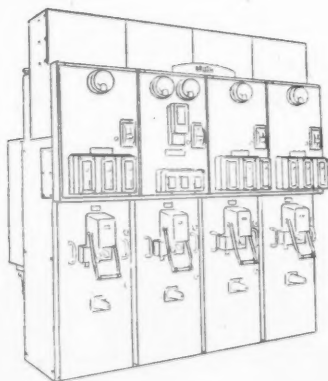


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5-124

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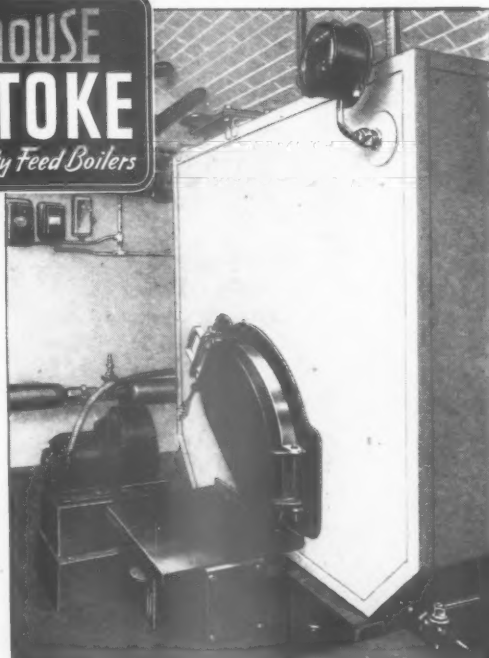
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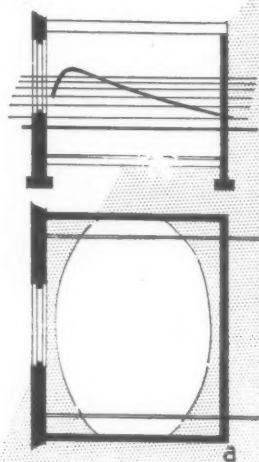
Daylight  
plans of



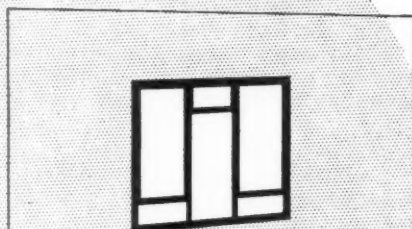
# STANDARD WOOD CASEMENTS are based on SOUND LIGHTING PRINCIPLES

Sheet Three

Fig. 7.



Daylight Factor graph superimposed on plans of two rooms of the same area.



A well-lit room with good light over most of its area.



A badly lit room, severely underlit at the rear.

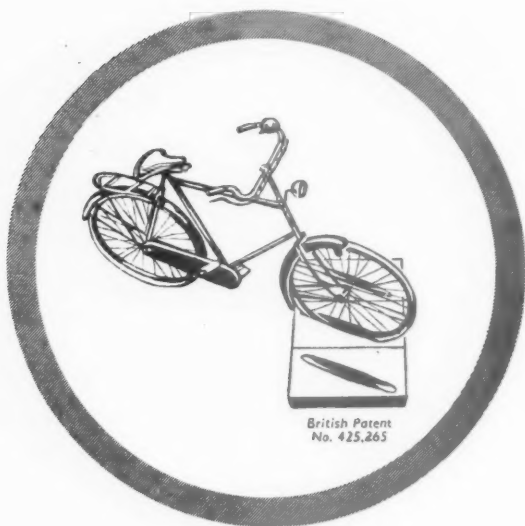
The light admitted by any window, plotted on a Daylight-Factor graph, will give the shape and size of room to which it is most suited.

But it is not always realised that the size and shape of a room are co-related factors. In the examples shown, (Fig. 7), the two rooms are of the same **area** but of a different **shape** and each has the same window, yet (a) a normal squarish room is bright and well-lit, while if it were made longer and narrower as (b) it would be gloomy at the back and need a tall narrow window. The contour-graph of the window, superimposed on both plans shows that a room of this size but of shape (b) needs a higher and narrower window to give greater penetration and less spread.

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*Refrigerator can be built into kitchen fitments with cupboard space above and below it.*

*Design provides for adequate ventilation of mechanism without the necessity for special air-bricks or ducting.*

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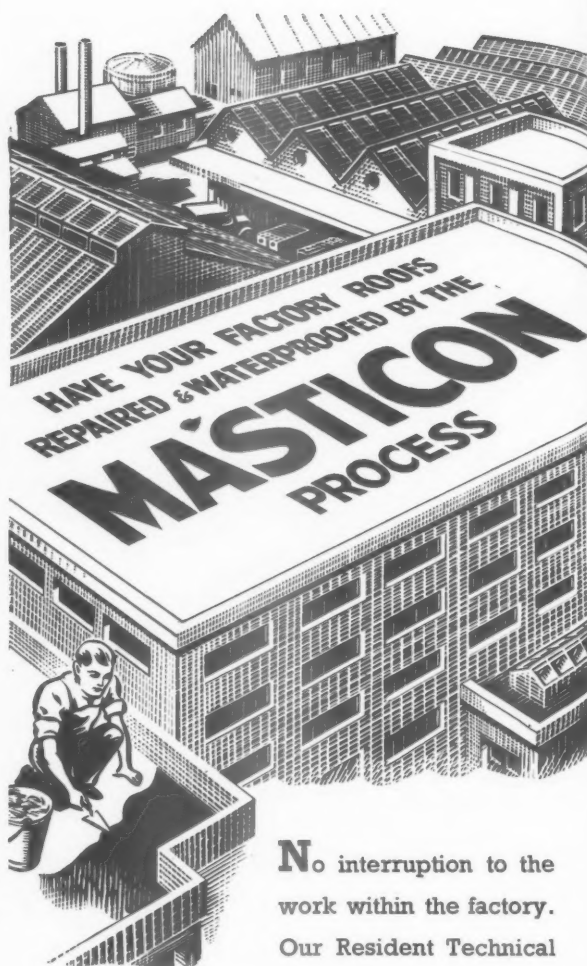
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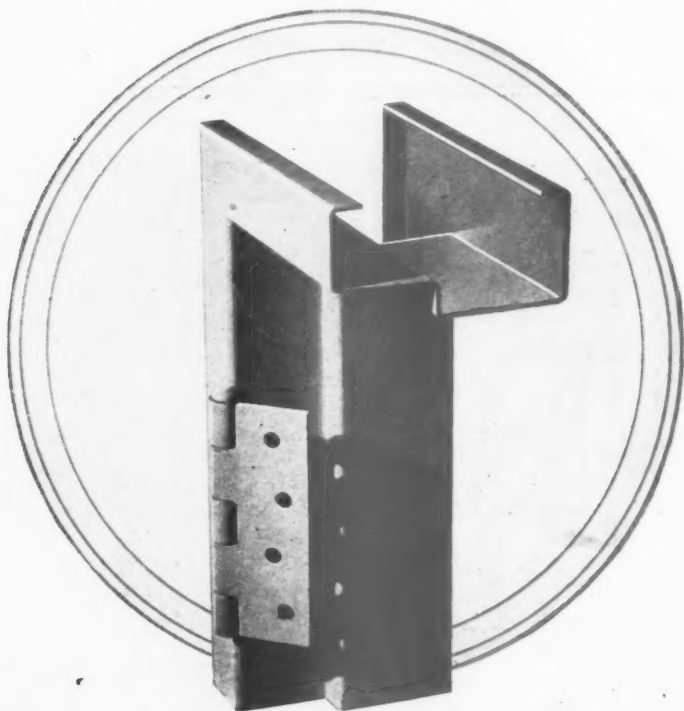
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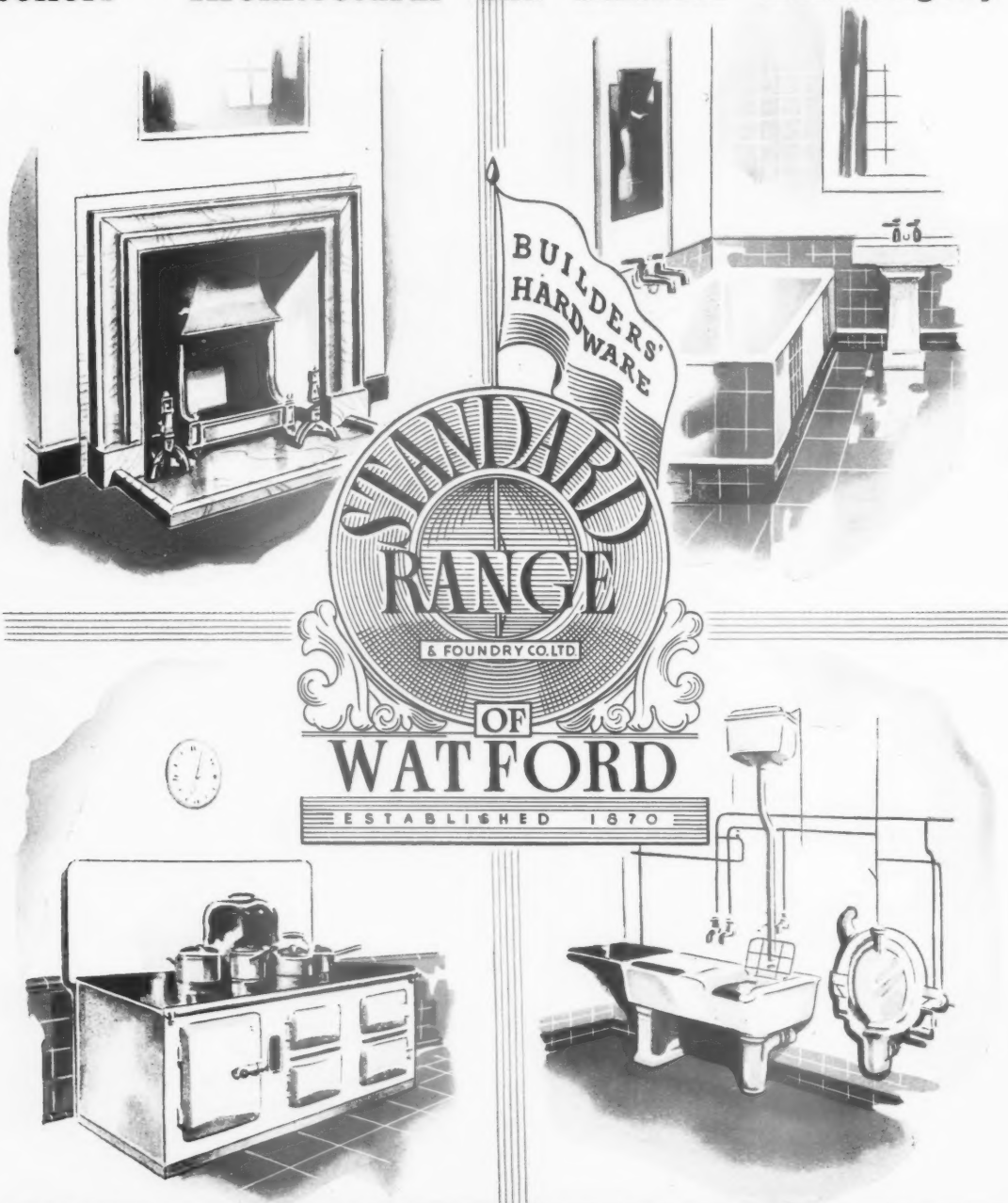
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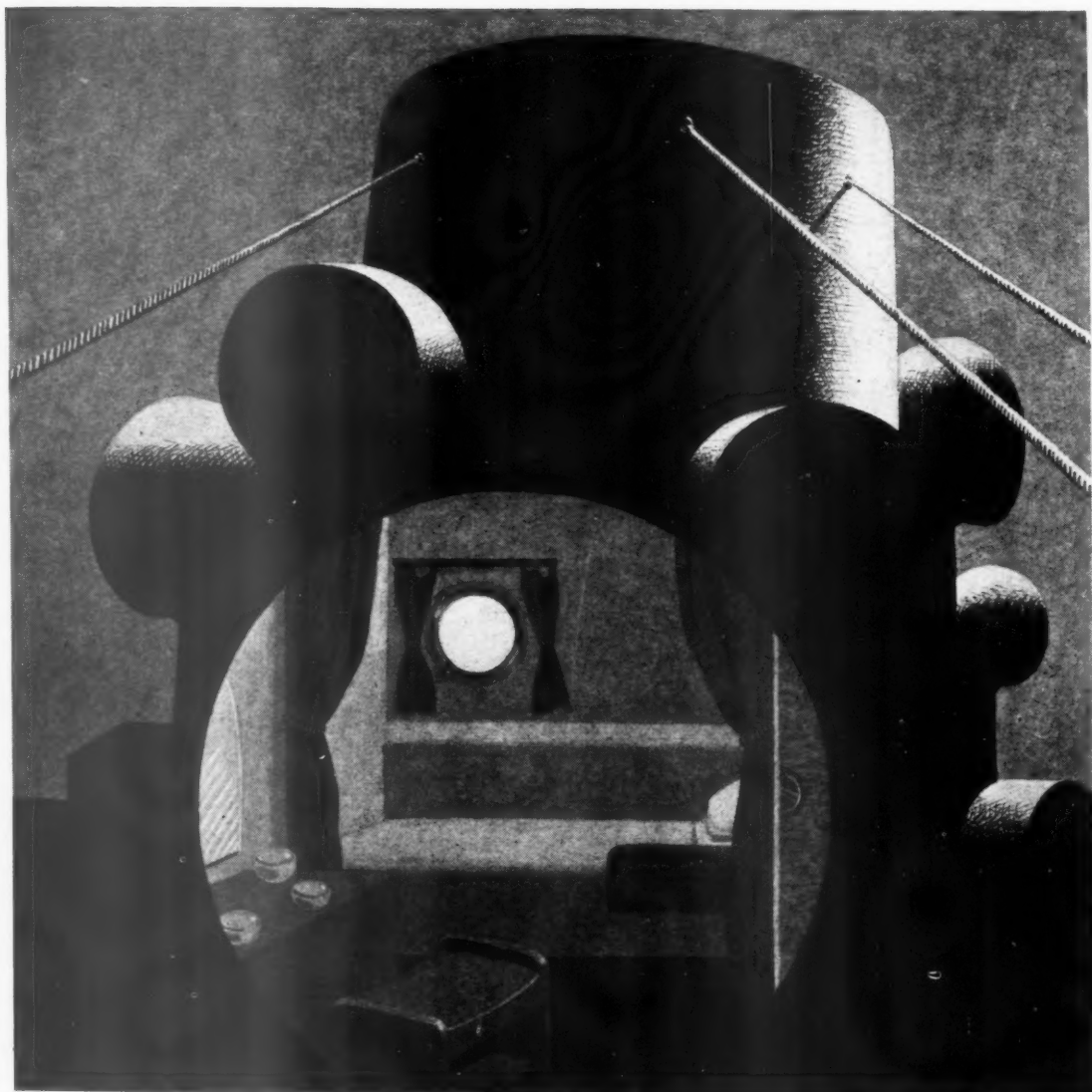
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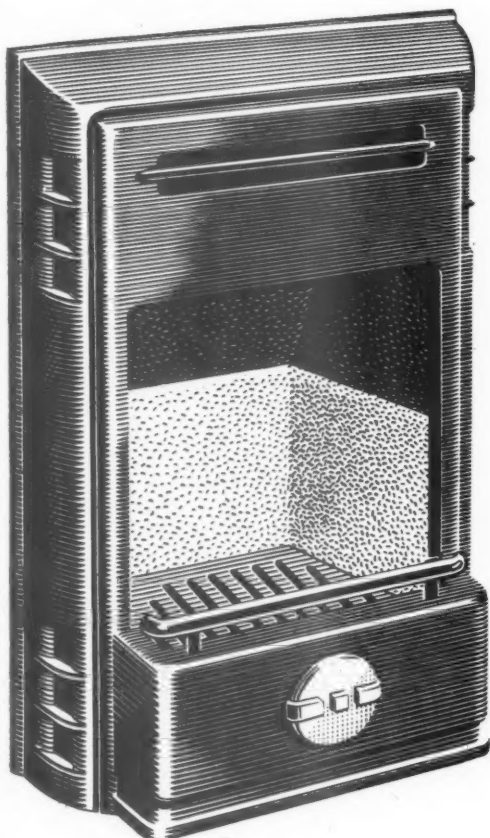
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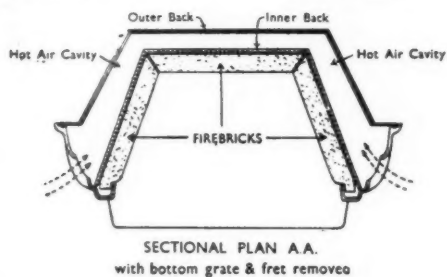
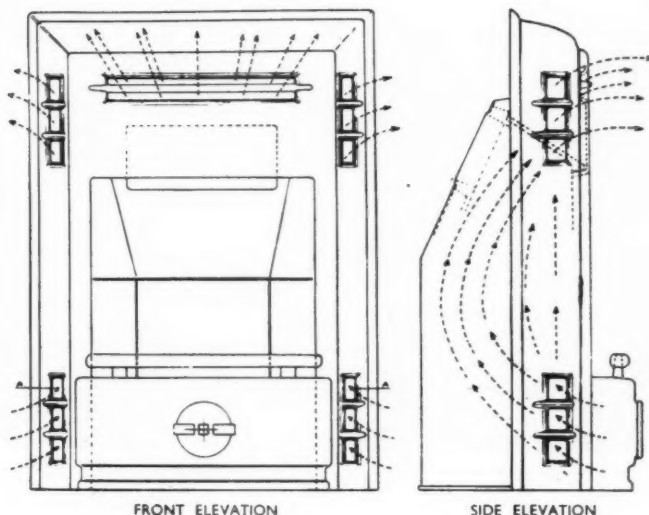
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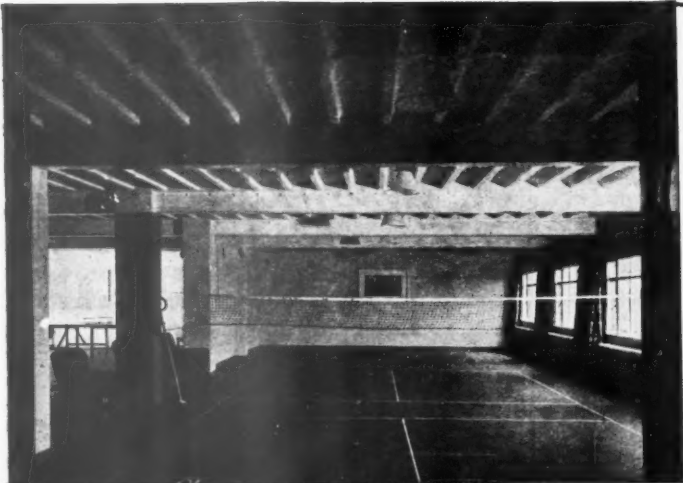
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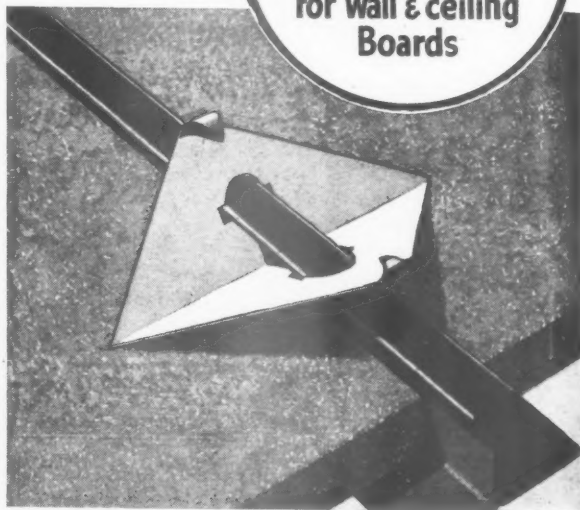
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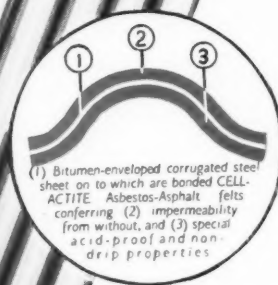
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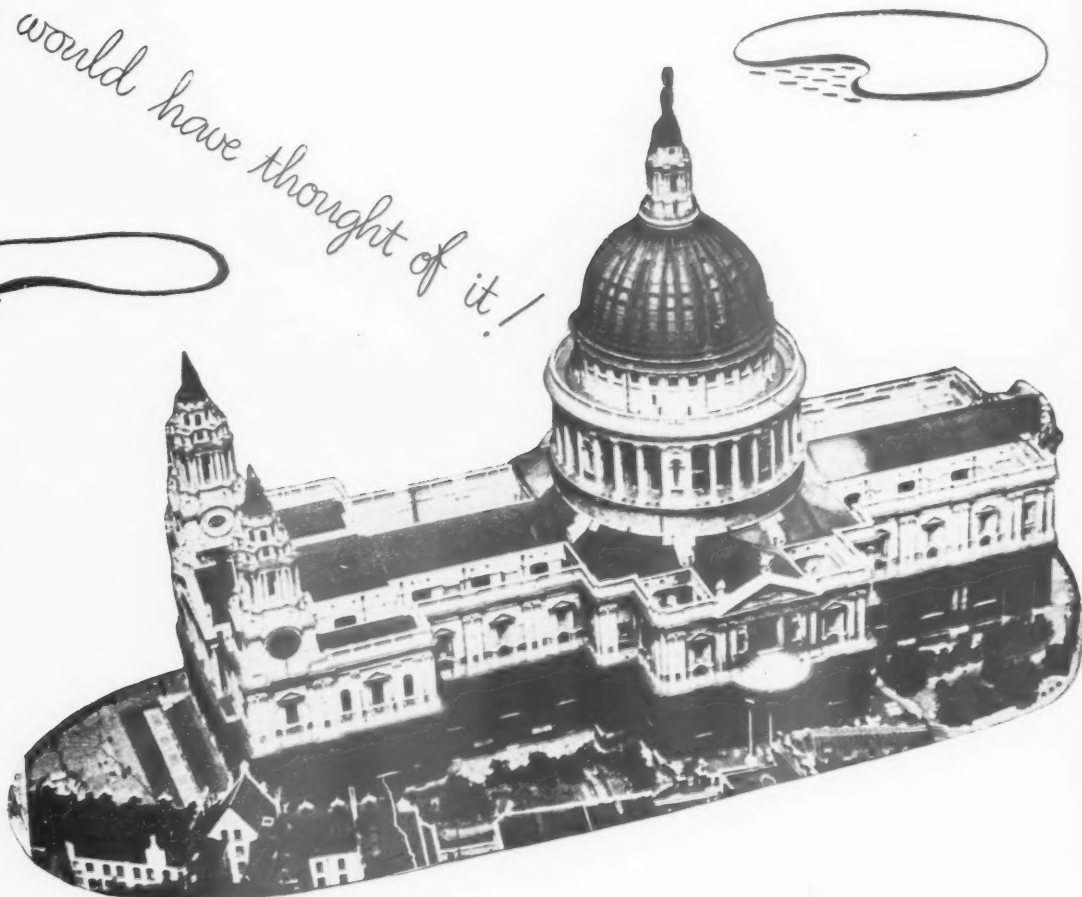
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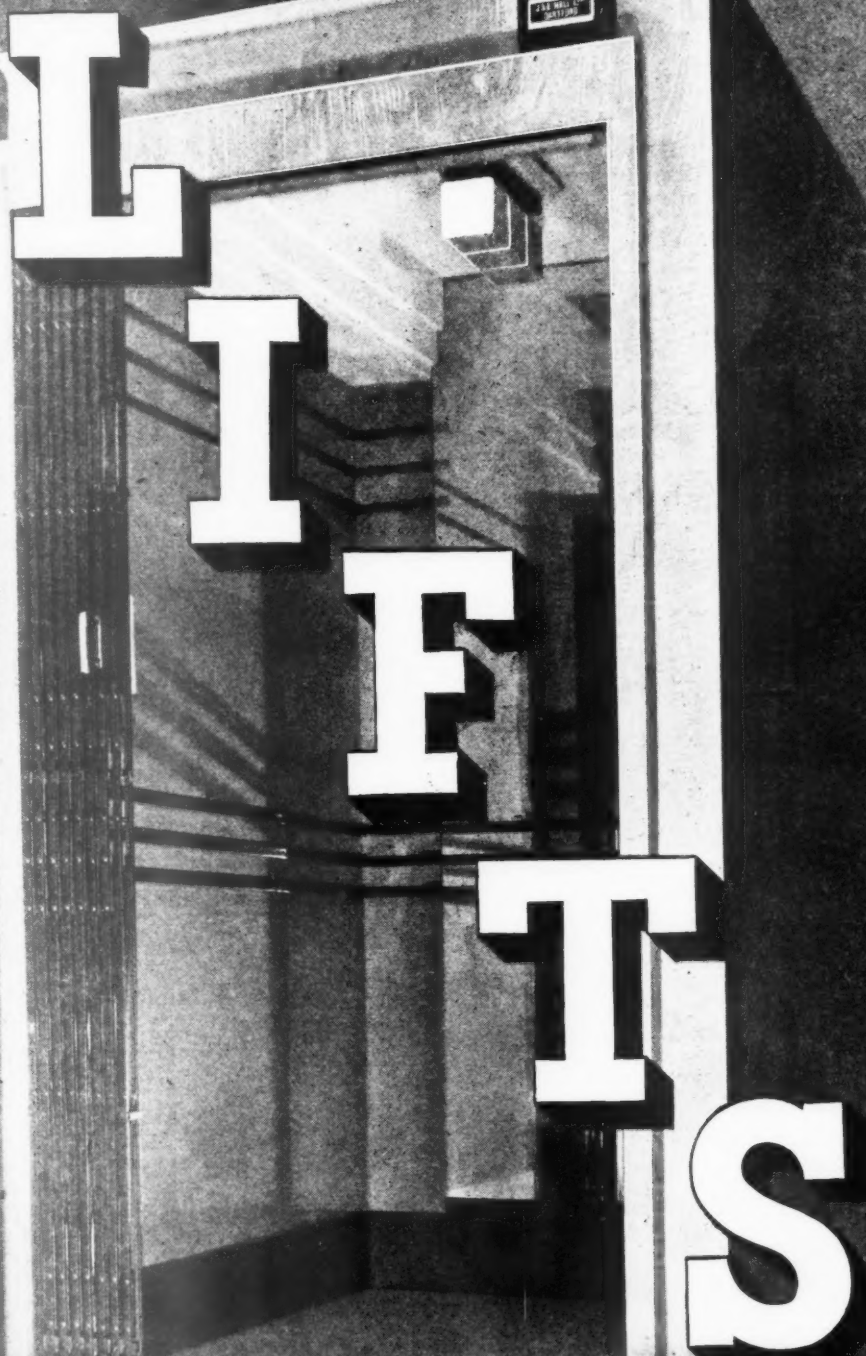
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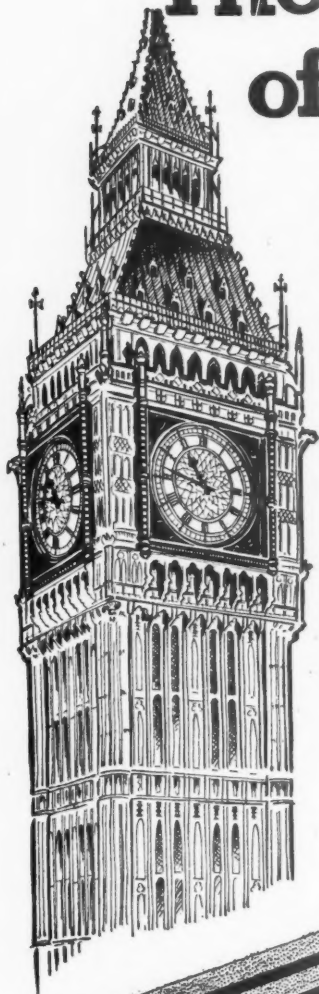
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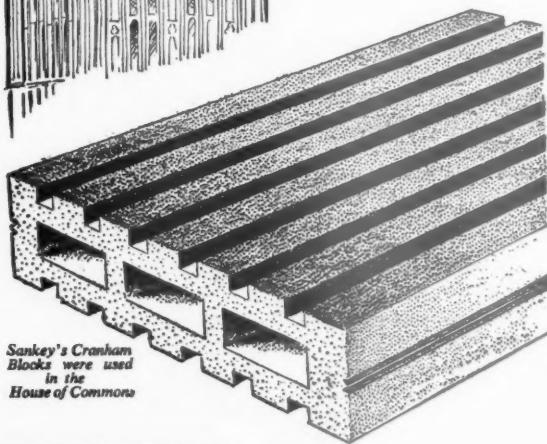


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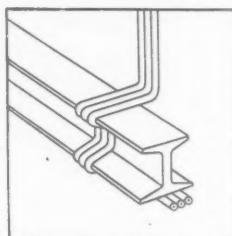
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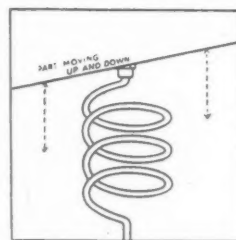
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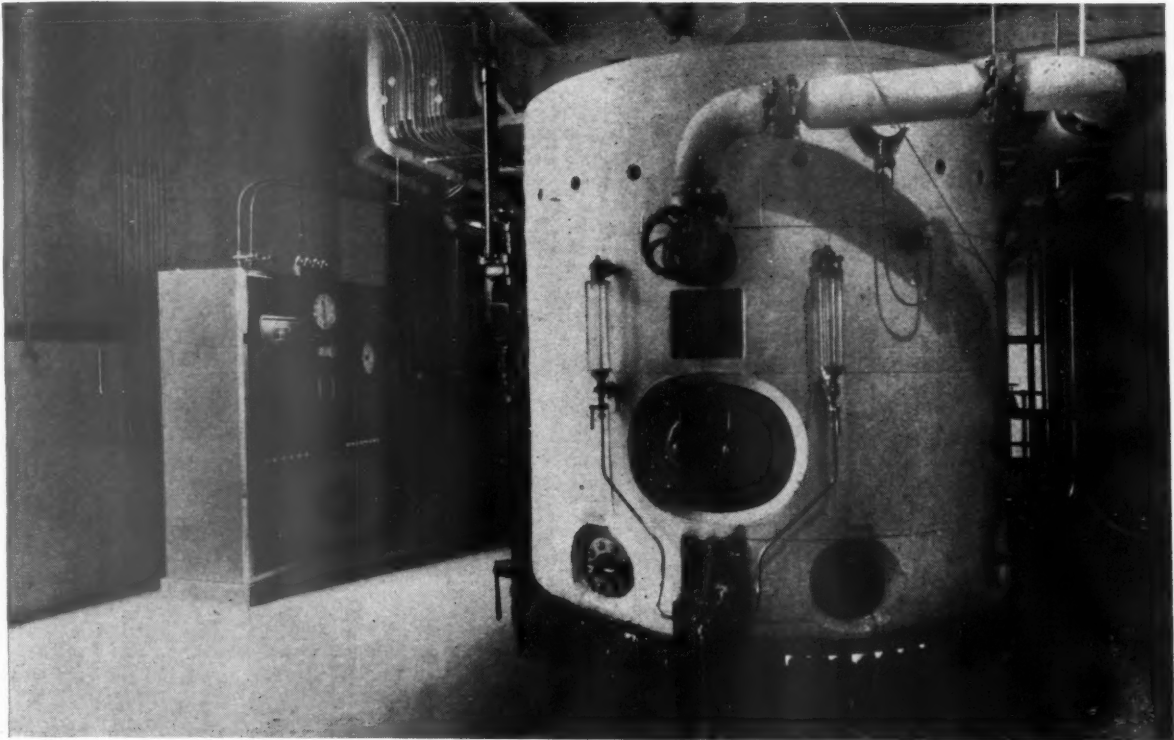
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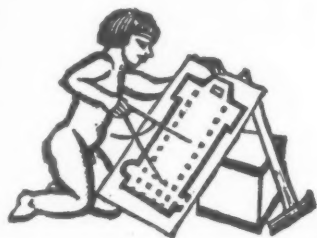
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## DIARY FOR MARCH APRIL AND MAY

Titles of exhibitions, lectures and papers are printed in italics. In the case of papers and lectures the authors' names come first. Sponsors are represented by their initials as given in the glossary of abbreviations on the front cover.

**BBC HOME SERVICE.** Wireless Discussion. *Homes for All.* Chairman, G. O. Slade, K.C. Sixth discussion. 7.40 p.m. March 31. Seventh discussion. 7 p.m. April 2. Eighth and last discussion. 7.40 p.m. April 3.

**BILLINGHURST.** *Living in the Country Exhibition.* (Sponsor, H.C.) MAR 30-APRIL 8

**BIRMINGHAM.** *Homes They Come From Exhibition.* (Sponsor, HC.) MAR. 30-APRIL 28

**BRISTOL.** W. T. Creswell, K.C. *The Powers and Obligations of the Quantity Surveyor.* At the Grand Hotel, Broad Street, Bristol. (Meeting also open to members of Allied Professions). Admission by ticket only on application to the Chairman, V. Mace, 13, Hengrove Road, Knowle, Bristol, 4; the Hon. Secretary, A. Weeks, 13, Glebe Road, Bristol, 5; or any member of the Committee. (Sponsor, Institute of Quantity Surveyors.) 3 p.m. APRIL 1

**DERBY.** *Homes to Live In Exhibition.* At the School Museum. (Sponsor, BIAE) MAR. 30-APRIL

**DIDCOT.** *Twenty Women at Home Exhibition.* (Sponsor, HC.) MAR. 30-APRIL 1

**IMPINGTON.** *Design in the Home Exhibition.* At the Village College. (Sponsor, CEMA.) MAR. 30-APRIL 13

**LONDON.** *Prefabrication.* At an informal meeting at the RIBA on April 4, at 5.30 p.m. G. A. Jellicoe will open a discussion on *Prefabrication.* He will be followed by Richard Sheppard and A. Pott, of the Building Research Station. The meeting will then be open for general discussion. APRIL 4

W. H. Hobday. *Sanitary Science and the Replanning of Large Cities.* Bossum Gift Lecture, Chadwick Public Lecture Series. At Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, 26, Portland Place, W.1. Chairman, Alfred C. Bossum, M.P. 2.30 p.m. APRIL 4

*Reconditioning England Exhibition.* At St. Martin's School of Art, 109, Charing Cross Road, W.C.2., by fourteen societies interested in the preservation of beautiful and historical buildings. The exhibition is intended to show how many of these buildings have been reconditioned so that their external appearance is not spoilt but their internal arrangements altered to suit some form of modern use. Lectures are to be given in the afternoons. APRIL 8-22

Dr. L. Reeve. *Factors Controlling the Weldability of Steel.* At Institution of Civil Engineers, Great George Street, S.W.1. (Sponsor, Institute of Welding.) 6 p.m. APRIL 12

*AA Nomination of Officers and Council for Session 1944-5.* At ordinary general meeting at 34-36, Bedford Square, W.C.1. 6 p.m. APRIL 18

Professor Sargent Florence. *Planning and Industry.* At Essex Hall, Essex Street, W.C.2. (Sponsor, TPI.) 6 p.m. APRIL 20

W. N. C. Clinch and F. Lynn. *The Design and Performance of Domestic Electric Appliances.* At the Institution of Electrical Engineers, Savoy Place, Victoria Embankment, W.C.2. 5 p.m. MAY 4

George Laws. *Chief Sanitary Inspector to the Richmond Corporation. A Hundred Years of Sanitary Progress.* At the Royal Sanitary Institute, 90, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1. Chairman, Kenneth R. Hay. 2.30 p.m. MAY 9

Dr. J. H. Paterson. *The Welding of Plastics.* At the Institution of Civil Engineers, Great George Street, Westminster, S.W.1. (Sponsor, Institute of Welding and Institute of the Plastics Industry.) 6 p.m. MAY 17

**LOWESTOFT.** *Twenty Women at Home Exhibition.* (Sponsor, HC.) MAR. 30-APRIL 1

**MIDDLESBROUGH.** *Rebuilding Britain Exhibition.* At the Public Library. (Sponsor, BIAE.) MAR. 30-31

**MOLD, FLINTSHIRE.** *Twenty Women at Home Exhibition.* (Sponsor, HC.) MAR. 30-APRIL 18

**PLYMOUTH.** *The Present Discovers the Past Exhibition.* At the Museum and Art Gallery. (Sponsor, BIAE.) MAR. 30-APRIL 11

**RISCA, MONMOUTH.** *Octavia Hill Exhibition.* (Sponsor, HC.) MAR. 30-31

**SOUTHEND.** *Rebuilding Britain Exhibition.* At the Municipal College. (Sponsor, BIAE.) MAR 30-APRIL 5

**THETFORD.** *Twenty Women at Home Exhibition.* (Sponsor, HC.) MAR. 30-31

## NEWS

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Though no feature in the JOURNAL is without value for someone, there are often good reasons why certain news calls for special emphasis. The JOURNAL's starring system is designed to give this emphasis, but without prejudice to the unstarred items which are often no less important.

★ means spare a second for this it will probably be worth it.

★★ means important news, for reasons which may or may not be obvious.

Any feature marked with more than two stars is very big building news indeed.

**ONE POUND OF PAPER IS NEEDED** to wrap each of the 10,000 parcels of books which are sent each month to our Forces at home and abroad, by the **Services Central Book Depot.**

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**Plans for a big RECONSTRUCTION OF BRISTOL** over a long period, while preserving historic buildings, will shortly come before the City Council.

There will be a new shopping centre, with circular arcades and terraced buildings, pleasure ground on the castle site, 65-acre University and hospital centre, civic centre, museum and swimming baths, city market, and an underground car park for 1,000 cars.



There was ski-ing at Earls Court in 1938. Maybe you remember the steep snow-covered gradient down which the skiers hurtled and leapt at incredible speeds. The manufactured snow was none of our business . . . but our designers and our scaffolders built the great hill of steel. Tubular steel construction affords the widest adaptability, and for temporary jobs . . . it's UP—and DOWN AGAIN—in no time.

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from AN ARCHITECTS' *Commonplace Book* SOMETHING OF NEW YORK. [*From Where Shall John Go?* by Anthony Bourne (Article in Horizon, a Review of Literature and Art, January, 1944)]. You already know something of New York. . . . It is, I think, the most urban city in the world, a complete negation of its surroundings . . . few trees, the most artificial of parks, tall austere and poker-faced like the traditional diplomat. However, I doubt if it is in itself any more essentially unfriendly or mentally stultifying than any other big city, and it is only to the pattern of its social life that I take exception. To begin with it is the most expensive place in the world to live. . . . How and where exactly to live I find it rather hard to tell you. In the more attractive sections of the town you are presented with the choice of a number of almost exactly similar boxes, the price increasing in direct proportion to the measurements. You are at liberty to assert your taste and personality by choosing to have your kitchen in the bathroom or in the living-room. You can then proceed to furnish (a process usually delegated by the prescient New Yorker to a decorator, a luxury you will be quite unable to afford) and so you are at liberty to exhaust yourself in the antique shops on Third Avenue or on Tenth Street, returning penniless with just enough furniture to live on. Meanwhile remember that unless you move promptly, on October 1 next, to another exactly similar box, you will be considered hopelessly stuck-in-the-mud, and moreover lose half your acquaintances owing to their inability to believe that you are still living in the same spot.

★  
**Architects of British Nationality are invited to SUBMIT COMPETITIVE DESIGNS FOR HOUSES in the Tarran system of construction.**

The promoter is Mr. Robert G. Tarran, of Hull, and designs for four alternative types of dwelling houses in the Tarran system of construction are asked for. Mr. T. Cecil Howitt, D.S.O., F.R.I.B.A., has been nominated by the President of RIBA as the assessor. Premiums are offered to the value of 700 guineas, viz., first, 100 guineas; second, 50 guineas; third, 20 guineas, for each type design. Last date for questions, Saturday, April 29; last date for submitting designs, Saturday, June 17. Conditions of the competition available March 27, may be obtained on application to Robert G. Tarran, Hull. Deposit £2 2s. (two guineas) returnable.

**The Council of the Society of Scottish Artists is suggesting the appointment of a CITY PLANNER FOR EDINBURGH**

The Council suggests that the planner should act in an independent capacity on behalf of the city and design the broad plan into which the Government, the Corporation and private enterprise could complete the details. Making the suggestion in a letter to the Lord Provost, the Council pays tribute to the manner in which the inquiry of the Advisory Committee on City Development has been carried out, and expresses the opinion that the solutions the Committee offer are practicable and that its report is based on plain commonsense.

**Mr. T. Warnett Kennedy of Glasgow has WON THE SCOTTISH TOWN PLANNING COMPETITION with his scheme for Peebles.**

The second prize goes to Mr. W. Coutts Youngson of Milngavie for the replanning of that town; the third prize to Mr. Robert Meldrum, Burgh Surveyor of Fraserburgh, for the replanning of Burntisland. Each competitor was allowed to choose and replan any Scottish town he wished. The competition was promoted by the Scottish National Housing and Town Planning Council. Mr.

W. Dobson Chapman, Chartered Architect, Town Planning Consultant of Macclesfield and President of the Town Planning Institute, was the adjudicator. Entries were submitted by 21 competitors including members of H.M. Forces. The prizes were awarded by the Council from the Sir William E. Whyte Prize Fund. Mr. Dobson Chapman, the adjudicator, awarded books as additional prizes to the three successful competitors.

**London builders are to SALUTE THE SOLDIER with £250,000 or, if the President of LMBA has his way, £500,000.**

In a stand and deliver letter to his colleagues in the industry, Mr. H. C. Harland, the chairman of the Building Industry Group Campaign Committee, says: It is no use telling me that you went to the limit last time. Probably you did. I want you to go beyond it this time. Nor is it any use telling me that the Government owes you money for work which you did last year or the year before, or the year before that. I know that, too, and I am urging the Government to pay up. Having cleared up these points, I return to my question. How much will you subscribe? £5? £50? £5,000? £50,000? Think it over. Quarter of a million did I say? Let's make it half a million when we're at it.

**Two of the Associations of ROOFING CONTRACTORS HAVE AMALGAMATED under the name National Federation of Roofing Contractors.**

The Federation has been formed by the amalgamation of the National Federation of Slate Merchants, Slaters and Tilers, and the London Association of Master Slaters and Tilers. The time chosen for the union is a fitting one, for each celebrated its Golden Jubilee in the closing weeks of 1943. Committees for Finance, Materials, Apprenticeship and Industrial Relations, and Publicity and Development have been appointed. The president is Mr. F. E. Ashford; the vice-president, Mr. C. G. Dobson; the honorary treasurer, Mr. A. Jarratt; and the past-president, Mr. E. Greenwood. The address of the London Regional Office of the National Federation of Roofing Contractors is High Holborn House, 52/54, High Holborn, W.C.1.

**In recommending the erection of 1,238 dwellings on a 60-acre site Battersea Housing Committee has taken into consideration the undoubted preference for HOUSES OR MAISONNETTES rather than block dwellings.**

The committee suggests that 148 homes in two-storey blocks, 776 in four-storey blocks, 308 terraced houses, and six flats over terraced houses, should be built on the site. The pre-war population of the proposed area was about 8,500, and it is estimated that the re-development would accommodate about 6,000 people.

★  
**Housing experts are afraid THE GOVERNMENT HAS CHANGED ITS MIND and abandoned tests planned for the speedy and cheap production of good quality houses by new methods and with new materials.**

Housing experts, says a special correspondent of the *Daily Mirror* in making the above statement, feel that only heavy pressure from powerful building trade interests can be responsible for the change and for the astonishing secrecy surrounding demonstration houses under construction at Northolt, Middlesex. Continuing, the special correspondent of the *Daily Mirror* says: Lord Portal, Minister of Works, announced in February that two of the demonstration houses there would be built of foam-slag, a new building material widely used in America and Germany, and said to be better than concrete or brick for housing. Raw material comes from blast furnace waste. Foam-slag houses were later officially stated to be under construction, but only one, in fact, is being built. And the original idea of foam-cast flooring has been changed in favour of timber. This change of plan has led people to ask if the reason is that brick, concrete and timber interests have been successfully at work. Several sections of the building industry are known to fear that foam-slag houses would cause them to lose post-war production. Certain skilled workers, too, feel that because such houses can be built almost entirely by unskilled labour, they might find themselves unemployed.





## Backyard in Stockholm

This issue of the JOURNAL is largely devoted to English rural cottages. By way of contrast, here is a view of foreign urban flats. The overwhelming preference in this country for houses is no doubt partly due to a preconceived idea that

flats must inevitably be inhuman and barrack-like. In fact, flats can provide a delightful environment, as this picture taken in the Gärdet residential district of Stockholm so effectively illustrates. Photograph is by E. Kidder Smith.

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*Up to half a million temporary emergency houses are to be built immediately after the war each with £80 worth of fitted furniture, said MR. CHURCHILL IN HIS BBC TALK last Sunday evening.*

A million homes, he said, have been destroyed or grievously damaged by the fire of the enemy. This offers a magnificent opportunity for rebuilding and replanning, and while we are at it we had better make a clean sweep of all those areas of which our civilization should be ashamed. However, I have given my word that, so far as it might lie in my power, the soldiers when they return from the war, and those who have been bombed out and made to double up with other families, shall be restored to homes of their own at the earliest possible moment. The first attack must evidently be made on houses which are damaged but which can be reconstructed into proper dwellings. This must go forward during the war, and we hope to have broken the back of it during this year. The second attack on the housing problem will be made by what are called the prefabricated or emergency houses. On this the Minister of Works, Lord Portal, is working wonders. I hope we may make up to half a million of these, and for this purpose not only plans, but actual preparations are being made during the war on a nation-wide scale. Factories are being assigned, the necessary set-up is being made ready, materials are being earmarked as far as possible. What about these emergency houses? I have seen the full-size model myself, and steps are being taken to make sure that a great many housewives have a chance of expressing their views about it. These houses will make a heavy demand upon the steel industry and will absorb in a great measure its overflow and expansion for war purposes. They are in my opinion far superior to the ordinary cottage as it exists to-day. Not only have they excellent baths, gas or electric kitchenettes and refrigerators; but their walls carry fitted furniture—chests of drawers, hanging cupboards and tables—which to-day it would cost £80 to buy. Moreover, for the rest of the furniture standard articles will be provided and mass-produced so that no heavy capital charge will fall upon the young couples, or others who may become tenants. In addition to this and to the reconditioning of the damaged dwellings, we have the programme of permanent rebuilding which the Minister of Health has recently outlined and by which we shall have 200,000 or 300,000 permanent houses built or building by the end of the first two years after the defeat of Germany. For these, 200,000 sites are already owned by the local authorities. Then we are told by the busy wisacres: "How can you build houses without the land to put them on? When are you going to tell us your plans for this?" But we have already declared in 1941, that all land needed for public purposes shall be taken at prices based on the standards of values of March 31, 1939. Nobody need be deterred from planning for the future by the fear that they may not be able to obtain the necessary land. Legislation to enable local authorities to secure any land required for the reconstruction of our towns has been promised, and will be presented to Parliament this session. There are some comfortable people, of course, who want to put off everything until they have planned, and got agreed in every feature, a White-paper or a blueprint for the regeneration of the world, before, of course, asking the electors how they feel about it. These people would rather postpone building the homes for the returning troops until they had planned out every acre in the country to make sure the landscape is not spoiled. In time of war we have to face immediate needs and stern realities, and it surely is better to do that than to do nothing while preparing to do everything.

## A B O N N Y R E P O R T

THE Scottish Housing Advisory (Westwood) Committee issued its report\* last week and has thereby stolen a march on the Interdepartmental (Burt) Committee on House Construction whose report is due out to-morrow.

The Scottish Housing Advisory Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. Joseph Westwood, M.P., the Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Scotland, was set up in August 1942 by Mr. Thomas Johnston, Secretary of State for Scotland, and its terms of reference were (i) "to make recommendations as to the design, interior planning, layout, and standard of construction of new houses in Scotland," and (ii) "to consider how best local authorities can exercise their powers under the Housing (Scotland) Acts to provide furnishings, fittings, and conveniences in houses provided by them, and to advise on what additional powers, if any, should be available to local authorities for this purpose."

The report begins by outlining the scope of the Scottish post-war housing problem and then recommends a three stage programme to tackle it.

The first stage is the provision of temporary, prefabricated and preferably demountable dwellings, as well as the full use of converted war buildings and the erection of single family houses temporarily sub-divided into two family flats—the so-called Duplex houses.† The second stage, to proceed simultaneously with the first, is the building of permanent houses to "short-term standards" similar in overall areas to the pre-war houses erected by Scottish local authorities but with improved equipment. The third stage, to be instigated as soon as costs are stabilised and labour and materials more plentiful, will provide permanent houses to improved "long-term standards" of accommodation and equipment.

A chapter of the report deals with services, fittings and standards of equipment—in particular with prefabricated plumbing units, with air convection and district heating, and with refuse disposal. Built-in kitchen equipment is considered and precisely specified, the point being made that with mass-production and standardization all the fittings advocated could be provided for 4d. a week rental at pre-war price levels. In the lay-out of houses, the Committee stresses the need for building neighbourhood units with all essential community services, and for the grouping of houses as opposed to ribbon development. It also suggests that all building authorities should be required to employ an architect. Detailed matters of amenity, too, are advocated such as the preservation and planting of trees, and the development of a high standard of design of street furniture.

The second part of the report deals with the provision of furniture in houses built by local authorities. It is recommended that local authorities should supply essential furniture

\*Planning Our New Homes: Report by the Scottish Housing Advisory Committee on the Design, Planning and Furnishing of New Homes. (Published by the Department of Health for Scotland, H.M.S.O., 3s. 0d.)

†See page 340.



to those tenants who badly need it, and also that the Utility Furniture scheme should be extended.

That briefly is the outline of the report, a document which should be useful not only in Scotland but throughout the British Isles. Apart from this, however, it sets a new pace for Government publications of this kind. It is not the usual formidable and uninspiring official White or Blue Paper but is presented in a stimulating and lively way which should encourage public interest. The topography is pleasant and legible, and there are ample illustrations.

The report may contain no revolutionary ideas, and future generations will probably regard the standards recommended as absurdly low compared with those that should now be technically and physically possible, at least within a few years of the immediate post-war difficulties. Nevertheless here is a conscientious and sincere attempt to set forth certain recommendations which if carried into effect would vastly improve the present appalling housing conditions in Scotland. Moreover the report expresses both in its recommendation and format the new human approach in which homes are considered not as cheap stables to accommodate cheap labour but as family centres where life can be enjoyed to the full.



*The Architects' Journal*  
War Address: 45, The Avenue, Cheam, Surrey  
Telephone: Vigilant 0087-9

## N O T E S & T O P I C S

### THE UNSEEN HAND

Those who want to discover conveniently and quickly what the position is on the housing front, and what are the general reactions to it, cannot do better than turn to *Hansard* for Wednesday, March 15, columns 263 to 361 wherein is recorded Mr. Willink's first speech in the Commons as Minister of Health which followed his statement on housing of the previous week, and also the debate which came after.

★

The Government's housing policy was not well received and Mr. Willink was attacked chiefly for

lack of clarity on matters which were strictly speaking not within his province. Mr. Greenwood, however, was charitable. "My heart goes out in sympathy to my right hon. and learned friend. He struck me as a brave man struggling with adversity," said he. "We all agree that we want 300,000 houses, but where are they to be put? . . . We cannot handle even the two-year programme on a basis of emergency measures. Until the Government make up their mind about Uthwatt, about Scott and about Barlow, we are simply beating the air in these discussions." Thus he summarized not only the attitude of this JOURNAL but, it seems, of most of the Members of Parliament of all political shades, including the Tories, who have just issued an interim housing report\* urging the creation of a central planning authority and the settling of industrial location without which, it says, the housing programme cannot be properly carried out.

★

Even Mr. Willink's announcement that Mr. W. S. Morrison is now drafting proposals for the public acquisition of land, which he promised would form the basis for a

\* *Looking Ahead: Foundation for Housing; Interim Report of the Conservative Sub-Committee on Housing.* (Conservative Party, 24, Old Queen Street, S.W.1; 3d.).

statement by the Government at the introduction of the promised housing bill after Easter, did not appear to satisfy the House. Possibly it is in unanimous agreement with the Tory housing report which comments: "More than four years have elapsed since the Barlow Report without the central authority being set up. We fundamentally disagree that the appointment of a Minister of Town and Country Planning is a fulfilment of various recommendations to establish a central authority."

★

"This discussion to-day ought to have been a discussion on the principles of the major policy to be adopted," continued Mr. Greenwood during the housing debate. "I hope that the House will express itself emphatically . . . on the importance of the Government making up its mind . . . it is obvious that there are rifts in the lute." Later in the debate Mrs. Tate commented harshly, "The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wakefield (Mr. A. Greenwood) said he thought there was a rift in the lute. I do not know whether he was referring to the Minister of Town and Country Planning as a lute. If he was, it was a most unfortunate comparison, because the Minister of Town and Country Planning never produces a tune. I very much doubt whether he ever will. . . ." Two members, however, sympathised with Mr. W. S. Morrison. Said Mr. Molson, "I regard the Minister of Town and Country Planning as being a good man facing obstructive and obscurantist colleagues." And Mr. MacLaren, "If there is one man that I would like to see making a success of a job, it is the present Minister of Town and Country Planning, but, like other Ministers, he is being hedged around by some unseen hand."

★

Following this rather sinister and equivocal remark, Mr. MacLaren proceeded, incidentally, to make a quite unwarranted attack on architects for finding jobs in St. James's Square and for having the presumption to prepare schemes for physical reconstruction. Planning and housing problems, he claimed, are not primarily the concern of architects

or even of civil engineers, but of economists. (Mr. MacLaren, I understand, is an economist). This, surely, is a half-truth, for though the economist certainly has an important place in planning and housing, so also has the architect, the engineer, the sociologist, the landscape gardener, the lawyer and many others.

★

The whole question which this debate poses is, who or what is holding up planning. Whose is this mysterious Unseen Hand? No Member of Parliament seems to know. Not even Mr. MacLaren had the temerity to tell us, though he did infer the answer when he stressed the importance of economics. Mr. Morrison himself, I believe, supplied the answer shortly after he was appointed to MOTCP. His phrase was rather less dramatic and more euphemistic than Mr. MacLaren's. It was—"fiscal questions."

#### RURAL COTTAGES

The recent arguments about rural cottages and what the agricultural worker really wants in his home, which have been appearing in the correspondence columns of the JOURNAL, should now be resolved by

Mr. Percy Powell's winning design for the Northants competition. "Too many competitors have failed to realize how a rural worker lives," said Mr. Darcy Braddell, when assessing the competition drawings. "It is because Mr. Powell has grasped all these things (what the rural worker wants) so clearly and has provided a house which answers them all so well, that he has won this competition."

★

His plan certainly is very sensibly and competently worked out, and it is on the strength of this rather than on his elevations that he has won the competition. The external appearance I find rather dull with its Boer-War-period-in-Berkshire stamp. Truly, as Mr. Braddell pointed out, the average rural worker would not welcome an almost all-glass south wall, but that it is possible to obtain a contemporary character in a country cottage without that, and one that is still in keeping with old bucolic surroundings is demonstrated in the charming design and equally charming sketch\* by T. Mellor, one of the runners up.

ASTRAGAL

\* See pages 241 and 246.



## LETTERS

R. G. Harvey Greenham (Secretary, E.J.M.A.)

M.S.F.

Bernard Gold, A.R.I.B.A.

### Standardization

SIR,—In the leading article on Standardization and Trade Associations in your issue for March 2 you ask what part is being played in development of standardization by these Associations.

You also refer to the fact that one outstanding example of successful standardization is the metal window industry, which we readily admit.

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that this Association, through its Development Committee, representative of the leading manufacturers throughout the country and with expert architectural assistance, has been actively engaged for the past three years in standardizing wooden joinery. It has worked in the closest touch with the Directorate of Post-war Building, and their Standards Committee has already approved the designs and drawings of the Association for Wood Case-ment Windows, and has instructed the British Standards Institution to adopt them as a British Standard.

The result of this standardization is that the range of windows has been reduced to six types giving 56 varieties. This Association is, of course, not only interested in wooden windows, but in all articles of wooden joinery, and is equally engaged with the British Door Association in standardizing panelled wood doors for post-war use, a reduced number of types having also been submitted to the Standards Committee of the Ministry of Works, and having been approved by them with a view to becoming a British Standard.

Apart from prefabrication of wood sections for houses, etc., we are now dealing specially with the prefabrication of internal units with the standardization of such items as built-in kitchen fixtures and wooden staircases.

I am drawing these facts to your attention so that you may note, in reference to the statements made towards the end of your article, that this Association, which has the full support of its members and is thoroughly representative of the joinery manufacturing trade throughout the country, is playing its full part in developing and standardizing for post-war use the products of its members.

R. G. HARVEY GREENHAM,  
Secretary, English Joinery Manu-  
facturers' Association.

London.



The Duchess of Gloucester with Earl Spencer opening the Exhibition of the Northamptonshire Rural Cottage Competition Designs at Northampton Art Gallery last week.

# DUPLIX HOUSE

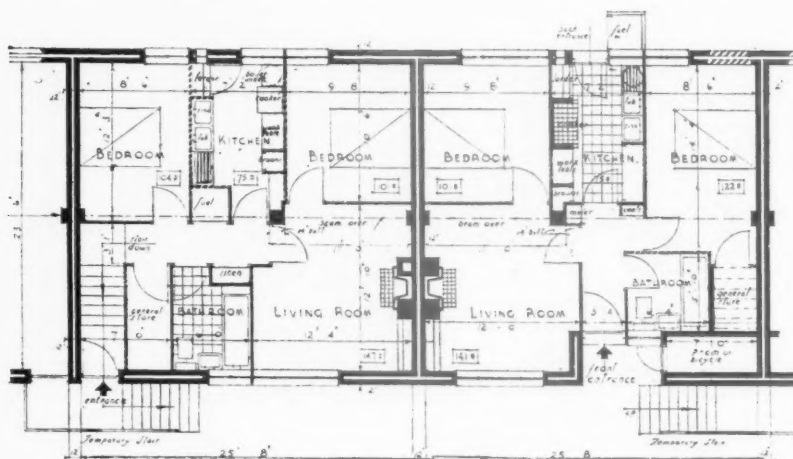
## Rural Houses



ENTRANCE ELEVATION



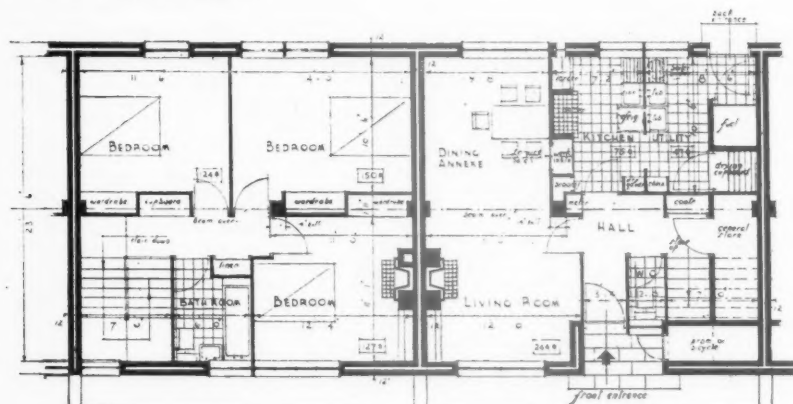
ENTRANCE ELEVATION



UPPER FLOOR PLAN

GROUND FLOOR PLAN

STAGE 1, 4-3 ROOM DWELLINGS.



UPPER FLOOR PLAN

GROUND FLOOR PLAN

STAGE 2, 2-4 ROOM DWELLINGS.

This Duplex House is reproduced from *Planning Our New Homes*, the Scottish Housing Advisory Committee's report which was published last Friday, and which is reviewed in this week's leading article. The Duplex House is a permanent type which the Committee suggests should be erected during the first of its three housing stages, so designed that in the immediate post-war period they can accommodate two families and can subsequently be converted into single family houses which are of a higher standard of planning and convenience. The process of conversion would merely involve minor alterations and the removal and reinstatement in new positions of certain fittings. The hatched parts of the top plan indicate temporary partitions.

SIR,—For the last four years I have been living in a small country cottage with my young family and without domestic help, so that I have been especially interested in your correspondence on Rural Houses.

From experience, I am in entire agreement with J.M.H. on the subject of bathroom and w.c.'s, but I wonder why he "knows positively" that the kitchen-living-room is inevitable, particularly where there are children.

I have a pleasant living-room with a small utility room adjoining. On most winter mornings two or three children under five years of age play in safety and comfort in the living-room. The fire is guarded and there is no other source of danger. Meanwhile I am able to wash, iron, cook and clean in the adjoining room, where I can hear the sound of their play and know they are safe, or peep at them through a glass panel in the communicating door. The living room fire gives constant hot water and heats the oven and hot plate in the utility room, while the children are safe from the perils of boiling liquids, hot ovens, cooking knives and the discomforts of steam.

On sunny days when they play in the garden I can supervise them from the windows of the utility room or living room, which overlook the garden.

The back door opens into the utility room, so that all muddy boots and clothes may be discarded there and the first layer of mud removed at the kitchen sink.

Many of my friends, the wives of agricultural workers who have to live and work, dry and air clothes, etc., in a kitchen-living-room envy me the comfort, cleanliness and convenience of my 300-years-old cottage.

Princes Risborough.

M.S.F.

## Designation of Architects

SIR,—I note with interest the resolution approved by the RIBA and published in your issue for January 27, formulating a new designation for the employed, but qualified architect.\*. It is good to know that the dignity of the Registered Architect is considered at all, though the only people whose prestige this resolution helps to protect is but a limited few.

No architect of high office, to my way of thinking, is comforted by the thought of similarly qualified men being termed as *Draftsmen* or mere *Assistants*. That is Prestige, but it is also far from prestige to employ an Assistant Architect at a very low salary, and I can see many young architects searching for work when this war is over.

Fortunately, in pre-war days, this was not considered an act of prestige, and to-day one has only to look in some of the technical branches of the Army and Civil Service to see what poor consideration is being paid to Assistant Architects, in fact the word Architect might easily be omitted in these cases. Unfortunately this does not reflect on the limited few.

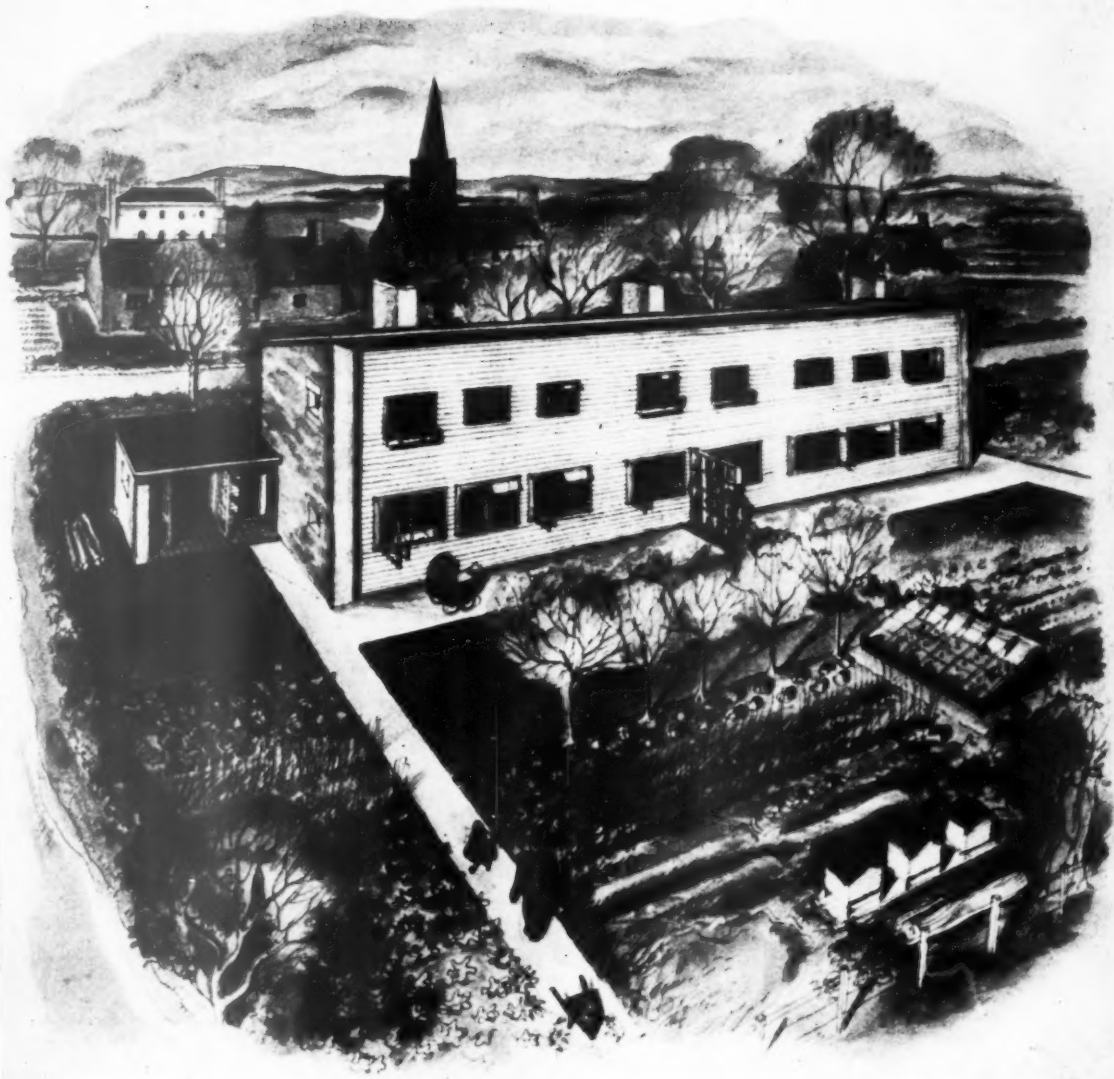
I suggest we extend our resolutions.

BERNARD GOLD.

West Croydon

\* On the recommendation of the Official Architects' Committee the Council of the RIBA approved the following resolution passed by the South Wales Institute of Architects on the subject of the Designation of Architects on the Statutory Register: "That in view of the principles and implications of the Architects (Registration) Act 1931, the synonymous use of the terms Architectural Draughtsman and Architectural Assistant is to be deprecated as detrimental to the status of the profession, and it is, therefore, advocated that all those whose names have been recorded in the Statutory Register of Architects shall be officially designated Architects or Assistant Architects whenever engaged upon work of a building nature, whether or not in departments or offices controlled by a member of this or any other profession." Copies of this resolution have been sent to all Allied Societies in the United Kingdom and also to the County Architects' Society. Members of the RIBA who are city and borough architects have been requested to bring the terms of the resolution to the notice of local authorities with whom they are serving.





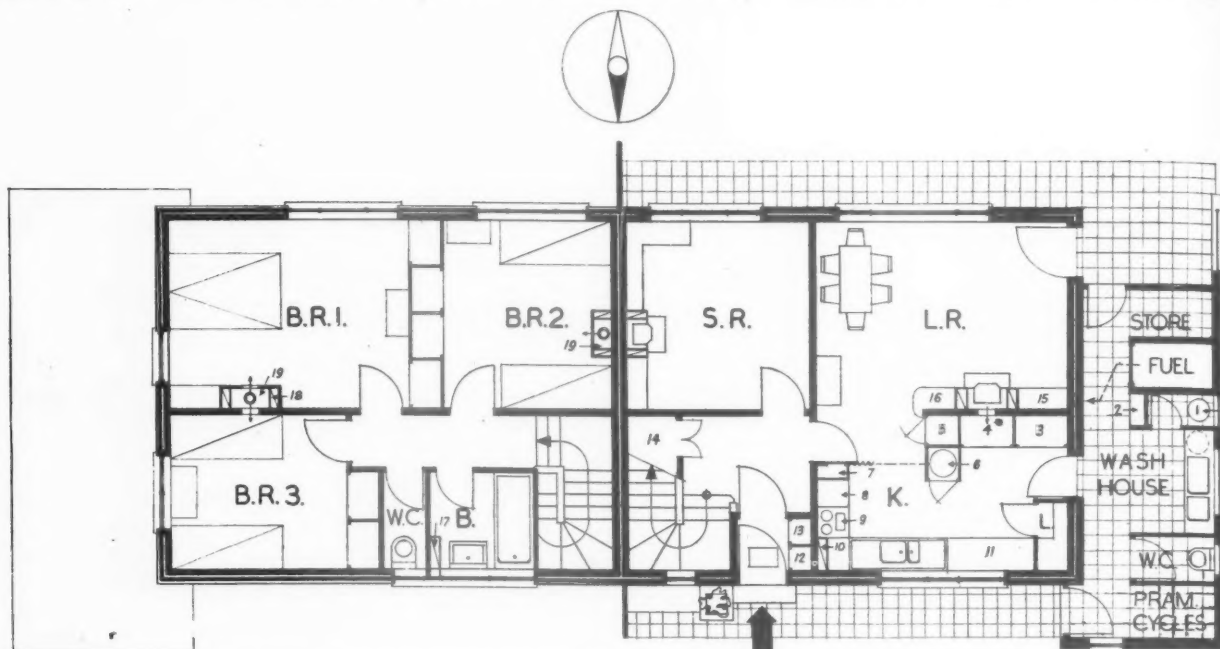
# COTTAGES

## FOR RURAL WORKERS

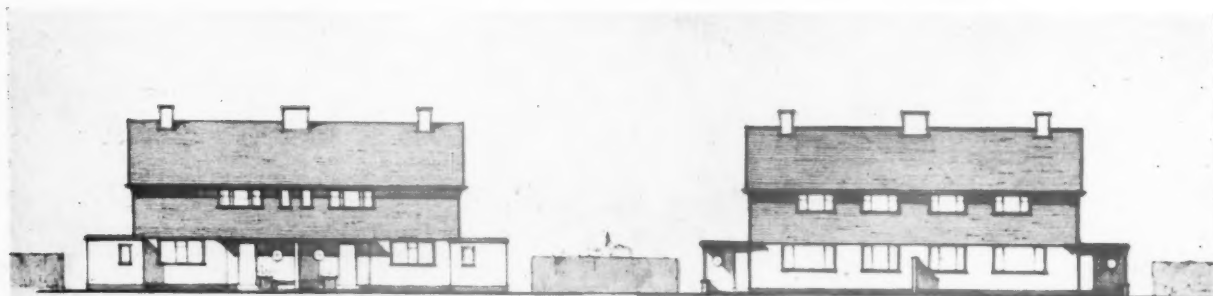
### NORTHANTS COMPETITION DESIGNS

Mr. Darcy Braddell, the assessor, has made the following awards in the Competition, promoted by the Northamptonshire Federation of Women's Institutes, for designs for a pair of cottages for rural workers. The number of the design is given in parentheses: First Prize, 75 guineas (96) Percy M. Powell, L.R.I.B.A., Sanderstead, Surrey. Second Prize, 50 Guineas (462) T. H. Tufft, L.R.I.B.A., and G. M. Boon, A.R.I.B.A., Stafford. Third Prize, 30 guineas (415) T. F. Winterburn, A.R.I.B.A., and T. L. Viney, A.R.I.B.A., Epsom, Surrey. Commended: (274) T. Wynne Thomas, A.R.I.B.A., and Alan R. Young, A.R.I.B.A., Birmingham; (293) F. W. Holder, B.A., A.R.I.B.A., London; (117) George Ford, A.R.I.B.A., and John Heald, A.R.I.B.A., Claygate, Surrey; (411) T. P. LeBriero, Leicester; (365) Charles Read, Chorley Wood, Herts; (487D) Thomas Hargreaves, Preston; (52) Bevil Greenfield and Kurt Linden, London; (225) Alexander E. Aikman, A.R.I.B.A., A.M.T.P.I., London; (486) L. Whitaker, A.R.I.B.A., Dip.Arch.Leeds, Leeds; (487A) Tom Mellor, Preston; (257) G. M. Boon, A.R.I.B.A., and T. H. Tufft, L.R.I.B.A., Stafford; (489) John P. Tingay, A.R.I.B.A., Eastcote, Middlesex. Above is a perspective, probably the best submitted in the competition, of the commended design of Mr. Tom Mellor, which is further illustrated on page 246.

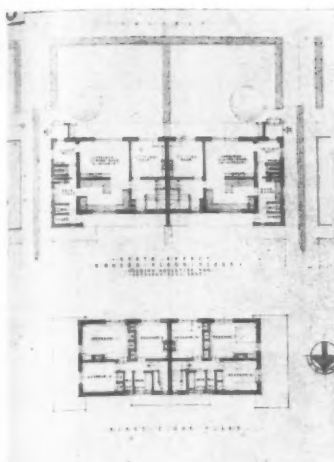
# FIRST PRIZE (DESIGN No. 96) PERCY M. POWELL



Above, the author's half-inch scale plans of the ground and first floors specially redrawn for publication by THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL. 1, Dustbin ; 2, wood ; 3, cupboard for working clothes ; 4, drying cupboard ; 5, china and cutlery ; 6, hot-water cylinder, linen and airing cupboard ; 7, brooms ; 8, serving table ; 9, cooker ; 10, vent duct ; 11, work table, 12, plumbing duct ; 13, meters ; 14, cloaks ; 15, fuel cupboard ; 16, wireless ; 17, plumbing duct ; 18, cold air duct ; 19, Henry Martin warmed-air duct and flue. The author's eighth scale drawings of the same plan adapted to a south aspect are reproduced on the facing page.

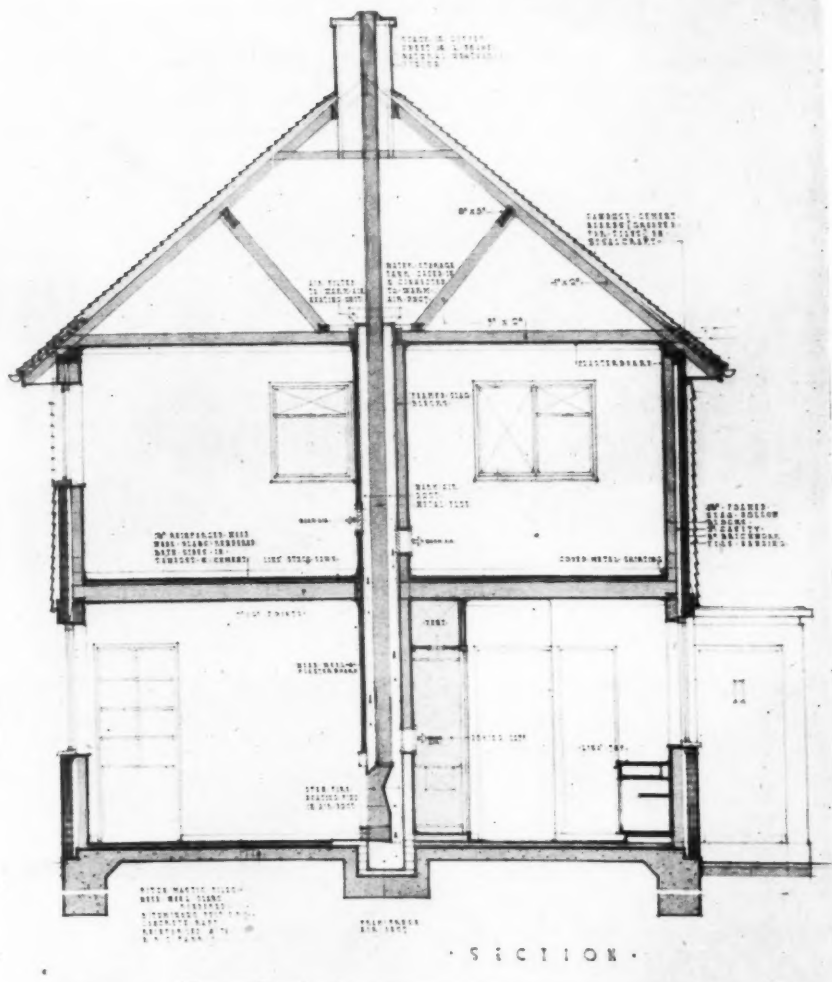






More than 500 designs were submitted in the competition, a total of over a thousand drawings. Plans and cross sections were called for to half-inch scale, and it was on these drawings far more than on the presentation of the eighth scale elevations that the competition was judged.

Concerning the designs submitted, Mr. Darcy Braddell says: Much of the work put into the drawings has been thrown away, for too many competitors have failed to realize how a rural worker lives, the severe limitations imposed by the amount of his income and, by no means least, the climate he works in. The conservation of fuel, for example, is a matter of very great importance to him, yet it will be found that in many designs he is to be asked to use one appliance to cook with, another to heat his domestic water and a third his living quarters. Again it will be found that a common plan is to provide a living-room-kitchen which is only equipped with a range, and the rest of the work is to be done in an adjacent scullery. The preparation, cooking and washing-up of a meal are not three processes involving the use of separate equipment for each. The use of the sink, for example, is required not only for washing-up but during the actual cooking of the meal. This means that the nearer the sink is to the range the better. If the range, therefore, is placed in the living-room-kitchen and the sink in the scullery, it will involve constant crossing and re-crossing of the room for the unfortunate mother. On the other hand, if, to get over this difficulty, a gas cooker is put in the scullery, then the whole family will almost certainly sit down to meals there to save trouble; and the living-room-kitchen then becomes what is virtually a second parlour with



the family not availing itself to the full of the largest room in the house.

Many competitors have used their sculleries to contain their clothes-washing equipment. This means that on washing days the scullery is full of steam and very congested. Others have used a separate wash-house but put their bathroom in it. To get to the bathroom from a bedroom in many designs means passing through the hall, crossing the living-room and then the scullery, to find yourself in a draughty back lobby before eventually reaching the bathroom in the washhouse. There is no inherent objection to a ground floor bathroom provided the access to it from the upstairs bedrooms is reasonably private and draught-proof. This difficulty has been notably well overcome in one of the commended drawings.

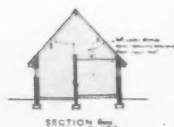
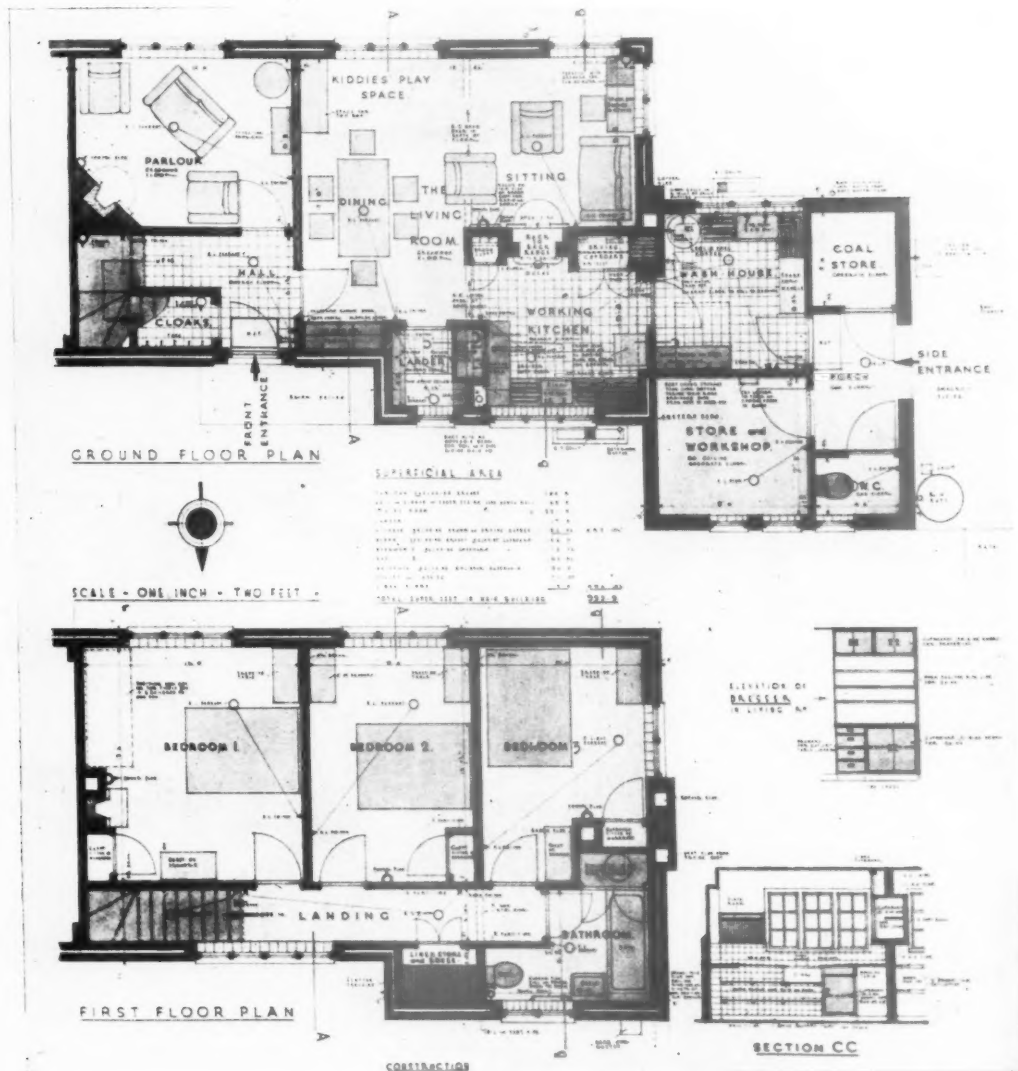
Another instance of an unrealistic outlook is the assumption that the average rural worker will welcome an almost all-glass south wall. It seems to be forgotten that he

spends his whole day out of doors at work in the fields and that a great many of those days are unpleasantly cold and wet ones, and so he has but little desire to live like a fish in a glass tank. When he returns to his home he wants, first, somewhere to put his bicycle away, then a w.c. to use if he wants it, after that somewhere to shed his rain-soaked clothes and remove his dirty boots and generally clean himself up without disturbing his wife at work before entering his house proper. He would like to find this snug and warm, with a fire burning to welcome him and one which he knows is also doing at least one other job, possibly two, thereby filling him with the comforting feeling that he can afford it. He will not much mind if there is a sink in his view, but he will naturally prefer it if there is not. What he will mind is if the sitting space round the fire is in a draught or in any other way uncomfortable.

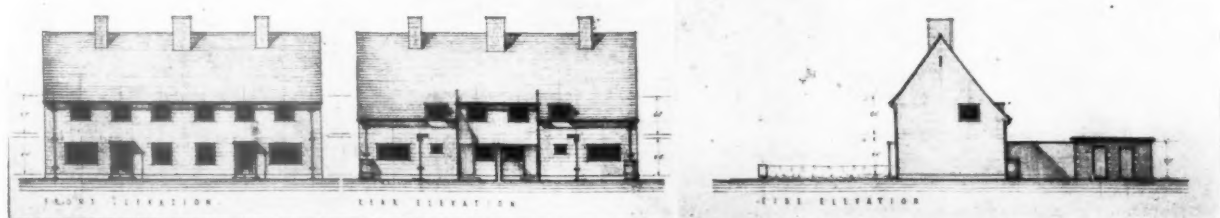
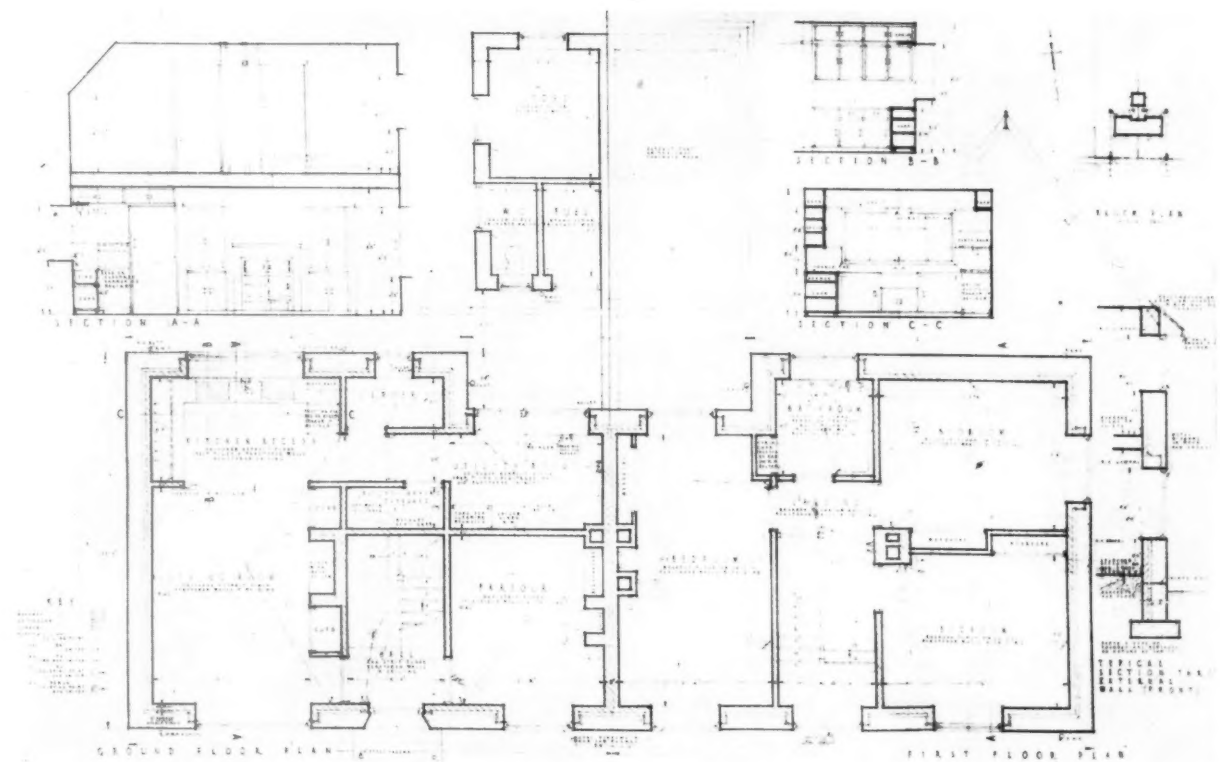
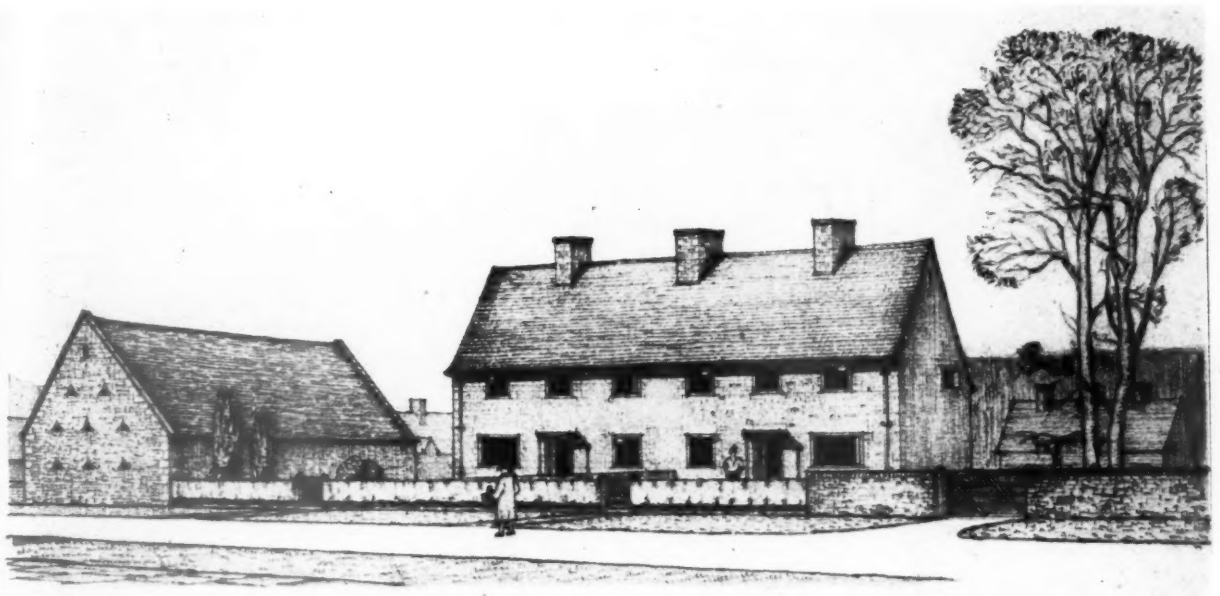
It is because Mr. Powell has grasped all these things so clearly

SECOND PRIZE (462) T. H. TUFFT & G. M. BOON

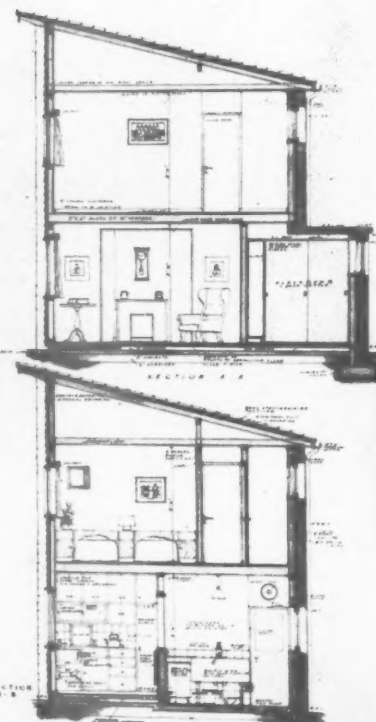
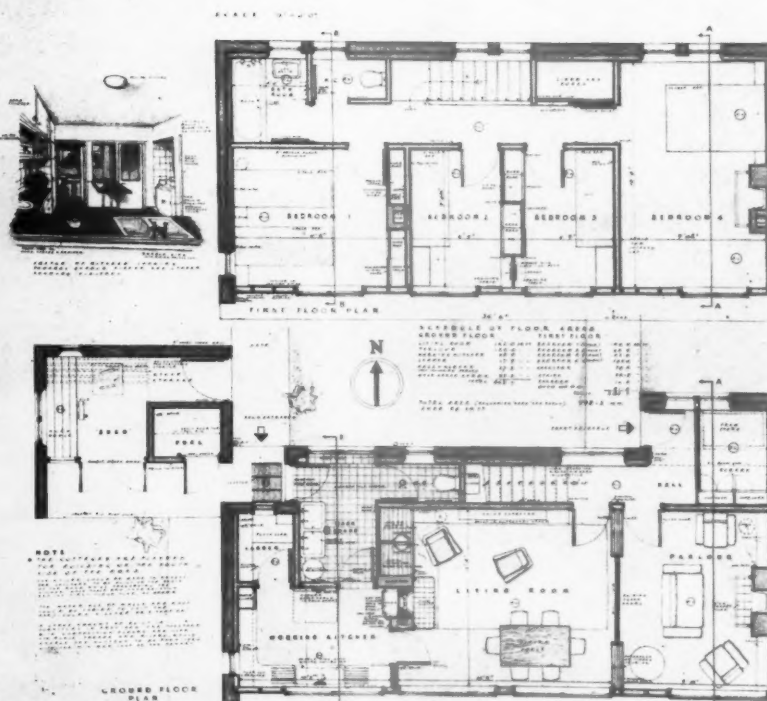
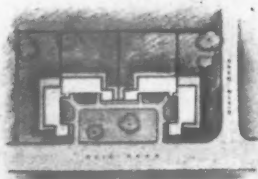
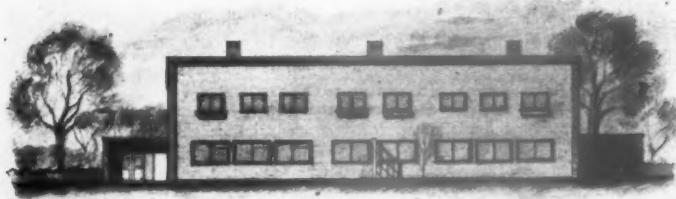
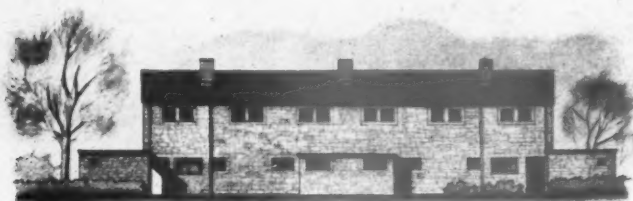
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THIRD PRIZE (415) T. F. WINTERBURN & T. L. VINEY

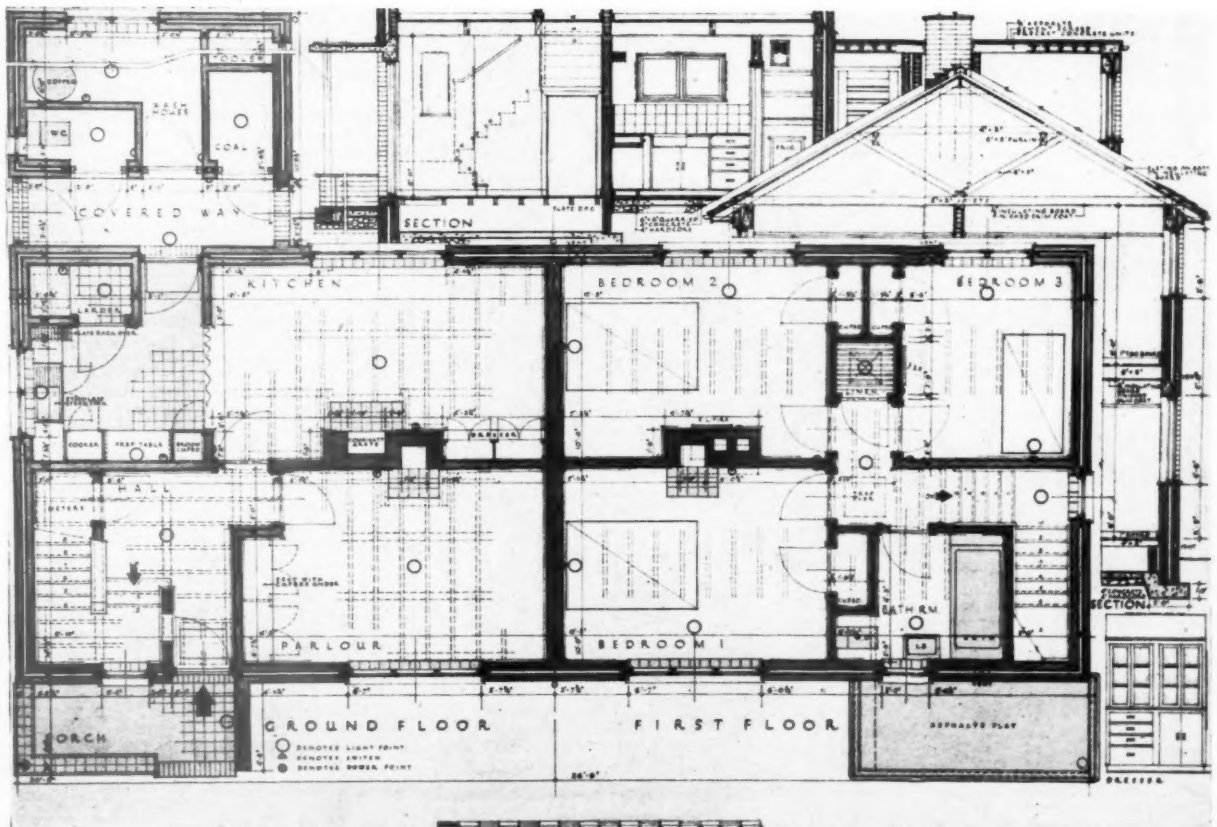
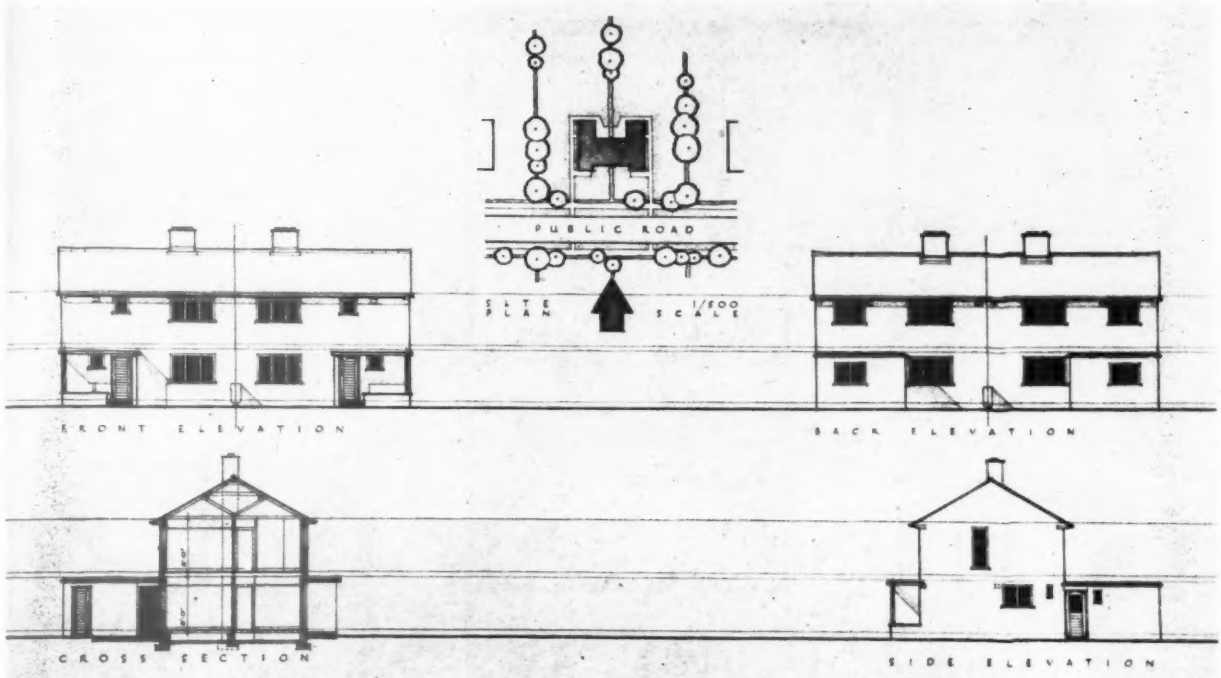


COMMENDED DESIGN (487A) TOM MELLOR



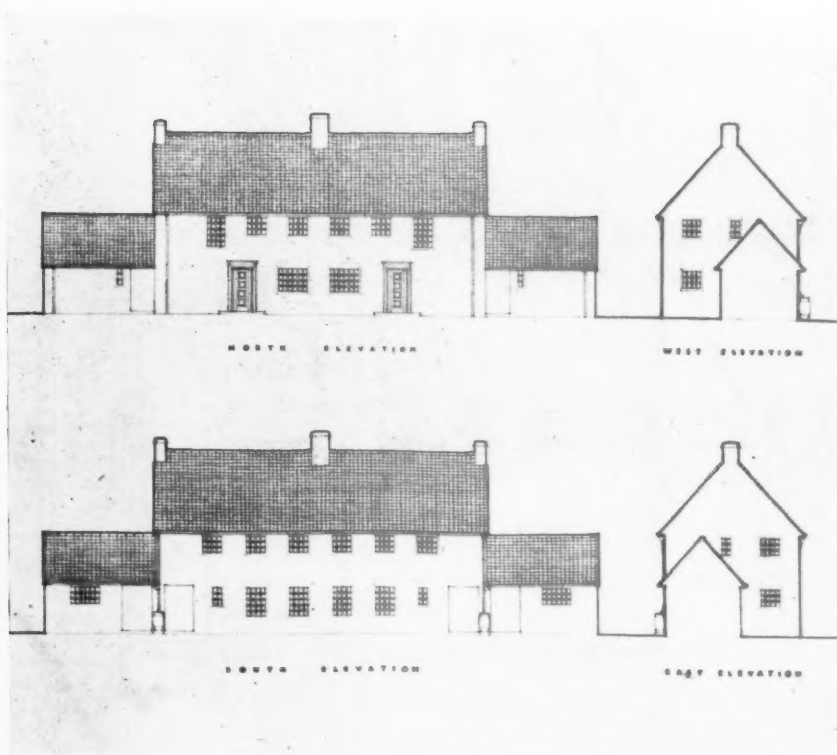
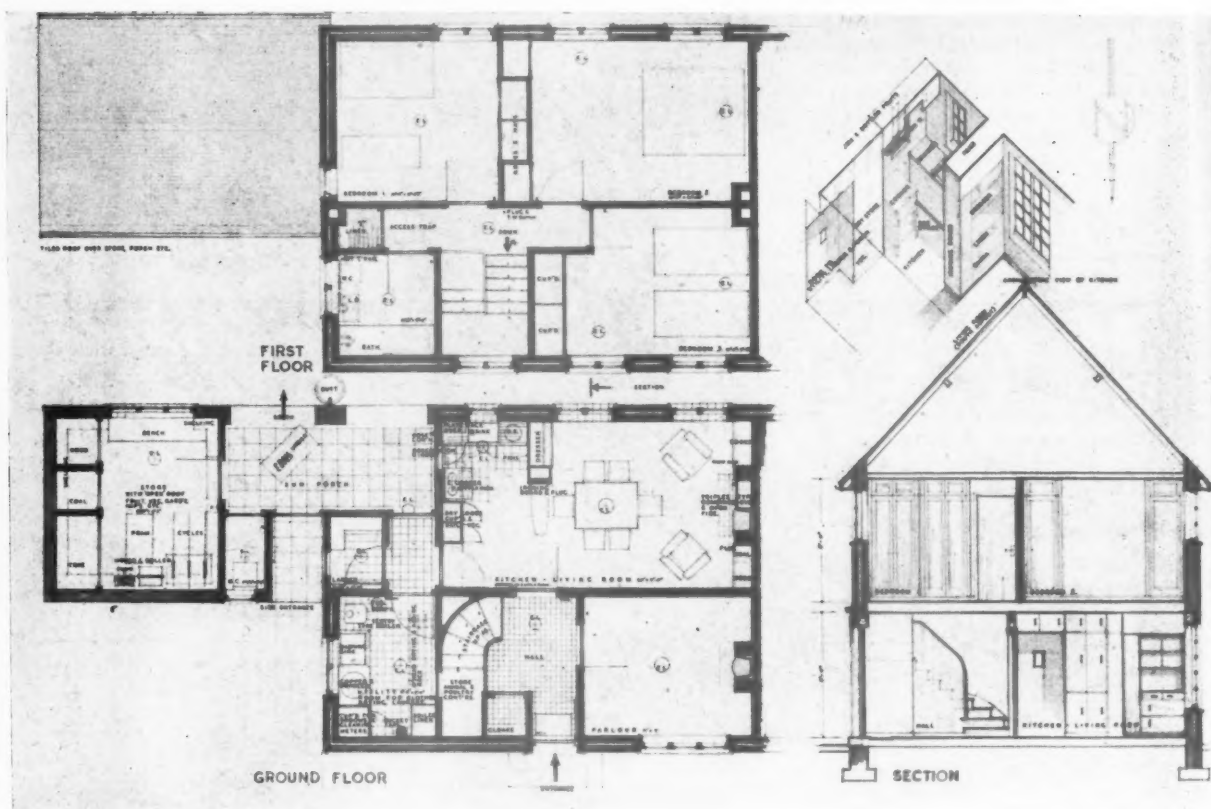


COMMENDED DESIGN (293) F. W. HOLDER





## COMMENDED (117) GEORGE FORD &amp; JOHN HEALD



remembered that large furniture at some time has to be manipulated up these stairs and occasionally coffins down them. If the straight run of stair is adopted for use on the score of economy in space then the width between walls must be a really generous one. Otherwise real discomfort and a certain amount of danger are accompanied by an air of shoddy poverty. This last is instantly conveyed, particularly if the foot of the staircase is the first thing that meets the eye on entering the front door.

Other examples of lack of realistic outlook were provided by competitors who sent in designs almost regardless of their cost.



# INFORMATION CENTRE

The function of this feature is to supply an index and a digest of all current developments in planning and building technique throughout the world as recorded in technical publications and statements of every kind whether official, private or commercial. Items are written by specialists of the highest authority who are not on the permanent staff of the Journal and views expressed are disinterested and objective. The Editors welcome information on all developments from any source, including manufacturers and contractors.

## MATERIALS

1429

### Dry Rot

**DRY ROT IN DAMAGED HOUSES.** BUILDING RESEARCH WARTIME BUILDING BULLETIN No. 21. (Issued by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, pp. 7-14; Memorandum on, issued by MOH; MOH Memorandum reprinted in *The Builder*, January 14, 1944, p. 43; Article on, by W. P. K. Findlay, *The Builder*, October 8, 1943, pp. 287-288; Article on, by Archilex, *The Architect and Building News*, October 15, 1943, p. 40). Increase in extent of dry rot. Nature of dry rot. Remedial and preventive measures. Problems of war damage and liability for spreading.

Severely decayed wood in many houses which were damaged during the blitz and left unattended for a while provide an interesting material for the study of dry rot in wood and of such remedial measures as can be carried out under present-day conditions.

Even in peacetime the damage caused by dry rot was an extensive one; the annual cost of repair was estimated at about £1,000,000. Since the blitz the amount of dry rot in domestic buildings has greatly increased, and the call for repairs comes at a time when economy in labour and materials is necessary. Architects dealing with bombed houses will chiefly be concerned with the questions (1) how to prevent the occurrence of dry rot, and (2) in case dry rot has occurred, how to prevent its spreading to adjoining houses.

It is well known that dry rot is caused by fungi which flourish only under damp, ill-ventilated conditions. Once the fungus has become established on damp woodwork it produces root-like strands which conduct moisture and enable the fungus to spread and attack the dry parts of a building. These strands are capable of penetrating mortar and can readily pass through partition walls. The fungus eventually forms fruit bodies giving off immense numbers of spores, which are easily blown about and spread the fungus further and further. In this way an outbreak of dry rot in one house is a source of infection for all other houses in its neighbourhood.

It is of the utmost importance that outbreaks of dry rot should be dealt with as promptly as possible in order to check the spread of the rot, and, since prevention is better than cure, it is equally desirable to take all necessary steps to prevent the outbreak of dry rot once signs of dampness appear in a building. The Memorandum, issued by the MOH, and the Building Research Wartime Building Bulletin No. 21, give all the necessary information regarding the nature of dry rot, and very detailed instructions regarding the treatments and repairs that can be recommended in damaged houses (1) where the building is damp, but no signs of dry rot are present; (2) where dry rot has been found or is suspected. More comprehensive information

on the subject generally can be obtained from the Forest Products Research Laboratory, Princes Risborough, Aylesbury, Bucks.

The article in *The Builder* gives brief descriptions of five cases of dry rot in buildings damaged in the blitz and the curative measures that have been recommended. The most important thing in all cases is to get rid of the moisture which has enabled the fungus to get a hold on the woodwork and this can best be done by improving the ventilation by all possible means. It has been found of great advantage to defer, where possible, repairs and reconstruction for some months after the preliminary work of removing the decayed wood and sterilizing the walls has been completed. This delay gives the brickwork a chance to dry out thoroughly before new timber is brought into contact with it. Particular attention should be given to the preservative treatment of all new timber used for replacement. In cases where the risk of dry rot remains the use of alternative materials to wood must be considered, for instance wooden lintels should be replaced by concrete, decayed door and window surrounds and skirtings should be replaced by a layer of hard plaster or cement.

Architects and builders may be asked to express an opinion as to whether the rot can be considered as part of the war damage. It is often difficult to give a plain yes or no answer to this question. If there is no evidence, in the records of a building, of rot prior to the bombing and it can be proved that the woodwork was saturated with water in consequence of the raid there would appear to be sufficient justification to ascribe the rot to war damage.

The article in the *Architect and Building News* sheds some interesting light on the question of legal liability for the spreading of dry rot. Damage to a property by dry rot which has spread from adjoining premises would amount to a nuisance, and liability would rest with the occupier or owner of the premises, even if no want of care on his part can be proved. The article also reminds architects that if the owner of a war-damaged property fails to take steps which he might reasonably have taken to preserve the property from dry rot, a suitable deduction may be made from the War Damage Compensation.

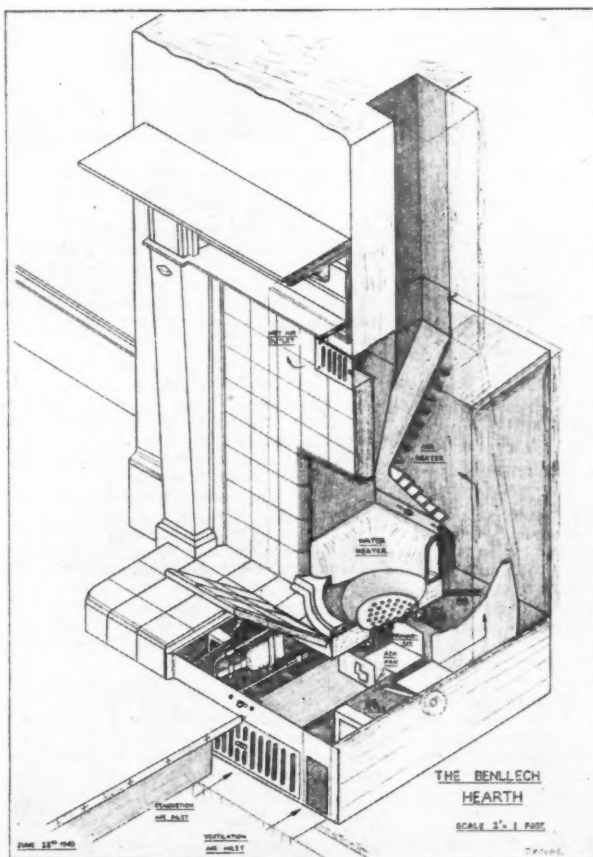
## HEATING and Ventilation

1430 **Convactor Type Open Fire**

**OPEN GRATE EFFICIENCY.** J. Young. (*Journal of Royal Institute of British Architects*, January, 1944, p. 65.) Convactor type open fire, which burns coal or coke.

The paper describes the *Benllech* hearth, devised by the author. The grate resembles an ordinary open fire in external appearance, but incorporates a number of features designed to overcome the defects of the ordinary type.

The lower part of the fireback consists of fire-brick, but the upper part is of metal.



The *Benllech* Hearth, a convactor type of open grate burning coal or coke. Lower part of the fireback is of firebrick, but the upper part is of metal. Behind the fireback is an air-chamber into which air is drawn through a duct under the floor. It is there warmed and discharged into the room through a grille in the surround. See item No. 1430 above.

Behind the fireback is an air-chamber. Air is drawn from the outside of the room, by means of a duct under the floor, through air filters into the chamber behind the fire and is there warmed; it then discharges into the room through a grille in the surround. Air for combustion is also introduced from the under-floor duct to the ash-pit space beneath the grate itself; care is taken to prevent mixture of the combustion and the ventilating air. Secondary air taken from the space below the grate is discharged into the combustion space above the fuel-bed. The whole appliance is lagged behind. A gas ring is provided for ease of ignition.

The author claims that the use of this fire (1) prevents draughts under the door and reduces air movement within the room to an unobjectionable level; (2) gives a more equable (air) temperature distribution throughout the room, and therefore greater comfort; (3) ensures more smokeless combustion of bituminous coal; (4) gives greater efficiency; and (5) enables coal or coke to be used with equal ease.

Diagrams of the test results are given, but these need to be used with great care. None of the ideas incorporated in this grate are new; but Mr. Young has apparently managed to combine them into a fire which appears to be successful. The use of the air filters is probably not justified, in view of the low efficiency with which small particles are removed.

The proposal in the design that air should be drawn from under the floor is perhaps unfortunate, as the heat loss from a ventilated floor is very great, compared with that from a solid floor. Other means of introducing the air could no doubt be devised.

#### 1431 Domestic Electric Plug

DOMESTIC FUSED PLUG. *R. Amberton* (*Elect. Rev.*, October 29, 1943, p. 569). Discussion of a standard 10 amp. plug with fuse.

The electrical industry seems to have agreed that there is no need for the existing complexity of several plug sizes for domestic electrical fittings, and there are apparent intentions to do away with the 5 amp. and 15 amp. plugs, using a 10 amp. size instead. There are also indications that ring mains will be recommended to get more outlets into rooms without excessive cost. This will mean difficulties with fusing unless each outlet can be separately fused. The author points out that the simplest way to do this is to make a fuse in the plug itself, preferably in one of the pins. A 10 amp. fused plug is illustrated.

#### 1432 Fuel Consumption

THE DEGREE-DAY METHOD AS A CHECK ON FUEL CONSUMPTION. *van Zuilen*. (*Gesundheits-Ingenieur*, June 10, 1943, p. 157.) Factors affecting heat requirements of a small experimental house over long periods of time. Only temperature difference determines fuel consumption.

The author describes the results of some experiments carried out in a small "house" on the roof of a building at Delft. The experimental "house" is 1 m. x 1 m. x 1.2 m., and is of wood, 32 mm. thick. It is air-tight, and has no windows. It is electrically heated, the temperature being thermostatically controlled at 20° C.

The ratio, heat requirement per day/number of degree-days per day, is plotted for daily, weekly and monthly periods. It is found that during the first few weeks, the value of the above ratio is greater than the average; while for the last weeks (during April and May), it is lower than the average. These differences are explained as being due to the drying out of the "house" at the commencement of heating (which immediately followed completion), and to the effects of

sunshine at the close of the heating season. The author concludes that the day-to-day heat requirement is greatly affected by the weather (sun, wind, rain) but over a week or a month, the effects of weather tend to cancel out, the heat requirement then being a function of the temperature difference only.

The results are compared with similar data for a block of offices at Hague and for a block of flats in England, and the author claims that his conclusions are confirmed.

(Although the author concludes that the heat (and fuel) requirements are proportional to the temperature difference, the data seem to admit of an alternative interpretation. The straight line drawn by the author through the observed points passes through the origin, but the upper points tend to lie above the curve, and the lower points below it. Another straight line can be drawn which more nearly fits the data, and from this, one would deduce that no fuel is required for heating an ordinary building when the outside mean temperature is still a little below the inside temperature—a deduction which is in agreement with American findings.)

## QUESTIONS and Answers

THE Information Centre answers any question about architecture, building, or the professions and trades within the building industry. It does so free of charge, and its help is available to any member of the industry. Answers are sent direct to enquirers as soon as they have been prepared. The service is confidential, and in no case is the identity of an enquirer disclosed to a third party. Questions should be sent to: THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL, 45, The Avenue, Cheam, Surrey.

#### 1433 Dry Rot

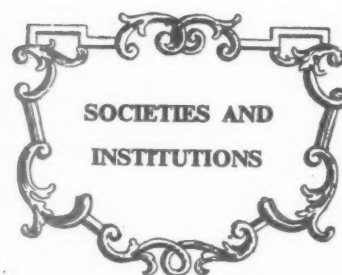
Q I have rather an interesting case concerning dry rot in a dwelling house, and I should be glad of any information on the subject. The property in question has suffered heavy A.R. damage affecting roof, walls, windows and plaster work. When the plaster was removed from ceilings and stud partitions dry rot was revealed in the ceiling and floor joists at ends, also to stud partitions, skirtings and stairs. Some of the timber attacked is in powder form. The owner maintains that wet penetrated through the roof causing dampness to the various timbers mentioned above and which is now in the form of dry rot. Would it be possible for the wood to become affected during the time of unoccupation, namely, three years?

A Dry rot develops rapidly, but it is difficult to say from the information available whether the whole of the dry rot is likely to be due to the dampness caused by war damage. Before asking for an opinion you should ascertain the condition of the timber in more detail, and the extent to which the dry rot has spread from the places where the timber was likely to be affected in the first instance.

The Timber Development Association of 75, Cannon Street, London, E.C.4, Telephone: City 6147, are in a position to give you the most expert advice, and we would suggest that you telephone them as a preliminary measure with a view to seeing exactly what particulars they would require before giving an opinion.

Incidentally, you will remember that it is the duty of the owners of property which has suffered war damage, to take precautionary measures to prevent the deterioration of the property, and it would only be possible to obtain compensation for the cost of repairing the dry rot, under the War Damage Acts, if the owner did, in fact, take reasonable precautions.

See also item No. 1429 on previous page.



Speeches and lectures delivered before societies, as well as reports of their activities, are dealt with under this title, which includes trade associations, Government departments, Parliament and professional societies. To economise space the bodies concerned are represented by their initials, but a glossary of abbreviations will be found on the front cover. Except where inverted commas are used, the reports are summaries, and not verbatim.

HC

## Dr. J. Fenton

February 15, at 13, Suffolk Street, S.W.1. Lunch-time talk at the Housing Centre on HOUSE CONVERSION INTO FLATS, by Dr. J. Fenton, Medical Officer of Health to the Royal Borough of Kensington.

J. Fenton: After the last war an attempt was made to meet some of the shortage by converting large single family houses into flats. This was done by private owners and also by local authorities, and the results were often unsatisfactory.

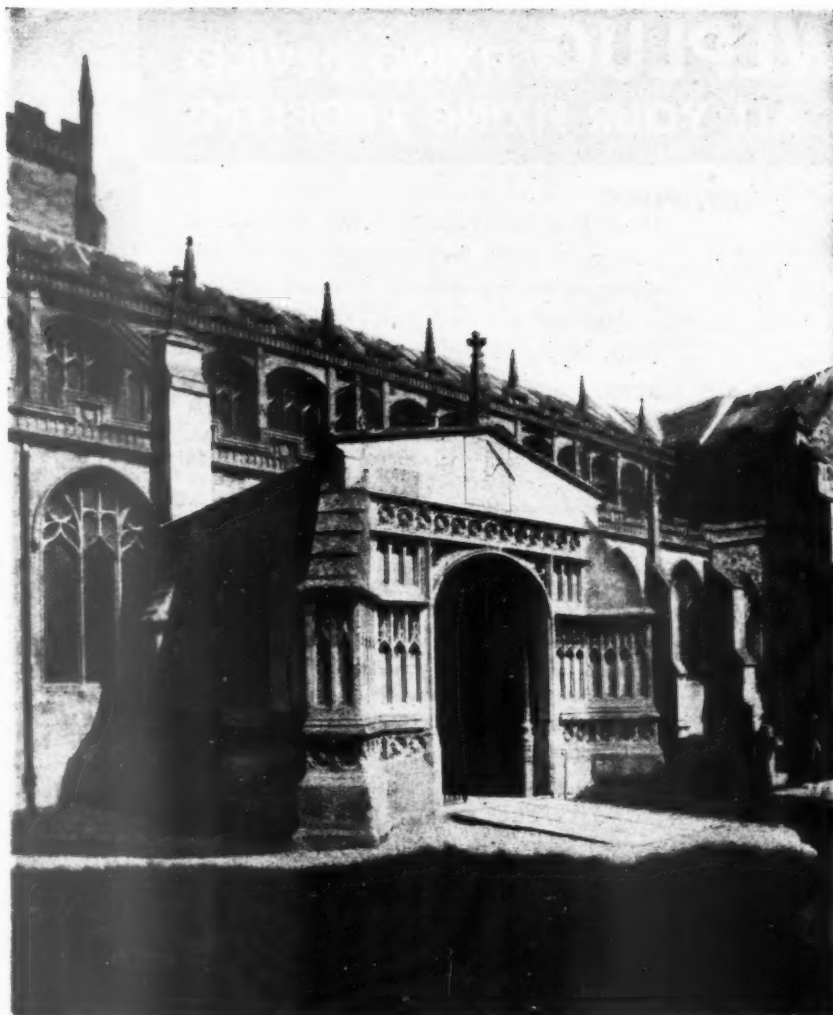
A speedy way of finding much-needed accommodation after the end of this war will be by undertaking these conversions, which will enable a single family house to be used by 3, 4 or 5 families. Owing to shortage of domestic help and high taxation, many of the large houses in South Kensington with spacious rooms will never again be used as single family homes. Many of them are unoccupied, and now is the time to take steps to ensure that the conversions which will be undertaken will make decent homes.

When we discuss housing we generally think of the poorer working classes, but to-day I am anxious to speak of the requirements of those families which, before this war, could pay £150 or £200 a year rent. The need will be there, and unless something is done, they will be in difficulties.

I would like you to picture in your mind a typical house in Queen's Gate or Cromwell Road, with a basement, a ground floor and 3 or 4 floors above. We should have legislation in the form of a Statute, or by-laws or regulations to enable local authorities to secure satisfactory conversions.

One of the difficulties has been that owners have endeavoured to put in too many flats with a view to getting the maximum rent: and in so doing, certain essentials have been left out or cramped.





L. E. Walker, Photo

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The South Porch

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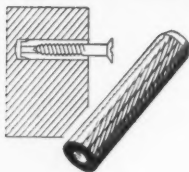
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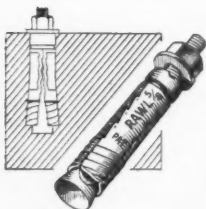
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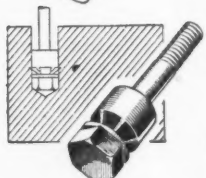
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## MAIN ENTRANCE HALL AND STAIRCASES

These are often dark and require a good deal of artificial light to secure safety. If the cost of artificial light is to be borne by the tenants, one or more may be too keen on economy and friction may result. If the cost is borne by the landlord, the tenants will have little inducement to turn off the lights at bed time. When the landlord finds the tenants careless in leaving the lights on day and night, he introduces time-plug switches. On pushing in the plug, the light remains on for a space of one minute or so, to enable the tenants to get to their rooms safely. But tenants have discovered ways of circumventing the owners' attempt at economy. A common one is to insert an ordinary pin which wedges the plug in the depressed position so as to secure permanent lighting. What is the solution to this question?

## FRONT DOOR TO EACH FLAT

There should be a front door to each flat, and the entire living accommodation should be within it. There should be a name-plate exhibited somewhere near the main street door, and I wonder whether it would be possible to require that each flat dweller's name should be inscribed thereon? All have had the unhappy experience of disturbing people in two or three flats before finding the person we want.

## PASSAGE WITHIN THE FLAT

It is not satisfactory to have to go through one room to get to another, and every flat should have a passage on to which the various rooms open. What should be the minimum width of this passage? I think it should be not less than 2 ft. 6 in.

Whilst we should insist on this passage in order to make living accommodation comfortable, its introduction presents a ventilation problem. When the front door and the room doors are shut, it is unventilated. Must we have trunk ventilation or mechanical ventilation? I am not much in favour of mechanical ventilation in flats which is run at the cost of the tenant, for it will rarely be used, and when once the mechanism gets out of order it will commonly not be repaired.

This passage will generally be without direct external lighting. Must we accept that as inevitable, and rely upon borrowed and artificial light?

## SIZE OF ROOMS

The Housing Act gives us a national standard for overcrowding. It provides that rooms with less than 50 sq. ft. shall not be taken into consideration. This standard, however, is for the purpose of sleeping accommodation, and a room under 50 sq. ft. can be used as a living room, a kitchen, or a scullery. The housewife spends a considerable part of her day in the kitchen or kitchenette, and these small places are unsatisfactory from the point of view of her health and of general hygiene.

There ought to be prescribed a minimum size of room which can be used for living and working purposes. What should that size be? Would 70 sq. ft. be a reasonable minimum for a kitchen? I think we could have bathrooms and water closets 70 sq. ft.

## VENTILATION OF ROOMS

The large rooms are often sub-divided by partitions with the result that some are left without any external window and must depend upon borrowed light and ventilation. This is unsatisfactory. There are two alternatives:

(1) That every room should have an external window; or

(2) be provided with mechanical ventilation. Mechanical ventilation in a private house is frequently not satisfactory. As mentioned before, it is rarely put on, and repairs are neglected. Do you not agree that every room used for sleeping and living, and the bathroom and water closet, should have an external window?

## DEGREE OF LIGHTING

Some of the large rooms are partitioned off by providing that one half of the window

supplies one room and the other half the adjoining room. The result is that there is an elongated room which is dark at the far end, and requires artificial light during the day-time hours. The regulations should provide for a minimum window space in comparison with floor space, but it is perhaps desirable to prescribe angles of light. What should they be?

A number of houses have well-holes at the back, with rooms opening on to them. The windows may be large enough, but the rooms never get any sunshine and are often inadequately lighted. A regulation prescribing the size of the window compared with the floor space in these cases is not adequate. It seems to me that there should be a standard based upon the degree of natural light afforded to the room. I am afraid I have no suggested standard, and its measurement depends at any time upon whether the sun's rays are being obstructed by cloud.

## PARTITION WALLS AND PREVENTION OF NOISE

We cannot, of course, exclude wireless, and I presume we cannot exclude gramophones from converted houses, and so we must meet the problem by prescribing partitions which will, as far as possible, be sound-proof. Even so, the opening of windows for ventilation purposes enables sound to go from one flat to another. I wonder whether anything can be suggested, apart from the prescription of noise-proof partitions?

## PROVISION OF MEANS FOR PREPARING AND COOKING FOOD AND THE PROVISION OF VENTILATED FOOD CUPBOARDS

Kitchen accommodation is probably one of the worst features in these converted houses. The kitchen for the basement flat is quite commonly the passage which leads to the front area. This is dark, narrow, badly ventilated and has little natural light; it is difficult to keep clean. On the upper floors, the kitchen is often on the landing, which is dark, badly ventilated and lighted, and difficult to keep clean. It is important that regulations should require a proper kitchen. I feel there is no alternative but to have a room reserved as a kitchen; that, of course, reduces the number of living rooms.

Frequently there is no ventilated food cupboard. It is not entirely satisfactory to have a cupboard fastened on to the outside wall; there is the danger of stealing and also the inconvenience; suggestions would be welcome. The difficulty would be met to some extent if every flat were equipped with a refrigerator.

## HOUSE REFUSE

One of the most serious problems is in connection with conversions made after the last war. Frequently no provision whatever was made for the accommodation of refuse receptacles. Dustbins have been kept in the halls or on the landings of different floor levels. They are unsightly, often not hygienic, and perhaps most irritating of all they form obstructions which tenants hit against in the dark. The dustbin is a source of great irritation amongst the various tenants. What is the solution?

First of all, it is necessary to consider the frequency of dust and refuse collection by the local authority. Twenty-five years ago there was in Kensington a routine weekly collection of house refuse. In due course we obtained a twice-weekly collection; and eventually we reached a daily collection in some of the main streets.

House refuse collection is a costly service, and the cost is enormously increased if the collectors have to climb stairs in order to secure the dustbins for emptying purposes, especially when there are many delays in knocking at doors and waiting for the housewife, who may frequently not be at home.

I imagine that we are all in favour of frequent collections by the local authority, but one of the real objections is the enormous cost involved in gathering the dustbins from inaccessible parts of the house, such as flats on the second or third floor.

This brings us to the conclusion that there should be some readily accessible position on the ground floor or basement level to which flat dwellers must remove their refuse at least once daily.

In some cases there is a food lift at the back of the house from the basement to the upper floors, which is used by the grocer, butcher or baker; this same lift is sometimes used for conveying refuse to the basement, and this practice should be prohibited. Can we have refuse chutes, as are commonly introduced in the big blocks of flats? The houses we are discussing are already built; the introduction of a chute either within the house or outside it would be an expensive measure, and I am not sure that in the types of houses we have in mind they would not give rise to offence. The best proposal I have in mind is that there should be regulations prescribing that a small dustbin with a close-fitting lid, of such a size that it cannot contain more than the average amount of refuse for one day, should be provided for each flat. This might be kept under the kitchen sink, and the flat dweller should be required to empty it once a day into a larger container kept in the place reserved for the purpose. The position for these larger containers is a matter for careful consideration. They are commonly kept in the front basement area and cause offence to the occupant of the front basement room; in some cases they are kept under the street pavement in vaults originally provided for coal. The problem of finding a proper position for these containers is wrapped up in the consideration of the basements, which I propose to discuss shortly.

## PRAMS AND BICYCLES

Tenants should not have to haul prams to upper floors. Other flat occupants complain of the obstruction, and a good deal of friction results. Weather-proof provision should be made, and possibly there will be no alternative but to use the basement. This is not entirely satisfactory, but I should be very grateful indeed if you have any suggestions.

Also it seems reasonable that some provision should be made for the storage of bicycles. Here I think there is less objection to the use of the basement, but again I am afraid that I have no solution, and would welcome assistance.

## THE STORAGE OF COAL AND COKE

In these flats in converted houses, gas or electric heating is probably the ideal; but the Englishman still has a great fondness for the coal fire. All these houses have fireplaces, and for some years to come we shall have to meet the desire for at least one coal fire in each home. Thus accommodation will be required for coal and possibly for coke. The flats themselves are not suitable for storage. In cases where there is a vault under the pavement, there may be room for galvanized metal bins to hold 5 cwt.; but if not, I wonder where is the best place for the coal to be stored?

## HOT WATER AND HEATING OF ROOMS

Problems in regard to storage of coal would be eliminated and the flats would be much more comfortable if we could have central heating and a constant supply of hot water. Post-war difficulties may make it impossible to secure this, but notwithstanding the fact that the houses are old, public opinion will gradually demand it. These old houses are not in all cases provided with central heating systems. The plumbing in them is provided primarily for single-family houses, and the expense of a new installation would be enormous. I am concerned very much in my own mind on this question, and would welcome help.

## FACILITIES FOR WASHING AND DRYING CLOTHES

Leases may contain provisions restricting these activities, but is it not possible that after the war the housewife will be compelled to do much more laundry? Or perhaps outside

laundry facilities may be easier. We cannot say. Here again I am in difficulties.

#### THE KEEPING OF ANIMALS

It will be difficult to object to the keeping of a cat in a flat, and many people will want to keep a dog for purposes of security; but the barking of a dog is a nuisance, and also sometimes a dog frightens callers and other residents. In houses without open spaces for exercise purposes a dog is a problem. Ought dogs to be allowed to be kept in houses or flats having no garden space? Householders take the dogs out, especially at night time, and they foul the pavements to the danger and inconvenience of other inhabitants of the district. On the other hand, some people can keep dogs and cats without allowing them to become a nuisance. I think perhaps the solution might be a much higher tax on dogs. Perhaps this would be a means of reducing the number and would result in only those people keeping them who really need them. Nuisance arises not only from noise but often from animals being kept under conditions that are not clean.

#### BASEMENTS AND CARETAKERS

The last problem is the question of basements and caretakers. Many of these large houses have basements and, however well constructed, they are not without fundamental objections as dwellings. I would like to see none of them used as such. I would like to see the basement used for the storage of prams and bicycles, central heating facilities, clothes washing, the accommodation for dustbins and so on. This would, of course, reduce the living accommodation, and possibly the rental value of the house as a whole. With proper construction of floors of concrete and with perhaps a side wall removed or at least a large window with the glass removed, one room would accommodate the dustbins, another could be used for prams and bicycles.

If the basement is used for the purposes suggested, that part of the house cannot be used for living purposes and, moreover, it cannot be a home for the caretaker. I do not see why the caretaker should have to live in the basement. It is uneconomical for one caretaker to be retained for each house, but if an owner has several adjoining houses, it would be an economical proposition to have a caretaker, but he should be provided with a flat above the basement level.

**Discussion:** In opening the discussion, Alderman Abady said that in dealing with the problem of legislation to control the conversion of houses into flats, the difficulties which had to be met fell into two classes. First was the question of regulations setting a minimum standard. What could be prescribed as the minimum physical requirements of each flat. Second was the question of regulations controlling the use made of the flats. How far should one interfere with the life of the tenant in making rules about keeping dogs and cats and that kind of thing. Alderman Abady thought members might be interested to hear how Westminster was tackling this problem. If houses fell into the category of working-class dwellings, the way to deal with them was by bringing them up to the byelaw standard. Westminster City Council had recommended to the Metropolitan Boroughs Standing Committee that pressure should be brought to bear on the LCC to remove the suspension of the byelaws. The Ministry of Health has now given local authorities power to requisition and repair houses, and there appears to be no limit to the amount that can be requisitioned. Westminster has requisitioned one hundred houses under this plan and has plans out for reconditioning them.

Mr. Browne (Nat. Fed. of Housing Societies) spoke of the importance of reconditioning work after the war. Local authorities could work in conjunction with housing associations who were also bodies who could buy a whole street. It was easier to carry out reconditioning work with several houses in the same ownership. With reference to lighting the stairs, he

mentioned a scheme where all the tenants had a meter in their own flat and their own switch on this meter, which they were supposed to use. This method ensured that each tenant paid for his own light. It was also possible to have an automatic cut-out by means of a clock, which it was not easy to play about with. To deal with floors, he suggested that it was convenient to let the existing floor boards remain and put Insulwood or a similar material over them and then put floor boards on top. This gave a nice level floor. He believed dust chutes could be installed to deal with the problem of refuse, where it was possible to place kitchens above one another.

## BEDA

### W. S. Morrison

March 17, at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, W.C.2. Luncheon of the British Electrical Development Association. Address on **ELECTRICITY AND PLANNING**, by the Rt. Hon. W. S. Morrison, M.C., K.C., M.P., Minister of Town and Country Planning.

**W. S. Morrison:** Two points occur to me in which the industry of electrical supply has notably helped the planner already and promises to help him increasingly in the future. In so far as electricity enables people and industries to be more mobile—to have a wider choice of habitation—it makes the task of the planner easier, for it makes his material more elastic. He can make his plans in freedom from many trammels by which his predecessors were bound. Again, in so far as electricity supply enables people in the country to enjoy such advantages as the telephone or the wireless—including, I hope, before too long, television—it adds richness and variety to the countryman's life and so counterbalances some of the temptations which in the past have drawn him to the town. In so far as electricity can bring light and heat in a clean and convenient form to the countryman, it can make him more efficient, and his life—and still more, perhaps, the life of his women folk—nearer to what we should all wish to see them. I see, myself, a great future for the electrically driven pump in rural districts as a factor of the first importance in the countryman's water supply. For a proper water supply is vital not only to the daily comfort of every household in the country but also to the daily work of every farm.

And surely electricity holds out high hopes for the development of truly rural industries. We have seen in this war, as compared with the last, what a revolution electricity has effected by the introduction of the small electrically driven motor. This has provided a quiet, clean, readily controlled instrument which has greatly extended the scope of women's employment and has made for compactness in factory layout. That is a development which has already affected industry everywhere. It may well have a most important influence also on the balanced development of our future countryside.

These are a couple of examples—I could go on adding to them, and you will find plenty of others in the Scott Report—of what the electrical industry should be able to do in the country. It could, of course, be matched by a picture of what electricity can do—and, I am sure, will do—in our towns and cities. The planners for their part, looking at their job in a constructive spirit, should be able to give valuable service to your industry. Let me take one example. In so far as they are able to present suppliers with plans, based on a careful study of present and future needs, of districts well grouped and well arranged for the purposes to which they are devoted, they should save suppliers in the development of

their service from the expense and haphazard development with which every case of sporadic and irregular building and road-making is apt to confront them. Such plans, I anticipate, will become common form throughout England and Wales.

I spoke just now of apprehensions entertained in certain quarters of your industry. The creation of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning just over a year ago, and the Interim Development Act which Parliament passed last summer, have, I know, caused some anxiety. In particular there has been a fear lest interim development authorities should use their new powers either to delay development unreasonably or to refuse consent—to the erection, say, of overhead cables or to necessary extensions of plant and buildings.

Well, every change frightens someone, especially before there has been a chance of trying it out and observing its operation in practice. The decision of Parliament that the future use of our land should be a planned use meant some change in outlook and some changes in organization. Planning in consequence has become a more active process than before. We shall have to experiment a bit with the working of the modified machinery. But I have had opportunities of discussing these changes with leaders in your industry and, after careful examination, I see no reason why, given common sense and goodwill, they should hamper legitimate electrical enterprise in any way. On the contrary, I venture to prophesy that in the long run they will powerfully promote it.

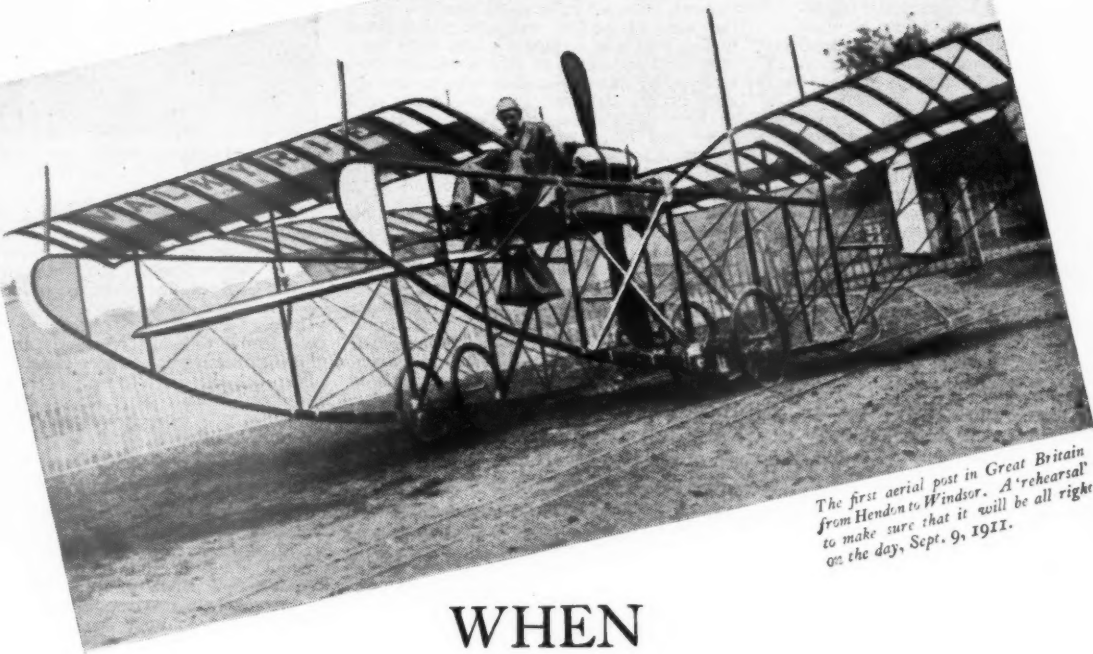
After all, in many parts of the country no serious difficulties seem to arise between supply undertakings, local planning authorities and voluntary bodies concerned with local amenities. All parties set themselves to establish friendly relations, and they keep those relations in good repair. In some districts, of course, there are difficulties and there may be friction. Some planning authorities have objected to all overhead lines and, not only to those, let us say, which invade delicate recesses of the countryside or destroy famous views, or where the pylons would dwarf the buildings. The fact is, of course, that pylons are often inevitable, but severe inharmoniousness with their surroundings need not always result. Much has already been done by improving their design; still more can be achieved by seeing that they are rightly sited. Then again, new supply stations, as Battersea has shown, if well and carefully designed, may be not only useful but also handsome. Let BEDA exercise its powerful influence to secure a wise balance between overhead and underground lines of low-tension supply and in favour of good-looking supply stations.

## HC

### H. J. Spiwak

February 22, at the Housing Centre, 13, Suffolk Street, S.W.1. Lecture on **TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR RECONSTRUCTION**, by H. J. Spiwak.

**H. J. Spiwak:** In Great Britain, temporary housing accommodation will be required for (1) the demobilized soldiers wanting to set up homes; (2) workers returning from war-time factories to places of their previous occupation; (3) re-evacuated people; (4) bombed-out people with no alternative accommodation; and (5) the large group of people who would normally set up homes but have been prevented by war-time stoppage of building. Every fifth house has been bombed and five million people have shifted their habitation. The utilization of existing war-time huts and the possibility of switching the barracks production into the production of a great number of units for temporary housing do not present difficulties; but difficulties arise on various other questions such as those of sites, site



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work, transport, services and the general planning aspects of temporary housing.

The existing types of hutments require a large amount of site work, and the times which are required for their erection range from 130 to 850 man-hours; at the same time some of the prefabricated houses proper could be erected with the expenditure of less than 100 man-hours and weigh perhaps only half as much as the hut construction.

Of services, the provision of temporary shelter requires a certain amount of underground services, and these will only in very few places be suitable for permanent housing on the same site. Perhaps half the material and labour spent on these services must be regarded as wastage.

If the proposition to build houses intended to be used for only ten years results in a lowering of the quality of materials it will be a waste of both materials and labour. It will require only a little more labour to produce sound permanent materials and structures. Whilst, therefore, the licensed life of the structure should be terminated after a period of, say, three to ten years, the materials themselves ought to be suitable for further use. The whole buildings, or their component parts, should continue to be used in this country, on the Continent, or wherever the houses are needed.

There is one structural aspect of post-war building which should be investigated. It may be possible to build prefabricated houses which can be of a permanent character while corresponding in their technique of erection and standard of requirements to the needs and requirements of an immediate post-war period. Thus there might be designed a structure of permanent character based on available materials and a great simplicity of production and speed of erection; such houses might be built for the first two years after the war, the type of construction being abandoned when the availability of other

materials and the condition of the labour market make the change opportune.

The best feature of the Government's proposals for the erection of temporary shelters is the linking up of temporary structures with the permanent building programme for a further ten years to follow the two-year temporary housing scheme. The main permanent building programme would start in the course of the two years, and prefabricated houses might be erected together with brick types. One feature of the permanent programme that should be applied to the temporary one is the standardization of fittings and equipment. Windows have been reduced to three basic types, baths will be produced in five varieties instead of forty, while tanks, cisterns and water heaters will be reduced from 272 to 100 types.

The Government's programme for housing is rather on the conservative side. The proper scale should probably be 250,000 in the first year, rising by 250,000 every year until it reached 1,000,000 a year, and then decline to the level of satisfying normal requirements and replacements. Another point requiring attention is the control of building materials. What is the use of designing temporary structures in cheap and good materials if costs are controlled by monopolies?

### TRADE NOTE

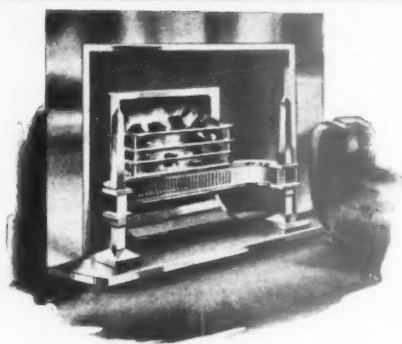
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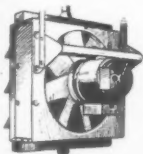
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