

# ENCIL OINTS

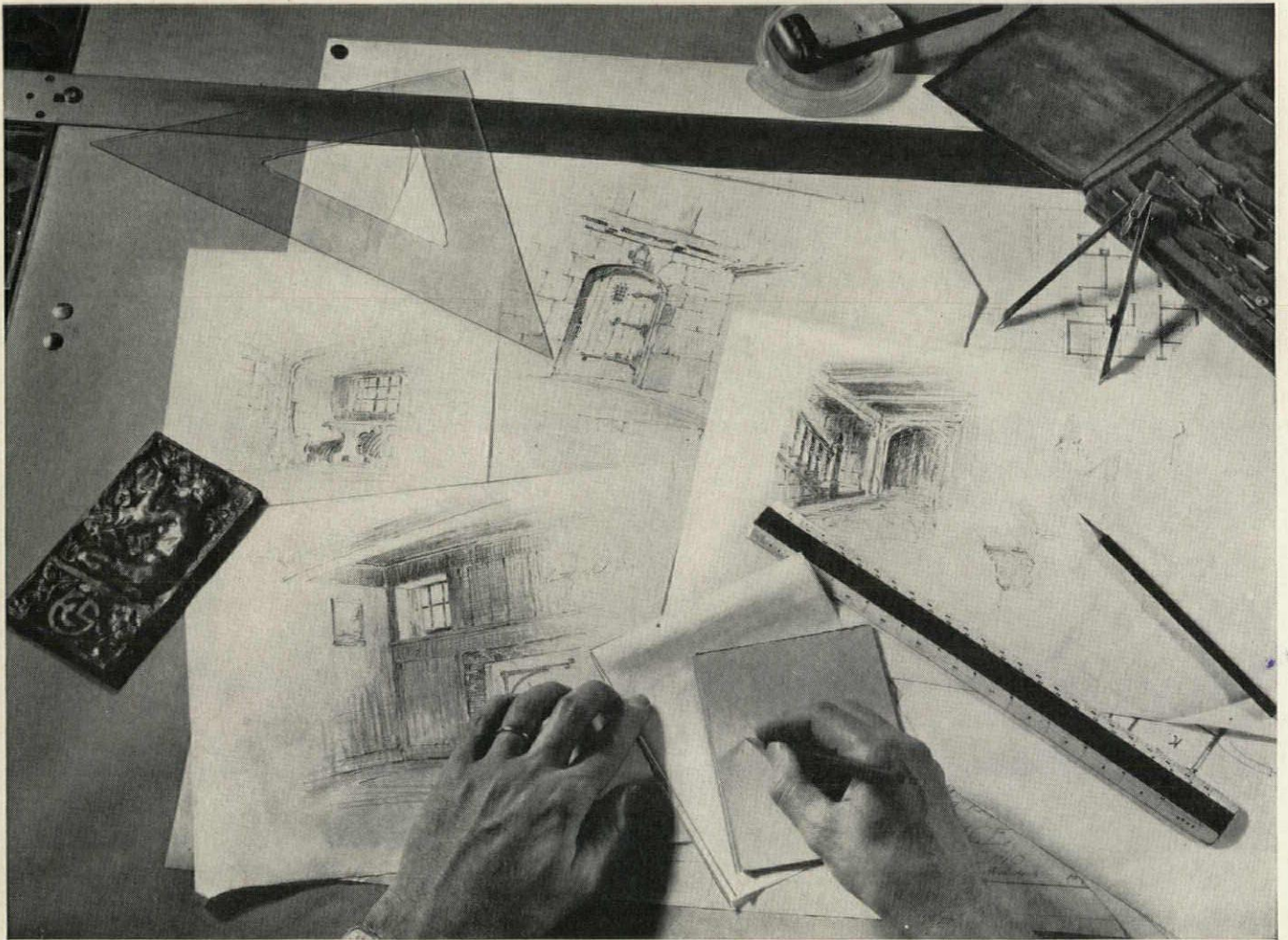
January 1935

GERALD J. PRONZINSKI  
ARCHITECT



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# PENCIL POINTS

JANUARY, 1935



VOLUME XVI, NUMBER 1

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*Something for Everyone in the Architectural Profession*

*Cover Design "Sheffield Scientific School, Yale University" by Samuel Chamberlain*

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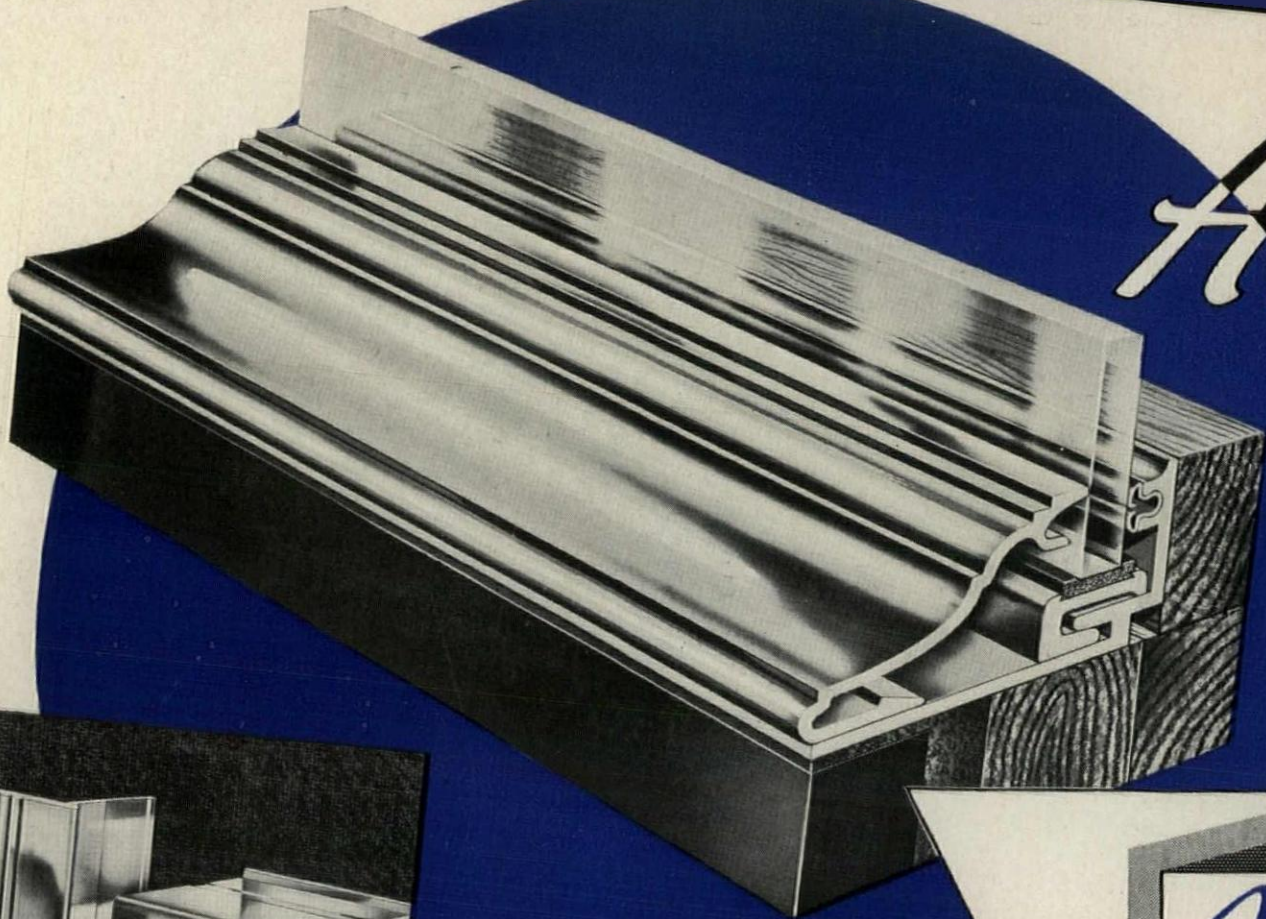
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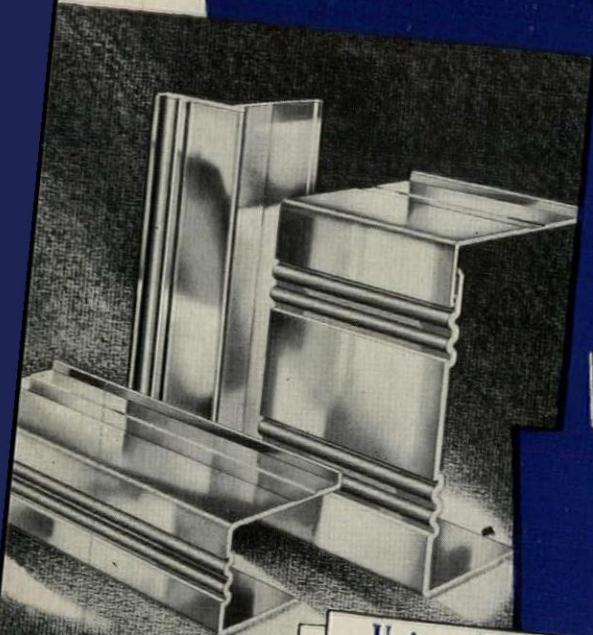
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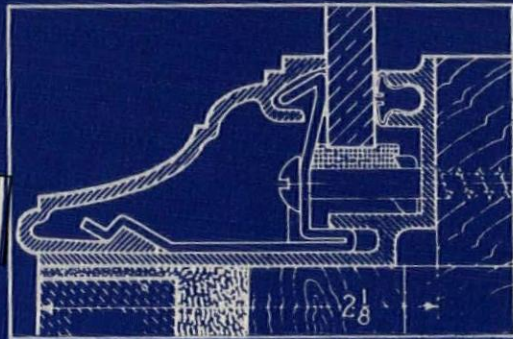
*Am*



*Now*



*Unity of design  
in all mouldings*

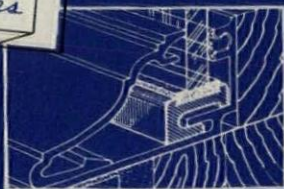


Full size cross-section of Pitco Sash.

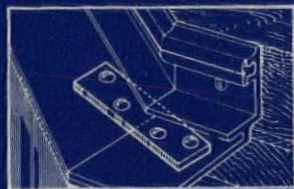


The metal surfaces which contact the sides of glass act as a yielding cushion, absorbing dangerous shocks and jars.

*Trim Vertical Bars  
adjustable to all angles*



Non-ferrous metal supporting blocks are firmly wedged in groove, thus preventing tipping, rocking or sliding out of line during setting of glass.



Heavy metal cleats seated in groove at corners secure miters against rising, falling or spreading due to faulty frame work.



Glass-holding units and face members are self-adjusting to various glass thicknesses without tilting inward or outward.



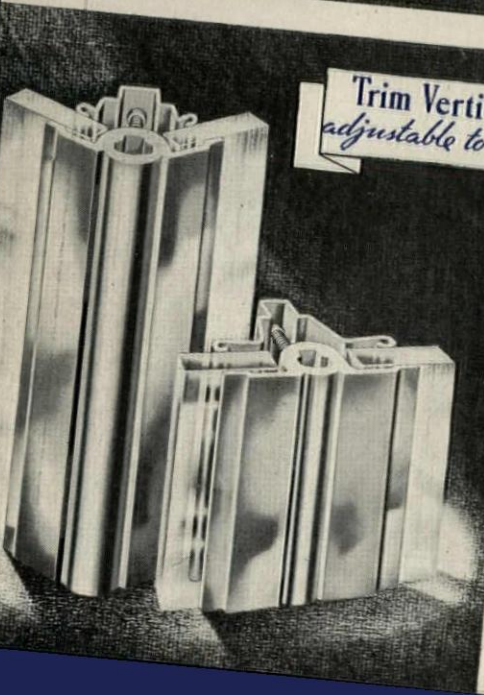
A metal blade inserted in each end of face and locked by pin in rear member is an extra means of securing face in position.



A sturdy square-cut continuous metal flange projects over edge of facing material, shielding the area which is most vulnerable.



The outer edge of inner member serves as a true, unvarying line to which face of structural material is set.





# Announcement

## OF IMPORTANCE TO EVERY ARCHITECT WHO EXPECTS TO DESIGN A STORE FRONT

THE PITTSBURGH PLATE GLASS COMPANY OFFERS

# PITTCO

STORE FRONT METAL

*A new, beautifully designed metal store front construction with double yielding cushion grip on glass.*

IT'S new . . . different . . . better . . . it's something you'll want to know about for the next store front job which comes to your board! For Pittco Store Front Metal has all the chief advantages of other store front constructions . . . and many new ones of its own!

**BETTER DESIGN . . .** Pittco didn't "just grow". It was deliberately designed as a complete line, all at the same time, and therefore exhibits a pleasing harmony and relationship of appearance, a true *unity* of design. **GREATER STRENGTH AND CLEAR-CUT CONTOURS . . .** all Pittco exposed members are extruded from solid metal, because this is the only practical means of assuring sharp, clear-cut contours, accuracy of mechanical detail and greater strength. **BETTER DISPLAY . . .** Pittco's generous depth of sash and attractive contours form an appropriate frame for the show window. **BETTER GLASS PROTECTION . . .** Pittco's new double yielding cushion grip on glass guards against breakage, strains and jars. **NEW CONVENIENCE . . .** Pittco vertical bars can be adjusted to all angles. And Pittco permits plate glass to be set in rear members of sash, show window to be prepared for use, and face of building to be washed down, before outer members of sash

are applied. **FINER FINISHES . . .** Pittco is furnished in Alumilited Aluminum and in Architectural Bronze, Satin or Polished finish.

Find out about this new and better store front metal. Ask our warehouse in your vicinity for a demonstration. And you'll want our A. I. A. File Folder of complete information on Pittco, with five detail drawings showing various applications of Pittco, including its use in combination with Carrara Structural Glass. Sign and mail the coupon now.

PRODUCTS OF  
**PITTSBURGH**  
PLATE GLASS COMPANY



Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company  
2316 Grant Building, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Please send me without obligation on request your folder containing full information on Pittco and detail drawings.

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FIRM \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_



GENERAL  ELECTRIC

# HOME ELECTRIC

**\$21,000**

**IN PRIZES**

**The purpose of this competition is to stimulate interest in home building and to encourage better designed homes from the standpoint of health, convenience, comfort and entertainment, utilizing the latest mechanical and electrical advances.**

**T**HE General Electric Company is naturally interested in making the American home more livable, through better planning and improved design.

In offering prizes of \$21,000 for more livable home designs, it is General Electric's hope to stimulate the skill and ingenuity of designers to bring about better health, increased comfort, greater convenience and improved facilities for the home entertainment of the entire family.

There have been many architectural competitions that emphasized exterior design. But so far as is known, this Competition is the first that places major emphasis on the utilization of modern interior equipment. Exterior design will of course be a factor in awarding prizes, but the judges will give greater weight to the skill and ingenuity with which

the architect has provided for the maximum health, comfort, convenience and entertainment of the family for which the house is planned. This family is described in detail in the Competition program.

The G-E Architectural Competition is divided into four classifications, as follows:

Class A—*Small home—Northern climate*

Class B—*Small home—Southern climate*

Class C—*Medium Size home—Northern climate*

Class D—*Medium Size home—Southern climate*

Equal prizes are offered in each class, as noted elsewhere. Each competitor may submit as many designs as he wishes—in any or all classes; and each design is eligible for a prize. In addition to winning one or more of the \$1500 prizes, a competitor may also win one or both of the two \$1000 grand prizes.

Any architect, engineer, draftsman or designer, ex-



ANNOUNCES A

# COMPETITION

## 54 PRIZES IN ALL

GRAND PRIZE for Best Small Home . . . \$2500. (Best Home in Classes A and B)	
GRAND PRIZE for Best Medium Size Home . . . 2500. (Best Home in Classes C and D)	
FIRST PRIZE for Best Small Home in Class not receiving Grand Prize . . . . .	1500.
FIRST PRIZE for Best Medium Size Home in Class not receiving Grand Prize . . .	1500.
SECOND PRIZE, in each of the four classi- fications . . . . .	\$1250. 5000.
THIRD PRIZE, in each of the four classi- fications . . . . .	1000. 4000.
HONORABLE MENTION, ten in each of the four classifications . . . . .	100. 4000.
	Total <u>\$21,000</u>

### Competition Program and Handy G-E Reference File... Free to each Competitor

The coupon below is your entry blank. It brings you the complete Competition program and the G-E reference file. Fill it out and mail today.

For the convenience and assistance of competitors, we have prepared a handy reference file containing architectural data on all General Electric products used in home construction or equipment.

This file will be sent free to each competitor, along with complete information regarding the rules of the competition and requirements governing plans and drawings.

cept G-E employees, is eligible to compete. The Competition will begin on January 2, 1935, and close at midnight, March 12, 1935. The judging by the Jury of Award will take place on March 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23; and announcement of prize winners will be made on March 23. The Jury of Award will consist of eleven members—seven architects representing different sections of the United States, one expert in child training, one home economics expert, one general contractor and one realtor. Names of jurors will be announced on March 19, the first day of the judging.

All entries will be judged anonymously—with only a nom de plume or other identifying device appearing on the drawings.

Prize-winning designs will be published together with the report of the Jury of Award.



**FREE**

### USE THIS ENTRY BLANK

Professional Advisor,  
G-E Architectural Competition,  
General Electric Co., Room 1208  
570 Lexington Ave., New York, N. Y. P.P.-1-35

GENTLEMEN: I desire to enter the G-E Architectural Competition for "Home Electric." Please send me full information and the handy G-E Reference File.

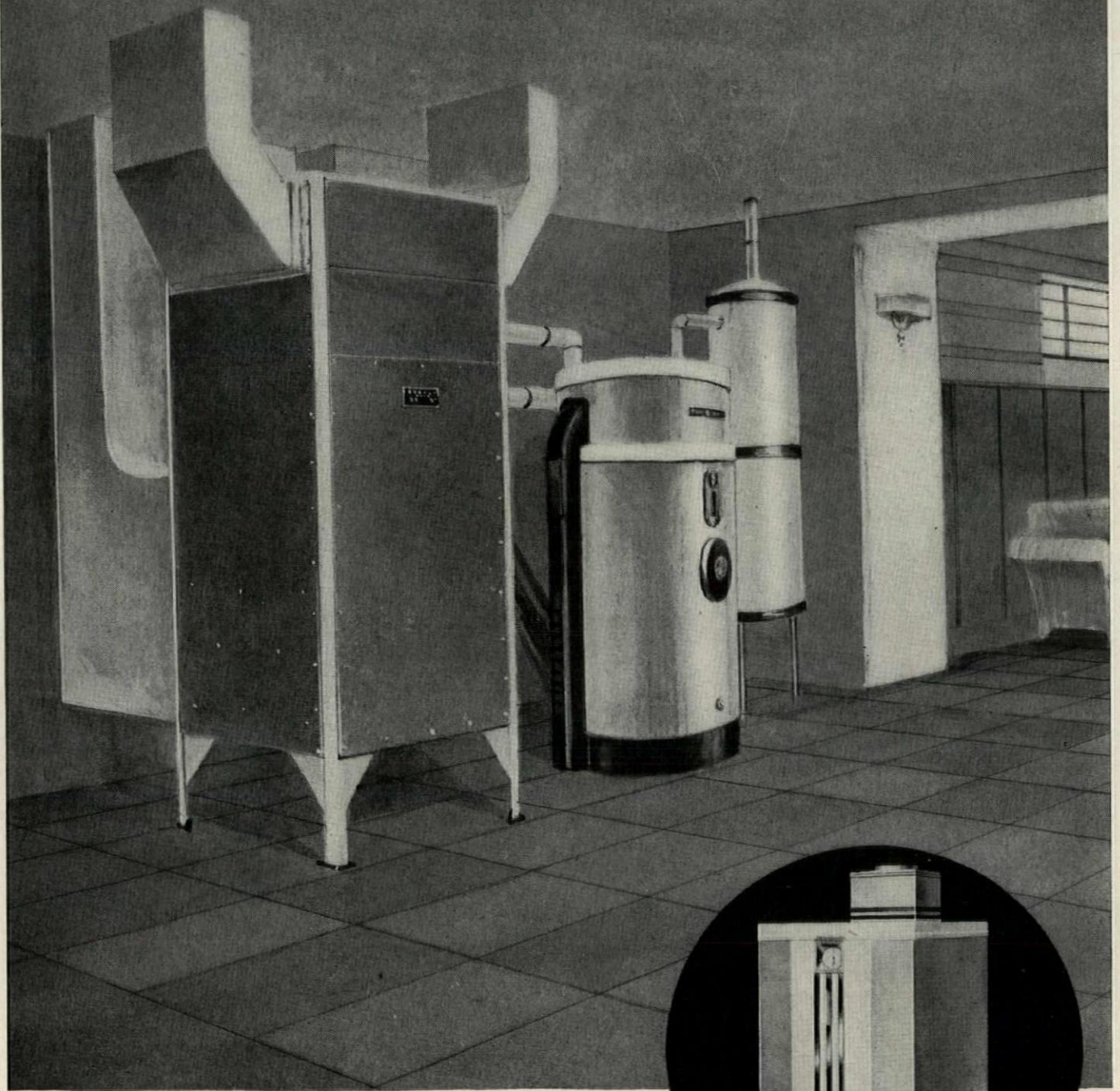
Name..... (PRINT)

Business Connection.....

Address.....



# AIR CONDITIONING



The above illustration shows one type of installation of a G-E Air Conditioning System as it looks in a modern basement ready for winter service. Either the G-E Oil Furnace (as shown) or the G-E Gas Furnace (see insert) may be used to supply the heat. The Oil Furnace also supplies hot water to the storage tank.



# AT RADIATOR COST

*In a new house, the G-E Air Conditioning System can be installed for about the same price as a good vapor vacuum system with concealed radiation.*

**T**HE G-E Air Conditioning System for winter service, delivering conditioned air through ducts to the various rooms, can be installed for approximately the same cost as a G-E Oil Furnace and a good vapor vacuum system with concealed radiation.

The G-E Air Conditioning System offers a number of distinct advantages, for example:—

**Split System**—Kitchen, bathrooms, garage—any rooms where air conditioning is not needed or not desirable may be heated by radiators in connection with the system—either steam or hot water. Also the furnace and the air conditioning unit may be placed at the most advantageous positions in the basement for connection with chimney and duct risers. They can be at opposite ends of the basement if necessary.

**Uses Oil or Gas**—Either the G-E Oil Furnace or the G-E Gas Furnace may be used with the system.

**Cooling May be Added**—The Air Conditioner is so designed that a cooling unit may be added at a later date without extensive alterations.

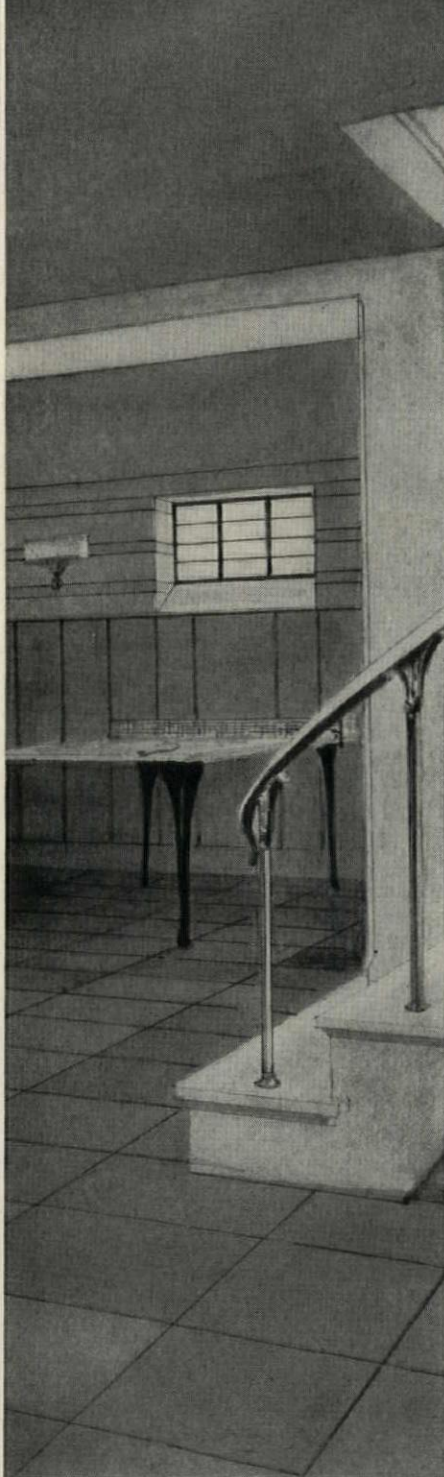
**Tested and Proved**—Before G-E

Air Conditioning equipment is placed on the market, it is thoroughly tested and tried under actual living conditions in the G-E Proving Home.

**Entirely designed and made by one company**—G-E Air Conditioning equipment, including coordinating controls, is not “assembled.” It is designed and made by General Electric under one responsibility.

**Installation and service by exclusive dealers**—There are G-E Air Conditioning Dealers in principal cities throughout the country. Each sells the entire G-E air conditioning line. Each has on his staff trained men who know their business, speak your language. They will work with you from the blue-print stage onward.

Architects who are entering the G-E Architectural Competition mentioned on previous pages of this magazine will receive complete descriptions of the entire G-E Air Conditioning line. Our dealer in your locality will be glad to cooperate with you on any other plans you may have on the boards. Address Air Conditioning Dept., General Electric Co., Dept. P.P.-1, 570 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y.



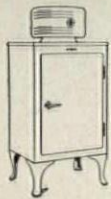
**GENERAL  ELECTRIC  
AIR CONDITIONING**



# THE GENERAL ELECTRIC KITCHEN wins top honors in any competition!!!



The General Electric Kitchen Institute offers full cooperation to architects on MODERN KITCHEN PLANNING. Services include detailed specifications and information on all G-E Kitchen appliances. For further information see the G-E Distributor in your locality.



(left) World's finest automatic electric range — the G-E Imperial.



(right) G-E Companion — \$72 (plus freight). Many other models.



General Electric refrigerators are first in dependable performance, first in modern styling, and lowest in operating cost. Universally recognized as the standard of refrigeration excellence. Models and sizes for every requirement . . . including Monitor Top, Flat-top and Liftop types.



G-E Electric Dish-washer washes all the dishes in 5 minutes. Costs less than 1c a day to operate. Models for every kitchen.



**S**ENSING the ever-increasing demand of modern women for kitchens *completely* equipped with electrical servants, architects with an ear to the ground invariably include the General Electric Kitchen in home modernization or new construction plans. It gives them a decided edge in any competition!

The General Electric Kitchen has definitely been proved a potent factor in eliminating rental vacancies, both in

apartments and single homes. It is likewise a powerful influence in selling homes at a profit.

Your nearest G-E distributor will be glad to furnish, through the Institute, complete details on any General Electric Kitchen appliances that fit into your plans, for modernization or new construction of either single or multiple residential dwellings. General Electric Co., Specialty Appliance Sales Dept., Sec. CP1, Nela Park, Cleveland, Ohio.

## GENERAL ELECTRIC



# HERE, THERE, THIS & THAT

## *General Electric Architectural Competition*

A national competition for the designs of small homes that will provide the utmost in modern convenience and livability is being sponsored by the General Electric Company. Fifty-four prizes, amounting to a total of \$21,000, will be awarded. By the terms of the Programme, it will be possible for one contestant to win as much as \$5,000.

Mr. Gerard Swope, in his address to the press, said, "This competition will enable the public to get a new vision of what an inexpensive home can be like in this new era of our national development. All the new advances in the art of living should be made available to everybody, and we are confident the architects and designers of the country will be able to show in their designs just how this is to be done in the small house."

Mr. J. F. Quinlan, General Electric Company, New York, has been named as director of the Competition, with Mr. Kenneth K. Stowell, A.I.A., as Professional Adviser.

The object of the competition is clearly stated in the double-page announcement on pages 4 and 5 of this issue of PENCIL POINTS.

A selection of the drawings submitted in this competition will be published in PENCIL POINTS.

## *WGN Broadcasting Auditorium Competition Results*

The nation-wide competition for the design of the WGN broadcasting auditorium resulted in the award of First Prize (\$2500) to Ernest Alton Grunsfeld, Jr., of Chicago; Second Prize (\$750) to Andrew N. Rebori and Edgar Miller of Chicago in collaboration; Third Prize (\$250) to John E. Miller of the Department of Architecture at Notre Dame University; and Fourth Prize (\$100) to Adrian Waldorf and John W. Knobel of Brooklyn and Richmond Hill, New York, in collaboration. Twenty-one Honorable Mentions carrying \$50 each were also awarded to Paul Nelson and Fernand Leger, Rolfe Renouf, the Charles H. Schmitz Company, Robert Bruce Tague, Clarence E. Wechselberger, David Chapman, Thomas Madden, Claude Bragdon, Loven & Mortensen, John C. B. Moore, Leon S. Barton, Jr., William W. Knowles and Vincent Aderente, Denby T. Hird, Hogg & Campbell, Henry B. Pennell, Jr., Paul A. Kilp, Wessel & Brunet, Thomas L. Hand, Delmar A. Warren, Benjamin P. Bailey, and Millard Sheets with Erle Webster and Adrian Wilson. It is noteworthy that, although the competition was open to Interior Decorators and designers in general, the four principal awards went to architects and that the First Prize was

won by a man already honored by the Chicago Chapter of the A.I.A. with its Gold Medal in 1930 for his meritorious design of the Adler Planetarium in Chicago.

The winning design, of which photographs could not, unfortunately, be obtained in time for this issue of PENCIL POINTS, was described in the *Chicago Tribune* as "a soft, illusive, uncluttered composition in silver and powder blue for the ceiling, proscenium arch, and walls, while the treatment of doors and seats in deep Morocco red gives body and substance to the general scheme." Mr. Grunsfeld (or "Groomy" as he was known to his friends at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Ecole des Beaux Arts and to his fellow members of the immortal *Pest Club of Rome*) was himself described in the same article as "one of the gifted and influential men of the new, vibrant, provocative school of American architects. He is a modernist without being a grotesque. He believes, as all the significant men believe, that function should determine form, but his belief does not carry him to an insensate, dry-goods box angularity."

Of the other prize winners, every one knows Andy Rebori; the Miller family has demonstrated its worth beyond all question by placing in two prizes; and the Waldorf-Knobel team reflects the training of Lloyd Morgan (you just can't keep that man from having some hand in winning competition awards).

One hundred and eighty-nine designs were submitted by contestants in all parts of the country and the Jury of Award, consisting of Mrs. Robert R. McCormick, Edward S. Beck, W. E. Macfarlane, Carey Orr, and Holmes Onderdonk, all of the *Chicago Tribune*, expressed complete satisfaction with the results.

## *A.I.A. Filing System for Architectural Plates*

The "Standard Filing System for Architectural Plates and Articles," which was prepared by a special committee headed by W. H. Tusler of Minneapolis, has now been in print for several months and has received general commendation from users, according to Edward C. Kemper, Executive Secretary of the Institute. Architects who wish to adopt this standard system for filing their magazine and other reference material can procure official copies by writing to Mr. Kemper at the Octagon House, Washington, D. C. The price is one dollar per copy.

## *FHA Modernization Jobs Bring New Work in Tennessee*

Apropos of the possible benefit to architects of Title I of the National Housing Act, Charles C. Anthony of the Public Relations section of FHA writes; "In addressing the Tennessee A.I.A. Convention on Title I, off the record, I opened the meeting up for discussion and the following situation was disclosed.

"A. For two years Tennessee architects have been earning an average of \$40 a month.

"B. They were only interested in big jobs and this thought was fostered by the

old-timers more than by the younger architects.

"C. Upon telling them what had been accomplished in other cities I asked if anyone present had cashed in on modernization and, to the astonishment of all, one of the younger architects stated that his firm had executed 350 modernization projects and from out of that clientele had closed Title II new home construction plans for seventeen dwellings.

"That started these architects thinking and a series of meetings are planned to follow up this disclosure."

## *New Course on Materials and Equipment*

A new course will be presented by Mr. Eugene Raskin in the Evening Classes of the Columbia University School of Architecture in the coming Spring Session. It will be entitled "Modern Products," and is designed to help the architect in meeting the realities of his profession by means of a survey of building materials and equipment available in this country, with special emphasis on new or recently improved products. The class will meet on Monday evenings in the form of a seminar, to study and discuss manufacturers' literature, details, and examine samples. Visits to typical installations will be arranged where feasible. Registration is from January 30th to February 9th, inclusive. Fee, \$20—plus \$7 University fee.

## *Additional Notes on the Fort Monmouth U.S. Army Headquarters Building*

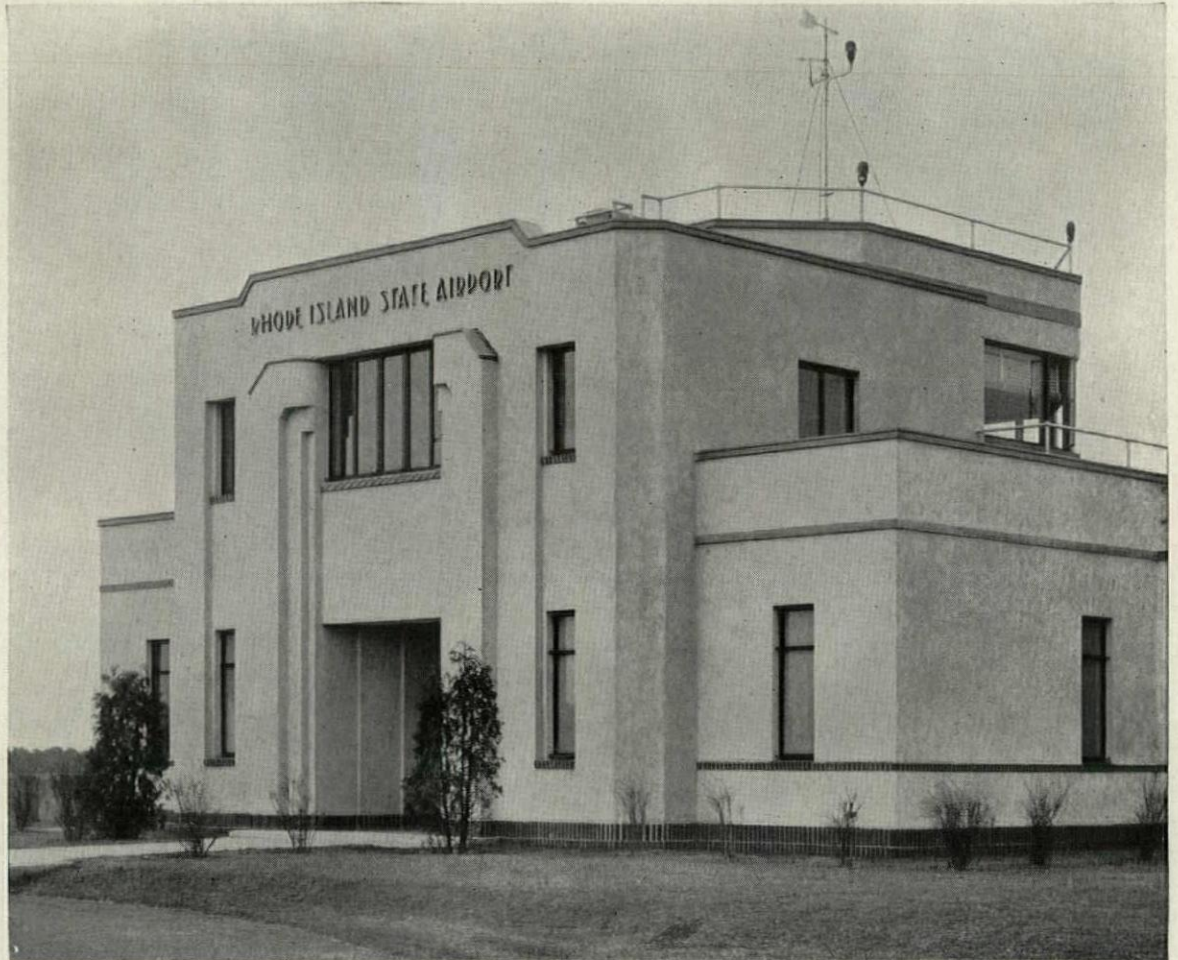
The design by Harry Sternfeld for the Headquarters Building at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, shown on page 34 of this issue, calls for a building of brick and limestone. The three pieces of sculpture indicated represent the Great Seal of the United States and two bas-reliefs based on activities of the Signal Corps in the past and in the present. The Post at Fort Monmouth is devoted exclusively to the training of United States Army Signal Corps personnel. It is one of the most completely equipped in the country. The services it renders are highly important and are all of a very technical, special, and scientific character. The Headquarters Building as shown was designed to be in keeping with the character of the establishment and will form the dominating note in the composition of the entire Post. The building houses offices for the administration, classrooms, laboratories for instruction, a library, a large map room, and other necessary services.

## *New Series of Pencil Drawings*

Reproductions of the new series of drawings by Ernest W. Watson, covering a variety of Gothic subjects, which are to appear this year in PENCIL POINTS in the advertisements of the Joseph Dixon Crucible Company, will be sent free, the editors are told, to any of our readers who write for them to the Company at Jersey City, N. J.



At an Airport — **STURDY  
STUCCO**



**STANDING** unprotected from the full sweep of storm, this airport building must face the worst kind of weather. Its stucco exterior must give protection from driving rain and sleet and snow, from bitter winds and constant freezing and thawing.

Light buff in color, smooth-finished, made with Atlas Waterproofed White portland cement, this sturdy prepared stucco *will* give protection, for years, and will retain its present excellent appearance as well.

Economical to apply on old buildings as well as new, permanent, firesafe, weatherproof Atlas White portland cement stucco (preferably prepared) is adaptable to any architectural design, for any type of construction. It is applied in any color, and in a wide variety of textures. Write for complete information to Universal Atlas Cement Co., Subsidiary of United States Steel Corporation, 208 South LaSalle Street, Chicago.

Administration Building, Rhode Island State Airport, Providence, finished with Atlas Waterproofed White stucco (prepared) furnished by California Stucco Products Co., Cambridge, Mass. Harry Carr & Son, Providence, was the plastering contractor, and Jackson, Robertson & Adams, Providence, were the architects.

**STUCCO** *made with* **ATLAS WHITE**<sup>207</sup>  
PORTLAND CEMENT



### P.S. He Got the Job

Since Elmer Grey wrote the article "Breaking into the Movies" that appears on page 31 of this issue, he has secured a position with one of the large moving picture production companies—not one of those mentioned in the article however. The place of his new occupation is just four blocks from where the ranch he speaks of was located thirty years ago! He writes: "I get up every morning at six o'clock and drive ten miles from Pasadena in time to punch a time clock at Hollywood at 8:15! Thirty years ago I used to ride a horse around through streets which are now among Hollywood's busiest thoroughfares. That magnificent horse had a habit of rearing up on his hind legs when brought near a street car and I had explicit instructions from my 'boss' to bring him near to one frequently in order to get him accustomed to them. He was so tall that the result must have been quite spectacular and I imagine the people of Hollywood thought I was showing off! Little did I then dream of the change that thirty years would make in that environment and in my occupation."

### Mortimer E. Freehof Submits a Jingle

Oh, men have bitten dogs before, particularly hot ones,  
Beauty shoppes by girls are sometimes manned;  
Machines have given men employment,  
as, for instance, slot ones,  
And whereas cans are dated, dates are canned.

As material for headlines these are paradoxes weak,  
For all of them as news are but conjectural;  
But I submit (in recent *Times*) as something quite unique,  
This ad:—"Help wanted; draftsman, architectural."

### Aluminum for Drypoints

The two drypoints reproduced on this page are of particular interest as examples of prints made from aluminum plates in place of the usual copper or zinc. Mr. Hogner and Mrs. Boyer are pioneers in working with this metal, the former having started to experiment with aluminum plates as long as four years ago, later interesting Mrs. Boyer in the new technique. The beginning was made because of a desire on the part of the artist to overcome some of the disadvantages inherent in the traditional copper. First of all, it was hard; secondly, its color was dark. It was difficult to sketch on the brown metal because the lines were hard to see. It was difficult to work the metal with the drypointer's tool because this required an excess of manual labor which quickly tired the artist and had a tendency to cause an unwarranted drain on his strength.

With the thought that perhaps aluminum might be better because of its comparative softness and light color, Hogner tried an aluminum plate but found it was too soft to yield more than one or two good impressions. He then tried a duralumin type alloy which he thought would give the required stiffness and hardness. He achieved success as far as sketch visibility was concerned, but found that the metal was almost too hard to engrave. This hardness almost caused despair and nearly sent the artist back to copper.

But the Alumilite process, which imparts an exceedingly hard surface finish to aluminum—identical with the oxide coating applied by Nature through contact with air, though many times thicker—came to the rescue and changed his point of view. With the aid of this process he was able to use commercially pure aluminum, which is very easy to cut through, and yet preserve the surface of the plate so that many more than the usual number of impressions could be made. The oxide coating produced by this process is ordinarily translucent and



"Fritz," From a drypoint on aluminum by P. R. L. Hogner

does not conceal the natural metallic lustre of the metal. This oxide coating, though very hard, was also very thin—only 1/5000 to 1/2000 of an inch thick. The drypointer's tool could break through it with ease so that most of the moving of metal was done in the soft part of the plate. The surface, however, and the burr cast up by the needle were hard and strong enough to withstand even more than the usual number of impressions.

Hogner interested Louise Miller Boyer, another Pittsburgh artist, in his discovery and she has pursued the technique of the new plate so relentlessly that all of her work is now being done on aluminum. Her preliminary sketch is made on the plate with a 3B or 6B pencil or a lithographic crayon and she makes erasures with a kneaded rubber.

"Strong passages," Mrs. Boyer said, "can easily be produced by cutting boldly into the softer metal below the surface, and the most delicate effects can be obtained by slightly scratching the top of the plate. These light lines, to one's surprise, will last almost as long as the deeper ones."

Overcut passages cannot be reduced by scraping or rubbing as this would destroy the coating. The burnisher may be used, but in general a good plate is the result of first intentions. The coated aluminum plate produces less burr and one of a different character than copper, being less sharp, and it may be scraped or rubbed off if desired. In storing finished plates no precautions are needed except to protect them from scratches.

For printing, the materials and processes are the same as for other plates. Plates are procurable in various grades of surface hardness. The softest grade is considered most adaptable because of the freedom it allows the needle. If, however, a greater number of prints are desired, a slightly harder surface is preferable. In testing out the toughness of these plates, more than 500 copies have already been successfully printed from one plate.



"Snowshroud," From a drypoint on aluminum by Louise Miller Boyer of Pittsburgh



# HERE IS A VERY PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION

of the SUPERIOR QUALITY  
of L·O·F Quality Window  
Glass

★

★

A SELECTION of articles commonly found in an architect's office was strewn about on a table-top; a large piece of L·O·F Quality Window Glass, securely clamped in a wooden frame, was suspended over them; a photograph was taken AT AN ANGLE, looking down THROUGH the glass at the table-top. The frame holding the glass was then removed and a second photograph was taken with NOTHING between the lense and the articles on the table. The two photographs are herewith reproduced. Despite the acute angle at which they were taken, the many straight lines are so faithfully reproduced *through the glass*, that it is practically impossible to tell which picture is which.

Hardly a technical or scientific test, it is true, but sufficiently convincing to explain, in some measure, why so many architects write a closed specification for this fine window glass. For your protection, instruct contractors and builders to leave the labels on until final inspection has been made. Libbey·Owens·Ford Glass Company, Toledo, Ohio.

★

*The authenticity of these photographs is attested by Underwood & Underwood.*

## LIBBEY · OWENS · FORD QUALITY GLASS





*The photographic study which forms the frontispiece, overleaf, is the work of the Artist-Photographer, A. Gonthier. The subject is a street scene in Taxco, Mexico. The reproduction was made possible through the kindly courtesy of Samuel E. Gideon of the University of Texas.*







# PENCIL POINTS

Volume XVI JANUARY 1935 Number 1

## TO WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY NEW YEAR

**P**ENCIL POINTS begins the new year of 1935 in a new dress (which we hope you will like) and with a feeling of optimism that we believe is warranted by enough visible signs to make it logical. We have a strong hope—almost amounting to an expectation—that this is the year that will go down in history as the one during which most of those now unemployed, including architects and draftsmen, returned to work. A rash thing to predict, but there is a chance that it may come true.

The utterances of our leading statesmen and economists (we mean the *real* ones); the reports of studies being carried on by such realistically minded research bodies as the Brookings Institution, National Resources Board, and others; the accelerating growth of general understanding by more and more people of how the economic system works and how it may and can be regulated by wise governmental policies looking toward the permanent common good of all rather than to the shortsighted, selfish, temporary advantage of a few powerful interests—all of these are encouraging indications that the democratic sector of the human race as represented by the United States is not going to pot entirely but is, on the contrary, about ready to look out for its own welfare and advancement. Many hitherto widely accepted economic theories are breaking down under the impact of persistent cerebration and are being recognized as fallacies. New and well-considered economic concepts, built on true understanding of the social changes that have taken place during the last two decades, are taking their places. Thoughtful men everywhere are assembling and analyzing factual information bearing upon our economic problems and are discovering just where the stoppages occur that periodically block the smooth flow of business and industry. Correct solutions will be found.

Against these thoughts it will be argued that ignorance and greed have not been and cannot be legislated out of existence, that wars may break out at any moment to upset what measure of equilibrium we have already attained, that social un-

rest and industrial strife may impede the program that is being evolved to lead us up out of the mire of depression. While we recognize these things, we still choose to believe that we are, less and less gropingly, finding the right path to reconstruction.

The place of the architect in the social scheme of the future is, we believe, going to be secure and he is going to fill a niche no less important than heretofore. We base this belief on the ingrained desire of humanity for beauty as well as utility in buildings and on the obvious need of society for trained planners, whether for its habitations or for its communities. There be they who fear that other elements of society will tend, in time, to supplant the architect. With this fear we do not agree. The engineer, who is often cited by the pessimistically minded among us as a substitute designer of buildings and planner of cities, has in general neither the desire nor the special talents to give the public what only the real architect can supply. Each of these groups of professional men has its own proper functions and each recognizes the merits of and the social need for the other. True, some individuals of one group will compete with those of the other at times, especially in days of economic stress, but in the main they will cooperate rather than struggle for supremacy.

How well the individual architect will fare in the days to come will depend on how well he is prepared to perform his services. Times have changed and are still changing. Has he kept up with them? Has he informed himself about the multitudinous new materials and methods of construction that are coming to compete economically with the older (and still meritorious) traditional forms and systems? Has he continued, by study and observation, to improve his skill as a planner and designer or has he, through discouragement or laziness or smugness, remained in a rut, content with whatever formulas he has adopted or with the aping of better men?

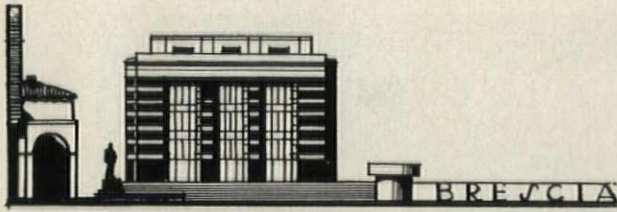
If he has progressed he will get his fair and full share of the all-important work wherewith to satisfy his material and spiritual wants as the expected recovery gathers strength. In the meanwhile he can be ever alert to exert his force on behalf of all the bold but sound moves that are going to be made in that direction—or are we mistaken? If we are not, it is going to be a Happier New Year than any we have had for a long time.





*"The New York skyscraper" of the National Insurance Company in Brescia, designed by Marcello Piacentini, Architect. For once in history a building of this type comes by its Lombard brickwork honestly*





# ARCHITECTS OF EUROPE TODAY

1—*Marcello Piacentini, Italy*

By GEORGE NELSON

EDITOR'S NOTE:—*We are definitely not interested in publishing examples of contemporary European architecture for the purpose of encouraging the sort of stupid copying of mannerisms that is unfortunately sometimes done. We do feel, however, that something can be learned from what is going on in Europe today provided we look at the buildings with full knowledge of the men and philosophies responsible for them. With this thought in mind, we commissioned George Nelson, Fellow of the American Academy in Rome, to interview a number of most important Continental architects and write for us a series of twelve articles to run during 1935.*

**I**RREVERENT legend has it—and there would seem to be some foundation for the tale—that sometime in the early 20's Piacentini was in a select group which became familiar with the taste of castor oil, that persuasive lubricant so generously administered to the wavering ones by enthusiastic Fascisti. Today, under the same regime, it is His Excellency Marcello Piacentini, official architect to the government, Secretary of the Royal Academy, President of the National Committee on City Planning, director of the magazine "Architettura," official organ of the Fascist Syndicate of Architects. All of which goes to indicate that we are here dealing with no ordinary man. And if it is true that at the beginning he and the new order viewed each other with mutual suspicion, it is equally to be remarked that had the present government, with its huge building program, never come into existence, Piacentini would not have reached his present unique position of power and eminence. Success he would have had under any conditions: it is in the man to be a leader; but the opportunities would have been lacking. The sluggish country of pre-Fascist days had its grandiose schemes, to be sure; the trouble was that it never did anything about them.

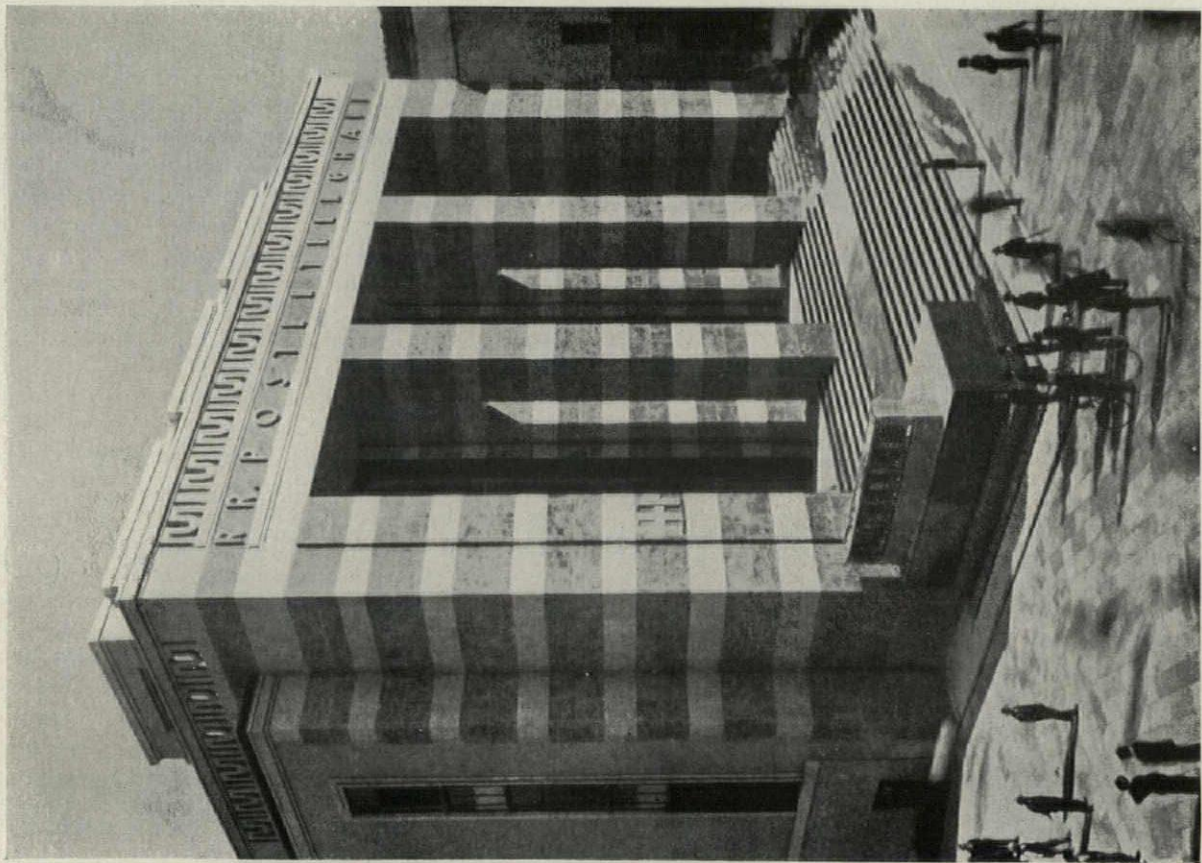
Piacentini came by his profession naturally: he was born into it. His father was an important

architect in his time and the son was given the best education the country afforded. In 1901 he took his final diploma, after having demonstrated unusual ability as a student, and two years later, at the age of twenty-five, he won first prize in a large competition for a new civic center for the town of Bergamo. This was indeed no little plan for a boy just out of school, and in one stroke his reputation was made. It is characteristic of the way things were done that the project was not completed until the present government took it in hand, a quarter of a century later. His record of successful competitions is phenomenal. In 1908, his design for a vehicular tunnel under the Quirinal hill in Rome took first place; it is still one of the most successful constructions of its kind. In 1910, he was back in Bergamo, having won another competition, this time for a new University. The same year he did the Italian Pavilion at the World's Fair in Brussels, receiving the Grand Prix for it. On the strength of this he was put in charge of all the buildings for the exposition in Rome, which took place the following year, this time not only winning another Grand Prix, but a gold medal as well. Shortly afterwards his plan for joining the palaces on the Capitoline hill was accepted, and with the architect Brasini he worked out an arrangement whereby the curiously elongated Piazza Navona might better be adapted to modern traffic needs. At the Panama Pacific Exposition of 1915, the Italian Pavilion won the only Grand Prix given to any of the 78 competing nations, and he took advantage of the opportunity to go to America. By the time he was thirty he had become a recognized leader in his profession.

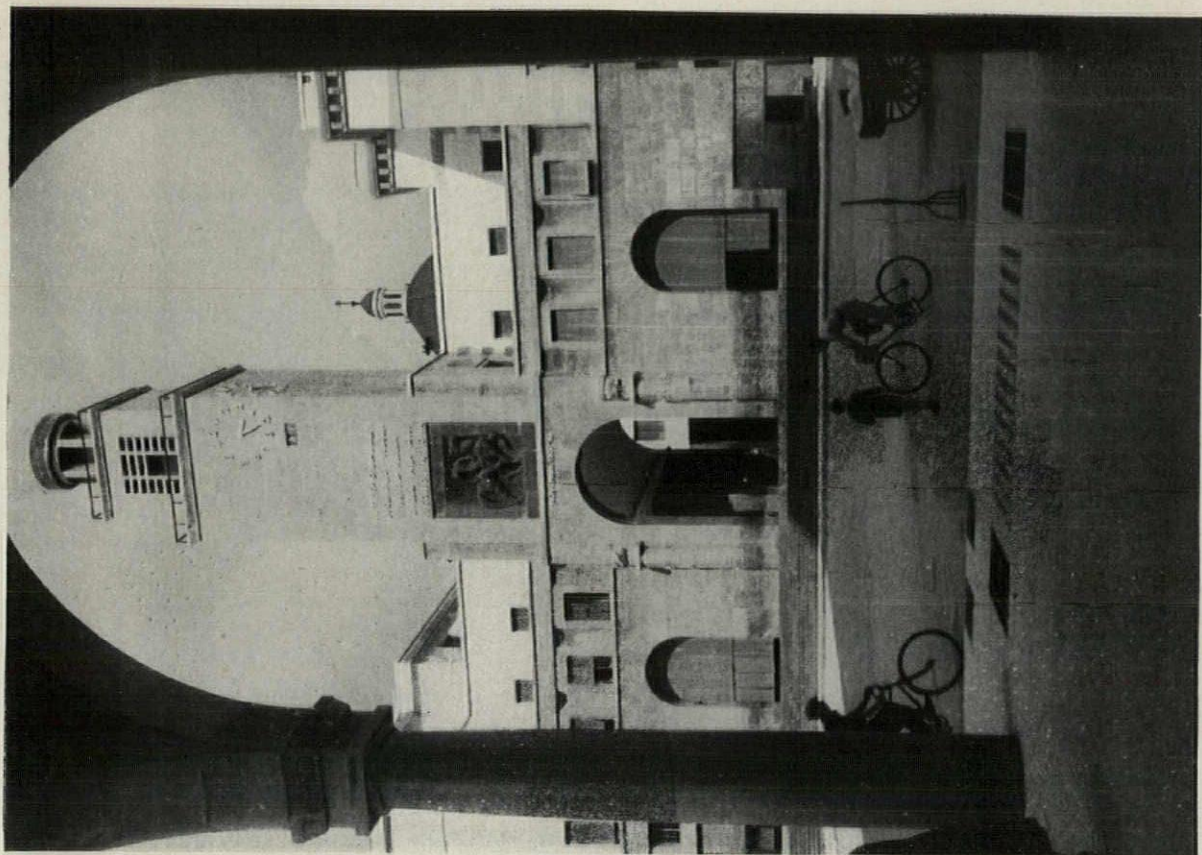
Piacentini's career illustrates clearly some of the advantages of giving out important work on a competition basis. It allows a young man of ability to come quickly to the fore. The better men set a pace which raises the standards of the entire competing group, which in the case of Italy is very large. Best of all, it makes for progress in design: men who would play safe on a commission that had been handed to them, often experiment on competition drawings. In the case of a dishonest or mistaken judgment, superior solutions still have a chance to win recognition, the best case of this, of course, being Saarinen's Chicago Tribune design. In Italy the numerous competitions which are held have become a kind of proving ground where all of the most radical ideas of the younger group are passed upon. And while there have been cases of the most flagrant abuses of the system, its educational effect, to judge from publications in the numerous interesting reviews, has been very great indeed.

Private commissions began to come Piacentini's way after the first winning competitions, and he soon demonstrated his outstanding abilities in the difficult business of job getting. His skill at negotiating and powerful connections often made him



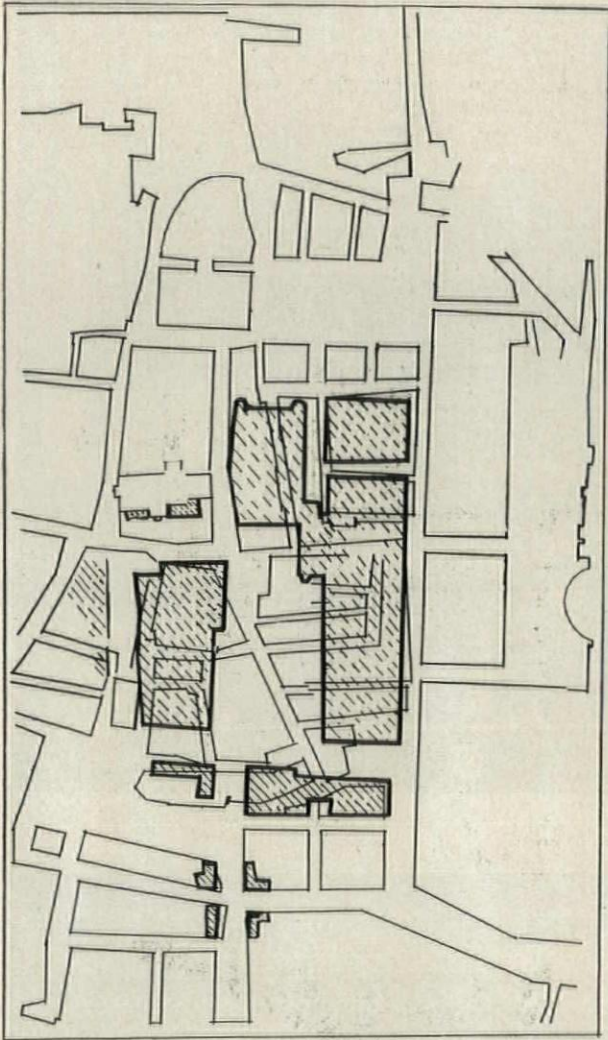


*Italy finds in the Post Office at Brescia that a Government building can be modern and still dignified, as well as possessed of a national flavor*



*The "Tower of the Revolution" indicates the Italian feeling that the last word on towers has not yet been said. A blending of old and new*



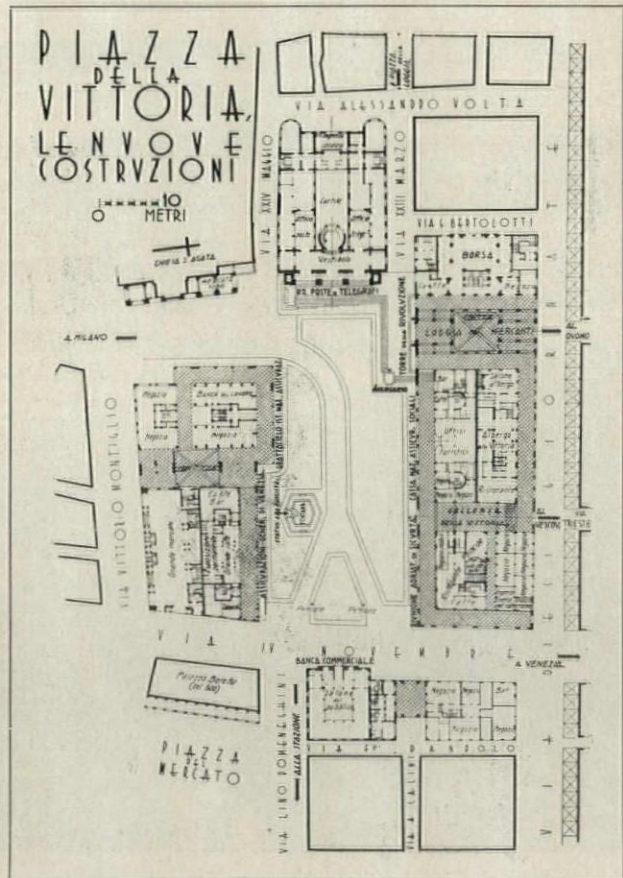


Plan showing the area rebuilt in Brescia. Worth noting that there is no through traffic in the piazza

the logical choice for architect when his undoubted talents as a designer would have been of no avail. One family in Rome, that had chosen to build its town house on a site complicated by all sorts of restrictions due to the proximity of several national monuments, was practically forced to engage him because no other architect in the city could have designed the house it wanted and then forced it through the Building Department. And he had the most uncanny flair for getting a maximum of publicity out of ordinarily commonplace jobs. One example will serve to illustrate. He was commissioned to do a moving picture theatre in 1915. He analyzed the problem of how to treat the facade in a manner years ahead of the time, and designed it as a simple screen with accents of flat decoration, rather than the pompous arches and colonnades that the Romans had come to expect on the fronts of their theatres—as well as on everything else, for that matter. It created a furore. Everyone who could talk or use his hands joined the controversy, and the howls raised by the arch-

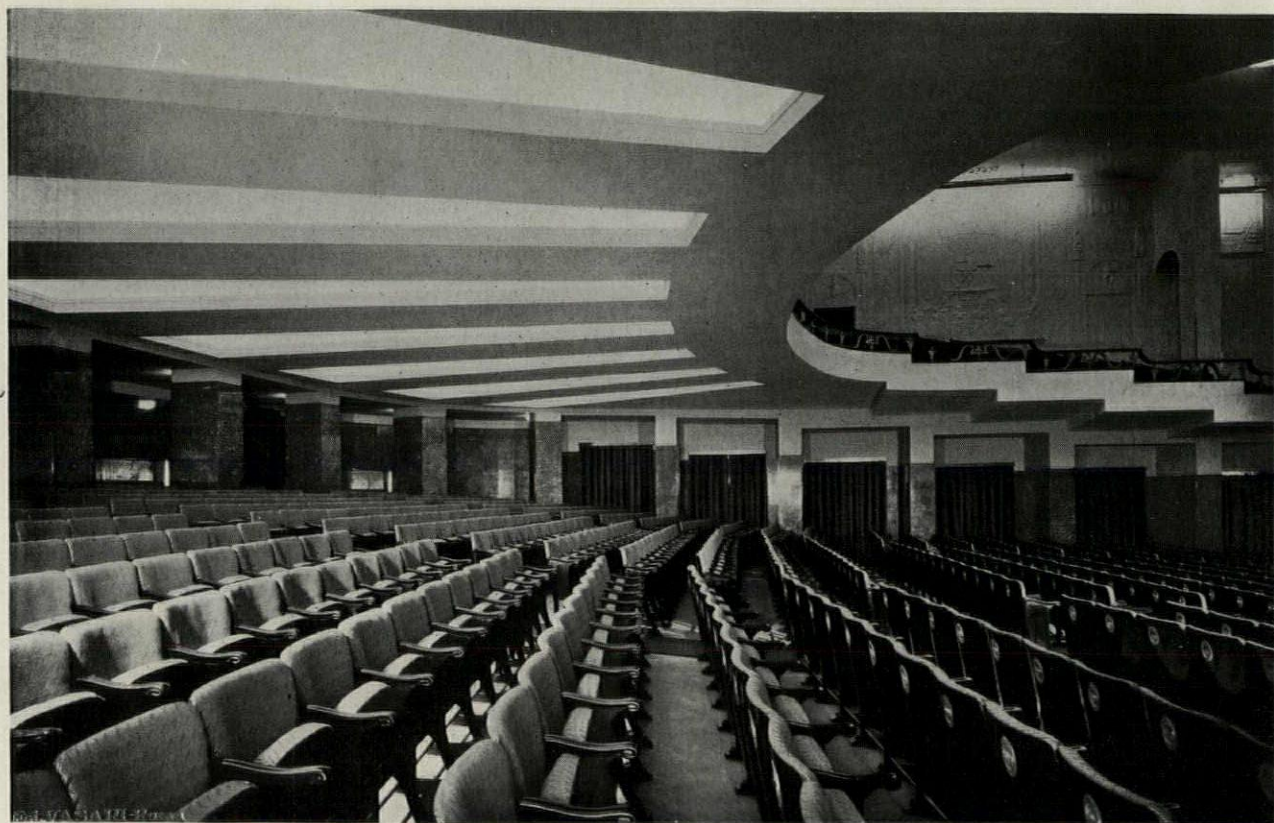
loving populace were so great that he finally had to do the facade over at his own expense. The battle went on for months in the cafes and newspapers, and while he did lose a good bit of money on the job, infinitely more important was the fact that when the excitement had died down there was hardly a man, woman, or child in all of central Italy who did not know that there was an architect named Piacentini in Rome. The proprietor of the theatre was highly gratified by the uproar: not only did he get a new facade for nothing, but the daily free advertising kept his house jammed for months. There was an amusing sequel to this tempest in a teapot. An American movie magnate, who happened to be in Rome at the time, called on him and offered him vast sums if he would design him theatres that would produce similar outbursts in America. Piacentini, familiar with the happy unconsciousness of the American citizenry where matters æsthetic were concerned, regretfully declined.

As he began to settle down to a prosperous career devoted to designing villas and an occasional theatre or bank, the war broke out, ending his architectural activities for several years. In the troubled days that followed the war he worked intermittently, doing a large building for the Bank of Italy, more villas, a new bridge over the



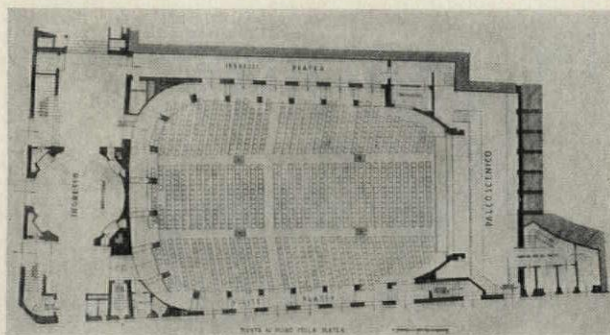
A more detailed plan of the new buildings of the piazza shows their nature and relative disposition



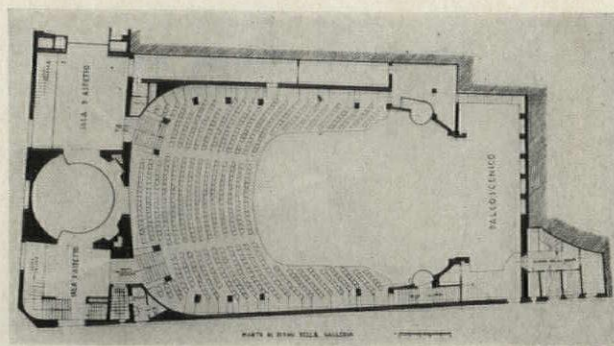


*Barberini Moving Picture Theatre in Rome. The architect refused to be stampeded into swallowing the modern formula whole. Italian materials and design can produce their appropriate theatre architecture*





*Orchestra and Balcony floor plans*



*Barberini Moving Picture Theatre*

Tiber, and made many town planning studies. Then came the March on Rome and Fascism, the slight misunderstanding already referred to—a matter that was speedily cleared up—and Piacentini entered upon the greatest phase of his career, under a government whose program included plans for a virtual rebuilding of the country in the shortest possible space of time.

Today his offices are housed in the modern building he designed, almost directly across the river from Castel Sant'Angelo. The busy clatter of typewriters, the air of energy and efficiency that pervade the place make it seem almost American by contrast with the studios of his more leisurely contemporaries. He receives visitors in a large room, impressively bare save for a huge desk and a few modern chairs. Not particularly striking physically, except for a pair of remarkably keen, noncommittal eyes, he somehow makes felt his extraordinary personal charm from the first instant. Behind the charm lies a cold detachment and an inflexibility which are not so pleasant, perhaps, but much more revealing.

He talks well, and courteously opened the conversation by speaking of his trip to America and the impression it had made on him. Like most Europeans he had an almost wondering admiration for the rich, unfamiliar beauty of the large cities, but never for a moment did he confuse this

sentiment with approval of the system of unregulated building that made such sights possible. In Rome there were laws to take care of that sort of thing, he added, and a very good thing it was, since the streets were already crowded to capacity. On the subject of modern architecture he was outspoken. The international style had no attractions for him: his sympathies were all with the efforts to produce a distinctly national modern architecture, and for the attempts of some of the younger men to introduce the glass facade and other features of the architecture of northern Europe, he had nothing but scorn.

"It is all very well to do these things in Russia," he snapped. "Here in Italy we have another problem. With a blinding sun for eight months of the year it is difficult enough to keep out the intense heat without removing what protection we have and then substituting glass for it. Look at this studio"—indicating a small row of horizontal windows—"just because I increased only slightly the usual glass area, even now in early spring this room becomes uncomfortably warm in the afternoon. This preoccupation with the least adaptable features of German architecture is clearly a case of slipshod thinking, of infatuation with forms while they pretend to talk about functions."

There was nothing out of the ordinary in all this talk: there rarely is in the reasoned conclu-

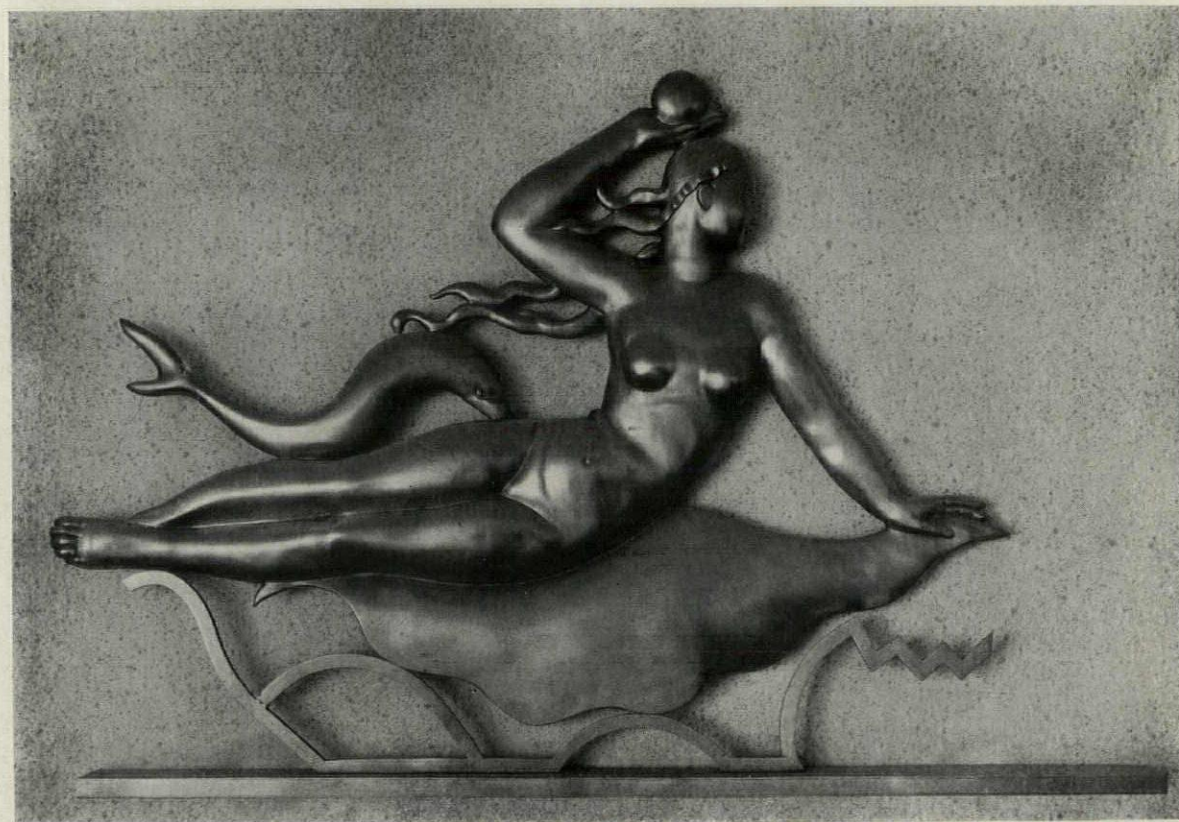
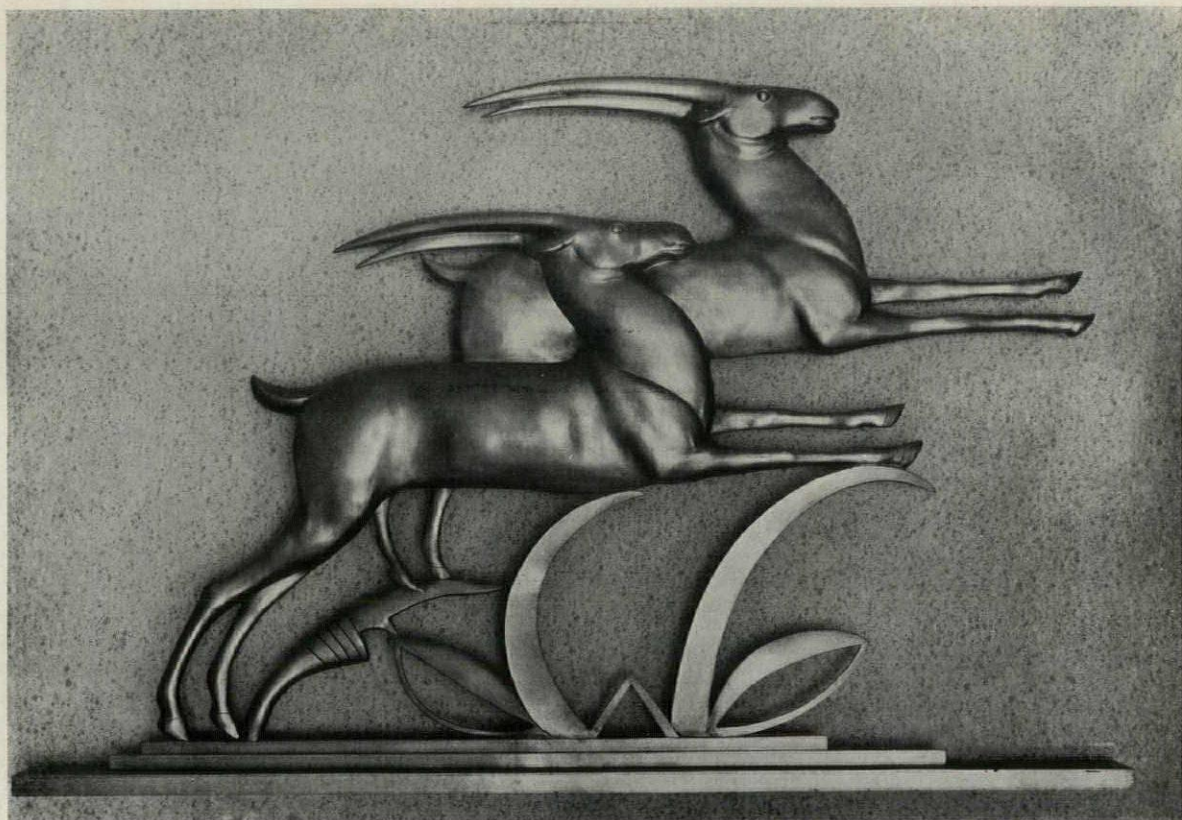


*Two views of the main lobby and sala d'aspetto*



*Large, simple, decorative motifs run throughout*



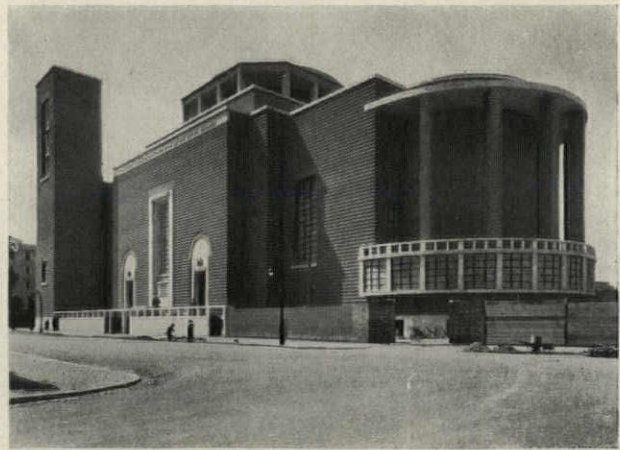


*Bas-reliefs by Alfredo Biagini, applied over main openings in the lobby of Barberini Theatre*





The Church of Christ the King in Rome



A radical departure from established forms

sions of the practiced builder who has found that theories are no good unless they can be successfully built. "Why this mad rush to create a new architecture in a day?" asked Piacentini. "Rome has seen many styles come and go; they all developed slowly. So today. What I build now is better, more truly modern than what I built last year. One must progress step by step—*passo a passo*—testing as one goes."

For all his expressed conservatism, his work tells quite a different story. How many of our architects, in a position similar to his, would abandon their bastard Gothic, emasculated Colonial, or the other shaking props which they substitute for lack of convictions, and make as radical a departure from established forms as in the Church of Christ the King, which was completed last year in Rome? Another example was the Via dell'Impero, and streets subsequently built in the heart of Rome. There had been plans made for years to remove the picturesque slums that fringed the Forum and put in streets to relieve the frightful congestion in the heart of Rome. Nothing, as usual, was done about it until Mussolini came into power. It would have been very easy to side with those sentimental souls who preferred to leave the malodorous tenements as a background for the ruins and to bewail the vandalism that would remove this scenery. Instead, as head of the commission, he worked wholeheartedly for the scheme until the government was interested, and then it was done. The spectacle of fast cars going down the street, past the ruins, only increases, if anything, the sense of their magnificence and power.

A few years ago one of the greatest of all the competitions was held. The town of Brescia, a thriving commercial city midway between Milan and Venice, needed a large new center for its growing needs. There were two existing piazzas, both inadequate, and between them lay a choked area of tangled slums. All of Italy's architects submitted plans, with the exception of Piacentini and others who were on the jury. The drawings were

judged inadequate, six of the best were purchased, and one year after the judgment it was announced that the City of Brescia had awarded the commission for the design of a new civic center to Marcello Piacentini. One might be tempted to inquire into this more deeply, but it would be fruitless; besides, as a cynical acquaintance remarked, no other architect in the country could have pushed the project through to completion. There were municipal funds, and there was money from the Government, but the success of the venture depended on the big companies which might be induced to buy or rent space in the buildings that were to surround the piazza. It was one of the biggest jobs Piacentini ever undertook; he succeeded finally, and in 1932, a scant three years after the demolition of existing buildings had begun, the Piazza della Vittoria was inaugurated with much pomp and ceremony by Mussolini, who afterwards privately expressed his gratification to the architect, as well he might. It was a splendid piece of work. In one stroke a blighted area was removed from the center of the city, its inhabitants were transferred to more sanitary quarters, a new open space, well placed in relation to existing traffic arteries, was created, automatically becoming the logical business section of the city. There are ten large buildings around the piazza, a post office, insurance company, bank, and so on. While easily accessible, the piazza accommodates no through traffic, and has consequently become the favorite gathering place of the people. One can criticize, of course. It is all a bit garish in its sleek coating of varicolored marbles. There is a curious vacillation between Lombard, Venetian, and non-traditional modern influences, and the very virtuosity of the architect makes for restlessness. Amid all the marble rises a thirteen-story skyscraper of brick, with apartments on the upper floors and a restaurant at the top. The post office, done in horizontal stripes of black and gray marble, is a simple and monumental edifice, not to be passed over lightly when one considers what

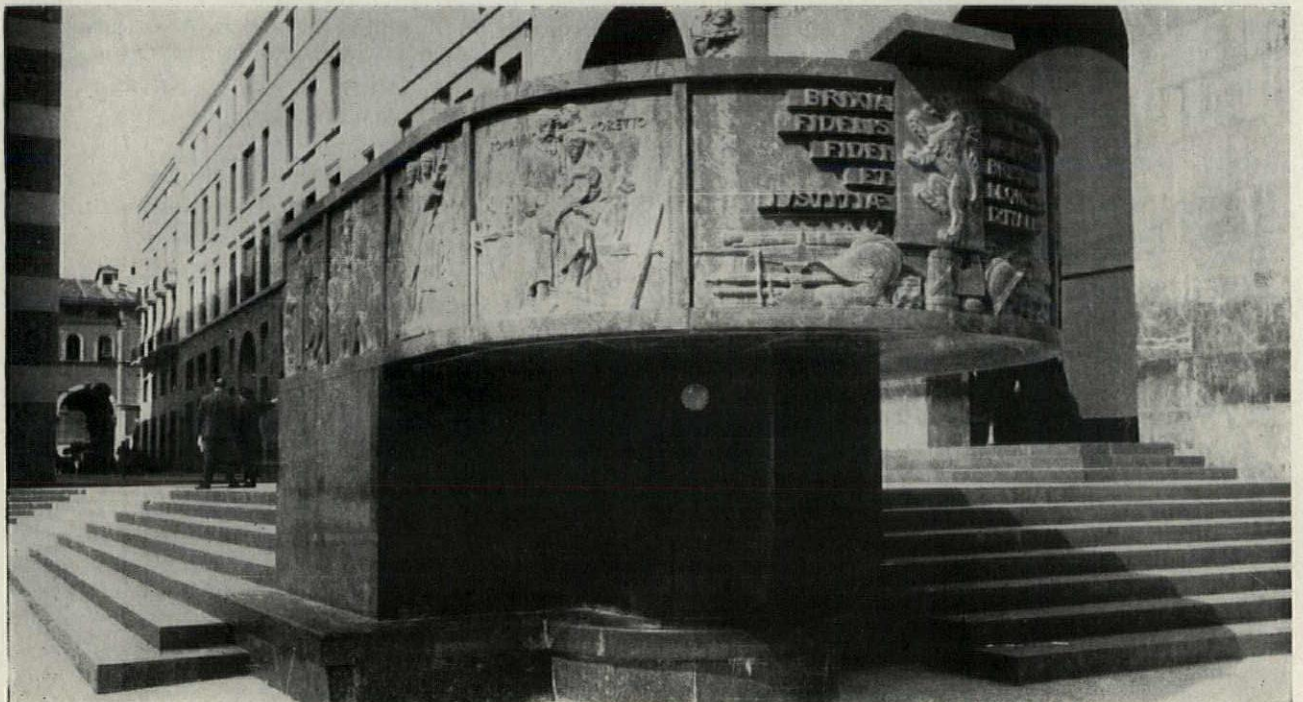


we have been getting in the way of post offices for many long years. Piacentini was practically a dictator on the work, and his powers extended to the point where he could say what kind of a shop was to go in any given space. It is to be noticed how he spotted cafes and restaurants on the corners so that the limits of the piazza would be marked at night. No opportunity of this magnitude ever came the way of the great builders of the Renaissance. Borromini and Bernini cut each other's throats for chances much smaller than this, and the best that any of them could do was to make complete plans that they hoped would be followed, and, during their own lifetimes, change the plans of their predecessors.

Last spring Piacentini was reported to have the equivalent of about twenty-six million dollars worth of work in his office. Large as this figure looks to any American architect in these days, when considered in relation to the wealth of Italy, by no means a rich country, it becomes staggering. Small wonder, then, that he is feared and flattered, attacked behind his back. Last winter opposition came to a head, and he was bitterly denounced—not by name—in Parliament. Why, came the question, should so much of the government work be concentrated in one or two offices when so many of the able younger men could get nothing? The picture is not quite as black as it was painted. Few countries in the world have entrusted so many commissions of importance to men barely in their thirties. Sabaudia, the new town in the drained Pontine Marshes, was designed lock, stock, and barrel by CANCELLOTTI and his group, all young. The new railroad station of Florence, popularly

known as "*la bara di vetro*"—the glass coffin—is being done by young men. So is the Naples post office and innumerable similar buildings being done all over the country. But someone has to be attacked, and Piacentini is the biggest target.

Personally, the man is a bundle of contradictions. In his character are to be found all the inconsistencies that have made the Italian temperament a mystery to the people of the north since they first became aware of it. A wily politician and utterly unscrupulous, he is at the same time a man of wide learning, passionately interested in his work and all that has any bearing upon it. A wealthy and conservative business man, he has written books on modern architecture, has held the chair of Town Planning in the Royal School of Architecture since its foundation, and is an authority on the subject. Undisputably an extremely able architect, he nevertheless made the serious error of signing his name to another man's design for a new street in Rome. The mistake lay in his getting sued and losing the case. A firm believer in a modern architecture of a distinctly Italian cast, his church of Christ the King has no prototype south of the Alps, plenty north of them. He is to be distinguished from his Renaissance forbears only in his dress and of the determination, and energy of the regime that is making over his country, he might be a symbol. Today he is at the peak of his career. Bound up intimately with a government beset by financial difficulties within and political worries without, it seems that he would of necessity rise or fall with the group now in power. But it is not safe to predict. He is a shrewd man.



*From this luxurious red porphyry tribunal the changing leaders harangue the Brescians*



# THE UPPER GROUND

*Being Essays in Criticism*

By H. VAN BUREN MAGONIGLE

D. ARCH., F. A. I. A.

"Take the upper ground in manœuvrin', Terence,' I sez, 'an' you'll be a gin'ral yet,' sez I. An' wid that I wint up to the flat mud roof av the house and looked over the par'pet, threadin' delicate."

R. K. "My Lord the Elephant."

LAST month I was unable to respond to the letters, long and interesting, received from three heads of schools as reactions to the commentary on the reports of the Collegiate Schools of Architecture. I hope to be able to reply in these columns in the February number. There seem to us to be two subjects of paramount importance just now, the education of the architect and the rehabilitation of the profession he is preparing to enter. The two are indissolubly related, and the practicing architect should take a far larger share than he does in shaping the students' education.

\* \* \* \*

Architecture for December prints an article entitled "The Challenge to Architectural Education" by Matlack Price, which I should gladly quote complete if that were possible, for this is a sane and beautifully expressed treatment of the subject—cool, moderate, and constructive. He begins by saying that in his student days, thirty years ago, "Architectural design was measured by taste and scholarship, and the training was planned and administered accordingly" . . . "Originality and imagination were frowned upon." I can't quite subscribe to the full implications of that last. They weren't *encouraged* much—no doubt of that—but neither, as I recollect, were they *discouraged*, certainly no more than they have been, to my personal sorrow, in five competitions, that I could cite, in the past few years. If ever there was a time when taste and scholarship were needed, it is now.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Price gives a list of the men to whom, in 1905 or thereabouts, the young were to lift aspiring eyes—from my point of view a quaint list, if I may say so—McKim, Mead & White, Charles A. Platt, Carrere and Hastings, Cass Gilbert, Arnold

W. Brunner, and Daniel Burnham. Mr. Gilbert had not yet, thirty years ago, attained a position above the ruck. Mr. Brunner never reached anything but mediocrity. And Mr. Burnham never was anything but a business man who could have made a go of the tripe business; as an architect to emulate, Never.

\* \* \* \*

Referring to the names of Bramante and Brunelleschi, inscribed on Robinson Hall at Harvard, Mr. Price says: "What has happened that these names no more evoke reverence, or even respect in the modern architectural student?" . . . "We did not know so much in 1905, could not, that is, pretend to the architectural clairvoyance of today's students, who see McKim, Mead & White as a bungling trio of old pattern followers." "The Empire State Building, and the R. C. A. Building in Rockefeller Center loom high, but they do not stand on the edge of the universe, with nothing behind them but void space. A great many years of architecture lie behind them." . . . "today's architectural student is so naively set toward the future that his curiosity will explore only in that direction *for all that he is without a compass and directions.*" (My italics.)

\* \* \* \*

All this moves me to say that I believe one of the reasons for the attitude of the student of the moment toward the old masters of the craft is ignorant, confused, incoherent thinking, not only on their part but on that of their preceptors.

The principles for which the names of Brunelleschi and Bramante stand, it is needless to say to rational people, are immutable and will be as long as one piece of steel, one brick, one stone, have to be placed upon another in order to build anything. Both men, a century apart in time, were nurtured at the dugs of the Roman Wolf. Did either reproduce the architecture they excavated and measured and drew and studied? Not at all. Each, in his own day and time, brought an architecture into the world as new, in that day and time, as the latest vagaries of the most rootless modernists are pretended to be. The fear seems now to be that if a boy studies any architecture before that of a few contemporary offices, he will waste his time.

\* \* \* \*

A major source of concern in education nowadays is the extraordinary and ridiculous phenomenon of the undergraduates demanding that they shall be "taught" "modern" architecture, and taught it as they wish it taught!! The homely expression for that sort of thing in my own infancy was "teaching their grandmothers how to suck eggs"—but now they also choose the egg for grandma. Some years ago I encountered the newly appointed head of a newly established school of architecture in an old and famous University who



told me that his mission in New York just then was "to buy books on modern architecture" and that his "students insisted upon being taught it"! Think of it! Think of a bunch of raw cubs out of the sticks, with neither background nor knowledge, having the monumental gall to dictate to a great University what it shall give them to fit them for life in a world upon which they had but very recently opened their infant eyes!! Grotesque, isn't it. And consider the cowardice of a University that would consent to infantile dictation; the fear that these pups would go elsewhere if it doesn't submit; fear that the "department" would dwindle, that it won't be a "big" department! Great God! Everybody with even the vision of a mole knows there are too many architects and too many architectural students now! But the unavowed, secret ambition in the hearts of most heads of schools is to have a "big" one. Quantity again, always quantity.

The Institute, as the leading body of practicing architects in the country, should make a survey of the entire profession, ascertain the constantly changing needs of it as regards new blood *for which employment may be reasonably assured*, and every year set every architectural school in the country its quota of new students to let loose upon us. As it stands, the schools just turn 'em out, as many as possible, with no reference whatever to the demand. It is cruel to these young men.

If I am talking nonsense just tell me so and I shall be a happy man to be able to say that I am wrong.

\* \* \* \*

Granted that the study of architecture or any art is a fine thing culturally, in theory. But there is another aspect. Such a young man, with a smattering of architecture, may be some day the client of some unhappy architect. I have had such a client in my time—and I'd rather have had a button-maker, knowing nothing but buttons; his little knowledge puffed him to the danger point.

\* \* \* \*

But to leave buttons for our neglected muttons.

Let me say to the schools this, out of an active experience of 53 years and 5 months: that if each of them turns out only one student per year who has a real flair for architecture, who gives promise of being the real thing as a man and an artist, they will have done enough for their country to justify their existence. And if they have ruthlessly weeded out the crop they began their year with and direct the discards into other channels in which they may be useful citizens, they will have deserved the thanks and praise of the profession.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Price relates how he found himself unexpectedly a substitute instructor in a noted school and says: "There was the initial shock of finding, as a whole, an attitude toward past architecture

that ranged from contemptuous indifference to heady resentment that a study of all this 'historic junk' should be required at all. Of what possible value could any architecture be without chromium steel? And with this general attitude went an absurd complacency—pathetic if it weren't annoying—an utterly callow notion . . . that architecture is in the process of culmination in such of its evidences as the Empire State Building, Rockefeller Center, and the work at the Century of Progress Exposition."

Who gave them this? Why do they think this way? They didn't think it out for themselves.

\* \* \* \*

"Educators . . . hesitate to change the curriculum." Since the basic truths of architecture are eternal, one can see no reason for anything but a simplification of the curriculum, a return to basic constructional principles which have developed with the æsthetics of architecture and which are *identical with the æsthetics of architecture*.

\* \* \* \*

Speaking of the manner in which new methods and materials have found their way into the engineering and construction courses in better form than in the courses in design, may I enlarge upon the general trend of Mr. Price's thought just here, and say that the "modernists" put an entirely unwarranted emphasis upon "new" materials, apparently for the sole reason that they are new—or untried. We must remember that at least 50 per cent of modern "art," be it architecture, painting or sculpture, is talk, mere talk: no, I'm wrong, it is "sales talk" not mere.

There is no virtue necessarily inherent in a new material. The clients of the "modern" salesman type of practitioner who permitted themselves to be persuaded to use window frames and sash of one of the aluminum family of alloys, *unpainted*, will rue the day they were told not only that it was "new" and "the latest thing" but that it would not rust—all rust of course looking like ferric oxide—that's the way you can tell a thing is rusted. But it was "a new use of a new material." It was "the latest thing." It would shine—for a while. And all new architecture must shine, must glitter. It catches the eye. It advertises the architect. It indubitably does. May I be permitted to be very modern and say—"and how!"

\* \* \* \*

Here is real constructive thought; Mr. Price says "I cannot see the question of the abiding merit of modern architecture and design in general as being anything like so important as evolving a system of architectural education and instruction *that will endow its students with the vital kind of taste, perception, and discrimination—an equipment which will enable them to understand, direct, and control the trend—any trend!*"



The italics are mine. The rest of the paragraph sets forth the danger in lack of such equipment.

\* \* \* \*

"But what, you may well ask, is to be taught, supposing the architectural curriculum is to be rewritten? Largely, the educator's problem is to define the objectives of *modern* architectural education and training—first to himself, and then, as early as possible, to the student."

I have italicized "modern" to emphasize my belief that the true objectives of today in education are the same as those of all our yesterdays back to the beginning of structure—how best to make a man and an artist with the sense of structure, that is to say, an architect. How to train him to think clear through a problem, big or little, simple or complex. How to help him to acquire that balance which will save him from being led away by false doctrine, by fads, by disingenuous chatter intended to advertise the chatterer. How to help him to know a principle when he sees it and to distinguish between one and the specious stuff which stalks around these days in masquerade.

\* \* \* \*

Listen to this: "But in a study of architecture as a humanly conditioned expression of taste, the student would learn at least one very important truth—that most examples of bad taste in architecture, and most eras stigmatized as low in taste, correspond in a way that is more than coincidence with *poor design*." (Mr. Price's italics.)

Again: "No sooner does the educator focus his mind upon the real nature and meaning of *design* than he begins to see that here may lie the central necessity of all architecture" (parlor sociologists please note) "and therefore the necessity, lacking which, modern architecture would fail. Because the older doctrine of architecture was one of 'adaptation' is an insufficient reason for going on teaching it as though this were still so."

Again: "Today the architectural desideratum is creative design." May I add: As it always was whether we knew it or not. "Creative" in connection with art is as dangerous a word as I know. "It would be unwise, here, to attempt an examination of the extent to which modern architecture is, in fact, creative; the word conveniently, and with sufficient accuracy, serves as a distinguishing term. *But architecture itself, in essence, has not changed as completely as many people suppose.*" (My italics.) "The change is one of emphasis rather than of fundamentals." And with the emphasis rather on the trivia than the essentials.

And while we are on the subject of "modern creative design" I would draw attention to the cold fact that the creative modernists are copying each other just as hard and just as much as ever the "adapters" did. In a lecture the other day I showed slides of five buildings practically alike except for the number of stories, in Stuttgart, Dusseldorf,

Berlin, London, and New York, any one of which might have been designed by any one of the quintet of creative designers. Which was the original creation I neither know nor care—the one in New York was the latest and, one hopes, the last.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Price goes on: "Haven't students been taught to recognize design when they see it . . . rather than given the ability to *be* designers?" Isn't the first step toward "being designer" knowing first what design has been, and *then* what it is being and becoming?

\* \* \* \*

He suggests three points he would feel essential in a new and reasoned curriculum for architectural schools. I will not quote them in full, except the first, as follows: "A new analysis of architectural design, so directed as to rationalize and coordinate *precedent* and the new *creative design*. This should perform the tremendously valuable necessity of examining the essential nature of design, and of seeing it as immutable, unaffected by transient fashions."

I can't help wishing he had not said the "new" creative design. For me there is no "new" creative design. Design in its very nature is creative, conditioned always by the strange unconscious process Mr. Elmer Grey so ably discussed the other day. I suppose he used "new" to link it unmistakably with the much debated "modern."

The exponents and proponents of the "new design" have not, however, invented the creative process although they make tacit claim to it; it was going on before they began to copy the Teutons and the Scandinavians and palm off their thoughts and things as their own—before, even, they were born.

His second point begins "New ideas in the study of style-sources." That word "style" bothers me. It very perilously connotes just the slough of "adaptation" in which architecture in this country has floundered for more than a generation. Style happens—Style in the only sense in which I ever consent to discuss it. It can't be taught, no matter what the "style-source," no matter how new the idea about it. The only source of Style is just that which Mr. Grey lighted up for us in this magazine in October.

The second paragraph of Mr. Price's second proposition suggests too much for my complete comfort the glad surprise with which Columbia hails the new discoveries referred to below.

\* \* \* \*

The first and second paragraphs of his third proposition are full of meat. I have in my files a paper once written by a well-known architect now passed on, and which I took the liberty of suppressing in what I thought was his own interest, consisting chiefly in quotations from Sir Joshua



Reynolds' Discourses to the effect that the best had already been done, once and for all, and that therefore we should continue to copy and never dare to think a new thought. Mr. Price, dealing with this tiresome doctrine, says: "It is a doctrine that defeats ambition before it has a chance to grapple with architecture in any realistic manner." Of course it does. But also it is essential that a student should be able to place what is to him a new idea in a just perspective, see it in relation to thoughts old and middle-aged as well as young and perhaps untried. How is he to be given to know whether the idea is new? It is just possible that it isn't. It might be a part of the heritage of the race which the young mind has not yet chanced to encounter—for such accidents will happen.

\* \* \* \*

Referring to the "stupid conflict" between the "practical" and "cultural" in any curriculum, he says that "the central mistake is to recognize or allow any conflict at all. Among many of the foremost architects of this country I have never been able to perceive that culture and a practical, realistic equipment are mutually exclusive." Which is so true that it is incredible that it should have to be stated—and yet I fear some of my own correspondents have taken me to mean that they are mutually exclusive. The man who can't build well and durably what he "designs" is merely not an architect at all. And, conversely, he who can't design that which he builds is not an architect either. In all the years I have been in architecture, until recently when so many brand new things are being discovered all over again, have I ever heard such truths as those questioned.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Price closes his able and stimulating article by saying: "A zest for intellectual adventure should be the characteristic of every University. And of every architectural school." Amen to that—and yet I venture to suggest that Alpine climbing is not an adventure to set forth upon with the equipment furnished by the cradle or even the crib. "Let the little legs grow stronger; baby then may climb the Alp."

\* \* \* \*

Dr. Charles Butler, who is, among other useful things, a member of the State Board of Examiners for architects in New York State, draws to my attention an error in the October "Upper Ground" in reference to the requirements for a license to practice, which proves, I am glad to say, only partial. The law still requires that after January 1st, 1937, an applicant, before he can take the exams, must submit evidence that he has been graduated from a college or school, etc., etc. Which is what I said. BUT, due as I gather to Dr. Butler's own efforts, there was *added* some time ago (so far as I know without any public announcement of

the change) an amendment permitting, in lieu of graduation, etc., twelve years' practical experience in architectural work of a grade and character satisfactory to the Board.

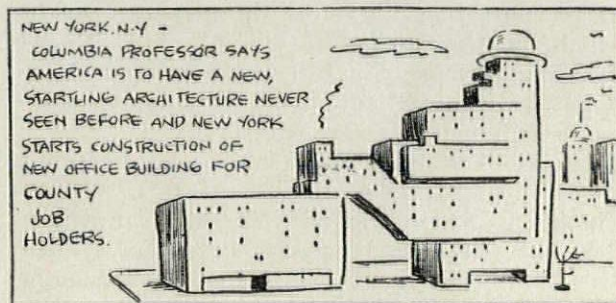
Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to make this correction, and the thanks of the profession are due Dr. Butler.

\* \* \* \*

The registration law in this State was framed primarily for the protection of the public from the incompetent constructor who used to call himself an architect. *It is equally important that the law protect the public from the incompetent designer!* This the New York law now measurably does. A fair percentage of the time given to an examination of an applicant is devoted to "aesthetic design"—which is as it should be; in my opinion up to fifty or sixty per cent of the marks, not mere *time*, should be for design, and a high grade of performance be required. There are any number of men who could pass creditably an examination in structural matters who would be highly undesirable, where design is concerned, let loose on a community.

\* \* \* \*

In the New York Herald-Tribune recently, the new Dean of the School of Architecture of Columbia University was quoted as follows: "The theatre of the architect will be, not the romantic picturization of streets, not the poetic aspects of churches and country houses, but great industrial and communal enterprises whose outcome, by a vast enhancement of security and health, will lift and sustain the happiness of populations."



Cartoon by Haenigsen in the New York Journal

Are we to understand from this that no more churches, no more country houses are to be built? Or that merely their "poetic aspects" are to disappear when Columbia really gets going on its "scientific" program? In relation hereto I would refer the interested to a list (given in an article of mine in the *American Architect* in July, 1933) of the types of buildings architects deal with at any normal time, which should convince the most skeptical that the emphasis put upon commercial structures in the past five or more years is misleading and unfounded. There is probably a copy



somewhere in the Avery Library—if that is still permitted to exist under the new dispensation. For the quotation continues: "If, therefore, the architect must abandon his carved stone, his vaults, his classic orders, and even his library"; this seems to threaten the existence of the background of present-day architecture so far as it is recorded in books. I am moved also to inquire why the architect *must* abandon his carved stone and his vaults? Perhaps they aren't stylish any more. How very dangerous a little rhetoric can be! The Dean of anything, from a cathedral down, is always listened to with an attention that should make him cautious how he misleads the public and the students; and mind his language careful.

The Dean addressed a luncheon meeting of the Architectural League the other day, I am told, and joined the Dutch in discovering Holland. With glad surprise Columbia hails the new discoveries of the new day—summarized, that buildings have functions—that if they do not express those functions they are not good buildings—and other evidences of pioneer thought.

It must be just too wonderful to chip the shell, stick out the downy head, and discover all these bright new things!

The article continued: "We must believe that it is not only a part of our work to give our students a technique which shall be useful and *salable* (my italics) but we must also strive to make them fit to apprehend a new and vastly wider responsibility than has hitherto characterized the architect." This is really too jejune to comment upon. For the sake of the record only, I enter a categorical denial of the statement that the responsibilities of the architect are any newer or any wider than they have always been. It may be good "publicity talk," but it is simply untrue.

\* \* \* \*

Any architectural school needs the support and approval of the practitioners of architecture. And if the schools persist in this sort of stuff, it may be difficult for students trained under such auspices to "sell" the "technique" they have so painfully acquired. To adopt the language of commerce so popular in school and pulpit, the architect of experience will, before buying, examine very carefully the goods he is offered by the scholastic drummers.

## TO THE PROFESSION:

**I**N the scores of letters that have come to me since my first address to the profession in the November "Upper Ground," it was inevitable that there should be many points of view. It is inevitable that many men should find more things the matter than the substitution of business objects for professional ideals. There are rates and

charges. There are the registration laws. There is the alleged top-lofty attitude of those architects who decline to give up enough, of days all too short, to satisfy the hordes of drummers who visit our offices, or the pleasant and gentlemanly "contact men" who represent a new and much improved link between the material men, manufacturers, and contractors, and the architect. Those practicing outside of a very large place like New York can have no conception of the number of agents of one or another kind who would take up every moment of our days if one saw even a small fraction of them. There are other things—and a good many of my correspondents refer to ethics. May I say just here that I have not mentioned the word nor the thing—ethics means professional conduct—and in my opinion professional conduct has never been on so generally high a plane in spite of the temptations of the times. I have not been drawing attention to misconduct on the part of the "professional" architect, but to the presence of the business-man-broker-type and his kind who have done untold harm to us because their minds are not the minds of professional men, and their attitude toward architecture as an art and a profession is that of the outsider who has horned in.

I thought I had made myself clear, that I had written English that was unmistakable in its meaning. But yesterday I had evidence to the contrary from a man who said he had read the November and December letters each four times, but was not yet clear as to what I mean. Hence these explanatory sentences.

Here is one: Architectural engineering is a profession within our profession, an honorable and useful calling; so long as the Architectural Engineer does not call himself an architect *tout court* and make pretense to be what he is so seldom as almost to be never—an artist and designer—he is, so far as I am concerned, outside this discussion. It is nevertheless true that the engineering type of mind is usually incapable of looking at architectural design and practice as the architect does.

I had assumed as to my readers, that I might count upon *their* assumption that after thirty-five years of practice I had learned that part of every architect's day is devoted to stark, hard *business*, and that if one is not careful it will encroach upon the mere beer and skittles of design and construction. May I assure those who have not understood this, that I am, and have been, all my professional life, completely aware of this element of the daily life of the architect.

I have the impression that some men think I am unduly nervous about the state of the profession, and that I was also unduly severe and outspoken. Well, when I was younger I used to do a good deal of sparring. I was taught two main things about fighting: 1st, To pick your mark. Not to aim at



three or four places, but just One. 2nd, When you had picked your mark, to hit it with every ounce of weight and force in your body. I was not unmindful of the many other marks this most interesting correspondence has disclosed—but I picked the place to hit which I considered the most important place, what I believe to lie at the root of all our troubles.

There has been, as I pointed out, a good deal of pussy-footing around the situation, some pretty mealy-mouthed utterances hither and yon. Plain talk was needed—and my mail is proof that it not only hit the special mark I picked, but jarred the rest of the system as hitting square on the button will always do.

To those who, never so gently, have regretted that I am “hysterical,” “panicky” or “slopping over,” may I say that when a man goes out to stalk a tiger he doesn't do it with a saucer of milk-and-water. He takes a gun. And further, that everything I have said has been deliberately conceived and carried out—and will continue to be, in the way I think will accomplish results. I'm not doing this for fun but to try to accomplish something.

Which brings me to this, to clear away any doubts on the subject: *This is not a publicity stunt.* Its genesis is to be found in a conversation with two serious Institute men who were discussing the regrettable change apparent in the professional attitude, and wondering where, in the Institute, the right kind of leadership could be found. I decided, having the vehicle of approach in “The Upper Ground,” to sound out the profession and asked my Editors if they would back me up—which they have with a magazine eight pages bigger, to accommodate this matter. I have hope that before long, with an awakened interest, leadership will be found. If every member of the Institute will demand that every man who looks a likely candidate for office—for office connotes leadership—stand up and be counted on the basis of his professional history we'll have leadership and the kind we ought to have.

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This letter in December dealt more with what Institute men can do to restore the profession to public respect and confidence, than the many others not in the Institute ranks. And to these latter I wish to address myself just now.

There are Registration Laws in 36 or 38 States of the Union. The number of registered architects in each varies, but in the aggregate they constitute a formidable body of opinion that can be directed to the public good—and one of the elements of the public good is to have its buildings well designed and built by competent architects. Here in New York State there are nearly 1600 registered architects. These are organized here into what is called the “Council of Registered Architects,” which is, roughly, dedicated to the protection of the mate-

rial interests of the architects, legislation affecting practice, etc. I think its field should cover design more than it does.

The Registered Architects of every State should organize also. Then when an architect, who might otherwise be isolated in a detached community, wants to be heard he can speak with the voice of not one but many. There is something heartening in feeling that one's fellows are with us.

Soon, no doubt, instead of the necessity for taking out a dozen licenses in a dozen different States, we shall have either uniform requirements for a license to practice in all States, or a central licensing authority acting for all the States. That this should be Governmentally controlled, God forbid. We must recognize that some elements of a Registration Law that would work in one part of the country wouldn't work somewhere else. And also that no community in any state would care to have some fellow, who has barely scraped through a low-standard exam in another, building poor buildings in a high-standard town.

In such Councils of Registered Architects is a splendid field for the effort to build up the profession in the public esteem. The character of practice and professional methods should be examined and re-evaluated. Ever since the World War, many architects who went down to Washington and worked in the various huge organizations of the hour were badly bitten by the efficiency bug. “Efficiency” was the *cliche* of the time, with more waste of effort than we ever saw before. They, and others likewise impressed by size and number—quantity, in short—have been trying ever since to impress the public with their business efficiency, with the size and splendor of their offices, by the size of their staffs, and have modeled their offices in appearance and atmosphere upon the counting rooms of huge corporations or banking institutions—with all the working machinery visible from the gate in the outer office. To some business minds that sort of thing may be impressive—perhaps it is. But it is such things that have helped to give the public the impression that architecture is a business, and it is just such things that every man should think over carefully. If you want people to believe that architecture is a profession, the office ought to look like an architect's office, the work-place of a professional man.

In this world of business toward which so many architects are casting sheep's-eyes, there is an enormous amount of bunk and silliness. One has only to look over the advertising pages of newspapers and magazines to see the utter drivel handed to the public by business men. And it is that kind of twaddle, that shouldn't be able to sell a penny's worth of anything to anyone above the grade of a low-type moron, that some men in our profession seriously propose should be adopted to “put the architect on the map.” Well, I believe that only



professional conduct and ideals can put the architect on the map. One of the tenets of our Code of Ethics is that it is unprofessional to advertise. If it is unprofessional for the individual then it is unprofessional for the profession as a whole to do it. And if someone can laugh that off, go ahead.

Every Registered Architect can render service to his community on such a plane as to command the respect of his fellow townsmen. Much of any program for the restoration of the profession must, in the very nature of life, seem dull and inglorious. Steady, grim plugging—mere daily behavior of a sort to show the laity what we think of our profession, of civic problems, of all the things we need not recapitulate here—does not seem very inspiring at first blush. And yet it is just such simple things, such everyday virtues, that make up the mass of any endeavor to raise the level of life to a better plane. It isn't given to everyone to be the showy horse in a spike-team, to catch the public eye—the hard pulling is done by the wheelhorses—but in an age and time and country such as ours has become, the spike himself performs a very useful function.

It has been particularly interesting to me to see the directions men's thoughts take under stimulus. I hope that just because a man has written once, he won't feel he has done enough. The only way to win a fight is to keep on fighting. Therefore I should like to see my correspondents comment upon *each other's* views, not mine alone, analyze them, have here a forum for constructive debate or suggestion, with an aim in view all the time, not a means of blowing off of steam, or hot-air, or spleen. It does no good merely to get mad, merely to be excited, and then sink back to sleep again. Now that we are AWAKE, let's STAY AWAKE.

## AND NOW, OPEN DISCUSSION:

LOUIS LA BEAUME, F.A.I.A.  
*St. Louis, Missouri*

I read Magonigle's article and find that nearly every other bedeviled member of the profession has either read it also, or heard about it. It was the principal topic of conversation at lunch one day when I happened to be in New York about three weeks ago.

My first reaction, on reading Mac's article, was one of considerable exhilaration. It was written with such gusto, and seemed calculated to crack so many cocoanuts that I enjoyed it thoroughly. My first impulse was to write to the author and congratulate him as the undisputed champion of beauty, morals, rhetoric, and self-respect, to say nothing of valor, indignation, and disgust. Undoubtedly he is entitled to wear the diamond-studded belt. I hope he may keep it for a long time because I am so thoroughly in accord with so much of his creed. I, too, deplore the confusion of ideals which some of our leadership has engendered, and I share much of Magonigle's disgust. But being, as you know, the mildest of men, I cannot help feeling that some of his language is

unnecessarily violent, and some of his nervousness not quite seemly in a champion.

When he asks categorically what I am going to do to rehabilitate the profession in the public esteem, I find myself at a loss for an answer. I do not feel it necessary to sign a pledge, or make a vow, or go on a crusade to Jerusalem. I have no inclination to hit the sawdust trail for, as a matter of fact, I feel pretty good already. All I can hope for is that my moral stamina will last, and that I personally will continue to behave as well as I have in the past—and that Magonigle will too. If he does and I do, and there are many more like us, we needn't bother about the world's respect.

The present attitude of the Federal Government seems to me rather beside the point—at any rate, without much importance. For three years the Government did utilize the services of practicing architects to considerable extent, to a greater extent, in fact, than ever before in the country's history, and I am inclined to think that when the present crisis is passed, architectural ability of the highest order will again be sought by the Government.

Magonigle's definition of an architect as "a man of constructive imagination" is admirable. His differentiation of the professional attitude from the mere business attitude is wholesome and cannot be too strongly stressed. I should like to believe, and do believe, that society is coming more clearly to understand what this differentiation means. Let us agree, however, that no architect is worthy of the title if he is not capable of seeing through, to the bitter end, the structural and business details of his client's project. A man may still be an artist and possess common sense, and nearly every great artist has his natural share of gumption. That goes without saying. I do not think, however, that the practice of architecture ought to be conceived as business. The professional attitude is quite different from the business attitude, to my way of thinking, in that the professional man (or artist) has nothing to sell but his best advice. He does not buy "things" cheap and sell them at a margin of profit; he does not manufacture "things" at low cost, in quantity, or otherwise, to sell again for a margin of profit. In other words, he is neither a manufacturer nor a merchant.

He should be a skilled adviser, counsellor and guide, rendering his services, of course, for a fair compensation, but with his eyes more intently fixed on his client's advantage than on his balance sheet. The minute he starts to choose between being a starved artist or a well-fed business getter, or has any doubts as to which he would prefer, he had better stop being an architect altogether, and become a realtor, a promoter; or a business man *per se*.

I should like, of course, to have the profession of architecture assume leadership of the entire building industry, and would even go further than that and have society utilize, more generally than it does, the very qualities which I have hinted at above in statesmanship and the conduct of affairs. I want the profession to go on informing the public of the functions which the architect is fitted, by temperament and training, to perform; but always I hope that the architect will stress his true function, that is, to design useful and beautiful buildings. That is the function that is uniquely and peculiarly his, and which cannot be shared by others.

Society needs the architect as an architect first, not as a business man. Architecture as a profession, in my judgment, can only survive if we continue to stress the purely professional and technical qualities which differentiate it from other professions or businesses. This ballyhoo about the architect becoming a captain of industry, a financial wizard, a sales promoter, a go-getter, or a racketeer is all the bunk. The country is already full of adepts in these lines who will beat us to it the minute we try to compete with them. Never fear Sears-Roebuck, the big architectural or engineering corporations, the promoting groups, etc. They will all have their little hectic day, but I have enough faith in the fundamental intelligence of the human race to believe that the functions of the true architect will continue to be appreciated for a long time to come.



RALPH ADAMS CRAM, F.A.I.A.  
*Boston, Massachusetts*

Your article for PENCIL POINTS is one ray of light in darkness. Count me in as a charter member of your "Architects' Professional League." More strength to your arm!

WALTER MELLOR, F.A.I.A.  
*Philadelphia, Pa.*

I have read with a great deal of interest your article, "The Upper Ground." I am in sympathy with your stand.

The more I think about reforms—whether economic, political, or social—the more I am convinced there is only one way to obtain them—not through the passage of laws but through education. There are always those who will find a way of circumventing laws, but if we can educate the individual and the public to want certain things or live in a certain way we will need few laws. The fewer the laws the better. If the same amount of time and money, which we spend on passing laws, and then trying to enforce them, were spent on educating the people to want those things, more would be accomplished.

Ours is a profession and should remain one.

The rehabilitation of the profession can only come through making the individual members want it to remain a profession. That seems to me to be the problem. Can you do it?

F. ELLIS JACKSON, F.A.I.A.  
*Providence, Rhode Island*

In Mr. Magonigle's challenge to the architectural profession, read recently with keen interest, I was deeply impressed by the picture of existing conditions painted by an artist gifted in the facile and forceful use of the medium he employs.

And what a picture!

He has, of course, chosen the view best suited to portray the vulnerability of our supposed armour. Let us, however, discard protection and expose the naked truth.

We are living in days when action of any description is supposedly an advance—towards what end we do not know. Albeit, it is not lethargy. Further, it may be said there was probably never a time when words were more numerous, more constantly flowing in a stream, the flood of which is becoming quite uncontrollable. The modern motto appears to be "action so long as there be action; words so long as there be words," with the result that confusion reigns supreme in the minds of many who would welcome a return to saner days.

I cannot fully agree with the criticism of Institute control so clearly set forth in certain statements made. This body, as such and through its committees, has made every effort properly to present our case to the high government authorities of both the present and previous administrations. Was there one better fitted for this Herculean task than Louis La Beume. If so, I do not know him; nor was there one who would have given more of himself, his time, and his efforts ungrudgingly or to better advantage. To a man we must agree that this is so.

And here let it be said as regards the post of Supervising Architect that possibly a lawyer was better fitted for the position he held as controlling figure of a large building bureau than any one of several able architects might have been and that a rear admiral as authority in command of a government building program is by no means as out of place as is the spectacle of attempting an undertaking of such magnitude in a manner calculated to reduce Federal architectural developments to the quantity method and thereby of necessity employing means comparable to those of accepted commercial productive management. It is here that we have failed in impressing and driving home our salient point. Objection to the qualifications of personnel is not so much at issue as is the unsuitability of submitting

public architecture to bureaucratic control, a condition wrong in premise and impossible of satisfactory execution.

Our quarrel, I am satisfied, is with quantity versus quality. What then is wrong with our picture that needs immediate consideration and correction. Not alone with the militant Magonigle picture of existing conditions, but the picture which each one of us sees as we help paint it day by day. One must not forget that we are passing from a world of potential cultural background into one of kaleidoscopic realism. In it there is no place for meditation, for orientation and the direct procedure to a goal of satisfying attainment. Democracy is in the saddle and one follows in her wake or plays a lone hand. For my part I incline toward the latter course if choice must be made between these two.

As a group, and as a profession, we have been urged to so enlarge our vision as to make our activities all too embracing; to ally ourselves not alone with the world of art and kindred endeavors, but to enter as well the field of political, social, and economic life. Such course can, I believe, be possible for only a gifted few.

To our distinct disadvantage, comparative reference has been made to the medical profession, and I think quite properly, for there is none held in higher esteem. I venture to say there is no class in the community that devotes itself more closely and more constantly to its chosen vocation than its members. It is not expected of them that they go beyond the limits of their practice, for in doing that which they are called upon to perform they automatically combine the social contacts with the professional. So, too, may we benefit our communities to a marked degree, not by our so-called allied activities, but by our outstanding professional fitness and helpfulness and through the medium of furnishing sound advice and counsel. By and large, then, I most earnestly believe we, as architects, must choose to focus our efforts on the devotion of time, study, and research to the advancement of our profession, its ideals, its attainments, and its opportunities. This course should be charted and followed assiduously—not casually, nor in the manner of a dilettante practitioner.

There may be some among us more fitted to act as ambassadors to a commercialized and hurrying world than are the majority. Let us see, though, that we are prepared individually and collectively for the delivery of our trust, that we may work to the end of bringing others of our countrymen to the belief that with each of the many-sided phases of our modern life in the hands of those who best understand their workings the sooner can we develop a society the advancement of which will further a life of far fuller potentialities than those we now enjoy.

What does one say to an "Architects' Professional League." I say "No."

No more organizations, preferably less—and in reducing the number let us make those which do exist more valuable, more helpful, more possible of fulfilling their needs and producing the results which Mr. Magonigle so ably and strikingly brings to our attention. Let us act and think—not the former, however, without distinct emphasis on the latter.

What is needed at the moment above all else is a return of prosperity that is not alone economic, but essentially spiritual as well. Without this intangible incentive no attainment of our aspirations is possible.

C. HOWARD WALKER, F.A.I.A.  
*Boston, Massachusetts*

Bravo!! Strength to your elbow. I have fought as I believe you know for years to my deliberate pecuniary disadvantage for just this thing.

At several conventions I helped to wreck registrations of architects in which any political influence was possible, claiming that the honesty and integrity of an architect could only be judged by his peers and that examiners other than architects were untrained and unqualified to judge of the architect's chief quality—that of design, plan included.



In speaking to one large engineering state college, I was welcomed by a demand for cheers as "he is an engineer" and my instant response was "Thank God, I am not! That demands an explanation and no apology. What you have done with your broad opportunities deserves all praise, but you are children and cripples. Answer me one question only: Have you ever done more than support a load, span a void, and keep extraneous materials out of a hole? There should be a plus quantity and quality to that merely utilitarian duty, which is the design and inspiration causing beauty, i.e., architecture."

Aiding the New York men, I helped to prevent state architects from becoming members of the A.I.A. and on receiving a dossier to be signed by me from the Boston Society of Architects, agreeing to a feeble attitude to clients, ostensibly to further building, I declined, wrote that we were not Yogis with begging bowls, and—being just out of a hospital and unable to attend the last convention—I arranged that if the matter was brought to the notice of the convention my letter should be read in opposition. It was not introduced. I have little use for codes and none for charts which are post-mortems—not prophecies.

The best compliment I ever received was from Zantinger, to whom I said I knew why I had been made a Doctor of Fine Arts by Penn. and that it was because of the affection of my friends and he said, "No, it is what you have stood for." I stand as I always have stood. Architecture is a very noble profession, the ignorance of which, even in its own ranks, does no credit to their intelligence. If I can be used in any way, let me loose.

JAMES KELLUM SMITH, A.I.A.

*Of the firm of McKim, Mead & White, New York*

I have read with much interest your recent article in PENCIL POINTS. Even before the depression, it was apparent, I think, that our profession was fast approaching a situation in which the architect was tending to become a hireling of real estate interests, of industry, or of government. The distressing conditions of the last few years appear to have accelerated this process. How much this state of affairs has been brought about by the attitude of the architects themselves and how much it is a reflection of the temper of the times, it is difficult to say. But it will lead inevitably to the degradation of the art of architecture in this country, unless it is corrected and the architect again assured of an independent, respected professional status. If this can be accomplished from within the profession as you suggest, so much the better. I hope so. But in any case you have done a fine service to the profession by focussing attention upon the issue.

LOUIS STEVENS, F.A.I.A.

*Pittsburgh, Pa.*

I have carefully read Mr. Magonigle's open letter to the architects of the United States in the November issue of PENCIL POINTS and feel that he has presented for our delectation what we have, many of us, been perhaps more or less conscious of for some time—a fairly accurate picture of the status of the profession, broadly speaking, at the present day.

Perhaps he has not, however, satisfactorily accounted for the existence of this state of affairs toward which we have either gravitated or been pushed over a long period. Certainly the considerable body of men at present identified as the architectural profession, overcrowded as it is and covering such a vast range of professional, intellectual, and æsthetic qualifications as it does, is, by reason of these very facts, measurably to blame; its leadership, too, cannot escape its share of responsibility. Nor can the public, including that changing part which from time to time is distinguished, to no good purpose, by the title of "Government," since through sheer ignorance no appreciable portion of the

same is capable of recognizing for itself just what architects should do or should be.

Possibly, too, the great issue of the hour, if any, so far as the profession is concerned, might seem to be a sort of rehabilitation, not in order to retore but rather, let us say, to establish the confidence of public and government in it as professional men. Such establishment can only be permanently brought about and maintained by achievement and not by assertion; and it seems to this writer that because of the prevalence of the conditions which Mr. Magonigle recognized, it will not be difficult—it will be practically impossible at present. While assertion seems to be continually striving to attain heights never before reached, achievement is visibly at its lowest level in the known history of the world.

Architects, as a profession, will never be able to hold that position in the world which they fondly assert to be theirs, until they can establish and preserve for themselves that distinction which belongs to them alone as professional men practicing architecture as a fine art and in a professional way (oh, of course, with all the other and usual ordinary requisites of professional men, including common sense). The title "architect" does not properly belong to those who are merely engaged in building and who, while possessed of sufficient skill in all practical matters and of unquestioned mental endowments, know but little of architecture as a fine art or possibly even what constitutes a fine art at all for that matter and who therefore lack the one requisite ability—which they are unable to avoid demonstrating—that of being able to achieve beauty in terms of building construction. Laugh at this if you will, but such beauty has been an acknowledged accomplishment throughout the ages and is still visible here and there today, in vastly diminished quantities, if one is able to identify it.

How this desired rehabilitation of the profession can be brought about I do not know. Further than that only architects can do it. But so long as the present great catastrophe, the TOTAL DECAY OF REASON, prevails throughout the land, just so surely will follow the final destruction of the profession as Mr. Magonigle foresees.

R. J. RANEY, ARCHITECT

*Kansas City, Missouri*

History reveals that the decline of aristocracy (represented by the Bourbons, the Hapsburgs, et al) was brought about after they had pridefully reached the pinnacle of power, security, and success. If affairs of state did not function to suit them, they would withdraw unto themselves and let the rest of the world "go to pot." But they still cultivated the "shrub of quality," in this state of egotistical isolation, to such refinement and perfection it eventually became anæmic and finally withered and died.

A parallel might be noted in the case of our own Aristocrats of Architecture; who, safe and secure in their position of success (reached, no doubt, through their own genius and effort), have withdrawn into their little shells, forgetting or ignoring the fact that there are other professions, crafts, and businesses in existence without the support of which they would long ago have perished.

Then, too, it is obvious, even to a "dumb" layman, that an architectural genius *can* create "the greatest masterpiece"; but, unless he is of the world, financially, industrially, and professionally, somewhat an integral part, his masterpiece will still be hidden "under a bushel" of other masterpieces.

As a matter of fact, every architect and his "second cousin" knows that architecture, today, is the sick man of the arts. Among a few of his many ailments might be mentioned: partial paralysis (too much self back patting), very bad eyesight (can't see the other fellow's "stuff"), and last, but not least, he is suffering from malnutrition, bordering on starvation. Yes, literally, starvation! He is actually starving because 75 per cent of the profession (who are not geniuses nor have reached the rarer stratosphere) are depend-



ent on the small house and other small type building design for their *actual daily sustenance*. Right now there "ain't" no small houses or buildings being built or, at most, very few. Should there, by chance, happen to be need for a small-house design, the Small-house Bureaux (perhaps countenanced by the Institute) snatch the very bread from the architect's mouth—if he is not very, very alert.

Other professions, like the medical and legal, depend to a great extent on a powerful national or local organization to see that the rank and file of their respective crafts obtain justice and have their rights respected. Likewise, the rank and file of the architectural profession have relied on their national organization (the Institute) to act for them. *If that organization* has stood up in the councils of the political, business, and professional world and demanded that the rank and file of their little army be rendered the things that are Caesar's in the name of architecture, then all is well and good. If they have not done this (you know whether or not they have), then we will have to look around for a new architectural Moses to lead us into the promised land of architectural beauty and plenty—the land of our dreams—or else crawl back into our little shell and let the old profession go straight to —.

DONALD W. SOUTHGATE, A.I.A.  
Nashville, Tenn.

Your article has aroused me to give expression to thoughts which have long been maturing in my mind but which I have not attempted to crystallize into the written word for lack of satisfactory outlet.

I have read your article with great interest and while I agree with you in parts of your comprehensive survey, I disagree in other parts.

I agree with you that the architect is no more a part of the building industry as an industry than the doctor is a part of the great drug industry as an industry, or the lawyer a part of the great law-book-printing industry and I am sorry we ever got into the great swivet of attempting to set up a code for ourselves under the specious plea that we are a part of the building industry. We could have advised our friends in the industry and have been of just as much help to them as we have been, just as we do advise and counsel with them every day in our ordinary affairs and we would have been in better position now had we gone that far and no farther.

I disagree with you, however, as to the correct method of asserting our rights to Federal work.

Before explaining just wherein I disagree, let me say first that I sometimes think that the scarcity of private work, together with the greater-than-normal amount of Federal work, has rather tended to focus our attention as architects on the Federal work to a degree which has exaggerated our perspective. There is, after all, not enough Federal work to support the profession, even if it were distributed.

What we need is a restoration of private work. Raving about the *modus operandi* of handling Federal work, or even finding a solution, will not of itself fill the greater void in our needs—that of finding normal employment in private work.

I offer no solution for the filling of the void in private work. In fact, I sometimes despair of a solution when I realize how many of us lived on it in the twenties; when I realize how, in conjunction with bond-mortgage salesmen, we persuaded the country to overbuild; and when I realize that we are no longer a young and pioneering country, but that we have come of age in America and must perforce settle down now to a more closely knit economy.

The deepest justification for building in this country has been the factor of constant increase in population. But this has now become a story of the past. The population will not increase as it has in the face of restricted immigration and a lowering birth rate. Read James Thruslow Adams' "Epic of America." The frontier is closed.

Replacement of obsolete structures may help in the future; I hope it will, but buildings do not wear out like shoes and clothing and many tenants seem to prefer old buildings because of their cheap rentals.

But, to get back to the matter of employment on Federal work, I wish to state that no voice or pen has come to my ear or eye which has had the courage to touch on the real cause which I believe lies back of the executive order of revocation of the famous "greater than \$60,000 project" policy of employment.

No one has apparently had the courage to admit that the greater bulk of projects designed by private architects under the Hoover regime and prior to the Roosevelt revocation were mediocre and no better in design than the Treasury Department could have turned out, had the Department been of a mind to "go modern" and try out all sorts of mechanistic stunts. True, the Department is bound to have consented to these designs, but they certainly put us in a hole, as a profession, when they did. They fed us the proverbial rope and we hanged ourselves if all the designs are as poor as those I've seen.

What is the reason for all this mediocre work? Who are the men who designed these buildings? Had you ever before heard of most of these architects? What went wrong with those you had heard of and would have expected better of? How did they get their appointments? Who finally named the architect in each particular locality? Was he selected by his local Congressman or by the Republican National Committeeman for that particular state? (I say Republican because all of that work was given out under the Hoover regime and I am, therefore, historically correct.) What does a Congressman know about an architect? (That he would care to tell.) What does a National Committeeman of a political party know about an architect?

If we can find the answers to these questions I believe we may find the reason for the executive order.

And if the final answer is in the fact that in the political scramble for those appointments which were made, we only made impotent monkeys of ourselves in the eyes of the Congressmen and Committeemen who made those appointments, can we then blame those politically minded gentlemen for wanting to "get out from under"?

Since there are too few of us to exert any political pressure as a *body*, can you blame these gentlemen for wishing to get rid of the annoyance of being importuned by us as individuals or small groups?

And did we importune 'em? We went after each Congressman, each time a job was to be given out, like a lot of mosquitoes and collectively we left the impression on Congress that we belong in about such a category. Monkeys or mosquitoes—harmless as a group, but d—d annoying.

If you are in favor of asking the Congressmen again to subject themselves to all of this pesky annoyance (as they are bound to view it) and of subjugating ourselves again to the humiliation of having to go through repeatedly with just such mad scrambles to become recipients of appointments of such dubious financial profit, then I, for one, am opposed to the restoration and would favor letting the revocation stand.

On the other hand, if you are in favor of restoring the old competition method of selecting architects which was the method used for a short while by the Government; or if you are in favor of some similar method which can eliminate the common politics which crept into this last go round—then I say "more power to you."

For common politics there was and mediocre work there was—plenty of both; and let us not fool ourselves into thinking that the author of the executive order doesn't know it!

There is no need of any new league or any other illusory panacea for our ills. Let us take what we have in the staunch old A.I.A., be frank with ourselves about the miserable politics we attempted to practice, set the course on a policy we can follow with pride, and go to the Federal authorities with a plan of selection designed to prove merit.



GORDON ALLEN, A.I.A.  
*Boston, Massachusetts*

Mr. Magonigle has put the case well. I am one of the many who have to answer "Nothing" to all his questions: "What have you done about it?" "What are you doing about it?" and (very likely) to "What are you going to do about it?" As in a good many other cases my talents, if any, do not include the art of persuading any one to do anything, but that does not mean I am not enthusiastic on behalf of all Mr. Magonigle wants, and that I will not help all I can.

Normally we might expect the A.I.A. to guard our interests, but it seems they are unable to do so. Perhaps what we need is (God save the mark) more Publicity! The public knows in a general way what doctors do and what lawyers do, but hasn't the foggiest notion of what an architect's job is or how he does it. Education of the public is a big order and can only be done slowly; but if the subject of what is being done to us in Washington could be aired in some publication with a big circulation, such as *Time*, the present situation might become more generally known.

With a lawyer for Supervising Architect and a Rear Admiral in charge of the government building program, perhaps we ought to start the Professional League with Clarence Darrow as president and General Pershing as Secretary, and beat them at their own game.

More power to Mr. Magonigle, and success to his efforts.

HENRY K. HOLSMAN, F.A.I.A.  
*Chicago, Illinois*

Responding to Mr. Magonigle's martyrdom, may I say, The architectural profession, if there is one, seems to be floundering in a fog.

Formerly, if "a gentleman and a scholar" gave dinners and balls, designed episodes and shaped events, then imported archaeology and directed the building of "mansions" and colleges, we acclaimed him architect and his archaeology, taste.

Lately, if an engineer or lawyer, with tracers and draftsmen, subcontractors and craftsmen, creates a good building we disown him as an architect and call him usurper, though we did not go after the job and he did.

In youth, the student is fed on illusions and his egoism is expanded by retouchers and tutors. When duly diplomatized, licensed, and institutionalized he is an architect.

He gets a humble house to build and fumbles it. He wants a commission, not a job—a patron, not an owner—a monument, not a building to build.

In old age, he sulks—there is no taste, no scholarship, no architecture—all is Economy, Sociology, Finance—no wholly high-hatted profession, only business in the world!

If an architectural profession is to arrive and stay in this land of the free and equal, it must mix its glamorous dreams with some homely common sense. It must stop strutting, bickering, backbiting and whining about who is who.

Each man must get the good ingredients in his guts and go out and get the job, unashamed, then do it right, within the everlasting limits of Economy, Sociology, and Finance and under the ever-changing whims, contrarities, and perversities of human nature.

ALFRED W. REA, A.I.A., AND CHARLES E. GARSTANG  
*Los Angeles, California*

We desire to commend you for your letter in the November number and to say that it voices our sentiments in the matter. It is certainly time that some definite move is made to turn the rising tide that is swamping the boat in which we, as a profession, are trying to ride out the storm that is upon us. They tell us that it is poor policy to change pilots in times of stress; yet if it had not been for Grant, there never would have been an Appomattox.

Not only is the national government embarking upon the biggest era of building in its history and handling all the

architectural work itself, but practically every state in the Union, every county and city of any size, is now doing the same thing. This has naturally led school boards, banks, utility companies, moving picture companies, and even large manufacturing concerns to undertake the same sort of work, until there is little left for the legitimate architect, while the universities turn them out in still greater numbers.

If the profession is to survive the deluge, it is time that some stand is taken against it.

GOLDWIN GOLDSMITH, F.A.I.A.  
*Austin, Texas*

A little group here in Texas was awake before you cried "Wake up." You have never heard of the Austin Branch of the West Texas Chapter. It consists of four architects, three teachers and one combination of both. In addition we had two Juniors of the Institute.

This fall we woke up at a preliminary meeting in September. In October we had two more Institute members and two more Juniors. In November we held a meeting to which we invited all of the alphabetic New Deal employees in architectural and landscape work and the upper draftsmen of the offices, and met twenty-six strong.

We repeated this in December with a few new-comers. We are laying plans to raise the status of the architect locally at least. We have started to "clean house" locally. We believe that we must begin with ourselves before attempting to clean house higher up.

If your "foray" in criticism, for it is that, rather than "essay," does wake up the architects I hope it will lead them to clean house at home first. We deserve the leaders we get and we will not have better leaders until we deserve them. It will be easy for many architects to follow the national political custom of throwing out the "ins" because the "ins" haven't prevented the architectural depression. But I believe the leaders have been ineffectual because the followers have not followed them. Or if the leaders took the wrong road, where was the protest from the rank and file?

Not until your clarion voice was heard has there been any articulate protest. We have all been too busy trying to "get ours," having seen how others crowded the trough.

Is not the real trouble a universal selfishness? The few who have tried to point a better way have been cried down by others. They have let mistaken selfish considerations control their judgment.

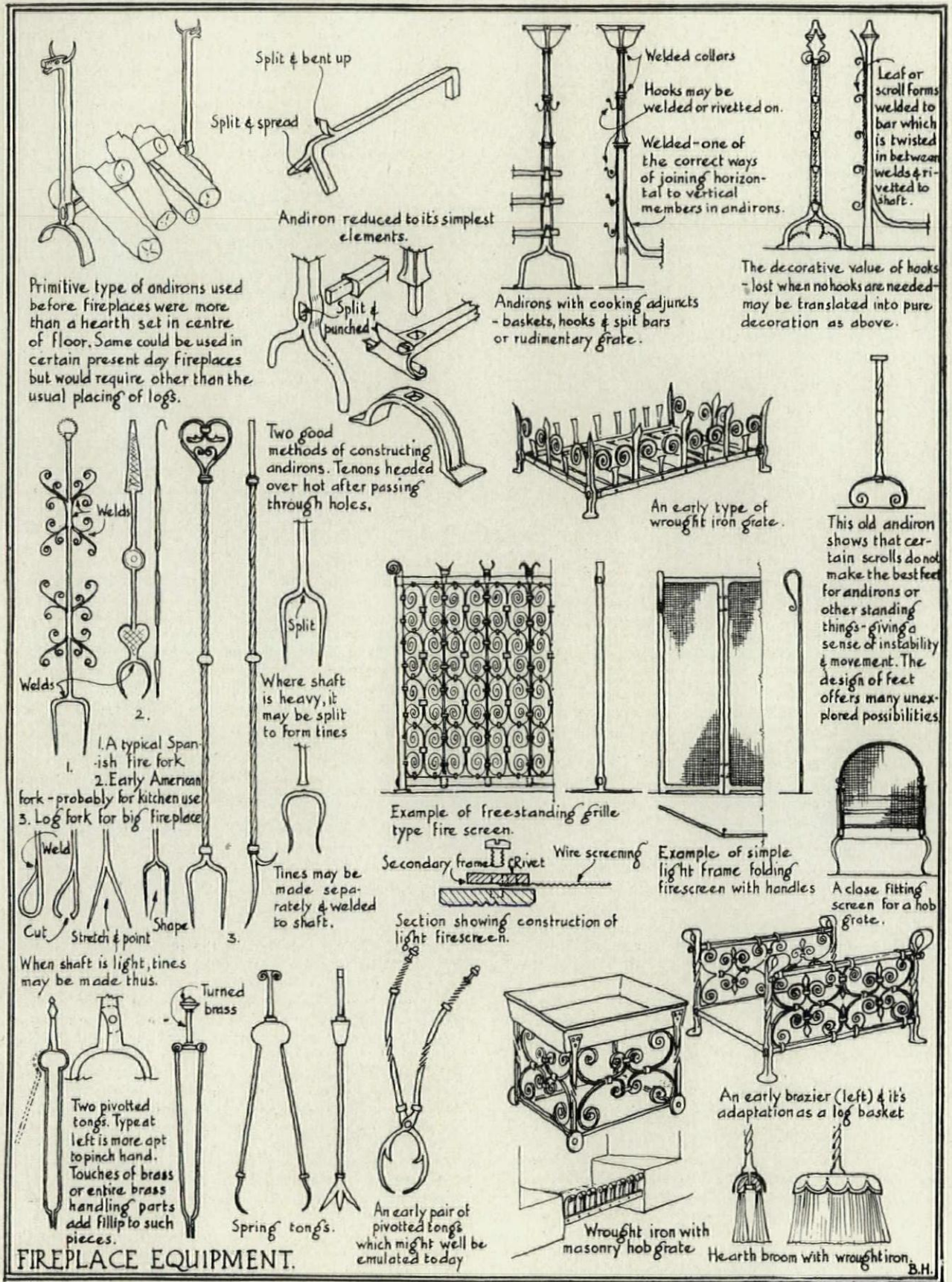
I sincerely hope that to your two appeals "Wake up" and "Clean up," you will add a third, "Brace up."

GEORGE S. KOYL, A.I.A.  
*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

Your very frank appraisal of the profession is a worthy effort to bring the architects of the country to the realization of the dangers which confront the profession.

The officers of the Institute have made a noble effort against extremely great odds to bring about in the administration at Washington the realization of the function of an architect and his professional relation to society. It is quite possible that they have compromised, but I am certain, after attending the convention in Washington, that the difficulties have been numerous, especially in view of the attitude of the Secretary of the Interior toward architects in general. I do think with the passing of the emergency that the profession will be as strong, or perhaps stronger than ever because of its attitude of cooperation with the building industry and its offer of assistance to the government, although these have been systematically refused for various reasons, some of them not complimentary to the individual members of the profession who have been employed in the past on government work. I am, however, in complete accord with the spirit of your article and believe that the profession will suffer if it continues to compromise with those theories of business which tend to destroy its professional character.





Details of Wrought Iron Fireplace Equipment, designed and drawn by Bernard Heatherley. See article



# W R O U G H T M E T A L W O R K

## *11—Fireplace Equipment*

By BERNARD HEATHERLEY

**T**HE destructive foolishness, into which every era is betrayed by assuming current thought to be necessarily superior to that preceding it, was evident at the inception of central heating by wholesale dismantling and neglect of the fireplace. The return to favor of the fireplace is shown by the frequency of its inclusion in new work, the restoration of old, disused hearths, and the provision for open fires even in such buildings whose conception springs from thoughts entirely at variance with the romantic associations of the fireplace. This indicates that it satisfies some universal instinct that neither needs explanation nor is likely to disappear from human character. The importance of the fireplace realized—often making it the dominating feature of a room—we should extend to its adjuncts the beauty we try to impart to the mantel, surround, hearth, etc. This was instinctively done in the past and the fact that the open fire was used for cooking as well as for general heating has given us a legacy of many lovely as well as practical wrought objects.

The most important of such pieces probably are the andirons or firedogs. History again points the way of logic for us in the design of these things. Serving originally only to raise the fuel from the hearth so as to permit a draft to the fire and to prevent logs from rolling, they developed into cooking accessories, with baskets and hooks to hold utensils and various kinds of spits. The evolution of the kitchen as a separate entity rendered unnecessary the cooking attachments on andirons for the living chambers and the typical andiron shaft became more and more purely decorative. The present general use of andirons includes no cooking requirements and we should design them accordingly. About the simplest design possible would be realized by bending the two ends of a bar at 90° and splitting one of those ends so as to give a total of three points of support. Most of us, however, prefer less ascetic things about us (even though the pocket would impose them) and from this bare necessity we have a limitless choice in the various degrees of richness.

One form of decoration to be shunned is that which gives the impression that andirons are movable things and provides them with handles—sometimes more like door knockers. Another kind of andiron, which has surprisingly gained favor, must have been conceived by a mind in which "massive" was synonymous with "good." It approximates vaguely the general form of certain fine old heavy cast firedogs, but proves to be light in weight being built up of sheet metal and, of course, hammer-marked. While it is desirable to study the design of andirons in relation to the fireplace they will serve, there is a quite large range of possibilities in good proportion of andiron to fireplace opening. It is wise not to make them so high as to be obstructive to refueling the fire. Andirons usually look best if they do not project beyond the face of the opening—if this would mean shaping the firescreen to straddle them.

The full development of the grate did not come until coal was in fairly general use and it was more often cast than wrought. These were, however, rudimentary grates in very early times and the type that holds horizontal rods, stretching from dog to dog and supported by hooks on the vertical shafts, is good today for the man who likes to build his fire high. The fireback is best in cast iron, as ordinary sheet metal would be too thin to withstand the heat of the fire without buckling.

The firescreen is of great importance—especially as we seldom use masonry floors, but carry wood floors and carpets right up to the hearth. There are two primary mental approaches to the design of a screen although a middle course is often taken. One requires that while preventing sparks from leaving the fireplace, the screen be inconspicuous so that the fire may not be obscured. A light frame, approximating the size of the opening, may be fitted with metal screening somewhat coarser than fly screening to effect this. It is advisable to use screening of non-corrosive metal as iron wires so light are vulnerable to corrosion. Nothing can be said against good commercially manufactured screening for this purpose and the non-corrosive material may easily be darkened if desired. The other main mental approach to the firescreen regards the fire as a pleasing background for a fine piece of metalwork. In this case the screen may be regarded as a grille and treated with infinite variety. It, too, must be backed with screening and in all cases this screening should be secured to a secondary frame which is, in turn, screwed to the main frame. Even though immune from corrosion, screening sometimes becomes broken and replacement should be thus facilitated. Unlike andirons, most screens must be considered as movable objects (for fire kindling and replenishing, ash removal, toasting, etc. Many people like the fire quite open except when it is unattended). Therefore it is good to provide screens



with handles. A number of iron screens have been criticized as excessively weighty, making their removal a difficult achievement. There is no need to merit this criticism which can be avoided without practicing the flimsy, chickenwire construction so evident in many commercially made fire-screens. One type requiring considerable weight is that which stands free of the fireplace on legs of its own and may be so placed that the fire is reached without its removal. Whether a firescreen shall just fit the fireplace opening, be straight with supporting legs, be curved, or shall fold, are matters subject to personal taste and the style of the fireplace itself. In the case of folding screens, the hinges are open to the considerations applying to all hinges. Wrought firescreens may involve all the wrought and forging processes discussed.

From the utilitarian point of view, the fork must take first place among the fire tools. Its design is largely controlled by the size of the fireplace and fuel. It may be very small or may have to be long enough to work on the fire from a comfortable distance. In general, the log fork is of two tines for pushing and poking and frequently has a spur behind for pulling logs. Those who succumb to the fascination of keeping a fire burning brightly, re-arranging the brands as they burn through and bringing fresh spurts of flame from seemingly extinguished logs, know the importance of balance in a fork. Besides the log fork, there are various kinds of toasting forks which can be marvels of delicacy and grace. There is ample precedent for such pieces owing to their culinary origin and if to some they seem to carry an amount of ornament excessive for practical use, one has only to remember the deftness which was necessary in other days, and which can still be acquired, in the management of many desirable un-necessaries. There are times when the fork cannot quite manage the logs and then the tongs become necessary. Experience shows the spring type as preferable to some pivoted types, being easier to use, and owing to the latter's propensity to pinch the hand. It is well to have the log-gripping portions roughed up or pointed for efficient use. The virtues implicit in a clean hearth have so long been recognized that the hearth broom is a very necessary piece of equipment. There is little precedent for its use with metal, but a head of bristles may very nicely be devised on a metal shaft. In the above three tools we have the making of a "set" if such is desired, which may rest in a standard or against hooks in the fireplace front, or they may, of course, be of diverse designs. If they do not hang clear of the hearth, it is well to provide a metal plate for the tools to set on so as to avoid scratching marble or other hearth material. The shovel and poker are not generally used with a wood fire, just as the fork and broom are superfluous for the coal fire. Log baskets lend

themselves admirably to making in wrought metals and a good starting point for their design is provided by some of the old squarish braziers. These were often on wheels which arrangement may recommend itself to some for a log basket. Or the piece may take the form of a rack, may be merely a bent sheet of metal on a frame, or quite intricate grille work. The foregoing comprise the principal needs of the fireplace. The many other accessories—bellows, trivets, fire-lighters, fenders, metal surrounds in place of brick, stone, or marble, etc.—are necessary or not according to individual opinion.

The mention of screws in connection with fire-screens and elsewhere in these writings suggests consideration of their legitimate use in hand wrought work. Of course the screw principle is of very ancient origin and we can find ample justification for the use of screws if we depend on precedent alone. Nevertheless there is that about the stock screw which stamps it for what it is—a mechanical product of mechanical process—which is nothing against the screw itself but is somewhat incompatible with hand wrought work. To talk of hand made screws would be ridiculous and it would be improper to ask any client to pay for them. Also, in the case of the screw, let us acknowledge that the mechanical product is better—is one of those things that should be made by machine. From the craftsman's point of view, a screw is not as strong as some other methods he uses to join work. The very virtue in a screw that it can be withdrawn is one point of weakness. But, as in the case of the firescreen secondary frame, the craftsman must make use of this very faculty. Therefore, we may establish that the screw is used legitimately where it functions better than anything else would in a given case. Further examples of this show in the use of expansion and toggle bolts and in attaching work in positions where neither welding or riveting is practicable. But the screwing of balusters to a handrail, the screwing together of scrolls in grille work, the screwing of a lamp base to its shaft—these are illegitimate and poor uses of screws. The craftsman can, then, on occasion feel thankful for the screw's existence from the practical point of view, but this does not settle its visual aspect—its greatest offence. The matter can be satisfactorily dealt with in some cases, as in the example shown for a gate frame in Article 2 (July, 1933) where a bolt was screwed into a horizontal member and headed over into a squarish countersinking on the vertical member it joined. This both prevented withdrawal and gave a good appearance. The worst visual offender is the flat countersunk head and if forced into using it one can do little about it. The round head and filister head are both better looking and the screw driver slot may be turned to some decorative purpose by making cuts across it or by punching a few holes in the screw head.



# A FRIENDLY BUT HONEST CRITICISM Of Two Competition Designs

By W. POPE BARNEY, A. I. A.

EDITOR'S NOTE:—Included among the 1176 designs submitted in the PENCIL POINTS-Flat Glass Industry Competition there were several done in the "functional" manner that stood out from all the other "modern" designs and attracted special attention from the judges. Although these designs were not given any prizes or mentions, some of the members of the jury of award suggested that it might be helpful to publish one or two of them together with critical comments. We therefore present, on the next two pages, two drawings selected as the best of the "functional" school and upon which Mr. Barney comments in a spirit of friendly helpfulness.

IT would seem to the writer that a sane modernism—which we all really desire—should and does start with a merciless logic in its approach to a solution. If it hasn't that, it really hasn't much to commend it other than perhaps a new and startling dress to exhibit in the architectural fashion show. Having, however, achieved a splendidly logical solution, its æsthetic expression is a matter of personal predilection. It would seem that the real designer should be free from prejudice either for or against old forms and that he should rather strive sincerely for forms that are significant and pertinent to his basic idea and beautiful to the eyes of at least a few others besides himself.

The modern designs in the recent PENCIL POINTS competition, to the outspoken regret of some of the members of the jury—and the secret regret, it is suspected, of all the members of the jury—did not reach the goal above outlined.

The designs on the following two pages are representative of several hundred of a similar nature. With all apologies to their authors, the writer would like to say that in his opinion they show modernism as it is all too frequently practiced where considerable good sense as well as nonsense are mixed together.

As evidence of GOOD SENSE, Design No. 1 shows:

1. A fine logic in placing the building on the lot, giving a maximum of garden to the South.
2. An extraordinary simplicity of conception in the placing of the two glass-walled rooms in the angle of wing walls which give privacy to the entrance of both guests and tradesmen.
3. The stark nakedness of the main entrance has a distinction which many structures clothed with historic fancy dress fail ultimately to achieve.
4. There is a nicely felt exterior segregation of the functions, unusual in a one-story house.

Under points of NONSENSE, I would enumerate:

1. The structural absurdity and visual undesirability of wing walls of the width shown in plans and perspective particularly when the material is indicated as some form of masonry unit.
2. A sun terrace beside the masters' bedrooms which is screened from the southern sun all day and from the morning sun up to 11 o'clock and from the afternoon sun after 1 o'clock.
3. Garden entrance to the minor bedrooms when the garden has so little indication that it would be either charming or private.
4. The round-ended bathroom.
5. The placing of a fireplace immediately adjacent to the entrance door.
6. The obvious difficulties which the owner will encounter in getting his automobile under cover and the resulting inconvenience of the delivery of supplies to the kitchen where a tradesman is asked to run down to the bottom of a hill in order to climb back up steps to the pantry.

The writer feels a respect for the effort to contribute something fresh in the evolution of a residence on a corner lot and he believes that a contribution has been made in the suggestion of the glass box in the angle of the walls, but at the same time he feels that there is a perverseness in disregarding, or else an ignorance of, so many elements that must be mastered before distinguished architecture is possible.

As evidence of GOOD SENSE, Design No. 2 shows:

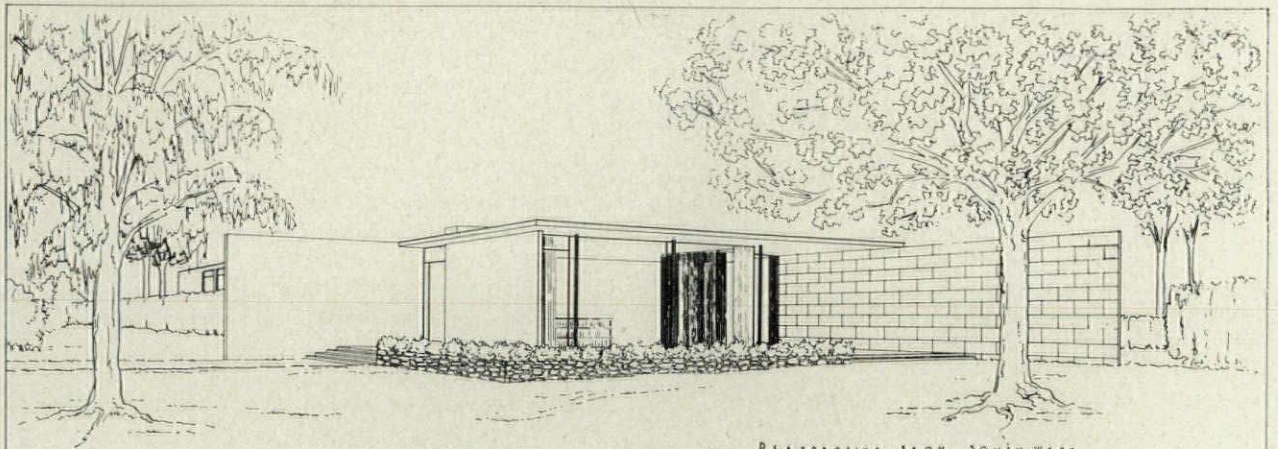
1. An intelligent placing of the house on the lot.
2. An interesting division of dining room and living room.
3. A fairly economical and well-lighted hall on the second floor.
4. The creation of sun terraces outside bedrooms.

Under points of NONSENSE, I would list:

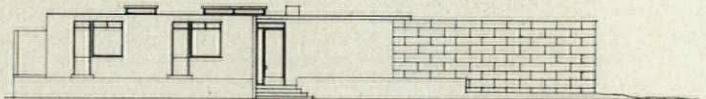
1. The lack of solution for the incoming kitchen supplies. They are either brought through the garage or under the windows of the guest room to the front door.
2. The wing wall which comes out to give privacy to the living room when glass walls and planting give little indication of the owner's desire for such an old-fashioned virtue.
3. The guest room and bath immediately off the entrance terrace.
4. The glass-walled and questionably ventilated maid's bath has a window passed by tradesmen.
5. A structural framing for the second floor which would tax the ingenuity of any engineer.
6. An indecision as to whether a sun porch should have an iron rail or a masonry parapet.
7. Lack of conviction as to the desirable lighting of bathrooms and the shape of closets.

Again the writer would praise the designer for his effort to find a fresh solution, but would recommend that he be as unsparing in the criticism of his own work as he very evidently is in his criticism of tried forms and usual construction.

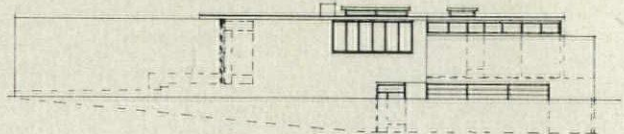




PERSPECTIVE FROM SOUTH-WEST



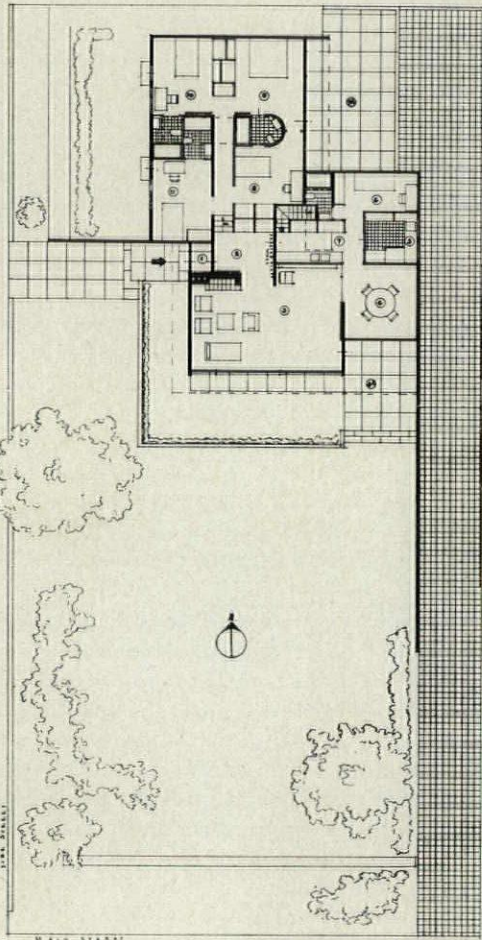
WEST ELEVATION



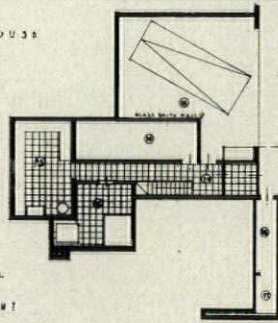
EAST ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



PLAN OF HOUSE AND SITE  
1/4" SCALE



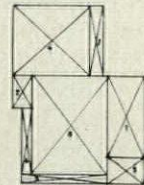
GARAGE AND BASEMENT

- ⊙ VESTIBULE
- ⊙ HALL
- ⊙ LIVING ROOM
- ⊙ DINING ROOM
- ⊙ DINING PORCH
- ⊙ KITCHEN
- ⊙ MAIDS ROOM
- ⊙ PANTRY
- ⊙ Boudoir (GUEST RM)
- ⊙ MASTER BED ROOM
- ⊙ DAUGHTER'S ROOM
- ⊙ SON'S ROOM
- ⊙ HALL
- ⊙ GARAGE
- ⊙ STORAGE ROOM
- ⊙ LAUNDRY
- ⊙ HEATER ROOM
- ⊙ MOTOR ROOM FOR AUTOMATICALLY LOWERING WINDOWS
- ⊙ TOOL ROOM

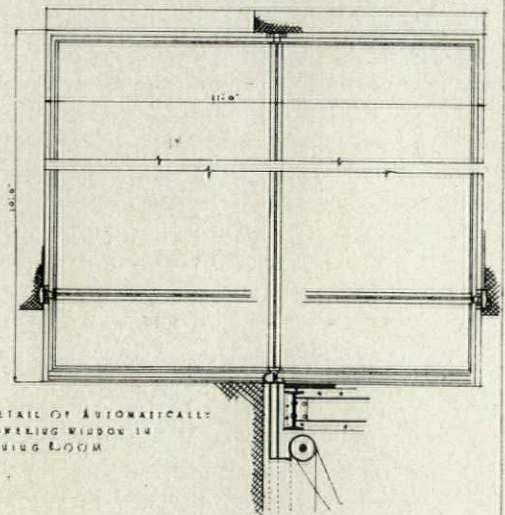
TABLE OF ROOMS & WINDOW SIZES

ROOM	AREA	PERIMETER	GLASS AREA
Vestibule	10.0	20.0	0.0
Hall	10.0	20.0	0.0
Living Room	15.0	30.0	15.0
Dining Room	15.0	30.0	15.0
Dining Porch	15.0	30.0	15.0
Kitchen	15.0	30.0	15.0
Maids Room	15.0	30.0	15.0
Pantry	15.0	30.0	15.0
Boudoir (Guest Rm)	15.0	30.0	15.0
Master Bed Room	15.0	30.0	15.0
Daughter's Room	15.0	30.0	15.0
Son's Room	15.0	30.0	15.0
Hall	10.0	20.0	0.0
Garage	10.0	20.0	0.0
Storage Room	10.0	20.0	0.0
Laundry	10.0	20.0	0.0
Heater Room	10.0	20.0	0.0
Motor Room for Automatically Lowering Windows	10.0	20.0	0.0
Tool Room	10.0	20.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180.0</b>	<b>360.0</b>	<b>135.0</b>

1/4" SCALE PLAN SHOWING OUTLINE OF COMPLETE HOUSE



AREA DIAGRAM

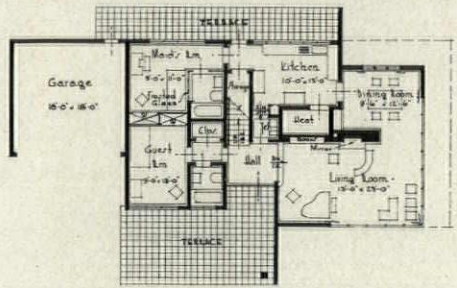
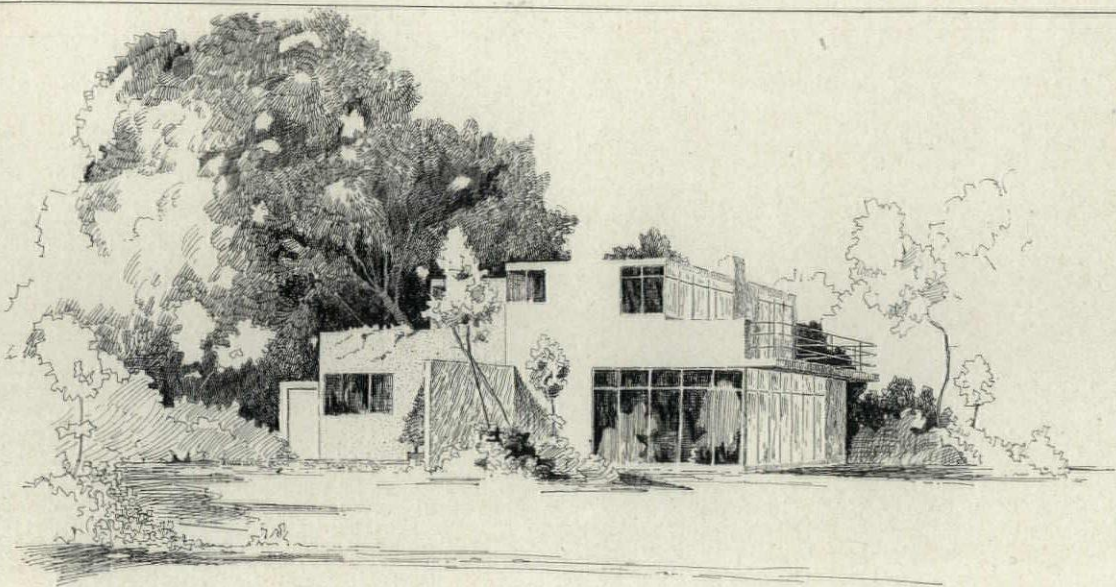


DETAIL OF AUTOMATICALLY LOWERING WINDOW IN DINING ROOM

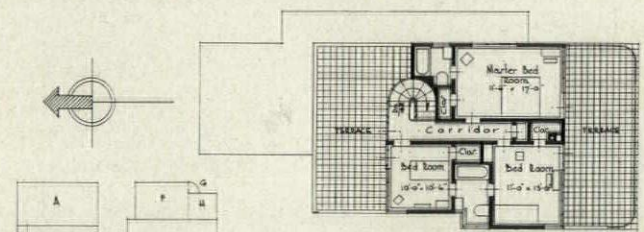
PENCIL POINTS FLAT-GLASS INDUSTRY ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION  
«JWRP»

Design by Jan A. Ruthenberg and William T. Priestley, Jr., for a House on a northeast corner lot

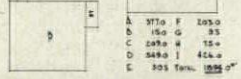




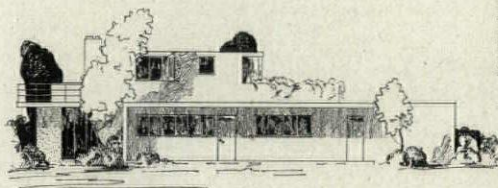
• FIRST FLOOR PLAN •



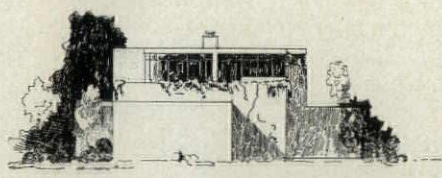
• SECOND FLOOR PLAN •



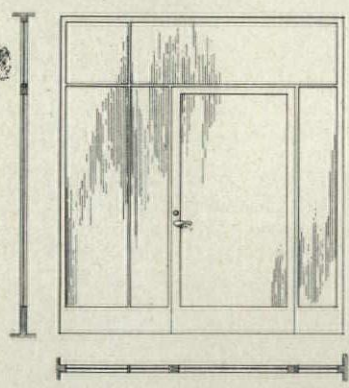
ROOM	FOOR A	SHEDD B	W/F X
LIVING ROOM	10'0"	24'5"	245
DINING ROOM	12'0"	8'0"	96
KITCHEN	10'0"	8'0"	80
BATH ROOM	7'0"	5'0"	35
BED ROOM	10'0"	10'0"	100
BED ROOM	10'0"	8'0"	80
BED ROOM	10'0"	8'0"	80



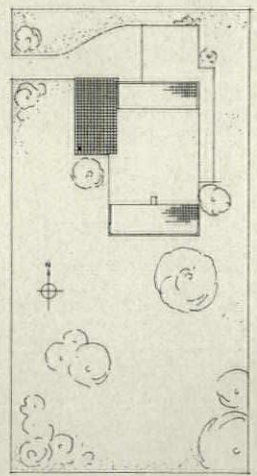
• ELEVATION FROM THE EAST •



• ELEVATION FROM THE NORTH •



DETAIL FRONT ENTRANCE 3/4" = 1'-0"



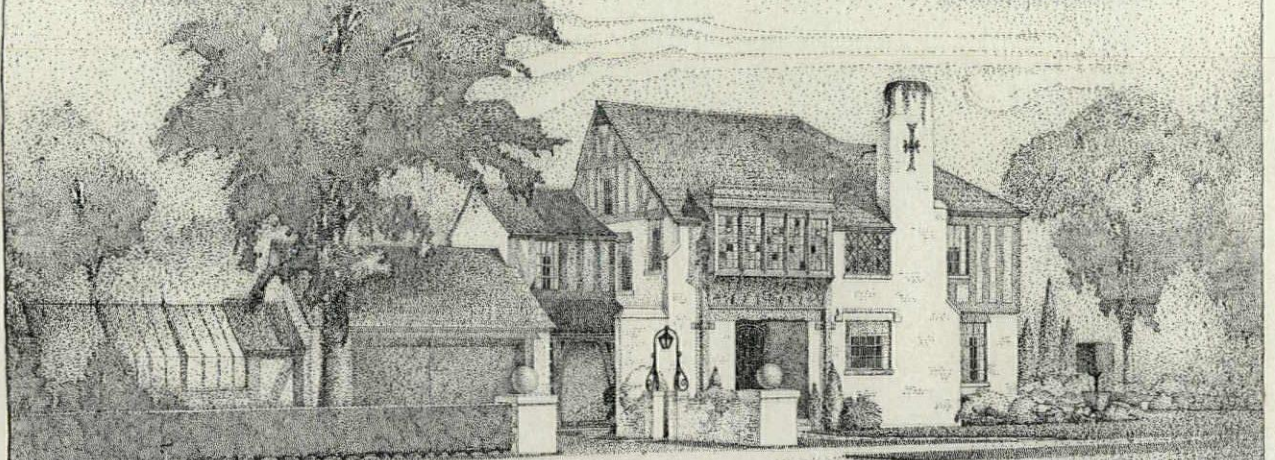
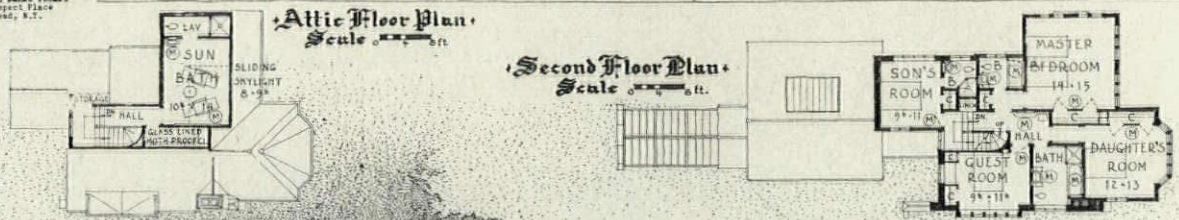
N.B. DETAIL OF FRONT ENTRANCE TYPICAL OF ALL GLASS DOORS

## PENCIL POINTS-FLAT GLASS INDUSTRY ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

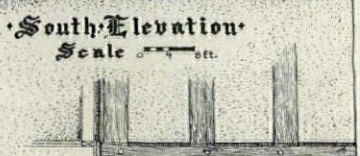
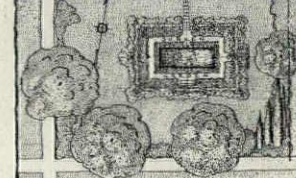
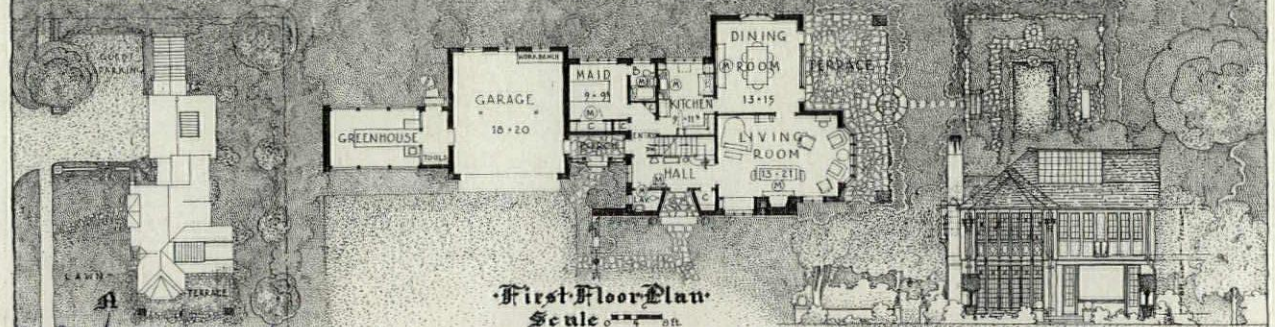
Design by Robert M. Wagner for a Residence on a northeast corner lot. See critical article on page 27



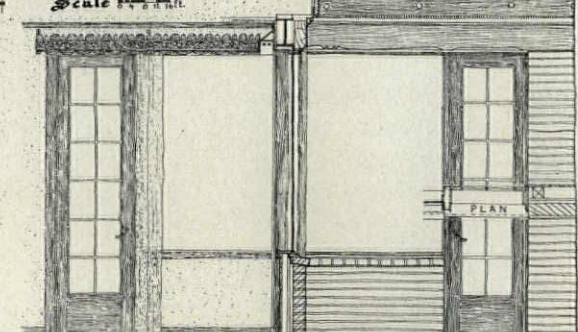
Richard Banks Thomas  
14 Prospect Place  
Newport, N.J.



**Pencil Points - Flat Glass Industry - Architectural Competition**



ROOM	AREA	GLASS	26
LIVING ROOM	27'0"	8'4"	23
DINING ROOM	13'5"	5'8"	17
KITCHEN	10'5"	3'0"	12
DAUGHTER'S ROOM	12'0"	2'8"	10
MASTER BEDROOM	14'1"	4'0"	12
DAUGHTER'S ROOM	12'0"	2'8"	10
GUEST ROOM	11'0"	1'8"	7
SON'S ROOM	10'0"	2'4"	8



Design by Richard Banks Thomas for a Residence on a corner lot. Printed to satisfy curiosity of readers of Mr. Thomas' article discussing the PP-FGI Competition on page 14 of our October, 1934, issue



# BREAKING INTO THE MOVIES

*A Harbor of Refuge for Some California Architects During the Depression*

By ELMER GREY, F. A. I. A.

**A** YEAR or so ago when the depression began to take on the aspects of a long drawn out affair and the debit side of my office ledger showed, month after month, an excess over the credit side, I began to wonder whether there was anything besides architecture that I could turn my hand to in order to make both ends meet. To change vocations at the age of sixty-three was not a pleasant prospect—but neither was a mortgage on the home or loans on life insurance policies!

An inventory of my resources of ability, experience, etc., and of the possible places where these could be put to use turned my gaze toward the moving picture studios. These were at least busy, and I knew that they contained "art departments" devoted to the designing and construction of "sets," some of which latter are more or less architectural in character and form the backgrounds of pictures. I knew that these art departments were headed by "art directors," who preferably were men of artistic ability, widely traveled and possessed of some dramatic sense. I reflected that I had been something of a globe-trotter myself, that a good part of my life had been spent in trying to absorb the beauties of the world, and that one of my weaknesses had always been that I liked to dramatize situations in which I found myself! Why might I not qualify? I decided to try.

One of my friends who had been an able art director years before, when moving pictures first came into being, advised me to aim high, on the score that to start at the bottom would make it too hard to work up. But I soon found that that advice was of questionable timeliness. Moving pictures had changed considerably since he had been in them, and sound pictures particularly had made their technique quite different. I found that most employers now require some familiarity with modern picture technique as a prerequisite of employment.

But, not knowing that, at first I aimed directly at an assistant art director's position, and my first try was at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio. The

M.G.M., as it is commonly called, consists of a square block or more of frame buildings thrown together without any apparent plan and in ways which the rapid growth of the industry and its consequent emergencies doubtless made necessary. This miniature village, called the "lot," is intersected in places by narrow streets and one's first visit to it is interesting because of the varied life to be seen there. Men and girls with makeup on their faces and in heterogeneous costumes are much in evidence. Joan Crawford passed in an open roadster. Johnny Weismuller was talking to a group. One girl without makeup on but with a much be-freckled face whom I passed but did not recognize, I was told was Katharine Hepburn.

My letter of introduction was to Mr. Cedric Gibbons, the well-known art director, but he was directing at the time so I was asked to meet Mr. Fred Hope, another art director, instead. Mr. Hope happened to be familiar with my work and made things very pleasant. He took me out to see one of the sets then building, that used in "When Ladies Meet." It consisted of two sides, the roof, and part of the interior of an attractive English cottage and I was amazed at the degree of completion to which some of these sets are carried, even though made for temporary use. This one had tiles on the roof made of some perishable material, but tin gutters had been installed nevertheless and even downspouts—and all this inside of a roofed and sound-proofed building! I inquired why the necessity of the gutters and downspouts and was told that they might some day wish to move the set outdoors, in which case moderate precautions against rain would be desirable. On the interior, the drapes, rugs, and hardware were all genuine and of the best material. The trunk of a real sycamore tree formed part of the composition outside, although the branches and leaves were artificially supplied. Real tile was used for paving the court, but the grass growing in its joints was of some dyed stuff like excelsior. I learned some of the nomenclature and technique of moving pictures at this time. A "wild wall" is one that has been so constructed as to be easily removable, so the camera can shoot through the space thus made available. The opposite sides of a room are often not parallel, to afford a wider scope for the camera's lens, the lack of parallelism not being noticeable on the screen. Mouldings which it is desired to have register definitely are detailed with very pronounced projections. During this visit I also passed through the large drafting room, where I found two of my architect acquaintances and where two others introduced themselves as members of our profession.

Mr. Hope, who seemed at the time to be much overworked, said that he would like to be able to break me in to relieve himself. He thought he could leave the execution of an architectural set



in my hands with the feeling that it would be properly carried out. The knowledge of a trained architect in their department would not only be valuable at times, but might raise the standard of their work, he felt. I suspect that having a reputation as an architect acted as a hindrance, however, as well as a help in obtaining a position there; for in a later interview he dropped the remark that his collaborators were afraid that I could not "stand the gaff"; and when pressed for an explanation said that they doubted whether I could stand the hasty way the work had to be turned out. Whether or not that had anything to do with final results in my case I do not know, but as weeks and months passed he was unable to create an opening for me. He gave me a letter to Mr. Van Polglase, art director of R.K.O., who advised me, if unable to connect with Mr. Hope, to try for a position of "sketch-artist." This is a man who picks out from accepted scenarios the most dramatic scenes, visualizes them and makes sketches of them for the better apprehension of the art director—or perhaps the art director picks them out and asks him to render them. No such position was vacant at R.K.O. at the time. At M.G.M. such work has been largely supplanted by the use of scale models.

I next went to the Fox and United Artists lots, at neither of which was a position secured. About this time a regular architectural commission came into my office, so my activities with the studios were stopped for awhile. When, some months later, this work was completed, the quest among them was resumed.

This time, in order to land a job more readily, I decided to aim lower. M.G.M. and R.K.O. were tried again but without success. Then I visited a studio the name of which will not be given for reasons which will become apparent. A new production was just about to be launched there and consequently they were very busy. Because of this I was turned over to the head of the drafting room. He was familiar with my work and promptly offered me a position, but I don't think wanted an architect in his employ—at least not this one! He bemoaned the task of breaking me in (which Mr. Hope had minimized) and stipulated that, although they worked but a five-day week, I would have to work nights frequently, sometimes until three in the morning; and that then I would be expected to be on hand again at eight the following day! "When we get into a jam the work just has to be gotten out," he declared. Of course—and I was not bright enough to ask him why in such cases they did not figure ahead a bit and utilize the remaining day in the week! I did demur, but to no avail. He could make no exception because the other workmen would object, he said. I wondered, if I ran a large drafting room and had in my employ a man who was

valuable but was unable to do a lot of night work, if I would let the other help dictate just how much of such work that man was to do. I wonder if I would not reserve that privilege for myself. I recalled some of the things I had heard about these movie jobs: "a dog's life," "a mad-house," etc., and decided not to accept the offer; also to find out if some other places were not managed differently.

For many years I had known the wife of a camera-man in one studio which I had not yet visited. She very kindly arranged an interview for me with its art director. He was a man of fine appearance and courtly manner and received me cordially. Some reproductions of my work which I had brought along were first examined and then he said that, although he could not give me a position immediately—"that could hardly have been expected"—he would keep me in mind and the chances for ultimate employment were "very good." In response to my query about working hours and night work, he said that a lot of night work was all foolishness, that they very seldom worked nights at his establishment and never within his recollection had they ever worked until three in the morning. He slid my card (upon which I had written my phone number and the hours morning and evening when I would be most apt to be at home) under the glass top of his desk with the remark, "I will call you up one day and you are to report the next"! In the casual view of his plant which I obtained I was struck by its well managed appearance. Many of the assistants had separate rooms; and a conversation between some of them relative to their work which I could not help but overhear gave me the impression that probably they were of higher calibre than the average. But waiting day after day and week after week for a phone call that would change over night one's entire manner of living is not the most enjoyable business. Some such weeks have already passed as I write this. I cannot leave the house during the specified hours for fear of missing a call! Many plans are held back. Not a satisfactory programme for long continuance!

But these are changing times! And so, in retrospect, have been the preceding years. They have produced such vast technical changes that even now we do not fully comprehend their effect upon our economic life. For example: this studio is not more than a half mile from where, some thirty years ago when I first came to California in search of health, I worked as a hired hand on a ranch! One of my duties then was exercising a tall and spirited saddle horse—another was milking a cow! And now, if I am again employed in that locality, it will be in helping in a kind of technical work which then was unknown! The advent of this work, motion pictures, did not take away employment as new inventions so frequently are accused of doing, but greatly increased it. Other



innovations have acted differently, however, and it is of course the readjustment of our economic life to fit them that is somewhat responsible for the present unrest. When the readjustment is made no doubt we shall all be much better off.

Positions in these motion picture art departments are, I am told, seldom permanent; most of those who hold them move about from one studio to another as the demand for their work comes or goes. In the event of my joining this transient army my office in Pasadena will consequently be retained. But its doors will be closed, its desk and drafting boards unattended, and its phone number switched to my house—all waiting for the time when general building activity will be resumed. Or—who knows?—there must be some positions of the kind which grow and do become perma-

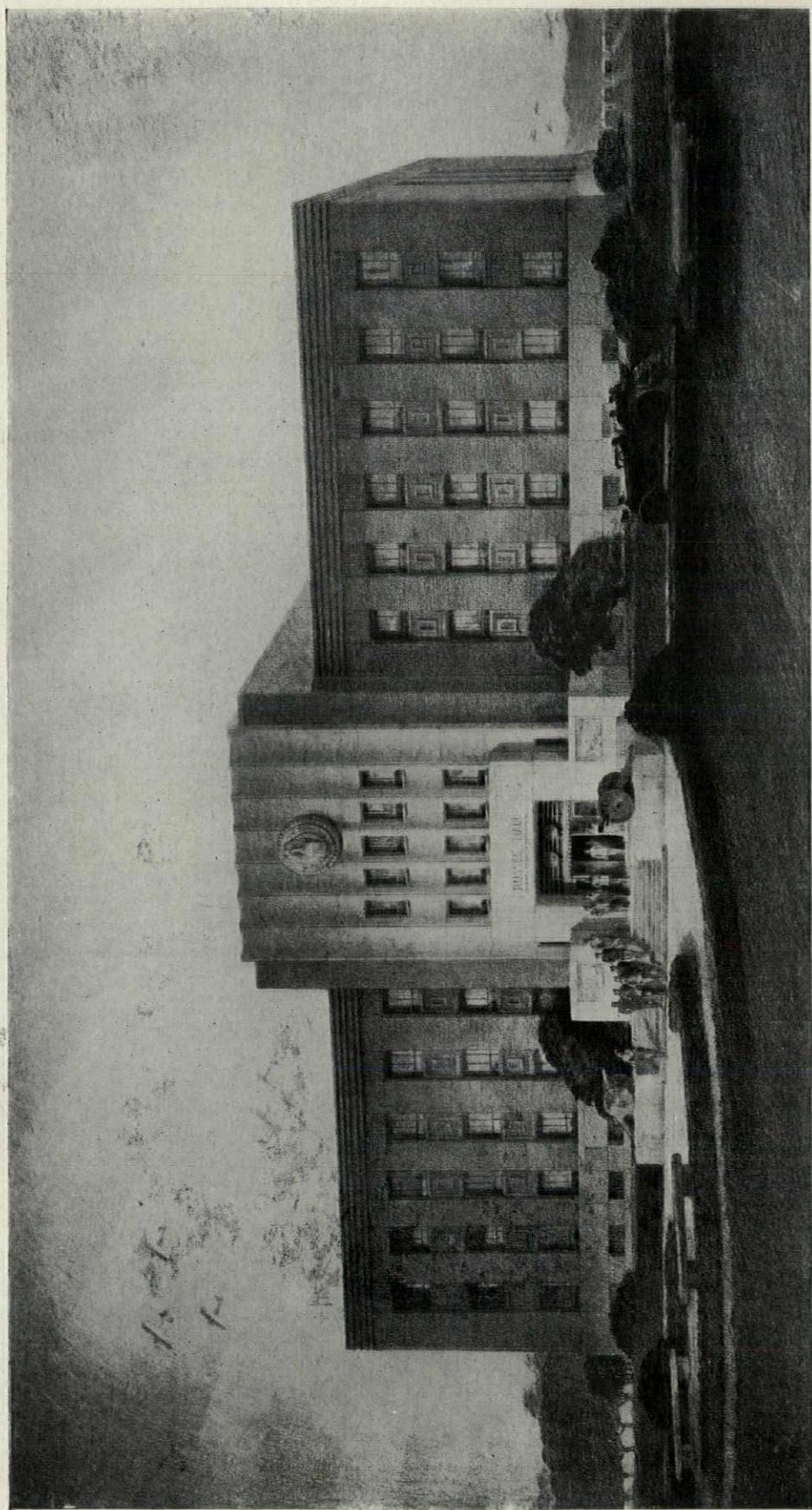
nent. Certainly there are plenty of possibilities for satisfaction in the work. If a man is able in it I can imagine his becoming well-nigh indispensable. There are no schools turning out art directors by the hundreds; they are self-made; and producers do well to accord them recognition on the screen. To their skill much of the success of modern picture making is due. They have it in their hands to increase enormously an appreciation and enjoyment of good architecture among the masses. The buildings they depict are not permanent to be sure, but they reach many more people with their message than do many permanent buildings, and often in ways that make very lasting impressions. It must be gratifying to feel that one is composing pictures which, in their ultimate life-like realism, enthrall and instruct audiences of thousands the world over!



"Beechwoods"

From a Drypoint by Max Hermann





*Headquarters Building, United States Army establishment at Fort Monmouth, N. J. Harry Sternfeld, Architect. Drawing by Hugh Ferriss*



# MODERNIZATION 1878 AND 1934

By OLIVER HOYEM

**L**OUD, unseemly laughter ricocheted through the halls of the new post office building in Washington. It was traced to the offices of the Federal Housing Administration. The causes for the mirth are of interest to architects especially. The story—

In the midst of the campaign for encouraging repairs, alterations, and improvements of homes in the United States, one of the curious writers associated with the FHA found in the Congressional Library a volume dealing with the home modernization movement of 1878. At first he thought there must be a mistake. But the text and all the illustrations convinced him that not only are the style cycles in home modernization just as definite as the depression cycles but the present architectural advice to home owners is a complete reversal of the advice given them fifty years ago.

When the evidence was presented to officials of the FHA and they compared the advice on alterations with their own campaign literature and photographs, the only successful defense was to laugh.

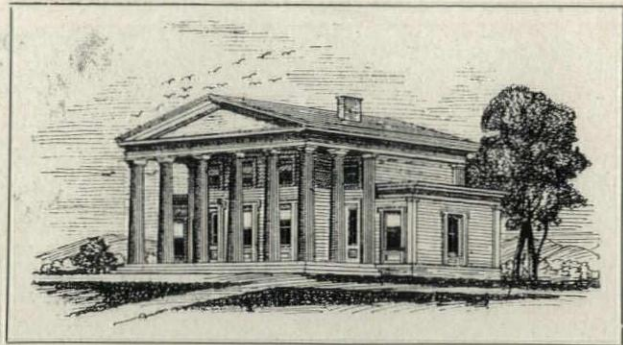
"Old Homes Made New" is the title of the volume from which the 1878 illustrations are taken.

The author of the book (may his soul rest in peace) comments:

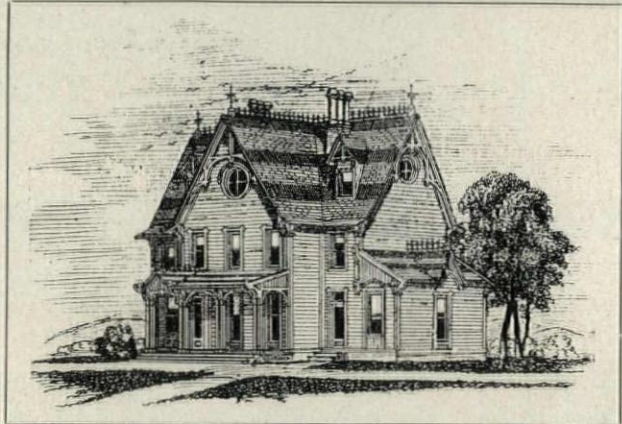
"These designs, while serving as simple examples of what may be done in the way of putting a new face and form on old work, may also serve to show in their completed state what can be done *de novo*. No claim of originality is made for any ideas that may be expressed in the text of this work; but they are simply advanced as the views held by the writer, of things to be right and proper, whether gained in the field of experience or taken as the dictum of some other person."

If it had not been for the illustrations, the 1878 author's words, as words, might be the words of a contributor to a modern periodical, especially when he adds: "The various and motley crowd of dwellings that in the last thirty years have been called into existence by the wants of our people and climate, and the taste of our architects and builders, are not such as we desire to preserve, or such as are apt to awaken feelings of admiration or pleasure."

Perhaps fifty years from today the Editor of PENCIL POINTS will again look at the record. The *New Yorker's* cartoon—"Jukes got a loan from the Federal Housing Commission"—may then have more than humorous significance to our posterity.



1878, Before "Modernization"



1878, After "Modernization"

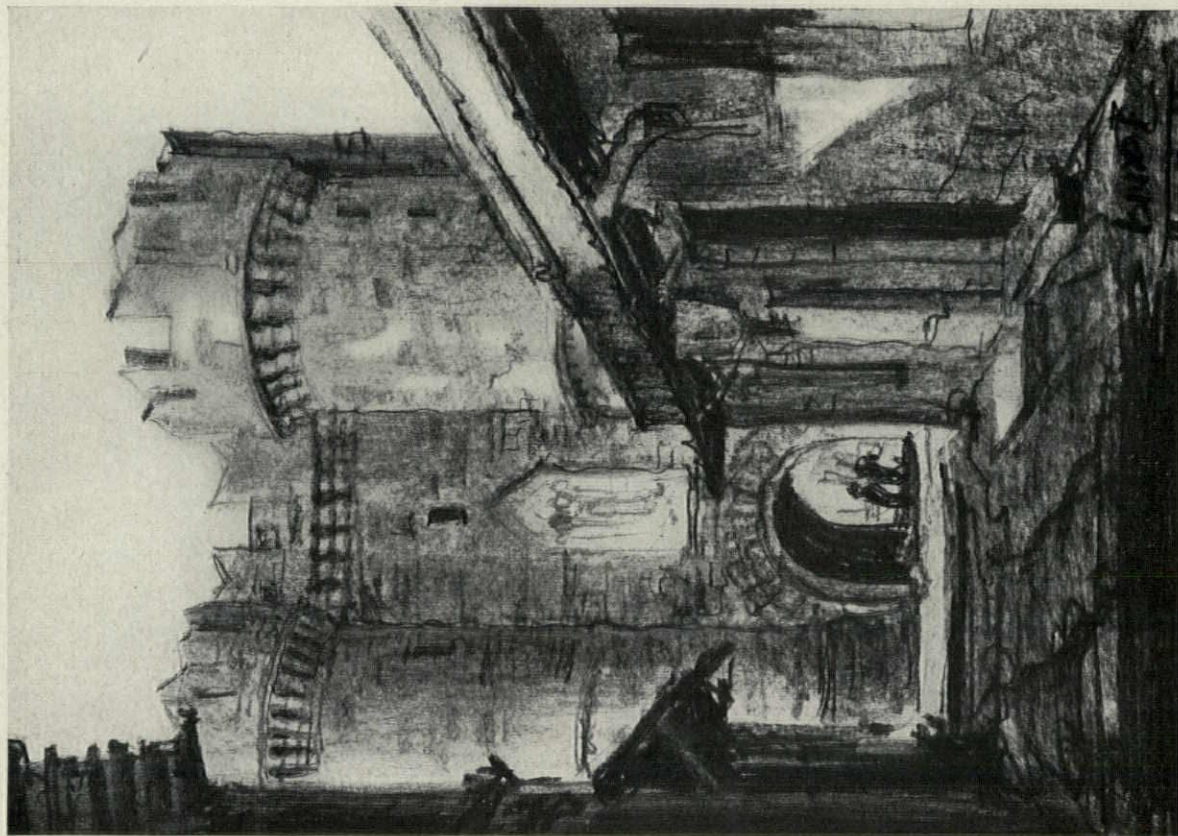
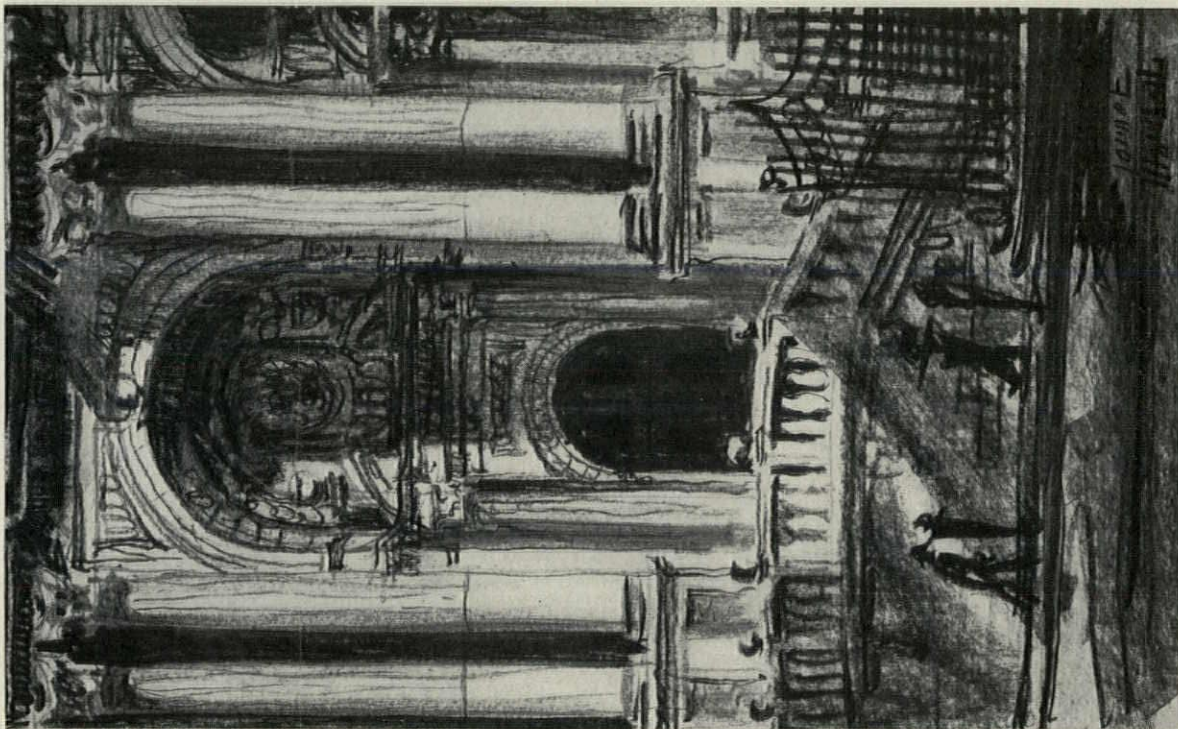


1934, Before "Modernization"



1934, After "Modernization"





Two charcoal sketches; Cathedral at Malaga and Gateway in Rhodes, by Lorne E. Marshall, Holder of 1931 George G. Booth Scholarship



# A TREATISE ON HOW NOT TO BUILD\*

*A Book Reviewed by John F. Harbeson*

*But man, proud man,  
Drest in a little brief authority,  
Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd, . . . .  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
As make the angels weep.*

**B**UILDING has ever been a gauge of human endeavor. By their works we know the peoples of the past, and that record has seemed to us noble, full of what we think of as "masterpieces." But now that record of building through the ages is held up to scorn by a prosecuting attorney. The crime? This building, this architecture in fact, for the unworthy works have largely perished, is the record of succeeding civilizations, in each of which great numbers of the population have lived in hovels, without comfort or security, while kings, priests and nobles have lived in (comparative) luxury and wastefulness. "Not only while," interrupts this prosecuting attorney, "but because" those kings and priests lived in plenty, did the millions suffer in poverty.

The peoples of the past did not have advanced ideas of social science, but any study of history leads an open-minded reader to the conclusion that each succeeding age has seen an amelioration of the common lot, and to the belief that in the not too distant future even "the forgotten man" will be decently housed, and have a proper share of leisure and pleasure. Many are those who have told us why this world is not a paradise. The preacher says it is because we do not repent and mend our ways; the eugenists that we do not take simple measures to avoid perpetuating the weaknesses of the race. Mr. Whitaker lays the blame for all worldly ills on private ownership of land, and postulates that the builders, though working with sincerity and faith in their craft, nevertheless always have done the bidding of priest and king, of landlord and usurer; that they have not built for the good of all, but have squandered their time and building materials in erecting palaces and temples for the glorification and perpetuation of the privileged few. To prove his argument, he indulges in an elaboration of the factors favorable to it, and the exclusion of any unfavorable factors.

It is quite definitely special pleading: facts are distorted or baldly misstated to bolster the preconceived thesis. Thus, William Penn is planning the streets of Philadelphia narrow, so there would be more land left to sell, to fill his purse. These are the streets still in use, and, though inadequate for today's traffic, were quite ample in the days of the horse and were as large as those in the capitals of the world at the time the town was founded; yet Penn must be excoriated as a profiteering landlord. Again, the middle ages are pictured as almost a utopia for the worker, a time of happiness and free expression—there were guilds of craftsmen then. Mr. Whitaker ignores the proven facts that craftsmen worked from sunrise to sunset, that children were

regularly made to work at an early age, that the death rate was exceedingly high and the average length of life only 25 years, as compared with the 57 years expectancy of those so fortunate as to be living in these times. And he finds fault with the Renaissance—that period of the "revival of learning," the period in which architects, as such, were developed by the natural evolution of life and the division of labor—and makes the statement . . . "it seems strange that so few noticed that buildings were beginning to grow poorer, and that the chance for everyone to have a decent house to live in began to recede rather than to grow nearer," and yet the housing of the common man, as well as his safety, had measurably improved in the Renaissance over the conditions in the "dark ages," which our author perversely pictures as idyllic. That such a picture is not in accord with history worries him not a whit, for he finds the historical method "of use only to pedants."

He speaks of the Dark Ages as a breathing space, a happy period, when the "delight in work overflowed in free and beautiful details in the articles of daily use, which tell the tale of a rich and abounding life." Yet he ignores the similar gaiety, the similar beauty of household objects and utensils unearthed at Pompeii—because he chooses to find the Roman method of building "based on bravado and humbug." Like Ruskin he has Mid-Victorian prejudices against Roman art, and thinks it crude and coarse, either not having seen, or ignoring, the many exquisite examples of the craftsmanship of that period, which were wide-spread throughout the Empire.

But in addition to this elaboration and distortion of factors favorable to his thesis, there are gross errors of fact. He places Mansart in the 15th century, two hundred years too soon; he speaks of the Baths of Caracalla . . . "which were to make a pattern for the facade of the Pennsylvania Station in New York"—in reality it is the plan disposition and the great hall of that station which are inspired by the Roman baths, not the facade. But the most colossal blunder is a description of the Parthenon as having the Pan-Athenaic procession carved on the outside of the building, just under the metopes, where "the two horizontal bands, one continuous and the other a series of alternate sculpture and triglyph, were so superbly balanced that not a line nor a figure was allowed to dominate or interfere with the harmony of the whole composition." Such an arrangement of sculpture was tried on the temple at Assos, and given up as ugly; but it is strange to find the Parthenon so described, and then illustrated by a photograph taken by the author, where, of course, no such placing of the Pan-Athenaic procession occurs.

The author does not understand the language of the artist, of the architect, or the craftsman. He belongs to that school of literary critics following Ruskin and William Morris, by which art is something to be reasoned about—a thing of the mind, with a basis in morality, rather than a thing of the eyes. To him there has been no architecture, because no age of the world has yet created a civilization in which all men are equal. He is looking constantly for literary qualities in architecture, such as that an arch has "a note of triumph in it," and he gets into difficulties when he finds something that transgresses the pre-conceived literary idea and yet is so compellingly beautiful that even the blind—or perverse—must admit it.

He deplores giving credit for the design of a great building to the one usually considered its designer—the ones who should be praised for the Parthenon, for instance, are not Phidias, or Ictinos, or Pericles, but the several generations of craftsmen who made such work possible. This is a very just, and a trite, statement. The genius of Shakespeare would not have been possible if there had not been a veritable flowering of literature in Elizabethan England, nor of Leonardo if he, too, had not come at a time rich with a heritage of artist craftsmen. But after making such a statement about the Parthenon, he picks out a little-

\*"RAMESES TO ROCKEFELLER—THE STORY OF ARCHITECTURE"—by Charles Harris Whitaker. Random House, New York City—\$3.50.

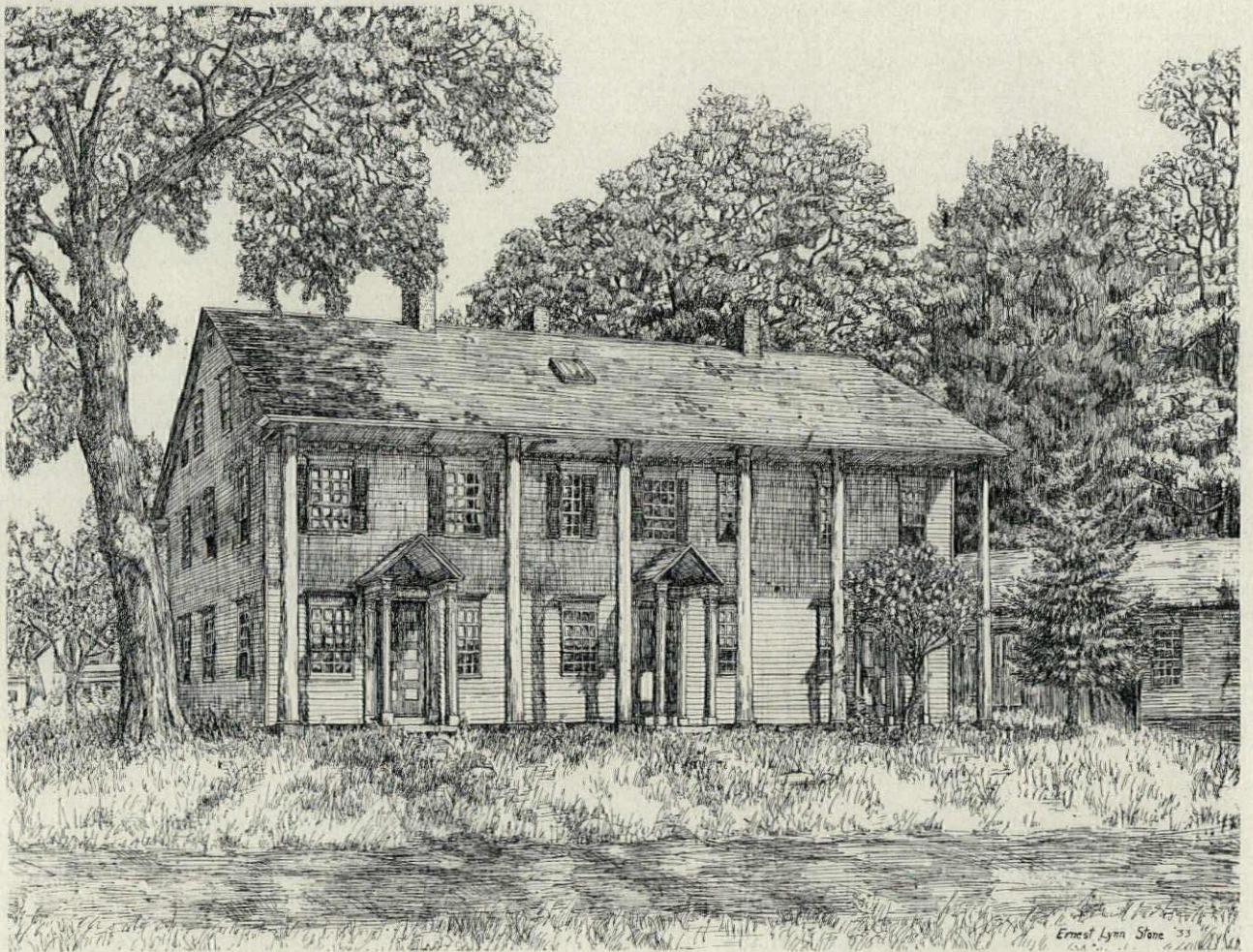


known individual, Andronikos, and gives to him sole credit for designing and building the "Tower of the Winds" and the water clock within it, totally forgetting the several generations of craftsmen in this case.

Though this is called a story of architecture, its interest lies not in architecture, but in social science, and the preoccupation of the author is to put a stop to price and profit, debt and "usury"—by which he no doubt means interest accruing on borrowed money—and above all the personal ownership of land, to the end that everyone may have "a fine and spacious room, sun lighted and sun shaded," in a society in which man, and particularly the craftsman, may work in justice and joy. To attempt the fulfillment of this ideal, he has sacrificed truth and reason, and deifies an intangible quality he terms "rightness"—a feeling for rhythm and fittingness innate, apparently, in every true craftsman. To this end, he finds Rome vulgar, Michel-

angelo a dilettante, Sir Christopher Wren an inferior engineer, not creative, but who "had a knack at combining such forms as the craftsmen had fashioned out of their centuries spent in searching for rightness," and our present civilization merely an age of "time-clockers and turnstilers."

This age is certainly not the millennium, and one would like to endorse an effort to improve the lot of the common man. But "Rameses to Rockefeller" offers no constructive suggestions to that end, unless the abolition of the private ownership of land be so considered. It is entirely a tearing down of our present social fabric and that of the past civilizations from which ours has grown. It arouses in one—in one, that is, who feels himself on such provocation undeniably a Tory—the same feeling as does the story of the old woman who, discussing the neighbors with her parson, concluded—"all the world is queer except me and thee, dear, and sometimes I think thee's a little queer."



*Collins' Tavern, Straitsville, Connecticut*

*Pen-and-ink by Ernest Lynn Stone*



# A. L. Gaptill's Corner

A LITTLE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL ESTHETICS, WITH EMPHASIS ON **SKETCHING AND RENDERING**

## Happy Future!

A friend suggests that in view of the desperate situation of so many in the architectural field, and the lack of promise of any great improvement in the immediate future, my last month's "Happy New Year" might seem to some of you readers to contain a thrust of sarcasm. But why? I do wish you all just that. And knowing what many of you have been through without losing your faculty of enjoying life, I see no reason to doubt its fulfilment. But, for downright pessimists, if any, I substitute the modification above. Certainly there are enough evidences of general improvement to give us hope for the ultimate recovery of our profession. Remember that each year adds to the age and obsolescence of every existing building, which means lots of alteration and replacement eventually, not to speak of new work. So we'll keep on grinning! And studying and thinking!



## The Competitions

We couldn't advantageously manage the first Corner competition this month, but next month it will be offered. Watch the February issue for the program; then get busy! And tell your friends. One doesn't have to be a subscriber to get in on it. And send suggestions for future competitions. I'm depending on you.

## Rendering Project No. 8

I suppose that at one time or another each of you has made a rubbing of an old coin: see 1, Sheet 8, overleaf. Or you have laid paper over a book cover or other rough surface and rubbed a pencil back and forth across it, making transfers on the order of those at 2. Our present project utilizes exactly this process.

As a preliminary to any attempt at finished work based on this idea, I suggest you make many trial tones such as are shown at 2. Place your paper over such diverse materials as book covers, window shades, rough artists' canvas, wall-board, linoleum, etc. The most sur-

prising things often result in good rubbings. Vary your pencils, too, and particularly your papers. You will soon discover an astonishing range of textural tones.

Now comes their application. Sketch 3 shows a practical use of some of the tones discovered at 2. The subject was first outlined very lightly in wax pencil on tracing paper placed over a previously constructed layout. Next, the tracing was moved to a sheet of imitation leather (a portfolio cover), and the patterned tones of the chair back and arms were done. A transfer to a book cover resulted in the seat texture (the paper was shifted to give contrasted directions to the patterns), and another book cover was utilized for the rug. The chair was finished over still another, shifted several times. The drawing was now sprayed with fixatif (reversing the directions offered on Sheet 3; there is no harm in this), and, when dry, was mounted on illustration board, its back being entirely covered with dilute white paste. Later the background tones were added and fixed. The wax pencil was used throughout. One not in the know, seeing the final drawing, might well wonder how the different textures were obtained. Sketch 4 shows a simple architectural adaptation, the rough stones having been rendered over coarse sandpaper. Graphite pencils were selected.

One is by no means limited to these black and white effects, for colored crayons of various types can be employed in similar manner. I once rendered some tapestries quite effectively in oil chalk on thin, smooth paper laid over coarse shade cloth. It was very easy to interpret the woven character of the fabric. By shifting the paper on the rough background, as a new color is used, particularly effective blendings of two or more colors can be had.

If the work is on tracing paper, this toning, whether in black or color, can sometimes be done to advantage on the back, to show through. The rough-textured tones developed in this manner



will be so modified as not to obliterate the drawing on the front. Evidences of carelessness will likewise be less conspicuous.

## Summer's Coming!

As January comes, and with it the organization for the winter-spring term of my usual evening classes in drawing and painting, I am reminded that we have about turned the corner, chronologically, and it won't be long, now, until summer finds me teaching and sketching on the Maine coast again. That's my Happy Hunting Ground, and I'm already eager to set up the old easel once more and have a go at the dirty dories, smelly shacks, and lopsided lobster pots. This is the time, incidentally, for you to get out your own materials and start that long delayed practice.



## "Criting" Backwards

The printer calls for my last "copy," and the proofs for January haven't come through. Yet I'm determined not to skip another issue without a crit, so let's squint at the December number.

Chamberlain's cover speaks mighty well for itself. Seasonally appropriate, it forms a fitting finale to a fine series. Simplicity is the keynote.

Armstrong's sketches (pages 4 and 6) are honest, having come to their "right" appearance naturally. The second offers an unusual point of view. Observe the diagonal composition, too.

In Merle Alley's drypoint, page 582, the brilliancy of the square is heightened by the dark frame of roofs, foreground, etc. It's a picayune point, but wouldn't the shutters of the second-story window of the interestingly textured nearby structure overlap if closed? Or don't I read it right?

What splendid sketching subjects the Monograph presents, notably those on pages 178 and 179. If you try the more complex ones, Rosenberg has some ideas for you, pages 615, 616, 617, and 618. See how well he had managed his values, light against dark and dark against light, to create pleasing patterns, to catch sunshine and shadow, and to distribute interest in rightful proportions. As interesting tricks, note the use of light fences, page 617, forming a foil for the figures, and of light trees with dark reflections, page 618, playing their part in a capably controlled spotting of the whole. For vibrant sunshine see page 616: for restful, dignified composition (and splendidly-handled trees) see page 617.

Just room for a word of praise for Morris Hobbs' simple etching, page 631, with its restrained darks framing studied lights, and for the meticulously managed pencil study by Stopa, page 634.



**PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVE RENDERING PROJECTS**  
**SHEET 8 • A TRICK FOR CREATING NOVEL PENCIL TEXTURES •**

Who has not, at one time or another, made rubbings of coins, on the order of these? → The same idea can be adapted to rendering.

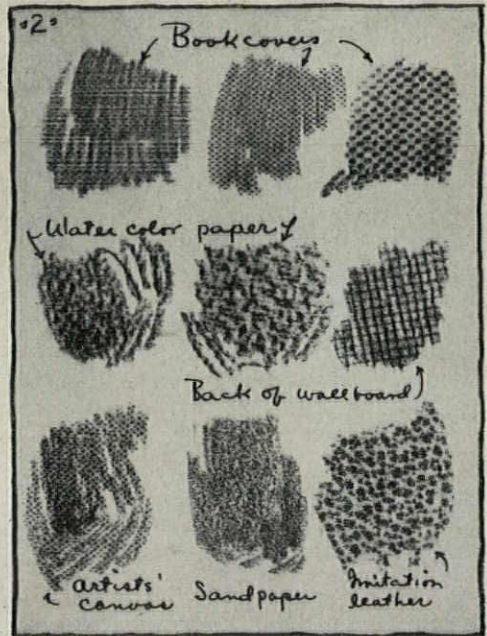
**1** Lay out your subject instrumentally on any fairly smooth paper. Place tracing paper over it and render such parts as are to be smooth and even. Work in pencil.

**2** Transfer the tracing paper to a rougher background selected for its texture (See Sketch 2 for possibilities), and continue your rendering. Change backgrounds when ever necessary. Use one type of pencil throughout.

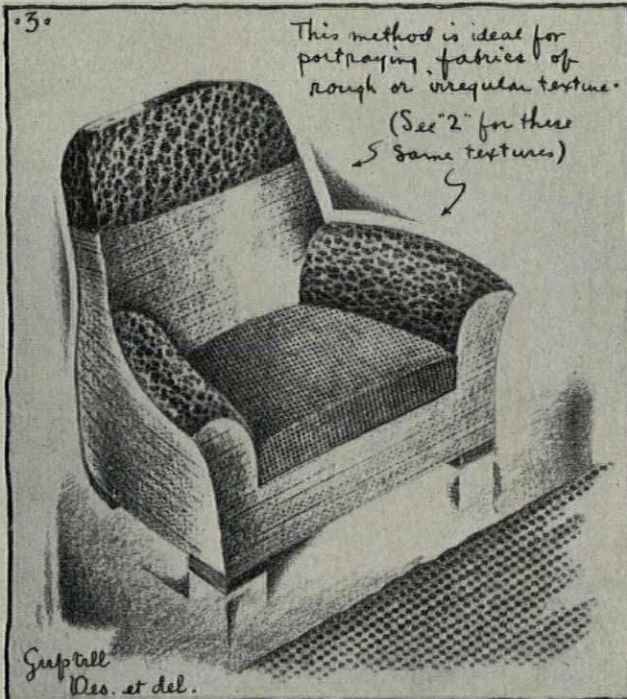
**3** Mount your finished rendering on a suitable background. Paste it all over the back. If well mounted it will seem to become a part of the board. Finally, touch up, and spray with fixatif.



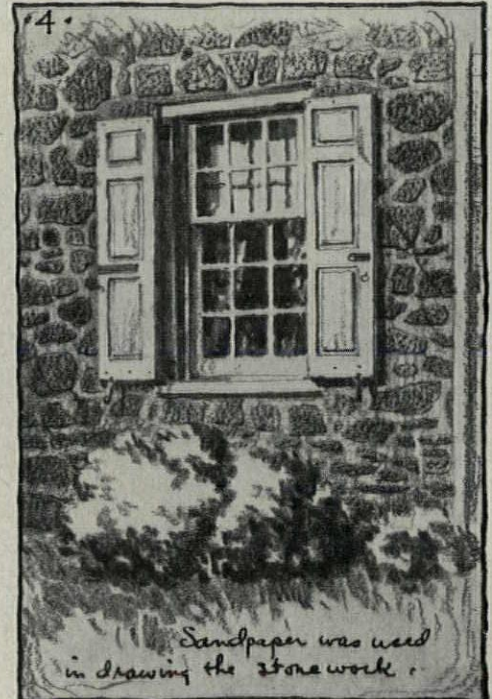
WAX PENCIL RUBBINGS



MANY TEXTURES ARE OBTAINABLE

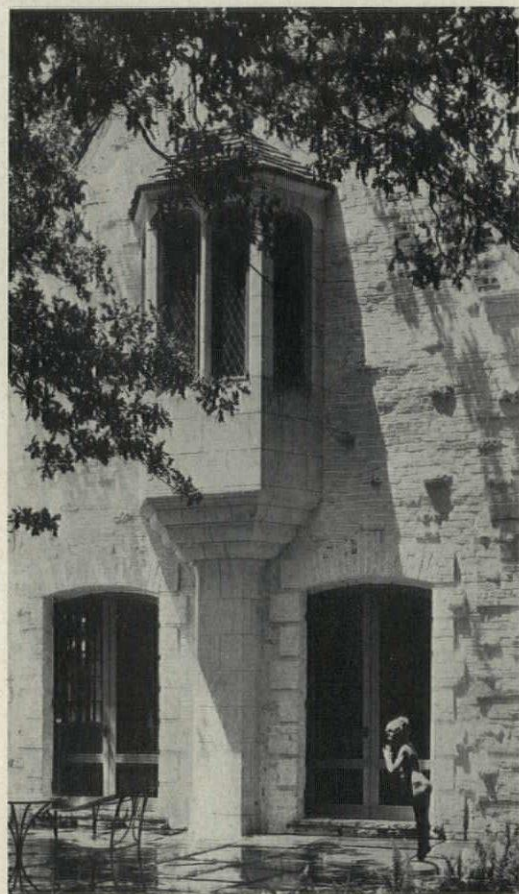
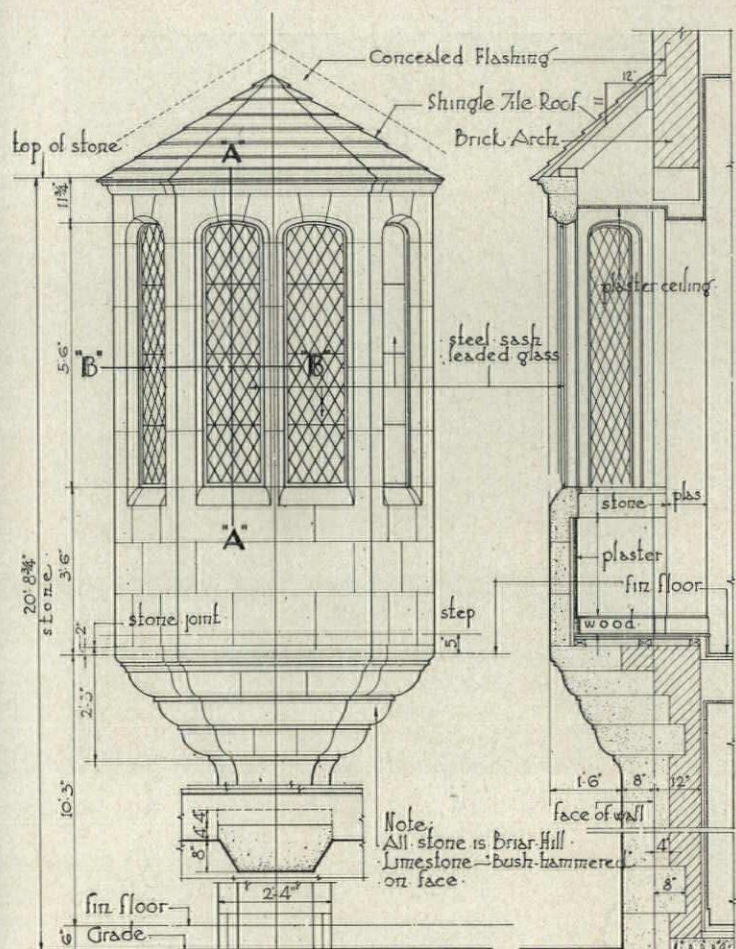


THE METHOD IS IDEAL IN INTERIOR DESIGN



A PORTION OF AN EXTERIOR

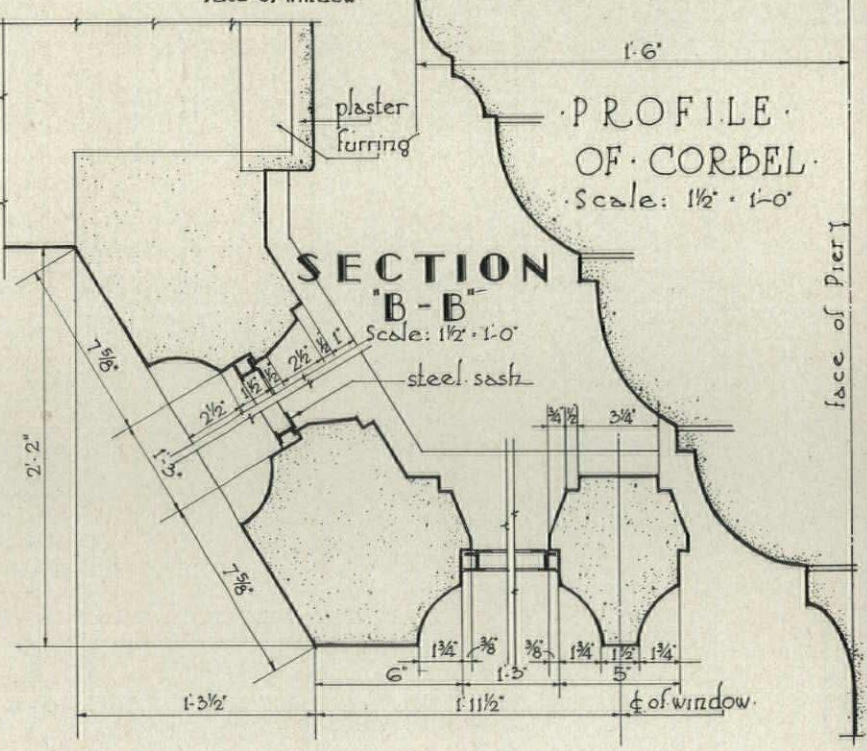
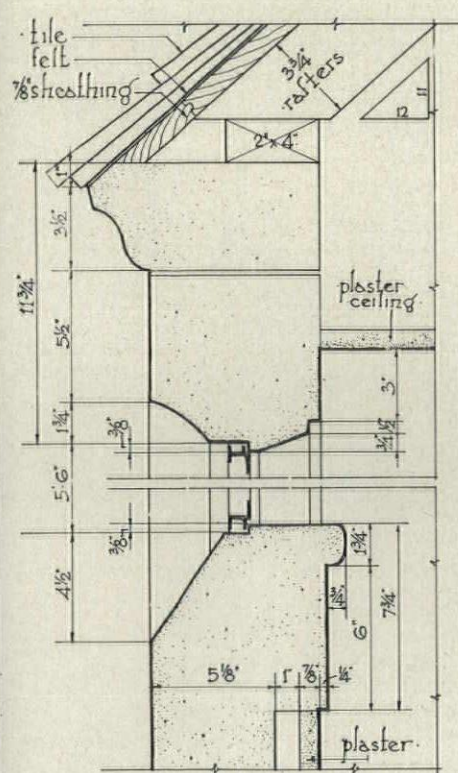




Photograph by Robert Maclean Glasgow.

**ELEVATION**  
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

**SECTION**  
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

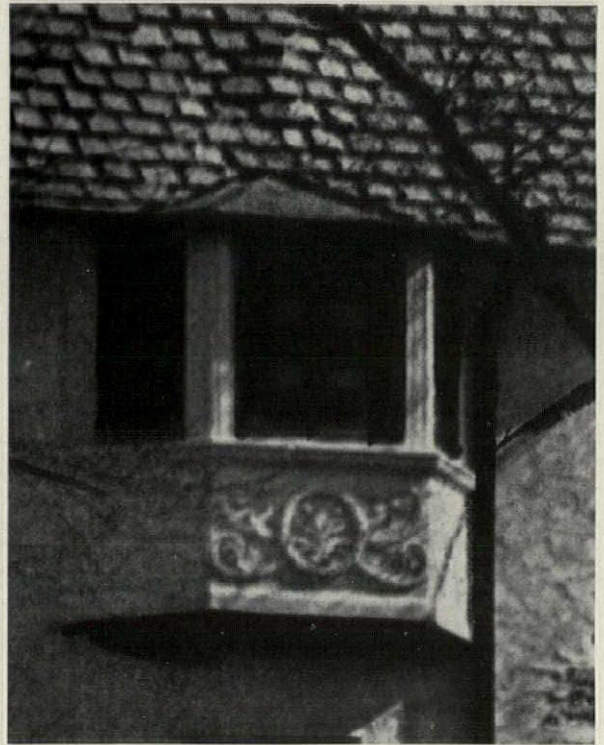
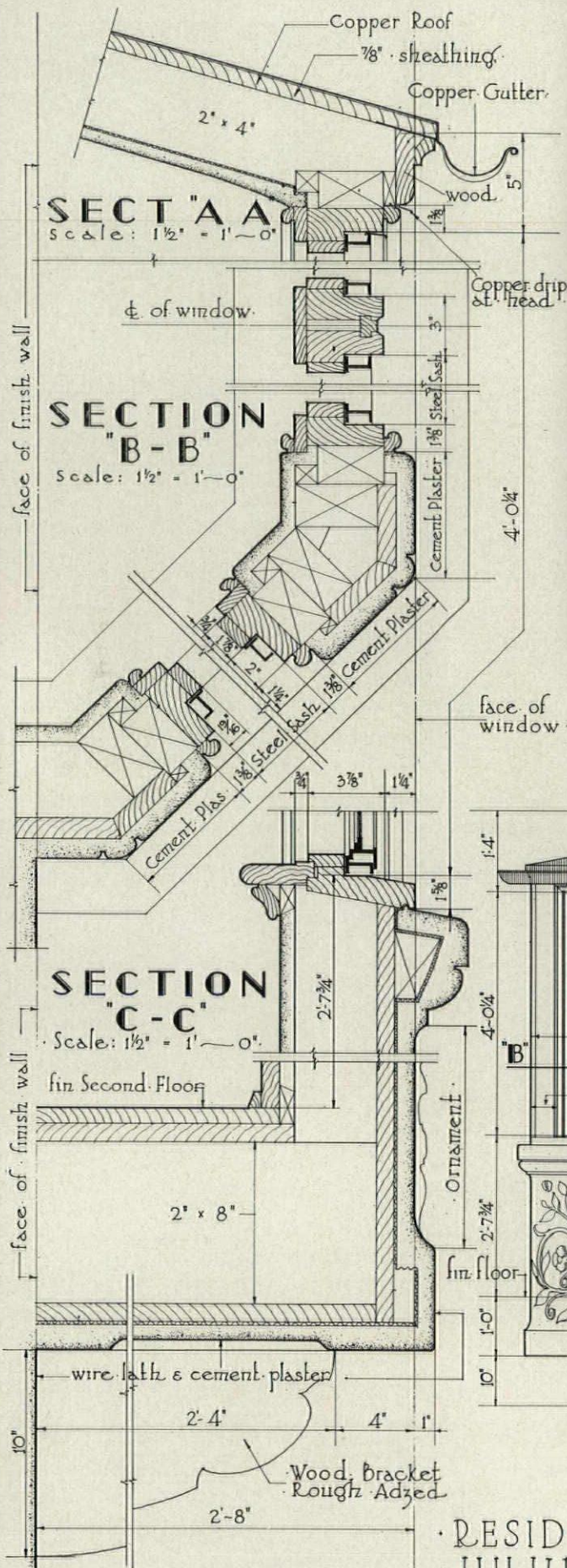


**SECTION "A-A"**  
Scale: 1 1/2" = 1'-0"

**SECTION "B-B"**  
Scale: 1 1/2" = 1'-0"

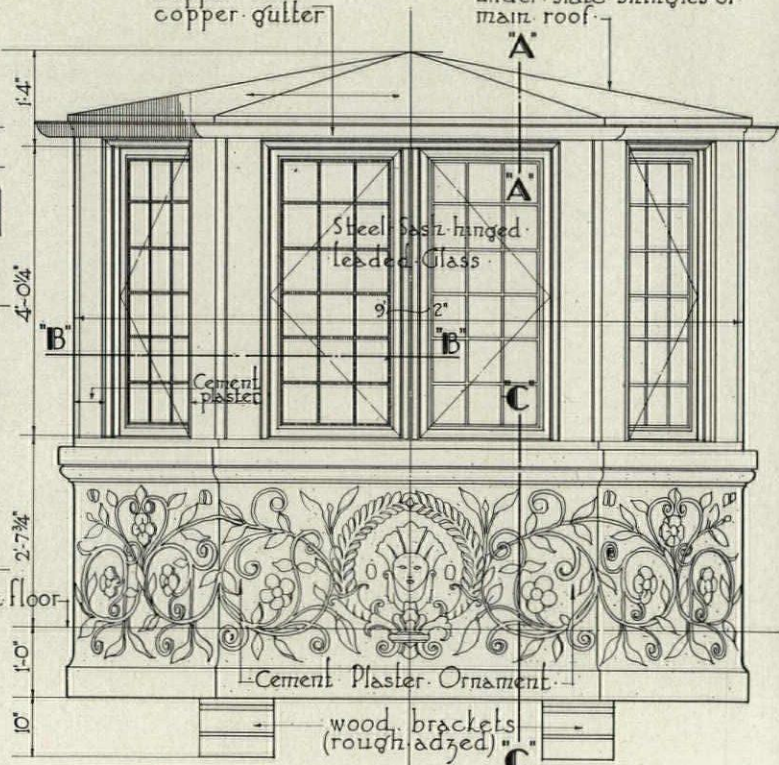
FRANK J. FORSTER ARCHITECT.





Photograph by Samuel H. Gottscho

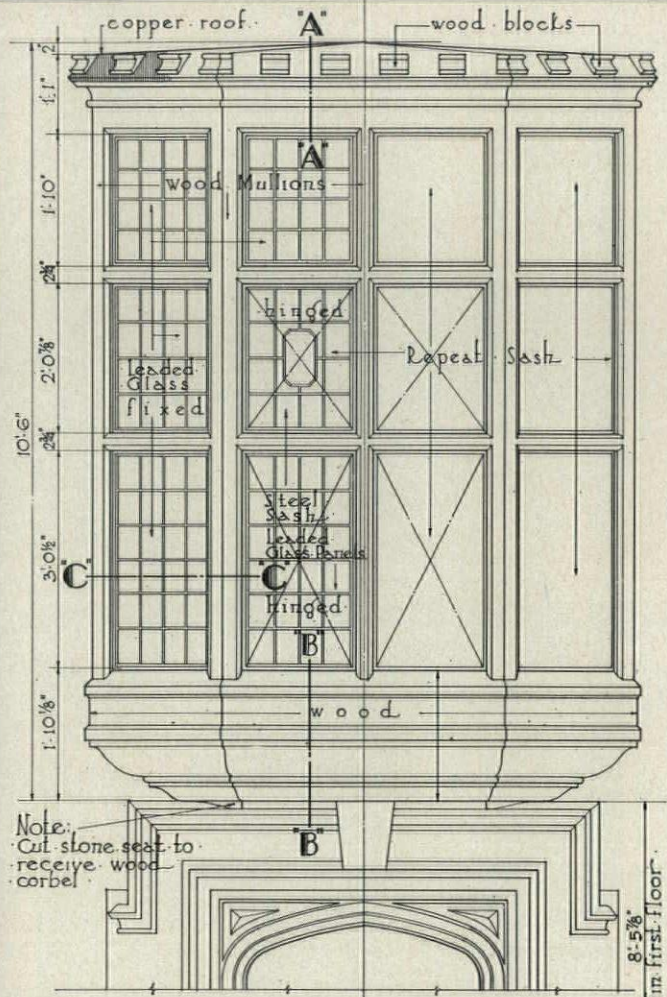
Note:  
Copper roofing flashed under slate shingles of main roof.



**ELEVATION**  
scale  $\frac{3}{8}" = 1'-0"$

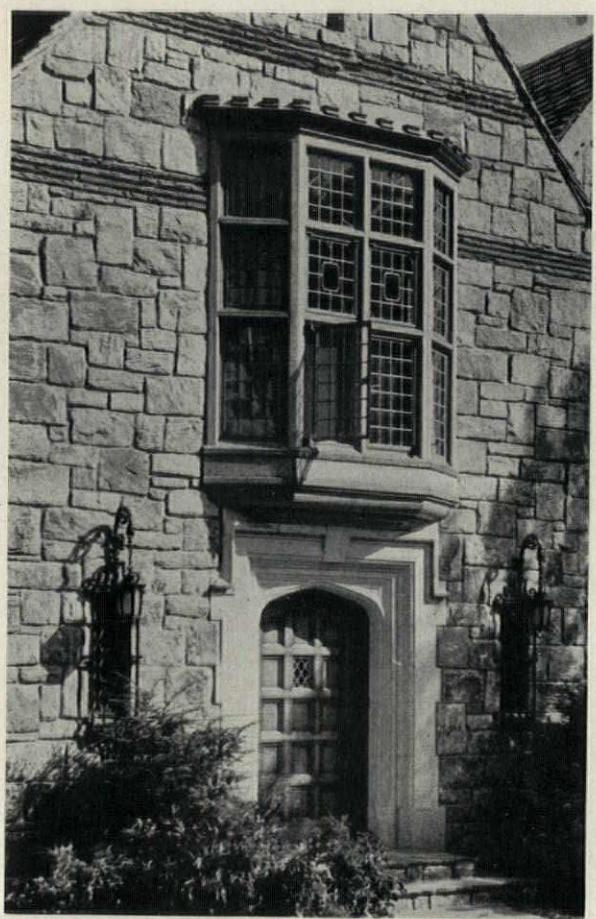
RESIDENCE AT FIELDSTONE · N · Y ·  
JULIUS GREGORY ARCHITECT



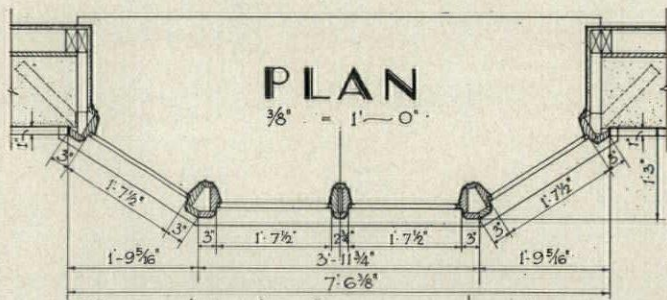


Note: Cut stone seat to receive wood corbel.

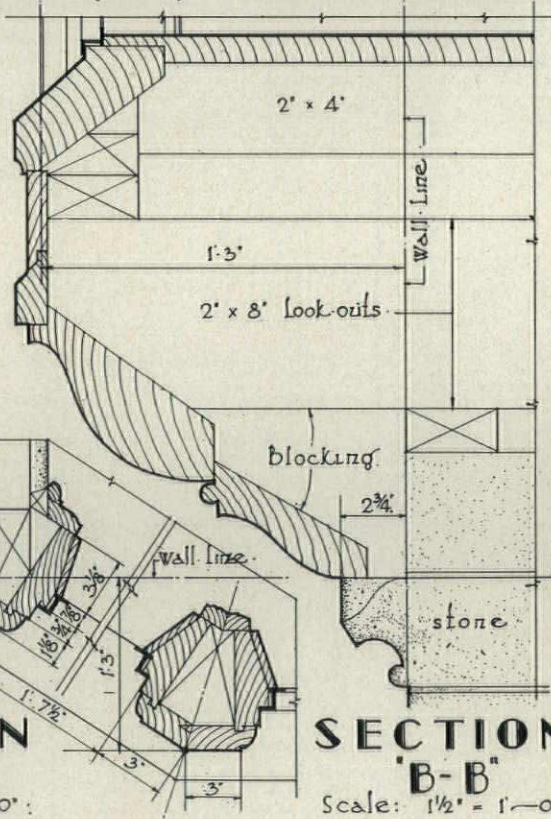
**ELEVATION**  
scale 3/8" = 1'-0"



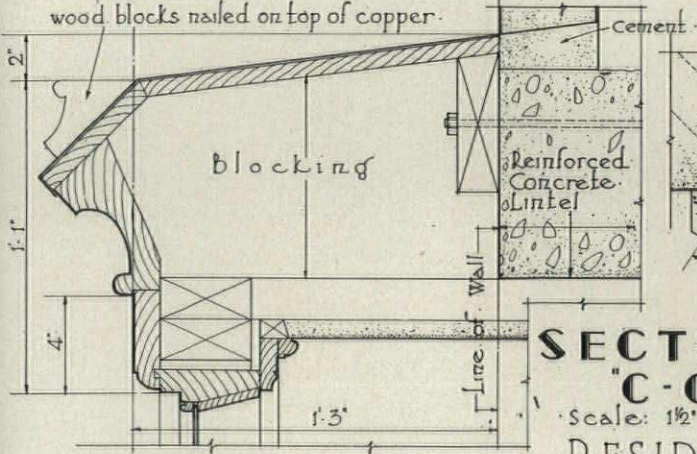
Photograph by Samuel H. Gottscho.



**PLAN**  
3/8" = 1'-0"



**SECTION "B-B"**  
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

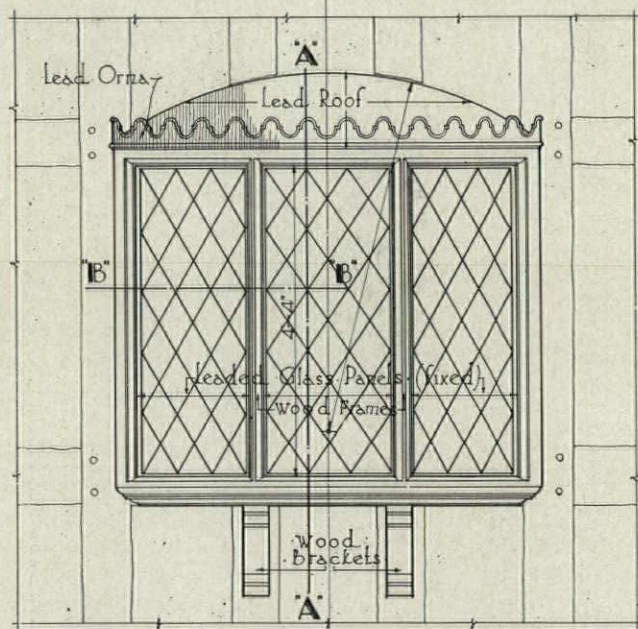


**SECTION "A-A"**  
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

**SECTION "C-C"**  
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

RESIDENCE AT LARCHMONT, N.Y.  
HUNTER MCDONNELL ARCHITECT.

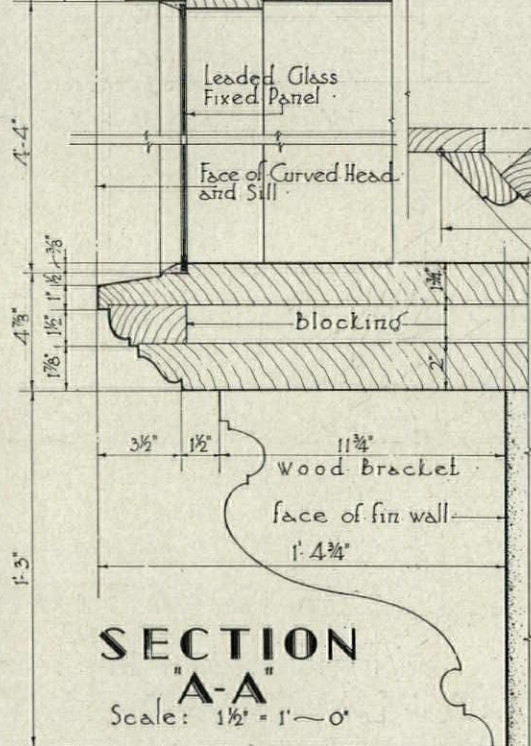
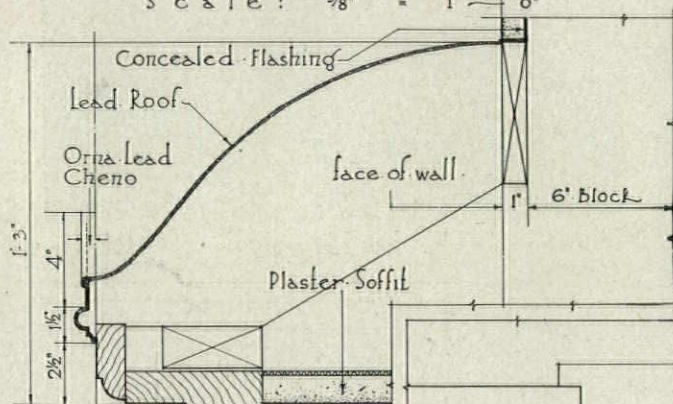




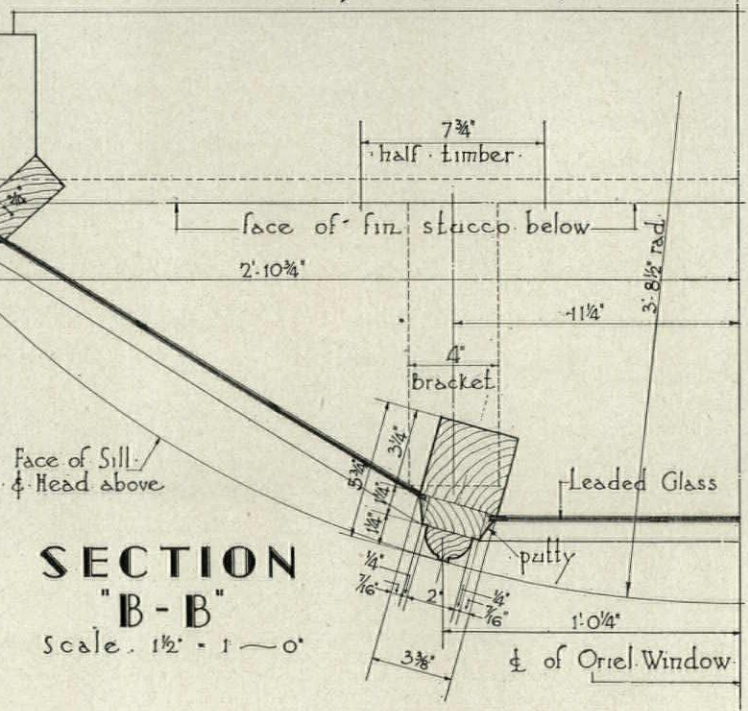
**ELEVATION**  
scale:  $\frac{3}{8}'' = 1' - 0''$



Photograph by Harold Holiday Costain



**SECTION "A-A"**  
Scale:  $1\frac{1}{2}'' = 1' - 0''$



**SECTION "B-B"**  
scale:  $1\frac{1}{2}'' = 1' - 0''$

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· W. STANWOOD PHILLIPS · ARCHITECT



# Eldorado Gothics



Watson asks, "Want a sixth sense? Just take up your pencil and let it play over the sculptured harmonies of this seven-centuries-old cathedral (Notre Dame, Paris). Its touch upon flying buttress and pointed arch, upon pinnacled spire and crouching grotesque is an inspiring contact with these Gothic glories." For perfect functioning of this sixth sense Watson uses Eldorado leads 4B, 3B, 2B, B, HB, H, 2H in such a drawing as this. You'll find Eldorados wherever good drawing materials are sold. (Try Anadel Pencils for your color work.) Pencil Sales Department 167-J, JOSEPH DIXON CRUCIBLE COMPANY, Jersey City, N. J.



# S E R V I C E D E P A R T M E N T S

**THE MART.** In this department we will print, free of charge, notices from readers (dealers excepted) having for sale or desiring to purchase books, drawing instruments, and other property pertaining directly to the profession or business in which most of us are engaged. Such notices will be inserted in one issue only, but there is no limit to the number of different notices pertaining to different things which any subscriber may insert.

**PERSONAL NOTICES.** Announcements concerning the opening of new offices for the practice of architecture, changes in architectural firms, changes of address and items of personal interest will be printed free of charge.

**FREE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE.** In this department we shall continue to print, free of charge, notices from architects or others requiring designers, draftsmen, specification writers, or superintendents, as well as from those seeking similar positions.

**SPECIAL NOTICE TO ARCHITECTS LOCATED OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES:** Should you be interested in any building material or equipment manufactured in America, we will gladly procure and send, without charge, any information you may desire.

*Notices submitted for publication in these Service Departments must reach us before the fifth of each month if they are to be inserted in the next issue. Address all communications to 330 West 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.*

## THE MART

**CIRCULAR DOME BUILDING FOR SALE:** Offered at a very low price, a circular dome building of wood, 80 feet in diameter and 40 feet high in the center, the material of which was used to form the dome for the new Hayden Planetarium. Ideal and unique for a dance pavilion, exhibition building, assembly room or game room. Perfect condition. White Construction Co., Inc., 95 Madison Avenue, New York.

J. W. Bailey would like to obtain Vol. 3, No. 4 of the *White Pine Series*. Address care of The Mart, PENCIL POINTS.

Miss Edith Gustafson, Librarian, The Newark Public School of Fine and Industrial Art, 550 High Street, Newark, N. J., would like to obtain the following *White Pine Series*: Vol. 2, Nos. 1, 3, 4, and 6; Vol. 3, Nos. 1, 3, and 4.

A. R. Sharpe, 144 Chestnut Street, Willimantic, Conn., has the following publications for sale: *White Pine Series*, Vol. 1, Nos. 1, 2, and 3; Vol. 2, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6; Vol. 3, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6; Vol. 4, Nos. 1 through 6; Vol. 5, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 5; Vol. 6, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6; Vol. 7, Nos. 1 through 6; Vol. 8, Nos. 1 through 6; Vol. 9, Nos. 1 through 5; Vol. 10, Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5. *Architecture*, May through December, 1921; January, February, March, May, July, August, September, and October, 1922. *The Architectural Review*, February, April, and July, 1919; August, 1918. *American Architect*, December 23, 1914; March 10, 1915; August 23, December 6, December 13, 1916; May 9, 1917. *The Architectural Record*, April through December, 1924; January through May, 1925. *The Architect*, October, 1923, and October, 1924. PENCIL POINTS, June and July, 1923; September, 1924.

C. Sedgwick Moss, 1619 R Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., is desirous of securing a Universal drafting instrument, with architect's scales, in good condition and at nominal price.

Thomas Larrick, 816½ Massachusetts Street, Lawrence, Kansas, would like to secure the following copies of *The Architectural Record*: January, February, April, May, June, July, August, October, and December, 1928.

Earl D. Hay, Head, Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, would like to obtain the January, 1934, issue of PENCIL POINTS. He has the following issues of that magazine for sale: June, 1920; February, March, and August, 1921.

ARCHITECT wishes space with builder or general contractor. Will give architectural service in exchange for rental. Phone LOnacre 5-7664.

Ernesto de Sola, San Salvador, Republic of Salvador, Central America, desires to purchase illustrated publications pertaining to small houses (Spanish Colonial or Californian style).

Robert Ronowski, 410 Edgewood, LaGrange, Ill., has the following for sale: *Chicago* and *Philadelphia Architectural Yearbooks*; PENCIL POINTS and *Architectural Record* magazines and various architectural books.

George W. Courtney, K. of P. Building, Winchester, Indiana, would like to obtain a good, recent book on specification writing, also one on small house design and construction, and Early American architecture.

Thomas R. Fahey, 102 East Jefferson Street, Colorado Springs, Colo., would like to secure a copy of the January, 1934, issue of PENCIL POINTS.

W. W. Dudley, 202 Colonial Avenue, Elizabeth City, N. C., will pay 50c each for the April, 1933, and the January, 1934, issues of PENCIL POINTS.

Fred J. Woodward, 728 17th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., has the year of 1924, complete, of PENCIL POINTS, for sale at 30c per copy. Will not break lot to sell single issues.

S. Juff, 6 McKee Street, Waverton, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, would like to purchase back numbers of PENCIL POINTS for the past two years.

A. Gargon, Alpes Vaudoises, Leysin, Switzerland, would like to obtain the following copies of PENCIL POINTS: August through December, 1929; January through May, July, and November, 1930.

## PERSONALS

T. P. BARNETT COMPANY, *Architects*, 1571 Arcade Building, St. Louis, Mo., announces that Mr. Sylvester G. Schmidt is a member of the firm, which is now composed of F. E. Rixmann, F. Paolinelli and S. G. Schmidt.

MURRAY LEIBOWITZ, *Architect*, has moved his office from Plainfield, N. J., to The Perth Amboy National Bank Building, Perth Amboy, N. J.

## MANUFACTURERS' DATA WANTED

ERNESTO DE SOLA, *Architect*, San Salvador, Republic of Salvador, Central America.

PETER A. TIAGWAD, *Architect*, 41 North Broad Street, Ridgewood, N. J.

ALLEN R. CONGDON, *Architect*, 5 Orange Street, Nantucket Island, Mass.

MURRAY LEIBOWITZ, *Architect*, Perth Amboy National Bank Building, Perth Amboy, N. J.

CHARLES L. PINCU, *Architect*, 4266 Phlox Place, Flushing, New York.

FRANK BELLINI, *Architect*, 7406 17th Avenue, Brooklyn, New York (data on bakery ovens, enameled brick and store fronts).

H. SIEMANTEL, *Designer and Builder*, R. R. 16, Box 58, Indianapolis, Ind. (A.I.A. data on residential construction, decoration and furnishing).

BRANCH D. ELAM, *Designer*, 2326 A. W. Grace St., Richmond, Va. (for A.I.A. file).

JOS. QUATMANN, JR., *Draftsman*, 1295 Boland Drive, Richmond Heights, Mo. (data on store plans and display windows).

HAROLD B. TRACY, *Draftsman and Designer*, 211 West Main Street, Mt. Morris, Ill. (data on residences, filling stations, small stores, and commercial buildings).

LOUISE LATHRUP, *Builder*, Lathrup Townsite, Birmingham, Mich. (small home data).

MARY W. VINE BUYCK, *Interior Decorator*, Slingerlands, New York (also data on suburban plot planning).


JOS. S. W. MA, *Student*, 1007½ West 35th Street, Los Angeles, Calif.

RICHARD J. BECK, *Student*, 57 Carlton Avenue, Jersey City, N. J.

J. SCRIBNER DUNNE, *Draftsman*, 2923 Ethel Avenue, Waco, Texas.

(For Employment Service see page 24, Advertising Section)





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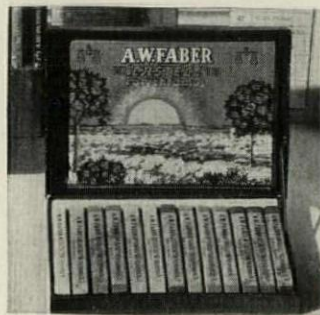
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## PUBLICATIONS ON MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

*of Interest to Architects, Draftsmen  
and Specification Writers*

*Publications mentioned here will be sent free unless otherwise noted, upon request, to readers of PENCIL POINTS by the firm issuing them. When writing for these items please mention PENCIL POINTS.*

### PITTCO STORE FRONT METAL.—A.I.A. File No. 26-b-1.

Folder announcing and completely describing a newly designed metal store front construction, which offers a double yielding cushion grip on glass. Included is set of detail drawings showing various applications of this new store front metal, including its use with Carrara structural glass. 8½ x 11. Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co., 2316 Grant Building, Pittsburgh, Pa.

### VENEER AND PLYWOOD (PANELS) SPECIFICATIONS AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA.—A.I.A. File No. 19-e.

New bulletin presenting for the first time fully illustrated information essential to clear descriptive and accurate specification of panel faces for the various types and large variety of face veneers. The information is designed to enable the architect, designer, woodworker and manufacturers to secure the precise effects desired. All of the principal native cabinet woods as well as many foreign varieties have been included. 8 pp. 8½ x 11. American Walnut Manufacturers' Association, 616 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

### "WHAT ABOUT YOUR ROOFS?"—New brochure dealing extensively with roof construction and maintenance problems.

Among the subjects discussed are included the importance of the "stitch-in-time" on roof repairs; the physical properties and characteristics of various types of built-up roofing materials; and roof insulation. A new complete roof unit, which combines steel deck, insulation and waterproofing, all in one unit structure, is also described. 18 pp. 8½ x 11. Johns-Manville, 22 East 40th Street, New York, N. Y.

### SOLVE YOUR FLOORING PROBLEMS WITH GENASCO TRINIDAD LAKE ASPHALT MASTIC.—Illustrated publication, dealing with the subject of Genasco Trinidad Lake asphalt mastic, describes its preparation, uses and methods of application. 36 pp. 6 x 9. The Barber Asphalt Co., 1600 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa.

### COPPER-COVERED ROBERTSON PROTECTED METAL.—Bulletin illustrating and describing a new product which consists of the standard Robertson protected metal with a surface of Anaconda electro-sheet copper, suitable for roofing and siding applications. Blue print details. 4 pp. 8½ x 11. H. H. Robertson Co., Grant Building, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

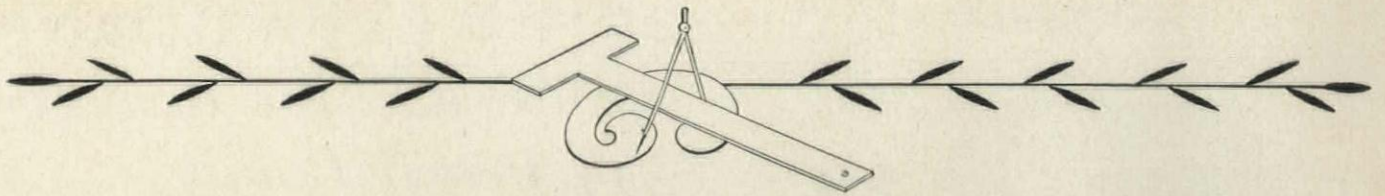
### BASMO GAS-FIRED BOILERS.—A.I.A. File No. 29-F-4.

Architects' and engineers' handbook dealing with the subject of gas-fired boilers for steam, vapor and hot water heating systems. Descriptive and technical data, tabular matter. Specifications. 20 pp. 8½ x 11. Crane Co., 836 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.

### CRANE GAS WATER HEATERS.—Bulletin explaining in detail the construction and operation of Crane automatic gas water heaters. Installation data, specifications, tank capacities, suggested hook-ups, etc. 16 pp. 8½ x 11. Crane Co., 836 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

### HOW TO PAINT CONCRETE, STUCCO AND OTHER MASONRY SURFACES.—New publication on the subject of Medusa portland cement paint shows how exterior and interior masonry and concrete surfaces can be painted in white or colors. Complete directions for using cement paint and floor coating are included. Profusely illustrated. 20 pp. 8½ x 11. Medusa Portland Cement Co., 1000 Midland Building, Cleveland, Ohio.





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**POSITION WANTED:** Young woman designer, graduate of recognized art school, with four years' broad experience in memorial designing, wishes position. Scale drawings, full size, and water color perspectives. Assist office and shop sales. Original and good worker. Also interested in opportunity other design fields. Write—Janet Small, 35 Highland Avenue, Lexington, Mass.

**POSITION WANTED:** Young man, age 20, unable to attend college, desires to enter an architect's office to learn. Four years' training at Memphis Tech and one year office experience. Will go anywhere, living expenses only wage expected. J. D. Owen, Jr., 1930 Evelyn, Memphis, Tenn.

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**POSITION WANTED:** Young man, 24, desires position in architect's office in Chicago or vicinity. Bachelor of Architecture degree. Experienced stenographer and typist. One year's experience with Chicago architect doing drafting, perspective layouts and renderings, secretarial work. Experience main incentive. Leif Skadberg, 5101 Byron Street, Chicago, Illinois.

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# HERE, THERE, THIS & THAT

(Continued)

## *Architectural Guild of America*

The printed forms which authorize the Guild to act on behalf of architectural employees continue to pour into the offices of the Guild from all parts of the United States. The last issue of PENCIL POINTS contained an article in which instructions were included for those who desire so to authorize the Guild but have not received the printed form. The response to this activity serves to demonstrate the interest the architectural employees of the country have in gaining trustworthy representation for the employees in matters germane to the Code. A large number of practicing architects have been reduced by the depression to the position of employees, either with Federal Government departments or with the projects set up under various work relief bureaus. These architects have been most prompt in sending their authorization blanks in order that their status as employees may be adequately protected.

We must not lose sight of the fact that architecture has lacked organization to a greater degree than any other profession. While county, city, and state associations have included in their membership practically every practitioner in the medical, legal, teaching and dental professions—to mention merely a few categories—the architects have been limited to one recognized national organization. This exclusive and essentially inactive group has inadequately represented a scant minority of the practicing architects, failing to advance the welfare of the average architect in any degree and neglecting to prosecute with diligence the limited field of interests it sponsors.

The economic cataclysm which has plunged the entire construction industry into a depression of great duration found the profession thus inadequately represented by a lone employer group. Whether an employee-architect, a draftsman, a specification writer, or a superintendent of construction, the employee of an architect or contractor found himself without representation by any organization of national scope.

A group of architectural employees in New York City organized the Architectural Guild of America a little more than a year ago. Overcoming inexperience in organization, apathetic resignation among draftsmen, and lack of finances, the Guild has continued to increase in membership while perfecting its permanent organization and vigorously promoting the interests of the architectural employee.

The Guild continues to oppose the award of Government contracts to private architects unless there be included in such contracts a specific scale of wages

for employees. Such a scale of liveable salaries was submitted to the authorities at the beginning of 1934, being presented to the group who represent employer-architects at the same time. The tacit refusal of this group to negotiate with the Guild in this matter serves but to increase the misgivings of draftsmen who have been accustomed for years to submit to the paternalistic authority of employers, self-styled patrons and protectors.

Architects designing buildings financed through Government loans and grants have taken advantage of unemployment in the profession; draftsmen have been compelled to accept wages based upon work relief salaries. Federal departments, on the other hand, offer draftsmen an opportunity to earn salaries approaching a living wage. Though these draftsmen must tolerate the necessity of leaving their chosen environment, often separating themselves from their families, the alternative must appear a great deal less attractive. Interested in the welfare of the profession, the Architectural Guild of America does not desire the socialization of Architecture nor the elimination of the individual architect. The treatment accorded draftsmen by private architects, however, must control our attitude toward Government projects at the present time.

The Code has failed, after months of dalliance in the obscurity of committee meetings, to emerge in its final form into the revealing light of publication. Recent proposals of its provisions continue to exclude students from wage-scale agreements. The Guild is unalterably opposed to such a clause, considering it too great a loop-hole for the ubiquitous "chiseler." While advocating the omission of the entire provision, the Guild has recommended to the authorities that—if the clause appears—no employee shall be considered a "student" who has been engaged as a draftsman in any office or offices for longer than one year.

Arthur C. Holden presented a talk, illustrated with lantern slides, at the November meeting of the New York Chapter of the Guild. He described his proposal for rehabilitating the blighted areas of the City through block reorganization. He proved the need for such activity and demonstrated the advantages for tenants, owners, and mortgagees. He emphasized the effect such a proposal, if carried out, would have on employment throughout the construction industry.

Howard Scott, Director of Technocracy, explained the origins and purposes of his researches to an interested audience at the December meeting in New York. Spirited discussion among the members since this lecture attests a revival of interest in this subject which at one time preempted the front page of metropolitan journals.

CLIFFORD F. HART,  
*First Vice-President*

## *Tech Architectural Club*

The Tech Architectural Club of Chicago held its first smoker of the fall season on October 18 with a goodly number of members present, according to its secretary. On November 16 the Club initiated 18 new members, and more came in

later. A branch has been established in the evening school of Chicago Tech and each group holds its own meetings in alternate months with joint meetings in between.

In the early part of February the organization will exhibit the PENCIL POINTS-Flat Glass Industry Competition drawings and expects to attract large numbers of Chicago citizens to the show.

## *Seminar at Columbia on Plan of New York*

A seminar on the plan of the city of New York will be given in the Columbia School of Architecture beginning in February, according to an announcement by Dean Joseph Hudnut. The seminar, which will include an analysis of the regional plan for New York, will be given by Dr. Werner Hegemann, who has been appointed lecturer in the school.

Dr. Hegemann is a visiting professor at the New School for Social Research. He directed the first international town planning exhibitions in Boston and in Berlin and has studied town planning problems in all parts of the world. He was employed as town planning adviser by the cities of Dusseldorf and Leipsic, the east bay cities of San Francisco, and Buenos Aires, Rosario, and Montevideo. He has also practiced landscape architecture and town planning in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

Dr. Hegemann was formerly editor of *Stadtebau*, German town planning monthly, and of a German architectural journal. He is the author of numerous books on architectural subjects and monographs on contemporary architects.

## *James Harrison Steedman Memorial Fellowship*

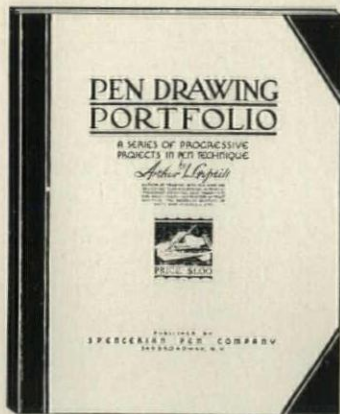
The Governing Committee of the James Harrison Steedman Memorial Fellowship in Architecture announces the ninth competition for this Fellowship, to be held in the Spring of 1935.

The purpose of this Fellowship is to assist well qualified architectural graduates to benefit by a year in travel and the study of architecture in foreign countries, subject to the approval of the Committee and under the guidance and control of the School of Architecture of Washington University, St. Louis. To this end an annual award of fifteen hundred dollars is offered to the winner.

The Fellowship is open on equal terms to all graduates in architecture of recognized schools of architecture in the United States. Candidates must be American citizens of good moral character, and shall have had at least one year of practical work in the office of an architect, including one year's residence in the city of St. Louis, before being entitled to assume the benefits of the Fellowship. All candidates shall be between twenty-one and thirty-one years of age at the time of appointment to this Fellowship.

Application blanks can be obtained by writing to the acting head of the School of Architecture of Washington University. They must be returned, properly filled out, before January 18, 1935.



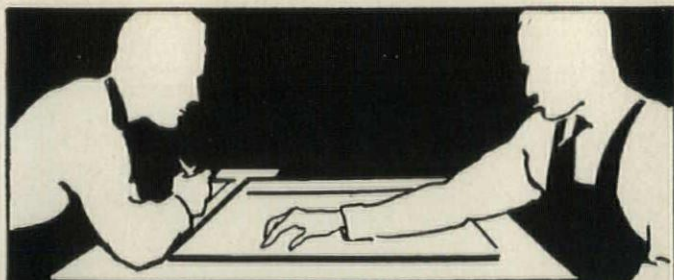


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## Federation of A.E.C.&T.

The January, Convention Issue of the *Bulletin of the Federation of A.E.C.&T.* is just off the press. The *Bulletin* comes out in a new typographical form, and has been enlarged to 24 pages; the price remains the same at 5c. Of special note among the articles in this issue are a report by Foster Hamilton, National Organizer, on his recent tour over the country; a review of the year's work by Jules Korchien, the National Secretary; and a new and hitherto unpublished article on America's productive capacity written exclusively for the *Bulletin* by Dr. Walter Polakov, former consultant to the Tennessee Valley Authority and one of America's foremost authorities on industrial planning and engineering.

Three new chapters take their place on the fast-growing roster of the Federation. As a result of the recent tour of the National Organizer, enthusiastic and growing chapters have already been formed in Detroit, Cleveland, and Rochester. Of these, Rochester, in the space of one month, has already reached a membership of over 150.

As PENCIL POINTS goes to press, the first National Convention of the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, and Technicians is meeting in Chicago. Delegates representing the Federation membership of over 6,500 with chapters in 15 cities will determine the policy of the Federation for the coming year. In addition, fraternal delegates will be present from organizations of other technical employees not affiliated with the Federation. There will be a complete report on the proceedings and resolutions adopted at the Convention in a forthcoming issue of PENCIL POINTS. The future policy of the Federation as determined by its membership will be stated together with its decisions on

1. Wages, hours and speed-up—Civil Service standards—Public Works and

Housing—Unemployment Insurance and Relief.

2. A permanent Constitution to replace our present provisional one.

3. Organizational methods for carrying out our program.

Through action undertaken by the Federation, the technical employees of the Macy's Bureau of Standards, organized 100% in the Federation, achieved a wage increase averaging \$3.00 per week. Macy's ads for the past five years have pointed "with justifiable pride to the staff of expert technicians employed in our Bureau of Standards." During these years, despite many individual complaints, the salaries paid these technicians remained at the same low "relief level."

The F.A.E.C.&T. succeeded in organizing the technical employees of the Bureau of Standards 100%. An interchange of letters between the Federation and Mr. Percy Strauss of Macy's took place. The full correspondence is published in the January issue of the *Bulletin*.

A few weeks later only the technical employees of the Bureau of Standards were given an increase in salary. The increases averaged \$3.00 per week.

It is interesting to note that despite many individual complaints this condition had been "Overlooked" for the past five years, and that only after organized action was begun had any consideration been given.

This increase does not bring the Macy scale of wages to the minimum level advocated by the Federation—but it is a beginning. The Macy group has materially strengthened and consolidated its position and does not intend to stop with this small gain.

As an interesting sequel to the great gains the Federation has made in the organization of private industry, the entire maintenance department of Macy's Department Store, composed of highly skilled architectural designers and drafts-

men, announces that it has followed the example of the men in Macy's Bureau of Standards by joining the Federation 100%. The group will be known as Local 34 of the F.A.E.C.&T.

The Federation program for a really adequate housing plan by the Federal Government continues to advance. The New York Chapter has taken the initiative in forming a "Provisional Committee for the Workers' Federation for Housing." This Provisional Committee has drawn up a national resolution and a New York City resolution for a planned program of Public Works construction. The New York resolution has been sent to every A. F. of L. building trades local union in this city. Ten of these have endorsed this resolution and have sent delegates to this committee. This resolution is, in its essentials, a broadening of our "Statement of Principles for a National Public Works Program" which appeared in the June *Bulletin*.

The Workers' Federation for Housing is planning to mobilize workers' organizations into a National Federation for Housing. Following these steps taken by the New York Committee, other Federation Chapters in other cities will consolidate the work by forming Workers' Federation for Housing Committees in collaboration with building trades unions in their own areas. Consumer organizations will be drawn in later. Each committee will lay out the plan for the rehousing of those who are living in unfit houses in its own city. The New York Committee has already taken the 14 areas designated by the New York City Housing Authority as areas in which housing is below any standard of decency and has based its program on the replanning and rebuilding of these areas with modern high-standard, low-rental housing, and the necessary schools, hospitals, playgrounds, etc.

ELROY WEBBER

Architects' Section, F.A.E.C.&T.



U. S. Federal Building at Chicago—Etching by the late F. W. Fitzpatrick

Henry Ives Cobb, Architect



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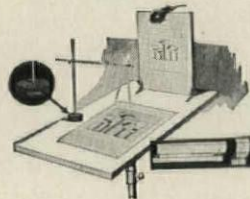
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2. In the construction industry are you satisfied with enforcement of maximum hours and minimum wage provisions now in effect? Yes ( ) No ( )
3. In the construction industry is there obtainable ample **working** capital—from banks? Yes ( ) No ( ); from government agencies? Yes ( ) No ( )
4. In the construction industry is there obtainable ample **investment** capital—from banks? Yes ( ) No ( ); from government agencies? Yes ( ) No ( )
5. Do you favor increased Federal appropriations for Public Works as a measure to produce recovery? Yes ( ) No ( )
6. Do you believe it necessary to balance the National Budget by any fixed date? Yes ( ) No ( )
7. In the construction industry do you think that government measures now in effect are **helping** small and medium sized enterprises? Yes ( ) No ( ); hurting such enterprises? Yes ( ) No ( )

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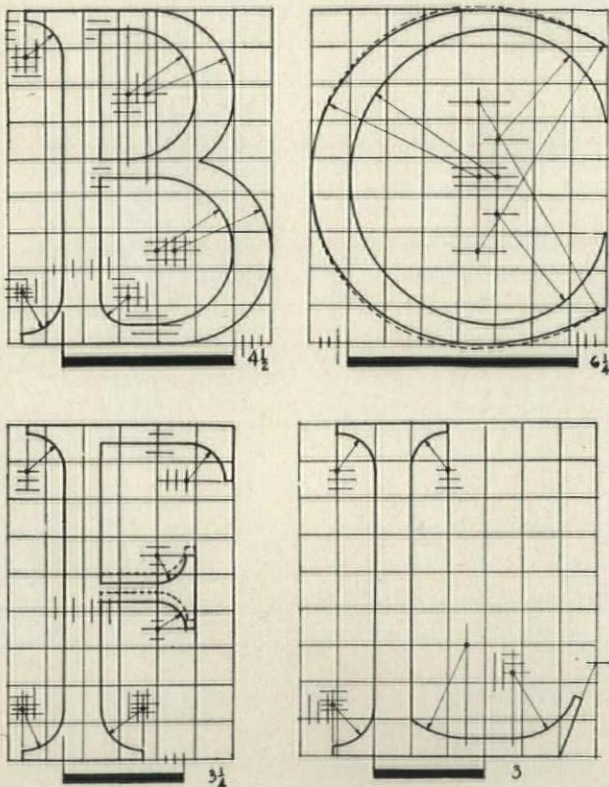
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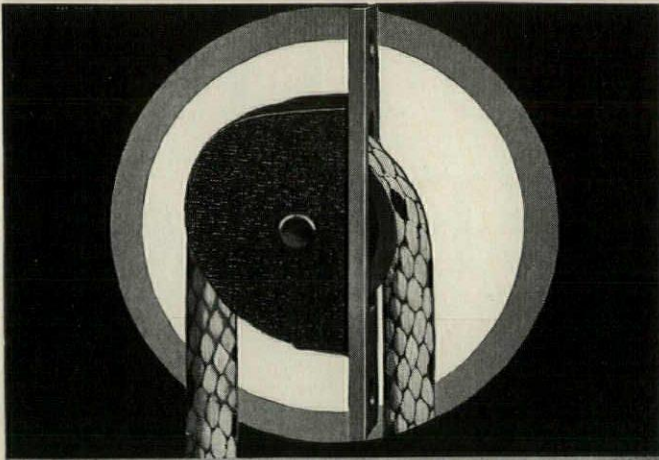
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FOR the first time in any book is presented the author's original, simple and practical method for the precision letter spacing of inscriptions and so forth by means of "Net Values" assigned to each letter in every alphabet. Alphabets of every style, with "Net Values" carefully worked out, are provided for the convenience of the user. Draftsmen who have had to lay out lettering at large scale or full size will find Mr. Weiss' system of "Net Values" a wonderful saver of time and labor. By its use an inscription to fit a given space can be laid out right the first time—so accurately spaced that only minor modifications, if any, will be necessary.

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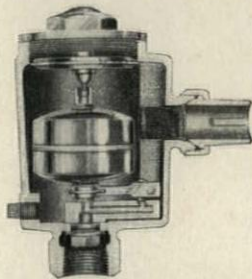


# NEW PRODUCTS

## Changes in Personnel, etc.

### NEW FLOAT AND THERMOSTATIC DRIP VALVE

The Jas. P. Marsh Corporation, 2073 Southport Avenue, Chicago, Ill., has added to its line the new No. 17 drip trap, which is designed for removal of air and condensation from short steam mains, branches or risers. Its operating characteristics, it is stated, make it especially desirable for installation on unit ventilators, small unit heaters or other equipment which may be subjected to freezing temperatures during periods when the heating system is not in operation.



The outlet discharge valve is water sealed at all times and the air vent is located in the trap bonnet. The thermostatic element screws directly into the trap body. Normally air is discharged through a port directly to the outlet connections of the trap.

A brass removable strainer is installed in the inlet connection and can be removed by disconnecting the union tailpiece nut. The body of the trap is provided with one  $\frac{3}{4}$ " union nut and tailpiece inlet connection and one  $\frac{3}{4}$ " tapped outlet. The No. 17 trap may be readily suspended on the piping itself with no other means of support required. All working parts are easily accessible through the removable trap bonnet. Interior parts are of bronze and monel metal with exception of the float which is a seamless copper float tested for a working pressure of 25 lbs. per square inch.

### NEW COMBINATION DRAWING BOARD AND WALL-EASEL

Especially adaptable for use by architects, artists and students in the home, as well as in the studio or office, is The Wallezl, a new compact fixture combining drawing board, wall-easel, blackboard and work bench. It is distributed by the Austral Sales Corporation, 101 Park Avenue, New York.



The frame of The Wallezl is mounted flat against the wall at any convenient position. Within this frame, the slate blackboard is held rigid. The work bench hangs vertical from hinges and is brought into use by supporting it horizontally on brackets swinging out from the frame. Against this base, the reversible blackboard can be propped so that the cork-surfaced drawing board is held firmly at a correct angle. The equipment includes a metal paint tray suspended from the front edge of the work bench when in use, and containing seven pots of water colors. Brushes and other artists' materials are also part of the outfit.

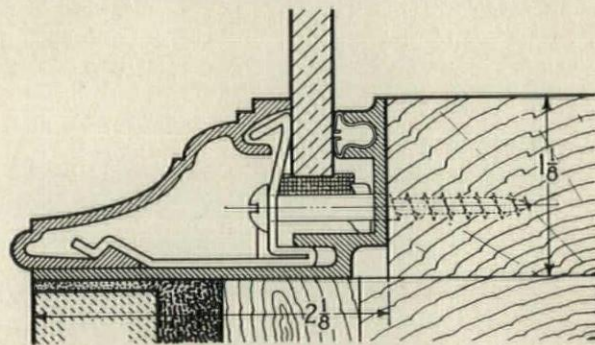
### READING IRON ANNOUNCES PROMOTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO SALES PERSONNEL

Important promotions within its ranks, as well as additions to its sales force, mark the beginning of the new year for the Reading Iron Company.

C. T. Ressler, formerly manager of railroad and marine sales, is appointed specification engineer, sales division, with headquarters at 401 North Broad St., Philadelphia. R. I. Fretz, formerly district sales representative, with headquarters in Columbus, Ohio, is appointed manager of eastern railroad and marine sales, with offices at 401 North Broad St., Philadelphia. C. W. Guthrie, formerly salesman in the New York district, is appointed district sales representative for the Columbus territory. Bryant Myers joins the company's Pacific Coast sales force. His headquarters will be at 213 Sheldon Building, San Francisco. E. S. Morrow is added to the oil country sales force with headquarters at Tulsa, Okla. F. B. Olcott is appointed special representative for the purpose of handling Government business. His headquarters are at 220 Mills Building, Washington, D. C.

### NEW METAL STORE FRONT CONSTRUCTION ANNOUNCED

A new type of metal construction for store fronts is announced by the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, Pittsburgh, Pa. The new store front metal is called "Pitco" and possesses several outstanding advantages. Pitco is a complete line of metal units, all designed at one time, and therefore displays a refreshing unity of design in all members. A



double yielding cushion grip on glass distinguishes the sash, offering better protection against strains and stresses on the glass. Vertical bars are adjustable to all angles. All exposed members are formed by the extruded process to assure clear-cut, sharp contours, adequate strength, and accuracy of detail. Pitco store front metal permits rear members of sash and plate glass to be set, show window made ready for use, and building face washed down, before outer members of sash are applied. Glass holding Pitco units is self-adjusting to various glass thicknesses. New methods of locking facing material in position, shielding vulnerable edge of facing material and securing miters against rising, falling, or spreading during glass-setting also characterize Pitco store front metal.

### MERGER UNITES TWO TEMPERATURE CONTROL FIRMS

Announcement is made of the consolidation of the Brown Instrument Co. of Philadelphia with the Minneapolis-Honeywell Regulator Co. of Minneapolis, thereby uniting two of the largest and oldest firms in the temperature control field.

The Brown Instrument Co. will continue as a separate unit with its present organization with Richard P. Brown as president but will be operated as a subsidiary of the Minneapolis-Honeywell Regulator Co.

Interests associated with H. E. Gosch, founder of the Stained Shingle Industry and former president of the Creodipt Companies, have purchased the Weatherbest Stained Shingle Company, hereafter to be known as the Weatherbest Corporation. H. E. Gosch is president; Phillip Rohrbacher, chairman of the board; Wm. M. Ritter, vice president and treasurer; E. M. Higley, vice president; Wm. Levy, secretary; Paul I. Cohen, director and attorney for the company.



# LEADING MINDS

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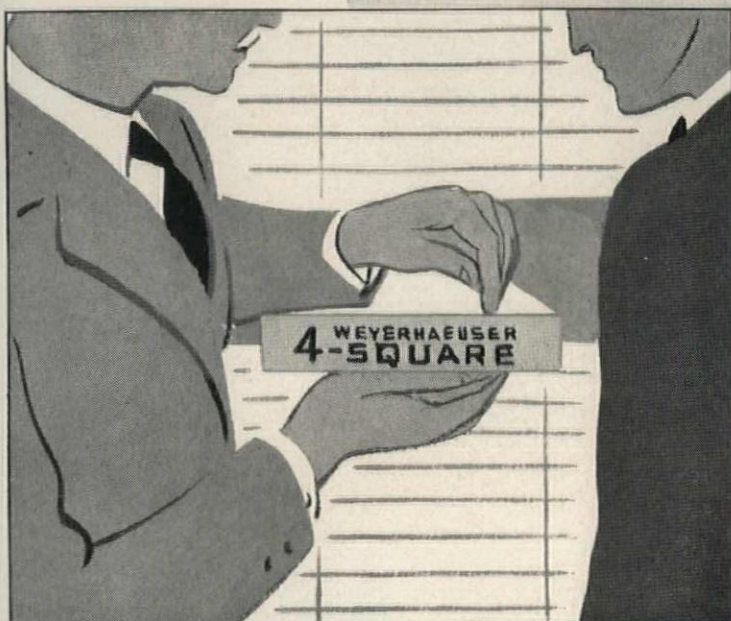




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\* Is it worth the architect's time to take on small modernizing jobs?

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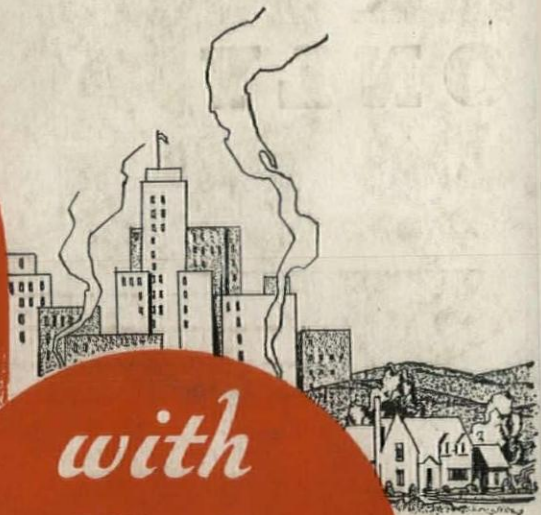
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