

THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL



standard contents

every issue does not necessarily contain all these contents, but they are the regular features which continually recur.

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★A glossary of abbreviations of Government Departments and Societies and Committees of all kinds, together with their full address and telephone numbers. The glossary is published in two parts—A to Ie one week, Ig to Z the next. In all cases where the town is not mentioned the word LONDON is implicit in the address.

| | | |
|-----------|---|---------------------|
| IGE | Institution of Gas Engineers. 17, Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1. | Sloane 8266 |
| IHVE | Institution of Heating and Ventilating Engineers. 75, Eaton Place, S.W.1. | Sloane 3158/1601 |
| IIBD | Incorporated Institute of British Decorators. Drayton House, Gordon Street, W.C.1. | Euston 2450 |
| ILA | Institute of Landscape Architects. 12, Gower Street, W.C.1. | Museum 1783 |
| I of Arb. | Institute of Arbitrators, 35/37, Hastings House, 10, Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C.2. | Temple Bar 4071 |
| IOB | Institute of Builders. 48, Bedford Square, W.C.1. | Museum 7197/5176 |
| IR | Institute of Refrigeration. Dalmeny House, Monument Street, E.C.3. | Avenue 6851 |
| IRA | Institute of Registered Architects. 47, Victoria Street, S.W.1. | Abbey 6172 |
| ISE | Institution of Structural Engineers. 11, Upper Belgrave Street, S.W.1. | Sloane 7128 |
| IWA | Inland Waterways Association. 11, Gower Street, W.C.1. | Museum 9200 |
| LIDC | Lead Industries Development Council. Eagle House, Jermyn Street, S.W.1. | Whitehall 7264/4175 |
| LMBA | London Master Builders' Association. 47, Bedford Square, W.C.1. | Museum 3891 |
| MARS | MARS Group (English Branch of CIAM). Secretary: Gontran Goulden, Building Centre, 9, Conduit Street, W.1. | Mayfair 8641 |
| MOA | Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. 55, Whitehall, S.W.1. | Whitehall 3400 |
| MOE | Ministry of Education. Curzon Street House, Curzon Street, W.1. | Mayfair 9400 |
| MOH | Ministry of Health. Whitehall, S.W.1. | Whitehall 4300 |
| MOLNS | Ministry of Labour and National Service, 8, St. James's Square, S.W.1. | Whitehall 6200 |
| MOS | Ministry of Supply. Shell Mex House, Victoria Embankment, W.C. | Gerrard 6933 |
| MOT | Ministry of Transport. Berkeley Square House, Berkeley Square, W.1. | Mayfair 9494 |
| MOTCP | Ministry of Town and Country Planning. 32-33, St. James's Square, S.W.1. | Whitehall 8411 |
| MOW | Ministry of Works. Lambeth Bridge House, S.E.1. | Reliance 7611 |
| NAMMC | Natural Asphalte Mine-Owners and Manufacturers Council. 94-98, Petty France, S.W.1. | Abbey 1010 |
| NAS | National Association of Shopfitters. 9, Victoria Street, S.W.1. | Abbey 4813 |
| NBR | National Buildings Record. 37, Onslow Gardens, S.W.7. | Kensington 8161 |
| NCBMP | National Council of Building Material Producers. 10, Princes Street, S.W.1. | Abbey 5111 |
| NFBTE | National Federation of Building Trades Employers. 82, New Cavendish Street, W.1. | Langham 4041/4054 |
| NFBTO | National Federation of Building Trades Operatives, Federal House, Cedars Road, Clapham, S.W.4. | Macaulay 4451 |
| NFHS | National Federation of Housing Societies. 13, Suffolk St., S.W.1. | Whitehall 1693 |
| NHBR | National House Builders Registration Council. 82, New Cavendish Street, W.1. | Langham 4341 |
| NPL | National Physical Laboratory. Head Office, Teddington. | Molesey 1380 |
| NSA | National Sawmilling Association. 14, New Bridge Street, E.C.4. | City 1476 |
| NSAS | National Smoke Abatement Society. Chandos House, Buckingham Gate, S.W.1. | Abbey 1359 |
| NT | National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty. 42, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1. | Whitehall 0211 |
| PEP | Political and Economic Planning. 16, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1. | Whitehall 7245 |
| RCA | Reinforced Concrete Association. 94, Petty France, S.W.1. | Whitehall 9936 |
| RIAS | Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland. 15, Rutland Square, Edinburgh. | Edinburgh 20396 |
| RIBA | Royal Institute of British Architects. 66, Portland Place, W.1. | Langham 5721 |
| RICS | Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. 12, Great George St., S.W.1. | Whitehall 5322/9242 |
| RFAC | Royal Fine Art Commission. 22A, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1. | Whitehall 3935 |
| RS | Royal Society. Burlington House, Piccadilly, W.1. | Regent 3335 |
| RSA | Royal Society of Arts. 6, John Adam Street, W.C.2. | Trafalgar 2366 |
| RSI | Royal Sanitary Institute. 90, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1. | Sloane 5134 |
| RIB | Rural Industries Bureau. 35, Camp Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19. | Wimbledon 5101 |
| SBPM | Society of British Paint Manufacturers. Grosvenor Gardens House, Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1. | Victoria 2186 |
| SCR | Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR. 14, Kensington Square, London, W.8. | Western 1571 |
| SE | Society of Engineers. 17, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1. | Abbey 7244 |
| SFMA | School Furniture Manufacturers' Association. 30, Cornhill, London, E.C.3. | Mansion House 3921 |
| SIA | Structural Insulation Association. 14, Moorgate, London, E.C.2. | Central 4444 |
| SIA | Society of Industrial Artists. 7, Woburn Square, W.C.1. | Langham 1984 |
| SNHTPC | Scottish National Housing & Town Planning Council. Hon. Sec., Robert Pollock, Town Clerk, Rutherglen. | |
| SPAB | Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. 55, Great Ormond Street, W.C.1. | Holborn 2646 |
| TCPA | Town and Country Planning Association. 28, King Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2. | Temple Bar 5006 |
| TDA | Timber Development Association. 75, Cannon Street, E.C.4. | City 4771 |
| TGC | The Gas Council. 1, Grosvenor Place, S.W.1. | Sloane 4554 |
| TPI | Town Planning Institute. 18, Ashley Place, S.W.1. | Victoria 8815 |
| TTF | Timber Trades Federation. 69, Cannon Street, E.C.4. | City 4444 |
| WDC | War Damage Commission. Devonshire House, Mayfair Place, Piccadilly, W.1. | Mayfair 8866 |
| WEDA | Welfare Equipment Development Association. 74, Victoria Street, S.W.1. | Victoria 5783 |
| ZDA | Zinc Development Association. Lincoln House, Turl Street, Oxford. | Oxford 47988 |

No. 2904]

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[Vol. 112

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Copies of the Association's pamphlet, "Softwood for house joinery", showing how to use the timber allowed per house, will be supplied on application to the Secretary.

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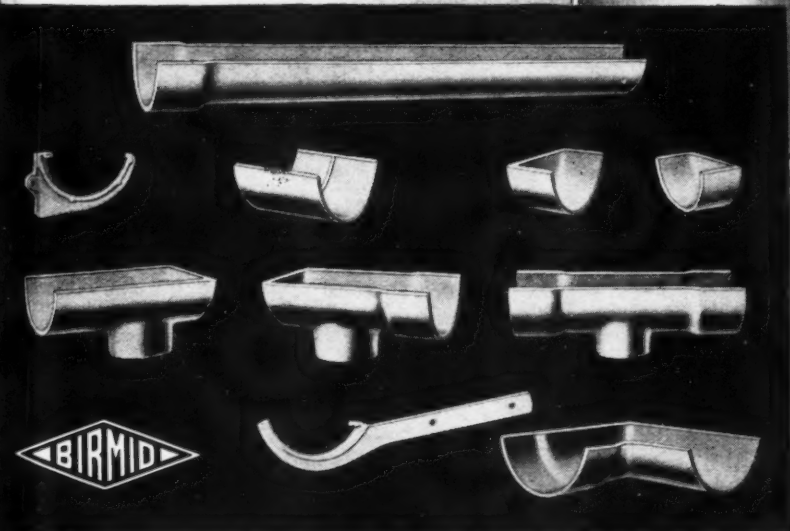
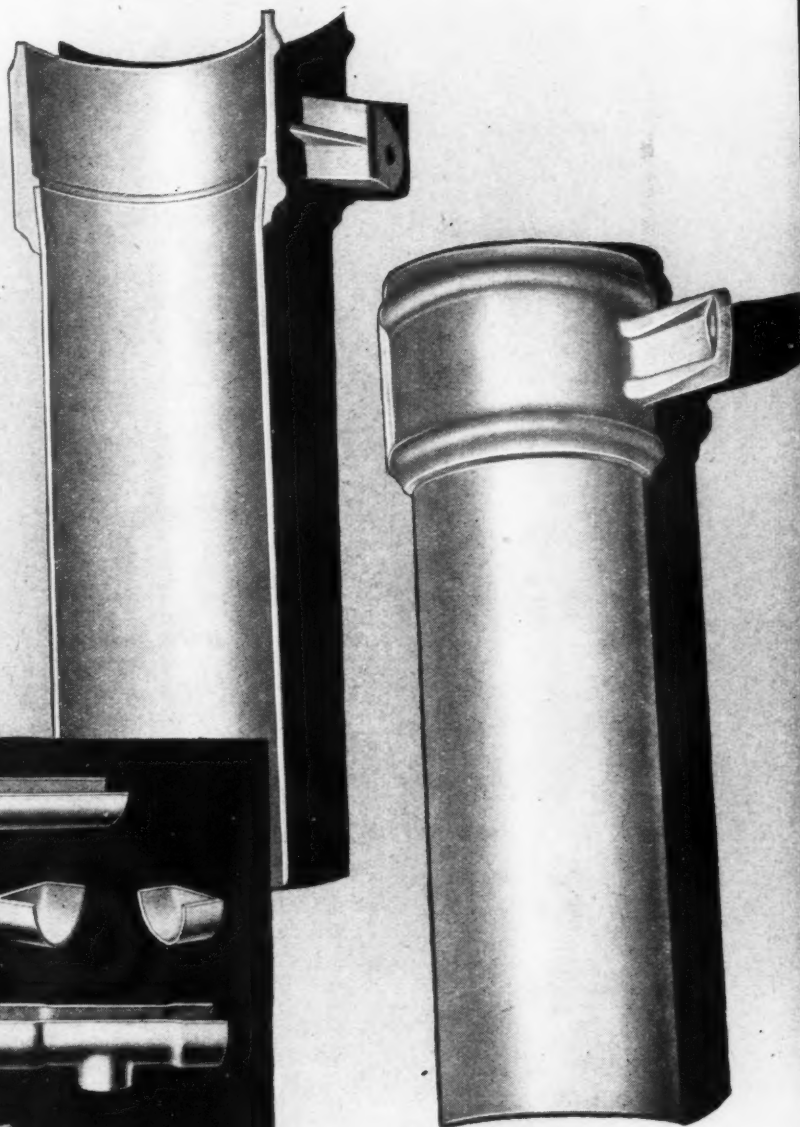
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ALUMINIUM RAIN-WATER GOODS



The "cast-on" socket (Patent No. 598,945) has been specially designed with the ears offset to eliminate the use of bobbins. The robust proportions and the strength of the aluminium alloy enable these projections to withstand rough handling in transit and on site. The rain-water pipes are made of extruded and drawn aluminium tubes which can be supplied in lengths up to 18 ft. A modern two-storey dwelling can be covered by a single pipe without the expense of jointing. Lightness, strength and ease of handling offer a worthwhile saving in erection costs



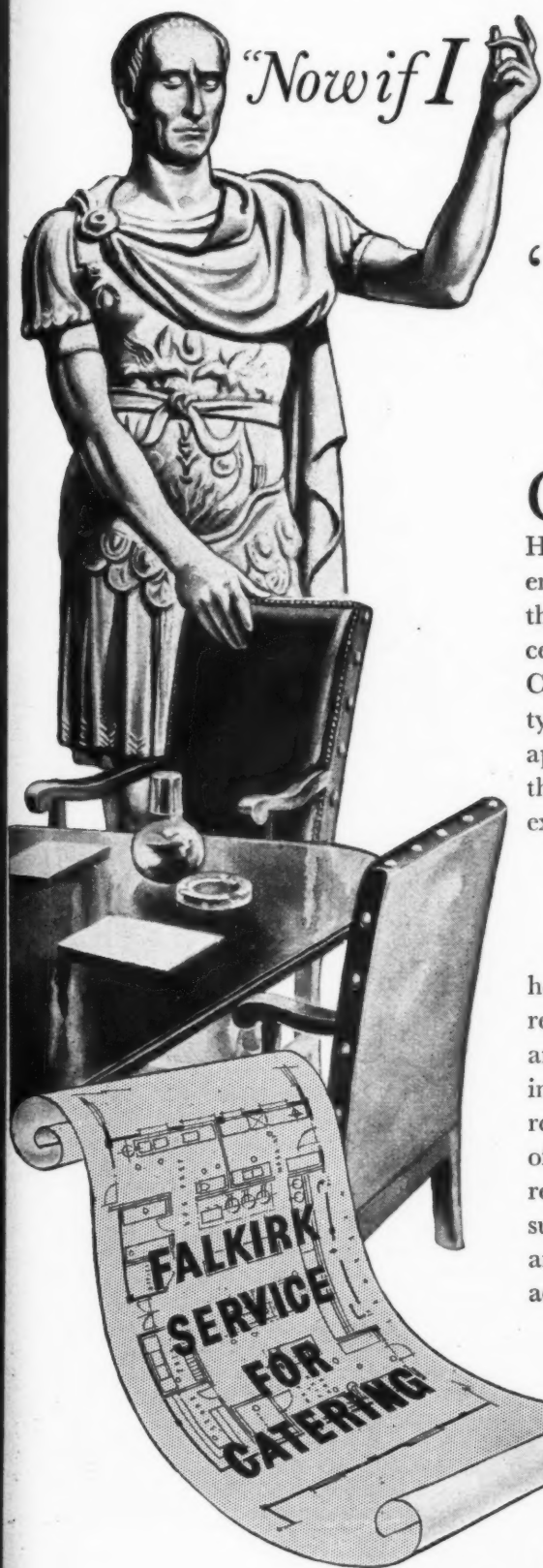
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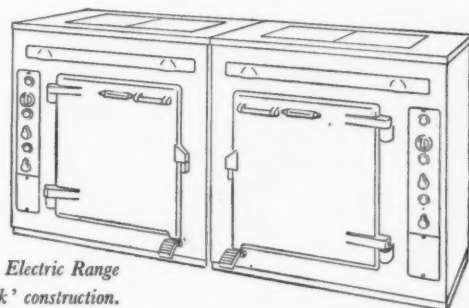
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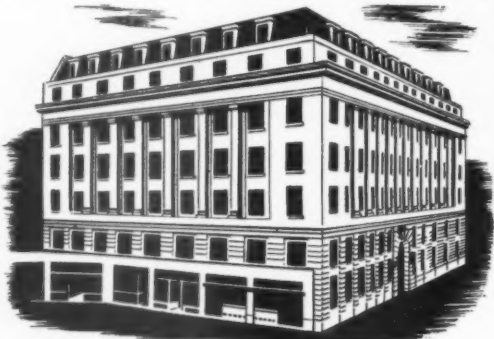
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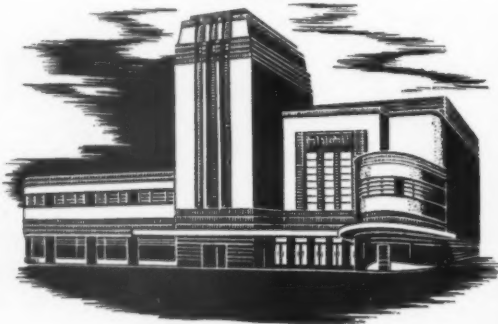
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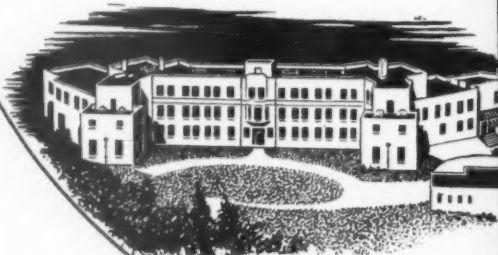
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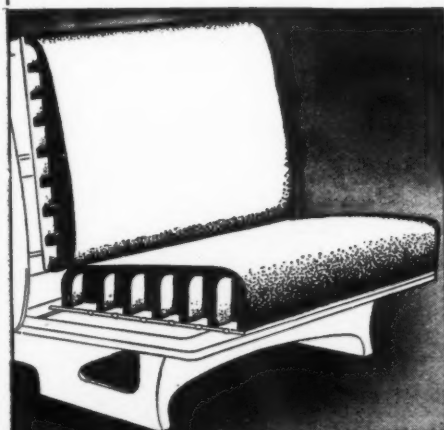
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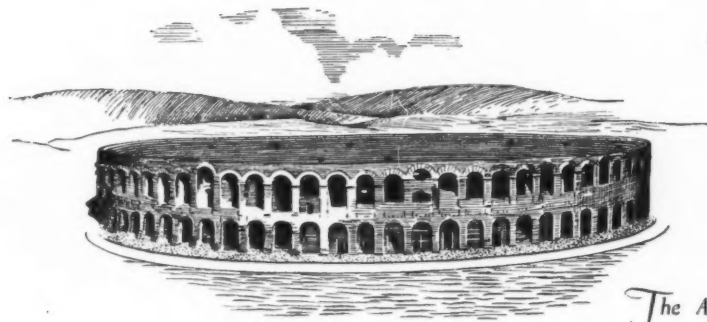
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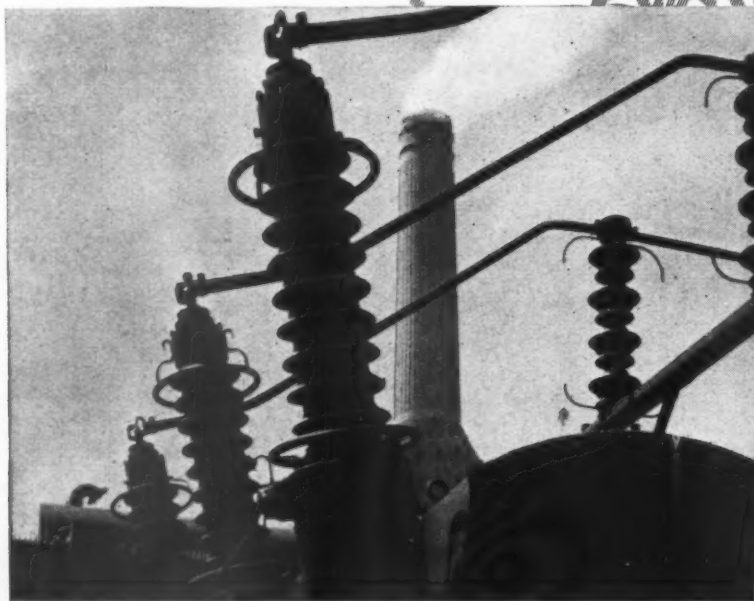
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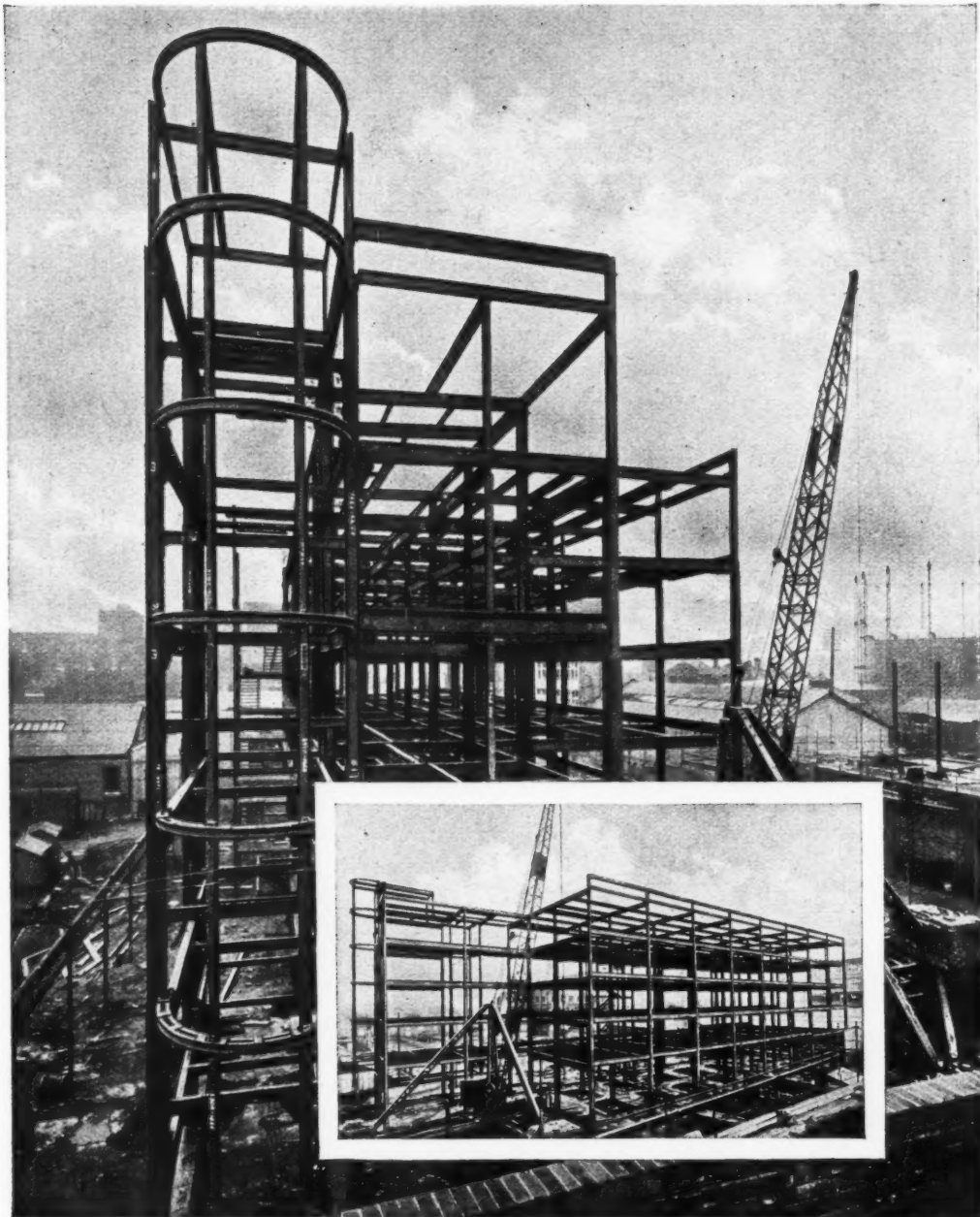
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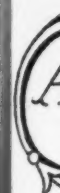
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THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL

No 2904 12/19 Oct. 1950 VOL 112

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* To preserve freedom of criticism these editors, as leaders in their respective fields, remain anonymous

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INCENTIVES

MOW has recently published the results of a survey on incentives and output which has been based on 158 Direct Labour forces employing, in all, some 14,000 men. As one would imagine, the men's earnings go up, but there is, none the less, a general saving in the cost of the work done; about 7 per cent., in fact, of the total labour cost, according to most of the local authorities whose figures were investigated. The 7 per cent., it should be noted, is an overall figure, and would no doubt be higher if all the jobs could have some sort of bonus applied to them.

*

One slightly disturbing fact, however, is that 16 local authorities "were not able to say whether labour costs had

been reduced by the operation of incentive schemes." This sounds to me as though some of the costing systems must have been pretty casual. One never really knows, when looking at Direct Labour figures, what sort of overheads are allowed for in the figures, and whether some of the salaries and costs aren't just lost in the Municipal Treasurer's system of bookkeeping. Direct Labour departments can all too often be set up as part of a political creed rather than as a means of providing better or cheaper building.

THE NEW CHAMBERS

One's natural reaction, on looking at a new encyclopædia, is to turn immediately to one's own subject and see what the editors have made of it. The new Chambers's Encyclopædia passes this test with flying colours. Architecture (to be found between Archipelago and Archives in Vol. I—A to Autonomy seems to be admirably treated, which was only to be expected seeing that the subject was in the hands of John Summerson, one of the advisory editors.

*

The quality of the entries—historical, technical and modern—is best indicated by the names of the writers Summerson had working for him. They include Sir Alfred Clapham, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Geoffrey Webb, J. M. Richards and Dr. Wittkower. Architecture has been given 36 pages of text and 19 pages of illustrations containing 83 photographs. The only complaint I have is that the latter are rather small.

I would also like to have seen a separate entry for Architect, explaining both what he does now and how his professional status has evolved. But the encyclopædia is a remarkable achievement. The production must have been an immense task, for although Chambers is a famous name among encyclopædias, this is a completely new work, re-written, re-edited and rearranged. The fifteen volumes will be an asset on anybody's bookshelves—if they have £42 10s. to spare.

ABC FOR FOB

With his assistants, Charles Hasler, boss of the Festival of Britain Typography Panel, has issued a handsome brochure showing specimen display letters for external use in the various Festival projects. The problem was "to produce a display letter which is British in feeling, of good 'typographic



OWING TO DIFFICULTIES IN THE PRINTING TRADE IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO PUBLISH A JOURNAL LAST WEEK AND THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS CONSIDERABLY CURTAILED.



Church Tradition

Nearly a quarter of the book *Switzerland Builds*, by G. E. Kidder Smith, the American photographer and architect, is devoted to a study of the vernacular buildings like the church of Saanen above which are still the architectural

backbone of the country. In the remaining three-quarters of the book Kidder Smith describes the development of modern architecture. *Switzerland Builds* is published by THE ARCHITECTURAL PRESS, price 42s.

colour' and one capable of being used architecturally—possibly in large sizes, flat or three-dimensionally—without loss of character." The basic Roman looks like

THIS

and the italic like

THIS

The type is modelled on the Egyptian types cut by Figgins, Thorne and Austin between 1815 and 1825. From the

LIGHT

version you can see that the type has affinities with the well-known Rockwell. The brochure lists a few general rules of layout. For instance,

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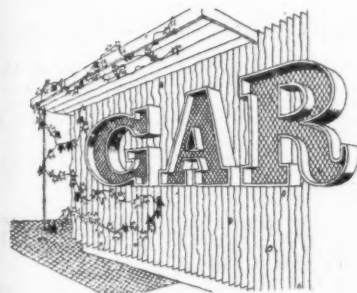
densed letters, although in themselves space saving, look their best when fairly widely letter spaced. The

EX-

tended version has letters of such a width that their use for very long words is inadvisable. Only lower

case

letters in the basic Roman are shown but they have been designed for the other alphabets as well, excluding the extended. Altogether a pleasing, robust type which allows plenty of scope for individual treatment as on this



age wall. At the same time, if the basic style is generally adopted, Festival lettering will achieve a happy unity.

M

ay I offer hearty congratulations to FOB's Typography Panel.

ASTRAGAL

The Editors

NEW TOWNS: FACTORIES BEFORE HOMES

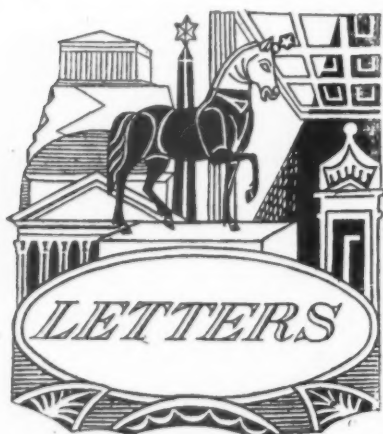
MR. LINDGREN, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, recently gave some very interesting information about the estimated factory population in the new towns. Between the eight new towns around London, the original factory population, at the time of designation, amounted to 27,895 workers; the estimated ultimate factory population is 96,250, i.e., this represents an increase of about 70,000 workers. Elsewhere in England and Wales the comparable figures are: original factory population 15,560; estimated ultimate factory population 33,500, i.e., an increase of about 17,900 workers. Similar figures have not been published for the new towns in Scotland.

By last June, building licences had been issued for factories which, on completion, will provide employment for 660 workers, and licences were about to be issued for factories in Harlow and the existing trading estate at Aycliffe to provide employment for another 1,000 workers. A description of the types of factories that are being built is given in the New Town progress reports by D. Rigby Childs, which are being published in the JOURNAL. The small extent of this part of the New Town building programme is clear when it is seen that out of approximately 90,000 new work places to be provided in factories, building is in hand for only 1,660. It should be remembered, incidentally, that factories take about twice as long to build as houses.

There is little doubt that the New Towns which are most likely to survive economy cuts in housing will be those where factories are already established and where the provision of further housing is essential.

In the areas of some of the New Towns, however, the Development Corporations were only set up because factories, employing several thousands, were already in existence, with practically no adjacent living accommodation. While the lack of balance that has taken place in the development of these areas is not to be recommended, as it is contrary to established doctrinaire views, there may well be advantages in following the sequence of events which puts the building of factories in advance of the building of homes.

The theory of establishing industrial employment in excess of local housing is that the work people who travel daily into the new town—at subsidised fares, if need be—will accustom themselves gradually to the new environment. They may well decide to settle there permanently as the houses are built, while they would probably be reluctant to move into the New Towns if they had to take up new employment and move to new houses at the same time.



W. F. Howard A.R.I.B.A.

D. A. Eaglen

A Plea for More Competitions

SIR,—I read with interest your leading article in the JOURNAL of August 10 on representative architecture, and unfortunately I gained the impression that your criticism is confined to those buildings the design of which the policy of the JOURNAL disapproves.

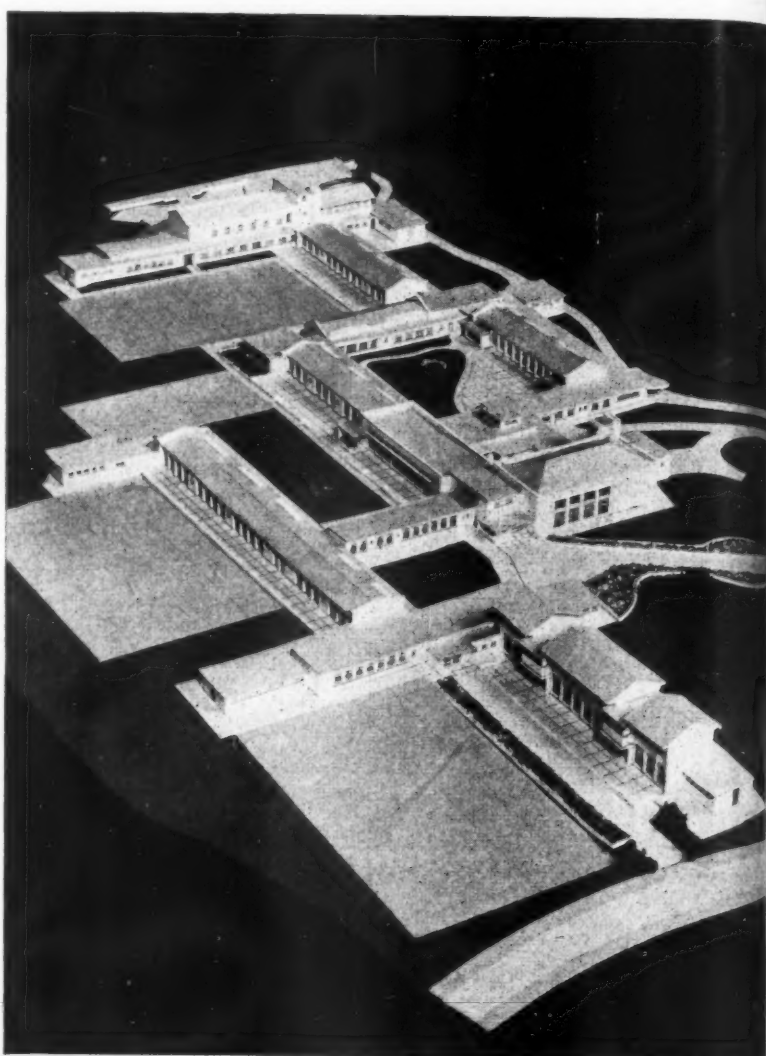
The design of the building out of which the article arose merely follows the trend of contemporary architecture, executed with greater or lesser skill and taste, than numerous others in a similar style.

Nevertheless, I believe that the majority of the members of the architectural profession will agree with your statement that it is tragic that the architectural quality of important national buildings should rest on chance and "laissez-faire." The responsibility for this must rest on the ministers of the government, and their architectural advisers, if such exist.

Since the end of the war many large projects of national importance have been handed out as private commissions, and in three cases (two of them recent), namely, the Colonial Office, the BBC White City building, and the London Airport, it has been done after an announcement that a competition would be held. In one instance an assessor had been appointed, and in two cases sufficient time had elapsed for the preparation of the most complex set of competition conditions. In both these cases the excuse was given that the problem was too complex for a competition, yet the time that elapsed between the announcement of one appointment and the production of a scheme was remarkably short, which seems to indicate that the problem was not too difficult. To suggest that a problem is too complex for a competition is feeble. The formulation of competition conditions is of the greatest value in assisting promoters to arrive at their requirements.

There are other government buildings which have been commissioned privately. Every new town has been dealt with similarly, surely a competition for at least one

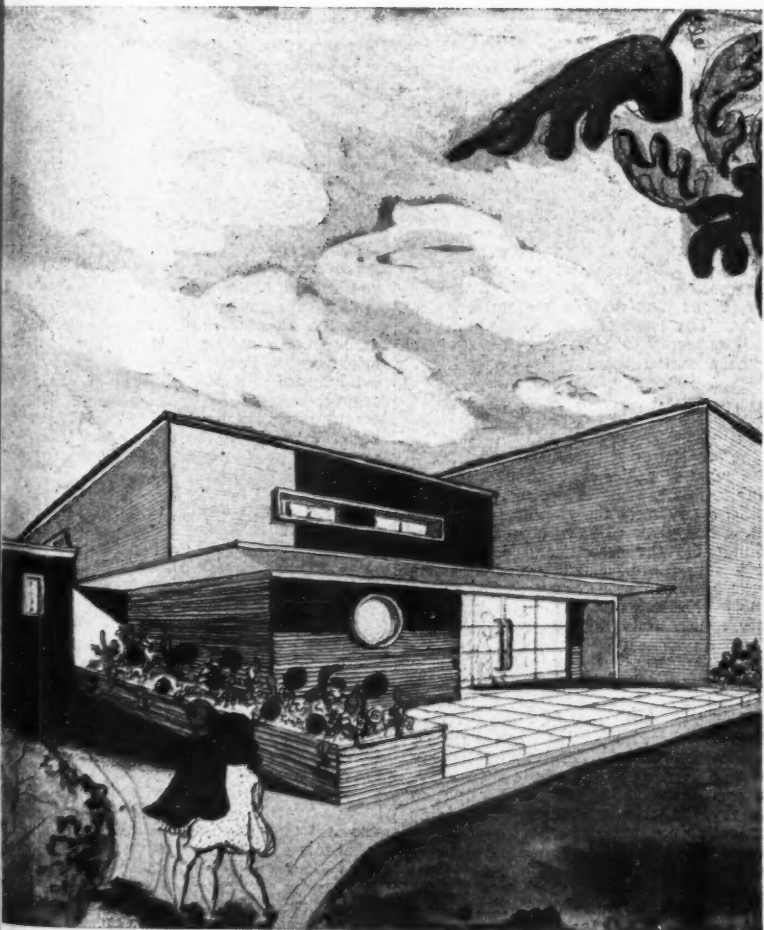
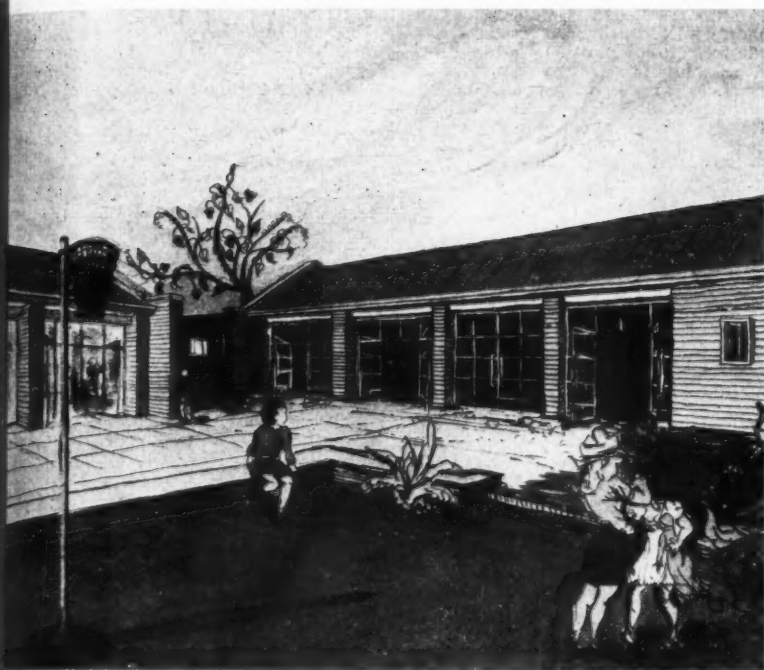
MODEL OF PRIMARY SCHOOL



The school shown by model photographs above and perspective sketches on the opposite page is now under construction to the designs of A. Hamilton the Blackpool Borough Architect and Engineer. There will be accommodation for 480 Juniors and 360 Infants.



R Y SCHOOL AT BLACKPOOL



of them could have been arranged. A considerable number of large schemes for the Colonies have been decided upon, and not every architect appointed has colonial experience. The 1951 exhibition comes into the same category, but here at least some of the younger members of the profession have been given an opportunity. Many of the semi-public corporations and local authorities appear to be adopting a similar policy, and if I make a special reference to the school building programme, quite a number of architects will understand.

I should like to emphasize that my criticism is not directed against the appointed architects, most of whom are unquestionably accomplished. It is directed against the policy, or lack of it, that allows this colossal bulk of work to be distributed among a restricted number. Considerable care must be taken in selecting architects for important national projects, but surely the field is a little wider than one is led to believe?

I have not seen nor heard any public comment by a leading member of the profession on this matter, and no information is available as to whether any reference is made by the government departments concerned to the register compiled by the RIBA. This document raised the hopes of the architect overseas during the war, and I should like to hear of at least one instance where those hopes have been realized.

The record of public architecture since the end of the war is deplorable, and in these days when the major part of the building programme is in the hands of government or local government authorities, the opportunities for the young architect are non-existent. Their only hope is a return to the integrity of the competition system.

W. F. HOWARD.

London.

Electricity from Windmills

SIR,—Reading through the technical section of the JOURNAL for August 3, I was interested to note the remarks made following the review of E. W. Golding's report on *Large-scale Generation of Electricity by Wind Power*, published by BEA 12A. Having recently completed a study of windmills in Suffolk, the conclusions that I drew regarding the future use of wind power were that unless designers of some ability were co-opted immediately into the groups working on the erection of wind power generators, the countryside would soon be disfigured by huge lattice steel towers erected (to quote the ERA) "on hundreds of sites fairly high and in groups of 10 or more." True, the ERA is exploring only the possibilities of such a scheme, but the danger is there, for if the artist's impression of the giant windmill to be erected in the Orkneys, which was published in the press some time ago, is anything to judge future British wind-driven generators by, the standard of design will have to be greatly improved.

Admittedly the 70 KW generator illustrated in the report possesses a degree of good taste, but this was built in Copenhagen, where one associates good design with structural and technical achievements.

It is fervently hoped that the authorities concerned will do all they can to raise the standard of design of these wind driven generators, so keeping up the tradition of good design and character of their fore-runners the windmills.

DOUGLAS A. EAGLEN

London

The EDITORS reserve the right to shorten letters from readers. Whenever possible, however, they are published in full.



Below is an article outlining some aspects of the law of libel in relation to the problems of architectural criticism. It has been written by a legal specialist and deals with a question of special significance to the architectural profession today

A. L. GALE (Barrister-at-Law)

Architectural Criticism

ARCHITECTS AND LIBEL

It is sometimes suggested that a critic of architecture is more likely to be sued for libel than a critic of the other arts because of the large sums of someone else's money involved. To put up a building is not only to commission a work of architecture but also to invest money in property. Therefore, so the argument runs, in criticising an architect's work it is difficult to draw the line between what is merely an opinion on his merits as a designer and what is an opinion on his competence—or incompetence—to handle a client's money, and architects or their clients are consequently particularly sensitive to the implications of critical comments.

All this may be true, but there is no reason to think that, when it came to actual proceedings, the law of libel would be applied any differently or more stringently in the case of architectural criticism than any other form of criticism. Perhaps what a critic might say in a particular case does reflect upon the architect's competence to handle his clients money and consequently it may possibly be libellous. But the same sort of thing in one form or another is likely to happen in many walks of life particularly among the professional classes. Criticism of one aspect of the professional work of a soldier or a parson or a surgeon may reflect upon his capacity to carry out

other duties he performs. And the same is true of an engineer or an accountant and many others.

In a sense, of course, any criticism of an architect's work, whether favourable or unfavourable, can be said to have a bearing upon his ability to make the best use of the financial resources at his disposal. But the bearing may be very remote and in all probability it would not be libellous. In any event the architect certainly holds no specially privileged position in the eyes of the law and there is little reason to doubt that the Courts would approach architectural criticism in just the same way as they would the criticism of, say, a solicitor or a surgeon or a portrait painter.

ÆSTHETIC AND TECHNICAL CRITICISM

An important practical difference between architectural criticism and criticism in the other arts is that architectural criticism may and frequently does involve both æsthetic criticism and technical criticism in a high degree.

Technical criticism is concerned very largely with matters of fact and in this respect the architectural critic must be particularly careful. Not all technical criticism, however, is a question of fact. It may be purely a matter of opinion whether for example the design of an electric power station is technically good or bad for its intended purpose; but generally speaking there can be no two views as to the actual size or shape or other details of its construction. On these matters therefore and on all matters of fact the critic must be accurate.

On the other hand if the technical design of a building is the subject of comment as distinct from the actual construction or position then the realm of fact has been changed to that of opinion. For example, the critic might very properly wish to criticise the design of a public swimming pool and it might be purely a matter of opinion as to the best layout of the buildings in relation to the pool itself. If he thought the design was bad or intolerably bad there is no reason why he should not say so. And the same would, of course, apply to similar matters where the question was one of opinion only.

Æsthetic criticism is even more nebulous than criticism of technical design—Beauty lies in the eye of the beholder—and what is lovely to one man may be a monstrosity to another. The critic is fully entitled and indeed is expected to form his own opinion on such a matter.

PRIVATE BUILDINGS

As the law stands at present, however, subject to what is said below about "matters of public interest," it is probably not safe to criticise adversely the technical design or planning or artistic value of a purely private building. On the other hand so long as what is said can be substantiated as being true the critic can be as damning as he likes about a private building. The question, therefore, is simply this: is what he says true?

This is a comparatively simple question to answer where the criticism is limited to what are clearly ascertainable matters of fact in the sense that they can be measured or weighed or otherwise proved. But there are matters which do not lend themselves to proof and it may not be so easy for the critic to substantiate the truth of his opinion about, say, the technical design of a building or its suitability for a particular purpose. His opinion may be only one of many—some good, some bad. Still less easy will it be for him to justify his opinion on the artistic merit of the building; in fact it may be impossible for him to do so.

Fortunately for the architectural critic there is a large and growing class of buildings about which he may comment quite freely on their technical design or artistic merit or other matters of opinion without having to substantiate the truth of his comments. Such buildings are those which fall within the legal description of "matters of public interest."

Any building, or for that matter, anything which may fairly be said to invite comment or challenge public attention are "matters of public interest." Under this description come the administration of public institutions and local affairs, places of public amusement and entertainment, books, pictures and works of art generally. The architecture and plans of any public building or other works and also any architectural plans publicly exhibited, e.g., the drawings shown at the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy, would clearly fall within this category.

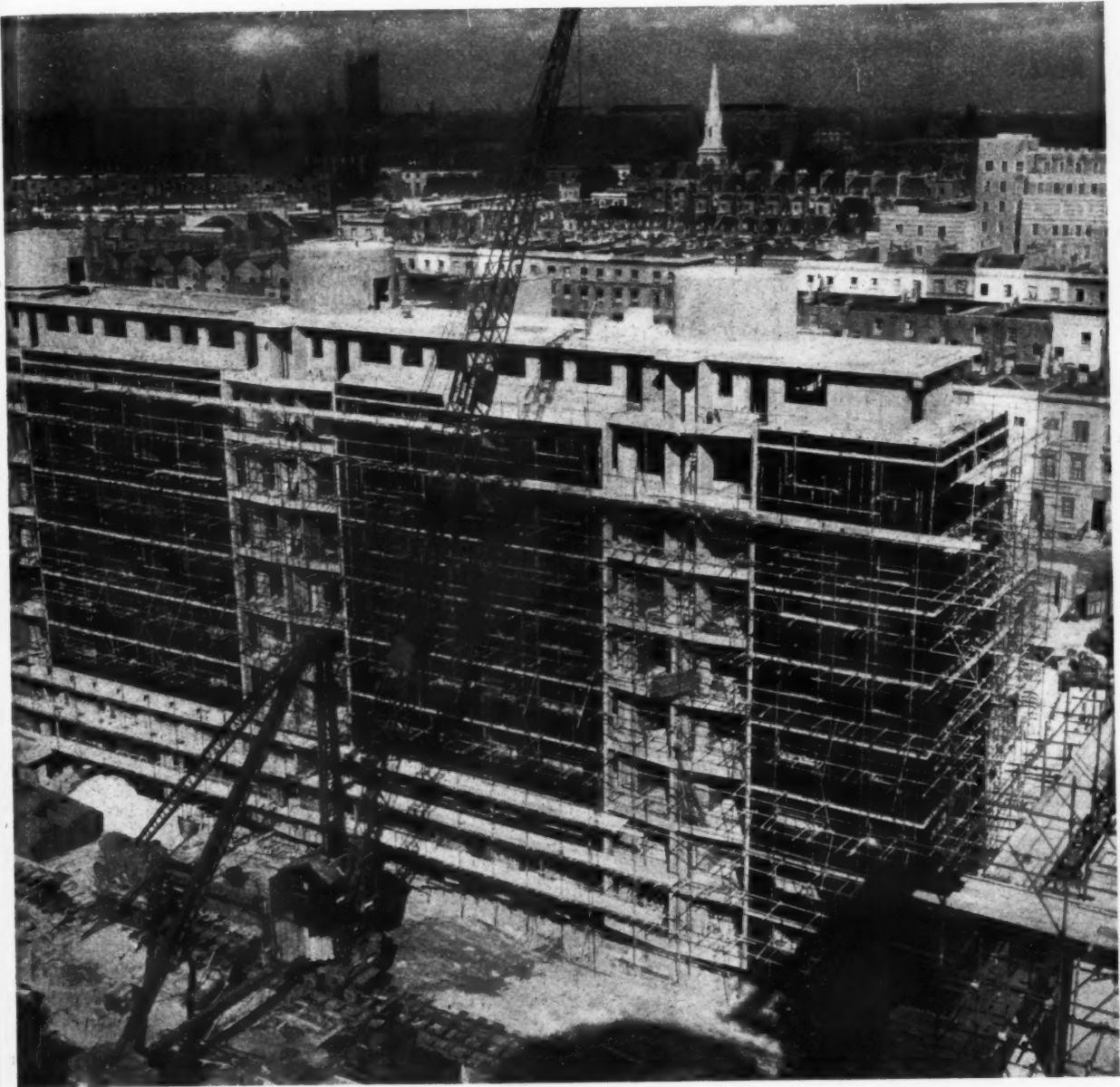
The vast growth of "socialization," the extensive building by government departments and local authorities, and the nationalization of industries has enormously enlarged this field. The critic is not, however, limited to public buildings or to works which the public are expressly invited to go and see. Any building or other architectural work which can fairly be said to invite comment or challenge public attention are proper subjects for frank criticism and so long as the critic expresses his honest opinion he has nothing to fear. For example, a private building estate may be a matter of public interest locally, as might also the sanitary conditions of workers' dwellings owned by a large private company. Furthermore, many buildings, though in private ownership, are looked upon as part of our national heritage and would doubtless be considered matters of public interest. Similarly a bright new multiple store if erected in the village of Broadway might well be a matter of public interest—and public concern, whereas the same sort of building erected in a busy industrial town might not.

Although, as indicated above, some buildings or works are undoubtedly "matters of public interest" in the legal sense the question whether a building or other work falls within this category must always depend upon its own particular circumstances.

It is a pity that it is not the practice to invite architectural critics to view important new private buildings with the object of obtaining criticism in the public press. Such a course might stimulate public interest in architectural matters and help to create an intelligent and discriminating approach to contemporary buildings. If invitations to criticize were made for this purpose the critic would probably be entitled to express his honest opinion of the building in much the same way as if it were "a matter of public interest."

The position is not quite on all fours with the criticism of a play or a book, for every kind of literary production placed before the public is a matter of public interest whether it be a play, a novel, a newspaper or a song. It makes no difference, therefore, whether or not a critic is invited to the first night of a play or has a review copy of a new novel sent to him. For example, a bus conductor who subsequently pays to see the play or buys a copy of the novel and then writes an article for his Union magazine is in precisely the same position as the professional critic and can say what he thinks about the play or the novel. But although legally the position might be different where critics were invited to criticise a private building, in practice it would probably come to much the same thing. For if critics were asked to express their opinions then they should be expected to give their honest opinions and it would hardly be reasonable for the person asking them to do so to object.

FLATS IN LONDON, UNDER CONSTRUCTION



The Powell and Moya flats at Pimlico, seen above, were photographed recently. The first block in this interesting example of British post-war housing, is now completed. The photograph on the right shows the circular water tanks. These photographs were taken from the heating tower.



The law of defamation has two main branches, libel and slander. Libels are defamatory statements communicated by written words or in some other relatively permanent form, e.g., a cinematograph film. Slanders, on the other hand, are defamatory statements communicated by spoken words or in some other transitory form whether audible or visible, e.g., signs or gestures.

A very important difference between these two branches of the law relates to the proof of damages. Where a libel is proved the plaintiff is always presumed to have suffered some damage and it only remains for the jury, having considered all the circumstances, to assess the amount of damages which they think should be awarded to the plaintiff. In the case of slander, however, it is generally necessary for the plaintiff not only to prove the slander but also to prove actual damage; that is to say some loss which can be estimated in money such as the loss of a particular contract or client. There are exceptions to this general rule and one of these is where a person is slandered in the way of his profession or calling. In this case he is presumed to have suffered some damage just as if he had been libelled. Hence a professional man if he has been slandered will be quick to show (if he can) that he has been slandered in his professional capacity. He then need not prove any actual loss and the damages awarded by a jury might be more than any monetary loss he has suffered and could in fact prove.

It will be seen, therefore, that the purpose of showing that a slander is "in the way of a person's profession or calling" is to put a slander on a par with libel. If the defamatory statement is a libel in the first place it of course makes no such difference. These matters are, however, often confused and that is frequently the reason why some professional men, when alleging that their work has been libelled, make such a point of saying that the libel affects them in their professional capacity.

I will now deal very briefly with the legal position of a critic in relation to these matters. Lord Shaw in the case of *Arnold v. The King-Emperor* said: "The freedom of the press is an ordinary part of the freedom of the subject and to whatever lengths the subject in general may go, so also may the journalist . . . but his privilege is no other and no higher. The responsibilities which attach to his power in the dissemination of printed matter may, and in the case of a conscientious journalist do, make him more careful; but the range of his assertions, his criticisms, or his comments, is as wide as, and no wider than that of any other subject." In so far as the law is concerned the position may be summarized as follows:

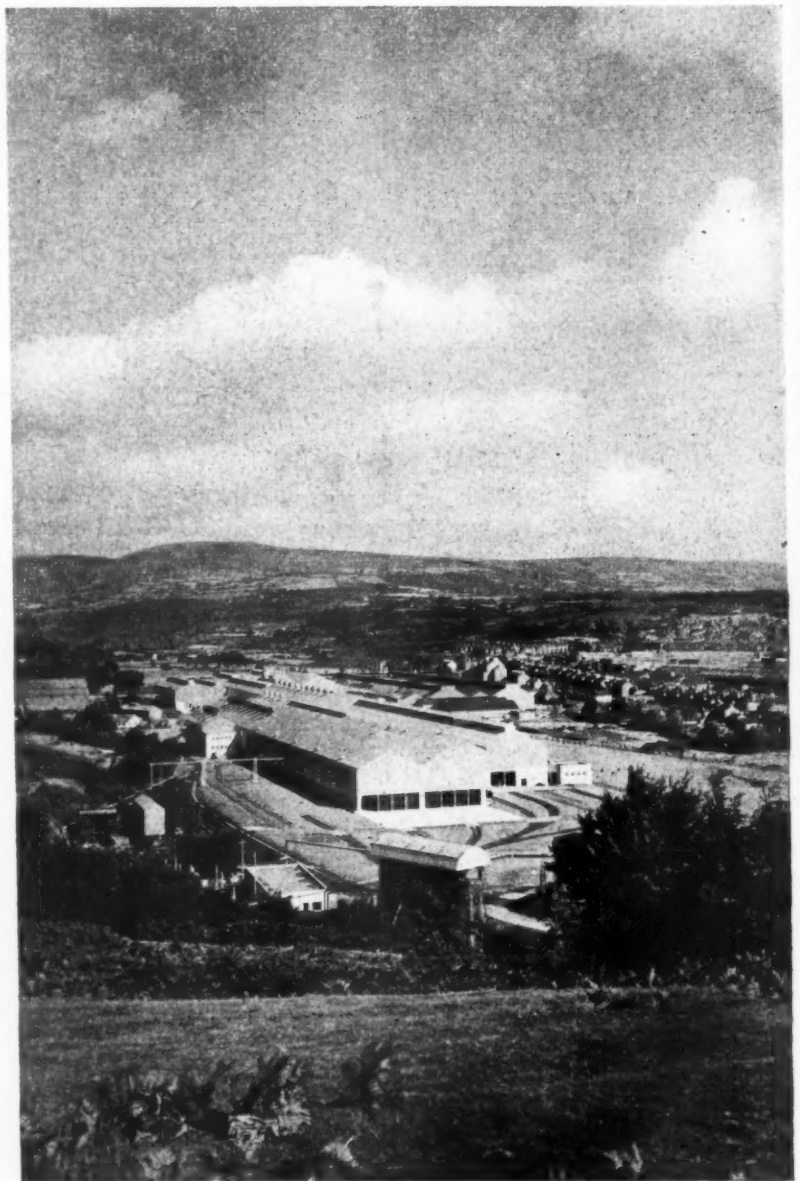
(a) If what a critic writes is true in substance and in fact it is no libel; or

(b) If the critic can show that the words complained of are fair comment on a matter of public interest then no action for libel will lie.

It is a good defence to an action for libel to show that the words complained of are true. This is known as "Justification" and the reason for the rule is that "the law will not permit a man to recover damages in respect of injury to a character which he either does not or ought not to possess."

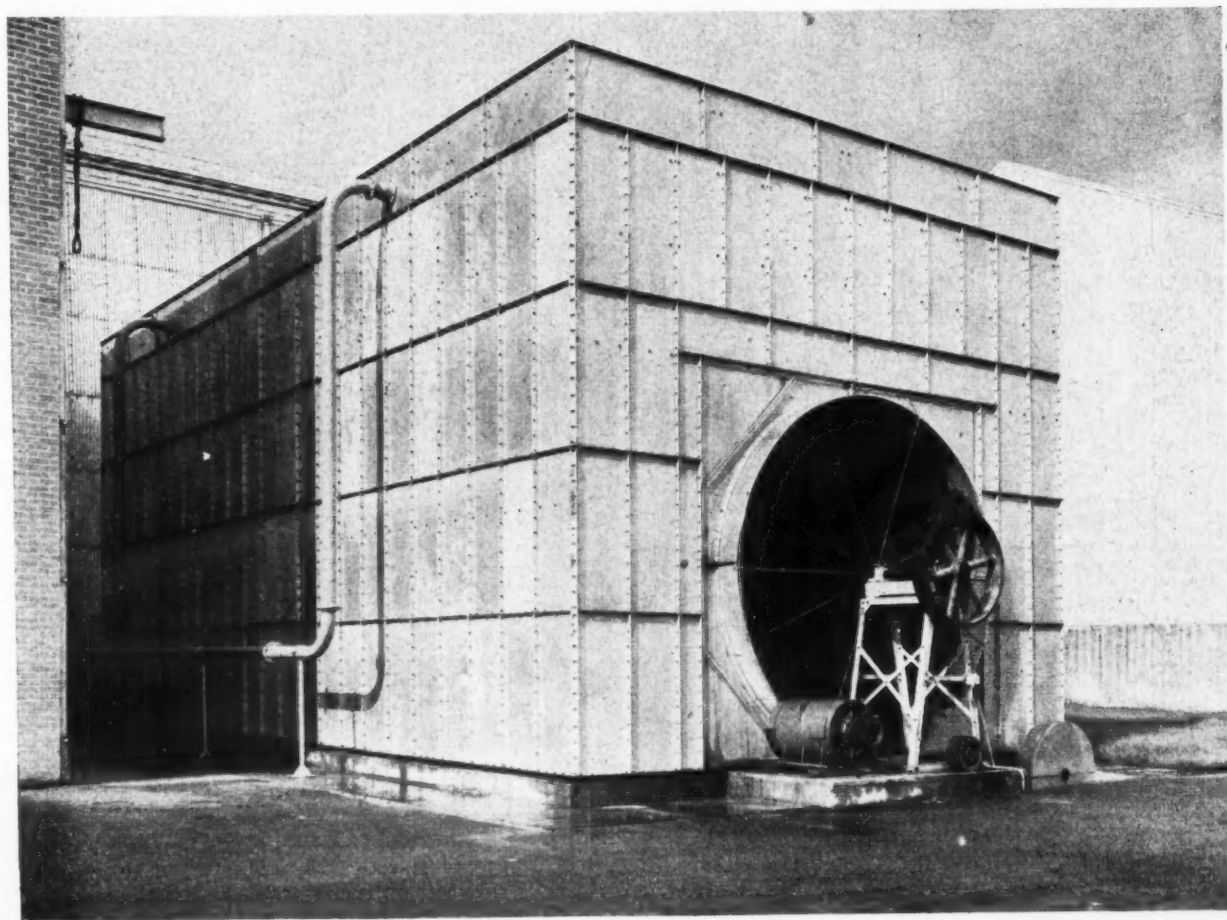
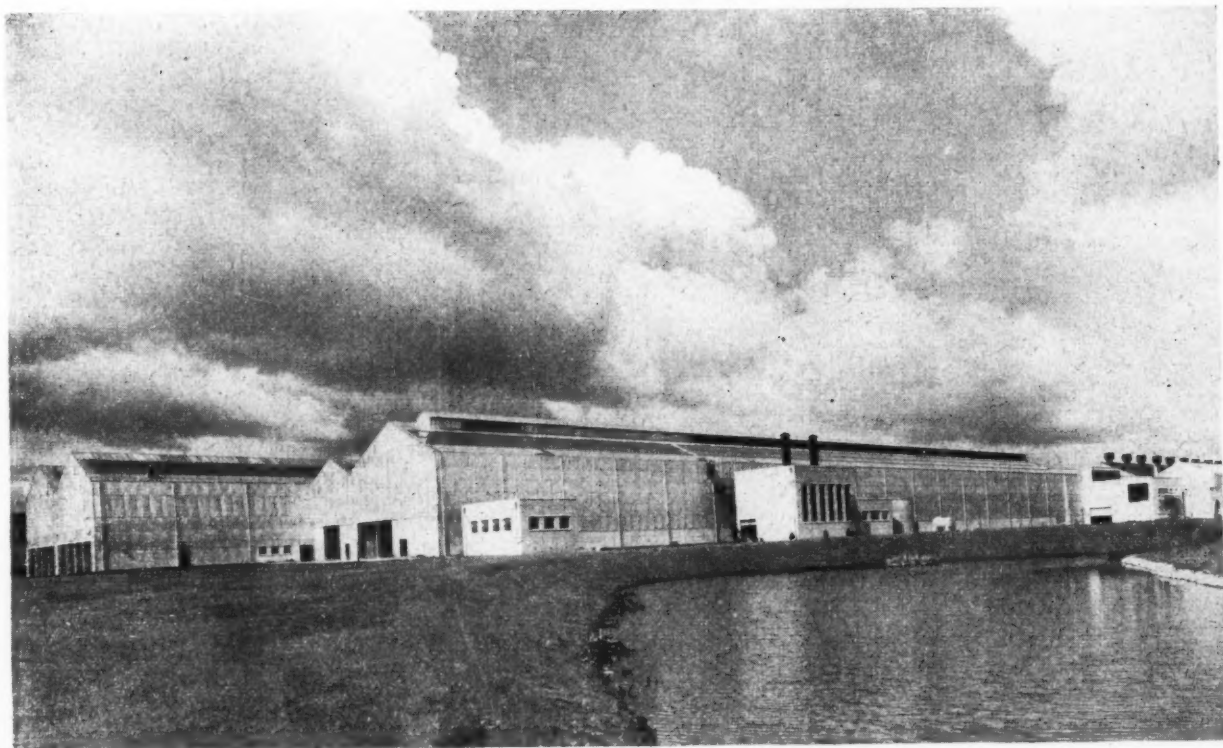
A critic may make statements which, on the face of them, are clearly most damaging to another person's reputation. But if what the writer says is true, then the other person has no right to a reputation free from those imputations and, therefore, having no right to such reputation he cannot recover damages for the loss of it. To take an absurd example: if it were written of an architect that in designing a building he had failed to make provision for staircases and this could be shown to be true then he would have no grounds for an action however damaging the statement might be.

NEW ALUMINIUM MILL

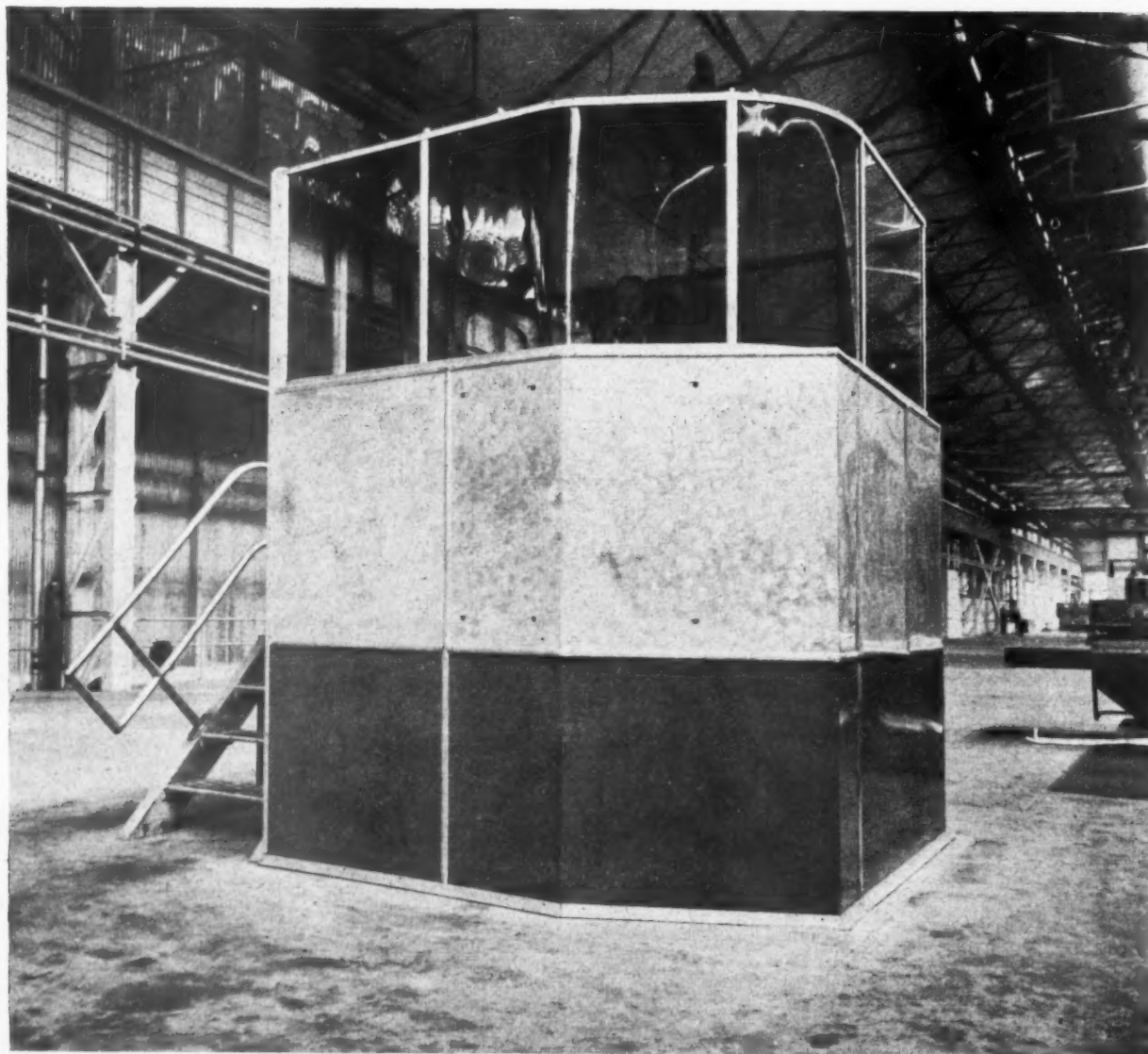
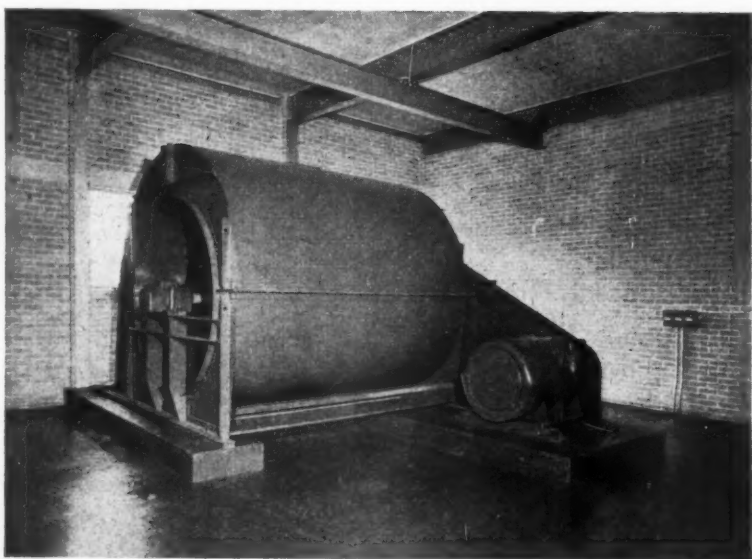
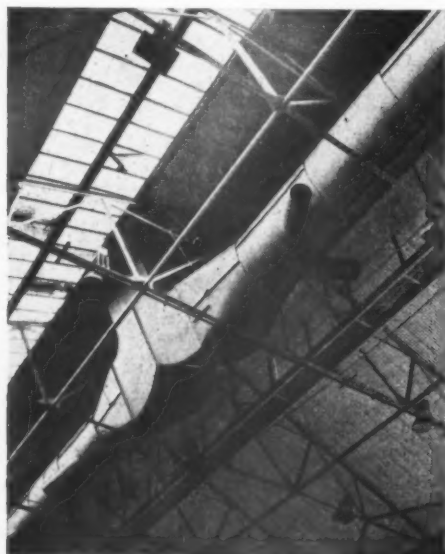


A factory extension, for Northern Aluminium Ltd., has been built at Rogerstone. The consulting architect was G. T. Gardner. Above, the factory from the south. On the right (above) the factory from the east with the boiler house and other service buildings. Below, a forced draught water cooling tower in aluminium sheeting to reduce maintenance. The main buildings are of steel frame construction. The upper walls of the bays are clad in corrugated aluminium sheeting in two layers. Aluminium insulating foil has been placed between the sheets. The lower walls are of 11-in. cavity brick 8 ft. high. All structural steel above crane rail level is finished in aluminium paint. Doors and other fittings are finished in medium blue.

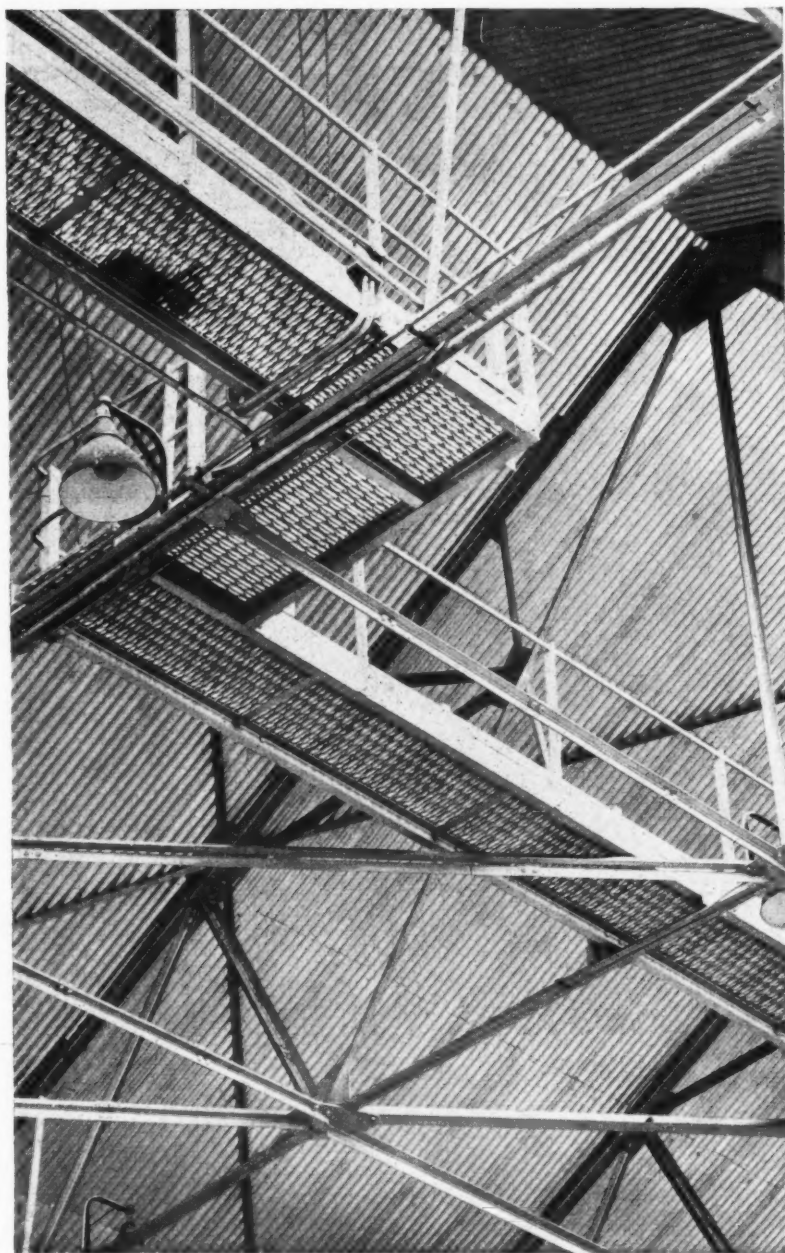
R E C E N T L Y O P E N E D I N W A L E S



N E W A L U M I N I U M M I L L R E C E N T L Y



O P E N E D I N W A L E S



Photographs on opposite page show top left, duct in west end of the building which was used for the plenum system, now to give extra ventilation as required; top right, one of two 120-in. fans that give cool air at the rate of 125,000 c.f.m. left, aluminium office for the centre mill. Above, section of the aluminium roof walkway.

In order to establish a defence of justification the defendant must be able to prove that the statement complained of is, in fact, true. It is not enough for the defendant to prove that he believed it to be true, even though he made it clear that he published the statement merely as a matter of belief. "If I say of a man that I believe he committed murder, I cannot justify by saying and proving that I did believe it. I can only justify by proving the fact of murder."

If, however, the libel contains not merely statements of fact but goes on to express opinions on those facts and such opinions are themselves defamatory, then the defendant must also prove the truth of those opinions. It is no defence that the defendant truly held such an opinion or made such an inference, it must be proved that the opinion and inference are true.

To say of an architect that "this is the kind of work he does" and then to point to one particular building he has designed as an example of bad workmanship would not be justified by proving that that building was in fact a bad piece of workmanship. The inference or opinion expressed in "this is the kind of work he does" is that he habitually does work of this quality and the defendant would have to substantiate the truth of such an allegation. On the other hand, however, a defendant, in order to justify, is not required to prove the truth of every single word of an alleged libel. If he is able to prove that the main charge or gist of the libel is true he does not have to justify facts or opinions which do not add to the "sting" of the libel. It is sufficient if the substance of the libel is justified.

Justification is a good defence to any action for libel. So long, therefore, as the critic confines himself to a true statement of the facts and any comments he makes on those facts are correct he can range over the whole field of architectural work.

No action lies if the defendant can prove that the words complained of are fair comment on a matter of public interest. This defence known as "Fair Comment" is only available in relation to "matters of public interest" which we have discussed above. It is of the utmost importance to the critic and what it amounts to is this: though the words complained of are really defamatory they are not actionable at law.

"Fair Comment" differs from "Justification" in this way. Under "Justification" the defendant must, as we have seen, prove the truth of every injurious imputation whether it is expressed as a fact or merely as an opinion. Under "Fair Comment," however, while the critic must still justify, or prove the truth of, every fact he need not "justify" his opinion. It is sufficient if he can satisfy the Court that the opinions which he expressed were the honest expression of his real opinions and it does not matter whether they are, in fact, true. For example, if a critic were to write that an architect in designing a building had omitted to make provision for lifts whereas in fact lifts were provided for he could not rely on the defence or "fair comment" because this is not "comment" at all but a statement, or rather a misstatement, of fact. If, however, the critic were to say that the lifts were not placed in the most advantageous positions this may be comment and provided it were his honest opinion he would be protected by the plea of "fair comment."

But "to entitle any publication to the benefit of the defence of fair comment it must be clear to those who read the words what the facts are and what comments are made on them. And for two reasons. Because it is impossible to know whether the comments are fair unless we know what the facts are; and because the public must have an opportunity of judging the value of the comments."

The primary rule, therefore, is that the

critic should never mix his facts and comments so that the reader cannot readily distinguish which are facts and which are comments; let him, so far as he can, first set out the facts and then go on to comment on those facts. In any event, however, he must take care that his criticism stands out as criticism and does not become intermingled with the facts for any matter which does not indicate with reasonable clearness that it purports to be comment and not fact cannot be protected by the plea of "fair comment."

Next, the comment must be honest comment. If the critic is "actuated by a malicious motive; that is to say by some motive other than the pure expression of his real opinion" then the defence of "fair comment" would fail. Thus if under the cloak of criticising a work a critic wrote with the indirect intention of injuring the person whose work he criticised this would not be honest comment.

If, however, the facts are truly stated and the comment is an honest expression of the critic's opinion it is "fair comment" however incorrect be the views expressed by the critic or however exaggerated or even prejudiced be the language of the criticism.

The limits of criticism are, therefore, very wide but it must not descend to mere invective. If, however, the language complained of is such as can be fairly called criticism the fact that it is violent, exaggerated, or even in a sense unjust, will not, in itself, render it unfair. Criticism may be fairly and reasonably expressed although it be through the medium of ridicule.

Finally we must consider by what standard such criticism is judged. "The jury have no right to substitute their own opinion of the . . . work in question for that of the critic, or to try the 'fairness' of the criticism by any such standard. 'Fair,' therefore in this collocation certainly does not mean that which the ordinary reasonable man, 'the man on the Clapham omnibus' as Lord Bowen phrased it, the juryman common or special, would think a correct appreciation of the work; and it is of the highest importance to the community that the critic should be saved from any such possibility."

In other words the jury, in deciding the question, have no right to apply the standard of their own taste to the subject matter criticised. If this were so there would be an end to all just and necessary criticism, for a jury could then say that a criticism was unfair merely because they did not agree with the views expressed by the critic. What a jury has to decide is this: could a fair-minded man, however prejudiced he might be, or however exaggerated or obstinate his views have written this criticism?—which is a totally different question from the question, "Do you agree with what he said?"

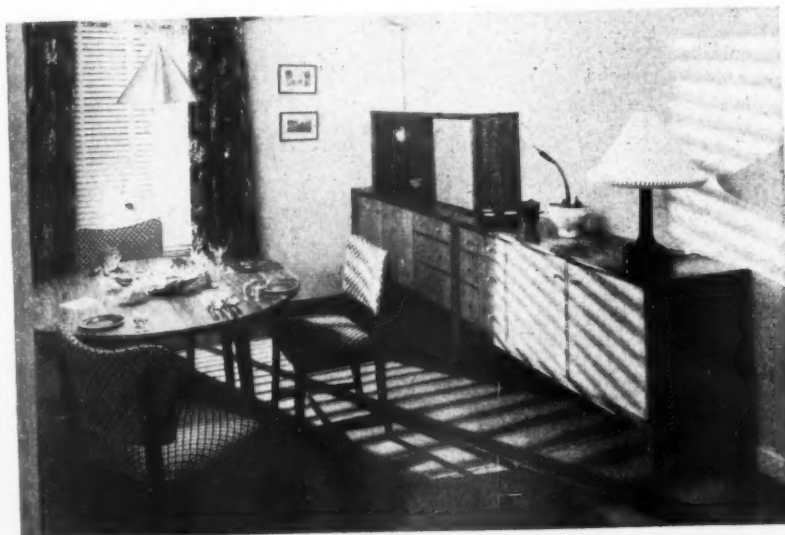
To sum up we can say that architectural criticism whether technical or æsthetic does not, so far as the law of libel is concerned, differ materially from any other form of criticism but because architecture is concerned so largely with matters of fact the critic must be particularly careful in this respect.



NEW RANGE OF UTILITY



The furniture illustrated on this and the following page is part of a set of utility pieces designed by Story and Co. Ltd. It is obtained in two combinations of wood.



UNIT FURNITURE



INFORMATION CENTRE • INFORMATION SHEETS
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS • CURRENT TECHNIQUE
THE INDUSTRY • PRICES • TECHNICAL ARTICLES

TECHNICAL SECTION

A digest of current information prepared by independent specialists; printed so that readers may cut out items for filing and paste them up in classified order, headings below.

INFORMATION CENTRE

4.64 planning: urban and rural ABERDEEN SURVEY AND PLAN

The City and Royal Burgh of Aberdeen Survey and Plan 1949—2 Vols. W. Dobson Chapman and Partners. Vol. 1 Survey Report; Vol. 2 Planning Proposals (Limited preliminary edition, prepared for the Corporation of the City of Aberdeen, 1950).

Report on survey and planning proposals for the City of Aberdeen by the Corporation's planning consultants. The policy recommended for the planning of the City is one of improvement rather than major re-adjustments. Vol. 1. 414 pp. typescript, 30 maps, 43 illustrations; Vol. 2. 293 pp. typescript, 17 plans, 25 illustrations.

Aberdeen is the most northerly of the important cities of Britain and is the leading City in the whole of the north-east of Scotland. The population is about 180,000. In making any study of this report it is important to appreciate the background history of its commission. The authors point out that the Corporation of the City of Aberdeen and the councils of the neighbouring county authorities are among the few local authorities in Great Britain to have prepared and secured ministerial approval of a town planning scheme under the Planning Acts of 1925 and 1932. The main purpose of schemes under these Acts was to control new development and, being permissive, the powers were not often invoked in respect of parts already developed or not likely to be developed. In the case of the Aberdeen and District Joint Town

Planning Scheme, 1933, the central parts of the City were excluded from the scheme and no planning proposals were prepared for these parts. The position changed, however, with the passing of the Town and Country Planning (interim development) (Scotland) Act, 1943, which put the whole of Scotland under planning control; the addition of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1945 gave to this control a more positive bias than hitherto.

With the stimulus given by these new

powers the City Council decided to have prepared an exhaustive civic survey and an advisory plan for the whole area of the city with particular reference to the central area: the general plan should be supplemented by detailed plans of the central area and other parts as required. At the beginning of 1947, Messrs. W. Dobson Chapman & Partners were instructed to undertake this work and to complete, if possible, within two-and-a-half years.

During this period the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1947 came into operation and a statutory requirement was laid upon local planning authorities to undertake a comprehensive survey of their area and to prepare a development plan by July 1, 1951, and the Department of Health for Scotland have issued recommendations and regulations on the lines on which this work should be done.

As far as practicable the consultants modified their own technique used on this survey and plan so as to ease the task of translating at a later date this survey and



The setting.

1 Sociology. 2 Planning: General. 3 Planning: Regional and National. 4 Planning: Urban and Rural. 5 Planning: Public Utilities. 6 Planning: Social and Recreational. 7 Practice. 8 Surveying, Specification. 9 Design: General. 10 Design: Building Types. 11 Materials: General. 12 Materials: Metal. 13 Materials: Timber. 14 Materials: Concrete. 15 Materials: Applied Finishes, Treatments. 16 Materials: Miscellaneous. 17 Construction: General. 18 Construction: Theory. 19 Construction: Details. 20 Construction: Complete Structures. 21 Construction: Miscellaneous. 22 Sound Insulation-Acoustics. 23 Heating, Ventilation. 24 Lighting. 25 Water Supply, Sanitation. 26 Services Equipment: Miscellaneous. 27 Furniture, Fittings. 28 Miscellaneous.



Aerial view of Aberdeen by Aerofilms Ltd.

advisory plan in to a form suitable for an official submission to the Department of Health. The authors claim that this survey and plan can perhaps be regarded in many respects as the prototype of the City Surveys and Development Plans required under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1947.

The layout of this report follows a fairly conventional pattern. The report on the survey includes eight chapters: Aberdeen yesterday and today, 26 pp.; regional setting and physical background, 21 pp.; communications 67 pp.; public utilities, 25 pp.; social services, 48 pp.; existing uses, 140 pp.; population, 21 pp.; communal facilities and physical amenities, 26 pp. The Report on the proposals includes eleven chapters:

the problem, 10 pp.; population, 5 pp.; employment, 7 pp.; industrial provision, 19 pp.; housing and planning, 19 pp.; central area provision, 30 pp.; education and health services, 21 pp.; recreation and general communal facilities, 31 pp.; communications, 11 pp.; amenities, 14 pp.; realization, 68 pp.

There are fourteen appendices in all: they include a very detailed population forecast and an analysis of floor space indices and quantities of accommodation.

It is difficult within the compass of a few paragraphs to comment upon this work, but in general it appears to be a sound and conscientious study. In its present form, however, it is a work which suffers through some serious lapses in editing. Planning reports are books for use. Once city fathers

and the rate-payers have lost that first flush of enthusiasm often felt on receiving a new report it is especially likely that the report will be pigeon holed if that report is unattractive to handle. The weight of the two volumes of the present edition is 14 lb. The weight and length of this work alone means that the reports will be mainly used as a source of reference. It is infuriating, therefore, to find in a book which is likely to be used mainly as a reference book that the authors who have gone to the trouble of compiling an immense amount of material, had it nicely typed, and produced some quite good maps and drawings, have yet made the path of the inquiring reader in finding his way around the pages about as difficult a task as possible.

It is too much to hope for to find a fully cross-referenced index accompanying text matter still in typescript form, but at least there should have been provided a contents list which included chapters, sections, subsections and so on and some form of running headings to each page. As it is only chapter and main section headings are included. These omissions ought to be made good if a new edition is produced, as has been suggested [see news item].

24.143 lighting

LIGHTING FOR THE PIANO

Lighting for the Piano in the Home. E. W. Commermy and M. E. Webber. (Illum. Engineering [USA]. June, 1950. p. 348.)

Trials with various types of domestic fittings. Passing interest; illustrated, photographs.

The Americans are making a characteristic effort to analyse home lighting needs, which have been left hitherto almost entirely in the hands of commercial suppliers. This note describes trials with standard lamps, table lamps, tubular lamps on brackets fixed to the music rack and special ceiling fixtures, to see which are the most promising for piano purposes. The chief result is that they do not much like any of the arrangements they tried, and they make suggestions for manufacturers. The chief value to the general reader is the incentive to think critically about home lighting, with good reference standards.

Readers requiring up-to-date information on building products and services may complete and post this form to The Architects' Journal, 9, 11 and 13, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1.

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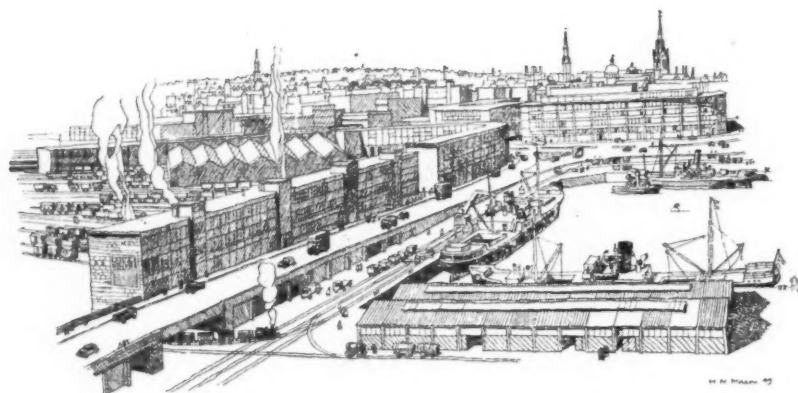
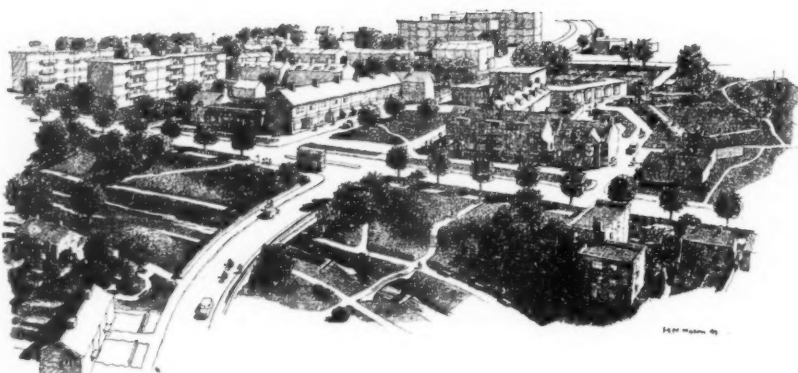
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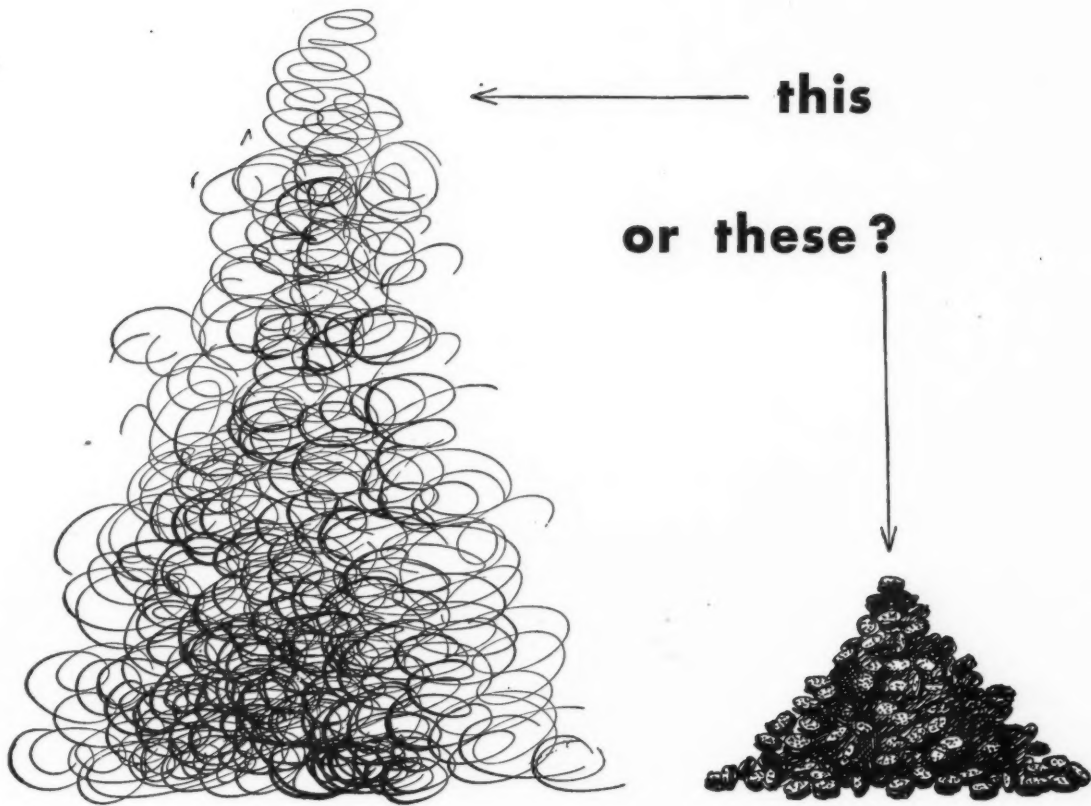
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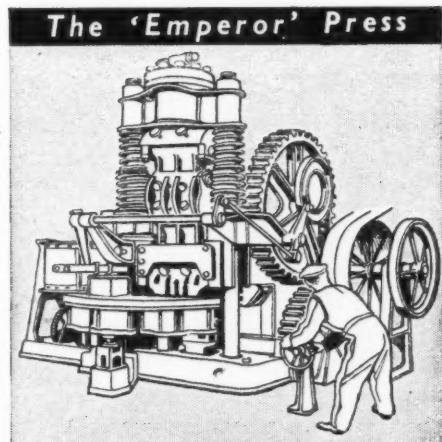


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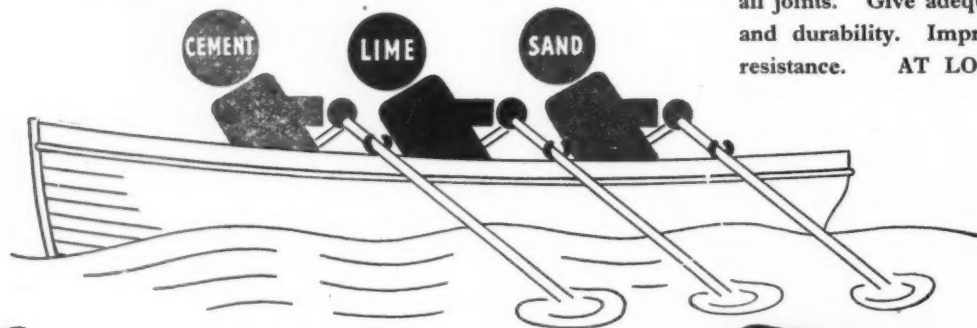
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LOOK TO THE FUTURE



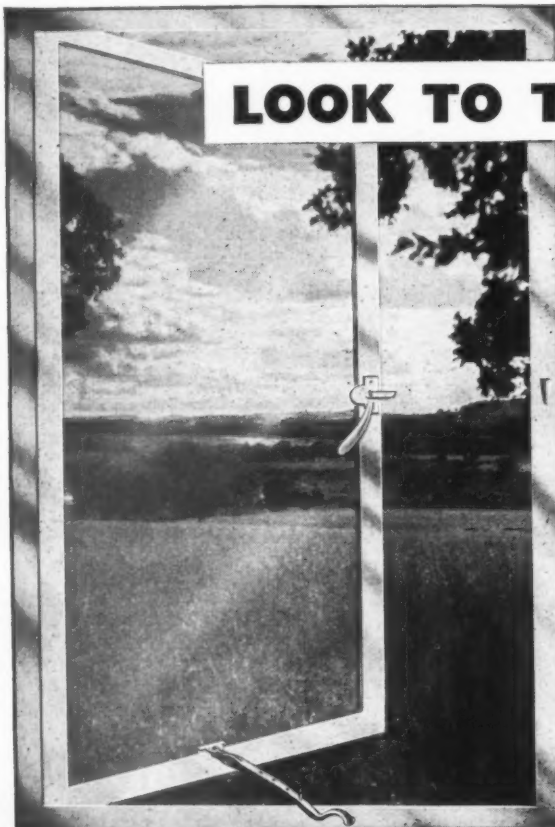
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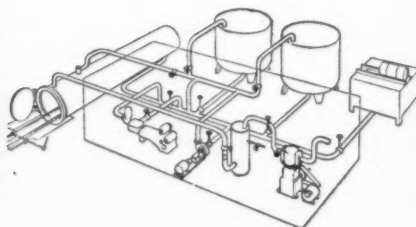
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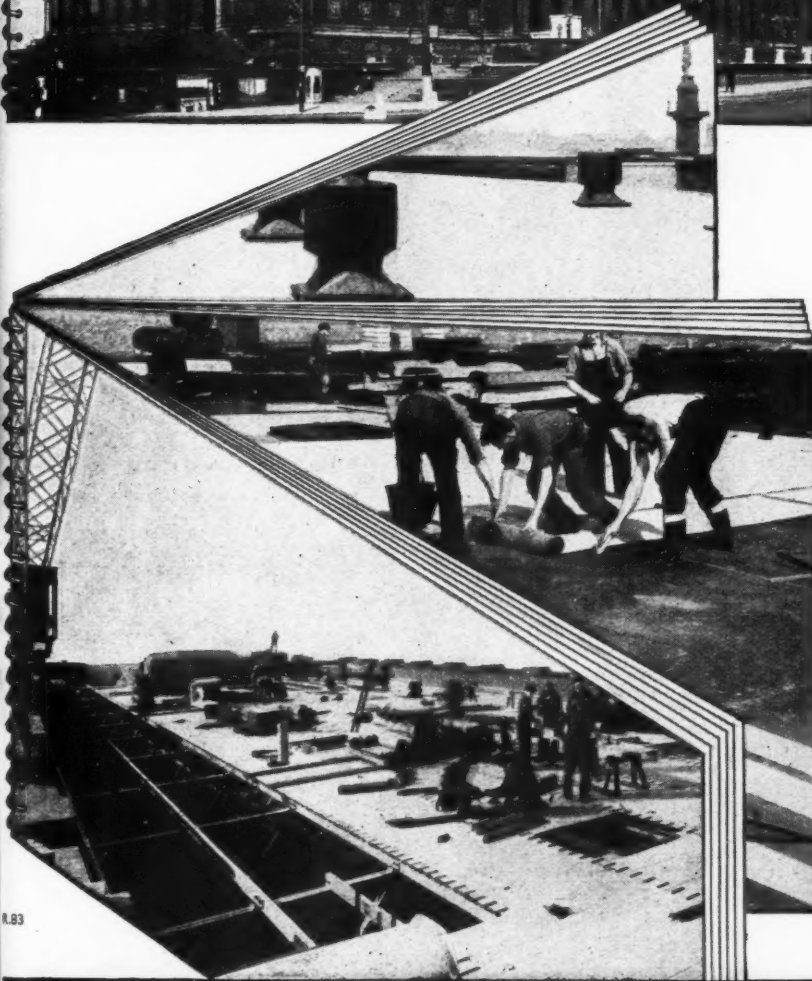
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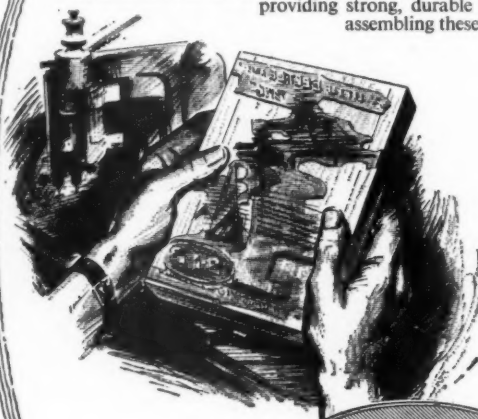
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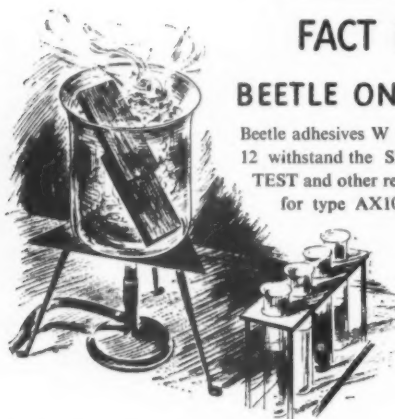
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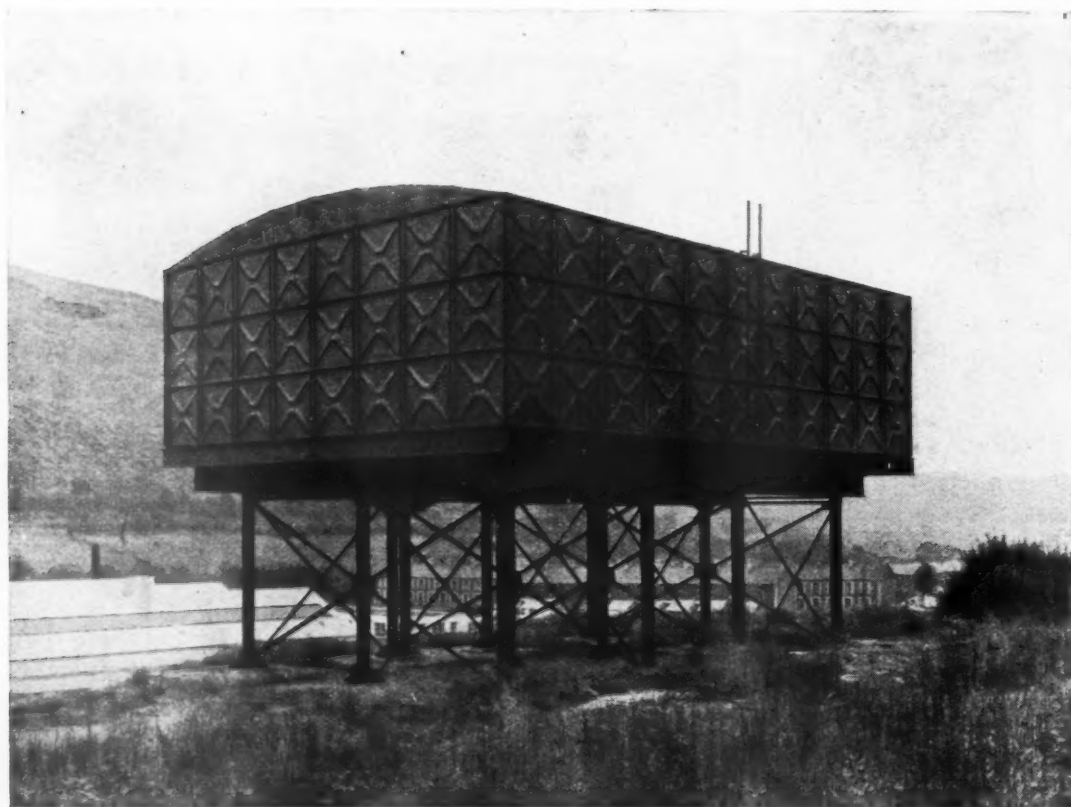


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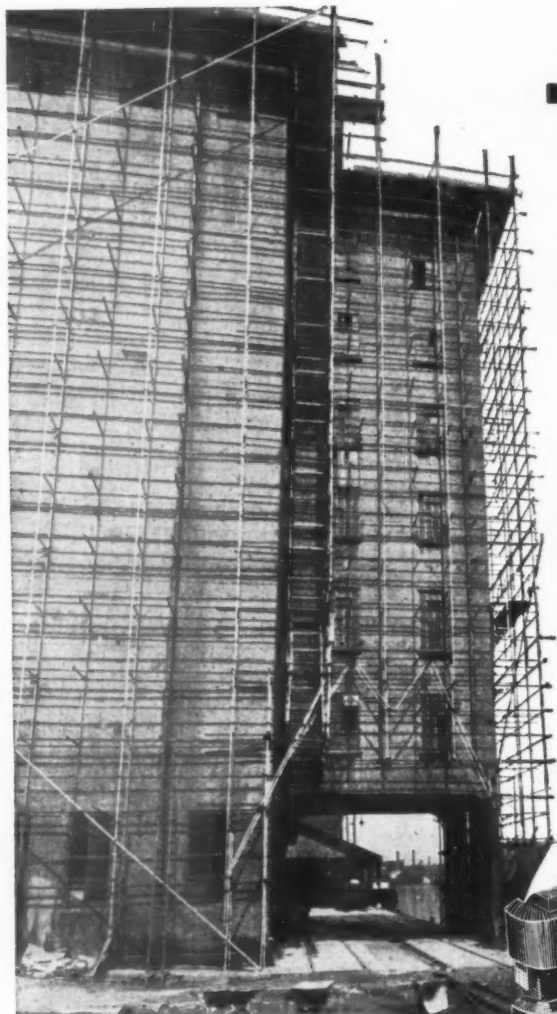
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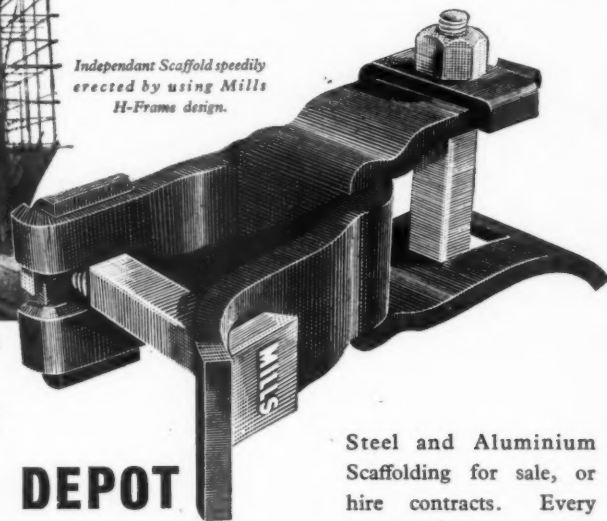


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