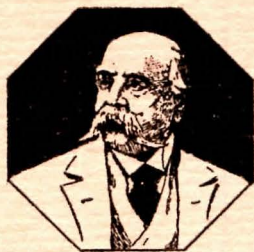


Journal of The American Institute of  
**ARCHITECTS**



GEORGE B. POST

November, 1949

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Guest Editorial by Herbert J. Powell

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The Problem of Our Education

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An American Architect in Peru

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Richardson Brognard Okie, F.A.I.A., 1875-1945

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Regional Seminars

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As the English See Our Building

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Architectural League's Gold Medal Awards

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# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

WITH THE AIM OF AMPLIFYING  
AS THROUGH A MICROPHONE  
THE VOICE OF THE PROFESSION

NOVEMBER, 1949

VOL. XII, No. 5



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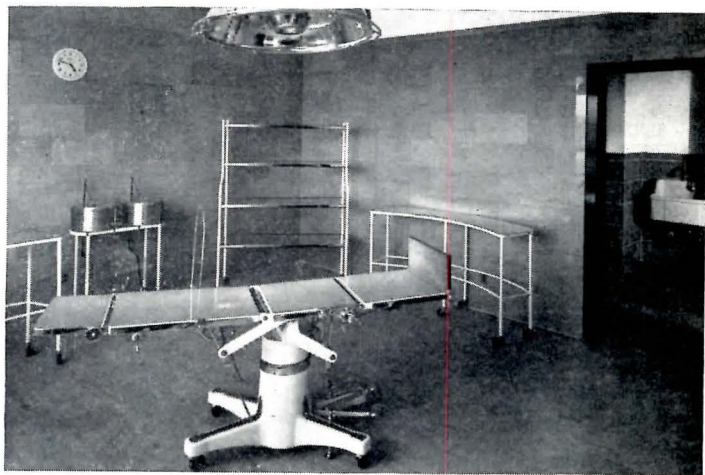
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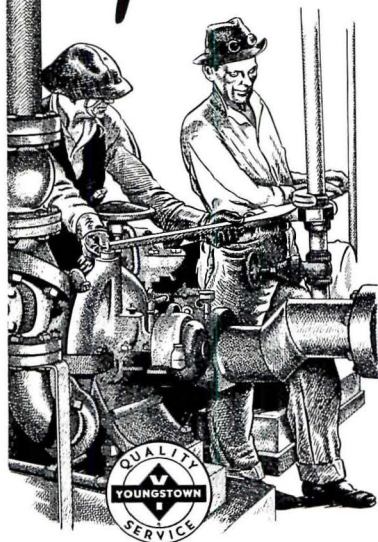


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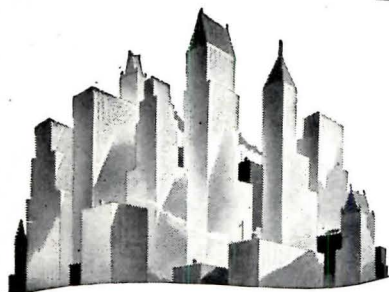
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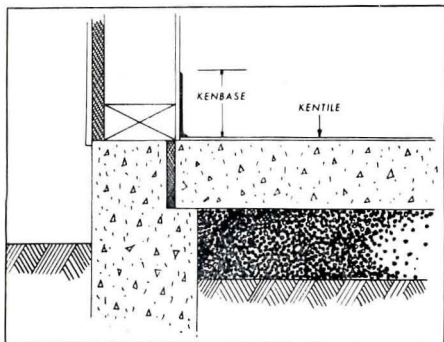
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*Instituted on the premise that a lot of high-pressure conviction is being bottled up for lack of convenient outlet, these editorials appear to be serving as successive relieving-valves. The opinions expressed are always the uninhibited ones of the Guest who occupies a particular month's driving seat. "The Plus Must Come from the Architect" is the title given the following by this month's Guest Editor—*

*Herbert J. Powell*

OF MARSH, SMITH & POWELL, LOS ANGELES

FROM the times of antiquity, the architect has practised a profession and not followed a craft. Noble buildings of every age stand quietly and enduringly, evidence of the ability of countless architects of the past whose names are lost, but whose messages still may be read. One of these messages, which modern architects may be in danger of overlooking, is that a building's significance can be truly translated into stone, glass, wood and its other component materials, and that enduring architecture must have beauty—esthetic appeal—an outward grace or harmony that proclaims to fellow architects the intense earnestness in the practice of his art, by which the designer synthesized the various elements of his building.

It is true that the owner em-

ployes the architect to furnish plans, to write specifications, to assist in taking bids, to coordinate the job with the letter and intent of the contract documents—all of these are part of the architect's agreed-upon services. But the owner expects more. The services mentioned can actually be performed by others than architects. The owner expects the architect to give him more than the arithmetic sum of these services. He expects him to be an architect. He wants him to breathe some spirit into the building. He anticipates a character in the building that proclaims its fitness to the particular and peculiar requirements of that building. He wishes his building to have significance as well as utility.

These are invisible qualities. They are not susceptible of being

written into a contract. I venture to believe that the value of an architect to his society rises and falls with his ability or lack of ability to deliver in these intangible areas.

Although the names of many of the great architects of the past are now unknown, their buildings, like the poems of ancient authors, have stirred men's emotions. Venice's great Piazza San Marco, with its surrounding buildings, the peerless Romanesque group of Pisa, the characterful Chartres Cathedral, Durham Cathedral, "half Church of God, half castle 'gainst the Scot"—these all bespeak their designer's dedicated ability. These architects put a plus in their buildings. Not only do we, as architects, recognize these, but all men who have come under their spell have understood their great quality.

Today, we are confronted with a different world and to some extent with different problems. What present-day architect has not looked with a feeling of wonder at the simplicity of the mechanical service systems of buildings in ages past? Consider a Gothic cathedral or a Medieval town hall. No plumbing, no heating and ventilating, no electrical work, no air con-

ditioning, no elevators, no signal systems, nor sound, nor fire-alarm devices, no program clocks, thermostats, troffer lights, radio, steam plants. No wonder the medieval architect could attack his design problem with a singleness of purpose that eludes a modern architect. These changes in buildings have obviously changed the architect's function. In a sizable modern building, an architect is part creator\* and part synthesizer or coordinator. He realizes that the various mechanical services all influence his design and to an extent form a part of it, and that therefore they must be controlled.

He may not realize that if he doesn't actively assume leadership in the layout and detail of the various mechanical and other component parts of his building, he is not actually fulfilling his duty as an architect. The finished building will result in less than it might be; it will lack the plus the architect should give. If, further, the design has had no spirit or character breathed into it by our modern architect, the public may conclude that professional architectural

---

\* I believe that there is a creative force involved in architecture and not just a reassembling of past forms, as some writers hold.

service is an unnecessary luxury that produces only run-of-the-mill architecture—that any business man can deliver, with someone to help him draft the plans. Should this happen, our architect stands in jeopardy of having his place taken by an administrator, who may have no design sense whatever, a non-architect business executive who can handle a department, but under whose insensitive performance the great values of architecture would dissolve into the bare functions of routine building whose banality would stamp our day in contrast to the excellence which

marks so many of the buildings of past great periods.

This may sound like a clarion call to our profession to think anew on what it means to be an architect. I intend it shall sound like that. We all need to prod ourselves every day, lest we become submerged in the detail of our profession and lose sight of its most important aspect, its art. For if an architect does not impart significance, character, beauty and fitness to the design of his building, there's no one else to do it.

The plus must come from the architect.

## The Problems of Our Education

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

A slightly abbreviated transcript of the President's address made before the Virginia Chapter, A.I.A., at Roanoke, Va., Sept. 23, 1949.

**N**O ONE who faces up to the leadership of a profession such as ours can take an immediate and complacent position as to its competence. If he is modest he must be aware of his own limitations and lacks in education. He must realize, as I have, that in any profession there is a continuing change in its practice due to new methods, new philosophies and new

techniques. The growth of knowledge and skills related to human shelter has been enormous. To these, all of us who have been in practice over the years, have contributed to a large degree. There is hardly a detail in Sweet's Catalogue which has not been either initiated or modified by an architect, most of them over forty; and I would hope that the younger

generations might also follow and be just as inventive of new shelter standards.

The problem of standardization is how to take efficiency and still maintain the semblance of variety. Nature does it by using the standard principle of chlorophyl to animate an infinite variety of leaf forms without upsetting the fundamental need.

These new techniques lead, of course, into many specializations. They have changed both our conception of space and attendant comforts, because we have rapidly used the new techniques—despite the equally rapid rise in their relative costs; and finally there has been the growing need now expressed by all professional men, increasingly dissatisfied with mere techniques: “How to acquire, at the same time, a larger degree of human values and amenities.”

In a world such as ours, all of us will be faced with these problems all through our professional life—as aspirants, as students, pre-registrants and as practitioners.

May I say that if this talk develops any conclusions, any implications, any recommendations for reform or revision of method, they are not pointed, purposely, at any one part, but at the pro-

fession as a whole. I consider the education of the architect up to registration, especially, to be the great responsibility of the A.I.A. I would like to say *sole responsibility* but I realize the vast difficulties we have in the United States when we consider the differences which exist quality-wise in the 48 states. *I insist, however, that the A.I.A. should have a definite national standard—one which it should put its authority and influence in back of—so as to obtain a general acceptance throughout the states.* At the moment there are forty-six different approaches—each one undertaken as an expedient and without too much backing or influence by the national organization.

Architecture is not alone in seeking to understand the education of a professional man. All of the professions are presently engaged in soul searchings and practically all believe that there is need, for example, of a reform in the basic stages of educational approach to a life work, i. e., in general education as well as in professional training and, to use a medical term, in internship. Practically all are concerned also with the lengthening out of the educational period

because of the encyclopedic knowledge required in the average professional experience—so much so that young men and women are unable to earn a decent livelihood until they reach their late twenties or early thirties.

I think, in the beginning, we may agree upon one or two things, i. e., the growing acceptance that the practice of architecture be entered into by way of professional schools of outstanding merit; and the necessity of the architects being licensed to practice—the latter, especially, in order to assure society that the complicated structures which are more and more our practice will be well built and safe for human use. The two are strongly tied together and the higher the accomplishments achieved in the educational field, the higher will be our position in the professional hierarchy now found in most states—where the same agencies license doctors, architects, engineers, morticians, nurses and bartenders—all desirable branches of work, professed by honorable people, but with entirely different standards of liberal educational backgrounds.

Shall we not agree that the architect must have more than a mere technical competence gener-

ated by a facile wrist and an imitative mind; and that when he enters professional training he should have some maturity of mind and purpose? May we not question, in general agreement with other professions, whether the educational standards of present-day high schools are sufficient?

José Ortega y Gasset, in "The Mission of the University," states that: "The University must make of the ordinary man, first of all, a cultured person before permitting him to engage in technical disciplines" because, as he says, "the professional man has become, unfortunately, more learned than ever before; but at the same time, more uncultured." I would suggest what is meant is, *that we may be technically competent and still fail in realizing the greatest social good because of an immature approach to the problems which we face—especially immature because we arrogantly think that this very technical competence is sufficient in itself.*

What does the ordinary man need as the basis of a professional education?—an education which leads, of course, into maturity, into competence and into happiness: A maturity to work in self-discipline—because professional work is a

continuing process; and a lasting professional worth is the result of self-discipline and creation. Self-discipline and continuing study create competence which ensures an honored place in society; and happiness or good will, so that the necessary compromises that life continually asks, will not leave bitter regrets within our experience.

*Moreover, these areas of experience should be increased in developing the ideas just expressed, i. e., that we know the meanings of the customs and political traditions which surround us because we, as architects, deal as much with humans as we do with materials. We must restate repeatedly in philosophy and in physical form our conception of democratic life.*



That we learn precision in drawing and writing and speaking—these necessary and vital means of communication which enable us, especially as architects, to translate ideas into structures. *I honestly believe those schools, which willfully maintain they are not producing draftsmen, are doing a great disservice to their students—* in two ways: one, draftsmanship will have to be painfully learned later if the student is to become

a successful practitioner; and two, good draftsmanship is immediately reflected in the earnings of the school graduate, for his only use in the modern office—in his very limited experience—is as a useful pair of hands. This is a grim, a true, but not necessarily a demeaning, fact. There is no reason at all why, with drafting competence, the average graduate may undertake not only the necessary internship studies before registration, but at the same time lead a normal family life even though it is an austere one; and as a profession, we who now are practitioners should help him, so that he may attain this stature early in his twenties rather than toward their end. After all, Sullivan was, and Wright and Corbusier are, exceptionally fine draftsmen and glory in that ability; and Wright was not ashamed to work as a draftsman for Sullivan.

Nor is literary expression to be lightly passed over, for we in America have left indelible marks upon expressiveness in literature as well as in building. Franklin, Jefferson, Thoreau, Emerson, Dickinson, Whitman—all have been precise users of language and have attained beauty in the studied use of words. There is a definite



creative impulse to be seen in carefully selected words.

That we develop the faculty of critical thinking to increase our worth to society and selfishly to ourselves; that, in learning how others solved the problems which, throughout time, have confronted them, we gain also in experience; that, looking closely at the whole history of art and esthetics, we will sharpen appreciation. This appreciation will limit imitation with its too narrow observance of fashion and so finally aid in creation. Imagine, if you will, a modern musician and composer not knowing Bach and the two other "B's." Just imagine a modern physicist not knowing the fundamentals outlined by Kelvin. *We architects should realize that no one is so provincial as he whose thinking is formed by a small intimate group.*

May I read to you several paragraphs from last year's A.I.A. Education Committee's report? The chairman of this committee was Ken Johnston. This is the architect they envision. I repeat these paragraphs because I am in complete agreement with them.

"The magnitude of current professional knowledge inherent in the technical advances in building

makes it impossible for any architect to learn *all* there is to know. Moreover, the rate of change in this dynamic work is such that *to teach answers to problems is dangerous.* Too often the answers are inadequate and obsolete before they can be put into practice. Consequently current architectural education, aware of the fleeting character of superficial skills, is not so concerned with imparting information as it is with the development of attitudes, fundamental concepts and ways of thought that mold the real pattern of professional service and growth. In this respect the objectives of the student, the apprentice and the practitioner are basically the same. The goal of professional education at each level is a capacity of independent thought, experiment and sound judgment, enhanced by the power of artistic expression and the ability to learn from experience.

"The mature architect is primarily concerned with the creation of adequate shelter, thus shaping a more challenging physical environment in which mankind lives, works and plays. The value of this service springs from a knowledge of people and the capacity to solve creatively their problems of shelter. The architect must learn to recognize a *need* and to express it in terms of a *program* that will serve as a vehicle for *research* and *analysis*. His judgment, discrimination and creative power must be so developed that he can reach a *solution* capable of execution in

structurally organized and esthetically significant space. This 'problem-solving process' is the common denominator of all professional practice. Directed sensitively, it is the essence of creative architecture. Therefore, it is the essence of adequate architectural education.

"The architect, while serving society, must appreciate that his duty as a professional man is above and beyond mere livelihood. This is made evident by his knowledge of the historical development of society and understanding of his relationship to it. He must have historical perspective in order to understand the world about him.

"As the professional competence of the architect grows and the quality of his service improves, his contact with people expands. He must increasingly assume the responsibilities of a specially trained man in a free society. Thus he must handle not only the creative, but the human economic problems as well. Therefore, he must have knowledge and experience on which to base sound judgment, together with the capacity to express himself forcefully and with clarity."

If we are looking for this type of man, there is no reason why we should not insist that he be properly educated before he enters professional training; and he himself should be aware of the great self-discipline required to become a professional man and that, above

all, architecture as a profession is one which requires adequate preparation. We must train men to create ideas and forego theory—to realize that the stream of invention has been continuous in the past; that fulfillment, rather than negation, is the aim of architectural design. This means that the teacher ensures pupil development by encouraging new and greater experiences.

I said that the technical education of the architect should take place in schools of outstanding merit. It must be obvious that while all education in its final analysis is self-education, there can be no doubt that if this is organized and directed by competent teachers, desirable results will be hastened—and by hastened, I do not mean hurried. I mean *hastened* in careful digestion. The man who, in his early years, works alone, must of necessity work slowly. Therefore the profession as a whole should encourage both an increased number and a finer quality in the men who teach, and here I mean "philosophical quality," for it is by acquiring a philosophy of lifework that a good draftsman can be made into a better architect. Given a philosopher as a teacher—one who encourages human contacts, critical

analysis, good expression—the draftsman need not worry about being lost in so-called planning factories.

I have just quoted from the excellent report of the 1948 Education Committee concerning the definition of an architect but, I wonder if the necessary implementation is to be found in our present practice or whether without a constant urge on the part of the A.I.A. it has sufficient power to influence the schools, the profession and examining boards toward actual attainment.

As late as 1941, the deans of the many architectural schools wrote and had published in *The Octagon* their opinions as to architectural education.

The introduction to these papers I quote, in part: "They (the papers) do not exhibit a universal philosophy but rather different approaches. Some of the philosophies differ so widely that it is difficult to determine if our educators have a common objective—even a common agreement as to what an architect should be and what his relationship to society and to his clients and to his profession should be." And then a question is asked: "Is this apparent lack of understanding of what the architect

needs to maintain his position in his profession in society a contributing cause and perhaps a primary reason for his failure to secure the recognition he thinks he is entitled to?"

Granting the need and desirability of an architectural evolution, does it necessarily follow that the architect may not accomplish a clear statement of his place in society, just as the oath of Hippocrates has had meaning since the fourth century before Christ until the present time? I believe that if we had some simple statement of purpose we could pass on as an ideal, we might achieve less exhibitionism, less museum acclaim and much more honest architecture—honest only in enlarging human capacities for happiness and responsibility.

I regret to say that the profession as a whole does little to assure the graduate of the professional school, a directed guidance and assistance toward successfully passing registration examination. The mentor system has largely failed and largely because any educational process should be coordinated and directed to definite ends; and very few, if any, offices in active practice are set up to offer this guid-

ance. With all the good will in the world it is impossible for the architect's office to do other than be casual about the education of the intern. The profession as a whole must see that sufficient numbers of proper schools are maintained in the larger cities to give the necessary legal and practice data for license. The profession as a whole must take the responsibility of encouraging, by example and a salary standard, the continued enlargement of our competence. Many years ago I entered the profession guided by the great friendliness of practising architects in Providence and Boston, and I am happy to say that the encouragement of these friendly men has been a guide to what I hope in turn is my friendly attitude toward my successors.

Of course, there is much more going on than I have indicated. The University of the State of New York, for example, is concerned because as large a percentage as 85 has failed in some years; the general average being about 60 percent—although this seems true as well of other state examinations.

We come to these questions: Are the registration examinations too

severe? Are they developed to restrict the number within the profession? Are the examinations too long, asking for too much manual labor and are they sufficiently devised so that competence once established, can be taken as a standard throughout all the 48 states, so that in our profession we need not establish stateline barriers?

Also, are they sufficiently different in character to establish the profession as unique in itself, or will we finally succumb to a universal examination which will establish merely a definite professional responsibility for public health, morals and safety, and which may mean, finally, that we and the other design professions, i. e., engineering and landscape architecture, will be classified alike?

At the moment there is a wide diversity throughout the nation as to what an architectural registration examination should be. This would seem to necessitate an understanding and statement of the differences and in turn to develop standards which the A.I.A. may seek to establish by exerting its national influence.

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards at Houston resolved in part as fol-

lows: "The NCARB offers its cooperation with the National Architectural Accrediting Board toward a reconsideration of procedures to be followed in the accrediting of the schools of architecture in the United States;" and it further resolved that it would cooperate with the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture and the A.I.A. to further this objective.

I suggest therefore that the educational problems of a profession aware of these conditions, seeking to develop within itself and establish publicly its competence and thereby to enlarge its influence for public good, should be a matter of investigation and study.

So the A.I.A. has initiated such a study—a survey—which I hope will give the A.I.A. some background of its educational needs and the implementation to make it a success.

With the approval of the Executive Committee, I have appointed a special survey committee composed of ten members, i. e., three educators, three registration board members, the chairman of the accrediting board and three practitioners. We have not completely organized the committee but it will have on it the chairman of the Edu-

cation Committee, the president of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards; and also be thoroughly representative of the country as a whole. It will be headed by an impartial chairman, Dr. Edwin Burdell, Director of Cooper Union in New York City. He is a professional man, a city planner, and has been Dean of Humanities at M. I. T. and is a well-known educator.

We are asking a distinguished group of lay people to meet with them and act as friendly advisers and consultants.

It is our purpose to make a survey of the actual conditions of the schools and of the registration boards so as to make definite recommendations. One: as to the preparation, extent and character of the pre-professional education of the architect. Two: Recommendations as to the character and length of time devoted to professional education. Three: Recommendations concerning the pre-registration education leading to license examinations, together with the nature, time and methods of accomplishment. Four: Recommendations as to the character, extent and quality of professional examinations, and the time required for examinations. And

finally, Recommendations regarding the number and quality of professional and technical schools.

Fortunately, we have ample funds; a residue of a gift from the Carnegie Foundation which was to be devoted to educational purposes; and the Foundation agrees that the new purpose is a most desirable use of the funds.

There can be no doubt of the responsibility that a professional organization has toward increasing the competence of its members, actual and potential. The A.I.A. must take the position of determining the qualifications of a competent architect, and its responsibility in this matter is greater than any individual school or registration board. Therefore, it is my firm conviction as your President that the A.I.A. must take a strong stand as to what a professional education should be; aim to establish it by either granting or withholding

approval or credit, and further set up and be responsible for an educational program and the means of its accomplishment for the interim period between graduation and registration.

I believe The Institute to be one of the most important influences in American life, its activities limited only by the horizons we ourselves set. I believe we are heading toward greater influence because we are beginning to realize our position as a profession and, in closing, I repeat a statement from Ken Johnstone's Committee on Education which I quoted before:

"The architect, while serving society, must appreciate that his duty as a professional man is above and beyond mere livelihood. This is made evident by his knowledge of the historical development of society and understanding of his relationship to it."

**English building is 55-80% less costly than ours, yet our man-hour is 50% more productive than theirs**

## As the English See Our Building

**A**MONG the rather frequent unfavorable comments on the efficacy of American building, it is refreshing, for a change, to get

the frank opinion of our recent English visitors.

A seventeen-man British building team recently returned home

after completing a six-weeks' study of construction methods and building organization in the United States. The following is the final report of the visitors, issued not only as a medium of appreciation for our hospitality, but embodying the findings of the team for the benefit of building procedure in England.

In the six weeks of our tour we examined as thoroughly as possible the organization, constructional techniques and general outlook of the American building industry in Washington and New York and in the industrial centers of Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo, Boston and adjacent districts. Our object has been to compare American practices with our own to see if we could bring back any recommendations to help our industry at home to increase its efficiency and reduce its costs, thus assisting directly our export industries which need new buildings, and our housing program.

Our team consists of architects, quantity surveyors, contractors, a specialist contractor and operatives (building craftsmen). We have thus been able to cover a particularly wide field in our examination of the contribution which can

be made by each section of the industry to greater productivity.

We have been greatly impressed by what we have seen in design, in the organization of work both before and after the contract is placed, in the availability and use of materials, and in the outlook of each individual member of the building team, all tending towards greater efficiency, greater speed and lower costs. We have made a particularly detailed review of the cost of building in America; our quantity surveyors have analysed the costs of a large number of separate contracts, and we have found that the over-all cost of building in the United States at the present time is approximately 55% to 80% above that in this country.

An important part of that figure is, of course, made up by labor costs. As the average rates of wages in the United States are rather more than four times our own, this means that there must be an appreciable saving on other items, and we have investigated the methods by which these savings are secured. Chief among them is the fact that, whereas we are yet handicapped and frustrated by shortages of various essential materials, whether they be still subject to official control or not,

there is in the U. S. an abundance of every kind of building materials and fittings; timber, steel and other metals, heating appliances, etc., etc. This means that a building contract can be planned down to the delivery and fixing of the last item. Everyone connected with the job knows what the target is and knows moreover that with good organization and hard work from all it can and must be achieved. That is a position which we would all like to see in this country and, until it can be regained, everything else is but a palliative.

The incentive thus given to speed and efficiency is reflected in the output of the individual operative. In the United States the average production per man-hour is 50% more than in Britain. This does not mean that the American worker necessarily works at a 50% higher speed or puts into his work that amount of increased physical effort. All the other factors—design, materials and contract organization—help him to achieve that figure, but it is our conclusion that, for these and other reasons which will be enumerated in our report, the American workman is enabled to, and does, work more effectively than the British workman. We

believe that he puts everything he can into his work without holding back. The tempo of the job is fixed from the commencement like a machine belt in a factory, and each one who does not keep up to the line, in whatever capacity he may be engaged, is rejected.

The direct material incentive is the high rate of wages of the building trade craftsman, which is one of the highest skilled rates in American industry, from which he is able to maintain, while in employment, an extremely high standard of living, related to a cost of living which, while differing in detail from our own, we found to be lower than we had expected. The individual to maintain that standard of living must keep his job. Despite the large amount of work in progress, there was a pool of unemployment in most of the centers we visited, and everywhere we went we were told that individual productivity had varied over a period in accordance with the rise or fall in the number of men seeking work. It is now definitely on the upgrade. American unemployment benefits are not paid nationally, and in general they represent a far smaller percentage of the normal weekly wage than in this country. If a man loses his



job, he is in danger therefore of losing his refrigerator, his automobile, and possibly his home.

The same considerations apply in each of the other sections of the industry. The architect must be, and is in general, a completely efficient business machine, experienced in the same hard school as the building contractor. The contractor, like the architect, has to live in a highly competitive world; competition among them being keen both in cost and in time. The subcontractors and specialists, more highly developed than in our country, are compelled to cooperate to the full with the main contractor and with each other, or the job will not be successful. Each not only has his incentive, but also cannot afford to risk failure. While there is greater scope for successful trading, there is also greater scope for failure, and the American State provides no feather bed for failures.

We have seen many points of great interest in the technical field. The extensive use of cinder blocks as backing for exterior walls, of asphalt shingles with a life of 15 or 20 years as an efficient roofing material, the minimum use of scaffolding, representing vast savings, and the use of ready-mixed

concrete. Plant and equipment of all types is readily available. We saw nothing particularly new in heavy plant or hoisting machinery—indeed, in some of these respects we are further advanced than the Americans—but there were no shortages, whereas many British contractors are still unable to obtain the equipment they require. Machinery was used on the job itself to a greater extent to cut and shape materials, representing a saving in labor and transportation costs.

We have studied American methods of house building, both by public bodies and by private enterprise. A far greater proportion of the total demand is met by the private housebuilder than in this country. There are no restrictions upon his activities and he is doing a great work. For example, the average skilled workman in industry can afford to buy his own home, and this is a great inducement in itself to productivity. The amount of Federal and State housing, and financial assistance, is, however, increasing. An important difference in housing is the great advances which the Americans have made in the design and installation of central heating in all types of houses.

To sum up, we have found nothing to undermine our conviction that, provided our building industry at home can be supplied with adequate materials and labor, and provided that everyone, from the top to the bottom of the industrial ladder, can be given that essential incentive to personal effort which the Americans possess and enjoy, the British building industry can equal the American industry in its efficiency. These factors are, however, all-important, and some of them are outside the control of industry itself or indeed of the British Government acting alone. The industry must, however, strive to achieve that spirit of initiative which the Americans display, and must not allow itself to be numbed into mute acceptance of present conditions and practices as something inevitable and enduring.

The team as a whole is unanimous in recognizing how great a privilege it has been for us to have this opportunity of examining a great and progressive industry. There can be no doubt that the

Anglo-American Council on Productivity has conceived a great idea in sending teams from various industries across the Ocean. We can assure British industry from our experience that American industrialists, management and labor alike, are willing and anxious to receive their representatives and to give them full opportunities for seeing everything they wish to. We received the utmost assistance, and the greatest hospitality, from the moment we landed until we left, and the Economic Co-operation Administration, which organized our tour, The American Institute of Architects, the Associated General Contractors of America, the American Federation of Labor, the Building Trades Employers' Association of New York City, and the National Association of Home-builders are all entitled to our most grateful thanks.

It will be our object to try and infuse into our industry at home the spirit of personal initiative which we met in the United States in the hope that thereby we may overcome our present difficulties.

## The Best Bridges of 1948

**F**OLLOWING its annual custom, Construction has awarded prizes the American Institute of Steel in two classes for the most beauti-

ful bridges opened for traffic in 1948.

In Class I (of more than 400' span) the prize went to the Watauga River Bridge on State Highway 67, Carter County, Tennessee. It was designed by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

In Class II, consisting of bridges

with spans under 400' and costing less than \$500,000, first prize went to the Airport Apron Overpass crossing the Van Wyck Expressway at the New York International Airport, Idlewild. The bridge, owned by the City, was designed by Clarke, Rapuano and Holleran.

We used to cram and sweat to get into the Ecole;  
now ten men will be admitted without examinations

## Postgraduate Work at the Ecole

*By Julian Clarence Levi, F.A.I.A.*

OVER A YEAR AGO at a meeting of the American Group of the "Société des Architectes Diplômés par le Gouvernement" the wish was expressed that a way be found to enable graduates of our architectural schools to experience some of the benefits of study at the Ecole. As I planned to be in Paris that June (1948) I was asked to explore possibilities with the French authorities. In consultation with Dean Arnaud we determined to suggest that graduates of the schools constituting the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture be admitted without examination to participation in the architectural competitions in the first class at the Ecole.

Upon arrival in Paris I conferred with Paul Tournon, Director of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and we both met with M. Louis Joxe, Director General of Cultural Relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They both approved the idea enthusiastically and stated I would have an official letter shortly.

On returning home I found a letter from M. Jacques Jaujard, Director General of Arts and Letters at the Ministry of National Education, officially approving on behalf of the French Government the admission of those graduates of schools belonging to the A.C.S.A. who would be accredited by a special Committee appointed by the

latter. To quote from his letter of July 26, 1948:

"It (the Ecole) will receive these architects in its ateliers without the obligation of taking the admission examinations and those tests of a scientific nature (mathematics, resistance of materials, perspective, stereotomy, etc.) to permit them to take part directly in the study of Architectural Composition in the first class of the Section of Architecture. In no case can the beneficiaries obtain the diploma." *Note:* French and foreign students pay no fees. The Ecole is supported by the French Government.

Dean Arnaud and I then communicated with Paul Weigel, President of the A.C.S.A. who appointed Dean Arnaud and Dean Koyl to represent the A.C.S.A. and me to represent the A.I.A. We appointed Charles Butler to represent the Diplomé Society and elected Arnaud chairman.

To put into effect this great privilege we drew up the following:

#### REGULATIONS

- 1) Each candidate must submit to the Committee:
  - a) a letter from the director of his school certifying his ability and capacity;
  - b) a letter from the candidate explaining his motives;
  - c) a copy of his scholastic record in the school from which he is a graduate;
  - d) photographs of 4 or 5 of his projects at that school;
  - e) proof of a sufficient knowledge of French.
- 2) The Committee should interview each candidate in person. If because of distance this is not possible the Committee may delegate this function to an architect in that locality.
- 3) The Chairman shall accredit each candidate accepted by the Committee by letter to:
  - a) the Director of the Ecole Nationale et Supérieure des Beaux-Arts;
  - b) the Director General of Arts and Letters at the Ministry of National Education.
- 4) Every candidate accredited by the Committee agrees to study and render at least 2 projects and 2 esquisse-esquisses during a school year. To benefit adequately by the generosity of the French authorities the Committee advises his participation in at least half the competitions to which he may be admitted by authority of M. Jaujard's

letter of July 26, 1948 on behalf of the Ministry of National Education.

- 5) On arrival in Paris the beneficiaries should consult the Director of the Ecole as well as the Professor of Theory in regard to their studies, an appropriate atelier, etc.
- 6) For the present the Committee places a limit of ten as the number that may be accredited in a year.

These regulations with the composition of the Committee were submitted by me this past June to: Nicolas Untersteller, now Director of the Ecole; André Gutton, now Professor of Theory; M. Joxe and M. Jaujard, and were verbally accepted by them. Both M. Untersteller and M. Jaujard also wrote me to that effect.

No stipend is contemplated for these men, as we did not wish to

diminish the value of the Paris Prize or the honor that goes with it. We feel that there must be a number of graduates every year, particularly those who obtain traveling scholarships, who will appreciate the advantage of post-graduate study abroad. The criticism of different professors and of fellow students in the atelier, the change in atmosphere, the influence exerted by the fine architecture of the past, will surely give perspective and breadth of vision so necessary to a well-rounded education.

This generous action of the French Government is not only an evidence of friendship; it is also a recognition of the high standard of education in our architectural schools. The Committee hopes that those who benefit by this arrangement will do honor to both their Alma Mater and to their French hosts.

## Richardson Brognard Okie, F. A. I. A.

1875-1945

*By George S. Koyl, F.A.I.A.*

**W**ELL ON TO four years have passed since a tragic turn of Fate took from the profession one of its "most sensitive and individ-

ualistic" practitioners. Richardson Brognard Okie, of Devon, lost his life in an automobile accident on December 25, 1945. Many ex-

amples of his distinguished work dot the Pennsylvania countryside as monuments to his artistic genius.

R. Brognard Okie was born in Camden, N. J., on June 26, 1875. Realizing that the son's aptitudes lay in some field other than his own, his father, a physician, enrolled him in Haverford College for the study of civil engineering. The son, however, decided upon architecture as a career and transferred after two years to his father's Alma Mater, the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in the class of 1897. Four members of that class of twenty-four, among them Okie, have been raised to date to Fellowship in The Institute.

His post-college employment was with the architect, Arthur Stanley Cochrane, of Philadelphia, but he soon associated himself with two other young men, Herman Louis Duhring and Carl Ziegler, in a partnership which was never tainted by written agreements and which continued on the most friendly terms for twenty years when, due to the exigencies of World War I, it came to an end. The extensive work of that firm in country houses gave direction to this field of practice with which the name of R. Brognard Okie is so inseparably associated.

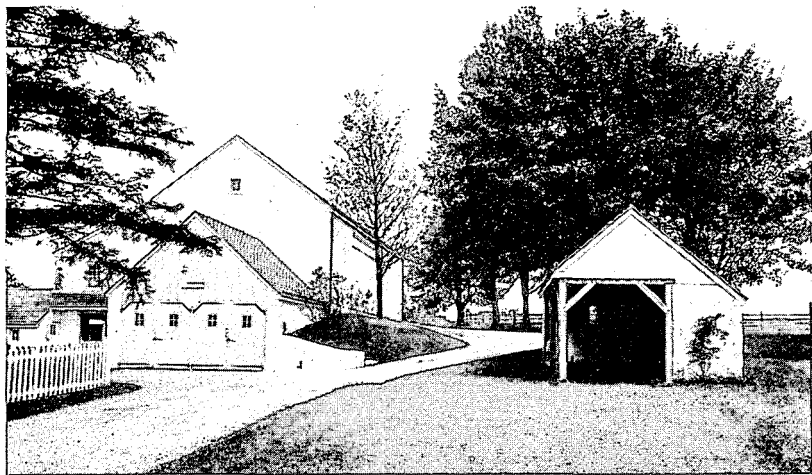
Mr. Okie loved the country and the soil. He lived that kind of life at his ninety-acre farm near Devon, Pa. He took pride in his stable of fine horses and was one of the first to exhibit in the annual Devon Horse Show. He had an antipathy toward mechanical contrivances such as the automobile, however convenient for extensive travel with his son, Charles, throughout Pennsylvania in the search for fine examples of early Dutch buildings. His tours over the less frequented byways of southeastern Pennsylvania, always with a six-foot rule in his hip pocket, measuring details and collecting odd pieces of old hardware, resulted in a knowledge of early American architecture which is so strongly reflected in his own work. His mastery of its design and peculiarities of construction resulted in many opportunities for the restoration of old homes and small rural churches.

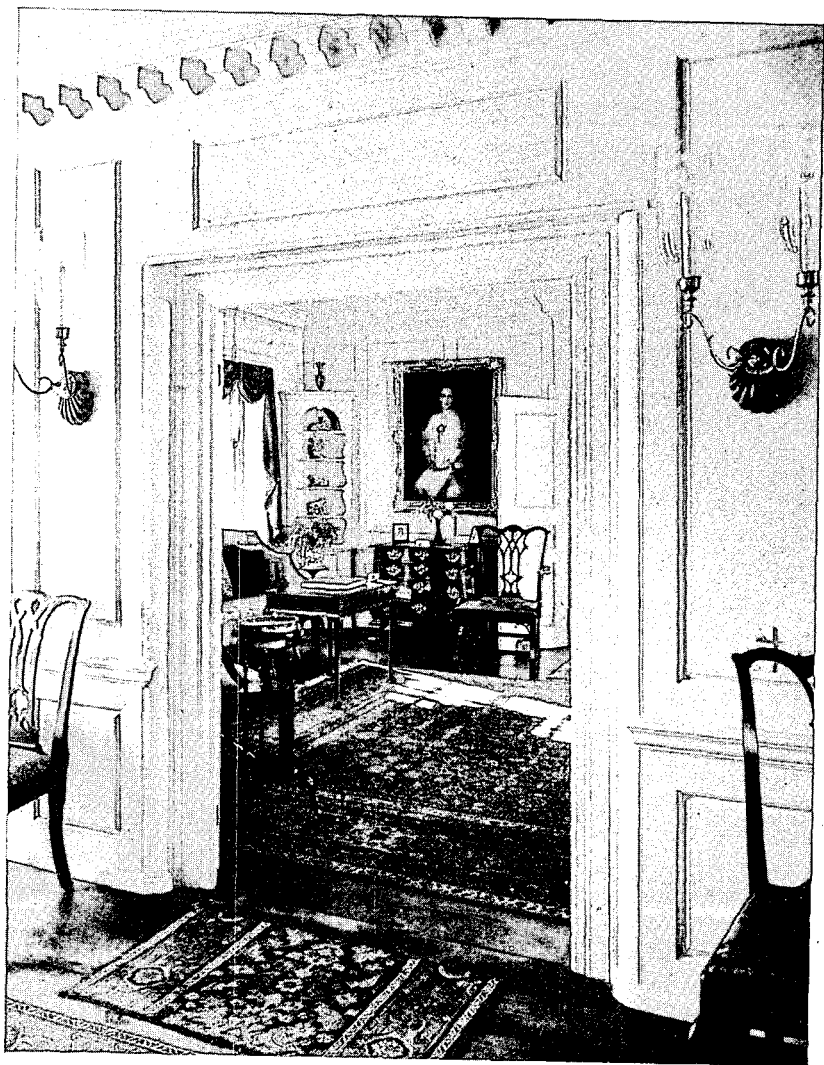
In 1925 he was appointed by the Women's Committee of the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial Exposition, architect for the reconstruction of High Street, in which he chose as associates for the complex historical undertaking, Ellison Perot Bissell and John P. B. Sinkler. Eleven years later, upon the recommendation of a Committee of



HOUSE AND OUTBUILDINGS FOR JUSTICE OWEN J. ROBERTS  
KIMBERTON, PA.

R. BROGNARD OKIE, ARCHITECT  
*Photographs by Philip B. Wallace*

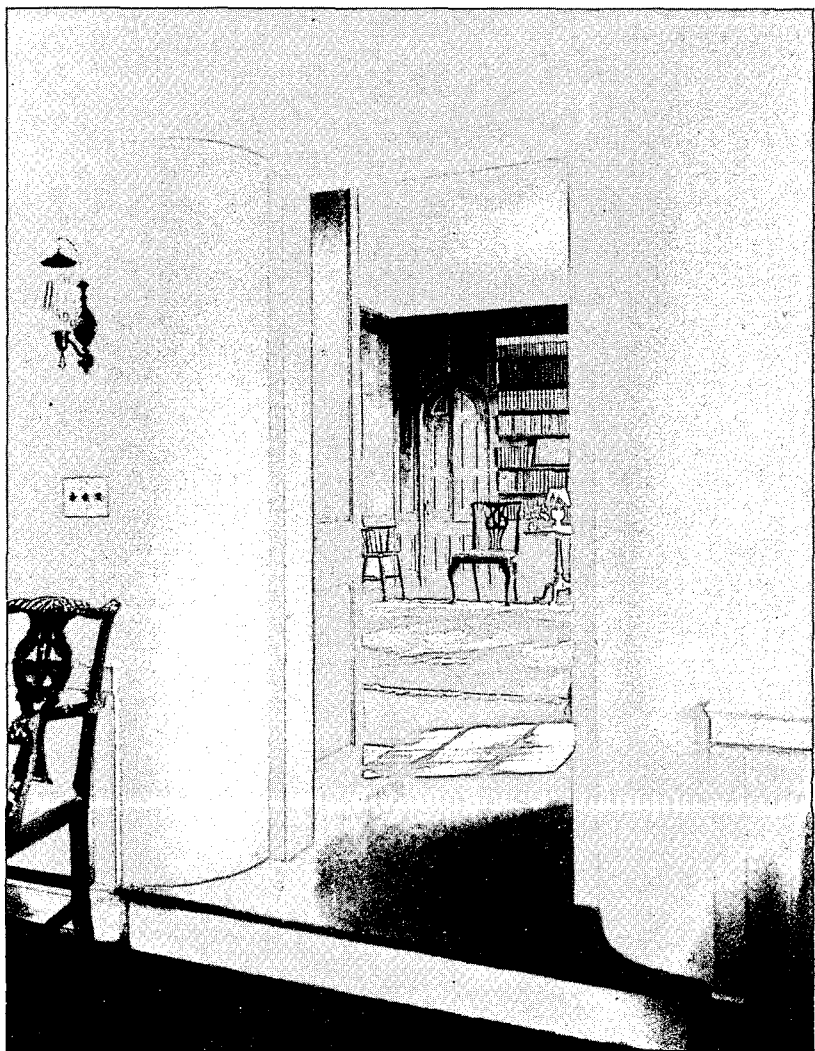




INTERIOR OF HOUSE FOR DR. JOHN E. LIVINGOOD  
ROBESONIA, PA.

R. BROGNARD OKIE, ARCHITECT  
*Photograph by Philip B. Wallace*





INTERIOR OF HOUSE FOR MR. LEWIS H. PARSONS  
VILLA NOVA, PA.

R. BROGNARD OKIE, ARCHITECT  
*Photograph by Philip B. Wallace*



HOUSE FOR MR. LEWIS H. PARSONS  
VILLA NOVA, PA.  
R. BROGNARD OKIE, ARCHITECT  
*Photograph by Philip B. Wallace*

the Philadelphia Chapter, he was selected as architect for the recreation of Pennsbury Manor, the country home of William Penn, some twenty-six miles north of Philadelphia on the west bank of the Delaware.

Exhaustive research resulted in eminently noteworthy accomplishments in these two difficult assignments. The High Street restoration, necessarily of staff construction, was cited as one of the two most successful parts of the Sesqui-centennial. Pennsbury Manor now stands in all its original dignity, restored as was Williamsburg, Va., from the scanty remains of foundation walls and scraps of pavement. In this case he was guided by letters, filled with detailed instructions, from Penn, detained in England during the fifteen years of its construction, to James Harrison, steward of his "Plantation at Pennsbury" in Pennsylvania. Begun in 1683 and completed in 1700, construction suffered the vicissitudes prevailing at that time of long delays in the shipment of materials; this is clearly interpreted in the clapboard protection of thin brick walls for the rear portions of the Manor house and in the Office of the Plantation.

However important these works are as essays in the realm of the historical, it is in the design of country houses that his sensitiveness and individualistic genius are best illustrated. It is no small tribute that his work has been frequently used by the speculative house builder as a source of inspiration. In restorations such as the Betsy Ross House on Arch Street, Philadelphia; or in the Paxton, Silver Spring and Winchester Presbyterian Churches; or the interiors of St. Peter's Church in the Valley at Cedar Hollow; or in the numerous restorations and additions to old Pennsylvania Dutch country houses, as well as in houses and their dependencies entirely of his own design, his qualities as artist and master builder are especially apparent.

Among the earlier works was that of the Main House at Valley Forge Farms for Secretary Philander Knox, completed while associated with Duhring and Ziegler. Restorations and additions to the house for Justice Owen J. Roberts, near Kimberton, Pa.; restoration of Redding Furnace, home of Arthur E. Pew, Jr., and to the house of Dr. and Mrs. John E. Livingood, of Robesonia, Pa., are

characteristic. The complete houses of Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Higgins, London Grove, Pa.; of Mr. and Mrs. Ernst R. Behrend, at Erie, Pa.; of Mr. and Mrs. Ledlie I. Laughlin, at Princeton, N. J., and of Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas R. duPont, Wilmington, Del., may be taken as examples from a long list of his own works. It is a solid tribute that each of several of his clients claims his own house to be the Master Work of Mr. Okie.

One recognizes in houses of his design the common denominator of undressed fieldstone walls, with either pointed or struck joints, a material which abounds, often on the site, in the southeastern Pennsylvania areas. His love for this material with pointed joints is evidenced by its use, eighteen inches thick, for exterior walls of the principal portions of a house and for gable ends of secondary or service wings where the fieldstone with struck joint or clapboard finish otherwise predominates. Door and window frames of solid oak or cypress, and sills cut out of 6" x 8" pieces of solid white oak were his usual practice. The flat lintel, built of three stones including the center key, or the segmental arch of the same undressed fieldstone,

maintain the over-all uniform character of walls. Along the eaves of facade there is usually a prominent square box cornice with pole gutter. Three-inch leaders without leaderheads drop, apparently without anchorage, to a 5" x 5" wood shoe. Thin bargeboards on gable ends pass most often unbroken by the chimney to the ridge, the gable effect being increased by setting the chimney back sufficiently from the wall face for a narrow strip of overlapping shingles. These few details are mentioned only because they have a special character throughout his work.

Chimneys are a feature of Mr. Okie's houses, just as are the fireplaces within. Of generous size, beautifully proportioned, they are always well related to walls and roofs. His special concern is illustrated by the story of one client who, upon visiting his house one day, found the workmen demolishing a chimney; he ordered them to stop, implying his right to restrict the extent of alterations on his own house. When he returned the next day he found the demolition almost complete. He rushed to a telephone to remonstrate with the architect. Mr. Okie's answer was that he had ordered the workmen

to tear down the old chimney and was himself paying for the construction of one to take its place. He was known to have demolished a chimney of his own design and to have replaced it at his own expense with corrections incorporated. To him, old Dutch farmhouse chimneys rarely needed more than being restored to their original state.

Restorations were not done to produce effect. Rather, each small part was reconstructed according to historical precedent and the effect was automatic. No detail was too small to be worthy of his concentrated attention. The detailing of the unseen but important rafters of white oak usually tapered, fish-tailed, halved and oak-pinned without ridge boards; the rabbetted, tapered and beaded clapboards; variety in design of latches and other hardware for exterior or interior, illustrate the point. Sound

construction and interesting design resulted from long hours of study on many large-scale drawings. All hardware was carefully drawn full-size—his own large collection of old pieces serving as inspiration for new designs. Modern heating, air conditioning, lighting and plumbing were naturally incorporated with no concessions to their inevitability.

Mr. Okie's architecture is the expression of an American way of life. It epitomizes his own culture and refinement as well as that of his clients. Naturally retiring and modest, his work attained high qualities by reason of his insistence upon perfection, and is a personification of the Pennsylvania countryside which he cherished so greatly as to make it the chief theme of his career—a distinguished contribution to a fine tradition in American architecture.

## The Architectural League Resumes Gold Medal Awards

THE Architectural League of New York, organized in 1881, has held fifty-two annual exhibitions, the last one being in 1938. At these exhibitions the work of

designers throughout the country was shown and the high quality of their work, together with the unique character of The League's membership, composed of archi-

pects, painters, sculptors, landscape architects, decorators, craftsmen and other creative artists, made these exhibitions events of outstanding importance.

To honor the designers of work of high merit in the various arts, The League, at the discretion of the juries, awarded gold and silver medals, and honorable mentions.

Carrying on the spirit which made these exhibitions such stimulating occasions, The League announces a series of exhibitions during the winter of 1949-50 of limited size but of the highest quality—potential Gold Medal quality. These exhibitions will be held in The League's quarters, 115 East 40th Street, New York 16, and will be under the management and direction of the National Gold Medal Exhibition Committee; of which Benjamin Lane Smith is Chairman.

Six separate monthly exhibitions will be held for the following arts: landscape architecture; mural painting; minor architectural works; design and craftsmanship in native industrial art; sculpture. These exhibits shall be limited to work executed since 1938. The work submitted may be of a single project or be general in nature, at the discretion of the exhibitor. Ex-

hibitors must be citizens of the United States, though membership in The Architectural League of New York is not necessary. These exhibitions will be conducted in three stages: 1. Preliminary Submission; 2. Monthly Exhibitions; 3. Gold Medal Exhibit.

Preliminary submissions shall consist of not more than 10 small photographs, unmounted, and not exceeding 11" x 14" in size, of the work which the applicants propose to show in their exhibit, should they be selected. Preliminary submissions will not be exhibited and are to be used by the committees and juries only for the selection of exhibitors. These photographs may be of a single project or may show the general character of the work of the designer. Each photograph shall have a typewritten label on the back fully describing the work, name and address of exhibitor; and in the case of sculpture or other actual objects which may be exhibited, the dimensions shall be given.

A properly filled-out entry slip and an entry fee of \$5 to cover handling costs is required from each exhibitor of a preliminary submission. This fee will not be refunded. All preliminary submis-

sions will be returned, postage prepaid by The League.

Preliminary submissions shall be sent to National Gold Medal Exhibition, The Architectural League of New York, 115 East 40th Street, New York 16, N. Y. so as to be received according to the following schedule: (a) Landscape architecture, Oct. 13, 1949; (b) Mural painting, Oct. 27; (c) Minor architectural works, Nov. 10; (d) Major architectural works, Nov. 10; (e) Design and craftsmanship in native industrial arts, Dec. 1; (f) Sculpture, Dec. 8.

For submissions of Architectural Works the Committee and Jury will determine which works will be designated as Major and Minor.

#### MONTHLY EXHIBITIONS

Immediately following the receipt of the preliminary submissions the committees and juries for selection will review these submissions and select a limited number of exhibitors from this group who will be invited to prepare an exhibit to be hung at a monthly exhibit in the space allotted by the Committee. A wall space of approximately 75 square feet will be assigned to each exhibitor for the display of

photographs, drawings, models, etc.

Selected exhibitors will design their own exhibits and shall submit sketch layouts of their proposed exhibit arrangement to the Committee who reserve the right to suggest changes or alternate arrangements in order to maintain the desired standards of the show; exhibitors who reside in the metropolitan area are expected to mount and hang and remove their own exhibits.

The selected exhibitors will be notified of their selection immediately following the report of the committees and juries and shall deliver their completed exhibit, ready for installation, on the following dates: (a) Landscape architecture, Nov. 18, 1949; (b) Mural painting, Dec. 16; (c) Minor architectural works, Jan. 13, 1950; (d) Major architectural works, Feb. 3; (e) Design and craftsman in native industrial arts, Feb. 24; (f) Sculpture, Mar. 24.

A fee of \$20 is required from each exhibitor selected to exhibit in these shows, the fee to be sent when exhibitors are notified of their selection.

Further details as to delivery of exhibits, insurance, etc., may be had in The League's Circular of Information.

## MEDAL AWARDS

During the monthly exhibits of the various arts the juries shall meet and select a limited group of exhibitors who will be immediately notified and invited to prepare a more comprehensive exhibit of their work to be hung in the Gold Medal Exhibition of all the arts to be held in the Spring of 1950. The medals and other awards will be selected by the juries from work exhibited at this show.

In 1909 The League established a gold medal in Painting and a gold medal in Sculpture; in 1915, a gold medal in Architecture; in 1919 a gold medal in Landscape Architecture; in 1920, a gold

medal in Design and Craftsmanship in Native Industrial Art; and in 1927, two silver medals in Architecture, one for works of major importance and one for works of minor importance. They are intended to encourage the submission of work of merit, to raise thereby the standards of The League's exhibition and shall therefore be given only in recognition of superiority in work actually submitted and placed. The members of the Juries of Awards shall not be eligible for the awards. All other exhibitors are eligible for the awards, irrespective of the fact that the exhibitor may have already received any of the awards in former exhibitions.

## An American Architect in Peru

*By Hartwell Moorehouse Webb*

From a letter written to his fellow members of the Palm Beach Chapter and shared by them with a wider audience

**Q**UERIDOS AMIGOS:— Both George Votaw and Bob Nevins have written me long newsy letters about the affairs of the Chapter, and I understand that several other letters addressed to me in Guatemala have been lost along the way. I want to thank you for writing and apologize for having taken so long to write myself. No matter how diligently

one tries, the all-pervading spirit of *manana* seems to creep into one's own affairs.

I would like to say that I am very proud to be a member of the Palm Beach Chapter and often get out the roster of membership just to go over the list of friends therein. Perhaps living so closely and seeing so much of each other as you do it is not so apparent to you as to me

NOVEMBER, 1949



what a fine group it is. At any rate I am very happy to be numbered there, and am trying to be a credit to the A.I.A. and the Chapter.

Perhaps you would like to hear something of my work. Primarily it is architectural, which is the side I enjoy most. It also includes such strange duties as appraising and purchasing land and buildings for Uncle Sam and trying to pry loose from the treasuries of some of our neighbor countries vast quantities of foreign credit which lodged there as a result of Lend Lease and Surplus Property operations during and after the war. It involves a lot of traveling for me. It is all good fun, though trying in spots. It's a little like a Parcheesi game—you can go great guns and get within an inch or so of home when, blooie!—there comes a revolution or equal, and you have to start all over again.

We are living in Lima, Peru, which is central for me, as my territory is made up of Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile. Lima is a lovely old city, architecturally speaking. At the moment I am constructing Residences for the Embassies in Colombia and Ecuador, and am about to begin one in Chile. Last year I designed and completed construction of an office building for the Embassy in Santiago, and here in Lima a large new office building, which incidentally was designed in Washington, is about to be started. This is to cost something over \$3,-

000,000. The Santiago offices cost about \$260,000. The Residences vary from \$50,000 to \$200,000. Lest you get alarmed and telegraph your Congressman about this disgraceful waste of public funds, let me hasten to explain that the only money being spent on such projects is the kind that can't be converted into dollars anyway. My aim in life is to convert it into useful (and I trust beautiful as well as practical) real estate, while the pesos, bolivianos, soles, sucres, or bolivars (as the case may be) are still worth something. As you doubtless know the currency in most Latin American countries is depreciating rapidly.

My Spanish appears to have a strange quality, but in spite of that I seem to get on very well with my good architect and contractor friends, for there is a common language there. By and large they are a grand bunch and go out of their way to be cooperative. I had a particularly happy experience in Chile, where the contractor set some sort of speed record in finishing the new offices. He was out to show the gringos. They *have* things to show us too. For example I shall nevermore be able to seriously sit down and figure things out in feet and inches. I am sold on the metric system. If some fine day a great crusade to ditch our clumsy system gets under way you will find me there. If only 4 inches equaled exactly 10 centimeters!—but they don't and they can't be squeezed.

There are things to be said on the other side too. For example, there isn't any such thing known as forming a pipe chase in masonry. It isn't cricket unless it is lovingly and laboriously chipped out by an Indian after the concrete has completely hardened. I could never understand why it seems absolutely necessary, to the Latin mind, to pound a building full of holes after it gets built, but it does seem so, and one sort of gets used to it.

You would enjoy, as I do, the gleam in the eyes of the workmen who install fine American products as glass, plumbing and electrical products. They don't get frequent opportunities in these days of scarce dollars—and relish them when they do.

I've been having something of an education in Spanish Colonial Architecture. Those were the good old days! And how rugged were the tenants of the monuments they left behind (if they survived)! It's a wonderful feeling to be able to sit in your patio of an evening in La Paz or Quito, for example. That is the time to admire the Southern Cross—provided you can see out through your blankets. I must say the old boys built well—even though they never heard of central heating. Earthquake after earthquake hasn't yet shaken down a lot of the best of it.

Had it been accepted twenty-five years ago that functionalism as a creed was based on satisfying not only mechanical but also human functions, it would not have appeared the straight-jacket that a one-sided interpretation obviously implied, and so provoked such a resistance movement in its day.—RODERICK ENTHOVEN, F.R.I.B.A.

Here and there there is some good modern design popping up. Chile especially is advanced. Much of it has a heavy German imprint. Peru and Ecuador still love the old things and ways too well, but even there there are signs—particularly in commercial construction.

As for traveling about—I enjoy it. Sometimes, as happened last year, I get a chance to bring my girls along; then it is better still. We had a lovely vacation last year in the mountain lakes of south Chile. From this point, or any number of points for that matter, you can pretty well take your choice of accessible scenery, high mountains, barren deserts, tropical forests or glacial lakes. You can go almost anywhere by air now and aside from international flights, it's not expensive. The fishing is awfully good in spots too.

Well, so much for that. I don't mean to imply that life is all one sweet song, but I am enjoying it and at the same time getting a lot of satisfaction from my work.

I wish that I might join you at the next meeting and hear all about everything. I won't ask anybody to write me after such a disgraceful silence on my own part—but if anybody should I should be very happy indeed.

If you do not appreciate your opportunities  
read what George Caleb Wright thinks of you

## Regional Seminars

WITH the experience at Biloxi and Indianapolis back of us, and more talk of regional seminars, it is likely that this form of professional education will gain in importance.

George Caleb Wright of Indianapolis has expressed the significance of the regional seminars very well in the *Indiana Society Bulletin*, of which he is the Editor. Let Mr. Wright tell it:

I was instructed by the Indiana Society's Board of Directors to make this issue of *The Bulletin* a "whoop-er-upper" for the Great Lakes District Seminars to be held in our fair Capital, September 30 and October 1. In approaching that job, I suddenly discovered my literary impulses (such as they are) in serious revolt. A surge of disgust took charge of my pencil, and the honeyed words of "whoop-la," which the instructions of the Board seemed to indicate, just wouldn't flow. So here goes—and this may cost me my job. I'm going to indite, as nearly as the facile American language permits, just what I feel in my innermost "innards" relative to these sessions.

The Profession of Architecture is fundamentally a profession of community service. As such its

prime attribute is unselfishness—or better perhaps—selflessness. Those men in the profession of most satisfying achievements are those who have discarded the "self" motive, and substituted that of service. Not only is their perspective that of "What can I do to be of service to my community?" Their outlook is more "What can my profession do to be of service to our communities?"

All of the above preaching (and I suspect I dislike preaching as much as you dislike reading it) leads to this:—The guy who divorces himself from his brothers in the profession; who shuts himself up in his own little bailiwick; who goes out to get as nearly all of the work in his locality as he can, regardless of what he does to his brothers or the profession; who, in brief, doesn't fraternize; that guy may prosper financially, but he's a pauper in so far as the largest return the profession has to offer is concerned. For the greatest joy in this business comes from a sense of having contributed a bit to permanent community betterment.

Does all of that seem to be a far cry from the Regional Seminars? Well it's not so far away. These Seminars are, first of all, a chance to sit down with your brothers of the worn elbows, and

to yammer together. That I think is perhaps their greatest value. They serve to draw us together so that in a fraternal spirit we can attack our common problems.

Then too, you just can't equip yourself for service shut up in your own office. Here's a chance to really learn, to broaden your horizon, to gather a real chunk of inspiration. If you don't leave the Seminars a much better architect it's just because you spend too much time in the Mirobar, and not enough listening to the sparkle which will come out of the discussions.

Finally these Seminars will give

you a chance to broadcast your own ideas, and what architect doesn't love to do that? Who knows, you may make a real worth-while contribution.

And so with disgust, I discard an appeal to your Hoosier patriotism. Of course, we're hosts and should attend one hundred per cent. Sure here's a chance to show our neighbors how WE can do a job of entertaining. Bunk!!! If you don't see in this association with your Brothers the great possibility of increasing your serviceability, and the serviceability of your profession—stay home, you poor benighted punk!

## News from the Educational Field

PRATT INSTITUTE, Brooklyn, N. Y., announces the appointment of the following men to its staff in the Department of Architecture:

Charles Warner to be Critic in Design; Peter Grippe, sculptor and painter, to teach Basic Design; Stanley Salzman, architect, to teach Graphics and Design; Peter Blake to teach Introduction to Architecture; Seymour Howard, architect, to teach Construction.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, College of Architecture and Design, announces the following appointments to its staff: Walter B.

Sanders, Professor of Architecture; Lyndon Welch, Instructor in Architectural Construction; Knut Lonberg-Holm and Roger G. J. Legrand, Visiting Lecturers in Architecture; Thomas F. McClure, Assistant Professor of Sculpture.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, School of Architecture, announces the following appointments to the faculty: J. Robert Buffler, Chairman in the Department of Architecture and Planning; Werner W. Dornberger, Chairman of Architectural Engineering. Others who have joined the faculty are: Nolan E. Barrick,

Cal Briggs, H. Conrad Kroll, Clinton Mochon and Harold W. Underhill, Jr.

YALE UNIVERSITY, Division of the Arts, announces the appointment of three Visiting Critics in Residence in the Department of Architecture: Alfred L. Aydelott, of Memphis, Tenn.; Harris Armstrong of St. Louis, Mo.; and Harwell H. Harris of Los Angeles, Calif. Appointed to the Yale faculty are: King Liu Wu as Assistant Professor of Architecture;

Robert R. K. Russell, Jr., Instructor in Architecture; and Theodore Hood, Assistant in Instruction in Architecture.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE COLLEGE, School of Design, announces the appointment of H. Th. Wijdeveld, a distinguished Dutch architect, as Visiting Professor of Architecture; Manuel Bromberg, Associate Professor of Design; Walter Weissman and Lee F. Hodgden, Instructors in Architecture.

## Calendar

*November 1, 2:* Semiannual Meeting of the Board of Directors, A.I.A., White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

*November 4-5:* The West Virginia Chapter, A.I.A., meeting at The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, W. Va. All A.I.A. members are invited.

*November 6-9:* California Council of Architects Convention, Palm Springs, Calif. For reservations write to Harry J. Williams, California Council of Architects, The Plaza, Palm Springs, Calif.

*November 10-12:* Convention of Structural Clay Products Industry, The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

*November 13-16:* 16th Annual Conference of the National Asso-

ciation of Housing Officials, Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston, Mass.

*November 14-16:* Southern Building Code Congress holds its annual meeting. Hermitage Hotel, Nashville, Tenn.

*November 14-18:* Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Exposition, Atlantic City Auditorium, Atlantic City, N. J.

*November 18-19:* Regional Convention for the Central States District—St. Louis Chapter, A.I.A., acting as host. Sheraton Hotel, St. Louis, Mo.

*December 9-10:* Regional Meeting of the North Central States District, Minneapolis, Minn.

*December 14-15:* 30th Annual Convention of the National Warm Air Heating and Air Conditioning

Association, Hotel Cleveland, Cleveland, Ohio.

*January 9, 1950:* Executive Committee of the Union Internationale des Architectes meets in Cairo, Egypt.

*January 16-19:* The First Plant Maintenance Show, in the Auditorium, Cleveland, Ohio, in connection with a four-day Conference on Plant Maintenance Methods.

*January 21, 22:* North American Conference on Church Architecture and the Church Architec-

tural Guild, Neil House, Columbus, Ohio. Exhibit of Church Architecture, Arts and Crafts by Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture and manufacturers, Neil House, January 2 to 25.

*February 19-23:* 6th Annual Convention and Exposition of the National Association of Home Builders, Hotels Stevens and Congress, Chicago, Ill.

*Change of date: April 10-16:* VII Pan American Congress of Architects, Havana, Cuba.



## Architects Read and Write

*Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative.*



### THE JOURNAL'S ILLUSTRATIONS

BY ROBERT D. KOHN, F.A.I.A., New York

FOR A LONG TIME I have kept silent on current Institute affairs as befits a "has been." But now I emerge from that dignified and stately attitude to urge that you reconsider the wisdom of publishing pictures of current architectural work in the JOURNAL.

Why not leave that, as formerly, to the many (commercial?) architectural magazines? If the JOURNAL needs illustrations to relieve

the monotony, subjects aplenty could be found in public works, the results of interesting competitions, and worthwhile and unfamiliar works of historic interest. The minute you begin with current architectural design or details there is involved an exercise of esthetic judgment where you and I for instance might (and evidently do) differ greatly.

*(See comment on page 236)*

### COMMENT ON

"THE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURE AS ART"

BY GUY STUDY, F.A.I.A., St. Louis

MR. RANNELLS' reprinted number of the JOURNAL recalled a paper, "The Study of Architecture as Art," in the September remark Sigmund Freud once made: "I am forever being amazed by the

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working of the human brain." Edgar Williams, in the same issue of the JOURNAL, raised a timely question when he asked, "What sort of stuff does that guy do?" I know nothing about Mr. Rannells or what kind of "stuff" he does, but I dare say that he is not a practising architect. I do not question the honesty of intent or the sincerity of Mr. Rannells in what he writes; but I do fear that he has been putting his sub-conscious mind through a severe set of gymnastics which can hardly be called sound architectural reasoning, and, while in the subsequent maze, has made his deductions. Let me quote a few fragments from Mr. Rannells' paper:

"Architecture begins with space which itself is endless, then shapes it in volumes which are measurable . . . volumes are defined as forms by bordering planes . . . interpenetration of inner and outer space . . . Of what significance is steel unless it be used to give expression to space . . . Of what significance is glass unless we use it to express the continuity of inner and outer space? . . . molding space . . . walls need no longer be supporting piers, or even surfaces, but rather planes of reference merely indicating the limits of volumes . . . ceilings float in the air, free to extend beyond walls and echo into outer space . . . the interpenetration of inner and outer space is the achievement of architecture in our day."

To give way to all this mumbo-jumbo is merely to state laboriously

and badly what has already been said very simply: that the function of modern architecture is to bring the outdoors into the inside of the building. But is this the function of architecture? In truth, architecture is precisely and exactly just what Mr. Rannells says it is not. Architecture is not space, but rather it is the very walls, floors, ceilings that confine space.

All practising architects, no matter to what school of thought they may belong, fully realize that it is in terms of walls, floors, and ceilings that they must work.

I have no quarrel with the so-called modern style, nor criticism against it; indeed, I find much in it to admire, but I do not consider it the only expression of our time, and I most vigorously resent the assertion that a traditional style cannot serve equally well. The real artist will breathe into his work the spirit of the present. True, he must first have an intimate understanding of the style, and he must go through long years of apprenticeship to acquire a knowledge of it, and he must recognize and respect its limitations and its fundamental principles. All these requirements seem distasteful and repugnant to the Modernists. But if the designer is wide awake to the ever-changing conditions, the trends of materials and the construction methods of his time, he will find them to be instruments with which he may inspire his designs with a spirit of modernity.

Everyone acknowledges that the

modern style is firmly established. No doubt, little by little, it will lose much of its austerity and, taking on some of "the rich opulence of the Renaissance," which today it spurns, it will become refined.

The modern style should be allowed to speak for itself and if it has a real message, we will all get

it. Whenever I read such nonsense seriously submitted as "floating ceilings free to extend beyond walls and echo into outer space," and that architecture is space confined in some magical and incomprehensible manner by mere screens rather than by solid walls, like Freud, I am amazed at the workings of the human brain.

#### MORE COMMENT ON THE SAME THEME

BY EDWARD HUNTSMAN-TROUT, F.A.S.L.A., Beverly Hills, Calif.

I HAVE thought, heretofore, that the architectural cult currently in vogue was concerned with functions, machines, and the like. It is illuminating, and explains much that has confused me in certain of its manifestations, to discover my error, and to find that it is not functional, but that it is legitimate offspring, by Gothic, out of Baroque, through interpenetration.

However, I am still just a little

confused, being surprised to learn that, when Baroque is so divine, Renaissance can be so vile; are they not rather closely related? But let it pass. Many nice people have an unwashed and unwanted ancestor lurking in the family tree.

In any case, isn't it lucky that a good architect is still a good architect, from whatever fount he may have quaffed the divine juice.

#### AND STILL MORE . . .

BY ALLEN G. SIPLE, Beverly Hills, Calif.

DOUBLE-TALK is now the accepted official language of architectural philosophizing, but seldom does it make as clean a confession of duplicity as in your September issue.

Professor Rannells of Kentucky defines architecture with gentle reasonableness as "the shaping of space into volumes proportioned and ordered in conformance with *man's* purposes." He then proceeds to damn the humanism of the

Italian Renaissance, and to cheer for "heaven-seeking" Gothic (of all things!) as opposed to "the earth-bound material and *human* orientation of the Renaissance."

I have been a member of the C.A.I.C. as well as of the A.I.A. for many years, but never has my state of confusion led me to doubt that buildings are built for *man's* purposes or to be less than proud of an earthy, material and *human* orientation.



We now turn to the news from Sweden and find that the Swedish brethren are turning away from functionalism toward a new movement known as "Humanism." "It is an attempt," says Mr. Gross, "to make architecture more livable. An explanation of 'Humanism' is very difficult. Even the Swedish architects can only give an explanation in generalities."

Let us make sure that no explanation of any movement is easy

or forthright. Let us always throw dust in someone's eyes—even in our own!

I give you the Tentmaker; who "in youth did eagerly frequent Doctor and Saint—

—and heard great argument About it and about, and evermore Came out by the same door wherein I went."

Yours for the man-sized exit door and a clean escape from double-talk.

COMMENT ON  
THE GUEST EDITORIAL BY EDGAR WILLIAMS  
BY THOMAS H. CREIGHTON, New York

EDGAR WILLIAMS has an "editorial" in the September issue of the JOURNAL in which he makes some rather general comments about the architectural press (in which term he apparently includes the home-making magazines but not the JOURNAL OF THE A.I.A.) which leave me completely confused. Perhaps Edgar's piece is, as he suggests it might be, so intelligent that it can't be understood. Another possibility is that he adopted a device that he himself condemns—the setting up of a straw man—and if that is the case he himself is indulging in a reprehensible sort of journalism.

One of the confusing things about his article is the fact that it is never clear *what* writing in *what* media (architectural magazines, books, *The New Yorker*, *American Home*, *Harpers*?) he is discussing. Since there are several clear refer-

ences to "the architectural magazines," "our old magazines," etc., one can only assume that the remarks in general are concerned with the three national magazines that reach large architectural audiences—the *Forum*, the *Record*, and *Progressive Architecture*.

Now, Edgar is complaining of what those magazines have been doing "in the past few years." It seems he is tired of reading "some of the emotional outbursts for or against this personality or the other." He writes ". . . whether or not Mr. X thinks he is the greatest architect in the world today, whether or not Mr. Y. was the first to use a plate-glass front for the bathroom, or Mr. Z. did so and so in his pink, blue, or brown period, is all a matter of small talk, and in my opinion is not worth the ink used and the paper upon which it is printed." I agree with Edgar

that his wordy straw man should be demolished, but I insist he is simply stuffed with Mr. Williams' prejudices. As one of the wormy-brained editors he describes, I have been a fairly careful student of architectural journalism in "the past few years," and I don't recall, in any of the architectural magazines, any articles which did any of the things he complains of, or even, by the greatest stretching of poetic license, did anything even remotely approaching this. What articles in what magazines about what architects is Edgar thinking of?

As a matter of fact the architectural press has become more and more factual and technical. I can't, of course, speak for the others, but in P/A our building presentations are almost staccato, our articles are generally on technical developments and matters of office practice. The pieces about individual architects, far from being concerned with "emotional outbursts," have been case studies of successful practice in various fields of activity, and case studies of men who have had an important effect on their communities. It seems to me that these studies have concerned the issue Edgar says is most important—"whether or not we architects as a professional group can guide our destiny so that we may help our fellowmen to gain greater happiness."

What magazines has Edgar been reading? Perhaps what he calls "the home beautiful" ones. These

he likes better than the professional group because their editors—according to him—have "no interest in architecture except to give the public what it wants—or thinks it wants." Is Edgar serious? I hope this is not an ideal for architectural editing that a large segment of the profession holds, because if it is, I'm going back to practice. As a matter of fact, his slurring reference to this whole group of magazines is as unfair as his attack on the "professional" one. There are good magazines and poor magazines in this field, and there have been since Edward Bok began publishing houses in *The Ladies' Home Journal* in the 1880's, and bragged that he and his magazine had "destroyed the American parlor."

This whole technique that Mr. Williams employs is, of course, fatuous and irresponsible. Someone could write an article saying some very mean things about "the architects," or "the architectural profession," and the casual reader, thinking of one architect (out of a hundred that he knew) who vaguely fitted the characterization, would nod solemnly and say to himself, "That's true," and a great deal of harm would have been done the whole practising group. It is a well-known propaganda device, not usually employed by responsible people.

As to Edgar's other point—that writing about architecture should be done only by actively practising architects—that would require a

lengthy answer. The obvious quick reply to it is that no one busily engaged in the practice of a profession can gain the wide perspective needed for over-all reporting or commenting. Edgar would apparently wipe out the whole field of literary criticism, dramatic review, musical commentary. Ward Morehouse would have to be an actor before he could study acting as a critic. Lewis Gannett would have to write a certain number of

novels each year before he would be allowed to function as a critic.

The subject of architectural journalism deserves wide and critical discussion. Some months ago the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* carried an excellent piece critical of the architectural press. It was tougher than the one Edgar Williams wrote, but based on factual reporting, not "emotional outbursts."

## Competition for Ecclesiastical Sculpture

**I**N THE HOPE that it may bring forth original and vital designs as well as spiritually stirring symbols of faith in the field of ecclesiastical sculpture, a competition is being sponsored by The National Sculpture Society.

The competition is open to sculptors working in the United States. Not more than three entries may be submitted by any one competitor, and these entries are to be submitted in any permanent material or in plaster and at a scale not

exceeding 18" in their greatest dimension.

The awards are \$1,000; \$500; \$200 and \$100.

The Jury: Rev. Robert I. Gannon, S.J., Chairman; John Engel, Donald De Lue and Walker Hancock—all three Fellows of the National Sculpture Society; Ralph Walker, F.A.I.A.

Further details may be had from the National Sculpture Society, 1083 Fifth Avenue, New York 28, N. Y. The closing date is April 30, 1950.

## Books & Bulletins

**PLANNING THE MODERN CITY.** By Harold MacLean Lewis. 2 Vols. 530 pp 7¾" x 10¼". New York: 1949: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. \$12.

A second-generation revision and expansion of Nelson P. Lewis' "The Planning of the Modern City," first published in 1916. The son served as Executive

Engineer for the Committee on a Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs from 1921 to 1932, and from 1932 to 1942 as Chief Engineer and Planning Consultant of the Regional Plan Association, Inc., New York City.

INDIAN ART. Essays by H. G. Rawlinson, K. de B. Codrington, J. V. S. Wilkinson, and John Irwin. 216 pp 4½" x 7¼". New York: 1948: Philosophical Library, Inc. \$3.75.

Essays on India's art in painting, sculpture, textiles, jewelry and other minor arts.

A GUIDE TO THE ART OF LATIN AMERICA. Edited by Robert C. Smith and Elizabeth Wilder.

485 pp 5¾" x 9¼". Washington: 1948: (Hispanic Foundation) Library of Congress. \$1.50.

A bibliography of the scattered material published up to 1942, as part of the program of the International Committee on Scientific and Cultural Cooperation of the U. S. Department of State.

M. I. T. IN WORLD WAR II, Q. E. D. By John Burchard. 370 pp 5¾" x 9". New York: 1948: The Technology Press. \$3.50.

M. I. T.'s former Director of Libraries, now Dean of Humanities, records details of a wartime activity that developed a tremendous national asset through cooperative group effort.

## The Editor's Asides

THE QUESTION of illustrations for the JOURNAL has always been somewhat of a problem. At first we started with historical subjects, but abandoned them because of complaint from some readers that they were much more interested in contemporary work than in the work of the past. This brought about the establishment of a policy which was explained in the May 1948 JOURNAL, part of which explanation was as follows:

"In view of the JOURNAL's size

and other limitations, the extensive illustration of a piece of contemporary architecture is beyond us. What we can do is to show, of notable contemporary works, a single detail representing that element of the structure, furnishing or equipment that most nearly achieved the architect's intention. All too frequently, a completed work disappoints its designer in many ways—else we should make little progress. But usually there is at least one detail of the whole that brings something of a thrill to the designer himself; it may be a detail in which sculptor, or

painter, or landscape designer, or interior decorator collaborated successfully; it may be some particularly happy choice of form or materials; it may be an ingenious solution of some challenging problem of plan or construction. Whatever it is, the architect finds it a point of satisfaction; it worked out as he had hoped—or better.

“With this purpose in mind, the members are urged to look over their photographs or recently completed work and send to the JOURNAL two or three that fit more or less the outline above.”

Through this policy the Editor had hoped to evade the responsibility for esthetic judgment in the material selected, putting the problem up to the members themselves. It was realized that this method was not without risk, but possibly justifiable by reason of the fact that it is unquestionably democratic. Comment on Mr. Kohn's letter (page 230), or suggestions for a policy better than the one in practice, would be heartily welcomed.

ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO we used to think it quite an achievement to modify interior temperature to suit the comfort of theatergoers or department-store shoppers. That was kindergarten stuff compared with the job now being worked out for the United Nations Secretariat

Building. So long as we could aim at an interior atmosphere that in temperature and moisture content came somewhere near the comfort zone of the average citizen, the task was not too formidable. But in the Secretariat there are to be persons from 58 nations—eventually some 4000 of them. Some like it hot, some like it cool; some like it moist, some like it dry. In the individual offices each is going to be able to get the sort of air he or she likes by setting a lever. That should serve as a preventive of much argument between, say, the Icelander and the Saudi Arabians.

We are intrigued by the title of a lecture announced by the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects. Professor J. T. Burke of the University of Melbourne was to speak on “Ghastly Good Taste in Victoria.”

Life is becoming very technical. Not so long ago we were accustomed to specify “gloss finish” or “matte finish” for an interior paint job—and then accept what the boss painter in his infinite wisdom thought we should have. Not so today. The National Bureau of

Standards puts a new gadget in our hands (for \$70). It consists of a set of 10 plaques having 10-degree steps from 1 to 90, and ranging from a matte to a high gloss. But let the N.B.S. clear the picture for you:

"The gloss measurement is essentially a simple one. When a specimen is illuminated at some angle from the perpendicular, the proportion of the light reflected at angles near that of mirror reflection is defined as gloss. A critical part of the definition of gloss, however, is the amount that the reflected beam may depart from the strict direction of mirror reflection and still be counted as contributing to gloss. With glossmeters commercially available at the present time, replacement of the lamp, for example, may introduce instrumental error unless readjustment is made. The new gloss standards permit a rapid check of instrument calibration at any time and give a basis for readjustment of the instrument if required . . .

"The plaques are measured for 60-degree specular gloss according to the ASTM method, using a glossmeter calibrated with the gloss reference standards of the National Bureau of Standards. These measurements include both the true

gloss and a diffuse reflectance component. Corrected gloss values are obtained by subtracting the 0°-60° luminous directional reflectance measured with an ASTM receiver aperture. The corrections for each standard are included in the certificate accompanying each set. The gloss values for standards above 15 are given to the nearest gloss unit, below 15 to the nearest tenth of a unit.

"Although the plaques have been selected for their superior quality a certain amount of nonuniformity is unavoidable. In order to minimize errors arising from non-uniformity, the central area of each plaque is measured, and the reverse face is marked with an arrow and centerlines . . .

"Even with the aid of standards it is not possible to do precise gloss measurement in the medium to high gloss range unless the glossmeter used meets very closely the aperture requirements of ASTM Method D523, or unless the reflected light flux distribution of the specimen and standard are nearly identical. Since it is not practical to meet the latter requirement, it is desirable to make a test for the former . . ."

Perhaps, after all, we can leave it to the painter.



Architects! Here's your chance to win one of the cash awards totaling \$5,000—for the most interesting and practical new design for an eight-family wood garden-type apartment building of wood frame construction. The first major prize is \$1,500 . . . first student award is \$500 . . . and 21 other cash awards.

### Open to:

Architects, Designers, Draftsmen and Senior Students. Competition closes January 15, 1950 . . . prizes awarded March 15, 1950.

### The Problem:

We believe many existing housing problems can be solved both economically and satisfactorily with a well-integrated combination of (1) the low-cost garden-type of structure with (2) traditionally low-cost wood construction.

This competition is intended to demonstrate how well architectural grace, beauty and originality can be expressed in a multi-family dwelling designed in wood.

### Enter Now!

For entrance application and contest rules, fill out the coupon below. This competition is approved by the Committee on Competition of the American Institute of Architects.



**Contest Secretary**  
**Wood Garden Apartment Design Contest**  
**c/o Timber Engineering Company (Sponsor)**  
**1319 - 18th Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.**

Please send me entrance examination form and contest rules for design of Suburban Apartment.

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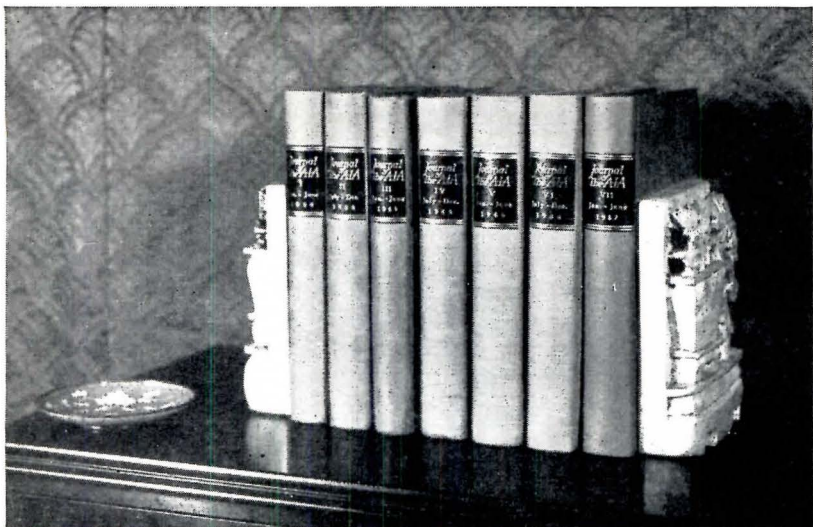
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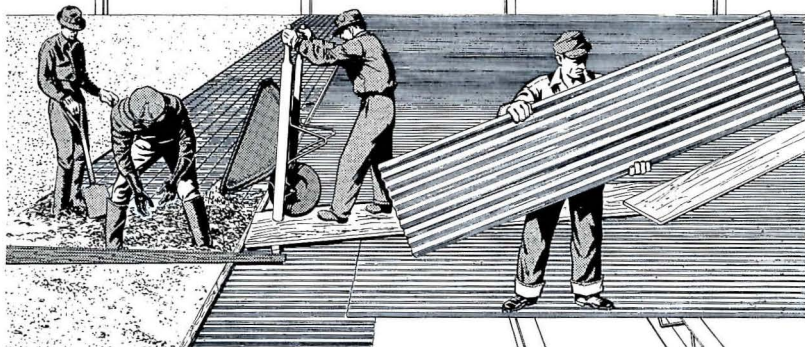
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