by the Institute gives practitioners an opportunity to select for recommendation those who during three or more years work in offices subsequent to graduation have demonstrated their fitness for admission to the National Council junior examinations, which makes a national standard approximately possible. The plan requires cooperation between all the educational and

professional agencies interested in the development of the profession.

The new tendencies in architectural education in this country are toward greater realism and thoroughness. This is also true in Europe, where the Reunion Internationale d'Architects, under the presidency of the distinguished French architect, Auguste Perret, has urged a broader cultural training and more thorough scientific and technical training for the students of architecture, and a strict selection from among those thoroughly trained for independent practice. Evidently there is considerable parallelism in the striving among architects and schools on both sides of the Atlantic for better results. This is also apparent in the field of architectural registration, now so widespread in this country and at present effective in England; it is being sought in France, where its desirability was long questioned.

Reference was also made to changes in the architectural curricula at the University of Michigan. These reflect recent changes in architectural thought, and are shown in the new Architectural Announcement of the University.

Competitions for the Prizes of Rome

THE American Academy in Rome has announced its annual competitions for fellowships in architecture, landscape architecture, painting, sculpture and musical composition.

In architecture the Daniel H. Burnham fellowship is to be awarded, in landscape architecture the Garden Club of America fellowship, in painting the Jacob H. Lazarus fellowship of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, established by Mrs. Amelia B. Lazarus and Miss Emilie Lazarus, and in musical composition the Frederic A. Juilliard fellowship.

The competitions are open to unmarried men not over 30 years of age who are citizens of the United States. The stipend of each fellowship is \$1250 a year with an allowance of \$300 for transportation to and from Rome. Residence and studio are provided without charge at the Academy, and the

total estimated value of each fellowship is about \$2000 a year.

The Academy reserves the right to withhold an award in any subject in which no candidate is considered to have reached the required standard.

The term of the fellowship in each subject is two years. Fellows have opportunity for extensive travel and for making contacts with leading European artists and scholars.

The Grand Central Art Galleries of New York City will present free membership in the Galleries to the painter and sculptor who win the Rome Prize and fulfill the obligations of the fellowship.

Entries for competitions will be received until *February 1st*. Circulars of information and application blanks may be obtained by addressing Roscoe Guernsey, Executive Secretary, American Academy in Rome, 101 Park Avenue, New York.

Further Comment On Rendering—And On Architecture

BY HUGH FERRISS, A. I. A.

I RECALL a meeting of the Architectural League at which I was permitted to make a few remarks—(one may as well recall his own remarks since it is a notorious fact that no one else does)—on the subject of Architectural Rendering. It was in '25; it was at the League's old quarters in 57th Street; it was "Renderers' Night"; and several of the members who specialized, in varying degree, in the lighter side of our profession were given their chance to speak—thus breaking the profound silence in which renderers usually labor away like bees!

What I tried to say, when it came my turn, was that aside from the technicalities employed to depict a building as it shortly is going to look—or as it shortly ought to be going to look—the real fascination of Rendering (to the renderer) is the chance it gives one to observe what is currently happening to Architecture—and to architects.

Perhaps it was duMaurier who wrote, in the once beloved "Trilby," that you don't know a face until you've drawn it. This should apply to buildings if it is true of faces—but is it?—in any case, renderers draw an awful lot of buildings, and whether they know (or like) what they are drawing, they are almost bound to meditate on their impressions. Indeed, it would seem that renderers have had little to do for several years *but* meditate, in which respect they resemble practicing architects.

The foregoing is a kind of apology: if one was permitted to comment on architectural trends in the busy heydays of '25, perhaps he may supplement his comment in the leisurely dogdays of '35. Especially in view of the fact that just lately one can speak of architectural activity with a degree—well, half a degree—of cheer. Only yesterday when the inevitable question was asked in the elevator of the Architects' Building, I heard some one answering, out loud, "Yes, *I am* busy." Perhaps anyone still in Architecture can be compared to the patient who has just reached the very beginning of the convalescent stage: he still looks damn sick to his friends; but secretly he is so elated at the prospect of any existence at all, so surprised he isn't altogether dead, that he can speak cheerily on practically any subject. Once more, then, the (rhetorical) question is: what the devil is happening to Architecture—and to architects; and, by the way, what is happening to renderers?

To get aside the latter,—and minor,—item, first. It is strange, but true, that while the demi-decade before '29 was a green pasture for the renderer, owing to the fact that so much building, wanting preview, was just about to go up, nevertheless the similar period since '29 has been really the renderer's *beau-ideal*; i. e., *all* building being now a matter of the future, the *only* way to view it has been to *pre-view* it! Architecture herself had become visionary and what could be more congenial to the visualist! Truly, if our stand-bys, the born builders, aren't building, they're dreaming of building and the dream-state is just cakes and ale for the renderer!

Of course the flaw in this ointment is all too obvious. The renderer has been free to draw his most ambitious of pictures for the most ambitious of promoters, but the latter, to their infinite regret (and his) have not had just at hand the wherewithal to compensate him for the proposed goods and services. (The reference is not to the ever-present allure of compensation on a higher plane "when/if the project materializes" but is simply to the baser metals.) In this predicament, the renderer has had to earn his right to make an occasional picture for his own satisfaction by turning, for income,—like many of his R. A. friends—to non-architectural fields.

Two of these which proved worth exploration—and still are if you are so inclined—are largely outlying and remote from the architectural field but nevertheless lie contiguous to it for a surprising number of miles—the fields of Advertising and of Publicity.

That is to say, there are innumerable buildings which are devoid of every architectural virtue, except the prime architectural virtue of existing, and whose landlords—the banks—are more than anxious to fill them with contented tenants. These may be office buildings or apartment houses—anyway, there has been, right along, a certain modest (or immodest) demand for that type of picture that makes you think, momentarily, that the new office space is *really* going to be spacious or that the "garden" outside the bed-room window is going to be worth looking down into more than once.

Yes, the banks are still open, some of them, and bankers still think their temple-like facades sufficiently impressive to old—or, preferably, new—

customers, to be worth pictorial publicity. Department stores still publicize their "institutional" character, and this means an impressionistic, a very impressionistic, sketch of a grandiose "portal" at the very least.

Departing from the architectural subject, but remaining on the structural, there are the Industrial Plants which still want those smooth, immobile and eery bird's-eye-views, looking as though the atmosphere had fled the earth and Time had ceased to be.

Then there is our graceful sister, Naval Architecture. Steamships still have been plying back and forth and some Line's "Number one man" (once you get him, this is the only trick) is doubtless open to some new "slant"—some "natural"—on how to make their pleasant, intimate ships look ten times bigger than they are and their big liners ten times more intimate and pleasant.

And there are still drawings to be made (for "public information") of "super-highways" (whatever they are), of airports and planes, streamlined trains, and God knows what other wonders of this age of Science, not Art.

Assuming that the renderer—turning his back for a few hours daily on the glory that was Greece (or the modernist glory that isn't—whichever he swore by) has contrived, in some such field as has been suggested, to keep the wolf at least at the door and to support his daughter in (approximately) the manner to which she has become accustomed, we then come back to the bigger questions: what is happening to Architecture—and to architects?

On the surface, of course, nothing much seems to be happening to Architecture—perhaps it is for Her, too, a "breathing spell." But to architects, a great deal has been happening—beneath the surface. *They are thinking about something.* The fact that architects are thinking about something may or may not seem important—this will depend somewhat on whether you are or are not an architect—but it is important. That is, the Architecture of the near-future depends, to a degree, upon what architects are thinking about today. In a sense, their thought of today is the Architecture of tomorrow, and it is pertinent—and let us of course hope not impertinent—to inquire, what are they thinking about?

This question came up during another discussion at a Round Table luncheon at the League—in their 40th Street quarters. What are architects thinking about? It went round the Round table, it went around and around. All I could think of, each

time the question went over my head, was that some architects are born with an interest in national socio-economic conditions, some acquire it, but now we *all* have had it thrust upon us. And I wondered if here, perhaps, at last, was the line that architects' thoughts are now taking: the intimate relation of the nation's social and economic condition to its architecture.

When, after the luncheon, I got back to a room on the Architects' Building and looked down onto the familiar structural set-up below, I had the impression (night-mare, if you wish) that this architectural melée did not represent simply the "art and science of building" but was, rather, a revelation, a kind of crystallization, of social, economic, technological and also political—factors. In the scene before you, in the skyscrapers and slums, you could actually spot the "competition," the "exploitation," the "profit motive," the "rugged individualism," the "laissez faire," the absence of "long-term planning" and all the rest of it: all the familiar ear-marks of the "system" we have been passing through and (perhaps) passing out of.

Now to those of us in the third, and worst category, who had to have the Economics slant thrust upon us, it is something of a jolt to realize that Architecture is not the charmed and virginal creature we wooed in University days; that architectural design isn't a special, precious and private field of culture quite cloistered from the larger world of current social and economic realities. But the jolt, once taken, seems to open up wider views which, although quite outside the Garden of Eden, seems to prove remarkably stimulating.

Once one accepts the premise that Architecture is the revelation and record of the prime, practical factors of life, just mentioned, then one may wish to rest his course. Study of just those factors is the next probable move, with understanding of them and ability to plan for their accommodation, the objective. Yet this is only half of it, for Architecture has an active, as well as passive role to play. It not only reflects realities, it can also influence them. People react in countless ways, many sub-consciously and some exceedingly subtly, to their structural, as well as their natural, environment—to their housing, their city-plan, etcetera. These reactions influence not only bodily condition but psychological state; hence train of thought; hence course of action. But from either view-point—whether following the van of events or leading—the architect from now on can scarcely be other than a student, at least, of Sociology, Economics, Tech-

Comments on Rendering—Continued.

nology and, yes, Politics. If this kills the Artist in him then the latter was a frail and precious creature, indeed. It was otherwise with Leonardo.

As a matter of fact, we already find that most of our acquaintances, including our fellow bonvivants of atelier and rathskeller days, have gone serious on us, and now meet with one or another group for socio-economic discussion. For example, there are a number of architects who were not in the least deceived by the premature and extravagant claims, and acclaims, of "Technocracy" anymore than they were by the premature and extravagant repudiation which so soon followed, but who seem to realize that aside from the silly flirtations of press and public, certain real issues were raised, remain raised, and have yet to be met. (Just how soon, is yet to be learned, of course; prophets naturally want to see their prophesies come true during their life-time, and this desire to attend the party accounts, no doubt, for the fact that prophets are so apt to be correct about everything except the date.)

Then there are those whose imagination grasps the proportion of the "Distribution Problem" (even though it perhaps does not quite grasp those of the "Production Problem," simply assuming, naively, that it has been "solved") and who appreciate the tenets of Social Credit—the reference being to the Douglas formulae rather than the current Alberta experiment. Then, of course, some of one's friends on his left have become steeped in Marxian ideology, just as quite a number on his right are secretly in love with some sort of Americanized Fascism.

The only point in mentioning these schools of thought is that they have such direct and immediate implications for Architecture. "Fascist Architecture" is by no means an improbable term; you can almost guess the grandiose appearances—and what a chance it would be for the "Grandeur That Was Rome" group, the "G. T. W. R." architects; Similarly, "Proletarian Architecture" connotes something pretty definite—you can surmise the glazed plane, the "uncompromised" angle, in short the International Style for the Internationale. Certainly, Social Credit, once the Discount and Dividend were implemented, would accelerate architectural practice beyond all existing bounds. And as for anything along the lines of a continental, technological set-up, it would change the face of Architecture entirely.

But irrespective of these particular brands of

thought—they may all leave you cold—there is one broad issue on which, it would seem, almost everyone interested in practicing Architecture in the future must take at least some quasi-intelligent stand. It is the same issue which, on its non-architectural sides, will quite probably be passed upon at the polls next November. That is—to render it in a couple of lines—shall we continue our past practice of "individualistic planning" or go in for some kind, some degree of "Master Plan"?

Of course, in the Spring of '33, people seemed to be invoking some master-stroke in economic planning; they wanted a Federal esquisse-esquisse at once with Rendu and even Full Size Details as soon as possible. Now that the depression is lifting a bit, they clamor to be let alone again, just as though the recent incident of miscellaneous pleading and centralized planning hadn't happened. "Quit the 'City Plan': let us go back to building, each of us, whatever he damn pleases on his own plot!"

Is it just barely possible that the emergency is not really passed?—that the quake we felt was merely the premonitory disturbance, just a warning on the seismograph, of the real disaster yet to come? That is to say, specifically, perhaps the system under which we have been living, which may be described for the moment as economics based on Financial Wealth, has not yet fully collided with an oncoming system, economics based on Real Wealth. ("Real wealth" here used to mean a nation's demonstrable ability to produce wanted and needed goods and services.) If so, people may eventually turn, again and perforce, and this time in a big way, to the notion of Master Planning on a national scale. And may not the planners themselves do well to turn to this scale of planning preparatorily and at once?

Architects, by nature and training, appreciate the scale of Master Plans. They have already built residential communities which were planned as a whole (*vide* Radburn). They have plans, at least, for the metropolis as a whole (*vide* "Regional Plan of New York"—and I hear that San Francisco is advancing to the stage of models). If a city, why not a whole geographical region? If regions, why not the nation? Conceivably, a Rebuilt Nation is the logical objective, not only for one political administration but for a generation of architects. It would be a great thing for builders to build—and for architects to design—and for visualists to render. The renderers, let us hope, would not merely "render unto Caesar."

With the Chapters and State Associations

EXCERPTS FROM MINUTES, BULLETINS AND REPORTS

Detroit.

At a luncheon at the Detroit Leland, the Chapter, in conjunction with The Michigan Society of Architects and The Producers' Council Club of Michigan, were hosts to The Producers' Council on the occasion of the Council's Twelfth Semi-Annual meeting.

The meeting, held on December 4th and 5th, was also the occasion for a banquet the evening of December 4th. Among the speakers were many architects prominently identified with the various governmental activities—N. Max Dunning, A. I. A., Kenneth K. Stowell, A. I. A., Editor of The American Architect, Colonel George Walbridge, Dorsay Newson, F. H. A., E. H. Foley, Jr., P. W. A., Donald McNeal, H. O. L. C., and Roger Allen, Toastmaster.

The keynote of the Twelfth Semi-Annual meeting of The Producers' Council was—"Increased co-operation between governmental agencies; financing institutions, architects, engineers, builders, and material manufacturers to promote quality in the resurgent construction industry."

New York.

Hon. Fiorello LaGuardia, Mayor of New York, and Charles W. Romeyn were the Guests of Honor at a luncheon meeting of the Chapter, held at the Architectural League on December 11.

The subject of the meeting—attended only by invited guests and Chapter Members—was "Architects Prepare to Replan a Neighborhood."

The program included a display of lantern slides by William Wilson, showing approaches to the Triborough Bridge; a statement "What Have Architects To Offer?"; and an address by Mayor LaGuardia on "What the City Expects and Needs of Architects."

Charles W. Romeyn was the recipient of a citation by the Chapter President, in honor of Mr. Romeyn's completion of fifty years of active membership in the New York Chapter.

At a luncheon meeting at the League on December 12, Dr. Erik Wettergren, Curator of Decorative Arts at Stockholm was the Guest Speaker.

The luncheon meeting of December 18 was held in the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Commodore. Eugene Meyer, Publisher of the Washington Post, former Director of the War Finance Corporation and Former Governor of the Federal Reserve

Board, spoke on "Small Buildings Make Big Business."

The American Olympic Fine Arts Competition, to be held in Berlin next summer, wishes to obtain for its architectural unit a list of architects who may be invited to exhibit designs for town planning and architectonic designs having to do with the practice of sport; i. e., water colors, drawings and photographs of buildings and grounds which have been designed or executed since January 1, 1932. Members having designs which would qualify are urged to send their names to the Chapter office, 522 Fifth Avenue.

Northern California.

The annual meeting of the Chapter was held at the Plaza Hotel, San Francisco, with Albert J. Evers, President, presiding.

The president delivered his report of activities during the year and offered suggestions for a more widespread interest in the affairs of the profession.

The Secretary-Treasurer's report was presented and accepted, subject to the usual audit.

Reports of Committees on Practice, Competitions, Legislation, Public Information, Education, Buildings Laws, Entertainment, Membership and Exhibits were submitted and accepted.

Cooperating organizations submitted summaries of the activities of the groups to which they are assigned. These included the San Francisco Federation of Arts, California Roadside Council, Architects' and Contractors' Conference Board, State Association of California Architects, San Francisco Housing Association, Advisory Committee to Art Commission, Producers' Council Club and the Advisory Committee to the Board of Public Works.

A number of the reports contained valuable recommendations toward future policy and program.

Officers were then elected for the year 1935-36. In accordance with the recommendation of the Nominating Committee which was submitted at the September meeting, the following were elected:

Will G. Corlett, President; Warren C. Perry, Vice-President; James H. Mitchell, Secretary-Treasurer; Albert J. Evers and Edward L. Frick, Directors (3 year term); Gardner A. Dailey, Director (2 year term).

It was moved that the Chapter extend its hearty appreciation to Mr. Evers for his faithful and valued leadership during the years of his office.

With the Chapters—Continued.

St. Louis.

The recent meeting of the Chapter was preceded by a dinner, attended by some forty members and guests.

F. Ray Leimkuehler, Chairman of the Chapter's Public Information Committee, spoke of the progress that had been made in effecting cooperation between the Chapter members and the Advertising Department of the F. H. A., in preparing material for the publication of a brochure and for newspaper releases.

It was moved and seconded that the Chapter express its appreciation to the F. H. A. authorities for their assistance to the profession through the F. H. A. publications.

Angelo B. M. Corrubia of the Education Committee reported on the work of his committee and announced that several talks were to be made by architects to the students of the various public schools in St. Louis and St. Louis County.

E. J. Russell spoke of the need of helping The American Institute of Architects in all possible ways and praised most highly the work being done by President Voorhees and the other officers on a very limited budget.

Tennessee

The annual meeting of the Chapter was held in Memphis on November 15.

The business meeting of the Chapter was held at 9:30 in the morning, but the entire day and evening was devoted to the activities of the Chapter in conjunction with the Convention of the Tennessee Branch of the Associated General Contractors of America and The Building Industries of Memphis, Tennessee.

A very interesting program was arranged, the Chapter being cognizant of the mutual benefit to be derived from the simultaneous convention of the two allied organizations named above.

It was the unanimous opinion of the participating organizations that the joint convention was most successful, and will result in benefit to all and will increase the influence and power of the construction industry throughout the State. It was suggested that a program of simultaneous conventions be launched in 1936.

An open forum for all units of the Industry was held in the late afternoon, terminating in time to allow everyone to attend the Banquet, which was held in the Ball Room of the Peabody Hotel.

During the Banquet the Convention was addressed by Stephen F. Voorhees, President of

the Institute, Louis LaBeaume, Vice-President of the Institute, and Fred W. Wright, President of the Tennessee Branch of the Associated General Contractors of America.

The President's address related in much detail his experiences on his recent trip to Italy as a delegate to the XIII International Congress of Architects. He stated that this meeting brought together Architects from almost every country of the world, that the exchange of ideas by the members was most valuable and that it was his ambition to bring the Congress to America some day. He related his experiences with the Code Authorities and with the Construction League of the United States and spoke on the functions and duties of the Architect.

J. Frazer Smith expressed the appreciation of the entire Chapter membership for the visits of Mr. Voorhees and Mr. LaBeaume to the Convention.

Washington, D. C.

The December meeting of the Washington, D. C., Chapter was less a meeting than a celebration—the occasion being the Fiftieth Anniversary of Appleton P. Clark's entrance into the practice of Architecture in the District of Columbia.

Thanks to the painstaking effort of Delos H. Smith, who so ably prepared the program, the meeting was a most pleasant and memorable one.

Early in the evening, after the excellent turkey dinner, President Heaton, upon motion from the floor, dispensed with the regular business and turned the meeting over to Toastmaster Theodore I. Coe, who read a number of congratulatory letters from various civic leaders and professional men in Washington, commending Mr. Clark on his splendid record of achievement in his own profession as well as his active participation in civic affairs during the past fifty years.

With Delos Smith leading the way in presenting a verbal picture of architecture and architectural practice over the past half century the program developed into a series of most interesting reminiscences, not the least of which were recollections of Mr. Charles A. Langley who, as a contractor, has had fifty years of pleasant business contacts with Mr. Clark.

The climax of the program came with the presentation to Mr. Clark of a beautifully bound book, suitably inscribed on the title page by Harry Francis Cunningham, containing the signatures and good wishes of all those assisting in the semi-centennial celebration.

As of Interest

Year Book.

The Year Book Supplement of the New York Chapter for 1935-1936 has been issued. It contains a complete list of the Chapter officers, fellows, members, associates, honorary members, etc., and the personnel of standing and special committees.

Housing in Philadelphia.

THE OCTAGON has reviewed a most timely and comprehensive booklet, "Housing in Philadelphia, 1934," by Bernard J. Newman, issued by the Philadelphia Housing Association, 1600 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

The booklet is liberally illustrated and contains articles on the "Carl Mackley Houses," "The Outlook for Housing," "Insanitation," "Dwelling Construction," "Demolitions," "Sheriff Sales," and "Rent Survey."

Copies may be had for 25¢ from the Philadelphia Housing Association.

A History of Mosaics.

The First Book on the subject in English and the First Comprehensive History of an important field of art is published today by Porter Sargent, 11 Beacon Street, Boston.

"A History of Mosaics," by Edgar Waterman Anthony, M. Arch., Ph.D., author of "Early Florentine Architecture and Decoration," brings together with due sense of proportion the heretofore inaccessible scattered shreds and patches of the history and technique of Mosaics over a period of 5000 years.

It is not surprising that there has been so little published on this important phase of art considering the fact that so many of these Mosaics have been

hidden away for many centuries in places relatively inaccessible—at Cefalu—at Salonika—under the whitewash of Santa Sophia.

This monumental work fills the gap in the catalog of Mosaics in every library and on every shelf of books of art. It is the result of long interest and study in art in general and Mosaics in particular, and could be produced only by one trained as an architect and art critic.

First Book on Louis Sullivan.

Although many magazine articles have called attention to his work, the first book on the great American architect who is credited with inspiring the whole modern trend is "Louis Sullivan: Prophet of Modern Architecture," by Hugh Morrison. Mr. Morrison found the task of reconstructing Sullivan's life story beset by difficulties as all office records had been destroyed by fire, there were few available photographs and no list of buildings he had designed and he left no family to preserve personal effects. However, Morrison himself visited every building designed by Sullivan now in existence, interviewed associates and friends, and personally added some seventy or eighty photographs of buildings to be included among the illustrations, producing what is not only the first but probably the definitive life of this genius. . . . A biography of the man and critical appraisal of his work has long been overdue. . . . The biography should open up a new era in the appreciation of American Art and Architecture.

\$4.00, less professional discount.—Published by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 70 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Important Notice

IT is necessary to publish a new edition of the HANDBOOK OF ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE and the Board of Directors desires to make such changes therein as will bring it up-to-date.

Therefore, the Board requests every member who is using or is familiar with this Handbook to send:

- (a) Notice of any error therein;
- (b) Notice of text, plates, figures, or forms that are unsatisfactory or obsolete;
- (c) Suggested changes in text, plates, figures, or forms;
- (d) New subjects, plates, figures or forms that should be included.

The Board will appreciate a prompt response to this appeal, for it desires to make this handbook of the greatest possible benefit to the profession.

Please send your suggestions to the Secretary at The Octagon *before the close of this year*, in order that proposed changes may be assembled and submitted to the Board at its pre-Convention meeting in 1936.

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