

Journal of The American Institute of
ARCHITECTS



PIERRE L'ENFANT

May, 1948

To an Art Commission—Hugh Ferriss

Capital Planning—Edmunds and Peaslee

The Architect and Safety—S. R. Bishop

Can Building Codes be Short?—Emil Szendy

The End of a Chapter—Alexander E. Hoyle

Some Detroit Personalities—E. B. Morris

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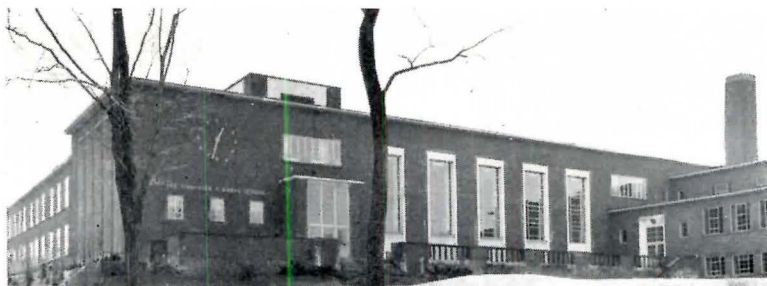
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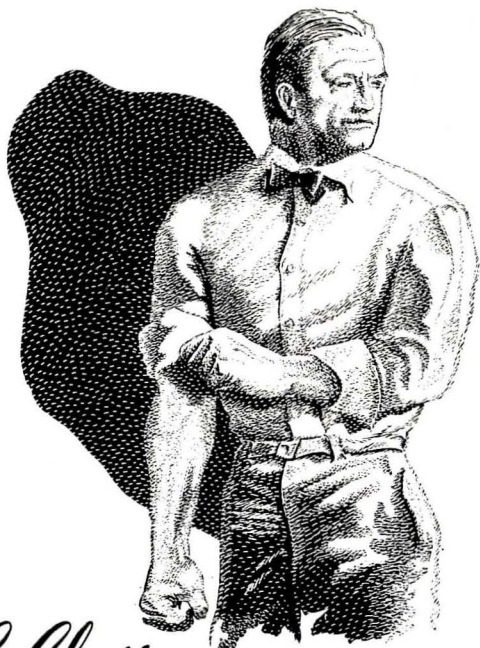


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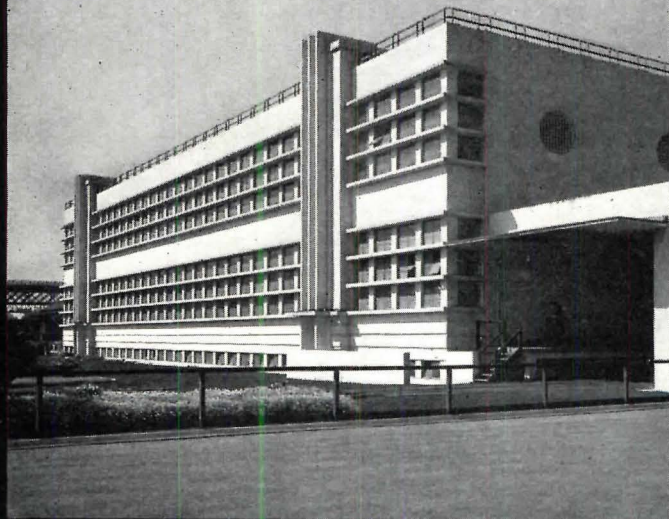
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Words to an Art Commission

By *Hugh Ferriss*

Part of an address on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary Dinner given to the Art Commission of New York City by the New York Municipal Art Society and other organizations on February 26th. Mr. Ferriss' assigned topic was "The Art Commission Today and Tomorrow." He is chairman of the Art Commission's Committee on Architecture.—Editor.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I am happy to submit to you three or four impressions which have crossed the mind of a student of architecture during the past few months.

I must confess that a year ago I had no idea how interesting the Commission's work is or *how much there is of it!*

I did not even know that it occupies the whole top floor of City Hall—right at the heart of things, yet elevated above (by a stone stairway that seems to wind up and up forever).

I did not appreciate the service rendered by the Commission's so-called "lay members"—actually, men of great experience who add a world of sense to whatever sensibilities the "professional members" may have and keep us from succumbing to artistic craze.

The only thing I did know about

was the deep personal devotion that everyone feels for the head of the Commission, Mr. William Adams Delano.

If you have in mind a map of Greater New York, we can tell you where to place 221 red-headed pins. They mark the location of proposed designs all of which we studied during 1947.

Included were over 40 plans for parks, parkways and playgrounds; over 40 for sculptured groups, tablets and war memorials; a number of portraits of former mayors; over 30 plans for libraries, museums and schools, a courthouse, a jail; a dozen plans for hospitals and health centers; half-a-dozen for recreation centers; a huge wholesale market; a large ferry terminal; a dozen bridges; the Battery underpass; two outstanding buildings for the Battery-Brooklyn tunnel; and Heaven knows how many

minor utility buildings, alterations and signs on piers. The estimated cost of all these projects is 224 million dollars.

Thus, the first impression which I submit is that the Art Commission is busy today and expects to be busy tomorrow.

I should leave discussion of the allied arts to my confrères, Miss Meière, Mr. Williams and Mr. Ley, but I must express my regret that so few of the current architectural plans call for any mural painting and sculpture.

If, as has been claimed, "Architecture is the mother of all the arts," it is too bad that in our day she has become so barren.

I imagine that her frigid mood will pass, and before long she will again be available for seductions. Indeed, if I read her cold palm aright, two tall handsome gentlemen are just around the corner.

I say this partly because of what architects are now thinking. It is true that there has been little mural painting and sculpture in eighteen years; in that time many architects have entered practice who may literally not have seen good painting and sculpture in the making. It is also true that many architects are preoccupied with new problems strictly architectural. But

sheer walls and "open planning" call out for enrichments judiciously placed; many architects will be only too glad to include them when financially possible; and I have seen blueprints not yet submitted to Commissions where the inclusion is specified.

Aside from what architects think about it, there is the way we all feel about it. Houses may be "machines to live in" but they are not to be lived in by machines. We are not cold or puritanical by *instinct*. And obviously, the impulse to decorate what we use and occupy has been with us since the caves. That impulse cannot be denied forever.

My impression here is not only that our city would be vastly enriched by new murals and sculpture, but that the Art Commission might do something about it—indeed, I believe that ways and means are being discussed.



And now to speak of architecture. As you know, the laws permit the Art Commission to say of any proposed design, "Accepted," or "Rejected," and that's that, but soon I found that our predecessors had handed down a more generous and constructive tradition. In the

numerous cases where a design is not very bad and not very good, we may converse with the designer with a view to *improving* his design. These conversations are a large part of our work.

Thus, the Commission is not a routine bureau only, nor a cold and remote judge only, nor a guardian of monuments of the past only. It may act as an influence for a better trend in civic designs.

Ah, but we will scarcely all agree on just what constitutes a "better trend!"

Since we are weary of the picture of two perfectly distinct schools of architects, modern and traditional, may I, for variation, picture all architects in active practice as making up a procession which, as a whole, is moving along with the times. It's just a question of how fast you like to walk! Some like to be up front with the band. Others like to bring up what I might call a dignified rear. But rear or front, aren't they all inevitably walking along?

At this point, some impertinent person might ask, "How fast does an art commission like to walk?"

My personal views on the question are of no interest; yet the Commission often, but not always, accepts the recommendations of its

Architectural Committee, whose chairman will be glad to confess that he is a traditionalist and a conservative—if you let him define his terms!

I believe that the most ancient tradition of architecture—one which we should conserve at all costs—is that a building should be both honest and beautiful. By "honest" I mean that its materials, its method of construction, and its intended use should be clearly stated in its design.

I may be reverting to childhood, but I like to recall the picture of the Parthenon that my father gave to me when I was a boy. It seemed to be made of stone, and I liked to imagine that when I grew up and went to Athens, I would be able, as Athenians were able thousands of years ago, to touch the solid stones. It seemed to be supported by columns. Some were still standing, and I liked to think that if you laid an entablature across them today, they would still be able to hold it up. It seemed to be for use as a temple—no more, or less—and so it was.

I may be an ancestor-worshipper, but I admire the manner in which our forbears put up buildings in New England and elsewhere which also plainly showed the stuff of

ever it be, and aim for beauty with, rather than despite, it. Indeed, if they do not do so, leadership will pass to other hands.

A new technology does mean that forms based upon a superseded technology are no longer valid as they once undoubtedly were. It does mean that architecture is forced to again become a creative art.

Creation on any broad front *takes time*. The masonry architecture of temples and palaces has had thousands of years in which to mature. An architecture in new materials and techniques for office buildings, industrial plants, broadcasting stations, airports and large-scale town-planning has had only a few years. I cannot agree with the gentlemen of the old school who bend over a cradle and say, "She does not seduce me!" Let them wait a few years—eighteen, or at least fifteen!

The impression I beg to submit in this connection is that it devolves

upon an art commission: (1) to appreciate the current intention to revive the old tradition of honesty in design; (2) to encourage every sincere effort to make these honest buildings beautiful; and (3) to demand marked success along this creative line before approving submissions.

In closing, it occurs to me, that while we may and do heartily disagree as to "modern architecture," we can, like the quarreling Irish couple, stand together when real danger threatens. This age is invariably called "the age of Science"—never "the age of Art"; furthermore, it is now the age of that kind of warfare made possible by science. For all I know, some men are consciously or subconsciously bent or bound to design for destruction, but architecture has never been called a destructive art. The allied artists, too, find their theme in creation, not destruction.

All Aboard for Salt Lake City

BY THE TIME this copy of the JOURNAL reaches you, all corporate members of The Institute should have received a letter from Secretary Ditchy enclosing a

folder prepared by United States Travel Agency. Its purpose is to answer all questions about how we get to Salt Lake City and what we can see on the way to and from

MAY, 1948

there. Some of the post-Convention paths may seem to lead in the opposite direction, but that is not without purpose; eventually they will bring you home richer in experience and memories.

It is unnecessary here to repeat the details of Optional Tours "A" and "B"—the Travel Agency's folder has spread them before you, giving itineraries, costs, schedules and what you would see. One fact is of prime importance: Those intending to see more of the West than is possible on a straight journey to and from the Convention, and wishing to join either the Special Train leaving Chicago or one of the Supplementary Tours after the Salt Lake City sessions, or both, should remember that *May 20 is a deadline for decision. Before that date you should have notified the United States Travel Agency of your wishes and made a \$25 deposit per person to secure your reservations. The final payment in full is due May 20.*

Whatever the means by which you get to Salt Lake City, the Optional Tours following the Convention offer unusual opportunities for getting better acquainted with your fellow architects as well as seeing some of this country's grandest scenery.

For those in the East the Convention Special from Chicago to the Convention offers still another opportunity of foregathering with their peers. This train leaves Chicago on Sunday, June 20, at 10:30 A.M. Connections from Boston, New York, Baltimore, Washington, Atlanta and Cincinnati are given in the folder. If you should find, at the last moment, that you cannot go, all is not lost; refunds are made in accordance with carrier regulations. But get that reservation in now. Last-minute joiners take last-minute accommodations—if any.

If Chicago is not a convenient rallying point for you, and you are starting from Seattle, for instance, the Convention Special Train is not for you, but the post-Convention Tours most assuredly are. If, however, you are starting from Miami, Birmingham or anywhere in the East, your complete transportation can be arranged by the Agency to join the main trek of the Easterners at Chicago. Or if you live west of Chicago but east of Salt Lake City, you can arrange to join the Special en route—at Omaha, for example; and you can leave either of the special Optional Tours at a point on the return that would be most convenient for you.

The point is, decide what you want to do now, and the Agency stands ready to arrange tickets and reservations as may be most convenient for you.

In the March BULLETIN there appeared details of hotel accommodations in Salt Lake City and the procedure of making reservations, which is a matter for individual action.

Those who know the Convention city suggest summer clothing with the addition of a topcoat. Perhaps a soft hat would be more convenient than a straw hat. Sun glasses are fairly sure to be needed, and the ladies would do well to have comfortable walking shoes—men always do. It is hardly necessary to mention the fact that we shall be in a color photographers' paradise.

The End of a Chapter

By Alexander E. Hoyle

THE BOSTON SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS was founded in 1867 by a small group of men who desired, as they said, "to unite in fellowship the Architects of Boston." Three years later the Society became a Chapter of The American Institute of Architects, and has functioned in this dual capacity ever since. It has had a long and illustrious history, adorned with the names and devoted service of eminent men; through the years it has acquired certain civic responsibilities, as well as gifts and endowments, which it must continue to administer.

In 1941 the Massachusetts State Association of Architects was

formed, and in a short time acquired a larger membership than the Chapter. When The Institute began to press its unification program upon the two groups here, considerable opposition developed, and a series of committees studied the problem without finding any formula acceptable to all concerned. The conditions in this territory—at that time including Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont—were peculiar, in that a very large proportion of the architects live and practise in Metropolitan Boston; no series of chapters, united by a council, would meet the situation here. It also developed that there was con-

siderable dissatisfaction with the Boston Society of Architects as the A.I.A. Chapter, on the part of men both inside and outside the Boston area. We were interested, naturally, in supporting the A.I.A. unification program, but the chief argument for a change was the fact that, except for purely A.I.A. matters, all the business of the profession was done twice over in this territory—once by the State Association, and again by the Chapter, entailing a scandalous waste of time and effort.

In 1946 a new joint committee took up the problem again, and in October of that year devised the formula which has since been approved by all concerned, and is now in operation. This was a compromise, and entailed concessions by both sides. There were three essential points involved:

1. The Boston Society of Architects agreed to surrender its Institute charter to a new chapter, to be known as the Massachusetts Chapter, A.I.A. To this new Chapter all the corporate members in the territory would be at once assigned.
2. The State Association agreed to elect its president, vice president, secretary and treasurer from those of its members who

were also corporate members of The A.I.A.

3. Following such election, the Chapter agreed to elect as its officers the same persons who had already been elected by the State Association.

This is not complete unification according to the Institute pattern, but is a step ahead. It is our hope that all the members of the Chapter will become members of the State Association, which will do all the day-by-day work of the profession at the state level, leaving only purely Institute affairs for the Chapter; thus we shall avoid the waste of effort which was inevitable under the old set-up. Now the same men will be officers of both the State Association and the Chapter, and can coordinate the work of the two bodies. It is also our hope that some day the present arrangement may develop into the normal Institute pattern.

It was a great sacrifice for the members of the Boston Society of Architects to surrender the Institute charter which they had held so long; the Boston Chapter has been connected with the whole professional life of most of the men here, and recalled memories of time gone by and the giants of our youth.

The disappearance of its name from the Institute roster is still strange to us. Fortunately the Boston Society of Architects is to continue as a local society, independent of both the Chapter and the State Association, with no more debates on competitions or the reg-

istration law, but time to make architecture the first interest at its meetings. We hope that in this character these gatherings may be useful, mellow, and wholly calculated (as in 1876) to "unite in fellowship the Architects of Boston."

Shorter and Better Building Codes

By Emil J. Szendy

BUILDING CODE CONSULTANT FOR THE CITY OF CLEVELAND

In printing the following opinion on a subject that has long been, and still is, of acutely disturbing significance to the architects and to the whole building industry, it should be made clear that this is the expression of an individual opinion. The Institute through its own Committee on Building Codes, and through representation on many other committees in the building industry, is actively concerned with all efforts to improve building codes. Through the reports of such committees and through comparisons of various thinking on the subject of code preparation, we should eventually reach some approximation of a form of code writing that will best serve all of us.—Editor

THE eye-for-an-eye and tooth-for-a-tooth Code of Hammurabi has been mentioned frequently in recent times as a desirable building code, simple and effective, and free from clutter of technical provisions. In effect, it set forth the requirement that building construction be safe, and the penalty that the builder who did not build safely be punished in a manner corresponding in character and degree to the damage inflicted. If collapse of the house caused the death of the owner, the builder would be executed; if the son of

the owner was killed, the son of the builder would be executed; if the building collapsed, the builder would be required to rebuild at his own expense. It was an elemental performance code; the builder either performed, or else—.

Hammurabi is quoted because, in contrast, our building codes, whether performance type, specification type, or both, have become bulky, complicated, and unwieldy. The building code of the average city may comprise as much as 60% to 70% of the Municipal Code. Superficially examined this may ap-

pear to be a disproportionate amount of regulation for one industry, the building industry; in actuality the building regulations are much wider in scope and application than the term "building regulation" implies. They define the city itself not only by determining the manner in which its buildings may be built, but also by determining the manner in which buildings may be used.

The past few years have seen spirited demand for "streamlining" building codes so that the building industry would be unhampered and costs could be reduced. To some extent the building code — any building code—has become the whipping-boy standing for the building industry. While building codes have seldom kept pace with changes and improvements in the industry and are almost universally in need of revision, they are only *one* of the many causes of organic disturbance within the building industry. As usual, we have attempted to cure a national ill by formulating a slogan and prescribing a panacea: "What the country needs for the salvation of the building industry is a national 'performance type' code! Take out the specification requirements; substitute performance requirements; in-

corporate national standards by reference; and there you have it—a simple performance code of (we hope) fifty to one hundred pages."

Or, "Wipe out all technical provisions including the performance requirements; provide only administrative provisions; set up a Board to draft or adopt both performance and specification requirements as rules and regulations, or delegate authority to do so to the Building Commissioner; and there you have a truly simple code of say, ten to twelve pages."

Both approaches are, at least in part, utterly unrealistic. The second, "let-George-do-it" approach, blindly and blithely ignores the actual problem. The first approach is correct in theory but at present impossible of achievement and difficult to administer.

Only those not familiar with the problem believe that an out-and-out "performance type" code can be written today, and every recent attempt to write such a code has resulted in a compromise which is part performance and part specification. As one authority and national proponent of the performance basis said recently: the performance basis "is a desirable method but not yet possible of full development in the absence of some

standard methods of tests and of methods of determining the results of such tests."

Also, to the extent that codes regulate the use of specific materials and methods of construction, they become specification codes. The performance requirements may, in general terms, define required fire-resistance or other requisite performance, but only specification provisions can prescribe the limits of height or area, or permissible methods of application of metal lath, construction of brick walls, or pouring of concrete.

No recent complete code has been anything but a bulky document. The Cleveland Code, which, for ease of reference, combines performance and specification requirements in one Code, will comprise approximately 500 pages. The Building Officials Conference of America have attempted compression by dividing their code into two parts, viz.:

Part I, "The Basic Code, comprising a compilation of fundamental performance requirements for all types of construction and use-group classification of buildings and the means for their administration in the Department of Building Inspection."

Part II, "The Construction

Code, comprising the detailed rules and regulations to implement the functional, performance standards of the Basic Code, which though mandatory, will be constantly in flux and subject to amendment with new developments in the industry."

Part I, "The Basic Code," now being reviewed by industry, consists of 442 pages of single-spaced typewritten matter, and lists, as reference standards or requirements, 250 other documents.

Part II, "The Construction Code," is yet to be prepared.

In a statement prefatory to the Basic Code it is said that "In compiling the first Draft of the Basic Code it was decided to include sufficient mandatory and detailed specifications in order to make it a working instrument, pending completion of the Construction Code"—"When the Construction Code is an actuality, subsequent issues of the Basic Code will be largely condensed and reduced to fundamental principles only." Apparently BOCA has found, as has Cleveland and Cincinnati and New York, that an out-and-out performance code cannot be successfully written today.

As to bulk, it seems reasonable to assume that the mandatory pro-

visions of the BOCA Code will eventually comprise some 500 pages of printed matter.

What is the solution? Is it possible to write a short, enforceable Building Code, or are we fated to face more and more involvement and complexity?

Our Building Codes, like coral, have grown by accretion, and like coral, are full of holes and rough spots. Substitution of tables for involved phraseology helps some; elimination of superfluous legal terms makes the meaning more understandable; but elimination of a word here and there in the manner of a "short" specification is inadvisable for, after all, a building code is a legal document and completeness of statement cannot be sacrificed. Reduction of the Code to "performance requirements" results in a document unworkable without the appended mandatory rules and regulations; and the total bulk is still the same.

The "let-George-do-it" approach to brevity is almost a foolish concept of code preparation. Someone must write the performance requirements and the specific and specification requirements; and these are the ones which are usually controversial, not the method of

administration. The wrangles at public hearings are over the specific requirements; almost everyone can agree on general performance requirements. Most assuredly, buildings shall be safe, sanitary and constructed in the public interest, but what do those words mean when interpreted locally, or state-wide, or nationally?

If the building code is reduced to administrative provisions, promulgation of rules and regulations must be in conformity with some enabling act of the legislature. Under the democratic procedure, adoption of any mandatory rule or regulation normally requires initial promulgation followed by public hearings, which procedure closely follows the customary procedure in adoption of any legislation. It is a moot question whether any time is saved, effort spared, or confusion eliminated, especially in a municipality where an ordinance can be passed with equal rapidity, by adoption of mandatory rules and regulations in place of laws or ordinances. Also, rules or regulations which are not processed through public hearings, but are merely issued by the administrative authority, are vulnerable to attack as to legality. If rules and regulations are handled on a state-wide basis

and frequently revised, it is inevitable that much will be done by the regulating authority in the State Capitol without the knowledge or consent of affected interests in distant cities.

A major reduction in bulk can be made by eliminating those parts that deal with acceptable practice in construction and substituting reference standards for them. Conformity with those standards can then be accepted as *prima facie* evidence of good practice in construction. That is the practice being followed in the Cleveland Code; but for lack of standards that can be accepted without modification, it has not served to substantially reduce the bulk.

The adoption of standards by reference is a common procedure in writing building codes. Unfortunately, practically every so-called "standard" is suspect. For lack of unbiased, authoritative standards, much material of known bias must be utilized. Where such standards are incorporated with blind trust, a Code so evolved is likely to be unworkable, confusing, and worse. The building standards situation is almost chaotic, and even that which purports to be unbiased source material must be

checked and examined for bias, applicability, and even poor English.

The best and most reliable material for code preparation emanates from the Bureau of Standards, the Forest Products Laboratories, and from one or two other government agencies. At least from these sources, the information is not suspect. George N. Thompson and S. H. Ingberg of the NBS have done more for code improvement than any two other men in the country. The NBS and the FPL have been the two major founts of information in preparation of the Code for Cleveland.

The building code standards of the American Standards Association are, unfortunately, still in process of preparation. Where the NBS has been the controlling force in preparation, the codes are excellent; in other cases, where industry has had a strong voice, the codes are a compromise, and suspect. The ASA procedure is slow, cumbersome and not suited to the purpose. It is too much to expect that selfish interests will unselfishly serve the public interest.

At the present time Code preparation is passing through a phase where preparation of the legislation, with few exceptions, is in the hands of those men who later

administer the provisions. In effect, the legislative and judicial functions are combined, a combination commonly deemed inadvisable. This has come about through the lack of knowledge and apathy of those most directly concerned, the professional men who operate under building codes. While the application of building codes is taught in the architectural schools, little or nothing is taught about code theory or preparation.

What is being done today is only a small step forward in the development of an acceptable national code. There is, in fact, considerable doubt whether a written national code can or should be evolved. The preparation of a building code should be a continuing process, and even "performance" requirements should remain in a state of flux. In preparation of a building code one is impressed by the impermanent nature of provisions drafted only a few years ago, or even today. And, if we continue to evolve new methods of construction and new laws or rules to regulate them, the cost of printing, reading and compliance will bog down not only the administration of building codes but the building industry itself. There must be a solution which will get

back closer to the simplicity of Hammurabi.

Building codes no longer can be considered as static documents revised only once in twenty years; but providing local machinery for revision, or even personnel to make the revisions, is not enough. Periodic revisions must actually be made, and by personnel possessing a special skill and wide knowledge not commonly found in a political appointee. Also, the revisions should be made along lines acceptable to the professions, and to industry.

If we discard the static concept and substitute the more rational conception of preparation of building codes as a continuing process, it becomes apparent that some agency or agencies must be set up, more active and productive than those operating today, to establish acceptable standards and to revise such standards at frequent intervals. We need acceptable standards of "good practice in construction" more than we need building codes.

Building codes are a composite of necessary and unavoidable provisions, such as those governing administration, zoning, the conflagration hazard, public sanitation and

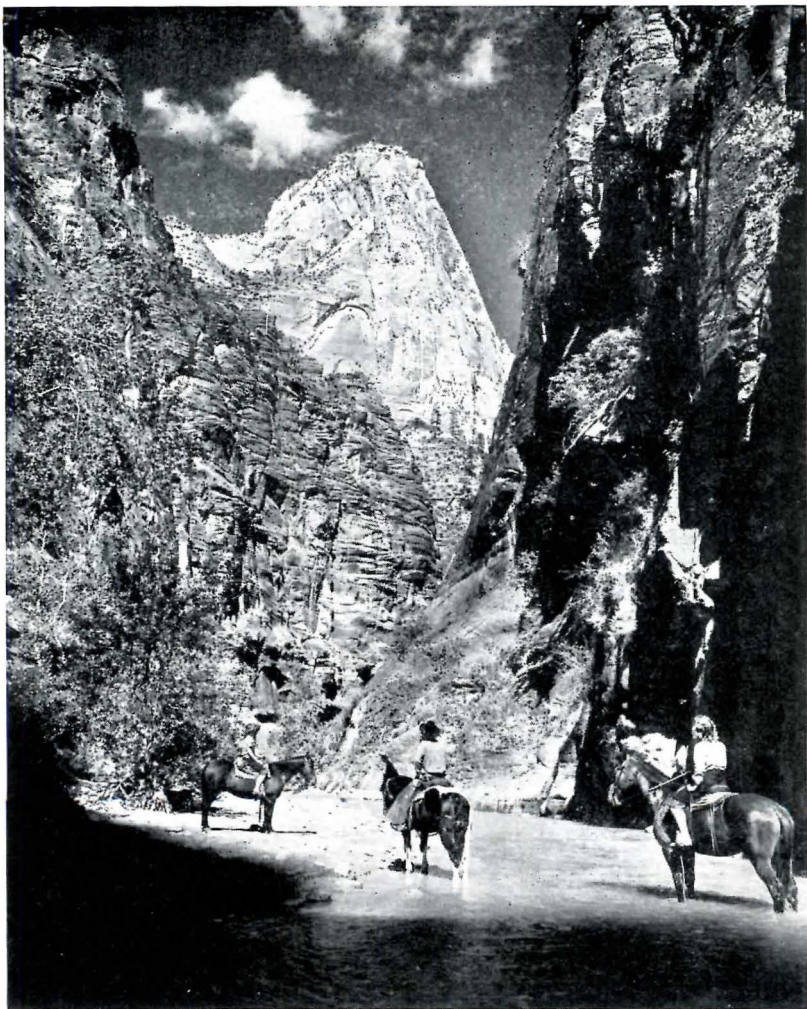
related matters locally affecting the public interest, and provisions which define accepted good practice in construction. These latter provisions are in building codes because they have not been adequately defined elsewhere. They represent about two-thirds of the code.

If we are to achieve simplification of building codes we should eliminate all parts dealing with good practice in construction and merely require conformity with some known and accepted, unbiased standard. Where satisfactory standards do not exist—and there are few acceptable major standards—machinery should be set up for their immediate evolution.

It would appear to be a proper governmental function to organize a Building Standards Institute, adequately financed on a national basis and with personnel untainted by selfish interest, under the auspices of the Building Technology Division of the National Bureau of Standards. The work now being done under ASA could be taken over and performed at an accelerated pace and with broadened scope. The standards developed would be invaluable not only for building codes but also

for the building industry. The haphazard, semi-voluntary effort of today would be replaced by planned progress. Voluntary effort has taken too long and the well-paid voice of industry and private interests has been too loud. The national importance of the problem definitely warrants the expenditure and the effort.

Once the National Building Standards Institute is set up and begins to function, a national building code will be a definite possibility. It will still not be a definite probability until a great deal of hard work is done; work that can neither be avoided nor reduced to simple formulas. Writing building regulations, like writing good specifications, is almost drudgery. But the end result will be well worth while; we should be able to standardize building procedure, achieve economies, improve methods, eliminate unnecessary work, reduce the bulk of our specifications, and standardize our building codes. The potentialities of such an Institute in benefits to the building industry are tremendous; it might even serve to bring the industry out of the horse-and-buggy era of unintegrated production and assembly and abreast with the machine age.

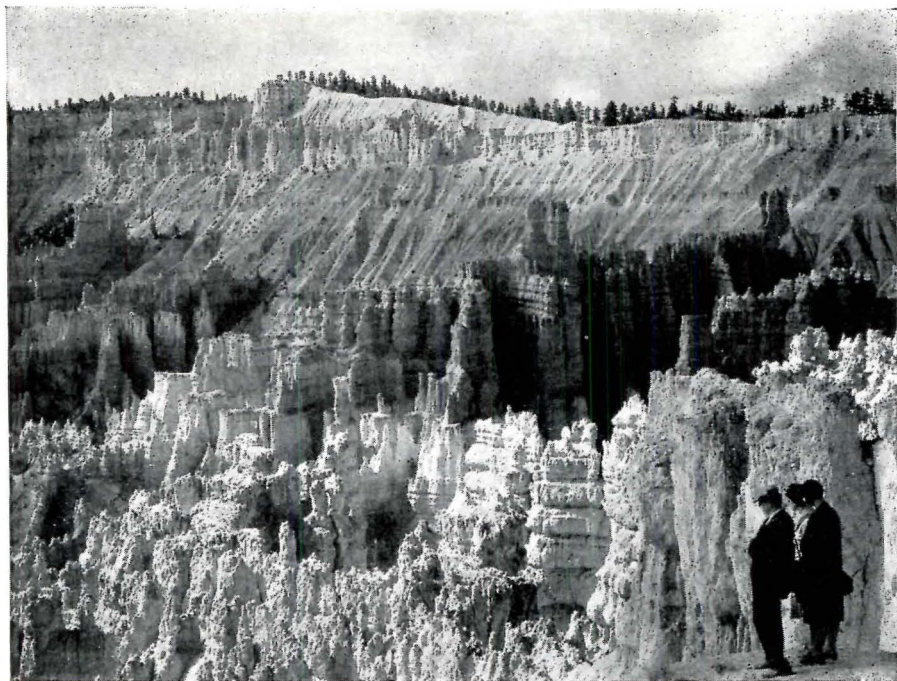


THE MOUNTAIN OF MYSTERY IN ZION NATIONAL PARK

Photograph by the Union Pacific Railroad

To be seen on Post-Convention Tour "A"

*Journal
The AIA*



IN BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK

Photograph by George A. Grant

By courtesy of The National Park Service

To be seen on Post-Convention Tour "A"

Some Detroit Personalities

By Edwin Bateman Morris

THE convention of the Michigan Society of Architects, held in Detroit in March under the prayerful guidance of Adrian Langius, Talmadge Hughes, Andrew Morison, Arthur Hyde and a host of others, was a pleasant and effective occasion. I couldn't quite come to full agreement with Andrew Morison. There isn't any rhyme or reason in the way he spells his name; I tried to get him interested in dropping off the last two letters and in doubling the "r". But he likes it the way it is, takes a pride in it.

I met Roger Allen of Grand Rapids and almost immediately started the Society for Getting Roger Allen out of Architecture by Christmas. It seemed a good idea at the time, though I am not wholly convinced now of its full urgency and expediency, even if backed by thoughtful reasoning upon my part.

Of course the argument against picking the pocket of architecture in this way is that Mr. Allen is the plaid coat and painted necktie of architecture — an ornament thereto. He has intelligence,

knowledge and inspiration. There exists the divided duty, the indecision, the I-love-Ethel-less-because-I-love-Barrymore, etc., so that one does not know whether architecture should be penalized to reward the world or the world disappointed to enrich architecture.

The nub of the matter is that Roger Allen looks like—and talks in the inspired amusing way of—Robert Benchley. Acknowledging this resemblance in physiognomy, Allen said publicly, and I quote, "This type of face, either in the case of the late Mr. Benchley or myself, should not be regarded as intentional."

The point arises of responsibility to the world and to posterity. Should talent be wasted; should light be hidden under a bushel, or a peck, or a pint, or a three-eighths yard steam-shovel? As I carefully explained to Mr. Allen, using mundane terms, the question is should he spend his life in Grand Rapids making a measly two hundred thousand a year, less tax, when the world awaits him?

Should he give up the prospect of wearing shorts in Miami in the

sunshine as the result of making shorts in Hollywood under Kleig lights? Should he give up the prospect of embalming in stereotype metal the thoughts which now float and fade into the somewhat secluded air of Michigan—unrecorded and unsung?

Of course it would be difficult for him to give up architecture—a sort of Allen wrench, so to speak. Yet there is the responsibility. Visibility against risibility; the heavy concrete against the light abstract; the beautiful pile against the beautiful smile. If you know what I mean.

Thus the problem: Whether to woo the serenity of Mother Architecture, or to rush to the bubbling fount of persiflage. I have not yet decided—I shall let Mr. Allen know when I do. Anyway it is nice to have two talents: the one to follow faithfully and with success the Seven Lamps of Architecture; the other to have the gift of smiling speech. It's difficult; it may be that the Allen-out-of-Architecture-idea is not such an inspired idea after all. Anyway it's an idea.

Not of such epochal importance, but still interesting, was a breakfast meeting the second morning of the convention for the Society's

board of directors, to which they were kind enough to invite me. Robert Frantz announced before breakfast that he was born in Pennsylvania and, since he understood the Statler Hotel had some Philadelphia scrapple, he proposed to sample it.

I deposed thereupon that I was born right in Philadelphia and I was not going to be outdone by anyone in my respect and veneration for scrapple. In case you don't know, scrapple is made from the less Ritzy and less aristocratic tissues of the pig mixed with cornmeal and various condiments and seasonings, looks like dog food, but is not in the least unpalatable.

Frantz and I prowled through the kitchens of the hotel, trying to discover someone who knew the file number for scrapple. At length they ejected us and said a culinary detective would be put on the case. In a few minutes report came that there was no scrapple, and would bacon and eggs do? And then close on the heels of this rushed in another courier, breathless, who announced that scrapple had been found. So we had scrapple; and all the architects gathered round, barking, and acting in a somewhat undignified manner. All in all it was not bad.

After the breakfast, I spoke to the full meeting of the Society; and when I had finished, Arthur Hyde told me I had said I was glad to be there "this evening," though it was distinctly forenoon. I don't know why one's tongue betrays one like that. I tried to tell Arthur Hyde—but was unnecessarily interrupted by the procedure of the meeting—how I had once introduced Frank Lloyd

Wright, in what I thought were pleasant enough terms. I must have made some slip, though to this day I do not know what it was, but the gentleman when he rose to speak turned upon me in fury and remarked, "It is possible to be an architect and at the same time a gentleman." And as this fact has been proven many times, I could not carry that argument further.

The Pan American Annex in Relation to National Capital Planning

By *James R. Edmunds, Jr.*, F.A.I.A.

CHAIRMAN OF THE INSTITUTE'S COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

With the assistance of Horace W. Peaslee, F.A.I.A.

THE Institute's Committee on the National Capital has had called to its attention the controversy over the location of the Administrative Building of the Pan American Union. The Committee regrets that it was not called upon to advise until after contracts had been arranged and construction operations begun. It regrets also that complete changes in its membership, and the nationwide distribution of its members, have made it difficult to keep in touch with this dispute of two decades'

duration and to realize when action terminated negotiations. Most of all, however, the Committee regrets that, instead of being only an isolated case of maladjustments in planning, this is but one of many such that have occurred in the past and a case typical of others which are bound to recur unless positive, preventive measures are taken.

The Committee has taken pains to review the backgrounds of this situation—not merely the location of this particular building but of

the area of which it is a part, the "Northwest Rectangle". After a number of different schemes had been developed by a number of planners, private and public, there evolved a generally accepted plan of a group of monumental marble buildings along Constitution Avenue with an inner group of functional office buildings arranged around an elongated, block-wide, mall. The old and new Interior buildings flank this mall at its east end; the former War Department, (present State Department,) terminates its west end. The scheme for the Avenue frontage showed the three central buildings (Science, Federal Reserve, and Public Health) on their present building line but the end buildings, Annex and Pharmaceutical, projecting to the line on which the Annex is now being constructed. However, other considerations prevailed and the Pharmaceutical Building did not adhere to the general plan but took a part-way projection.

Attention then focussed upon the projecting Pan American Annex. The Academy of Science had been accepted without question in front of the War Department building and no question had been raised about buildings to be erected

north of the Federal Reserve and Public Health—but the then Secretary of the Interior took exception to the Annex location adjacent to his newly acquired site even though the Annex had been authorized by Act of Congress years before the Interior project was started. It must be stated that there could have been no valid objection to the interposition of the Annex if it had been a larger building occupying an entire block on the established building line; but there are valid grounds for questioning its eccentric placing which crowds the triangle formed by the oblique crossing of Virginia Avenue.

President Roosevelt interested himself in this aspect of the controversy and appointed an informal committee to reconcile differences. This committee evolved a plan acceptable to both the Secretary of the Interior and to the Pan American Union, with which the District Commissioners refused concurrence on grounds of serious interference with the flow of heavy traffic to the north and northwest. The controversy then shifted to eliminating the Annex altogether from its authorized site and to locate it within the original Pan American block. The specific pro-

posal is to place it where the present garden pavilion now stands, completely destroying the building-and-grounds composition which has been the showplace of Washington—a proposal with which the Committee cannot concur.

The Institute Committee holds that the present plan is not as good, from a general planning standpoint, as the rejected substitute plan which was signed by the Chairmen of both Fine Arts and Planning Commissions (although it received neither approval nor disapproval by the latter agency). The Committee does not agree with the District Commissioner's objection that traffic considerations made the plan unacceptable. However, as the project stands, the Committee cannot say that the location is disastrous, nor that the building—which is a distinguished design from the hands of a great architect who has made notable contributions to the national capital—will impair the aspect of the Interior Department. The Committee regards the controversy and its outcome more as an object lesson, which should be heeded if far more serious planning shortcomings are to be averted.

There are many might-have-beens which we may cite to illus-

trate possibilities. We have another outstanding example in the half-realized scheme for Lafayette Square, as projected in the Treasury Annex and the Chamber of Commerce, blocked by the non-cooperation of the agency which erected the Veterans' Administration; the Treasury Annex, in turn, having nullified the civic contribution of the Riggs Bank and American Security in subordinating their cornice lines to the Treasury; and the Treasury itself, blocking the Avenue view of the White House which was to have been reciprocal with the Capitol. Even the Capitol is blocked from the east by the Library of Congress, which also adds a golden dome to the House of Representatives wing as viewed from the west. Today we have not only controversies of plan versus planning, but even nullification of planning by zoning and traffic interests, and by the withholding of funds needed to lay the groundwork for redevelopment.

When the Planning Commission legislation was projected, the Institute Committee of that day urged that the findings of the planning body should be mandatory upon its constituent members. This recommendation was not adopted,

conformance to general plan being left to cooperation which has permitted non-conformance and mistakes such as the loss of park and playground sites, which can never be rectified. In 1944, the Bureau of the Budget made a study of the whole situation and produced a report and recommendations which have the acceptance of a standard textbook in planning circles. This report has now received the sponsorship of the President who last month brought together at the White House the heads of Federal and District agencies concerned with the development of the Capital and called upon them for cooperative effort in planning, while at the same time directing the Budget Bureau to draft legislation to implement its recommendations.

This is the situation upon which the Institute's Committee on the

National Capital feels that attention and action should be focussed. The architects and other civic and professional associations, which have worked for the development of an adequate Federal City, should devote their efforts to obtaining, through Congress, the realization of the Budget Bureau's recommendations for the establishment of Planning Commission jurisdictions and the appropriation of funds for the long-deferred publication of development plans. In a measure, we have paid only lip service to Burnham's "make no little plans." With a re-organized, representative Commission, to include the Administrator of Federal Works and the Architect of the Capitol, we need have no further apprehension about planning which is "too little and too late."



Honors

To AUGUSTE PERRET is awarded the Royal Gold Medal for 1948 by His Majesty the King on the recommendation of the Council of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Perret will be remembered particularly for his rein-

forced concrete church at Le Raincy, built in 1923.

To CHARLES SUMNER GREENE and HENRY MATHER GREENE the Southern California Chapter has awarded special certificates of merit for design and execution of

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work in architecture and the fine arts. Messrs. Charles and Henry Greene opened an office in Pasadena in 1894. They retired from practice in 1914.

CHARLES H. DORNBUSCH has been appointed a member of the Illinois Architectural Examining Board, filling the vacancy caused by the resignation of Jerrold Loebel.

Victor Mindeleff

1861—1948

By Delos H. Smith

THE death, on March 26th, of Victor Mindeleff, F.A.I.A., deprives Washington of one of its most notable architects.

For more than half a century he was identified with the life of the Chapter and The Institute. His work remains distinctive. His designs, from the original Glen Echo Park down to the Public Roads Group at Gravelly Point, cover the period in which the very earth has shifted beneath the feet of dogma. He stood for an uninhibited architecture—individual, consistent and memorable.

The character of his work was no doubt influenced by his early years with Dr. J. W. Powell's expeditions to the prehistoric ruins of the Southwest. The sketches he drew and brought home of aboriginal Indian dwellings made a valuable contribution to American

ethnology and doubtless inspired his innate talent. And a certain common sense in viewpoint may well have been gained on the prairie.

Back East again, his domestic design showed a real appreciation of house and garden as a unit, as well as the rare feeling for form and color which made his work distinctive. The houses he designed owed much to home experience. Together with Mrs. Mindeleff, to whom he attributed all horticultural success, he made gardens to dream about and in his versatility turned to the brush for further expression. This happy gift in painting led to the creation of the flower studies and decorative panels for which he is noted. The work of architect, painter, gardener was always well done.

Removed in recent years to

Southern Maryland, he still found expression, on the drawing-board, in the delicate and careful draftsmanship—brown ink on white cloth—which created drawings that can be fairly likened to old

lace. And he still knew how to make his garden grow.

We knew and admired him as one who had not really grown old. The influence of his character and work will not easily be forgotten.

Safety from the Architect's Viewpoint

By Samuel R. Bishop

A.I.A. REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CONSTRUCTION SECTION, NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL

Reprinted by permission from *Construction Safety* for January 1948, published by the National Safety Council, Chicago; with some revision by the author to fit a different audience

AT A RECENT MEETING of the Executive Committee of the Construction Section of the National Safety Council it was suggested that it would be of interest to obtain the architects' viewpoint on safety.

In considering safety from the architect's viewpoint, we must begin with the premise that the architect's interest in and responsibility for safety extend only to those building construction projects which are built from plans and specifications prepared in his office and carried forward under his supervision.

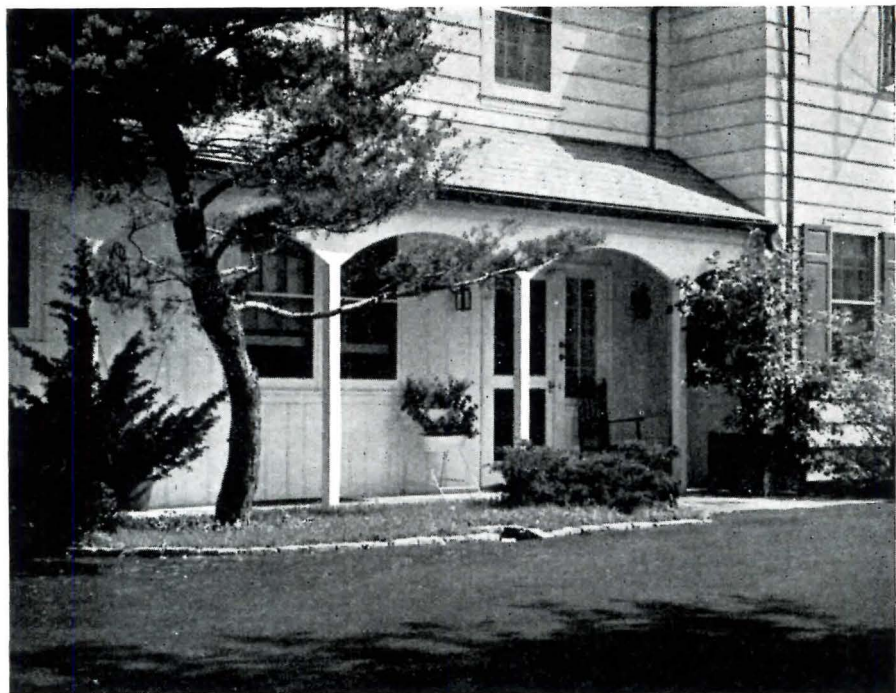
On such items of construction work, safety would seem to begin in the architect's office.

First, let me qualify by saying that safety seems to have fallen to

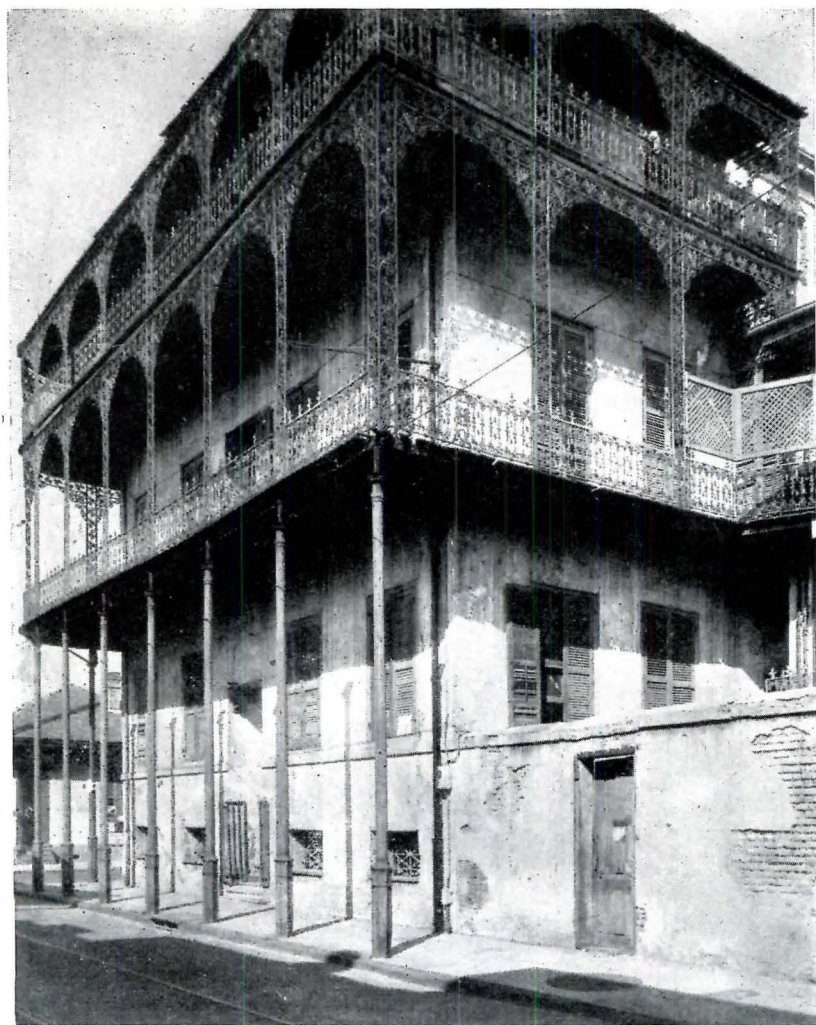
the architect by default, mainly because the average contractor has been rather slow to show any interest in the matter and reluctant to assume it as his responsibility, so that now safeguards are a fundamental requirement in nearly all architects' specifications.

At the same time, in some construction work, the architect may be concerned simply with the design of the project, such as bridges, viaducts, park layouts, etc., where no specifications are prepared, contracts are made by others, and the actual construction is under the supervision of the general contractor, who assumes full responsibility for the safety of his men and the public.

But in building construction,



SERVICE ENTRANCE
RESIDENCE OF E. J. MARSHALL
TOLEDO, OHIO
BELLMAN, GILLETT & RICHARDS, ARCHITECTS



Do you know this building?

Photograph by Frances Benjamin Johnston, Hon. A.I.A.

HOUSE OF THE TURK,
VIEUX CARRÉ, NEW ORLEANS, LA.

there are a very few operations of any size or importance which are not started by the architect. They are started through the use of his plans and specifications, through the use of architectural documents such as the "General Conditions" and various types of contract forms.

All these form the basis of a contract; it's usually the architect who awards the contract; it's the architect who starts the job and, being retained as supervising architect, he is definitely in a position to demand such safety measures as are necessary to protect the workmen and reduce the likelihood of accidents.

In the course of my work during the past 25 years, I have checked a great many specifications coming from offices of architects in all parts of the country; and although up to a few years ago very little attention was paid to the matter of safety, and very little concerning it appeared in specifications, yet it has gradually become more and more recognized and is today provided for in one form or another in nearly all specifications.

When specifications do not make specific mention of requirements on safety, the "General Conditions" issued by The American In-

stitute of Architects (which document is attached to nearly all specifications) contains a section on safety which is all inclusive. It places on the contractor the responsibility for taking all necessary precautions for the safety of his employees, complying with all applicable provisions of Federal, State and municipal safety laws and building codes. It requires him to erect and maintain at all times necessary safeguards for the protection of workmen and the public, and to post danger signs warning against the hazards created by protruding nails, hod hoists, well holes, stairways, etc.

By using these "General Conditions," the contractor is under contract to provide and maintain safety protection because they form a part of the architect's specifications and become a contract requirement.

Furthermore, the architects were interested in the preparation of the American Standard Safety Code for Building Construction, which was sponsored by The American Institute of Architects and the National Safety Council, and approved as the American Standard by the American Standards Association.

This code contains all the usual requirements necessary for the pro-

tection of workmen engaged in building operations.

During World War II and since, government engineering and construction projects, as well as the construction done by or for some large industrial concerns, provide for safety in construction by a contract clause. This clause makes the following broad provisions.

- (1) That the contractor (and sub-contractor) shall:
 - (a) Provide adequate and timely mechanical safeguards and personal protective equipment for all workers.
 - (b) Provide a minimum weekly safety educational time for all employees.
 - (c) Provide a full- or part-time administrator for (a) and (b).

The demand for these provisions is so worded and so placed in the contract that it becomes a valid consideration in "invitations to bid," like any other requirement in the contract. This facilitates enforcement by the architect and the owners. That this demand saves lives and reduces insurance costs is now a matter of record.

So, while the architect's viewpoint is that he recognizes and accepts his share of responsibility for safety in building construction, yet much depends on the cooperation of the contractor in bringing to the attention of the workmen by every means possible the necessity for greater care and more regard for their own personal welfare.

The Journal's Illustrations

IN VIEW OF the JOURNAL's size and other limitations, the extensive illustration of a piece of contemporary architecture is beyond us. What we can do is to show, of notable contemporary works, a single detail representing that element of the structure, furnishing or equipment that most nearly achieved the architect's intention. All too frequently, a com-

pleted work disappoints its designer in many ways—else we should make little progress. But usually there is at least one detail of the whole that brings something of a thrill to the designer himself; it may be a detail in which sculptor, or painter, or landscape designer, or interior decorator collaborated successfully; it may be some particularly happy choice of

form or materials; it may be an ingenious solution of some challenging problem of plan or construction. Whatever it is, the architect finds it a point of satisfaction; it worked out as he had hoped—or better.

With this purpose in mind, the members are urged to look over

their photographs of recently completed work and send to the JOURNAL two or three that fit more or less the outline above. With material of this character the illustrative side of the JOURNAL can be made more interesting and more stimulating and be given a distinctive character of its own.

First Congress of the International Union of Architects

THE OCTAGON is in receipt of 300 copies of the official invitation to the First Congress of the International Union of Architects to be held in Lausanne, Switzerland, June 28.

These invitations are at the disposal of any American architects who are likely to be able to attend.

Subjects for the sessions are: The Architect and Planning; The Architect and the Industrialization of Building; and The Architect, State and Society.

The organizing committee suggests that anyone intending to attend would do well to look into, in advance, the matter of currency exchange. The committee also suggests that it would be greatly to the advantage of anyone attending to provide himself, before leaving America, with a gen-

eral Holiday Season Ticket on the Swiss Federal Railways. Details may be had from any of the tourist agencies.

Traveling Exhibition

THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS, Washington, D. C. announces a new traveling exhibition, "Ghosts Along the Mississippi." This exhibition consists of seventy-five original photographs by Clarence Laughlin depicting the development of Louisiana plantation architecture. For information regarding space requirements, weight and rental fees, write to Mrs. Annemarie Henle Pope, Assistant Director, The American Federation of Arts, 1262 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

Comparing Wright and Le Corbusier

IN TWO PARTS—PART II

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. The contestants were asked to compare the philosophies, economic and social programs, and physical ideas of Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier. First prize was awarded to Mr. Stillman's essay, of which the first part appeared in the April JOURNAL, and the conclusion is printed below.—Editor

WRIGHT'S aversion to "bigness" extends to recreation. He agrees with Le Corbusier that art and sport are enjoyed vicariously, making for extreme expertism in a few. He would like to see the "star" system in theater and Hollywood destroyed; the people must act and produce. Wright's huge attraction is the market which develops from the embryo of a filling station on scattered ribbon roads into the educational, entertainment and distribution center accessible to autoists on main arteries.

The idea that there will be no "great halls"—no Metropolitan Opera Houses—for concerts and plays is novel and significant. Art, however, includes the Theater, a theory Wright seems to abandon. Nevertheless, he condescends to include "a few traveling stars"! The development of the colorful "fair" is difficult to visualize, especially with the gasoline station as the

foetus. Distribution of goods and education have been allied for no apparent reason.

Whereas offices would be humanized by Le Corbusier, Wright makes them non-existent in his plan. Since money has no commodity value in the latter's program, credit displaces cash. Thus only a filing system becomes necessary! Banks are eliminated. Ostentatious civic buildings and courthouses become redundant in Wright's system, sans law and politics. And professional men live at their residences, thereby excluding the use of office buildings.

There is need for relating professional places to residences where people might consult doctors and dentists conveniently, but the trend for professionals to assemble in one building cannot be overlooked. Centralization of specialists and equipment has merit. The location of such clusters, however, needs careful planning.

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Reducing all industrial buildings, stores and rail centers to midget size has no rational basis. Where manufacturer is near raw materials, there may be a need for masses, although not "massing", of workers. Only distances are immense! To Wright, "nearby" means 15 to 30 miles; thus schools, ordinarily considered recreation and cultural magnets, are miles away from residence. To Le Corbusier beaches 10 miles from home are "useless"!

Le Corbusier arrives at his form easily. Living in apartment units is no hardship for most Europeans. Industrialization of building and group housing means mass production, standards and economy. Efficiency in his "model city for commerce" requires speed and proximity. In his enthusiasm for motion, Le Corbusier has forged a circulation system which separates fast from slow traffic, light goods from heavy goods, urban from main line and suburban tubes. Integration has reduced the present streets by two-thirds, and transportation culminates in a central, grand station of many levels. In the evolution of Le Corbusier's thinking, however, speed has become less a fetish, and circulation receives subordinate attention to

"living, recreation and work" functions.

Alongside the 24 commercial skyscrapers with 5% coverage, there are amusement and public buildings at low heights. The residential structures of six stories or more are in park settings. Beyond the central residence, there is a garden city housing two million people. Between suburbs and city, a fresh-air reserve or greenbelt has been established. Since 90% of the land is open, the city becomes "one great park."

The Fourier tradition of making work attractive was solved, in Wright's case, by focussing on the citizen's "timeless" devotion to the ground. Le Corbusier invokes "the biology of the office building" and the strategic location of industry for enjoyable and healthful working conditions. Le Corbusier agrees that greater leisure time and organized cultural and physical activities are not sole solutions. The drudgery of the housewife must be minimized. This is accomplished by kitchen gardens, joined with the gardens of neighbors, in scale with maintenance. "Hanging gardens," sheltered from the rain, provide suitable atmosphere for conversation and dining. The "toit-jardin" (roof garden

and solarium) is one of five major points in Le Corbusier's "new architecture." At the base of apartment dwellings, there are community restaurants and cleaning and laundering establishments; here there are reduced costs by mass purchase of necessities. In addition, he provides organized nurseries, domestic and health services to relieve further the overburdened housewife.

Recreation, both active and passive, indoor and outdoor, for the returning laborer and for the "neglected" youth takes place near the residential quarters. The system is one of seclusion in the "cell" and social living in the "colony." Meeting-places and lecture halls are necessary adjuncts of the urban community. Le Corbusier emphasizes the binomial "individu-collectivité"—and one cannot be stressed at the expense of the other.

For Le Corbusier, the house is a "habitable machine" and the tall building signifies communal life. Wright clings to the myth that every man must own his detached house to maintain individuality and independence. Both agree that crowded living, "like pilchards in a cask," does not lend itself to health and freedom. Apartment dwellings are not prison cells, nor

do they guarantee communal living; witness metropolitan multiple dwellings where the next-door tenant is neither seen nor known. On the other hand, the British ideal of "undisturbed privacy" is not reminiscent of the ascetic who retires into a cave. We might dispense with the legend that there is a "divine right" of possessing an individual house, and with the larger falsity that home ownership makes a man "whole and complete" and bestows liberty and better citizenship on the holder.

There is, furthermore, some relation between group and single-family housing. A combination in accordance with desires and needs of particular communities is perhaps a more flexible system. Bachelors, professionals and childless couples, both old and young, may require apartments; the necessity for one-family units may be more apparent in families with children, who could then play in adjacent gardens. In our society, there is an hiatus between the pocketbook and the "castle" dream. The question is not, "How shall the single-family house be preserved or attained?" but "How can we embody the basic requisites of domestic life in a modern community program?"

Frank Lloyd Wright deals at great length with economics, although his answer is oversimplified. Compare, for example, his questionable economy of two and more autos per family with Le Corbusier's thought that "truly productive work" is found in the production of clothes, food, books, etc. After a diatribe against the artificialities of our outworn economy, where the worker "is a time-bound slave to the wage system," Wright appeals for a new "success-ideal." Speculation and the God of profits are evil and decadent. Unearned increment, uncollected even by the single tax, is at the base of evil. And we have veered from our "birthright," the soil, without which we must perish. Wright's solution is simple. We must return to the good earth and an agricultural economy which will ensure the individual of true "capitalism."

Wright's thesis is that a natural system where money and authority have been replaced by farm labor and "some simple social medium of exchange" in an "absolutely self-sufficient system" is coming into effect. But this evolutionary movement of the population to the farms is not the sole cause of decentralization—Wright proceeds.

Youth is dissatisfied. Depressions rock the industrial foundations. Mobility and electricity are insidiously eroding the peat structure of metropolis. The primitive nomadic instinct has been reawakened. And, finally, to the rescue arrives the mystic executor of the Broadacres plan — the "Great Architect," the "creative intellectual," will come along and lo, the "organic city"! Wright believes that economists, politicians and religionists have failed, and so the "prophetic interpreter" will lead the centrifugal procession to "Usonia."



Centuries ago, the Brahmins envisaged a farming society as the goal of a good social order. Henry George mentioned that if you "take away from man all that belongs to land, he is but a disembodied spirit." However, Henry George had a larger sense of the meaning of land economics. Even Robert Owen provided more thoughtful "villages of cooperation" in order that workers would not be separated from their food.

Wright's dependence on the withering away of the state and eventual disappearance of civil law is reminiscent of Utopian dream-

ers. His belief that "organic capitalism" will eliminate unemployment is unrealistic. There are no longer self-sufficient units isolated from outside economic forces. There is no immunity of a cell from spreading depressions. Unfortunately, "modern economic life cannot be left to automatic forces."

An economic escape mechanism, such as the futile call to return to an agrarian economy, cannot solve the complexities of our cities. In the enthusiasm for nature, the resultant possibility of reduced standards of living are disregarded. An agricultural order does not insure adequacy, plenty or security. India and China have maintained such a life for centuries without attendant benefits in the way of a decent and healthy life for their peoples. Correlated solutions are necessary for industry and agriculture since they are intertwined in our economy. Full employment, social security, raising of living standards, conservation and development programs and other problems are vital for both city and farm consideration with joint responsibility and action.

The independence and "glory of the farmer" who "stands closest to God" shall be achieved by the strikingly undemocratic flute of

the "genius." To the extent that we are committed to democratic philosophy, we cannot entrust "event-making" to a "hero", whether he be a baroque despot, the savant of Saint-Simon or an architect-genius. The decision must arise from the community or not at all. Pericles once spoke of the citizens of Athens—if not the originators, at least judges of policy. Harold Laski phrased this thought aptly: Experts must be "on tap," not "on top."

Le Corbusier deals flippantly with economics, coming as vague afterthoughts. He admits that he has no economic solution, that he is only an "architect." He appeals to emotion—since nations spend millions on armaments and war, the choice presented rhetorically is munitions or city building. In effect, Le Corbusier says: "In our age of statistics, we must always prove a point by finance and fact. Here they are!" A rebuilt city is a greater challenge than a newly-created suburban satellite. It seems intuitive to him that replanning would be less costly than continuing in the present waste of urban living. To solve the traffic muddle, palliatives such as street widenings are useless, prolonging the problems. Surgery is vital. A

drastic and new land use and transportation pattern must come into effect. The medieval town was charming and fit for its age, but in the modern day the street is more than a provider of traffic; it is an "atelier en longueur" (a spread-out workshop). Thus, Le Corbusier's efficient network of circulation appears almost as an over-all solution.

Le Corbusier sees no hope for modification in economic organization, and, therefore, relies on the equilibrium of competitive forces to rebuild the city. His aim is to provide reasonable principles whereby problems can be judged. It is for the international investor to recognize the high values to be created and to finance remodelling of metropolis. The profit motive and private initiative will accomplish the "true and only" building. The concomitant effect, Le Corbusier weakly suggests, would be a panacea for peace, since bombing of international investments would be prevented.

Le Corbusier has based increased land values on tremendous densities of population and lofty structures. These dual stimulants do not always react to force values upward. Even where values rise with higher construction, surrounding

areas may decline economically. However, in the "Vertical Garden City," the mode of neighborhood living and the surrounding open space are not impaired by towering edifices. There is reason to believe that profits could then be based to a great degree on the density plus a desirable environment.



History has shown that individual instruments and private funds are ineffective without some coordination and control by government agencies. Le Corbusier himself should have learned that private capital may fail even when plans for a new city have been accepted by officials and people (Nemours in North Africa is the example). The issue of world peace, moreover, remains in the province of international accord and statesmanship.

Le Corbusier comes closer to reality than those who seek cures-all by overemphasized agrarianism. Retainment of rural life, but relating country to town, agriculture to industry in a well-balanced environment, are imperatives. Le Corbusier recognizes the value of a regional approach, merely stressing a "Vertical Garden City" as the

suitable vehicle of expression in a machine age.

Whereas the Utopian dreamers outlined social and economic programs, Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier draft architectural utopias. The architects have emphasized noticeably the physical city. For Le Corbusier, design is the basis of civilization—"The height of civilization came when the straight line was used." To Wright, architecture "must be the framework of civilization." Although they are mindful of social objectives, the socio-economic considerations are met inadequately. The way of life, the livelihood of people, the family and community life, the cultural opportunities—these are better relegated to other professions.

To give architecture such prominent standing in history is narrow. To place art before political and sociological factors is fanciful. At best, design accompanies technical and ethical conditions. Esthetics cannot supersede health and welfare.

Although Le Corbusier realizes that happiness and creation are dependents of choice and collaborative endeavor in the form of cities, he limits selection to a doctrinaire, geometric and vertical city. The

cartesian pattern may yield efficiency, but there must be provision for curves where properly needed. The silhouetted skyline or the skyscraper as seen from the air become too important to him. The city must appear attractive from a person's porch, or from his view during a stroll or a walk from residence to job!

Neither Wright's dependence on an omnipotent genius nor Le Corbusier's reliance on international speculators will solve the problems of cities in a democratic way. That "progress is a result of men working together" is the key to city planning. For democratic planning, Julian Huxley's "co-planners" are vital—the people in active support and participation. If Le Corbusier feels that grouping rather than chaotic individualism is satisfactory, "repetition" does not necessarily attain "grandeur." He may be thinking of the regal architecture of Versailles in preference to the monotonous slums behind the palace. If Le Corbusier is entranced with mass uniformity, he is not departing from tradition. If, however, he seeks a universal standard, he offers a program for progress.

Like other artists, Wright and

Le Corbusier have been forced to accept the union between the artistic and the social and political. The architect who uses the lyricism of the Victorians to project fantasies into the future cannot solve "the brutally vulgar" city. This is tantamount to the Utopian reaching for perfection. The architect has transcribed a poetic plea into a visual design, and both are reminders of our hopes. Dickens' "Hard Times" and the "Broad-acres" model make us aware of

our "rational sympathy" for the conditions of mankind.

The philosophies and designs have been submitted. Theories must be translated by teamwork as an expression of the people. Neither "Broadacre City," nor the "Vertical Garden City" is final; the process of city building is continuous.

"The heartening fact about modern life is that as people we can shape our destiny."—*David E. Lilienthal.*

Calendar

April 21-May 9: Exhibition of the architecture of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Metallurgical and Chemical Engineering Building, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago.

May 17-19: Annual meeting of the National Citizens Conference on Planning, sponsored by American Planning and Civic Association, Essex House, Newark, N. J.

May 24-28: Institute for Hospital Engineers, conducted by the American Hospital Association, Knickerbocker Hotel, Chicago.

May 27-30: Annual Conference of the R.I.B.A., to which A.I.A. members expecting to be in Europe are invited, Liverpool.

May 31-June 4: Institute on Hospital Public Relations, conducted by the American Hospital

Association, Westminster Choir College, Princeton University, Princeton, N. J.

June 19-20: Annual meeting of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, Salt Lake City.

June 20-21: Thirty-fourth annual meeting of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, Salt Lake City.

June 22-25: Eightieth Convention of The American Institute of Architects, Salt Lake City.

June 28-July 1: First Congress of the International Union of Architects, Lausanne, Switzerland.

July 6-10: Store Modernization Show, Grand Central Palace, New York.

September 20-23: Fiftieth Anniversary Convention, American

Hospital Association, Atlantic City, N. J.

September 20-24: Annual Technical Conference of the Illuminating Engineering Society, Hotel Statler, Boston.

September 26-28: Twenty-first

annual convention, California Council of Architects, Yosemite Valley.

October 13-16: Annual meeting of the National Association of Housing Officials, Olympic Hotel, Seattle, Wash.

News of the Educational Field

WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY'S School of Architecture announces the award of Charles Frederick Schweinfurth Scholarships—discontinued in 1937 and reactivated last year. These scholarships are administered by the Cleveland Museum of Art and carry a stipend of \$400 covering the expenses of study at the American Art School of Fontainebleau. The recent awards were to Richard Vrooman and Donald Spaulding Woodward. Gordon W. Canute, an alternate, will replace Vrooman who is not able to accept this scholarship. All three men are veterans.

The UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, through its School of Architecture and Allied Arts, announces the reactivation of the Ion Lewis Scholarship. It is administered jointly by the School of Architecture and the Oregon Chapter, A.I.A. Re-

quirements may be learned in detail by applying to Dean S. W. Little, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Applications are due not later than June 1, 1948. The awards will be made on or before August 1.

The UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA announces the appointment of Morley Jeffers Williams as Professor of Landscape Architecture in the North Carolina State College of Agriculture and Engineering.

THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA will hold a Carnegie-A.I.A. Summer Session beginning July 26 and continuing for three weeks. The purpose of the session is to show the influence for good or ill of architecture and the arts in everyday life. Enrollment will be open to leaders in civic and educational work as well as to students.

Designed for those interested in the community, the church, the school, the commercial and industrial elements, and the home as environmental influences in human development, the session will consist of lectures, conferences and field trips.

WORLD STUDYTOURS, of Columbia University Travel Service, announces a European Reconstruction Seminar for 1948. Intended primarily for specialists and advanced students in the regional and community planning, housing and architectural fields, the tour of

five and one-half weeks will cover England, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Sweden. As in 1947, the leader will be Hermann H. Field, a member of the Cleveland Chapter, A.I.A. Over-all cost for the 54 days, New York to New York, will be \$1,275. The group will leave July 16 and arrive back in New York on September 9. Further information and detailed itinerary can be had from World Studytours, Columbia University Travel Service, New York 27, N. Y., or from Mr. Field at Cleveland College, 167 Public Square, Cleveland, Ohio.

New York State Association Awards Certificates of Merit

NEWS of the New York State Association of Architects and its 1947 Convention, last October, has been reaching The Octagon in piecemeal form. A complete list of those architects receiving the Certificate of Merit is now at hand as follows:

Ade & Todd: for Airport Terminal, Rochester, New York.

Adams & Woodbridge: for office building for N. J. Manufacturing Association, Trenton, New Jersey.

Badgley & Bradbury: for Edificio

Shell Building, Caracas, Venezuela.

Eggers & Higgins: for Archbishop Stepinac High School, White Plains, N. Y.

William Gehron: for Utica State Hospital Medical and Surgical Building, Utica, New York.

Alfred Hopkins & Associates: for Bellevue Hospital Residences and Schools for Nurses, New York City; also for B. Altman Store, Manhasset, Long Island, N. Y.

Eric Kebbon: for J. Fenimore

- Cooper High School, New York City.
- William Lescaze: for house for E. A. Norman, New York City.
- Moore & Hutchins: for Goucher College Library, Baltimore, Md.
- Morris & O'Connor: for Westchester County Home, New York.
- O'Connor & Kilham: for Harvey S. Firestone Memorial Library, Princeton University, Princeton, N. J.
- Reinhard & Hofmeister: for Deeds Carillon Tower, Dayton, Ohio.
- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill: for Presbyterian Hospital, Waterloo, Iowa.
- Van der Gracht & Kilham: for Carroll College Library, Waukesha, Wis.
- Voorhees, Walker, Foley & Smith: for Bamberger Store, Morristown, N. J.; also for Rahway Telephone Co. Building, Rahway, N. J.
- Department of Public Works, City of New York: for Hospital for Chronic Diseases, Welfare Island, New York.
- The Committee on Housing for Paraplegic Veterans, New York Chapter, A.I.A.: for its achievements in standardizing design of residential quarters for paraplegics.

The Editor's Asides

THE ANN ARBOR CONFERENCE of April 2 and 3—sixth of these gatherings under the sponsorship of the University of Michigan—concerned itself with the subject of esthetic evaluation. Fellow practitioners and educators in sculpture, painting and landscape architecture joined with the architects in a stimulating and constructive discussion. To this observer, at least, the talk brought great encouragement: visual appeal is not dead; it has only been lying dormant through these years of em-

phasis on so-called functionalism. The conclusion reached—and not yet challenged, so far as I gathered—was that one of the essential needs to be satisfied in achieving true functionalism is the need of emotional appeal. It seemed to me that no participant among the more than one hundred present was content with having our architecture meet only the physical needs of stability, convenience, shelter, comfort, adaption to purpose and economy of means. In the effort to achieve these qualities more fully

than in the years when style was a governing consideration, visual appeal and emotional stimulus were neglected, if not actually taboo. Apparently, we have turned another corner in our architectural march, when humanism and visual appeal are to gain once again our respect and perhaps even their rightful power to influence design.



THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, in making a survey on what Americans read, found in 1947 that the major subjects were: 1) personal problems, 2) housing and 3) business. A book on how to persuade business to furnish the individual with housing might have been a best-seller.



Motor Court Age tells me that they receive thousands of letters a week seeking information as to the designing, building and operating of motor courts. Many of these letters ask for names of architects who have done such work. *Motor Court Age* (1186 South Main Street, Salt Lake City 4, Utah) would be glad to have the names and addresses of architects who have given special attention to this sort of work.

It is rather astonishing to learn that the average investment in these motor courts runs well over \$100,000, and half a million is not uncommon.



THE ATTEMPTS to find easier and less costly ways of building small houses, organized at the University of Illinois, have us slightly dizzy. They are building six identical "Industry Engineered Houses," with the idea that with each successive one they will have learned better and more economical and quicker ways of doing the job. The saving on the second house over the first seems to have been 481 hours of labor, but the house cost more money. More skill in layout, supervision and training was needed. The workmen, made familiar with the improved techniques, undoubtedly could do a lot better on repetition—and doubtless will, dispelling our dizziness.



CALIFORNIA never has earthquakes; it has an occasional fire. Just to be prepared, however, the architects, engineers and seismologists have formed a group to study the earthquake problem. No one, apparently, has ever undertaken the job of finding out and record-

ing just what an earthquake does to a building. So there seems to be need for an Earthquake Engineering Research Institute. Japan has one, but we haven't; we never have earthquakes—well, *hardly* ever; only five really destructive ones in the last twenty-five years. More power to California's efforts to do something about it!



IT IS SAD NEWS that the National Committee on Housing, of which Mrs. Samuel Rosenman has long been an active spearhead, is folding up as of May 1. Reason: failure in the Committee's efforts to finance its efforts.



THE PUZZLING PROBLEM of controlling fire through an escalator well seems to have been licked by Otis, Westinghouse and Grinnell, working in close collaboration. It's done through an exhaust system combined with a curtain of water.



MRS. EMILY POST says—and, by the way, Mrs. Post is a daughter of the late Bruce Price, New York architect: "If your house, inside and out, does not match your individual character, it is no better

than a dress suspended on a wax figure." Perhaps The Institute ought to appoint a Committee. . . .



IN AN EFFORT to catch up with an error we made in reviewing "Contemporary Color Guide" by Elizabeth Burris-Meyer, this is to say that the price is not \$5.95 but \$10. The lower price applies to another one of Mrs. Burris-Meyer's books.



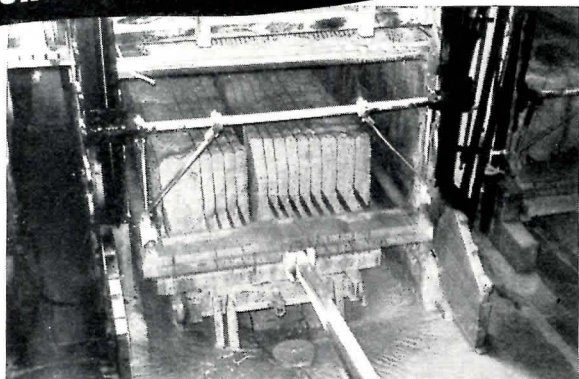
IF YOU haven't seen and read "Back to *What Kitchen*" in the April *Harper's*, look it up and see what Ann Leighton thinks of our modern laboratory cubicle. She wants more humanism—as do many—in our contemporary ideas of kitchen design.



I SEE THAT our old friend Asher Benjamin, author of "The Country Builder's Assistant," has come to life in the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company's current full-color advertising in *Time*, *Newsweek* and the *Saturday Evening Post*. Between that and the cinema of "Mr. Blandings Builds his Dream House," the public may come to know something about why architects are permitted to live.

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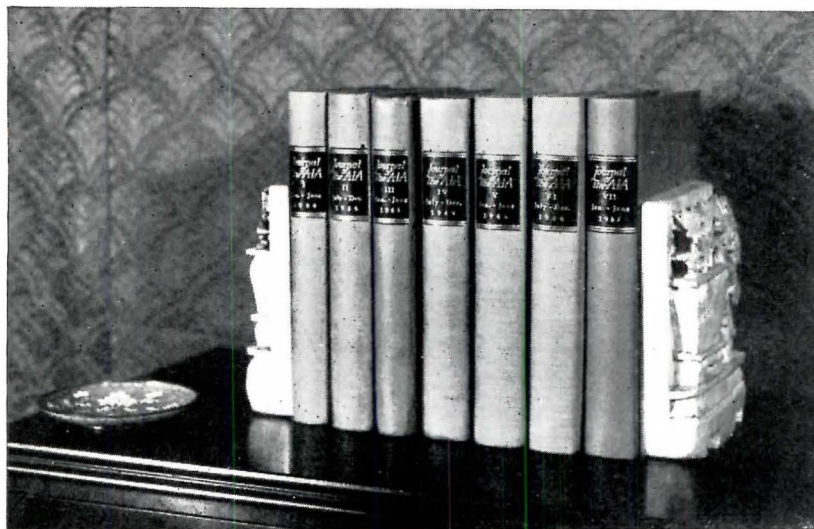
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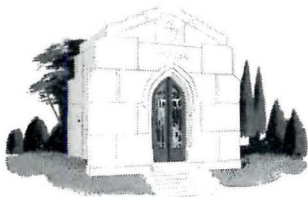
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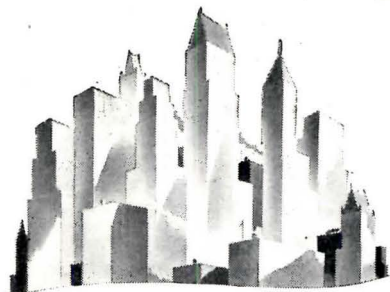
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