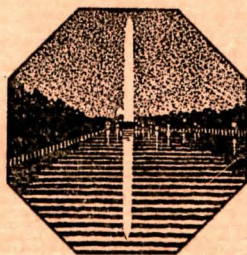


Journal of The American Institute of  
**ARCHITECTS**



April, 1948

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Leopold Arnaud

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Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A.

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Ely Jacques Kahn, F.A.I.A.

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A. F. Deam • Seymour Stillman • A. N. Gibb

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R. Clipston Sturgis, F.A.I.A.

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Hobart A. Walker, F.A.I.A.

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Guy Study, F.A.I.A. • Charles Nagel, Jr.

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35c

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
SMALL HOMES COUNCIL  
MUMFORD HOUSE

# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

APRIL, 1948

VOL. IX, No. 4

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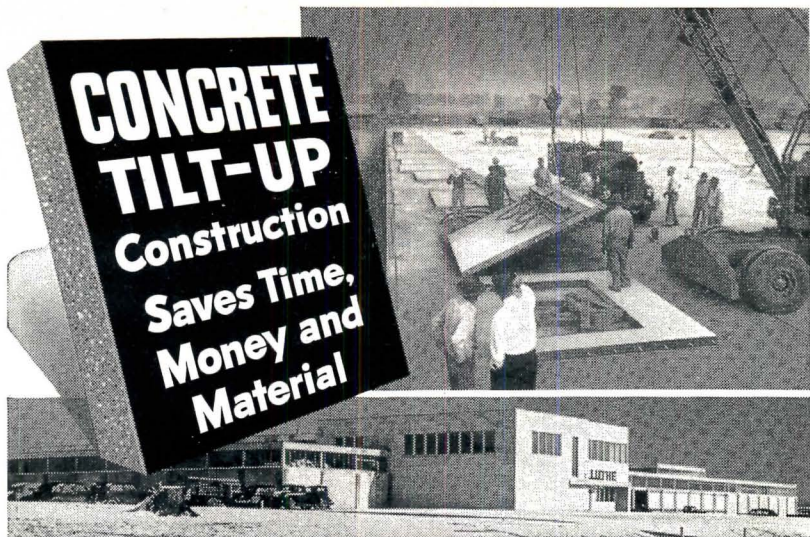
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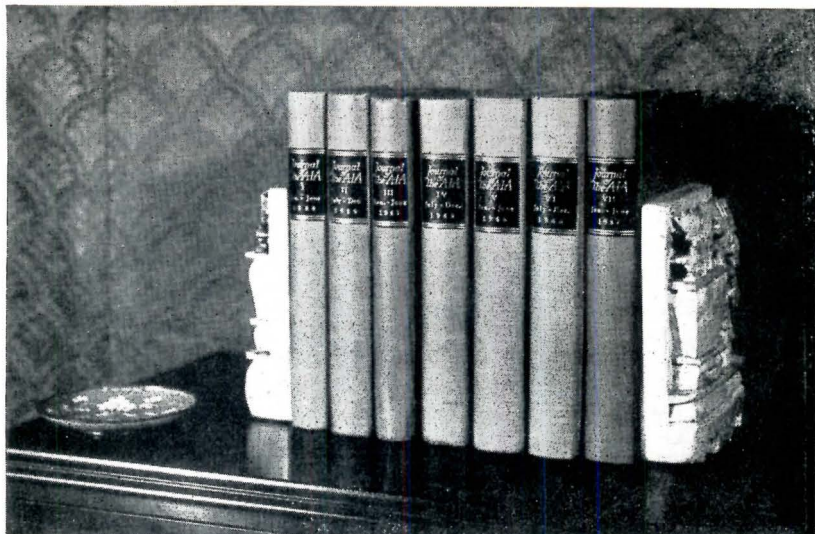


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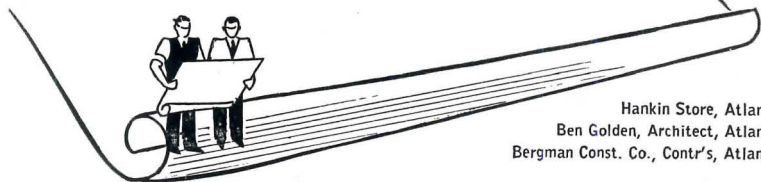
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# How Architecture Is Being Taught

*By Leopold Arnaud*

DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

In slightly abbreviated form, a paper presented at the  
VI Pan American Congress in Lima, Peru, October 1947

**I**N ORDER to understand present tendencies in the teaching of architecture in the United States it is essential to have a general idea of the evolution of this training, as it is only with this knowledge that one can understand the reasons for the changes of the past, and the probable direction of future changes.

Until the last quarter of the eighteenth century there were no professional architects in the United States. While the refinement of detail and proportion of much of our early architecture is justly admired, it was the work of craftsmen directed by the owners and inspired by "handbooks" of architectural details which were usually printed in England and which had wide circulation in this country.

By the end of the eighteenth century there were two kinds of practitioners who could be called architects: the talented amateurs

(such as Thomas Jefferson or Dr. William Thornton) and the professionals. The first were gentlemen keenly interested in architectural design, who often were prolific in supplying drawings for houses for their friends and sometimes were responsible for the designs of public buildings as well.

The second group were almost exclusively Europeans (mostly English or French) who were trained in Europe and who came to this country to seek their fortunes, or as political refugees.

Young Americans wishing to be architects had two ways to prepare for their profession: they could go to Europe, or they could be "apprenticed" to a practising architect in this country.

Many went to Europe, either to England or to France. Those who went to England followed the apprenticeship system under conditions quite similar to those in this country, except that the archi-

jects for whom they worked had possibly larger and more important practices than their confreres in the New World. Those who went to France could either work in architects' offices, or they could study at the National School of Fine Arts—a long-established school where a careful schedule of courses had been developed. These conditions prevailed until the middle of the nineteenth century.

By 1850 there were enough architects in the country to make them think of a professional association (The American Institute of Architects was founded in 1857) and to think also of a more practical and efficient manner in which to train the future members of their group. Several young Americans had now attended the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris and had returned to establish lucrative practices.

About 1862 a group of architects and interested citizens in Boston decided that the time had come to establish a school for the training of architects. They prevailed upon William Robert Ware, a practitioner in that city, of the firm of Ware & Van Brunt, to direct such a school.

The better to establish the curriculum of the proposed course of

study, two or three practitioners accompanied Mr. Ware to Europe to visit several countries in order to acquaint themselves with the methods of training used there. England, Germany, France and Italy were visited and the methods of training architects in each were studied.

In Germany the instruction was considered too mathematical, as most schools were closely connected with schools of engineering; but the apprentice system was present. In Italy the architect was trained in schools of fine arts, where the pictorial and decorative side of his training far outweighed the practical. Only in France did they find a school which embraced both sound theoretical training in architectural design and planning and thorough training in the science of building.



The first school of architecture in the United States was founded at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, by William R. Ware in 1864. Although, in general, the curriculum was inspired by the curriculum offered at the Paris School, it was carefully modified to comply with American requirements, both

pedagogical and professional. In no way was it an attempt to establish here a replica of the French School. The majority of the instructors were drafted from the profession, but the chief professor in design was Desiré Despradelles, a young Frenchman imported to develop in America the French methods of teaching architectural design.

As the American public began to appreciate the services of the architect, and as the country developed, more schools were established, and Mr. Ware himself left the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to come to New York in 1881 to establish a school of architecture at Columbia University.

In the first development of the schools, with a French professor of design at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and in several other schools as well, it was natural that a strong French influence prevailed, so that many young Americans went to the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris either for their entire training or to continue the training begun in our American schools. Between 1885 and 1914 large numbers of American students frequented the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris and many re-

mained long enough to receive their diplomas from the French School.

Meanwhile in the United States, the carefully prepared curriculum laid out by Mr. Ware and his advisors had slowly changed from a well-balanced schedule of theoretical and practical training to one in which the design course took almost all of the students' time, and where the technical and practical courses were reduced to a minimum. This was partly brought about by changes in the French School, where more and more stress was being placed on theoretical design, but it was largely due to a misconception of the teaching in France by many Americans whose sojourn at the *École des Beaux-Arts* had not been long enough nor intimate enough to allow them to grasp the fundamental philosophy of the French teachers. This, together with the prevalence of eclecticism in architectural design in this country, and the allocation of the major structural problems to "structural" specialists, tended to intensify the unbalance in the school curricula.

With the depression of 1929-1930, building activity in this country practically came to a halt. Because of the lack of building many young men were hesitant to enter

the architectural profession, and many could not afford the expense of university studies. As a result, registrations in the schools of architecture throughout the country dropped sharply. Empty schools and idle offices meant temporary catastrophe to the profession; but the catastrophe was not an unmixed evil, for it gave both teaching and practising architects the cause and time to think. It was realized unanimously that education in architecture had had many serious shortcomings and should be re-investigated.



Many architects and instructors, and especially many students, influenced by professional periodicals, were fascinated with the "International Style," particularly as it was expressed in Central Europe. As change was the order of the day, and as architectural education needed to be revised, "revolution" rather than "substitution" was thought to be the answer. Instead of a careful analysis of needs and an attempt to mold instruction on the needs of the profession and of the country, it became the style to swing sharply away from any methods used in the past. The methods of the French School were consid-

ered antiquated and false. Too few of the insurgents had the perspicacity to discern the balanced and logical structure of the old curriculum beneath the prevalent superficialities and misinterpretations that had developed during the first years of the twentieth century. The chosen corrective was the "structural and analytical" or "functional" approach. The study of the past was considered anathema.

Much very crude designing was done in the name of "functionalism," and much very inhuman architecture resulted from the "structural and analytical approach." The reasons were twofold: First, Americans had always accepted their major architectural expressions from Europe (except perhaps from 1800 to 1850), yet they had always "naturalized" these imported forms, and the resultant architecture, for better or for worse, has been tempered by our local requirements—climatic, economical, traditional. But the new forms, accepted in the 1930s, were quite alien to our requirements, and for some reason they were accepted by many as unalterable, perhaps because they were supposed to be "international" and would therefore lose this characteristic if they

were made to conform to local requirements. Second, these forms, in reality conceived largely by a small group of men, were not "international," but rather embryonic,

In any case, some few schools espoused the new doctrine, discarded the old system entirely, and based their training exclusively on a so-called analytical approach to the design problems, with great stress on social and structural studies.

While the designs of the previous period had been florid at times, the products of this new "advanced group" were cold, inhuman and unattractive to all but their ardent disciples; curiously enough they were often as untruthful as had been some of the products of elaborate eclecticism in the previous period.

The present methods in architectural education, now quite generally established in the schools of this country, have emerged during the last decade. In general there is a much better understanding of the required balance between "structural courses" and "design courses." Most of the better schools have a well-balanced curriculum where instruction in design and in construction (with the various courses related to each) are

well integrated. They teach that architecture takes form according to the needs and ideals of society, and that, at present, we are admittedly in the midst of great social change. A school devoted to the training of architects must therefore combine, through its curriculum, principles of stability with flexibility, so that permanent values will not be lost, while contemporary problems will be understood and given their proper significance. The student must learn to recognize fundamental qualities in human nature and in the material world, so that he will not be unduly influenced by fads and fashions. Having a knowledge of the past and of the present, he will be prepared to cope with the drastic changes of the future, and to produce designs that will not only have esthetic value, but will also conform to the needs of the day.

The established schools of architecture require their students to follow some courses of a "general" or academic nature as well as purely professional courses; for an architect is not merely a technician, and should have training in general culture as well as in professional subjects. There are courses in English language and literature, in one foreign language (usually



## Honoring Jean Hébrard

By Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A.

An address by The Secretary of The Institute on the occasion of a testimonial dinner honoring Professor Hébrard upon his retirement from the faculty of the College of Architecture and Design, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, February 19, 1948.

MR. TOASTMASTER, MR. PRO-  
VOST, GUEST OF HONOR, AND  
FRIENDS:

I follow tradition in this salutation, a tradition which requires that the principals of the meeting be recognized separately and distinctly from the general assemblage. And at this particular time in our architectural history, before a group so predominantly architectural, I fear that such respect for tradition may be misunderstood. I admit that it would be more sensible and obviously truthful to gather you all into the one category of friends (instead of casting an aura of doubt about the heads of the principals), for friendship is the lodestone which has brought us together here tonight.

But there is something in the purpose of this occasion which suggests the propriety of a certain degree of formality. We are here

to do reverence, and reverence is a compound of many gestures—an obeisance, a salute, a frank avowal of admiration, a warm protest of friendship, and other gracious tokens whose significance custom has firmly established.

Our printed program, you will note, is fittingly adorned with a quotation in French:

“n’as tu pas observé en te promenant dans cette ville, que d’entre les édifices dont elle est peuplée, les uns sont *muets*: les autres *parlent*: et d’autres enfin, qui sont plus rare, *chantent*”?

I have it on the authority of one of his bosom friends that these words have appealed very strongly to our guest of honor, and they have thus found their way to this program. They appear originally in a charming essay entitled “Eupalinos, ou l’Architecte” written by Paul Valery, a French poet and academician, which takes the form

of a Platonic dialogue between Phaedrus, the composer of Aesop's fables, and Socrates. The discussion takes place long after the demise of both of these gentlemen and although the locale of their interview is not specifically mentioned, it seems pleasant enough to allow them to expatiate on the beauties of architecture. Phaedrus quotes at length from conversations which he has had with Eupalinus, a Greek architect, and the words quoted come from the lips of Eupalinus.

For your edification and mine, I found that Eupalinus lived at Megara in Greece in the sixth century B. C. and designed and constructed many temples. He also built for the tyrant Polycrates of Samos, a tunnel under a hill to bring water to the city. This aqueduct still exists and is one of the most remarkable constructions in Greece. Through this and similar enterprises Eupalinus gained a great reputation as a hydraulic engineer, but this phase of the man's character Valery suitably ignores.

This was not the first time that an analogy between music and architecture was drawn. Friedrich Von Schelling spoke of Architecture as "music in space, as it were

frozen music," and Madame de Stael in a similar connection used the descriptive phrase, "continuous and stationary music." And I am sure there have been many others to whom this analogy has appealed, for it is a felicitous one.

In dilating upon the subject, Valery goes on to say that neither the purpose of the building nor its form contribute to this musical quality but, rather, it comes from the talent of the architect, or it is a gift of the Muses. He does not ignore the fact that the music must be in harmony with the building's purpose, but over and above the fulfillment of its mundane task, it chants its hymn of joy and glory, and to him who has a spiritual ear to listen, it imparts its spiritual melody.



The true essence of a work of art lies in its ability to transcend the inherent qualities of the materials of which it is made and to create an entity in which they are submerged; and the degree to which it attains this subtle quality measures the tone and beauty of its song.

Architecture has been characterized as the true and complete historian of mankind. It records

frankly in enduring materials the aspirations, the hopes, the indifferences, the struggles, the inventions and discoveries, the fortunes and misfortunes, the daily comings and goings of mankind. In the architectural product of a period the extent to which its buildings sing, or merely speak, or are silent, or—and here I make mention of a class to which Valery did not allude—shout raucously, is the mark of its culture.

Today we are passing through an embarrassing period. It is a period of transition. There are still with us those who are so enamored of the architectural achievements of the past that they find no appetite for change, and even with the wealth of new techniques and new materials at our command, they would solve our new architectural problems in the perfected idiom of a past culture.

Diametrically opposed to these are others by whom any innovation is welcomed and to whom the true test of cultural attainment is brash novelty coupled with a basic satisfying of utilitarian purpose.

Those who complete the circle are adherents to a more or less degree of either camp, but somewhere along the arcs we find more and more of those to whom the slavish

adaptation of the architectural styles of the past is abhorrent and untruthful (but who are aware nonetheless of the value of our architectural inheritance) and who are courageously developing a purity of architectural expression which is consonant with our times and techniques, and which will accommodate the potentialities of our present civilization. To these we must look for our modern esthetic.

Here we see the foment of our civilization at work, for only a time of great change, of great unrest and uncertainty would support such divergences in the architectural process.

But this is not the first time that a transitional architecture has interpreted the upheavals in the life of man, or that new notes in the architectural vocabulary have been spurned with derision by those devoted to the perfections of the past. The word "Gothic" when first applied to architecture had connotations of barbarism.

These facts of our present situation have posed problems for those who educate the young architect and for the offices which receive him into their organizations. And the young architectural neophyte himself, emerging from the



placid fields of academic accomplishment and entering the bustle of a less idyllic world, finds the adjustment difficult. This disparity, of course, has always been with us to some extent and I believe it may be said without fear of contradiction that there is manifest today a better understanding, both by the general public and the practising profession, of the modern architectural problem, and that henceforth we shall see the steady development of a style which meets appropriately our modern way of living, which is couched in terms expressive of our modern life, and which is executed intelligently in terms of our modern building techniques.

It has been gratifying and assuring to have had in a position of influence here at our Alma Mater, and previously at the University of Pennsylvania and at Cornell, a man whose appreciation of our present situation has been so acute.

His work as an architect in the field of housing, and the reconstruction of cities and villages in France after World War I, and his participation with his brother, Ernest Hébrard, in the planning of a projected International City, are indicative of his knowledge and appreciation of the impact of modern civilization upon architecture; and it has been most fortunate that countless students have come under his competent and inspiring ministrations. Regret at his parting we cannot avoid, but it will be mitigated by the hope of an occasional visit, and the stimulus of pleasant memories.

I deem it a happy privilege on behalf of The American Institute of Architects to salute you, Jean Hébrard, as one of its distinguished members, as a profound student, and as a beloved teacher whose ideals are not silent, and do not talk, but sing in the hearts and the work of his host of votaries.

## News of the Educational Field

ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY announces that George E. Danforth has been named as assistant to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, director of the department of architecture.

PRATT INSTITUTE, of Brooklyn, N. Y., announces that its curriculum in architecture will be increased in duration to five years for freshmen entering in September 1948.

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY in Rome has announced the award of eighteen Rome Prize Fellowships for one year each, beginning October 1, 1948. Closed during the war, the Academy re-opened to its regularly appointed Fellows in October 1947, under the directorship of Laurance P. Roberts. Visiting staff included Samuel Barber, composer, who is now in residence at the Academy, and George Howe, F.A.I.A., who left for Rome on March sixteenth.

Some new fellowships have been awarded as follows: Architecture, James R. Lamantia, Jr., New Orleans, La.; Landscape Architecture, Vincent C. Cerasi, New York City; Sculpture, Gilbert A. Franklin, Providence, R. I.

JAMES CLINTON PEEBLES, Dean of Engineering at Illinois Institute of Technology, will retire at the end of August after an association with Illinois Tech and its predecessor institutions which extends over nearly a half century.



## HONORS

TO WALLACE KIRKMAN HARRISON of New York, Director of Planning in the construction program of United Nations, the New York Chapter, A.I.A. has awarded its Medal of Honor.

H. ERROL COFFIN of Connecticut has been elected a Corresponding Member of the National College of Architects of Cuba.

NATHANIEL A. OWINGS, of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, has been appointed by Chicago's Mayor Martin Kennelly to a four-

year term as Chairman of the Chicago Plan Commission. Mr. Owings is the first architect ever to hold this position.

CHARLES HOWARD CRANE, of London, has been named as a member of the architectural competition jury in connection with the XIV Olympiad.

WALDRON FAULKNER of Faulkner, Kingsbury & Stenhouse has been elected president of the board of the Washington Housing Association, which organization has re-

cently completed a decade of community service.

EGGERS & HIGGINS, the New York State Association of Architects announces, has received from it a Certificate of Merit for the

Archbishop Stepinac High School, White Plains, N. Y. A committee of the State Association under the chairmanship of Frederick Woodbridge selected the new high school from among 250 buildings considered.

## Contemporary Design in Architecture

*By Ely Jacques Kahn, F.A.I.A.*

In somewhat abbreviated form, a paper presented at the VI Pan American Congress in Lima, Peru, October, 1947.

TO ATTEMPT a discussion or conceivably an argument to explain contemporary design in architecture, is almost as absurd as to discuss modern medicine as compared to the alchemy of the Middle Ages. Contemporary work is just what it means—work of our time aimed at answering our requirements in terms of materials and processes at hand.

We have gone through an interesting period where the heavy pressure of tradition rested mightily on our shoulders and still bears on those who fail to have the courage to discard it. It was a strange experience for many of us to have been trained, theoretically at least, to be expert in any style of any period of any country, the absurdity of which must be manifest to anyone who recalls that the build-

ers of the Gothic cathedrals, for example, slowly and laboriously learned their craft and had no other concern or responsibility beyond erecting the structures their particular community demanded. They were not called upon at a moment's notice to design a Roman bath or a Greek temple, and had they been, they would, in all probability, have laughed at the suggestion.

In the first instance many of us were instructed to learn that the plan came first. Without an intelligent plan thoroughly developed, there can be no facade, for this then becomes a screen that is paper-thin. The modern conception merely emphasizes an older viewpoint, that a building must express first its function, and be able to serve thoroughly, to be use-

ful, whether we are discussing a residence, an office building or a church. There can be no justification in starting with a preconceived thought of a design and squeezing a working building into such a frame. In other words, we no longer can go to the books—select our prototype and adjust our plans to junior copies of the Renaissance or any other relics of the past.



The resistance to modern work is simple to understand. Not many people can visualize a building from plans or model, and they feel far more comfortable to take their architect to a hallowed spot and ask him to produce a bank building, for example, that will look like the Parthenon. All over the world there are countless examples of this strange reflection of the past, all mediocrities and all destined to be swept away. We realize also, that in a period where labor costs were very low, decoration and much handicraft was automatic. We now understand that we have to be more particular in placing the decoration we do use. The result of this pressure is to be far more careful in our selection, reserving our areas for decoration so that we can obtain major contrasts

between plain surfaces and enriched elements. Quite possibly we can bring our major craftsmen, the sculptors and painters into our conferences at the beginning of our work, so that they will have the opportunity to establish at the outset their relation to the finished work.

It has been suggested that modern work seems to aim at excluding painters and sculptors. This, unfortunately, has been the case when the reaction from over-decoration had swung to stark simplicity. The human being will not accept that theory for too long a stretch, and if we are wise we will realize that the play of light and shade, the contrasts of color and plastic form will sooner or later return in the form of a demand. What does become clear is that we will not repeat elements of design that had a significance to people of a particular country at a particular time.

Our decorative elements may, in turn, grow out of our requirements for better buildings. We have new materials, new processes, new possibilities in the use of concrete, pre-cast slabs, new alloys, and our designers have the choice of trying the difficult job of developing a new architecture from their use or

acknowledging that the task is too much for them.

At this moment we face various new responsibilities that are little concerned with esthetics and more particularly with questions of human relationships. The war, and the epoch shortly before it, brought a sharp drop in construction and, in Europe certainly, saw the destruction of thousands of buildings. It has become evident that the lack of intelligent planning for the good of the community has produced many of the worst by-products of this age of industrialization—slums, factories, heavily burdened lines of transportation and a variety of processes flattening those few elements of charm with which nature might, originally, have endowed the area in question. It is of meager credit to our scientific or industrial advances if, because of the fictitious requirements of our so-called civilization, we destroy beauty, comfort and actually the charm of any spot of the globe we proceed to improve.

Strangely enough, the facts are brought squarely before our eyes when we examine the huge holes torn by war through so many European cities. Centuries of carelessness produced unimaginable conditions, blocked fine buildings with

rubbish and, now that we can appreciate the mistakes of our ancestors, we wonder if we really have learned enough to have us rebuild, decently. Economic factors will have considerable bearing on whatever may be done, but it is inconceivable that we will ignore the fact that we are now in a motor-traffic age where narrow streets do not belong, where relationships between living areas and work areas, recreation and education are vital stones in the eventual edifice.



Modern architecture, if it means anything at all, will aim towards proper planning in the broadest sense. We cannot waste our time in trying to create one attractive or useful structure if the community itself has no logical program. It is evident that, under the normal theory of the right of the individual to do what he pleases with his own property, he ignores the fact that the very value of his land and building depends, in a large degree, on the relation of his structure to his neighbors. Common sense, for example, would prevent a slaughter house from being built in a fine residential neighborhood, yet equally stupid results happen

when entirely uncontrolled building permits over-supply of any variety of structure. If, for example, a row of theaters were to be erected where the demand was less than the enthusiasm of the builders warranted, the value of all of them would deteriorate. We cannot assume that the success of our planning can rest on the wisdom of an individual with selfish interests, for it is entirely beyond his province or his comprehension that something should or should not be erected on a particular site.

If we are really serious about planning, we must think beyond the small unit of the city and appreciate the elements that comprise the complete life of its people—its source of food supplies, markets, as well as the characteristics of industry that are maintained by its people. This planning in a very broad sense could be similar to that of the Tennessee Valley Authority, where flood control of hundreds of miles of land and river brought in turn the development of a great source of power—later factories, rich agricultural lands and eventually what should be a vast community of many cities and towns, all fostered by the single idea of planning on a great scale. Quite apart from the fact that the build-

ings erected by the technical staff of the Authority are excellent examples of modern architecture, one sees the intensely practical and coldly realistic value of good planning that will result in happier lives for millions of people.

There is always the danger, in this broad and possibly ruthless approach, of ignoring those qualities of picturesqueness and charm that the older cities of our world have always presented to us. Here is where the architect, as the artist, must maintain a firm hand, for he can, as a member of the group of experts or as its leader, see to it that the eventual work, once it has had an opportunity to blossom, can be beautiful and soul-satisfying as well as thoroughly efficient.

The idea of the city itself as a sound conception is open to question, for as masses of buildings crowd out light and air, trees and green spaces become negligible. Acres of hard surfaces spread over lands that once held moisture, and with the lack of shade it is obvious that the temperature of our cities has increased in hot weather in direct proportion to the acres of reflecting surfaces that replaced lawns and vegetation. The least we can do if, as seems obvious will



ONE OF TWO MAIN STAIRWAYS, NEW ALBANY POST OFFICE, ALBANY, N. Y.

GANDER, GANDER & GANDER, ARCHITECTS

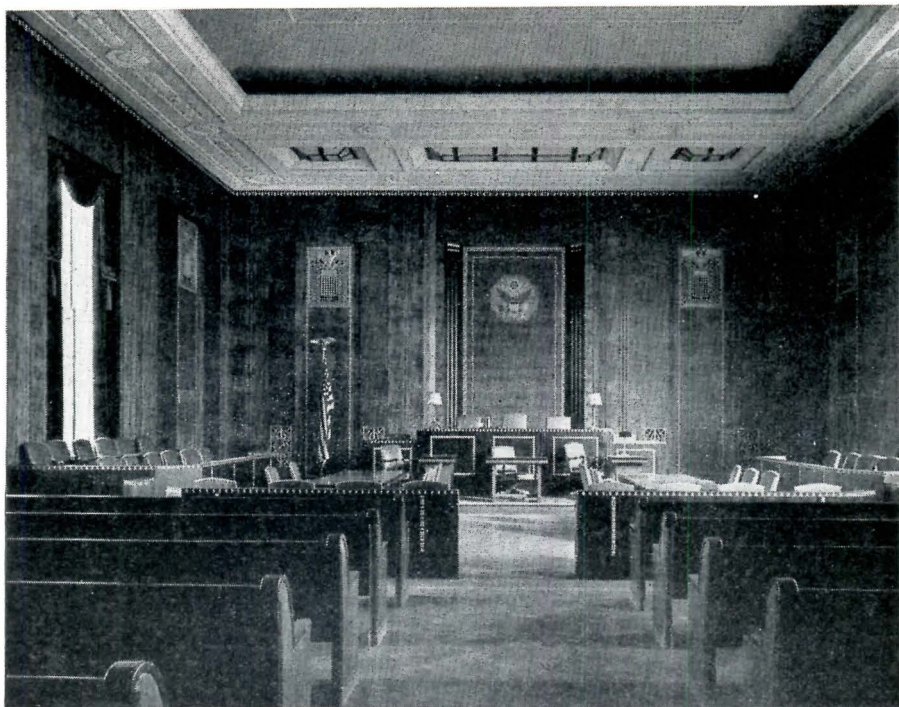
NORMAN R. STURGIS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT

ELECTUS D. LITCHFIELD, CONSULTING ARCHITECT

*Photograph By Samuel H. Gottseho*

St. Geneviève Gold Vein and Rose marbles are used, with black-and-gold marble for the newel.

*Journal  
The AIA*



MAIN COURT ROOM, NEW ALBANY POST OFFICE, ALBANY, N. Y.

GANDER, GANDER & GANDER, ARCHITECTS

NORMAN R. STURGIS, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT

ELECTUS D. LITCHFIELD, CONSULTING ARCHITECT

*Photograph by Samuel H. Gottscho*

Oregon burl maple panels the room, with the coat-of-arms in marquetry.  
Draperies are in mahogany color, trimmed with silver.



be the case, the city will continue, is to try our utmost to avoid further damage and rectify such errors as may be within our power.

In the last thirty years zoning restrictions have prevented completely uncontrolled expansion, but we still are thoroughly aware that the immensely interesting masses of tall buildings centralized in a few spots in the city are vicious in the simple fact that their concentration has pulled thousands of people into small areas, increased land values enormously and in turn pushed living areas to the distant more free districts. Immediately, we have transportation problems to feed these centers, and so we burrow into the earth for more subways, and keep on the everlasting cycle of more inhabitants per acre and then the need for moving them in and out.

In the midst of this strange planning, when the design of a new building comes to pass, the architect faces rows upon rows of every conceivable variety of good and bad taste. Before he adds to the confusion, he might ask himself if he wishes to contribute another pseudo-Gothic or pseudo-Renaissance variation, or will he be frank with his conscience and his client also, in studying a building that,

by reason of its good plan, fine proportions, well-chosen materials, will be a work of art? The problem is not a simple one when one can be accused of insulting history by refusing to pay attention to it, or more particularly by daring to assume that the modern designer is so brilliant that most of the elements of tradition can be discarded.

We must realize one important factor, and that is that the young people who come out of our schools are no longer trained to be archeologists. Perhaps they know too little of the past, but the fact remains that they are definitely aware of modern trends and it would be difficult for them — almost impossible — to repeat the hodgepodge that was formerly a general practice.

As might be expected, the main resistance is to be found in the magazines catering to the wealthier citizens, particularly those that choose to please their feminine followers. Naturally, where people own furniture and knick-knacks that have a strong association, they hesitate to let them go and are frightened lest they appear strange in new surroundings. No matter how ugly, their treasures must remain and, as is so often repeated, "modern architec-

ture is fine, but of course not for the home." It will require time, of course, for these fragile relics to pass on and then perhaps we will find furniture and all of the fittings of the house designed for our new methods of production and the uses we now put them to.

The same principle, to be sure, applies to religious buildings. We are beginning to see churches and synagogues that no longer are bland copies or indifferent design in a spirit that the creators barely understand themselves. Where deep religious instinct exists, there can also be the same profound respect and enthusiasm to produce a worthy building that was in evidence when the masters of the older days were active. Here, to be sure, there is even more emphasis on reliance on tradition, but actually, as fine work in the new spirit appears, it will become natural for building committees to realize that they can entrust their problems to a good designer and permit their requirements to be analyzed, without the handicap of arbitrarily imposing a design on their architect.

As to the new materials and processes: reinforced concrete is very much in the public eye;

cement is available almost everywhere and reinforcing material is not difficult to obtain. What we find so important, when labor costs are high, is to consider the archaic practices that for centuries have plagued us in using small bricks, laboriously laid one on the other—plastering on walls and ceilings with the resultant bringing of quantities of water into our buildings and then patiently waiting for moisture to evaporate. Larger wall units, precast, are already available and sooner or later we will discover how to avoid the absurd fashion in which we now install our plumbing. We are aware, where labor unions do not object, that factory-produced bathrooms could materially reduce costs. As it now stands, we proceed with every bathroom and kitchen as though we were surprised at their novelty and build them painstakingly by hand. Such elements could readily be organized into packaged units and be shipped in, factory-built, much as automobile parts are now assembled. We have come some distance in the realization that a building is not necessarily better when hordes of men are piled over it to the confusion of any one who understands efficient management. We are

quite aware that labor-saving devices, such as spray painting, are frowned upon by those who assume that jobs are the first consideration. These are factors of economics that must be clarified to the same degree that it is important to find apprentices learning how to become skilled at their trades. Once it is ascertained that labor will be paid properly for a full year's work, many of these obstacles to building will vanish.

In the final analysis, our modern work will stand or fall to the degree that we become aware of modern requirements, new standards of

comfort, safety, and particularly the advance of science in presenting new materials or new applications in assembling what is available. The designer must be more than an artist, or at least an artist who has the added scientific background. He will fall far short of modern standards if he assumes that all he requires is an interesting idea. A good building is a good design well built. The architect has the double responsibility of being capable of a fine conception and also being qualified to carry through his task until the structure is well and beautifully built.

## Former Days in Philadelphia

*By Edwin Bateman Morris*

From an address to the T-Square Club and the Philadelphia Chapter of The A. I. A. at a meeting held at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel in Philadelphia on February 10, 1948.

I AM GLAD to see gathered together so many Philadelphians. When I lived in this city the definition of a Philadelphian used to be a person who lived on a narrow strip between Overbrook and Paoli. Now I understand that has been liberalized so that anyone living within the city limits is also a Philadelphian.

I was born in a locality now glamourized by the presence of

Victor Abel's Postal Station C. I grew up in the shadow of the walls of Girard College and of the Eastern Penitentiary, though I never became an alumnus of either.

In the quaint distracting, diagonal-streeted Francisville section I went to school in company with John Harbeson, though he was of a later class. I think the first time the thought of architecture came to me was one winter in the

'nineties when the Schuylkill froze over from the dam to the Wissahickon.

It was a glorious occasion when one could skate far from the crowd, into the pleasant upper reaches of the winding river, an adventure however not without danger. At that time a young Philadelphian, out of sight of everyone, skated over thin ice and was drowned. That was John Stewardson, who, had he lived, would have had his name written large in the great book of architecture.

Perhaps this was the beginning of my thoughts concerning our profession. At any rate some several years later I was enrolled in the architectural school of the University of Pennsylvania. The University of Pennsylvania was in those days often spoken of as one of the greatest universities in West Philadelphia, the sort of simple childlike jest the naive bucolic city of that time enjoyed.

There was another quip. I am sorry to have to tell you this; as my dentist here in Philadelphia used to say, "I'm going to hurt thee now, always believe in telling thee beforehand." So this quip in question is not altogether painless, but is offered as archeology,

to give the spirit of the time. It concerned a Pennsylvania Dutch visitor who saw the statue of William Penn in the courtyard of City Hall waiting for the tower to be finished. The visitor looked up at the statue and said, "Statyou, Penn?"—a lame and involved pun which convulsed the gentle Brotherly Love citizen.

It was not until a decade or two later that sophistication began to come. When the hundred-thousand-dollar infield of the Athletics won the first World Series, the first break from tradition came, resulting in talk of taking William Penn down and in his place substituting a sculptural representation of Home-run Baker. That was the beginning of Modernism in Philadelphia.

My first introduction to the T-Square Club came when a little play was brought down from the architectural department at Pennsylvania and given at the Chancellor Street club-rooms on a quaint stage with ingenious gas footlights.

This stage was originally built for Herbert Wise's "De Bumps and Buoneratti." I did not see that architectural skit, but Mat Dunlap used to tell me about one scene that had in it the precious

germ of an idea which, had it been carried to its logical conclusions, would have made of architecture, always the most fascinating profession, as well the most comfortable in the world.

In this scene a man was sitting at a desk facing the audience. The pile of bills at his left hand identified him as an architect. In his right hand he has a large stamp. He would look at each bill, stamp it, and hold it up to the audience. The stamp said "Forget it." And I contend that had this thought been carried on to completion and perfection, the architectural profession would have been the most comfortable profession in the world.

The atelier of the T-Square Club has always been of high character and in those days with Cret as patron it offered a design education of very great value. I used to drop in at this atelier, and found there was apt to come a fatigue point in the middle of the evening, when everyone would repair to the St. James bar. There, as Walter Karcher has reminded me, a glass of beer was ten cents as compared with five in the adjacent suds emporia, but what those hungry tracing-paper wasters did to the bounteous free lunch made

the expenditure of the dime more than economically sound.

The names in those early days are now, in many cases, legendary: Crane, Rankin, Kellogg, John Molitor, Dave and Laurie Boyd, Adin Lacy, Will Hays, and so on. I used to walk up the South Broad Street canyon with Will Hays and he would stroke the polished granite base of a high building and exclaim, "How would you like to collect 6% on that?"

I remember meeting Wilson Eyre and Gilbert McIlvaine hurrying toward Broad Street, and Eyre shouting, "Come on and see the procession." So we all ran and here was a little parade headed by a noisy band, and Eyre was pleased as a boy.

McIlvaine was a companionable soul with a keen sense of humor. His "When you talk to me keep a civil tongue in your cheek" will be remembered. He was not then associated with Eyre, the second in command to Eyre then being a certain W. E. Jackson. Jackson, a good construction man, had no design background but liked to advise his boss on design problems. The boss would listen patiently, if somewhat absently, and say, "Jackson, you have a diseased taste."

Eyre did not like the white, prophylactic bathrooms of the period and, going to the other extreme, would use red quarry tile. This being too dramatic a contrast with white fixtures, he had the Trenton Potteries make him buff tubs and other fixtures. I believe that must have been the first appearance of colored bathroom fixtures.

Many of the architects of the period were fine athletes. The companionable Livingston Smith, a steady and expert football player for Pennsylvania in the Hare-McCracken era, used to do the best architecture after the hardest day of that bruiser football of the early days.

I was very fond of Dave Boyd. In his last illness he dictated a letter to me saying he had been having his family read to him my editorials in the *Federal Architect*; a dangerous adventure that may have hastened the end, but a very precious remembrance to me.

Philadelphia was beginning to grow and the South Broad Street canyon was extending. The historic piece of property at the northeast corner of Broad and Walnut Streets was sold as site for a tall building.

This property had belonged to Stephen Girard. In the first part of the 1800s, Joseph Bonaparte, kindly and hospitable soul, extended his kindness and hospitality to a beautiful shop girl who came to his attention in Philadelphia. He wanted to build a house for her on this Broad and Walnut Street property, but the opinion in Philadelphia was that he was possibly too kind and too hospitable for the fair city. Stephen Girard was therefore wholly against selling the property. Bonaparte, persuasive, said, "Mr. Girard, if you will sell me the property, I will, as a purchase price, cover the ground with silver dollars." And Girard replied, "Yes, Mr. Bonaparte, if you will set them up edge-wise."

Perhaps in digging back into my memory I have carried you too far into the past. But Philadelphia, then and now, is a pleasant place. It was nice to meet again Shay, Kohn, Magiziner, Yardley, Carver, Dean Koyle, and a host of others. It is an uplifting experience to meet so many architects. A hard rough mistress, sometimes, this Architecture, but she makes of her followers, if I am not too enthusiastic, wonderful and entertaining persons.

# Comparing Wright and Le Corbusier

IN TWO PARTS—PART I

By Seymour Stillman

The School of Architecture and Planning at Massachusetts Institute of Technology sponsors an annual essay contest, with prize funds donated by Ralph Walker, F.A.I.A. This year's subject was chosen with an eye towards reaching both the students of architecture and planning, a policy in line with the broad outlook of Dean Wurster. The contestants were asked to compare the philosophies, economic and social programs, and physical ideas of Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier. First prize, judged by Henry Russell Hitchcock, Roland Greeley, and a member of the English Department, was awarded to Mr. Stillman's essay, which, slightly abbreviated, appears in part below and is to be concluded next month.—Editor.

LIKE socially-minded thinkers from biblical prophets to recent Utopian reformers, Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier have produced models for society. Having analyzed the disorders of "metropolis," and being filled with a determination that each has *the* solution, Wright and Le Corbusier then take opposing positions. The former feels that Jeffersonian agrarianism would inexorably solve urban problems; Le Corbusier favors verticality and the harmony "when the cathedrals were white." Broadacres versus skyscrapers!

Both Wright and Le Corbusier sing out their protests against urban life: it is wasteful, congested, destructive of human values. Manhattan is not a "magical island," but wicked disorder. The liabilities of "metropolis" are weighed, and the conclusion is that

the physical decadence paralleling social and economic demise must be met in some integrated scheme of life: mere physical mutation is an irrational outlook. They believe that economic, ethical, and social changes must accompany design. Both are filled with the possibility of accomplishment. In a letter to the Mayor of Algiers, Le Corbusier stresses that a plan is not for the future but for "the immediate present." The final resemblance appears in a dogged determination that each has *the* solution!

Broadacre City has been fashioned out of Wright's manifold background. He is at once an idealist and a romanticist, who possesses a fervent nostalgia for a past age when there existed the dignity of the individual. With William Morris, he feels human dignity

cannot be achieved under the present system. With Arnold, he cries out against the success-ideal of money and speculation in the industrial era. With Thoreau and Whitman, Wright denounces our vicarious civilization, holding out the "atmosphere of truth and beauty." He realizes that work is without nobility, that the laborer is prevented from fulfillment of life's purpose. As with the Victorians, competition is anathema to Wright—the fault lies in the "superstition" of commercial profit which has become an end in itself, outweighing humanity.

Wright is a physiocrat: his land policy is agrarian. It is of the simple, homespun, household economy variety—the type we envisage in the mention of "Jeffersonian Democracy." Henry George's economic theories form a vital part of Wright's thoughts. And like Veblen, he feels that goods have been subordinated to money. Taking the example of Rousseau's revolt against Bourbon autocracy, Wright is stirred by the ominous hand of industrial despotism: the answer, he claims, can be found in a return *en masse* to the soil. At this point, the architect detaches himself from Jeffersonian ideals and bursts forth with a fantasy

wherein each man becomes a "capitalist," each man owns two cars. His idealism is carried to a disappearance of politics, with an understanding public conscience to conserve natural resources.

In addition to a poetic romanticism, Wright has an over-zealous faith in architecture as the supreme solution. The Victorian reliance on comprehensive education as a weapon in the acquisition of human dignity has been relinquished by Wright. An oriental mysticism permeates the architect. These combine to give him an emotional, often conflicting, outlook. Thus, his sympathy for the soil contends with the use of technology for society's progress. His reverence of simplicity is cross-purposed with an intricate transportation system. His adoration of independence conflicts with an "organic" life which might conceivably entail some cooperative enterprise, like common ownership of railroad rights of way, farm machinery, and community culture.

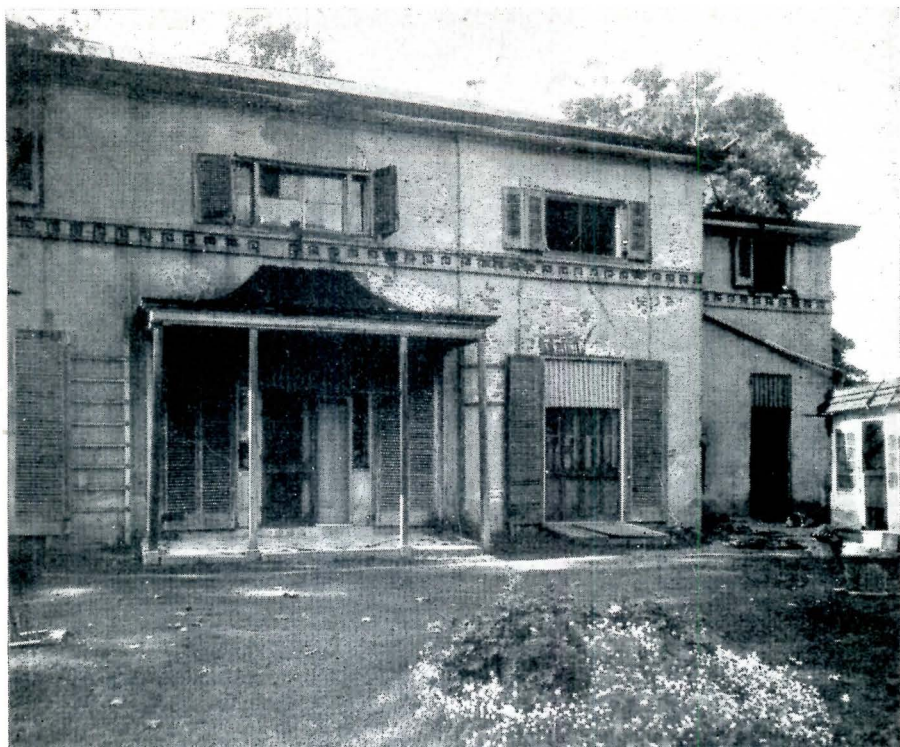
Le Corbusier has been smitten by the machine and geometry. He loves the order and smoothness of a clock or automobile. Technology and science must be followed in a city pattern; then, the city would





REINFORCEMENT

*Photographic study by Inland Steel Company*



*Do you know this building?*

*Photography by Frances Benjamin Johnston, Hon. A. I. A.*

NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE  
SWANWICK MANOR (1825)

employ the materials of our age and become efficient. The past he extolls, but only because there he finds examples of the severity he loves. The autocratic methods of *le grand roi* are not emulated: it is the geometry of planning which stirs. A reverence for the past, yet a view towards a future plan!

The city and its contributions to culture intoxicate Le Corbusier. He worships the straight line, whether it be the longitudinal avenue or the vertical skyscraper. The pattern of modern cities which have lost their civilization by intense overcrowding must be changed: the new towering structures must be bathed in open green. With the admiration of metropolitan life there goes a glorification of commerce. It is no wonder that a central role in his plan for a "contemporary city" is played by 24 tall business buildings, 60 stories in height, in which, figuratively like Wren's plan for the reconstruction of London, "all lines radiate from the Stock Exchange." The "*cit  d'affaires*," however, does not mean usurpation of the "*joies essentielles*," for as in his plans for Montevideo and Rio in South America, and Algiers in North Africa, Le Corbusier provides from 90% to 95% of the land free. A pedestrian

network is given principal importance in a goal of efficiency and "*une ville verte*."

"A man who lives in a single house is a slave," says Le Corbusier. A gradual change in thought has yielded a minor concession in the provision of single-family homes. People enjoy the collective life, and naturally the solution of a city's problems must be imbued with the concept of cooperation. The "human scale," sunlight, and the beauty of trees are apparent to Le Corbusier, and therefore around each apartment there abound park and recreation areas.



From such backgrounds we might view the difference of philosophy in the following categories: concept of city; living, leisure, and labor; economics and government.

Aristotle had a "feeling that limitation of size was necessary for the natural association of people," what John Dewey termed the "neighborly community." In his "Utopia," More set up neighborhood units and 54 cities, 20 miles apart. Cooperative colonies containing 500 to 2,000 population were the limits of Robert Owen. Ebenezer Howard's garden city

had a quota of 32,000 "for the full measure of social life." Many have assumed that 2,000 to 5,000 people should serve as the nucleus of a neighborhood, with the elementary school as geographical and social center. There has been this perpetual feeling that size of population must be limited if natural social interaction is to be maintained.

To Wright, urban concentration means decay and the end of democracy. He believes that in the past civilizations have perished because of undue centralization. He sees an accelerated abandonment of "tyrannical" steel and concrete centers because man "prefers horizontality" to the "unAmerican" skyscraper city created by "herd instincts."

Le Corbusier, however, recognizes that cities are nerve centers, and that civilization depends on the city; therefore, the task is to make the city livable. He feels that a "collective enthusiasm" animates man. Moreover, only through cooperative ventures can there be achievement in architecture and city building. To Le Corbusier, the question of rural living is essentially the same as city: "commodity, comfort, hygiene."

Wright's scheme of one family

per acre does not appear to be based on a "social" unit, although the research on what is too big and what is too small is negligible. The only restriction on size emanates from the intuition that "Bigness" is overcrowding and overbuilding with an attendant loss in cultural and social intercourse. The dream of Howard, however, was not to afford an isolated and self-sufficient life, as is "Broadacre City."

Wright's intuition that the city is crumbling is not fact. There is a tendency to peripheral movement, but urban concentrations are paralleling the dispersions on the outskirts of metropolitan districts. What he calls "unAmerican" and the "herd instinct" are better defined perhaps as the "communal sense." There is furthermore no historical evidence to prove his bold thesis that centralization destroyed civilizations in the past. What scientific facts do we possess in regard to mental and spiritual decay? For example, how much is known medically about neuroses of past societies?

Wright's cult of agriculture as the salvation for "an ugly civilization" is the exaggerated escape which David Lilienthal abhorred, for machines can be used for "humanizing man's environment" if

people with a common purpose would join in the control of technology. Polemics against machines ought to be aimed at *Homo sapiens*.

Le Corbusier does not feel that three million people in a "*cité-jardin verticale*" is too dense when one considers the open space surrounding residence and business. His city doesn't contain tall buildings which tyrannize. They are not air and light destroyers. Esthetically, towers in a traditional street layout contain no factors giving "relief from unrelenting rectangularity of forms." When set in natural landscape, and by a proper disposition of related skyscrapers, as in many European projects, an "exciting comparison" can be created. Perhaps Le Corbusier's zeal for a "water-tight formula" and for a grandiose skyline carried him away. Yet, until further study of "size" and its relation to society, there can be no definitive conclusions.

Although the city might overreach itself in magnitude, wherein the political and social community begins to tremble, neither logic nor a sense of history can lead one to conclude that when this point is touched the city must be abolished. Le Corbusier admits that the "city

is crumbling," that the centers are in "mortal sickness," but he doesn't suggest elimination. In his hedonism, he conceives of "the world's workshop" as retaining the "joy" forces and casting out the factors of "despair."

Le Corbusier has high regard for agrarian reform, but as a regional problem. "Civic power" demands concentration and not dispersion. His plans call for "family farms" and "cooperative" farm villages with social and administrative centers in harmony with industrial location.

Wright seeks the house which interprets human activities and is synchronized with an acre of land. There is a surprising concession, however: for the "urbanized," there is provision for some skyscraper apartments, but these are to be "owned" and ultimately absorbed. The theory is that inured urbanites don't know how to live with nature but somehow will learn!

Wright sees no hope in present housing policies which mitigate and prolong "spiritual poverty." In his revolt against the landlord, he concludes that man must be given a \$500 home, \$150 automobile, and \$40 garage. Since taste shall be educated, there will be no bad

designs. Despite predilections to "chicken - in - every - pot" schemes, Wright does insist that so-called "average" houses must be eliminated, and each person, regardless of income level, must live in the privacy and adequacy of his well-designed home.

In his desire for individuality, Wright has abandoned advances in public and group housing. His position would sustain the contention of Chancellor Bismarck, who in the nineteenth century championed labor and social reforms as stra-

tegic weapons to appease the workers and stave off a growing Socialist movement. Public Housing, however, must be viewed as a democratic process which, against the curtain of our past, is tantamount to a mild revolution. Wright's concern with architecture in public housing in America by-passes the progress in living and open-space accommodations for low-income groups. He completely ignores the social and economic gains to those housed as well as to the community.

## A.I.A. Arbitration Clause Upheld in Court

THE PROFESSION has long been convinced that in its Standard A.I.A. General Conditions it possessed a sound document. The feeling of confidence has been so widely shared among others in the building industry that few if any have chosen to test provisions of the document in court.

The case of J. Lansing Finlay vs. Gerald Fitzgerald, in the Appellate Division of the New York Supreme Court, has given us a test with regard to Article 40, Arbitration. The Court is of the opinion that Article 40 in a contract means what it says. The Memorandum of Decision follows:

The petitioner, Gerald Fitzgerald, has moved this Court to compel arbitration of certain disputes arising under a contract with J. Lansing Finlay for the construction of a building.

The contract was entered into between the parties on September 11, 1945, and by its terms the said J. Lansing Finlay was to construct the building in question for Gerald Fitzgerald at a cost of not more than \$130,000. As the building progressed monthly statements were submitted by the contractor to the owner and were paid without any certificate from the architect and this practice continued until the sum of \$130,000 had been paid. Statements rendered on September 10, 1946, October

1, 1946, and March 21, 1947, were not paid and the total amount claimed by the contractor, including additions and extras, amounts to \$152,214.28, leaving a claimed balance due of \$24,214.28. The contractor claims that the last work under the contract was done in December 1946, and that the contract was then completed.

The last three statements were rendered to Fitzgerald's office manager as had been the practice with the previous statements.

Following certain conferences between the parties to the contract or their representatives, the contractor on or about March 26, 1947, filed a mechanic's lien in the Schenectady County Clerk's Office in the amount of \$24,214.28, and thereafter commenced an action in the Supreme Court on or about April 1, 1947, to foreclose the lien. It is claimed in this action that the cost of the building together with additional work and materials were of the reasonable value of \$154,543.81.

On May 1, 1947, Fitzgerald demanded arbitration of the dispute arising under the contract

and on May 19, 1947, served notice upon Finlay designating his arbitrator.

It is contended by the contractor that the matters in dispute are not subject to arbitration under the terms and conditions of the contract and that if the same were matters intended to be arbitrated that the owner had waived his right to arbitration by reason of his failure to make proper and timely demand.

It appears to me that it was the intention of the parties to this contract to arbitrate disputes arising thereunder including the manner of construction and claims arising under said contract for additional work and materials. And it further appears to me that the owner did nothing which would indicate his intention to waive this right to arbitrate disputes arising under the contract.

Accordingly plaintiff's motion directing arbitration is granted and an order may be submitted.

WILLARD F. BEST,  
Justice of Supreme Court  
[New York State]

Dated: September 2, 1947.

## Calendar

*April 12-13:* Institute on hospital dietary departments, scheduled by the American Hospital Association, Kansas City, Mo.

*April 19-23:* Institute on hospital dietary departments, scheduled by the American Hospital

Association, Buck Hill Falls, Pa.

*April 26-30:* Institute on Hospital Housekeeping, conducted by the American Hospital Association, Drake Hotel, Chicago.

*May 24-28:* Institute for Hospital Engineers, conducted by the

know nothing about painting or sculpture. One may even be tone-deaf and not interested in music, but everyone lives in a house and goes to churches and public buildings.

These things are architecture and they are the familiar everyday experience of everyone. I can imagine no more interesting or even exciting study for children than to learn about the various habitations of man, which could be so easily illustrated by slides. This would mean real historical knowledge. I sincerely hope this will be taken up seriously by school authorities.

Speaking of schools, I have never felt very sure of the value of our architectural schools. When Ware started the M.I.T. school he was a noted practising architect and as such could give valuable training. Now many of the instructors, and even some of the heads of our schools, are not practising architects. To my mind the chief and almost the only good point in the *École des Beaux-Arts* was the training given by the practising architects who taught and criticised.

I happen to have had a long experience with my fellow architects all over the country, and the best men have invariably been men who had the most thorough all-around education. Some of our very best men never had training in an architectural school. Bertram Goodhue, who stands out preeminently as a great artist, as well as a great architect, never had it. He was

trained in offices and got his fundamental training in England.

On the other hand, men like McKim, who got their training in the *École* in Paris, did their best work when they forgot the *Beaux-Arts* training. McKim did the Boston Public Library when still under the influence of the *École*. It is a preconceived exterior, fine in its way, but falsified to fit the necessary plan and fenestration of the interior. The Morgan Library was the fruit of his maturity when he was freed of the Paris influence.

I have a feeling that a broad general education, a good prep school and then college is more important than an architectural school. It is well, perhaps, to have both, but if one must choose between the school and college, I should certainly choose college. I still feel that no training for practice is better than work in a good office. Certainly the school does not fit a man to enter at once on independent practice.

I myself graduated from Harvard with a *cum laude* in philosophy and with a good training in mathematics up to and through integral and differential calculus. All of the latter I so completely forgot that I can't even remember what they were about, yet that they were training in clear thinking I have no doubt. On graduation I went into my uncle's office and then for two years was an apprentice in a London office. I had Wednesday and Saturday off to spend on study, measuring and



drawing in the South Kensington Museum. Following this I had a year of travel, drawing and measuring abroad. I much doubt if I should have been as well fitted to practise if I had spent these four years in a school of architecture. I then returned to my uncle's office; at the end of a year he died, and I found myself in full charge of an office that had been going since 1862 and which, at the time I took over, had not a trace of any businesslike administration. I never felt any lack of school training in architecture, and it certainly would not have helped me in the reorganization of the office on a business basis.

To my mind, the one clear function of education is the training

of the mind to think clearly. In architecture, especially, one must be able to weigh and consider matters, so that the vital ones can be kept and the less essential eliminated. That is the problem that faces the architect in every kind of work. In my own case, my best training was during the fifteen years I worked in The A.I.A. on the Standard Documents and the reorganization of The Institute, and I profited chiefly by my association with Burt Fenner, Laurie Mauran and others of that group.

Education does not end on graduation from school or college; rather that is where education begins, and it continues as long as life lasts.

### YOUTH WILL BE SERVED

BY ARTHUR N. GIBB, F.A.I.A., Ithaca

**A** PARTNERSHIP for the practice of architecture, consisting of Sherwood Holt, A.I.A. and Arthur N. Gibb, F.A.I.A. will officially be established under the firm name of Holt & Gibb, Associated Architects. Mr. Holt, who is in my judgment the leader of the young architects of Ithaca, you will

note, heads the partnership, while I, who have been in practice since 1892, am well satisfied to take second place in the billing and also take a less strenuous part in the work, while also having the satisfaction of knowing that the interest of our clients are in thoroughly competent hands.

### THE WHITE HOUSE BALCONY

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

**I**F ONE CAN JUDGE FAIRLY from the photographs which have been in the public press showing the balcony which President Tru-

man is adding to the South Portico of the White House, it appears that the criticism against it has been more political than architec-

tural. I have always felt that the south facade of the White House was about perfect, yet at times I have had a feeling that the portico was slightly detached. This balcony which Mr. Delano is building

may overcome the feeling of detachment.

At all events, if the balcony turns out to detract from the facade, it will be no great matter to remove it.

## THE WHITE HOUSE BALCONY

BY CHARLES NAGEL, JR., Brooklyn, N. Y.

I HAVE READ with great interest the various communications on the question of whether a second-floor balcony in the south portico or the White House is advisable, and obviously the opportunities for amusing and acrimonious discussion are infinite.

To date, however, there seems to have been little effort on the part of any of the experts to consider the President's request as anything more than an unreasonable whim.

As the young son of one of President's Taft's "official family," I was privileged to become more familiar with the White House than I would have been able to ordinarily, and I remember well the almost miraculous way in which the White House, not a large building, was able to take care of large crowds on the days of the great Presidential functions. By the same token the state apartments, though not oppressively large, are formally furnished and not well adapted to the everyday life of an average American family. Also there are many times each week when the main floor of the

house is open for inspection from citizen visitors—a privilege which is taken advantage of to the full.

Therefore it must be on the second floor that the President and his family rely for any personal and private life which the President's official position permits. Does it then seem unreasonable for Mr. Truman to want a vantage point from which he can in relative privacy enjoy sun, air and one of the finest prospects in our capital city?

In a day when functionalism is so much to the fore, a second-floor balcony, accessible to the President's study and bedroom, would seem no more than a correction of an obvious oversight in the original program or in its execution.

With such models as Jefferson's porticoes in the University of Virginia as a guide in the vernacular, with the taste and mastery of traditional forms of William Adams Delano, and with the edict of "form follows function" firmly in the mind, surely an acceptable version of that most American institution, the family porch, can be produced that will be a delight not

only to Mr. Truman and his family but to all his successors.

If I were to be troubled by the balcony shown on page 68 in the February number of the JOURNAL, it would be by a feeling that the problem of introducing a balcony had been tackled with a certain feeling of apology. Let us by all means have the balcony and let us

have it expressed frankly and charmingly as Jefferson did it at Charlottesville.

But is it really necessary ever to have that unfortunate awning that cuts right across the simple rusticated base of the portico? Or if it is, surely it needn't appear in official photographs.

### A WAY TO SAVE POSTAGE

BY P. J. HEROLD, San Francisco

**T**HOUGH I have retired from active practice many years ago, I still receive many letters and circulars advertising building products. Although I have asked literally hundreds of firms to re-

move my name from the mailing list, the flow continues. Requests to omit my address from public lists of registered architects seems unavailing. Can anything be done to save this useless waste?

### MUSINGS OF AN OLD-TIMER

BY HOBART A. WALKER, F.A.I.A., Baltimore

**I** WAS very much interested in the letter from Victor A. Matteson in the February JOURNAL, "Is it Architecture?" I have been hoping that some architect would have temerity enough to express himself honestly about the present trend of ultra-modernism in architecture as well as in all of the arts, and Mr. Matteson has eloquently voiced the opinion of many of us, both young and old, who have given much thought to this subject.

If I add a few of my ideas, it will naturally be said, "Oh, he is an old-timer and cannot bear to accept any sort of progress." We

cannot and do not want to arrest progress, but we must be sure that it is progress. Many years ago the slogan of young architects was "Progress before precedent," and they still adhere to it but unfortunately have added to it "beauty be damned!"

Lest it may be imagined that I am in my dotage, I would say that I have watched with great interest the gradual progress of architecture toward honesty and simplicity. We all admit that many of the large buildings erected toward the close of the last century were very bad because the designing of tall

commercial buildings was a new art made necessary by skeleton construction.

The first step toward simplicity, I think, was made by Burnham & Root in the design of the Monadnock Building, Chicago, which attracted great attention at the time, and some ridicule, but I think it had a profound effect on our architectural thinking.

Stanford White has been credited with the axiom, "Take care of the sight line and the skyline, and the rest of the building will take care of itself." That is sound advice and, in general, has been accepted until the arrival of "functionalism," which means farewell to architecture and welcome to engineering. If architects are willing to accept this thesis, it means the passing of a great and honorable profession.

I hope we have not seen the last of such eminent American architects as are so graciously mentioned in the fine letter from Sir Ian

MacAlister (Feb. JOURNAL). My own opinion is that the pendulum is swinging too far and must retrace its arc until it stops for a while at "Sanity" on the dial. Such buildings as the Empire State and Woolworth buildings are surely modern and yet are a delight to behold. Let us not be content with erecting buildings of blocks, without beauty or character. I would respectfully suggest that architects would do well to ponder these quotations: Longfellow said, "Ah, to build, to build, that is the noblest art of all the arts"; and Ruskin said, "When we build let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight or for present use alone. Let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when these stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, 'See, this our fathers did for us.'"

## Books & Bulletins

IF YOU'RE THINKING OF BUILDING. By Brown Rolston. 144 pp. 6" x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". New York: 1947: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

An A.I.A. architect warns the prospective client of pitfalls and tells how to avoid them. He has little patience with the extremes of modernism.

HOUSES FOR FAMILY LIVING. By Frederick Gutheim. 52 pp. 8" x 8". New York: 1948: The Woman's Foundation, Inc. 35c.

A frank appraisal of our past efforts to design for family life, with suggestions as to the many factors which must be taken into account in today's and tomorrow's

designing. The best part of the book is its analysis of how the family, from youth to old age, changes in its needs and desires.

**A GUIDE FOR PLANNING FACILITIES FOR ATHLETICS, RECREATION, PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION.** By participants in National Facilities Conference, December, 1946. 130 pp. 8½" x 11". Chicago: 1947: The Athletic Institute, 209 S. State St. \$1.50.

**THE LAST LATH.** By Alan Dunn. 96 pp. 8" x 10". New York: 1947: F. W. Dodge Corporation. \$2.50.

Bringing together the best of the amusing cartoons that have been appearing in the front of the *Architectural Record* during the last ten years.

**THE BUILDING OF BATH: 47-1947.** An Architectural and Social Study. By Bryan Little. 176 pp. 5½" x 8½". London: 1947: Collins (14 St. James's Place) 15s net.

The many illustrations are chiefly from photographs taken since the raids of 1942, with some interior details never before photographed.

**THE NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT PLAN: ITS SPREAD AND ACCEPTANCE.** Compiled by James Dahir. 96 pp. 6" x 9". New York: 1947: Russell Sage Foundation. \$1.

**SIMPLIFIED ENGINEERING FOR ARCHITECTS AND BUILDERS.** By Harry Parker. 256 pp. 5" x 7¾". New York: 1947: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. \$3.

Second edition of a work that first appeared in 1938. Professor Parker, of the University of Pennsylvania, is the man who has revised and brought up-to-date the *Kidder Handbook*.

**AN OLD NEW ENGLAND VILLAGE.** By Charles D. Hubbard. 120 pp. 9¼" x 12¼". Portland, Maine: 1947: Falmouth Publishing House. \$3.50.

A 70-year-old pen-and-ink master not only writes a book that brings back early New England life, not only illustrates it, but also hand-letters every page of text.

**IES LIGHTING HANDBOOK.** 646 pp. 5¾" x 9" plus 187 pp. mfgs.' reference data. New York: 1947: Illuminating Engineering Society. \$7.50.

A joint effort of the Society's editorial staff and over 100 contributing specialists to bring together basic technical information and application techniques.

**CONTEMPORARY COLOR GUIDE.** By Elizabeth Burris-Meyer. 40 pp. and 30 plates in color, 6¾" x 9". New York: 1947: William Helburn, Inc. \$5.95.

The plates suggest harmonious color combinations (with Munsell system designations) for rooms of

various purpose, their floors, walls, woodwork, drapery, upholstery and accessories.

**DATA BOOK FOR CIVIL ENGINEERS:** Vol. 3 Field Practice. By Elwyn E. Seelye. 320 pp. 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8". New York: 1947: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. \$4.50.

**AMERICAN SCULPTOR SERIES:** 1—Wheeler Williams; 2—Paul Manship; 3—Anna Hyatt Huntington; 4—Daniel Chester French. Each volume 64 pp. 5" x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". New York: 1947: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., under the auspices of The National Sculpture Society. \$1.50 each vol.

Each volume, a credo of the sculptor, followed by illustrations of his or her more important works.

**SIMPLIFIED PERSPECTIVE.** By William Wirt Turner. 246 pp. 6" x 9". New York: 1947: The Ronald Press Co. \$5.

A book for the student, leading him step by step through the basic principles and their application, by the head of the Department of Engineering Drawing, University of Notre Dame.

**THEORY OF LIMIT DESIGN.** By John A. Van Den Broek. 152 pp. 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". New York: 1948: John Wiley & Sons. \$3.50.

Bringing the theory of engineer-

ing from its former dependence on elastic stress analysis, supplementing the theory of equilibrium, to its later knowledge of ductile or semi-ductile stress distribution, with the shift of emphasis from permissible safe stresses to permissible safe deformations.

**NEIGHBORHOODS BUILT FOR RENTAL HOUSING.** Land Planning Bulletin No. 4. By Federal Housing Administration. 24 pp. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Washington: 1947: U. S. Government Printing Office. 15c.

**HOUSING OF NEGRO VETERANS.** An analysis by the Racial Relations Service and the Housing Data Staff, both of HHFA. 51 pp. 8" x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Washington, D. C.: 1948: Housing and Home Finance Agency.

A valuable compilation of information relating to the housing of minority groups—the lack of which data has impeded our efforts at solution.

**ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE.** By Clinton H. Cowgill, A.I.A. and Ben John Small, A.I.A. 403 pp. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". New York: 1947: Reinhold Publishing Corp. \$12.

A welcome supplement to The Institute's "Handbook of Architectural Practice," shedding light on the business, legal and other phases of the practitioner's proper activities.

## The Editor's Asides

CHARLES E. PETERSON, of St. Louis, has written an interesting article on "Early American Prefabrication" for the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, recently available in a reprint. It goes back to Sir Martin Frobisher's project, in 1578, which tried unsuccessfully to bring over for a gold mining crew in Baffin Land, a knock-down house of wood. It ends with the efforts of a firm of lumber dealers, of Boston and New York, to produce a house of interchangeable parts for the Union Army at the outset of the Civil War.

BETTER CONSIDER SERIOUSLY the possibility of establishing your own vegetable garden this summer. The Department of Agriculture points out that we can substitute home-grown and home-preserved foods for part of our usual purchases of foods made from, or produced with, grain. That would relieve some of the pressure on the market for grain, the principal food needed for relief abroad. During the war years "Victory Gardens" brought in over 18 million gardens to supplement our food supply. That aid is now needed—and more.

WALTER T. ROLFE, F.A.I.A., is continually surprising his friends by his versatility. Top-flight educator, he recently turned from his professorship to active practice (Golemon & Rolfe) and has there rivaled the beaver in his energetic labors. Not occupied more than 23 out of the 24 hours each day, he took to water color, and now the American Water Color Society of New York has accepted one of his efforts to hang at the National Academy Galleries in the Society's 81st Annual Exhibition. We may hear of his carving ship models inside of a bottle, next.

TALBOT HAMLIN has an article in the March *Magazine of Art* which will interest many architects, "Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 1764-1820."

I TRUST that my remarks last month about the dwelling basement are not being misinterpreted as indicating an opinion for or against the basement by Housing and Home Finance Agency. Of course, the HHFA takes no such stand. In two issues of the Agency's *Technical Bulletin*, November 1947 and January 1948, its

technical staff points out very constructively that, where basements are omitted, there arise certain new problems of insulation, deterioration and potential structural failure, which should have the architect's best thought. The *Bulletins* mentioned are replete with detailed drawings and illustrations based on research and experience.

SWEDISH WOODEN ARCHITECTURE, in a collection of 55 photographs, is now on exhibition at the Baltimore Museum of Art. Later it will be shown at the Minneapolis Art Institute, about May 1. The exhibition will be available to chapters, schools or museums for the cost of transportation from the last place of showing. The photographs are selected from 350 taken or acquired in Sweden by John H. Scarff, F.A.I.A., Hyde, Maryland. Interested organizations should communicate with Mr. Scarff.

HORACE PEASLEE'S experience with his announcement of simplified specification writing is somewhat like that of the Department of Agriculture described in the February *Reader's Digest*. A Congressman was chiding the Department for its multitude of free publications—"They print every last

thing about nature but the love life of the frog." Requests began to flow in to the Department for a copy of "The Love Life of the Frog." Repeated announcements, and finally the voice of the Secretary himself on the air, insisted that the Department had published no such work and had no intention of ever publishing such a work. After the broadcast there were more than a thousand requests in the mail.

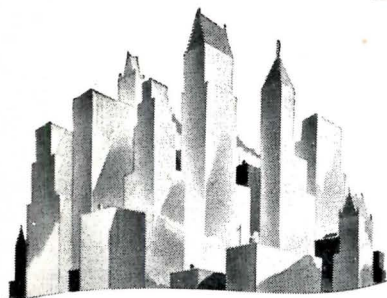
Mr. Peaslee told of his system of writing specifications in the November 1945 *JOURNAL*. In the March 1946 *JOURNAL*, replying to a flood of questions, he restated the simple principle involved and said he had told the whole story in the first article—there wasn't any more. And still the letters flowed in—"What is the system?" Again, in the September 1947 *BULLETIN OF THE A. I. A.*, he told his story, and reprints of these pages spread the information to a wider audience. And the flow of inquiries continues.

Mr. Peaslee would like very much to be rid of the job of answering letters, so that he could resume his practice of architecture. The story is in print, as specified above, and there is no more to be said. Period. Exclamation point.



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# Uncle Bill stopped shaving . . . . when Liza started the laundry



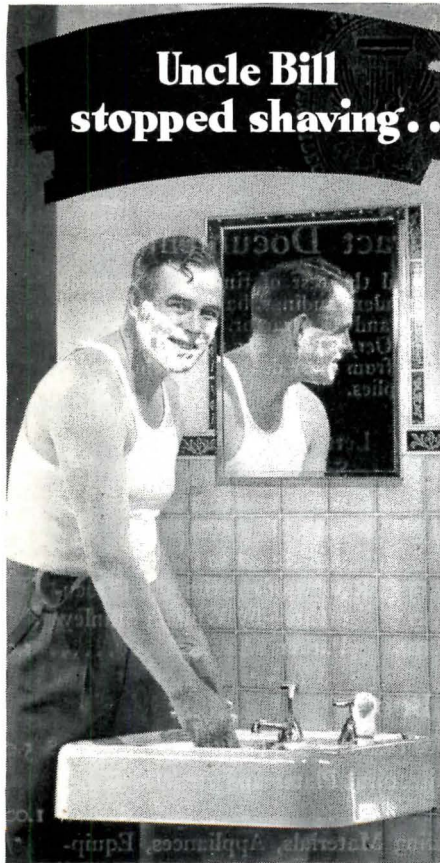
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And imagine the family's embarrassment half an hour later, when Uncle Bill came down to a belated breakfast, and they had to tell him that there never was any water on the second floor when a basement tap was on!

After all it wasn't Liza's fault, nor the family's either. You really have to blame the fellow who put in too-small piping in the first place. He was trying to "get by" with pipe--and meter, too--not big enough to serve the regular water outlets, plus the extra ones the family had installed later.

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