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JANUARY MEETING

The principal business of the monthly meeting, held January 24, at which there was an attendance of fifty-five, was the announcement by Wesley Bessell of his committee's plans for educating the public on the subject of architecture and the architect.

Mr. Bessell pointed out that architects have long been hiding their light beneath a bushel, and that it is essential to the future of the profession to inform the general public, our potential clients, of the service we are equipped to give.

Of the many modern means of enlightenment, the motion picture and the radio are probably the two most important, and both lend themselves well to the dramatization of the architect's story. As proof of this there were shown to the chapter three films made for educational purposes, each of which told the story of an industry or a division of one. Mr. Sutton, of the Jam-Handy Corporation, producer of these films, explained that such a picture would find outlets not only among schools, colleges, social organizations and parent-teachers associations, but also in regular theatre programs. One film produced for the U. S. Steel Corporation had been shown in 2000 theatres in the United States.

Representatives of the Producers' Council were present, spoke in favor of the idea, and promised the whole-hearted cooperation of the Council.

The committee presented the idea as a first step in a campaign of public education which would necessarily have to be sponsored and managed by the Institute nationally, but it was felt necessary that the Chapter express its opinion on the merits of the scheme.

After general discussion from the floor the following motion was adopted unanimously:

"It is the sense of the meeting that the plan under discussion has many possibilities and is worth exploration."

For the Committee on Industrial Relations Mr. Platt reported on the new Supervising Engineers' Union and offered the following resolution which was carried:

"Resolved that it is the opinion of the New York Chapter A.I.A. that the proposed unionization of licensed profes-

NEXT MEETING

FEBRUARY 21

LAUGHS! THRILLS! HEART THROBS!

Architectural League at 6:30. Don't miss it! For once you can forget your troubles and join in a whirlwind of frivolous fantastic foolery staged by this century's greatest impresario, Wesley S. Bessell. At colossal expense Mr. Bessell has had prepared a vital moving drama of today, WHO KILLED COCK ROBIN? or THE ADMIRAL'S REVENGE. It will be extravagantly mounted, and with its chorus of glorious gilded gynandromorphs bedizened and bedazzling, will far outshine any former production of this or any other universe. The lowly will be exalted and the mighty abased. Come one, come all, and by all means BRING YOUR WIVES, winsome in their wimples.

sional engineers is detrimental to the best interests of the building industry."

In connection with pending housing legislation Mr. Lescaze offered a resolution urging the legislature to include provision for payment of fees for services rendered before funds for a project are authorized. The resolution was carried unanimously.

James W. Kideney, President of the New York Association of Architects, and George A. Chapman, of the Chicago Chapter, were present as guests.

The following newly elected members were introduced to the Chapter: Aubrey Grantham, Bancel LaFarge, E. Jerome O'Connor, Eldredge Snyder and Sanford B. Wells, an associate member.

ERRATUM

In our December issue the makeup of the Subcommittee of the Institute Committee on Competitions was incorrectly announced. Its members are Egerton Swartwout, Chairman, Alfred M. Githens and James K. Smith.

STATE ASSOCIATION

All members of the Chapter are also automatically members of the New York State Association of Architects, although many do not realize this, and know little about the State Association.

We have asked Mr. John T. Briggs, Secretary of the Association, for a statement of its function and policies. He replies as follows:

"The New York State Association of Architects is endeavoring to coordinate the interests and aims of all the Architects of the State through one central body which is so constituted that it reflects the considered opinions and judgment of our many sided profession.

"All the organized architectural societies of the State are represented by Directors on the Board and those individuals who are members are represented by one or more Directors of their choosing. These Directors, as well as individual members, do the work of the Association through committees; they also receive the advice and thoughts of the constituent member bodies.

"At this time of the year the most active committee is that of Legislation, whose duty it is to receive, read, digest and send to the several societies for their recommendation and opinion, proposed laws. After advice from the several member bodies they then collate the whole and present to the Legislators, Senate and Assembly Chairmen of Committees, and even to the Governor, the views and recommendations of the Architects. In this manner the Association has placed on the statute books several beneficial laws, beneficial to the public interests as well as to our own interests. Much good work has been accomplished and more is possible when we are better equipped with means.

"Another active committee is the Convention Committee. This year the Second Convention will be held. These forums are for all the Architects of the State regardless of affiliations. The two or three days required should be set aside by every Architect so he can attend with unfettered mind and devote this time to the joyous exchange of experience and policies for betterment. It is surprising how much progress can be made when everyone contributes his bit.

Slender rods bound together have great strength. Our old friends the Romans knew this before the Christian Era and they carried it as their symbol of Power. If we seek correction of current uses or proposed formulæ, by intelligent unity we can have it."

ENGINEERS' UNION

How would you like to write to your client as follows: "Dear Mr. Client: Because one of the painters on your job caught cold from riding to the job in an open car, a strike has been called which makes it necessary for us to cease inspection and supervision of the heating and ventilating system, as the supervising engineer we employ for this work is on a sympathetic strike." The proposed A. F. of L. union of licensed professional engineers might lead to such an absurdity.

It is inconceivable that the higher type of professional engineers can be forced to join the union, but even if they do not, and the union does succeed in making it necessary to employ one of their men on each job, very intriguing situations might arise. Probably the least that would happen would be that two men would be paid to supervise, with one doing the work and the other playing pinochle.

The New York Building Congress has led the way in opposing this prostitution of a system which, with all its faults, is pretty generally accepted, and the Chapter has followed their lead in strongly condemning the proposed union.

As William Joshua Barney pointed out: "It is hard to conceive of collective bargaining where both parties thereto are union officials. It would seem that the unions of the City of New York will in their own interest decline to be a party to even the first encroachment upon the freedom of supervision and management to deal collectively with them."

MAYOR'S LIST

The complete list of architects qualified for City contracts for 1939 is on file in the Chapter office. The list consists of the names of 75 firms chosen, as in the past, by a jury of three architects appointed by the Committee of Eight.

This system of choosing a list of architects to do City work has been in operation now for long enough to bring to light some of its defects and its virtues. It is no more perfect than any other man-made device, and perhaps the present year would be an appropriate time for an impartial committee to make a dispassionate study of its record to ascertain whether it is producing the results hoped for or whether any sort of modification of procedure should be recommended.

LEGISLATION

The Committee on Legislation wishes to announce that through the Chapter's membership in the State Association, we receive copies of all pending bills affecting the profession. These are on file at the Chapter's office and are available to all interested members, excepting those that the Committee is actively working on, and information regarding them may be procured from the Chairman of the Committee.

The Chapter also receives from time to time copies of Building Department rulings. Among the ones now on file are:

(1) A list of rules and regulations of the Bronx division of the Department of Housing and Buildings pertaining to filing of plans in that Borough.

(2) A copy of general order 13/1938 of the Department of Housing and Buildings pertaining to single room occupancy in class "A" Multiple Dwellings.

(3) A statement of policy of the Department of Housing and Buildings on qualifying of job superintendents under the code and on fire retarding garage ceilings in converted dwellings.

(4) A statement from the Housing Division of the Department of Housing and Buildings pertaining to (a) sprinkler in lieu of a second means of egress in non-fireproof "heretofore erected existing Multiple Dwellings"; (b) permissible number of occupants for fire escape exits; and (c) fire retarding ceilings of lodging houses, dormitories, etc.

(5) Departmental order HD-3038 containing 33 pages of instructions to inspectors regarding issuance of violations on Multiple Dwellings and unifying the procedure throughout the city.

Due to the length of this departmental data it is impossible to send copies to all the members. A set, however, will always be on file in the Executive Secretary's office for convenient reference of the members and the secretary will undertake to mail a copy of the few additional sets at hand to any member who will write enclosing 15c for mailing with letter promising to return within three days.

MEMBERS EMERITUS

The Chapter office requests that any members wishing to be placed among the Members Emeritus notify Miss Waters. According to the A.I.A. By-Laws, Chapter 1, Section 6, any member who on his seventieth birthday has been an Institute member in good standing for fifteen or more years and wishes to avail himself of the opportunity, may be made a Member Emeritus. There are no dues for these members. Upon receipt of applications and completion of the necessary procedure, appropriate certificates will be awarded.

SMITHSONIAN

The recently announced competition for the Smithsonian Institution has aroused considerable interest and discussion among architects.

Disregarding some serious points of criticism, there is a question even larger than they which is of the utmost importance to the profession: Should the principle of partial services be permitted to become a general one?

The yeas feel that a satisfactory result can be obtained if the architect makes the preliminary sketches in his own office, and from that point follows up the development of the design by frequent consultations at Washington where the working drawings and details are produced by government agencies who have promised to follow out as closely as possible the intent and spirit of the architect's designs.

The nays insist that architecture is sufficiently difficult to do with the very best of tools; great buildings are all too few. The principle that jobs can be faithfully carried out without close personal attention from start to finish, without the architect on the job at the bitter end, is a dangerous one. They believe that a lack of integrity is implicit in the partial service method, and as a matter of principle oppose it. Sooner or later a definite stand on the matter will have to be taken by architects as a whole.

In response to inquiries which have been received, the following statement is made by the Institute Committee on Competitions: "The American Institute of Architects does not disapprove the competition for the Smithsonian Gallery of Art. Its members, individually, will have to determine for themselves whether or not they care to participate." This statement was necessarily not as full as the committee wished due to pressure of time and the necessity to have it published in the "Octagon." A further statement may be expected.

LABOR LAW

A proposed amendment to the Labor Law of New York State enlarges the definition of "workmen" to include any person performing architectural, technical, engineering or drafting duties for another for hire.

This amendment, if adopted, would obviously place in the same classification the youngest high school graduate starting his career tracing plumbing layouts, and the venerable doyen of the profession who collects his yearly retainer for advising a large corporation.

A flood of letters to Albany would perhaps be effective in modifying this unreasonable amendment.