

ART REFERENCE DEPARTMENT  
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# Journal of The American Institute of ARCHITECTS



MONT-ST.-MICHEL

September 1944

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Remaking a City

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Our Heritage in Mont-Saint-Michel

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London and Open Spaces

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Ithiel Town, Architect and Engineer

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Newly Elected Fellows

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Architectural Journalism in England

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The Scientific Approach to Construction

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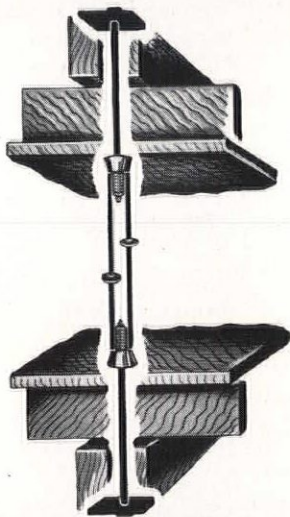
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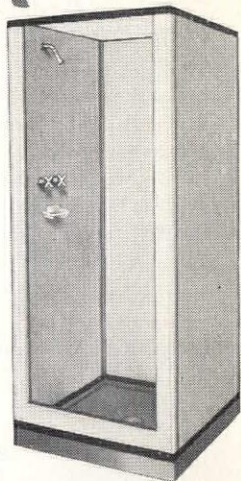
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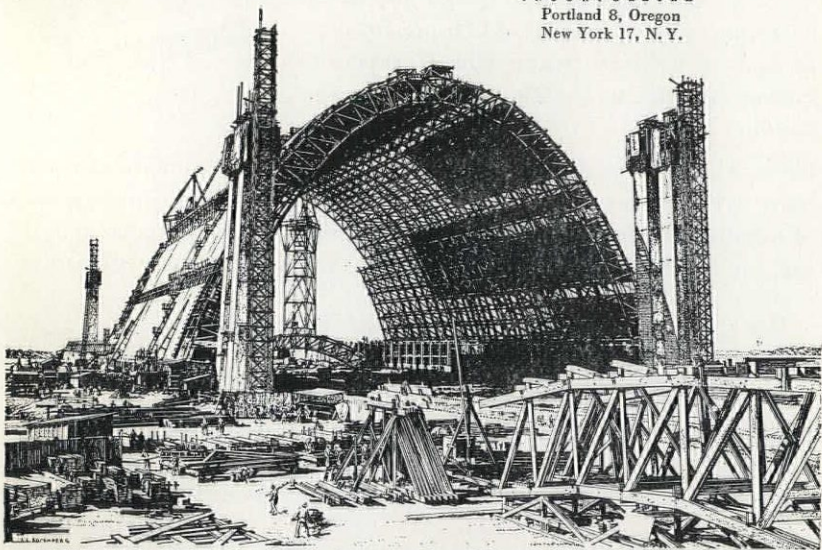
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## Remaking A City

Excerpts from the Second Public Report (Zoning and Master Plan) of N. Y. Chapter, A.I.A. Committee on Civic Design and Development. The report was prepared by John Taylor Boyd, Jr. and Jacob Moscovitz in collaboration with the Committee: Grosvenor Atterbury, chairman; Arthur C. Holden, secretary; Cameron Clark, Charles Downing Lay, Jacob Moscovitz, Perry Coke Smith and Robert C. Weinberg.

NEW YORK's situation resembles that of other cities of this country, particularly the older ones. So serious is the physical deterioration in most American cities that experts are beginning to question the ability of the larger urban centers to produce a satisfactory way of life in their present form. Whatever may be said regarding this opinion the facts all point to one conclusion: that is, that our cities cannot continue indefinitely in their present condition. The situation is clearly one requiring a much more fundamental approach than has hitherto been made to the problems of the physical environment within the city.

Although the deteriorated physical condition of our City requires a major operation, this operation is economically possible, provided it is carried out under a well-considered, long-range policy. The basis of such a long-range policy must be the adoption of a thor-

oughly effective master plan and a comprehensive re-zoning of the City's land uses—two requirements that are now lacking.

The purpose of this analysis is to point out the direction we believe zoning and its guiding instrument, the master plan, should take in order to help arrest, and as soon as possible reverse, this process of deterioration, and so create conditions favorable to a sound and wholesome environment within the City.

The present Zoning Resolution, the first comprehensive measure of its kind, was adopted in 1916. Since that time comparatively slight changes in the Resolution itself and in the districting of the city have been made. The main argument for zoning—which still holds good—was that it would stabilize property values by protecting the owner of a property against the construction of a building in its immediate surroundings

that would have such a different use, and such excessive height or coverage, as to exercise a depreciating effect upon it and upon the neighborhood.

The Resolution as it now stands has been only partly successful. It will be inadequate as an aid for the rehabilitation of New York City's physical environment if it is not substantially modified in the light of present-day conditions, and even then it cannot be considered as the foundation for rehabilitation.



The master plan for the City has not yet been fully formulated. This, in spite of the fact that its true function is to establish in the first instance, the proper relations between all types of land uses, both public and private, thus making it the parent instrument of physical planning, and in spite of the fact that the administration of any zoning ordinance should receive its direction for good or evil from this parent instrument.

Master planning is a comparatively new instrument of physical planning. The preparation and adoption of the master plan for the City was prescribed and made mandatory by the new charter of

New York City. However, so far the approach to this task has been vague and ineffective. No real attack has been made on the main source of the existing confusion, namely, the maladjusted and unbalanced condition of the present land uses, both public and private.

Evidence of this deterioration is widespread throughout the City. The real property of New York, taken as a whole, is deteriorating faster than it is being replaced. Contrary to the prevailing conception of the public, deterioration is not confined to the slums or to the blighted areas. The process affects all classes of structures. Another of its characteristics is traffic congestion within the areas affected.

Congestion of traffic is most acute in, but is not confined to, the newly and densely built-up central districts, such as midtown and downtown Manhattan. In these central districts depreciation is far more extensive than meets the eye. A consideration of the finances of structures, even of many properties that are comparatively new, reveals a strong trend towards premature economic obsolescence. We encounter many cases of buildings that are structurally sound, yet are economically unsound, because they



operate at a loss or bring in but a scanty return on the investment.

It is important also to realize that the situation represented by these conditions has existed for several decades. Incidentally, this shows the fallacy, entertained in some quarters, that the burden of taxes on real property is chiefly responsible for the deterioration and unsatisfactory finances of many New York buildings. Taxes have caused complaint only in recent years and are but a minor factor among many that lie at the roots of the difficulty.

It is our considered opinion that the approach to the future of zoning and the master plan should be founded on an understanding of what really gives vitality to the City. Such an approach, at once

realistic and workable, will be found if we reduce to a simple classification the many types of human activities that operate in the city, and the physical patterns into which they naturally translate themselves.

This is not so difficult a matter as it sounds. Upon analysis, the myriad of human activities fall rather easily into eight major groups. Each one of these groups of basic human activity naturally works out a corresponding pattern for itself; in the shape of those physical constructions, installations, and land uses incident to its functioning. This physical pattern which each human activity group evolves for itself may be termed a land use pattern. The logic of this is apparent in the following table:

#### HUMAN ACTIVITY PATTERNS

#### LAND USE PATTERNS

1—Carrying on Work . . . . .	Commerce, Industry, Business, services.
2—Making our Homes. . . . .	Residential areas.
3—Governing Ourselves. . . . .	Public administration centers.
4—Training the Young. . . . .	Schools, playgrounds.
5—Caring for Health. . . . .	Health centers, clinics, hospitals.
6—Spending our Leisure. . . . . (recreation).	Parks, theatres, all places of sports, amusements, relaxation and culture.
7—Our Community Affairs.	Community Centers.
8—Moving about. . . . .	Traffic and transportation systems.

Here in these eight Human Activity Patterns and their corresponding land use patterns are the fundamental elements composing the city's complexity and its seeming confusion. Once this is perceived, it becomes the task of planning, zoning and other regulations to insure that these major elements be properly located with reference to each other and that the order thus arrived at be safeguarded; also that this basic order should have full scope to function freely and efficiently, with the least possible friction. We must also recognize that it is not a static order, but one in a continuous state of evolution. This last characteristic is particularly important.

Following out this approach, the master plan becomes the instrument which resolves the various land uses, as physical expressions of their corresponding activity patterns, and combines them into a coordinated system, giving form and efficiency to the fundamental order of the city. Specifically, the real function of the master plan and zoning is to make sure that each one of the above major land use patterns is most efficient in itself and is properly coordinated with the others, to create a sound physical environment within the whole city. By

weaving the land use patterns, enumerated above, into a master plan, we obtain the answer to the *What, How and Where* of things; i.e., based on answering *What* the major nature of each human activity in the city is, and *How* should they best be related to each other, in order to determine *Where* they should be placed.

Some such approach might form the basis of formulating measures for a satisfactory physical environment within the city in the post-War period.



We recommend the adoption of a long-range realistic assumption for the total population of the City, based on such an ultimate absorption point which will make possible the requirements of a future "open" city, (sufficient open spaces). This assumption is the primary requirement for a sound master plan, and an effective zoning resolution. Also, a master plan which provides for a rational distribution of that population.

The control over population density within structures should likewise be more direct than is provided for today.

We recommend a master plan and zoning based upon a policy

of long-range adjustment—to be pursued, however, without avoidable delays—to improve the relationships of occupational to residential areas, particularly with regard to the degree of proximity of homes to working places. Also, we recommend a more efficient and realistic allotment of the area of land for any single use in a zone.

We recommend a master plan which integrates the several, separate, City-wide plans which govern schools, health services, parks, and other public services with the City-wide plan of private land use.

We recommend a master plan which integrates the City-wide plan of parkways, express highways and thoroughfares with the City-wide plans of each of the other elements enumerated above.



The relation of *traffic* — the eighth in the list of land use patterns previously enumerated — to the others, and its place in the master plan, deserves particular notice.

In the pursuit of the numerous activities of our daily lives, we citizens walk, ride, or move materials from *place* to *place*, from one fixed point to another. We go from a shelter of one type of use to a shelter of another type of use, or

from shelter to shelter of the same type of use. In other words, land uses create patterns of *fixed* points and areas. These patterns are of different categories and between them takes place the constant movement of man and material, channeled by means of the streets, highways and other thoroughfares. It is obvious, therefore, that the *location* of these various types of *fixed* points or areas *in relation to each other*, establishes the City's traffic pattern; the channels of which should, therefore, *follow* the lines of the most efficient functional relationship between the various types of land use patterns. This principle establishes a basis for integrating the City-wide plan of parkways, express highways and thoroughfares with the major categories of land uses, public and private.

Moreover, the *type* of traffic thoroughfare should be consonant with the *type* of land use it services; and, conversely, a parcel of real property can be said to be in the *right location* for its *particular use* only when it is located on that thoroughfare which services it best, as determined both from the standpoint of its suitability to the locality and to the "organized" traffic pattern of the whole City.

New York City should be alive to the challenge offered by the nationwide movement for large-scale reconstruction, known as Urban Redevelopment, which is becoming accepted by experts as an essential—nay, perhaps the major, means—for removing the causes of deterioration of our cities.

This movement envisages the reconstruction, in the form preferably of replacement, of entire "neighborhoods" as residential units, in which are included all the necessary amenities; social, educational, recreational, shopping facilities, etc., each thoroughly coordinated and integrated in the unit.



We recommend a master plan which provides for long-range gradual changes in the process of the readjustment of the City's land uses through the instrumentality of *time-zoning*.

There is a common assumption that a building exists in perpetuity or at least for the duration of its physical life. This assumption is no longer tenable, for cities change too rapidly.

There are many factors involved in these trends and changes in the City's land uses. Among them are the changes in the use character

of neighborhoods (foreseen and unforeseen) that are constantly taking place; and technical advances in the building field over a period of years, which make a building economically obsolete, even though it may be still physically sound. We should give practical recognition to the fact that the physical and economic lives of a structure are by no means necessarily co-terminous. In recent years, *time-zoning* of land uses has come into favor in city planning as a means of dealing with these actual conditions; it recognizes the processes that actually take place in the gradual growth of the city, and guides this growth into orderly development.

*Time-zoning*, however, requires cooperation on the part of real property owners with the City Planning Commission. It would be absurd to expect the City to pay for the removal of buildings—which must be to some extent a constant process—that is necessary to maintain sound conditions in the zones. Consequently, it devolves upon the owner to so adjust the financial structure of his buildings as to make it practicable for him to undertake either its demolition and rebuilding for a more suitable purpose or its alteration, within the time limits set by the City

Planning Commission for the reasonable economic life of structures in the zone in which his building is located. The underlying principle is doubtless an extension of the method of amortization now in use, in such manner as to allow for the setting aside by the property owner of reserves to finance the replacement of a structure when it has outlived its economic life.

The general approach to zoning and the master plan, outlined broadly above, has, as its goal, an eventual physical pattern for the City in which each piece of property is in the right location for its particular use, both economically and socially, and on the right street or thoroughfare; considered both in relation to its immediate environment and to the City as a whole.

It would be futile to attempt to assess the responsibility for New York's situation in terms of guilt or the failure of individuals. Since the conditions are of long standing and widespread, the community is to blame—city government, the

public, and those private interests most directly concerned. This much, however, is clear: united action and the closest cooperation of all sections of the community in their respective roles must be forthcoming if we are to right the situation.

Private initiative is girding itself, ready for the take-off. The public should realize its full share of responsibility in the future of its city. In particular, private interest most concerned—such as property owners, real estate experts, building managers; their organizations; the building industry; and also civic organizations—all should seek a clearer view of the factors that are at the bottom of the deteriorated physical conditions of the City and together push for their removal.

Nor should we fear the task to be too great. We have every opportunity — in the amount of land available, in the experience and the resources of the planning and construction fields at our command, and in the prospects of finance—to accomplish the task.

“Is it better to build great highways to take city dwellers temporarily out of the city, or to plan park systems that will permanently bring more of the country into the city?”

—NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, INC.

## Our Heritage in Mont-Saint-Michel

A passage from "Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres," by Henry Adams, written before 1905; published by Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston.

THE MAN who wanders into the twelfth century is lost, unless he can grow prematurely young.

One can do it, as one can play with children. Wordsworth, whose practical sense equalled his intuitive genius, carefully limited us to "a season of calm weather," which is certainly best; but granting a fair frame of mind, one can still "have sight of that immortal sea" which brought us hither from the twelfth century; one can even travel thither and see the children sporting on the shore. Our sense is partially atrophied from disuse, but it is still alive, at least in old people, who alone, as a class, have the time to be young.



One needs only to be old enough in order to be as young as one will. From the top of this Abbey Church one looks across the bay to Avranches, and toward Coutances and the Cotentin—the *Constantinus pagus*—whose shore, facing us, recalls the coast of New England. The relation between the granite of one coast and that of

the other may be fanciful, but the relation between the people who live on each is as hard and practical a fact as the granite itself. When one enters the church, one notes first the four great triumphal piers or columns, at the intersection of the nave and transepts, and on looking into M. Corroyer's architectural study which is the chief source of all one's acquaintance with the Mount, one learns that these piers were constructed in 1058. Four out of five American tourists will instantly recall the only date of Mediaeval history they ever knew, the date of the Norman Conquest. Eight years after these piers were built, in 1066, Duke William of Normandy raised an army of forty thousand men in these parts, and in northern France, whom he took to England, where they mostly stayed. For a hundred and fifty years, until 1204, Normandy and England were united; the Norman peasant went freely to England with his lord, spiritual or temporal; the Norman woman, a very capable person, followed her husband or her parents; Normans held nearly all the Eng-

lish fiefs; filled the English Church; crowded the English Court; created the English law; and we know that French was still currently spoken in England as late as 1400, or thereabouts, "After the scole of Stratford atte bowe." The aristocratic Norman names still survive in part, and if we look up their origin here we shall generally find them in villages so remote and insignificant that their place can hardly be found on any ordinary map; but the common people had no surnames, and cannot be traced, although for every noble whose name or blood survived in England or in Normandy, we must reckon hundreds of peasants. Since the generation which followed William to England in 1066, we can reckon twenty-eight or thirty from father to son, and, if you care to figure up the sum, you will find that you had about two hundred and fifty million arithmetical ancestors living in the middle of the eleventh century. The whole population of England and northern France may then have numbered five million, but if it were fifty it would not much affect the certainty that, if you have any English blood at all, you have also Norman. If we could go back and live again in

all our two hundred and fifty million arithmetical ancestors of the eleventh century, we should find ourselves doing many surprising things, but among the rest we should pretty certainly be ploughing most of the fields of the Cotentin and Calvados; going to mass in every parish church in Normandy; rendering military service to every lord, spiritual or temporal, in all this region; and helping to build the Abbey Church at Mont-Saint-Michel. From the roof of the Cathedral of Coutances over yonder, one may look away over the hills and woods, the farms and fields of Normandy, and so familiar, so homelike are they, one can almost take oath that in this, or the other, or in all, one knew life once and has never so fully known it since.



Never so fully known it since! For we of the eleventh century, hardheaded, close-fisted, grasping, shrewd, as we were, and as Normans are still said to be, stood more fully in the centre of the world's movement than our English descendants ever did. We were a part, and a great part, of the Church, of France, and of Europe. The Leos and Gregories of the

tenth and eleventh centuries leaned on us in their great struggle for reform. Our Duke Richard-Sans-Peur, in 966, turned the old canons out of the Mount in order to bring here the highest influence of the time, the Benedictine monks of Monte Cassino. Richard II, grandfather of William the Conqueror, began this Abbey Church in 1020, and helped Abbot Hildebert to build it. When William the Conqueror in 1066 set out to conquer England, Pope Alexander II stood behind him and blessed his banner. From that moment our Norman Dukes cast the Kings of France into the shade. Our activity was not limited to northern Europe, or even confined by Anjou and Gascony. When we stop at Coutances, we will drive out to Hauteville to see where Tancred came from, whose sons Robert and Roger were conquering Naples and Sicily at the time when the Abbey Church was building on the Mount. Normans were everywhere in 1066, and everywhere in the lead of their age. We were a serious race. If

you want other proof of it, besides our record in war and in politics, you have only to look at our art. Religious art is the measure of human depth and sincerity; any triviality, any weakness, cries aloud.

If this church on the Mount is not proof enough of Norman character, we will stop at Coutances for a wider view. Then we will go to Caen and Bayeux. From there, it would almost be worth our while to leap at once to Palermo. It was in the year 1131 or thereabouts that Roger began the Cathedral at Cefalu and the Chapel Royal at Palermo; it was about the year 1174 that his grandson William began the Cathedral of Monreale. No art—either Greek or Byzantine, Italian or Arab—has ever created two religious types so beautiful, so serious, so impressive, and yet so different, as Mont-Saint-Michel watching over its northern ocean, and Monreale, looking down over its forests of orange and lemon, on Palermo and the Sicilian seas.

“THE HOUSING INDUSTRY’S greatest problem in the post-War era will be its ability to *compete* successfully with the automobile, the fur coat, jewelry, delayed vacations, etc., for a fair share of the consumer dollar.”—  
IRVING W. CLARK of Westinghouse.



# Houses In the Nation's Economy

By the Editors of *TASK*

A Housing Program for the Immediate Future, as developed by the Editors of *Task*, a magazine aiming "to give the profession direction—a social cooperative one."

**H**OUSING began in this country as a stimulus to employment and production. It has ended by becoming an essential part of the production process. In 1935 low-cost urban housing was first constructed by the Public Works Administration, one of many attempts to revive business. When, in 1937, the Senate Committee on Education and Labor unanimously favored the United States Housing Act, its members saw the housing program creating jobs in industry. Today, in the war, it is the shelter need which has called for more and more housing. Report after report has shown that the lack of it is the great weakness of our war effort. Proper shelter and high production go together. Although this is not the first time that the two have been coupled, it is the first time that all of us see the connection. We see more. Mere shelter is not enough; people demand community facilities as well.

The need for housing is plain. An estimated 16,000,000 families must be satisfied before this coun-

try is properly housed. The Administration knows the need. When President Roosevelt gave the nation a Second Bill of Rights, the fifth on the list was *the right of every family to a decent home*. The first and most right the President offered was *the right to a useful and remunerative job* for everyone. The first of these, and it cannot be over-emphasized, is impossible without the fifth. *The construction of decent homes and of community facilities for all who need them will be the key of our future expanded economy.*

Those who are against public spending seldom realize that even in the "normal" days of the 1920's, public construction—Federal, state and local—took more money and employed more people than any single line of private enterprise. We must face the fact that our future expanded economy, agreed on by labor and most of business, will, for the most part, be carried out without further capital investment in private enterprise. Instead, the new investment will be

made by the government in public works which, by providing employment and raising the general standard of living, will create the market for the nation's produce. The accepted form of public works, such as highways, bridges, defensive armaments, etc., will never absorb the available capital or offer full employment. *The kernel of the post-War public works program must be in the weakest of all our industries, that of residential construction.*

The saddest example of American ingenuity is the residential construction industry. The least advanced technically, it has failed completely to meet a vast market. In 1939 there were 4,000,000 families earning below \$1,000 and 5,000,000 between \$1,000 and \$1,500 who, as far as the residential construction industry was concerned, were non-existent. While other industries, such as the automobile industry, continually expanded their markets by lowering prices, homebuilders and realtors plodded their lonely way. Where the United States Housing Authority, in 1939, succeeded in reducing the net construction costs per dwelling in public housing to \$2,720, the wild-eyed advocates of free enterprise, with the

help of Government-guaranteed mortgages, could only come to \$3,601. A leading realtor has admitted that it is impossible for private enterprise to build a substantial house costing between \$2,000 and \$3,000. Another has prophesied a marked increase in construction costs. When the members of the National Association of Home Builders were polled to discover what future market they were seeking, 18.7% of those replying decided on homes costing between \$3,000 and \$5,000, 65% between \$5,000 and \$10,000 and 12.7% over \$10,000. The helpless 9,000,000 families with incomes below \$1,500 a year, who cannot afford \$3,000 homes, continue to be left out of the picture.



As for existing shelter facilities, they are woefully inadequate in contrast to our production potential. Twenty-three per cent of all dwellings in urban areas had no private baths in 1940, and at least 10% needed major repairs. In rural areas 27% of the houses needed major repairs. In New York City, where a comparatively high standard prevails, two out of five buildings lived in were built before 1900. For a nation which

prides itself on being up to date, our obsolete houses are a sad revelation.

The Federal Government has come to the rescue of the residential construction industry, not to mention the real estate and mortgage institutions, largely through the Federal Housing Administration. Perhaps too much has been made of the influence of the FHA, particularly on mortgage rates. It permits  $4\frac{1}{2}\%$  since 1939, prior to that year  $5\%$ , on  $90\%$ -guaranteed mortgages. The Census of 1940 reveals what little change has occurred. Out of a total of 139,957 mortgagors reporting in suburban Philadelphia as owning one-family nonfarm properties, 88,235 still paid  $6\%$ , only 17,383  $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ . Why mortgagees, whether individuals or institutions, should get  $4\frac{1}{2}\%$  on Government-guaranteed mortgages when buyers of war bonds are satisfied with 2 or  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  is difficult to understand. In addition to providing unnecessarily high interest rates and neglecting the low-income groups, the FHA had, until the war, no place for the Negro. The failure of the FHA must be taken as the failure of the residential construction industry to answer the national housing problem.

There is a way out. Private en-

terprise will provide all homes that can be built at a profit; the Federal Government will take care of the unprofitable. The United States Housing Authority, now the Federal Public Housing Authority, has proven successfully that publicly financed, publicly owned and *privately built* housing is the answer to the nation's low-income shelter need. The USHA early discovered that the three principal costs of housing were: first, the cost of money; second, that of public utilities; and third and least important, that of labor. It reduced the first by lending money at low rates to the local housing authorities; it reduced the second by careful planning, by standardization and by skillful negotiation with public utility companies; and it reduced the third by providing steady employment to the men in the building trades. Precedent for Government subsidies of this kind is nothing new. Had it not been for the Government-financed, Government-owned and *privately constructed* highways of the 1920's, the automobile manufacturers would not have been able to sell their products. The only reason the Federal Government subsidized highway construction in those "prosperous" days was the failure

of private enterprise to do so. Owning and operating highways, as far as private enterprise was concerned, was a losing proposition. In the same way it has neglected the housing industry; the FPHA has had to step into the war housing picture wherever homes were not provided. Because it has the experience, the FPHA is the best national instrument to support the residential construction industry and so provide a stimulant to the nation's post-War economy.

The states have limited borrowing and taxing powers; municipalities with their antiquated real property tax are helpless. To support a national housing program we must look to the Federal Government to enact realistic tax legislation. Such a tax policy will mean increased levies on the upper income brackets, increased inheritance and gift taxes, the elimination of all tax-exempt securities, mandatory joint returns for married couples, and the reduction of sales taxes which burden the low-income groups. Our plans for an expanded economy and full employment after the war are impossible without sound taxation.

We must look to the Federal Government to create the housing machinery necessary for providing

jobs and homes for returning veterans and war workers, homes executed by both private and public enterprise.

#### *Task's Housing Program:*

1. A permanent Federal Agency to handle all Federal housing activities, including the function of guaranteeing mortgages and housing loans, with an Administrator in the President's Cabinet to see that housing is a part of national planning.

2. The Agency will see to it that every American family who needs one shall have a home of adequate and comfortable standards. If the home cannot be built at a profit, it must be built with Government subsidies.

3. The Agency will forbid any discrimination and segregation on the basis of race, religion or color in housing.

4. As basic standards, the Agency will have:

a. Complete community facilities within walking distance of homes. If these facilities do not exist, they must be built. Facilities must be made available at all times in the neighborhood as well as in the project. There must be no walled cities.

b. Low density to assure ade-

quate space between buildings and good site planning.

c. Proper location of projects in relation to industrial needs.

5. Construction of substantial housing for returning veterans and migrant workers will be given priorities.



## London and Open Spaces

By *Ralph Walker, F.A.I.A.*

PATRICK GEDDES, that patron saint of planners, said in 1904: "City improvers, like the gardeners from whom they develop, fall into two broadly contrasted schools which are really, just as gardening itself, the formal and the naturalistic." Here less than fifty years ago was indicated the simple qualifications of a city planner or "improver." That in this relatively short time the whole problem has become so complicated, so involved, as to preclude the possibility of a gardener (no matter how talented) from readily becoming a planner, is shown in the fact that planners today need to be sociologists, economists, engineers, architects, and practical politicians, all at the same time and, if possible, and God does not forbid, in the same person.

The question, however, as to whether the results of planning are

to be formal or informal still persists and underlies the physical characteristics we find in the small amount of *design planning* found in cities. So much so that these divergent qualities of design are used largely as matters of individual taste or prejudice, regardless of terrain and the increased use of the automobile.



Open spaces in London seem infinite; a street may seem a solid wall of houses and more often than not hide open gardens in back of them. It is said that at one time there were 460 domestic squares in London. The railings and fences so commonplace about British front yards have, during the war, fallen as scrap and at the same time into disrepute. Some of the British have taken openly to

an American idea and you may hear—"Why don't we, like the Americans, have unfenced front yards?" The old parks have also lost, without as much regret as you might expect, the fine old wrought and cast iron fences which kept out the common folk. "It is a question whether they ever will be put back. It has become more democratic for all to have ready access to the old gardens." And, as many of them are now surrounded by business premises, they long ago ceased to have a quality of exclusiveness.



When one studies our British cousins, one is amazed to find a certain lawlessness in their character. Some time ago they had a universal speed law of twenty-five miles an hour, and to make the catching of an offender more "sporting" he had to be caught in a speed trap. It was well known, however, that the Automobile Club of Great Britain had uniformed agents posted at all main cross-roads who, if they saluted a car with the Club's insignia, indicated that the next stretch of road was free of a trap. During the time when Americans bootlegged liquor the British bootlegged speed. Whenever a fence really gets in

the way, the British are apt to forget traditions and the sanctity of the law and break it down.

The city of London has been for many centuries one of open spaces. This in sharp contrast to the cities on the continent. The British for many centuries have defended an island rather than any one of the individual cities to be found on it. So urban character in Great Britain is entirely different from that in Europe, where a very tight congestion necessary for defense within walls was common. Open spaces within a city are indeed precious in Europe, and those which have a "natural character" must of necessity be thought as strange. It is interesting to note that a natural park within the city of Munich is called the "English Park."

This brings up an interesting idea—the question of the scale and quality of design in the open spaces of a city with a dispersed character as compared with one where people live in a state of congestion. In thinking about it, it would seem natural that were London a city where the height and mass of buildings were similar to those in Paris, we would expect to find a treatment of parks like those of the Tuileries and the Luxembourg.

But the low character of English buildings, the fact that trees are dominant, makes plausible the informal quality of both Hyde and Regent Parks. You may walk through both of them and, because of the inconspicuous building line surrounding them, rarely see it and think yourself well in the country.



The architect in charge of the restoration of the eighteenth-century city of Bath believes that a small clump of fullgrown trees in the "Circus" is too large in scale. The fault may lie not so much in their size as in their informality, an arrangement antagonistic to the geometry of the enclosing and hard circle of buildings. This eighteenth-century formality is rare in England. "The parks of London are perhaps the element that most surprises the foreigner unused to English tastes and ways. Here are neither the leafy terraces or regular alleys of German capitals, nor the trimmed well-clipped boscajes and levels of Versailles and the Tuileries, but only mere stretches of parkline greensward, dotted here and there in charming irregularity with old trees of noble size. Walks there are indeed, and footpaths, shrubberies, and flower

beds; but the chief area of the London parks is ever and always this fresh, radiant, undulating turf; turf which here, more than ever, suggested the little Board School girl's answer to a question on general knowledge, "Turf, madame, is grass and clean dirt put together by God." ("Highways and Byways of London," by Mrs. E. T. Cook.)



It is very hard to translate into other and foreign conditions the quality of design which so clearly fits in their native surroundings. It is to be wondered at, for example, why anyone should think it good design to plan a small English park at the Battery in New York; architects visualizing the great mass of the city behind it must question the feeling for scale in the proposed design. A good example of the quality of scale and design which goes with high buildings is clearly shown in Bryant Park, (illust., p. 131), where the formality and relationships are not only in keeping with the back of the Library, but also with the amazing chaos of the high skyline on the other three sides.

The British have always used their open spaces as places to play

on. The great difference between England and Germany, for instance, was that walking or playing on the grass was *nicht verboten*. I was interested to observe in Trinidad, at four o'clock on every afternoon, when the sun's rays have lost their power to harm, the great Queen's Park covered with adults playing all sorts of games. And a tropical dry season can be as deadly as the vandal hands which cost New York City a hard quarter of a million a year.



But, while the Londoners use their open spaces intelligently, it is well recognized they have an insufficient number of them; so that the London County Council's new plan proposes in every business area an acre for each 10,000 workers—little enough surely. New York has also an insufficient number of parks for workers. Below 57th Street at least three million workers pound the pavements at noon-time, cluttering up the corners, interfering with motor traffic. There are practically no open spaces for the noontime use of these millions of workers. One of the most interesting models at the exhibition of New York's Post-War Building Program was a

model of Manhattan below Central Park; it clearly indicates this condition—the green spaces are so conspicuous by their absence.

The use of the street as a place for meeting and play is so much an ingrained part of the ways of the immigrant from continental Europe that it is very difficult for these people and their children to adjust themselves to a concept all too common in housing developments, of narrow walks and more green grass than they have been accustomed to in their former dwellings. From casual observation it would seem that the street in New York is still the most important play place; that playgrounds far removed from the eyes of the average mother are not, for very young children especially, considered as desirable. A relation of apartment entrance and play street is a condition which might be worthy of study in housing developments.



The use of open spaces for play has one very well-known example at Washington in the famous Oval (illust., p. 131) at the back of the White House, where the great meadow is covered at noon and in the evenings by players of



games. In London the use of great open spaces for sport, and for that kind of show which is also a type of play, is ingrained in the ways of the British. But they have been used largely by those who had sufficient incomes to possess more than adequate leisure. Your cockney found his recreation in his local pub.



The London County Council Plan has set up standards of population densities and compensating open spaces which are reasonable and eventually will be accepted, because the English, as well as others, are fighting for much more this time than so-called houses for heroes.

All British planners are one in urging that satisfactory open spaces be set aside in the rebuilding of the bombed cities. In London a standard of four acres per thousand persons has been set as a minimum within the city; to these will be added another three acres in green belts encircling the major city. The British have long believed that the green belt is an insurance, against the frittering away of the limited amount of land in the British Isles. Every bit of the land must be used in-

telligently; for example, the Bourneville Trust is studying how to reclaim the famous "Black Country" which lies near and about Birmingham. It seeks drivers of bulldozers who have an appreciation for a beautiful landscape, and it would have them push great spoil and slag heaps into flowing and natural forms to give a groundwork for reforestation. It also seeks in new mining enterprises (now largely of the open-cut kind) that the miners, in opening up the vein, fold back the top soil so that, as the ore is removed, it may be replaced and the land returned to agricultural usages.



The British know the need for playgrounds which are near enough for adults to use at the end of a day's work, without tramping or busing for another such interminable time as they experience going to and from work, but they also know the joys of rough lands. They appreciate the great need of bringing the country to the city. I walked out along the Thames Bank one Sunday, through the old village of Ham with its common and fine old Georgian houses, where the Scotch officers under James I settled; and again, on another Sun-

day morning, I tramped over Hampstead Heath — each time in friendly company. It seemed as if all the English women had sent their menfolk out for the weekly look at a countryside—a countryside which is well within the great sprawl of the city.

The British plan to copy our motor parkways. Many spoke of the fine job that Westchester County, and especially Robert Moses, had done about New York. They hope to tie railways and canals, using the parked land as an insulation to keep the heavy traffic noise away from the residential areas. These parkways will tie the main cities of Britain together in a chain of super-highways. This, because of the smallness of the Island, is like tying Boston, New York and Washington together into a tight relationship.



In the London County plan the Thames is to be made the river it can be—embankments are to replace mud flats, and tree-planted promenades are to give "Whistler's river" a formality which to him would have meant, I am sure, a loss of mystery.

A city may rise and fall in power, but unless it makes a firm

impression of beauty on poet and painter it will have lived in vain. Gone are the commercial glories of Venice. May we hope the Nazis may leave the physical ones!

There are in London formal squares which are extremely fine in human scale; they are an inheritance from the eighteenth century. For the moment, despite the blitz, they are still surrounded by old Georgian houses whose simple walls, well-spaced windows and finely placed detail, show an appreciation of sensitive planning that is hard to find outside British cities. Across the street in the small parks are the trees—tall plane trees—

Green is the plane tree in the  
Square

The other trees are brown;  
They droop and pine for country  
air;

The plane tree loves the town.

They are great and majestic, the London plane trees, weaving webs of lace over the gray buildings and emphasizing the quality of nature in the otherwise wastes of stone and brick. The occupants of the buildings get all the possible air and sun and at the same time can look out at pleasant greensward and trees. Commonwealth Avenue

in Boston and Gramercy Park in New York have tree planting on the same principle. One of the plans made after the famous fire thought of London as being a city of such squares.



In each of the many communities into which the London County is to be divided—that is, if the dreamers win—there is planned a cultural center where education, the drama, schools, libraries, mu-

seums, recreation parks for sports and for leisure, shall all be arranged to give the benefits of a modern civilization to as many as can be encouraged to demand these wide opportunities for betterment. The ideal here can be stated in those words of Pericles: "Lovers of the Beautiful, but simple in our tastes, we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness."

Open cities—open spaces—open minds. No walls to limit imagination.



## The Edward Langley Scholarships

IT was announced in *The Octagon*, December 1943, that no awards of the Langley Scholarships would be made in 1944. It has, however, come to the attention of the Board of Directors that there are, possibly, projects that could be carried out without appreciable distraction from the war effort. Accordingly, proposals may be submitted to the Committee on Awards and Scholarships (chairman, Loring H. Provine, Architectural Building, University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill). As the year is rapidly approaching its end,

any proposals should immediately be submitted to the committee in time for action by that committee prior to a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board on September 22 in Washington.

These scholarships are awarded for advanced work in architecture. They are open to all residents of the United States and Canada who are engaged in the profession of architecture; that is, architects, architectural draftsmen (including specification writers, supervisors, and executives), and teachers and students in architecture.

Awards will be made upon a competitive basis from the standpoint of the character, ability, and need of each candidate; the purpose of the grant; potential contribution to professional knowledge or welfare; and amount of grant required.

Programs must be carefully planned and the candidate should attach a written summary to his proposal giving a clear picture of how his work or study will be developed and reported, a schedule of time requirements, and a statement in reasonable detail of the expenditures to be made from the requested grant.

Any architect in the United States or Canada may propose a

candidate. The faculty or head of any architectural school in the United States or Canada may propose any teacher or student in such school.

Every proposal shall be made *in duplicate* on A.I.A. Form S70, which may be obtained from The American Institute of Architects, 1741 New York Avenue, Washington 6, D. C.

All information and data required on the proposal form should be filled in, and both the original and duplicate proposal should be sent to Chairman Provine at the address given above.

The time is very short. Immediate action is essential on the part of proposers.



## Honors to Architects

Kenneth C. Black of Lansing, Mich., has been reappointed by Governor Kelly as a member of the State Planning Commission.

Marc Peter, Jr., of Boston, has been added to the register of lecturers of the Royal Institute of British Architects—a register of selected men available for speak-

ing to public groups on architecture and allied subjects.



Eugene Henry Klaber, F.A.I.A., presently of Washington, D. C., has been appointed Head of the Division of Planning and Housing, School of Architecture, Columbia University, New York.

# Ithiel Town, Architect and Engineer

By J. Frederick Kelly

Excerpts by permission from an article, "A Forgotten Incident in the Life of Ithiel Town," in *Old-Time New England* for January, 1941.

I THIEL TOWN was born in Thompson, Conn., in 1784. He was a farmer's son, and the death of his father when Town was but eight years old gave him little opportunity to acquire much schooling. As a youth, he worked as a house carpenter, but in time went to Boston where he studied architecture under Asher Benjamin. By 1812 he had made his way to Northampton, Mass., where he became associated with Captain Isaac Damon, an architect and engineer of considerable note, who specialized in bridge building. It is not unlikely that Town's interest in engineering and bridge construction, which led later to his patenting a bridge truss of lattice form that brought him a sizeable revenue, resulted from his association with Damon. Town's scale model of this truss is now on display at the museum of the New Haven Colony Historical Society, 114 Whitney Ave., New Haven, Conn.

When the contract for building

Center Church meeting-house on the New Haven Green was awarded to Damon in 1813, it was agreed that Town should serve as his assistant. For some reason now unknown, however, Town assumed full charge shortly after the work was begun, and carried it to completion. While Town is generally credited with the design of this monumental structure, a detailed report of the building committee, preserved among the ecclesiastical society's records, shows conclusively that he was merely the builder, and not the author of the design. A complete account of this matter will appear in the writer's forthcoming book: "Early Connecticut Meeting-Houses."



Shortly after his arrival in New Haven, Town was commissioned to design and build Trinity Episcopal Church, which stands south of Center Church meeting-house, on the New Haven Green. He was

the designer of three other religious structures in Connecticut: Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford, and the Congregational meeting-houses in Plainfield and Thompson — the last, unfortunately, having long since disappeared.

In 1829 Town formed a partnership with Alexander Jackson Davis, and opened an office in the Merchants' Exchange, New York City, under the firm name of Town and Davis. During this partnership, Town received commissions to design a number of important public buildings, or act as consultant in connection with them. Notable among them were the State Capitol at Raleigh, N. C.; the old State Capitol of Indiana — no longer in existence — and the United States Custom House at Wall and Nassau Streets, New York City, now the U. S. Sub-Treasury.

The income from the practice of

his profession, augmented by royalties paid for the use of his patented bridge truss, enabled Town to accumulate a library of books on art and architecture that was famous in its time, due to the fact that it was probably the richest and most complete in America up to the time of his death, which occurred in New Haven in 1844. His interest in the fine arts accounts for the fact that he was one of the founders of the American Academy of Design.



Town's own residence, which he designed and built for himself, still stands in Hillhouse Avenue in New Haven, though somewhat altered by a subsequent owner and occupant. Built of brownstone in the Greek Revival style, it is a severely formal structure. Now owned by Yale University, it forms a part of the Sheffield Scientific School group of buildings.

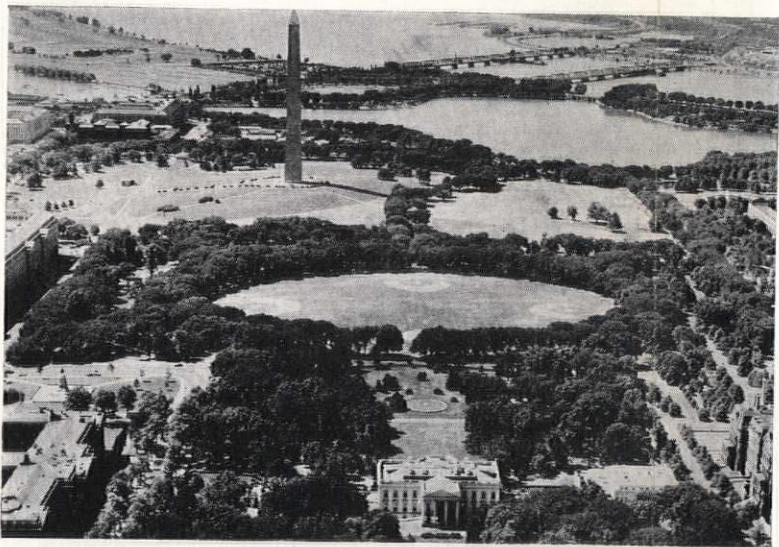


"WHAT then can engineers and architects do to match their professional training with the future? . . . They should enter into partnership—a partnership of technology and art. I don't mean by this that one should hire the other and worry about who is boss."—FREDERICK M. FEIKER in *The Architectural Record*.



BRYANT PARK, NEW YORK CITY

*By courtesy of the New York City Department of Parks*

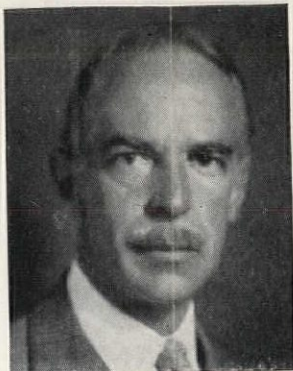


THE OVAL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

*Photograph by Todd Mapping Service, by courtesy of  
National Capital Park and Planning Commission*

Illustrations for "London and Open Spaces," p. 121

*Journal  
The AIA*

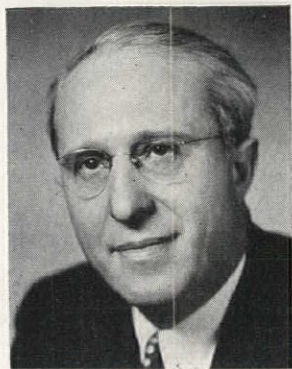


William Lawrence Bottomley  
New York

Clarence Cullimore  
Bakersfield, Calif.



Clair William Ditchy  
Detroit

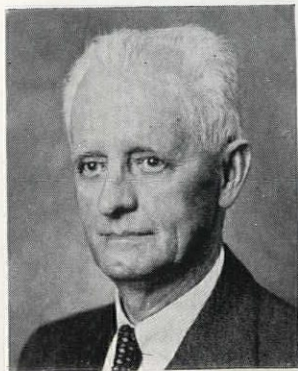


Ernest A. Grunsfeld, Jr.  
Chicago

## FELLOWS OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

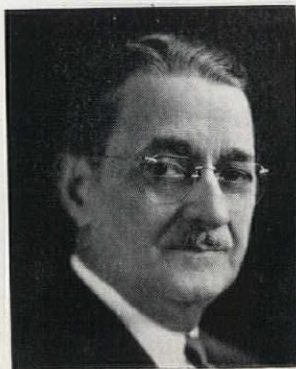
A corporate member may be ad-  
been in good standing in The In-  
and if he has notably contributed  
fession of architecture, in design  
tion, or by literature or educati  
The Institute, to any chapter or  
by public service.

Niels Hjalmar Larsen  
Boston



James L. Montgomery  
Charleston, W. Va.

W. Oscar Mullgardt  
St. Louis

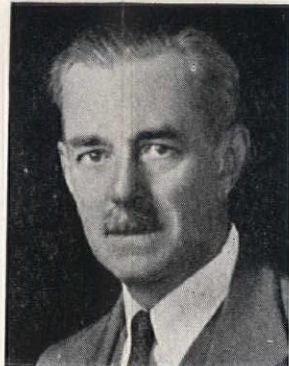
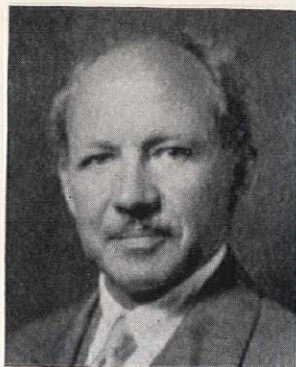






Branson Van Leer Gamber  
Detroit

William Gehron  
New York

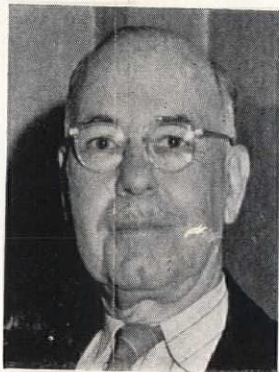


Alfred Morton Githens  
New York

ELEVATED BY THE JURY OF  
FELLOWS IN MARCH, 1944

vanced to a Fellowship if he has  
stitute for not less than ten years  
to the advancement of the pro-  
or in the science of construc-  
tional service, or by service to  
state association member, or

Hugo Franz Kuehne  
Austin, Tex.



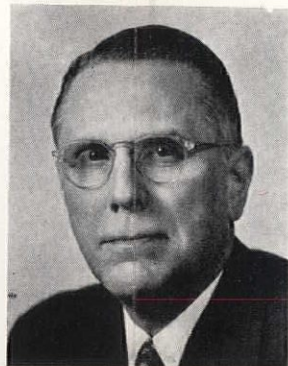
Henry Carlton Newton  
Los Angeles



Alexander C. Robinson, III  
Cleveland



Edmund Randolph Purves  
Media, Pa.



Continued over leaf



Alfred Shaw  
Chicago



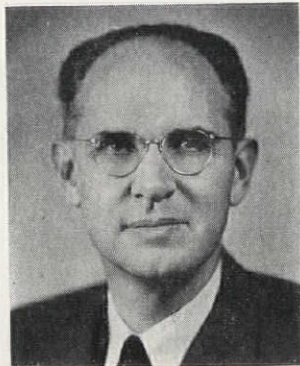
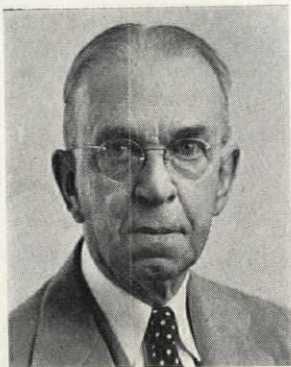
James Kellum Smith  
New York



Howard A. Stout  
Atlantic City, N. J.

Eugene Weston  
La Canada, Calif.

Henry F. Stanton  
Detroit





## Advanced to Fellowship in 1944

**F**OLLOWING the publication of the names, citations and portraits of Fellows elevated as of May, 1943—appearing in the August JOURNAL—here are similar data of the Fellows elected by the Jury as of March, 1944:

**WILLIAM LAWRENCE BOTTOMLEY**  
New York, N. Y.

Admitted to The Institute in 1914. He has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects for his achievements in the field of residential architecture. The many examples of buildings designed by him and carried out under his direction show uncommon understanding of the problems of planning, selection of materials and relation to surroundings, which has resulted in work of high merit.

**CLARENCE CULLIMORE**  
Bakersfield, Calif.

Admitted to The Institute in 1927, Mr. Cullimore has made notable contribution to the profession in the field of domestic and industrial architecture, and particularly by his researches and writings and original designs in the field of adobe buildings. For these accomplishments and for his contributions to education as a teacher and

a scholar, Mr. Cullimore has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

**CLAIR WILLIAM DITCHY**  
Detroit, Mich.

Admitted to The Institute in 1924. An outstanding architect of splendid character, high ideals and unusual executive ability; has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects for his outstanding practice, his adherence to the ideals of The Institute and his contribution and service in various capacities to the Michigan Society and to The Institute as a Director for the Great Lakes Division.

**ALFRED MORTON GITHENS**  
New York, N. Y.

Admitted to The Institute in 1933. Throughout a long practice he has devoted much of his time to the special study of the library problem. He has been the architect or consulting architect for many distinguished library buildings. For his compilation of technical data on libraries, which is made available to all through his writings, his constant adherence to the highest standards of the profession and his contribution to the science of library design, he has been advanced to Fellowship in

The American Institute of Architects.

BRANSON VAN LEER GAMBER  
Detroit, Mich.

Admitted to The Institute in 1926. A prominent practitioner of proven ability in executing large commissions, both public and private, he has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects for his efficient, intelligent and enthusiastic leadership in Institute affairs, and his constant and vigorous effort to advance the ideals of The Institute and his contribution to city planning for the City of Detroit.

WILLIAM GEHRON  
New York, N. Y.

Admitted to The Institute in 1931. Has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects for the consistent excellence of his executed work. Without violating those principles of stability and repose which characterize classic architecture, he has given his work the touch of an expert hand and a sensitive spirit of great distinction and contemporary understanding.

ERNEST A. GRUNSFELD, JR.  
Chicago, Ill.

Admitted to The Institute in 1924. Has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects for his distinguished talent in design, the uniform high standard of his executed work, his feeling for the best in modern archi-

itecture exemplifying not only originality but also good taste, and his rigid adherence to the high ideals of The Institute.

HUGO FRANZ KUEHNE  
Austin, Tex.

Admitted to The American Institute of Architects in 1917. In recognition of his broad civic interests and his long public service as founder, director and president of many civic commissions and boards in his home city; and his uniform quality in architectural design; for his efforts in securing State Registration; for his unassuming devotion to the profession of architecture in his Chapter, the State Society and The Institute; for his establishment of the Department of Architecture at the University of Texas, and for his subsequent aid and encouragement to architectural education, Hugo Franz Kuehne has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

NIELS HJALMAR LARSEN  
Boston, Mass.

Admitted to The Institute in 1921. He has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects as an outstanding example of broad achievement. He is not only a brilliant draftsman and skilled designer, but has exhibited unusual interest in methods of construction. He has contributed notably to the cause of education through service as critic in the Atelier of the Boston Archi-

lectual Club, as an instructor in design at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and as a member of the Visiting Committee of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard Architectural School. He has contributed untiringly of his time and talent not only toward the welfare of his profession but in the broader interest of the public.

**JAMES L. MONTGOMERY**  
Charleston, W. Va.

Admitted to The Institute in 1922, Mr. Montgomery has been untiring in his devotion to the up-building of his chapter and the architectural profession in his state. For these notable accomplishments, for his unfaltering support of the highest standards of practice, and for his sustaining influence upon the younger members of his profession, James L. Montgomery has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

**HENRY CARLTON NEWTON**  
Los Angeles, Calif.

Admitted to The Institute in 1927, he has given unselfishly of his time to Institute affairs, and to the public welfare. He has distinguished himself as a Brigadier General in the armed forces, in which capacity he is now serving. He has contributed to the profession by outstanding examples of church architecture, and as a teacher he has contributed to education. For these accomplishments Mr. Newton has been advanced to

Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

**W. OSCAR MULLGARDT**  
St. Louis, Mo.

Admitted to The Institute in 1917. Nominated by his chapter and endorsed by a notable group of fellow practitioners, he has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects for well-recognized professional ability, conspicuous contribution to the welfare of his Chapter and The Institute, and for untiring service in the interest of the public.

**EDMUND RANDOLPH PURVES**  
Media, Pa.

Admitted to The Institute in 1930, now serving as colonel in the United States Army, has rendered valuable and unselfish service to The Institute as a director and as special Washington Representative. For these reasons and for excellence of design, professional integrity and high ideals, he has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

**ALEXANDER C. ROBINSON, III**  
Cleveland, Ohio

Admitted to The Institute in 1924, admired and respected by his colleagues for his professional attitude and sincerity. For these reasons and for his sound design, careful planning, and excellence of executed work, he has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

ALFRED SHAW

Chicago, Ill.

Admitted to The Institute in 1932. Has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects for his achievement in design. He has shown great skill in composition, color and in selection of material as evidenced by his executed work.

JAMES KELLUM SMITH

New York, N. Y.

Admitted to The Institute in 1929. Steadfast in his belief in maintaining the principles of classic architecture, applying uncommon judgment not only in his architectural work but in his capacities as member and President of the Board of Trustees of the American Academy in Rome, he has served the profession with distinction. His rank as lieutenant-colonel in the United States Army is a measure of his patriotic service to the Nation. For this record of achievement he has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

HENRY FRANCIS STANTON

Detroit, Mich.

Admitted to The Institute in 1922. For his professional integrity, ability, and devotion to the advancement of the profession of architecture, for the uniform ex-

cellence of design and executed work, and high standards of practice, he has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

HOWARD A. STOUT

Atlantic City, N. J.

Admitted to The Institute in 1921. Throughout a long career of practice, his devotion to the highest purposes of the profession has merited the esteem in which he is held by his fellow architects. For this example, for his unselfish assistance to beginners, his service on the State Board of Architects, and his constant efforts to advance the ideals of The Institute, he has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

EUGENE WESTON

La Canada, Calif.

Admitted to The Institute in 1927, he has made notable contributions in the field of large-scale, low-cost housing, both as to design and administration. His contributions in design of all types of structures have been of uniformly high standard. He has given notable service to The Institute and to his community. For his accomplishments he has been advanced to Fellowship in The American Institute of Architects.

"The American architect has been accused of using bricks without brains but we will have them so long as we have brains without bread."—MARK DANIELS.

# The Scientific Approach to the Problem of Economic Construction

By *Grosvenor Atterbury, F.A.I.A., N.A.*

The first of two addresses given at The Architectural League of New York in conjunction with an exhibition of Progress of Prefabrication, March, 1944.

IN LOOKING at this first exhibition of the many new methods and materials employed in the work of prefabricators—who have actually produced some 50,000 houses as their contribution to the war emergency—we may easily miss its underlying significance. For we should see here, not so much the individual results these pioneers have achieved as the beginning of a revolution in the building industry, a revolution whose success will mean not only a long step forward in our effort to solve the housing problem, but a cure for a serious dislocation in our economic structure.

The subject of this meeting is "Prefabrication." But for our talk we have changed this title to cover a very much wider concept and field of endeavor which includes, besides Prefabrication, all the possibilities resulting from standardization, mass and machine production and elimination of processes involved in a scientific approach

to the problems of economic construction. The mere transfer of work from the field to a factory will not in itself produce the radical economies necessary for a solution of the housing problem.

Theoretically that problem can never be wholly solved. For one of its basic factors is a variable—the standard of living—and consequently the solution can approach, but, like a variable, can never reach its limit. Practically, however, there has been such an enormous lag in its advance, accumulated through centuries of neglect and stupidity, and the consequent waste in our traditional methods of construction, that today, with an enlightened approach, we have an opportunity to make revolutionary progress toward a practical solution of our particular problem—cheap housing for the great masses who cannot afford decent homes at current prices.

Now the basic reason for the prohibitive costs of conventional

building methods is that their formula for production has been 80% material mixed with 20% brains—quite often less—instead of that of the automobile and all the other products of organized industries—20% material and 80% brains. In short, until the exigencies of war forced us to so-called “prefabrication,” we have been trying to build cheap houses of bricks without brains!

The cure of this situation, we believe, lies in a “Scientific Approach” to the problem of construction, such as was indicated by the original program submitted to the Sage Foundation in 1907 for Researches in the Economic Production of Workingmen’s Homes.

It read as follows:

First: To investigate all the current building materials and methods; secondly: To develop as a demonstration the most promising system discovered, or a new system that would:—

a. Produce a fireproof structure with minimum deterioration and maintenance costs,

b. Under a system that would be sufficiently flexible to meet the necessary variety of architectural design.

c. That would, nevertheless, permit manufacturing economies—by standardization, mass and ma-

chine production of component parts so as to secure savings similar to those already achieved in the great organized industries—such as in the basic necessities of clothing and food, not to mention the Ford car, the dollar watch and other standard products already selling at good values without the aid of public or private subsidy, so as to substitute the profit motive for philanthropy in low-cost housing.

d. That would give the laboring man a product based on the highest skill in material, technical and esthetic design—ordinarily available only to the rich.

e. That would mean, ipso facto, a substantially certified product in place of the meretricious structures which, in default of anything else, the laboring man must rent or buy at the mercy of the speculative builder.

f. That would, finally, make possible an organized and profitable industry for the economic production of workingmen’s homes.

Well, that isn’t so bad for a youngster just getting hold of an idea—nearly forty years ago. It could be better stated today. Yet there is expressed or implied in it all the basic elements of the problem we are now dealing with except one. And that one is vitally important to our present discussion. At the turn of the century it was only a speck on the horizon. But in the past four decades it has



grown into one of the greatest problems this country is facing today—organized labor, and in our particular field, the chief barrier that we must surmount in our crusade against the appalling waste in these old-fashioned methods of construction which we are trying to replace by scientific engineering and manufacturing processes. Obviously, as Eric Johnston says, unions should be agencies for the general national welfare. Today they are certainly not.

The existing antagonism of union leaders to mechanization and the consequent saving of waste in precious manpower, in precious materials and in precious time—all doubly precious under today's war conditions and the reconstruction that must follow, is incredible.

This mistaken policy seems all the more strange because the laborer in the building trades will gain more than anyone from such a revolution in the art of building. For in mechanizing construction, we are implementing the laborer and increasing his productivity and consequently his wages, which is not a theory but a fact, proven by what has happened in our great organized industries.

But labor will benefit not only directly but indirectly, for in radi-

cally reducing building costs we are curing a serious dislocation in our existing industrial and economic structure.

This is an aspect of our problem that is not generally realized, and so important that we want to quote here from an article we wrote several years ago on, "The Missing Industry:."

"Reducing the equation to its lowest terms, the solution of the housing problem resolves into the finding of a method of equalizing the productivity of the various wage-earners in the lowest-income classes.

"The absolute level of costs of the food, clothing, housing and such other commodities or luxuries as are requisite as a basis of contentment and happiness is immaterial. The requisite is that their relative prices measure equal values in the judgment of the classes involved. As a matter of barter, forgetting the dollar prices that are supposed to register their values, food and clothing should be exchangeable for housing on terms that appeal to the workingman as fair and equal.

"Under such conditions, the workers who produce these essentials can and will exchange their labor and its resulting commodities in such proportions and quantities as their own wants and productivity determine.

"For in the last analysis labor

must buy what labor produces, and the masses who constitute the human factor in the housing problem themselves supply the vast bulk of the market for what they produce. But when today the factory mechanic, for example, comes to barter the results of his own productivity for the worker who builds houses, he finds the exchange a bad bargain.

"Expressed in money as the measure of value, his housing dollar is worth about 50 cents as compared with that of his food dollar and his clothing dollar. So he buys almost anything but housing. He can neither afford it at the price nor see in it good value or a fair bargain. Even his luxury dollar has double the purchasing power of his housing dollar, and it is not surprising if he buys automobiles, radios and electric refrigerators, and continues to live in a second- or third-hand building—until the government subsidizes him with a home for which he pays half the cost while his fellow workers help all the other taxpayers make up the deficit.

"The obvious reasons for this disparity of the workingman's dollar we will not discuss here. Until the building mechanic is implemented and the production of his housing is mechanized on an organized and scientific basis in place of the present wasteful, out-of-date methods, this situation will continue—an economic dislocation that blocks the way to the greatest

and most profitable unsupplied market in this country today, and that constitutes a veritable "restraint of trade," harmful to the prosperity of the nation.

"Now, obviously, under these conditions, the spending, lending or giving of any number of 50-cent housing dollars for the poor man cannot help matters. On the contrary, it only tends to perpetuate the present wasteful methods of producing housing, with its handicap on the productivity of the building mechanic as compared to that of workers supplying the other basic commodities—not to mention the harm it does in several other important respects.

"The solution, of course, is to reevaluate the housing dollar by increasing the building mechanic's productivity to equal that of the workers in highly organized industries. This, of course, means a technical reevaluation in housing production, but it can be done. It is, of course, a very complex problem—by no means confined to construction alone. It cannot be solved by government, nor commercially, except through tedious years of trial and error. Only independent, unhampered, scientific research by the brains in the country can accomplish it satisfactorily.

"The writer has, for twenty-five years, been as a voice crying in the wilderness that the solution of the housing problem lay in the 'profit motive,' and that the quickest, if not the only way to obtain this

solvent was through the scientific approach, specifically through a research institute of economic housing.

"This is confirmed by Mr. Alfred Sloan, who writes: 'I would say, without any reservation whatsoever, that I cannot think of any more outstanding contribution to both social and industrial progress than a definite evaluation of the progress of arts and science in its application to the housing situation. It never has been done as it should be done, and it never will be done and the facts and possibilities determined unless it is done in the abstract, such as your plan contemplates. . . . The great pity is that we did not have the foresight to recognize the importance of the problem long enough ago to put us in a position where the results of research could be capitalized in the critical situation which now exists'."

Well, since Science and Philanthropy have no joint board of directors, we have not gotten the Clearing House we need so badly, and must do our research work "each in his separate star." Those who do that work well, as seekers after truth, are in an honorable estate—one which, like most honorable positions, has high obligations and no material reward! Only the winners in the ancient torch race ever got prizes. So we

must have something within ourselves to sustain us in the race.

Now we are not here concerned with personal accomplishments. Years ago we stopped talking, being convinced that if a man does good work, sooner or later it will speak for itself far better than he can. But though few, if any of us, will see the end of our work, we can all remember our beginnings and the rough road many of us have trodden.

And why and how we tackled our problem, and why we didn't give it up in spite of setbacks and failures, is worth thinking about. Because the evaluation of our work will finally be based not on our small results but on the spirit in which we have worked.

So in this connection it may be helpful to look back some fifty years to the beginning of the "Researches in Economic Construction," whose early chapters are partially visualized on the walls of this exhibition and whose history must have much in common with the work of many in this audience.

They began by what looked like pure "chance"—if there be such a thing. Personally we agree with Murger, who calls chance the "Vicar of God." At that time, Henry Phipps, having sold his hold-

ings in a great steel company to J. P. Morgan for many million dollars, promptly turned philanthropist and employed a young architect to design a workingman's hotel in Pittsburgh. At that time, also by chance, if you choose to put it that way, the first high building in reinforced concrete was being erected in Cincinnati, and the inquisitive young architect jumped on a train to have a "look-see." As a result the plans for the workingman's hotel were developed on the basis of this new system.

They were well along when one day Mr. Phipps' Pittsburgh agent came hurriedly to New York to report that the local unions, learning our plans, had passed a resolution that henceforth no concrete should be put in a building above the basement except with a trowel! Now the reactions to this were immediate, surprising and, for the architect, fateful. For Mr. Phipps in his quiet way said, "Well, I think the workingmen in Pittsburgh can look after themselves. We will not erect the workingmen's hotel. They can do without it!" But the young architect's reaction was quite different. "Mr. Phipps," he said, "What we must do is to eliminate that trowel!"

So the architect lost his job.

But instead he then and there caught an idea by the tail. And it proved to be the tail of a bear he has never been able to let drop.

This, however, is but the beginning. When we have eliminated the trowel, by far the most important and difficult part of the problem remains—the finding of a substitute. For when we take away from the building mechanic his hand tools, we must give in exchange a far better means of livelihood, a means that will put him on even terms with his fellow workers in the great organized industries whose productivity has been increased so many fold through the miracles of science and mechanization. In a word, instead of a bag of tools, we must give him a factory.



The story of the years that followed we will omit—though it is as exciting and dramatic as many thrillers one sees on the screen. But from those experiences we have acquired something that all of us who, as pioneers working on this great problem of economic construction, should take to heart—a belief that will sustain our faith, carry us through discouragement and give us strength to carry on

our war against the age-old traditions and prejudices we must beat down to reach our goal.

For it is not enough merely to state an idea—however true and convincing we know it to be. It must be fought for and prevail. Yet a high purpose attracts to it, sooner or later, the means of its accomplishment. And it is on this mysterious power that we must, above all, rely.

Now this sounds somewhat like religion. Well it is—the belief and reliance on a Supreme Power, which is implicit in all great scientific achievements. For science is more than human knowledge; it is inspiration—just as engineering, with which we are most directly concerned, is to a surprising degree intuition.

And one of the most encouraging signs in our struggle to cure the lack of balance between the costs of satisfying the three basic needs of human welfare, is the fact that science is beginning to recognize—war production notwithstanding—its social obligations to human welfare. For its greatest men, like Pupin, Milliken and Jeans, publicly acknowledge that, in spite of all the accumulated wisdom of science, its discoveries are not the work of the human brain alone but

of something greater, higher, more universal and cosmic—a Force to which science owes its very life and therefore its highest and most sacred obligation of service. You may call this unknown quantity intuition, subconscious thinking or the expression of the Divine Intelligence, or the Word of God speaking through our human minds. But whatever you may believe about it, the great fact is that, as Stephen Leacock put it, "Today Religion is getting into bed with Science, saying, 'Move Over!'"



What then, has all this sermonizing to do with us who call ourselves "prefabricators?" Against this background we appear like little termites busily gnawing at the age-old structure of hide-bound tradition in the building art that has come down to us with the hand-made bricks of Babylon. Well, what we have said is really a plea for a proper recognition both by ourselves and by others, of the real function we are performing—not of destruction, but in laying the foundations for the new art of construction that is to be based on scientific research instead of on stifling tradition.

We are, in fact, just as much

research workers as the great chemists and physicists who have seemingly produced the miracles of today.

Both they, and we, are creators only by brevet. Man can only search, discover, interpret the great cosmic laws to which he has access through his subconscious mind.

In fact all the work we have shown here, and the words we speak here, will scarcely outlive the morrow. For, "The Old Order changeth, yielding place to New" is already out of date today. It is the New Order that is changing,

even as we say goodbye to the Old. So we have only made a fresh beginning. Yet let us not think little of ourselves because we are like sandhogs sinking caissons for some great structure whose completion we shall never see. For what we have done already is far more important than the spectacular gilding of the dome.

As was written 2,000 years ago: "According to the Grace of God which is given us as wise Master-Builders, we have laid the foundations; others shall build upon them."

## Hospital Competitions

**T**wo competitions are announced by The Modern Hospital Publishing Company, open to architects, architectural students and draftsmen. These have been approved by The A.I.A. Committee on Architectural Competitions as of the Secondary Type—that is, competitions not leading to the erection of a definite structure.

Competition No. 1 is for the best design for a small general hospital; Competition No. 2, for a small community health center. Architectural adviser, Carl A. Erickson, architect, 104 South Michigan

Ave., Chicago 3, Ill. Judges: Dr. Malcolm T. MacEachern, associate director, American College of Surgeons; Dr. Vane M. Hoge, U. S. Public Health Service; Graham Davis, hospital consultant; Mies van der Rohe, Illinois Institute of Technology; Charles Butler, architect of New York; Nathaniel A. Owings, architect of Chicago; Henry R. Shepley, architect of Boston. Prizes in each of the two competitions: \$1,000, \$750, \$500; and three honorable mentions, each \$100.

Contestants are required to reg-

ister their intention of entering by letter mailed on or before Sept. 30, 1944 to the architectural adviser. Drawings required are: a perspective rendering; plot plan, 1/32"; floor plan or plans, 1/8"; two simple elevations, 1/8"; one

cubage diagram. Closing date, Dec. 1, 1944.

Further details are available from The American Hospital Publishing Co., 919 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.



## Architectural Journalism in England

Excerpts from *The Architectural Association Journal's* report of an open meeting, London, May 16, 1944; Mr. John Summerson in the chair.

ARCHITECTURAL journalism, Mr. Summerson said, was not of very ancient date; it was only about a hundred years old. Apart from a few very highbrow periodicals long since forgotten, the *Builder* was the first weekly to make its appearance and its influence felt, and it was still very much alive, having achieved the first century record in architectural journalism.

In recent times the influence exerted by the Press was sufficiently obvious. In the architectural weeklies of the 'twenties and 'thirties there were so many pictures resembling Stockholm Town Hall, that one would find it difficult to ascertain which was the building itself and which the tributes of its admirers. The same was true of

Dudok's excellent schools and of some of Le Corbusier's buildings. He had heard many people condemn that influence, and it was a question for discussion whether it was a good thing for designs to be broadcast in that way and for people to digest them from the weekly plates on which they were served by the Press.

Mr. F. R. Yerbury, Hon. A.R.I.B.A., said he had looked through the architectural papers last week to see whether there was either vice or virtue in them and he found no vice and not very much virtue; what he did find was the average man doing a decent job of work, trying to placate the architects by publishing their drawings and presumably getting a very good circulation in consequence.

It was not a question of vice or virtue but of doing a workmanlike job.

It was necessary to have truth in journalism, and that was why a photograph was a very good thing to have, especially if it was a good one. Photographs did not lie, though they might exaggerate slightly. If they had an influence, and led to the reproduction of Stockholm Town Halls all over England, that was not the fault of the Stockholm Town Hall or of the photographer or of the journalist. He had heard it said that the architect should always build in white, because it photographed better, but that again was not the fault of the journalist or the photographer, but of the reader. The journalist and the photographer gave what they thought was interesting, and it was for the reader to use those things as he might.

Mr. F. Howling (Editor of the *Builder*), dealing with the question of the criticism of current architecture, said that some architects wished current architecture to be criticised, and thought it would be for the good of architecture and help people to appreciate good work. There was, however, a very great danger in it, and he had abstained from it and con-

tented himself with the architect's own description of his work. Shortly after the last war, he called on a very distinguished architect to get a description of one of his jobs, and was asked, "Why don't you criticise architectural work?" He referred, in reply, to the law of libel, and so on, and added, "But shall I start with your building?" "Surely," replied the architect, "there is nothing in *my* building which deserves criticism." While architects might agree on the desirability of criticism of current work, he himself felt that it was dangerous. He would welcome the views of architects on that point.

Mr. R. Greenhalgh (Editor of *Building*) disagreed with Mr. Yerbury and Mr. Howling; he maintained that both architecture and architectural journalism had a moral basis, and that architectural criticism was desirable, and he had carried out his ideas in *Building*. Twenty years ago when he became editor of *Building*, he was confronted with that problem; he realized that such criticism was dangerous and might lead to libel actions. All architects in the abstract were in favor of architectural criticism, and took the view that architecture was an art and that there must be criticism, just as there was



criticism of music, literature and painting; but what they meant was criticism of other people's buildings and praise of their own.

Mr. Howard Robertson recalled that on one occasion Mr. Hegemann had spoken at the A.A. and talked about the *Monatsheft für Baukunst*, which he edited, and which was full of the most virulent kind of criticism, and attacked such people as Mendelsohn without any restraint at all. Hegemann had said that the effect was that everybody complained bitterly about his paper, but they all bought it to see what it said about Mendelsohn, and Mendelsohn bought it first of anybody. If one lashed out right and left at everybody, one was covered; the difficulty arose when a paper praised some work and criticised other work, because it then showed a tendency of its own, and was pushing its readers in one direction or another.

Personally, he did not feel that it was the function of the architectural journalist to try to push his hearers in a direction in which they did not want to go. The effect of some journals, and of some American ones in particular, was to "put across" a type of architecture for which there might be no general, basic support from the pub-

lic. He did not say that that did happen, but it could, and eventually it could mislead the public into believing that all architects were fantastic creatures who dealt in the wildest theories and the wildest sort of architecture.

Mr. I. M. Leslie, of the *Builder*, said that it was very hard, if not impossible, to be in possession of all the facts about a new building. Should the criticism be at the plan stage, when it might be useful, or when the building was up? One might never see the plans until the building was up, and then if one criticised, one would probably not be in possession of all the facts. In that case, could architectural criticism be anything but superficial, and therefore largely valueless?

The President (Mr. A. F. B. Anderson, F.R.I.B.A.), said that criticism was one of the greatest joys of an architect. Many architects wanted that criticism to be virtuous, but derived more pleasure from it when it was vicious. The value of photographs lay in the fact that they provided the architect with material for the exercise of criticism. The architect expected to find photographs of good buildings, from which he could benefit; but he also enjoyed

it when he came across a photograph of something really bad. As a matter of policy, the architectural journals might bear in mind that, while they should certainly illustrate good buildings, it was a point in their favor that they sometimes reproduced bad, and gave the architect an opportunity to have his critical fling.

Mr. J. Murray Easton, F.R.I.B.A., remarked that the law of libel seemed to be all that prevented architectural journalists from tearing the profession to pieces, and in this country the law of libel seemed to be more severe than in any other. It would be interesting to have some definition of how far it was possible to go.

Mr. Ralph Tubbs, A.R.I.B.A., said that it was a question of "fair comment;" one could say what one liked about esthetics, but not raise any question of professional ability.

Mr. F. R. Yerbury suggested that anyone could criticise the façade of a building, because it was a public show, and one could not be sued for libel because one did not like an elevation; but the statement that the plan was bad was a criticism of the architect's professional competence. If a man went to a play and wrote a devastating article about it he could be sued

for libel, but if he was invited there as a critic he could say what he liked. An architect who wished to do so, therefore, could invite critics to inspect his building and take his chance on it, and they would then be free to express their opinions. Hegemann ran his magazine for years; he lost a subscriber every month, but the following month, when he criticised another building, the subscriber lost the previous month would come back and say, "You were a bit hard on me, but you are perfectly right about this other fellow."

Mr. E. S. De Mare, of the *Architects' Journal*, said that one defect of readers of the architectural papers was that they did not let their journal know sufficiently what they did and did not like about it, nor did they use it as a forum to express their ideas and opinions, either about the journal itself or on general matters of architectural interest.

Referring to the publication of criticism, Mr. Eric L. Bird (Technical Editor, prior to the war, of the *R.I.B.A. Journal*), said that there was one method used by Hegemann, which he would mention for the benefit of anyone who could use it. Hegemann photographed a number of notorious

buildings several years after they had been erected, and showed them also as they were on the day when he first photographed them, with the most shattering results. Many buildings which looked lovely in the drawings at the Royal Academy, and when first illustrated, presented a very different appearance after a few years. The camera had many defects as a means of illustrating architecture which many architects did not realize.

Mr. Hugh M. Casson, A.R.I.-B.A., said that the architectural Press might not be a normal influence, but was certainly a very responsible one. When he was young he worked in a cathedral city for an elderly architect who, whenever he was in doubt, said, "What would Sir Guy Dawber do here?" and then did it, and did it extremely well. Later, when he went to another office, in London, with a younger principal, that principal, when in a difficulty, would say, "What would the *Architectural Review* say if I did it in this way?" In all the offices in which he had worked, the zest with which the architectural papers were opened to see what a mess so-and-so had made of something showed that the architect was not so sensitive to criticism as some people believed;

in fact he liked it so much that he did not mind having it done to him.

Mr. A. Pott pointed out that the architectural journals were, presumably, intended to be read mainly by architects, people who were supposed to make their living very largely by using their eyes, yet the standard of layout and arrangement was deplorably low. There was an opening for someone to bring out an architectural journal at which one could look with pleasure, apart from anything else.

Mr. Hilton Wright suggested that one form of architectural criticism which might overcome the difficulty of libel, but which he had seen used only twice (once in *Focus* and once in *Architectural Design and Construction*), was criticism by the most important person concerned, the person for whom the building was built. He wondered why that form of criticism was not more widely used.

The Chairman said that he could not do better than end on the note struck by Mr. Yerbury at the beginning. Architectural journalism was a technical job, and when a good journalist did it well and conscientiously everything was all right.

## California Architects in Survey

THE State Association of California Architects has recently completed a survey on the growth and decline in the number of certified architects in the state during the past twenty years. Statistics compiled from the questionnaire revealed the following:

The average age of the architect has increased from 42.7 to 54.3 years, comparing 1920 and 1940 figures.

The number of architects per thousand of population in 1920 was 18; in 1930 was 17, and in 1940 was 14.

Enrollment in architectural colleges increased to 400 per cent in 1936 and 1940 as compared with enrollment in 1924. Of the 1924-25 group, 50 per cent became architects by 1928. Of the 1930 group, 20 per cent became architects by 1934. Of the 1936 group none became architects by 1940.

In 1924 the profession received 17 per cent new blood and the state law was again tightened. In

1926 the profession received 7 per cent new blood, and the state law was again tightened. In 1930 the profession received 5 per cent new blood and the state law was still further tightened. In 1940 the profession received 2 per new blood.

Out of 460 graduates of architectural schools, 42 became registered architects, and 418 became unregistered architects or draftsmen without certificates.

In 1926-27, 88 per cent of applicants ultimately received certificates. In 1930, 75 per cent of applicants ultimately received certificates. In 1936-37, 38 per cent of applicants ultimately received certificates. In 1940, only 30 per cent of applicants have received certificates.

It was the opinion of the majority who discussed the subject that the state registration laws and examination should be revised and made less drastic.—*Architect and Engineer*, 7/44.

## PBA Reorganization

AUGUST 1ST saw a reorganization of the Public Buildings Administration, Federal Works

Agency. No official announcement of the details has been made, but Harold B. Rogers told the story

in the *Washington Evening Star* for August 1, and these facts have been substantiated.

W. E. Reynolds, Commissioner of Public Buildings, has ordered a realignment in PBA as follows, the order having been approved by Maj. Gen. Philip B. Fleming, FWA Administrator:

Four new deputy commissioners are appointed—

Deputy Commissioner for Design and Construction, George Howe, F.A.I.A., former Supervising Architect.

Deputy Commissioner for Building Management, Charles A. Peters, former Buildings Manager of PBA.

Deputy Commissioner for Real Estate Management, Edward R. Witman, former Fiscal Manager of PBA.

Deputy Commissioner for Administration, Robert O. Jennings, former Assistant Buildings Manager of PBA.

Harry G. Hunter remains Assistant Commissioner, and becomes

Acting Commissioner in the temporary absence of Commissioner Reynolds. Mr. Witman is next in line as Acting Commissioner in the temporary absence of both officials.

The title of Supervising Architect, in use for more than a century, falls to Gilbert S. Underwood, former Chief of Planning and Design of PBA.

N. Max Dunning, F.A.I.A., former Architectural Assistant to the Commissioner, becomes Architectural Adviser to the Commissioner.

The organization, which was constituted the PBA of FWA by the President's Reorganization Plan No. 1, July 1, 1939, goes back to July, 1837, when President Andrew Jackson appointed Robert Mills to be Federal Architect in the Treasury Department. Ammi B. Young followed Mills, after a short lapse, with the new title of Supervising Architect, and that title has been in effect ever since.

## Safety Code for Building Construction

ONE of the latest safety codes to be approved as an American Standard by the American Standards Association, and one which should interest all architects, is the "Safety Code for Building

Construction," sponsored by The A.I.A. and the National Safety Council.

The code is the result of about ten years' work on the part of a committee representing twenty national organizations, including the U. S. Departments of War, Commerce and Labor, and under the chairmanship of a representative of The Institute, Samuel R. Bishop of New York.

The code specifies safety measures to be taken for protection to the public, as well as to the workmen, and its requirements apply to all types of building construction other than such specialized types as bridges, lock and dam construction, power line construction, etc.

At the same time, building construction involves so many different kinds of work and classes of mechanics, that to include all applicable code material would result in needless repetition and duplication. The code, therefore, is supplemented by other American Standard codes per-

taining to building construction.

In reviewing this code, the architect will see that it contains much specification material, as safety should begin in the architect's office and in the architect's specification. As there are few operations that are not carried forward under the architect's supervision, it places him in a definite position to demand safety devices on every important operation.

While the code will not supersede the many Federal, state, or municipal codes now in effect, it contains safety measures for many types of building construction not to be found in many of the others, and will, no doubt, be adopted in its entirety in those localities where construction work is not now subject to any code of requirements.

(Copies may be obtained from the American Standards Association, 29 West 59th Street, New York 18, N. Y. Price, \$1.10; less for quantities.)

## Highlights of the Technical Press

*Architect and Engineer*, 7/44: Toward Urban Redevelopment, by William W. Wurster; 3½ pp. t. From Spain to California (proposed reassembly in Golden Gate Park of a Cistercian Monastery);

Julia Morgan, architect; 6 pp. t. & ill.

*The Architectural Forum*, July: Planning With You—Plymouth, England; 4 pp. t. & ill. St. Mark's

Church, Burlington, Vt., Freeman, French, Freeman, architects; 6 pp. t. & ill. Post-War Transport Plane; Henry Dreyfus, designer; 6 pp. t. & ill.

August: Chicago Subway; Shaw, Naess & Murphy, architects; 5 pp. t. & ill. Planning With You—Syracuse Uses the Radio; 3 pp. t. & ill.

*The Architectural Record*, July: Building Types Study—Municipal Buildings, in collaboration with *The American City*; 20 pp. t. & ill. Acoustical Planning for the Motion Picture Auditorium, by C. C. Potwin and B. Schlanger; 2 pp. t. & diags.

*Landscape Architecture* (quarterly), April: "Flight Strips" for Civilian Use, by Col. Stedman Shumway Hanks; 9 pp. t. & ill. Garage Turn and Parking Space,

by Walter L. Chambers; 3 pp. t. & diags.

*Pencil Points*, May: Some houses of moderate size, three of them for architects. Building Product Facts—Wainscoting; 2 pp.

June: By Their Works Ye Shall Know Them; public housing in Washington as challenged by speculative operators; 12 pp. t. & ill. Museum of Modern Art's Exhibition—Built in U.S.A., 1932-44; 10 pp. t. & ill. Building Product Facts—Pipe, Welded and Seamless Steel, cont.; 2 pp. Red Cross Office Building, Los Angeles; Sumner Spaulding, architect; 10 pp. t. & ill.

*Southwest Builder and Contractor*, July 21: Army's Heavy Bombardment Hangar, Muroc, Calif.; Taylor & Barnes, architects and engineers; 4 pp. t. & ill.

## Books & Bulletins

ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR BUILDING CODES. Sponsored by American Municipal Association and Building Officials' Conference of America, Inc. 16 pp. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " by 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", paper cover. Approved January 31, 1944 by American Standards Association. New York: 1944: A.S.A., 29 W. 39th St. 35¢.

One of a related series presenting recommended basic building code requirements that are being

developed by technical committees under the procedure of the American Standards Association.

DECORATIVE ARTS IN THE NETHERLANDS. By Paul Bromberg. 62 pp. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ " by 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", paper cover; illustrated with photographs and plans. New York: 1944: The Netherlands Information Bureau, 10 Rockefeller Plaza. 60¢.

A brief sketch of the industrial

arts, including some architecture and its accessories, with an appreciation of that pioneer in the arts, Dr. Jan Francois Van Rogen, recently a victim of German violence.

**MEMORANDUM ON POST-WAR URBAN HOUSING.** 124 pp. 6" by 9", paper cover. Published by The International Union, United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW-CIO), Education Dept., 1324 Maccabees Bldg., Detroit 2, Mich. 25¢.

A comprehensive and intelligent discussion of the housing problem from the consumers' point of view. Prepared under the direction of R. J. Thomas, by William G. Nicholas, Director of Housing Department; Otis Winn, A.I.A., architect, housing consultant; and Philip Brezner, architect, consultant associate.

**THE NEED FOR URBAN REDEVELOPMENT LEGISLATION IN CALIFORNIA.** A report by the Regional Planning and Development Section of Town Hall; Reginald D. Johnson, F.A.I.A., chairman. 36 pp. 6" by 9", paper cover. Los Angeles: 1944: Town Hall.

An able study comparing the Greer-Hansen plan, the Urban Land Institute plan and the FHA proposal, with specific recommendations for California.

**PLANNING FOR THE SMALL AMERICAN CITY.** By Russell Van Nest Black and Mary Hedges Black. 92 pp. 7¼" by 10½", paper cover. Chicago: 1944: Public Administration Service (1313 E. 60th St.) \$1.

Revised edition of a monograph first published over a decade ago, for the guidance of operating officials and interested citizens. The revisions are in accord with the changed emphasis and new concepts brought about in recent years.



## New Members of The Producer's Council

RECENT ELECTIONS to membership in The Producers Council with the names of their Official Representatives:

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## The Editor's Asides

IF YOU WANT to be set straight on any subject, make a public statement and then sit back and await results. Many times have we thus acquired knowledge. The mails are full, these days, of letters setting us straight in the matter of the Monadnock Block, published last month in the "Do you know this building?" series. Apparently nearly everybody knew more about it than the Editor.

The architects of the older half were BURNHAM & ROOT, of course, not Holabird & Root, which latter firm dates from 1927. As to the walls, "all masonry" in our caption might be interpreted as including the interior partitions. This is not the case. The exterior only is wall-bearing; the interior has steel columns, girders and beams with wind bracing taken up by masonry walls every 50'. And thus progresses the education of an editor.



WASHINGTON seems to be going geometrical. The Octagon can hardly be accused of starting it,

way back in 1800—and anyway The Octagon isn't even an approximation of an octagon in plan. The Pentagon might be blamed—it has been blamed for other things. In any event, the movement is well under way, for there is now being finished a dormitory building for officers on R Street that is a dodecahedron. The next step would seem to be the calling in of Claude Bragdon, who might take the movement into the fourth dimension with a hexacosihedroid.



RECENTLY a few trucks drove up to the Library of Congress and unloaded an architectural library. It was not an ordinary assortment of architectural volumes running, as these often do, to some one or two stylistic categories. It was a rather well-rounded record of architectural efforts of all ages and all lands, including our own. I should hazard a guess that its replacement value might be in the neighborhood of \$20,000. It was the architectural library of the Supervising Architect's Office, Public

Buildings Administration, Federal Works Agency, U. S. Government. That office, having no room for books and presumably no real use for books, excepting those of the handbook type, turned the main inspirational and historical portion of the library over to the nearest Home for Old Books.

As a gesture to indicate the passing of stylistic plagiarism, this may be emphatic; it may even be theatrical. It suggests, however, the sophomoric aspirant to authorship who says, "As for me, I am going to *write* books, not *read* them."



WHEN the young man returns to peace-time pursuits, is he going to be able to say nothing better than "This is where I went out"?



THERE ARE THOSE who believe that the greatest good for the greatest number will be achieved only when all land is publicly owned—whether by municipality, state or Federal Government—and is rented for use in the public interest, the rentals obviating most present forms of taxation. In this connection there may be significance in Boyden Sparkes' statement in a recent *Saturday Evening Post*: "Today, but by no means solely

on account of conservation, the Federal Government holds an enormous area of land outright. The total, including land in Alaska and Hawaii, is 383,600,533 acres. This is equal in size to the combined areas of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. One-fifth of the entire area of the United States. Actually, most of it is west of the Mississippi."

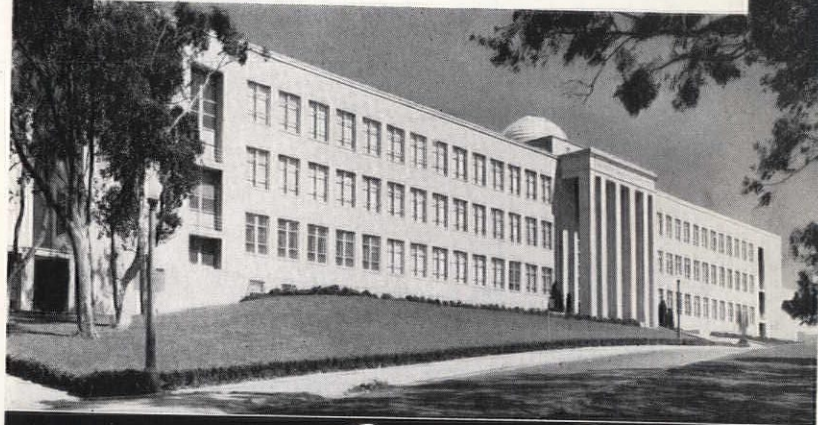


OUR most humble apologies are offered to the Sociedad Central de Arquitectos, for our loose designation, in the August number, of the organization as "of South America," in recording the honoring of Harold R. Sleeper of New York as a Corresponding Member. While the Society's activities extend pretty much all over the South American Continent as well as to Mexico, Cuba, Canada and the United States through its Corresponding and Honorary Members, the Sociedad is, of course, of Argentina—a distinction that we should have made clear.

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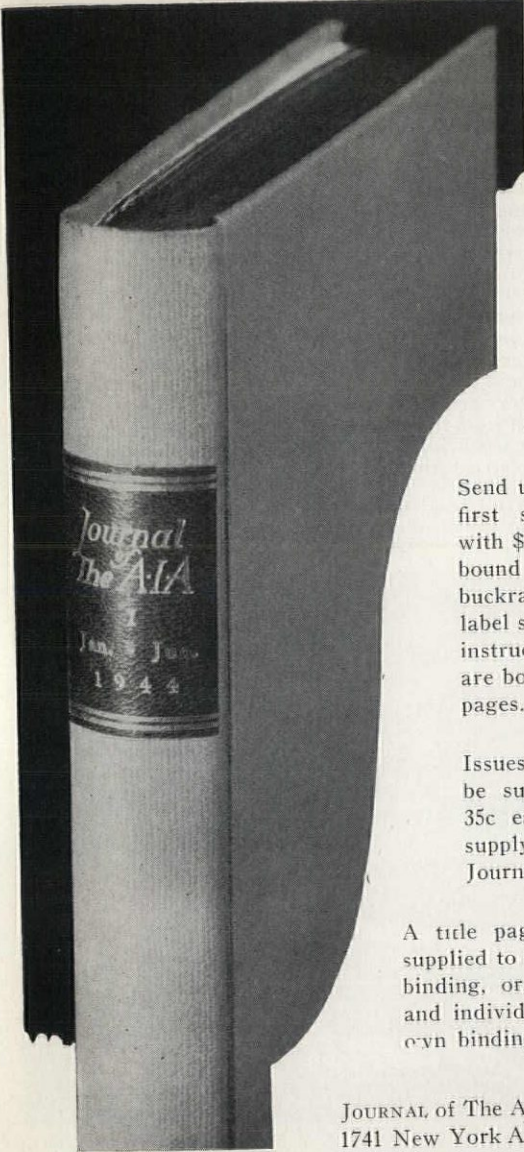


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