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WILLIAM MORRIS

November, 1950

The Emancipation of Architecture

Ten Books on Architecture

The Discipline of Architecture

Form, Function and Expression

How Should Our Cities Grow?—II

Architecture as a Political Weapon

The Society of Architectural Historians

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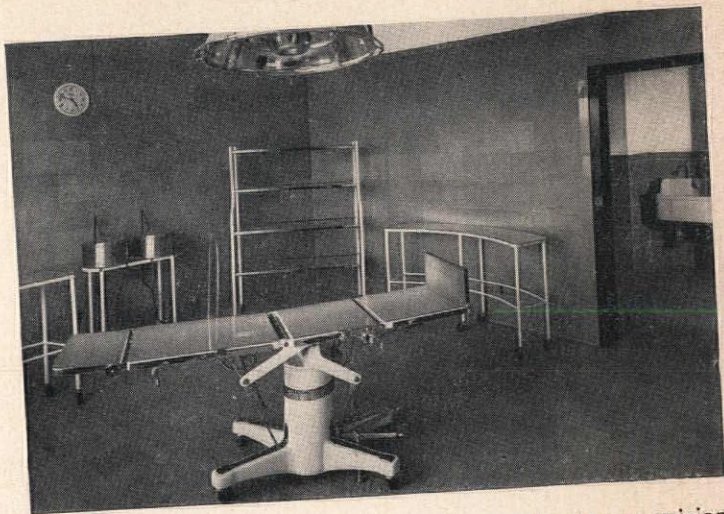
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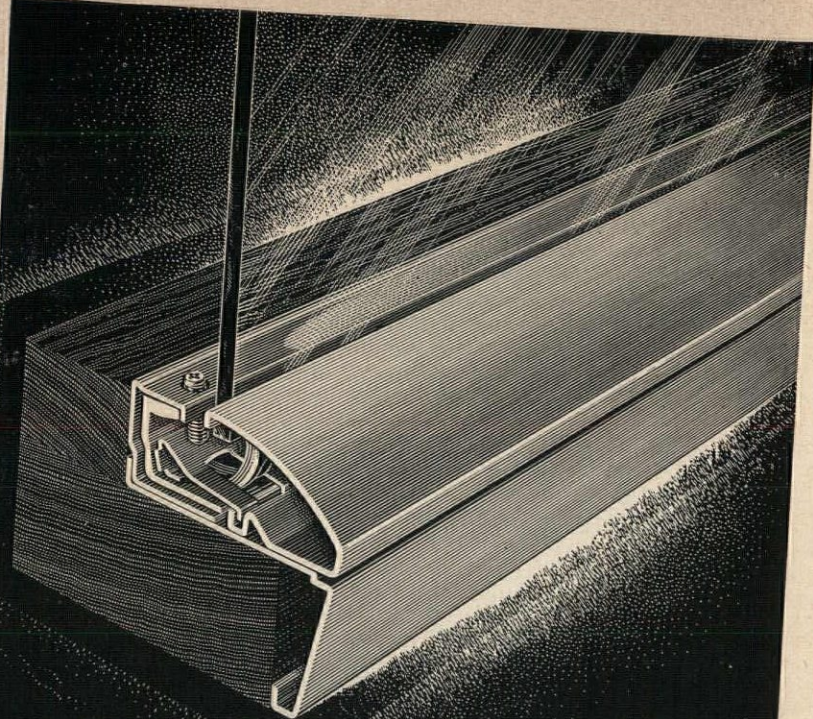
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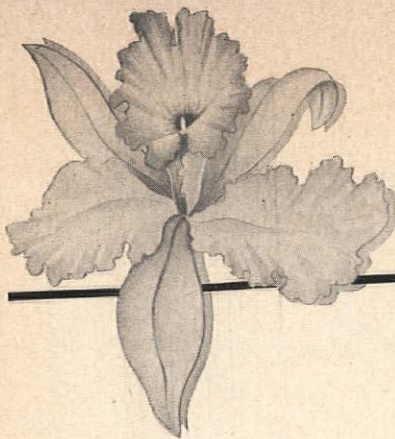


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The bundle of sticks

A wise old man called his quarrelsome sons about him. Taking up a bundle of sticks, he commanded each in turn to break the sticks. All tried, but in vain, and said it could not be done.

"And yet, my boys, nothing is easier to do," said the father, as he undid the bundle and broke the sticks, one by one. "By this example, you can see that united you will be more than a match for your enemies; but if you quarrel and separate, your weakness will put you at the mercy of those who attack you."

The useful truth of this fable is just as timely today as it was when the Greek ex-slave

Aesop told it 2,500 years ago. You, a patriot, believing in individual liberty and freedom for all, see our American way of life threatened by the menace of communism abroad and jeopardized at home by complacency, negligence, confusion and incompetence.

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Architects as Manpower

NATIONAL DEFENSE takes men as well as money and materials. Building's manpower, as well as building credit and building materials, must be mobilized. What this fact means to architects was carefully considered by the A.I.A. National Defense Committee at a recent session in Washington. The Committee took note of the likely impact of a three-million-man defense force upon the profession as a whole. It considered, in particular, as doctors, engineers and other professional groups have had to consider, the whole difficult question of military service and deferment.

Architects have a great military tradition. The architects whom history remembers have often been great military engineers as well. We know why this is so: our own members have seen distinguished service in two world wars, and they found ways to put their architectural training, skills and proclivities to work in the Army, Navy or Air Force. If necessary they will again. The National Defense Commission intends to explore, with the Department of Defense, ways to make the most of the capabilities of architects in the Armed Forces.

To architects who want to know their duty in a time of national emergency, we believe it

can be said that to the extent they are needed, they must serve their country. We are citizens first. There should be no thought of group deferment, as other professional groups have sought group deferment. Always there will be individuals in exceptional situations whose military service the national interest may indicate should be deferred. But architects as a group, and architectural students as a group, cannot hope to place their professional interests above those of national service.

We are confident architects will support Maj. Gen. Lewis B. Hershey's determination to avoid group deferments, and that they will support equally his recommendation to put the deferment of college students upon the essential grounds of merit and ability rather than those of professional mark.

NATIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEE,
A.I.A.

The Discipline of Architecture

By *George Bain Cummings*, F.A.I.A.

I HAVE RECENTLY ENJOYED an experience in spirit-stretching of which I avail myself annually—returning to the beautiful campus of my Alma Mater, Cornell University, at commencement time. Not only does Nature appear at her very best at such a time and on that particular site, but in the comingling of so many members of the Cornell family—students, alumni, faculty and administrators—occurs a heart-warming reaffirmation of faith in goodness, truth and high purpose that is richly rewarding. I would not miss it. And as year is added upon year the experience grows more meaningful and precious.

In the academic ranks walk distinguished scholars who are great teachers, their robes richly colored with significant design, each indicating the discipline professed by the wearer. Because we know these men as friends, our awe is coupled with affection, our humility coupled with pride in the knowledge that they and we are members of the same historical era, of the same civilization, of the same society, of the same spiritual dedication. At Cornell we call it

Freedom and Responsibility. It is of this dedication that I write.

The discipline we architects profess is difficult to define or confine. Webster discusses discipline as teaching, instruction, tutoring; as that which is taught—learning, doctrine; as training or course of training which corrects, molds, strengthens or perfects; as control gained by enforcing obedience or order—the quality or state of orderliness gained through self-control—orderly conduct; as a rule or system of rules affecting conduct or action.

The discipline of Architecture is all of these. It demands all of a man's mind, to comprehend and assimilate; all of a man's skill and ability, to practise; all of a man's spirit, honorably to account for its stewardship. It demands integrity, industry, intelligence, imagination, initiative. It demands courage, perseverance, sacrifice and constant striving.

We are free men—by the grace of God and our heritage. Conjoined with our freedom, and not to be dissociated from it, is our responsibility. Socially responsible

practice of our profession demands that the Architect be a "whole man"—gentleman, scholar, citizen, philosopher. Out of his productive time and income he should give a tithe to the betterment of his community and the society to which he owes his life and his living. Nothing less than a life-time dedication to the ideals of his profession will suffice for his ultimate satisfaction and happiness.

We who are the members of the profession are responsible for making it of fullest possible usefulness to present and future society; for the recruitment of large numbers of those whose natural endowment or talent promises competence and social usefulness, after proper training; for the provision for specialized instruction and training of these recruits; for provision for and devotion to continuing investigation, experiment and invention; for the sharing of experience and the dissemination of all useful professional knowledge. As individuals we bear our personal share of this group responsibility. If we shirk in performing our share, either the total job will suffer or others will be forced to do more than their share.

But there is one aspect of our responsibility that no one else can

discharge for us. Where we as individuals live and practise our profession, we *are* the profession. The profession and all architects are judged by us. No program of national publicity or public relations will avail, if in our own community we fail to do a good job. Here is a responsibility we cannot transfer, we cannot shirk. Upon us personally and individually rests the yoke of the discipline of our profession. Of each of us is demanded the most meticulous care in the handling of each commission entrusted to us.

The important things are that we realize and accept our social responsibility; that we acknowledge that our education is a continuing process; that we give ever our very best in professional service.



Do we need an architect's equivalent of the Hippocratic Oath? And, if so, would it be something like this?

Humbly and proudly I profess my competence under the discipline of architecture.

Upon my most shining personal honor I promise unending devotion to the task of continually studying, learning, seek-

ing, experimenting, that I may become ever better educated and trained for my work.

Upon my most shining personal honor I promise to my community undeviating adherence to the ideal of service to my fellowmen, as the goal of my effort, that I may honestly and fully earn my living—my right to live among them.

Upon my most shining personal honor I promise to maintain that integrity in practice which will insure to each client the finest possible stewardship of his interest.

Upon my most shining per-

sonal honor I promise in the execution of every commission to strive to create beauty as well as order, character as well as safety, spiritual value as well as convenience.

Upon my most shining personal honor I promise to join with my fellow architects to make our profession of greatest possible usefulness and benefit to our society, to share and disseminate all valuable professional knowledge, and to pass on to the succeeding generation the full and fine discipline of our profession, enriched because of my dedication.

Neither form alone, nor function alone, nor both together alone, will achieve Architecture

Form, Function and Expression

VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY LOUIS SULLIVAN

By Robert Woods Kennedy

THE WORD ARCHITECTURE is defined in Webster's as: "Art or science of building especially for the purpose of civil life." The learned lexicographers who wrote this definition were unable to decide whether architecture is in fact an art or science, which was both thoughtful and accurate of them. With equal thoughtfulness they

also say that this art or science of building is especially for civil life, in other words, for man at his most courteous and urbane. Implicit in this definition is the idea that architecture is not concerned with minima. Architecture is shelter transformed by man's instinct for workmanship. It is building into which has been poured more than

the minimum of thought and labor required for its primary purpose. It is concerned with optima, in the biologist's sense, with "the most favorable conditions as to temperature, light, moisture, food, etc. for the growth and reproduction of an organism." And it is also concerned with optima in a cultural sense; it must be expressive of its author, of its time and place, and it must be beautiful. The first of these requirements has often been called function, the second form. This is to confuse form, bricks, and mortar, with expression, an appeal to the senses. Form and function are parts of the same idea.

Louis Sullivan in his famous essay on Function and Form took all three elements fully into account. His student says: "What you want me to understand and hang on to is that just as every form has its function, and exists by virtue of it, so every function finds or is striving to find its form."¹ Later in the same essay he goes on to describe how this idea develops. His student says:

"Then I infer that I can go on and consider my detail as of itself a mass, if I will, and proceed with the regular and systematic subdivision of function with form, as before, and I will always have a

similarity, an organic quality—I can guess what you mean—descending from the mass down to the minutest subdivision of detail. That's interesting isn't it? The subdivisions and details will descend from the mass like children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, and yet, they will be, all, of the same family."

"Yes, yes. Very good so far as it goes. But I wish to warn you, my dear boy, that a man might follow the program you have laid down, to the very last detail of details, and yet have a very dry, pedantic, prosaic result. He might produce a completely logical result, so-called, and yet an utterly repellent one—a cold, a vacuous negation of architecture."²

Obviously Sullivan's frequently quoted "form follows function" was not interpreted by him as it was by the functionalists. He considers the business of properly relating them a matter of *professional technique*, not an end in itself, and he makes this abundantly clear. Later on his student asks:

"Well then, tell me for myself—

¹ Sullivan, Louis: "Kindergarten Chats." Scarab Fraternity Press, Washington, D. C., 1934, Page 41. (A later edition is published by Wittenborn Schultz, Inc., New York.—Ed.)

² Ibid. Page 44.

what will make architecture as you understand it?"

"First of all a poetic imagination; second, a broad sympathy, humane character and a thoroughly disciplined mind; third, a perfected technique; and fourth, and sweetest of all, an abundant and gracious gift of expression."

"Then you don't go much on logic?"

"It has its excellent uses. It is valuable in the hands of a mathematician for example."³

Design can be defined as the art of synthesising form and function at a certain point in time. To place this act in time is highly important, for the synthesis is a temporary one. Architecture as an art is so durable as to seem eternal. Architecture as optimum shelter is short-lived. Time gradually separates form from function. Man's sense of beauty, while it drifts, does not change; whereas his sense of appropriate function is constantly changing. As we lose sight of and forget earlier functional requirements, our view of architecture becomes more and more purely esthetic. And the further back in time we go, the more difficult it is to see a building as the synthesis of form and function which it originally was. By default, that abil-

ity becomes the province of the scholar. Leonardo da Vinci, for example, in his *Codice Atlantico* manuscript described the living functions of his time like this: "The large room for the master and that for the family should have the kitchen between them and in both the food may be served through wide and low windows, or by tables that turn on swivels. The wife should have her own apartment and hall apart from that of the family, so that she may set her serving-maids to eat at another table in the small hall. She should have two other apartments as well as her own, one for the serving-maids, the other for the wet nurses, and ample space for their utensils."⁴ Today we can not guess from a cursory look that the Italian sixteenth-century house was used thus. It is small wonder then that in our ignorance of its true function, ancient architecture appears in the guise of a slow and beautiful evolution of form; as art for art's sake.

It is out of this distorted view of the past that the fallacy of architecture as pure art arises. As soon as ancient architecture is seen

³ *Ibid.* Page 45.

⁴ da Vinci, Leonardo: "Notebooks." Reynal & Hitchcock, New York, 1939. Arranged by Edward MacCurdy. Page 1036.

separated from its function, it immediately seems logical to go on using its forms, in that they are still beautiful. Because these forms were part and parcel of the functions of their day, they must be altered to fit the new requirements, or our new requirements must be abandoned in favor of the old forms. To attempt either is, as Sullivan pointed out, technically unsound. The numerous and horrible revivals of our own and of the eclectic period are indications of the accuracy of his analysis.

Related to the fallacy of architecture as historic form is another, to which the "artistic" architect is particularly subject. It might be called the fallacy of form for form's sake. To fall into it is to allow the shape of a building to develop along lines of its own, unrelated to the functions of men which it is to house. At best it results in a large amount of useless structure simply to fill out the building's form. At worst it actually prevents a functional arrangement of some or all of the building's parts, for the sake of what appears to be a beautiful result. Many of the designers in this mode use forms we have learned to think of as "functional," in a completely unfunctional way. They

are admired for the neatness and simplicity of their plans and structural details, achieved at the expense of every other relevant consideration. This substitution of neatness for "Firmness, Commodity and Delight"⁵ is again primarily a failure in technique.

If one grants that the functions of a building are at best ephemeral, then it is only as an art that architecture can be eternal. To design a building as a purely functional object is not only to prevent it from giving that final and delicate pleasure which man holds so valuable; it is to make it positively offensive, to miss architecture all together. Man holds the esthetic sense so valuable that he will continue to get along in functionally obsolete buildings simply because they are beautiful, and full of meaning. Yet, the pit of architecture as pure function, like the pit of architecture as pure art, is one into which many designers have fallen, unmindful that as synthesists, they cannot be partisan. This was the fate of the European Functionalists, of the early nineteen hundreds. Their metamorphosis is a fresh reminder that

⁵ Wotton, Henry Sir. "Elements of Architecture." London 1624. Part I, page 1.

neither pure function nor pure form are the ways to architecture. There is nothing for it but that the architect must constantly and conscientiously develop both phases of his art and science. He must study architecture as an art, in the buildings around him, and as history, in order to develop a frame of reference. He must constantly seek out and organize objectively new attitudes toward materials, assemblies, and living functions in order that his work may remain useful for even the shortest period. But the fact remains that both of these aspects of architecture are preparations for a technical process, and do not guarantee in any way, no matter how carefully they are performed, a fine result. The bare synthesis of form and function is not enough. It must be accomplished with an ulterior, clearly defined, artistic motive in mind.

The person using architecture, once his functional requirements have been met, quite legitimately demands that it be expressive. He is happier when his emotions and intellect are excited. It is worth noting that for many people this requirement outweighs their functional demands. One of Mr. Wright's clients is quoted as saying: "I know the roof has leaked,

and that the skylights leak, but I would rather live in this house than any other house in the world."⁶

There are several facets of expression in architecture each one of which helps produce this kind of response. Two of them are of particular interest today, in that one or the other is virtually always omitted from current building. The first is that imparted by the architect himself to his work. ". . . art" says Herbert Read "is the expression of the uniqueness of a personality," and he goes on to say later on in the same essay: "Since the Renaissance the personality of the architect is stamped on every building of any artistic value, until we come to the functional architecture of our time."⁷ This distrust of self on the part of the architect, this tendency to lean on standardized and accepted forms removes one of architecture's greatest sources of pleasure. Furthermore it has had the effect of making the functional style seem dated and cliché-ridden before its time.

An equally important characteristic of building as expression is that it must open up for us some

⁶ Mrs. Gregor Affleck. *Progressive Architecture*. October, 1946. Page 70.

⁷ Read, Herbert. "The Grass Roots of Art." Wittenborn and Co., New York, 1947. Page 15.

new perception of the nature of our time. This feeling is completely absent from most eclectic work. What we miss is the sense of an intuitive reorganization of form to better express some new function. We require an intellectualization of our current position. This need not be at all complex. Many an architect's rendering appears in the press over the ridiculous caption, "Artist's Conception of the Future." And, in its more subtle forms, this need of prophecy is still news to those who seek it. Ortega y Gasset expresses this beautifully, and incidentally ties art, science and expression together in a particularly significant way when he says: ". . . it is in art and pure science, precisely because they are the freest activities and least dependant on social conditions, that the first signs of any changes of collective sensibility becomes noticeable. A fundamental revision of man's attitude towards life is apt to find its first expression in artistic creation and scientific theory. The fine texture of both these matters renders them susceptible to the slightest breeze of the spiritual trade-winds. As in the country, opening the window of a morning, we examine the smoke rising from the chimney-stacks in

order to determine the wind that will rule the day, thus we can, with a similar meteorologic purpose, study the art and science of the young generation."⁸

These two aspects of Sullivan's sweet, abundant and gracious gift of expression can probably not be consciously used by the architect. "Artists are to a considerable degree automatons—that is to say, they unwittingly transmit in their work a sense of scale, proportion, symmetry, balance and other abstract qualities which they have acquired through their purely visual and therefore physical response to their natural environment."⁹ It is perhaps because of this fact that architects have so violently argued one formula (the house is a machine) against another (the house is a stage set), forgetting that Sullivan, in whose name so much of this is done, was guilty of no such oversimplification. A third formula (the house is a personal expression) is gaining ground currently. One can only hope, in view of how poorly the first two notes

⁸ Ortega y Gasset, Jose. "The Dehumanization of Art and Notes on the Novel." Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1948. Page 42.

⁹ Read, Herbert. "The Grass Roots of Art." Wittenborn and Co., New York, 1947. Page 11.

sounded unaccompanied, that architects will play the whole chord

now that its last note has been re-discovered.

Architecture as a Political Weapon

By Hugo Leipziger-Pearce

CONSULTANT, TO THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND TO THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR GERMANY

THE POTENTIAL of "Architecture as a political weapon" has been forcefully stated by Bernard Shaw and Frank Lloyd Wright. Herbert Read and others have fully elaborated on the timely significance of this premise. Undoubtedly, it has taken on new and rather crucial implications in the light of recent East-West ideological controversies. In the opinion of many, Western Germany has emerged as the actual testing ground where both concepts are building up strength, while facing each other not only politically but culturally as well.

As part of accepted strategic responsibilities in this struggle, the United States has developed most effective tactics through the Department of State. In contrast to the blaring techniques adopted by the other side, our purpose consists of demonstrating the American way of life to the Germans under the watchful eyes of Europe as a whole. The Voice of America,

the Exchange of Persons Program and the Information Centers or America Houses enjoy great popularity because of their restraint from propaganda.

Twenty-seven America Houses and 122 Reading Rooms, from Hamburg in the North to Berlin and Munich in the South, have concentrated on a large program, interpreting American cultural intent and purpose by the spoken and printed word, movies, exhibitions and every other means available. A recent survey shows that in the U. S. Zone of Germany alone roughly 931,000 people or 7% of the entire population over 15 years of age have visited a center one or more times. To quote one top-level executive of the German Economy, also of Resistance fame: "In its over-all effect of bolstering morale, every America House is the equivalent of a whole U. S. Army Division." This brings to mind Bernard Shaw's argument on Architecture and Aesthetics in his

recent "Everybody's Political What's What": "The education that sticks after school is aesthetic education," and "Fine Arts should be ranked with . . . science, education and fighting power as a political power."

Probably, the contribution of greatest significance for architecture and city planning in Germany has been provided by the momentous AIA Havana exhibit and the British Town Planning exhibit, now circulated among the larger cities of Germany. The America House Program itself is presently engaged in demonstrating the organic functional design approach through its own new buildings for Ruhr-Essen and Stuttgart. As a result of my experience as consultant for these two projects, in addition to housing and city planning matters, I have suggested competitions for future projects of this kind to be sponsored by the State Department among American Schools of Architecture, under the supervision of The American Institute of Architects. I am also in favor of extending the large Exchange Program of the State Department to the Schools of Architecture and Planning in this country as a two-way procedure. My

participation in an international three-weeks workshop of young professional people and students from France, England, Holland and Germany in Stuttgart, to discuss "How to Rebuild our Destroyed Cities," has convinced me that Europe's vast reconstruction program is offering an educational opportunity without precedent, and it should not be left unutilized.

Housing figures in Germany seem to indicate a good start toward rehabilitation, with 255,000 units approved up to midyear and another 400,000 expected to follow next year. Yet the approach to this vital problem seems to miss the chance of generations, and constitutes a definite setback in our re-education effort for democracy. Our indifference toward problems involved in architecture, housing and city planning seems to be the more regrettable as many of the U. S.-sponsored individual building projects could be channelled into such an approach, rather than being treated as unconnected details. The alternative is heavy investment with certainty of premature obsolescence. This goes not only for location, site selection, building plans, but also for the building techniques employed. A large program comparable to the U. S.

Housing and Home Finance Agency's Research Program should be stimulated at once in order to overcome the enormous housing shortage. Presently encouraged methods of piecemeal construction can never hope to overcome the psychological and physical handicap of an unintegrated community pattern. The relationships between housing, recreation, schools and transportation, as well as separate demands for industry and commerce, are practically nowhere emphasized, let alone attempted as a new pattern for the development of a democratic neighborhood and community spirit. The role of the schools as neighborhood centers is

completely unknown. All this and more is ignored, while at the same time actual construction in large volume goes on without utilization toward a positive community environment. The prevailing picture of building back, brick by brick, the former city pattern of regimentation (particularly, the multistory barracks system of housing—*Mietskaserne*) is cancelling out much of the hopeful results of our re-education efforts so far. Particularly the younger generation cannot be expected to absorb democratic teachings fully as long as they are housed under the adverse environmental effects of the *New Slums*.

Down with Symmetry! What bungling in design it is—particularly in the human body!

The Emancipation of Architecture

By William Roger Greeley, F.A.I.A.

THE CHAINS OF TRADITION have been loosed from our long-chafed limbs, and the scales of eclecticism have fallen from eyes little accustomed to the clear light of day. The New Freedom is here. Never before has there been a complete emancipation, never before anything, in fact, but a limited progress in the direction *quo ante bellum*, so to speak. For the

ancients were all dyed-in-the-wool traditionalists. Each dynasty in Egypt started exactly where its predecessor left off, and was satisfied to copy the old, with such timid adventures into the field of originality as might be forced by new forms of worship, new community demands, new skills among the captured peoples who were enslaved and exploited.

Greece learned no new approach. One temple succeeded another in the same architectural style, the same material, the same plan arrangement. There were no outlaws, and there was no shaking off of traditional restraints.

Rome dipped into the tradition of Greece and strove to emulate it. Aqueducts, baths, arenas—these required engineering forms not previously developed, and so, through the need of solving new problems in construction, architecture expanded its vocabulary of forms, but even then did not abandon its traditions, and clothed the new walls with the old garments seeing the new forms as vulgar until they were ennobled by the time-honored vestments of antiquity.

What Rome did has been repeated by all subsequent cultures. The Romanesque evolved from the Classic, but the previous forms were not departures. They refined and modified but never repudiated precedent. The sturdy column became the attenuated colonnette. It was not changed when the Romanesque had become the Gothic.

All our Western history exhibits but one architecture, and from the

tomb of Tut to that of Grant the architect's eye has been admiringly fixed on the past.

Only now, in the twentieth century, is he clearly, freely, joyfully, looking forward.

What he sees and what he does with it will help to determine how soon the pendulum will swing back into the old habits.

He sees requirements for shelter of a new kind—types of buildings never needed before. He sees new materials with novel properties making possible innumerable solutions of engineering problems.

He sees function as a dominant factor in design. A modern building housing various activities calls for a modern plan, in which orientation, circulation, ventilation, illumination and safe egress can be achieved only through complete freedom from the cramping influences of symmetry and proportion in the external shell of the building. The true functional expression of a complicated and diverse set of plan requirements is obviously an asymmetrical uninhibited envelope.

When all is said and done a building is an organism and must function as such. Serviceability must not be sacrificed to symmetry. As an example of an organism in

which everything is sacrificed to symmetry, behold the human body! How can it do its work properly with a diversity of complicated organs crowded into a streamlined and rigorously balanced exterior? It seems harsh to criticize a design so classic and so universally employed, but, really, our own torso is so stupidly built on a central axis, with every part exactly forced into the shape of its opposite neighbor! No matter how much the conservative mind, warped by precedent and subservient to past forms, may continue to admire the outward lines of "Miss America," the day has come for a freer and more honest expression of the functions that her body has to perform. Let us redesign her primary mass with a thought to what it contains.

Let the two lungs continue to balance each other, and let there be a spigot for milk and a spigot for orange juice axially placed as a sop to custom, but let not the heart be crowded in against one lung. Rather give it ample room to perform its vital pulsations by attaching it externally above the left breast. Here it can have freedom of movement, and if ailing, can much more easily be repaired than

in its present inaccessible pocket back of bony ribs. Lower down, with nothing to balance it, is the huge mass of the liver, crowding the intestines on the right. Better far to increase its assignment of space by adding, frankly, an excrescence, like a great tumor, above the right hip. Already Miss America would begin to make sense. As for her head, we have been told often enough about the sophistries of a false dome, serving no useful purpose. Miss America certainly has no need of one, and we will redesign her upper story, substituting a much more logical flat roof extending directly back from the eyebrows and provided with pores exuding waterproof wax to replace the bothersome and really inefficient fibrous thatch so universally demanded by the traditionalists.

These are only hints, but they are sufficient to indicate the possibilities of a female form which would make Miss America completely satisfying not only to the emancipated *eye* but also to the ardent and exacting *mind* of the modern designer!

Not that this reform can in any sense be restricted to the human frame. Symmetry at the expense of functional honesty has led the

Classic Designer to the most absurd and extravagant vagaries and the most fantastically elaborate caprices. Think of a hundred billion snow flakes, every one worked out on the basis of a symmetrical geometrical *parti*! Then realize that all that is needed is a hunk of H₂O in solid form—any shape would do, the simpler the better, and of course symmetry here is a ridiculous waste of talent.

Look at this tree and weep at the insincerity of its design! Its chief activity, above ground, is to expose the leaf surfaces to the sun in order to promote a chemical process. Any sensible designer would arrange the leaves all on the east, south and west, leaving the north unoccupied! But no! Symmetry must be had at all costs, so here is your wineglass elm loaded with equal foliage all around—imagine it! And see this towering spruce—a forced and dishonest plan, just calculated to tickle the uneducated eye of the sentimental traditionalist!

Some day, when we get control of Nature, intelligent designers who understand the importance of a free and uninhibited approach to problems of functional form will discard the limitations of axial symmetry, and we shall then have

side-hill cows such as Vermont farmers have always longed for, with two short legs on the up-hill side as they graze along; and we shall devise butterflies with one red and one green wing to guard against flight collisions; and this will be only a beginning, but in the meantime we shall have to live among a tiresome plethora of axial symmetry, relieved only by the fiddler crab among crawling things and the skunk cabbage among blossoms. In this great crusade for truer and saner design it is fitting that man should begin in the field of his own artifacts, leaving the errors of nature and of nature's God to be corrected later when he has gained the power. Already he has begun the great advance.

He has risen above the pyramids, the Parthenon, St. Peter's, Rheims, the Brooklyn Bridge and the Lincoln Memorial toward the new freedoms in design. For the column of Trajan he is substituting that of Lally, and for the seven gables a sawtooth roof; for a cloistered colonnade the more logical cantilevered slab.

Down with the reminiscent and traditional. Down, in particular, with the axis, and hail the Freer Form!

Ten Books on Architecture

By *Marion Dean Ross*

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND ALLIED ARTS,
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

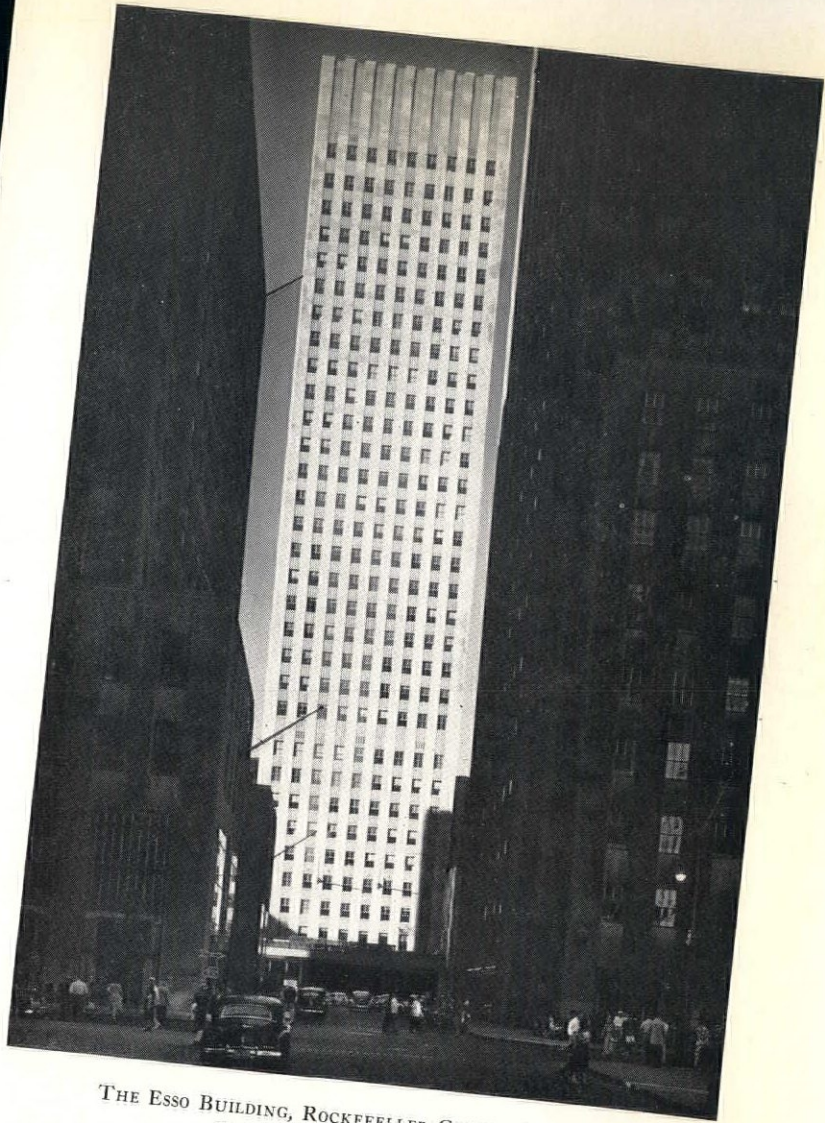
NEARLY EVERYONE reads something, and to many readers there has probably come at one time or another the urge to list the books they have liked best or considered great or important. The bookish person may have often done this, though perhaps he has not often had the boldness to offer his choice to others. If the bookish person is also a teacher, he has no doubt made such selections for his students, though perhaps never precisely called them "great books." So it is with some hesitation that I am presenting to the general reader a selection of ten books that have for me greatly illuminated the study of architecture.

Just a hundred years ago last Spring one of the most widely read books on architecture of all time appeared in England. This was John Ruskin's "Seven Lamps of Architecture." Probably many people today could still claim this as the only major work on architecture that they have ever read. However, time has dealt hardly with Ruskin, and not many serious

critics of modern architecture give a gracious welcome to the "Seven Lamps." While it is still, in many respects, a great book, it is not in my list.

There are other very well known works that might figure in many lists of important books on architecture, but which I will not be able to include. Vitruvius, the oldest surviving writer on architecture, is still available in many languages more than 2000 years after his day. This is a recommendation that is hard to ignore. Others have pressing claims to be included in any such selection, and to name a few will show how strong their cause may be: Many readers will wonder at the omission of Alberti, Palladio, and Vignola among the Italians; the great French writers—de l'Orme, Blondel, Viollet-le-Duc, and Choisy; John Shute, the first English writer on architecture, and Campbell, Kent, Chambers, Adams, or others in the great tradition he began.

It is true that architecture is not limited by language, and books in foreign languages have influenced



THE ESSO BUILDING, ROCKEFELLER CENTER, NEW YORK
CARSON & LUNDIN, ARCHITECTS
Photographs by Ezra Stoller



BLOOMINGDALE'S STORE, FRESH MEADOWS, FLUSHING, N. Y.
VOORHEES, WALKER, FOLEY & SMITH, ARCHITECTS
Photograph by Sigurd Fischer

builders or patrons even though their text was never understood. Architecture was one of the earliest fields to be treated by the printed book, and ever since the invention of printing, books, both through their text and illustrations, have exercised an increasing influence on building, the importance of which can hardly be overestimated.

After all these limitations, it may seem that this list can scarcely include any *great books*, and perhaps in the historical sense it does not. Only time can be the judge of this. I have tried to select ten outstanding works of the twentieth century that have made a considerable contribution to our understanding of architecture and its place in civilization. Since I expect that anyone who may be interested in perusing this collection is more at home in English than in any other language, all are available in this tongue (some in good translations). To borrow terminology from one of these writers, the books have been selected because they present the *constituent* rather than the *transitory* aspects of contemporary architectural criticism. Not all of the books are of equal merit. Some of the authors present conflicting viewpoints, but

all have in some way influenced our seeing and thinking of architecture.

Among the authors in this short list, some are already well known to architect and layman alike. Pevsner, Giedion and Mumford have been widely acclaimed. It might be possible to formulate some order of importance from the popularity of these writers, but I believe that the pattern of development of the contemporary view will be better served if we consider the books in the order of their appearance without attempting too fine a discrimination of individual importance.

Published first in 1914 and in a second edition in 1924, "The Architecture of Humanism," by Geoffrey Scott (London: Constable and Company) is an appropriate introduction to the twentieth-century vision. The author confesses in the introduction that he had first intended to write on the principles of classical design, but finding the various opinions on architecture so confusing that no theory could be made convincing, he turned to the study of the basic concepts of architecture. Ruskinian rhetoric had obscured the meaning of architecture to such an extent that it was impossible to appreciate the true relation of the history of

taste to the history of ideas. Scott skillfully disposes of the academic taboos, and frees the study of architecture from the Romantic, Mechanical, Ethical, and Biological Fallacies of nineteenth-century criticism. Without denying the need for functional design and sound construction, he recognizes the essential quality of space, coherently developed, as the basis of beauty in architecture. In his analysis he frequently turns to Baroque art, then generally neglected, to illustrate this development, and we will find that other influential critics will also do this in the years following. It is important to mention that Scott does not forget man in his study of space, constantly emphasizing the humanistic qualities of design. For him, ". . . architecture deals with space directly; it uses space as material and sets us in the midst."

From a defense of the Renaissance to the violent manifesto of one of the leading modernists may appear a sudden change, but both are in essence concerned with a return to first principles, to the buildings themselves, in the critical analysis of architecture. In 1922 Le Corbusier first published "Vers Une Architecture" (Paris: G. Cres et Cie.), a book which since

has had numerous French editions and twice been published in English. It contains the major theme of this prolific writer and architect. Though somewhat repetitious and overly didactic, it has influenced countless young designers in all parts of the world. Le Corbusier clears away the consideration of architecture as a "style" that can be put on or left off as one might a feather on a woman's hat. In common with Scott, he emphasizes the concern of architecture with space, mass or volume, line and proportion. While advocating a manner of building expressive of this century, he finds the prototypes of successful space integration in the great buildings of Greece, Rome and the Baroque. Even now one might be surprised to find a discussion of St. Peter's in a book on the new architecture, yet not only does St. Peter's appear, but the Parthenon is compared with a Delange "Grand Sport" model of 1921. The beauty of form, as well as the mechanical fitness, of the products of the industrial world is given a place beside the great monuments of the past.

In this remarkable book many of the ideas that have become so familiar in the discussion of modern design, find their earliest expres-

sion. The house is a "machine for living-in." Architecture of the new age is to be raised on "pilotis" (stilts), it is to have an *ossature indépendante* (skeleton construction), a *plan libre* (free plan), a *facade libre* (free elevations), and a *toit-jardin* (roof garden). We are all acquainted with these features today, and not only in the work of Le Corbusier but also in that of many other modern architects. Since certain critics have accused him of reducing building to a machine product, it is perhaps worth quoting from "Vers Une Architecture" that "*L'Architecture est au dela des choses utilitaires.*"

In selecting the next book, I have not been concerned with an evaluation of contemporary design. Saxe-verell Sitwell's "Southern Baroque Art" (London: Grant Richards, 1924), as the title indicates, takes us to the seventeenth century, and is not concerned with architecture alone but with the unity of the arts in time and place. The prejudice of the past that great art belongs to some particular times, while other periods are of inferior interest, is dealt a severe blow. "One of my objects has been to dispel the smoke-clouds in the belief that there has been no age in history

that is not worth examination." And he further explains, "my aim . . . has been to examine . . . the spirit and atmosphere of the time and place . . .". The pleasures of Caserta, La Granja and the Indies are conjured up as Fari-nelli's singing did that of Philip V. Though the aim of the book is avowedly to reproduce the atmosphere of the epoch, it is soundly documented with a bibliographical and biographical appendix.

"Modern Architecture, Romanticism and Reintegration," (New York: Payson and Clarke, 1929), the work of Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr. is the first scholarly study of the history of architecture in the last two centuries to appear in English. Hitchcock was one of the earliest writers to see the nineteenth century as part of the formative period of modern architecture and to present the unity of this development. Though the book suffers from a rather too arbitrary use of stylistic "tags," due to its pioneering position, the material is sound and informative and especially important for relating American and European contributions.

Lewis Mumford, the most universally acknowledged and respected critic of architecture in America, has written a number of

important works, but in this list I would like to include only one. "The Culture of Cities" (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1938) was the second part of a trilogy on the machine, the community, and man. This is the volume in which architecture has the greatest part. It is a study of man's total architectural environment, plus, of course, much more. The growth of the city in Western culture from the Dark Ages to the troublesome times of this century is presented with its benefits and disadvantages. The book is concerned with man's struggle to form a satisfactory urban environment, in particular with his struggle with the machine age, and the possibilities for a new order through intelligent application of the machine and machine processes. The broader social basis of architecture that has come to be one of the characteristics of our time is studied in its development. Lewis Mumford has in this, and in other books and articles, been one of the pioneers in presenting ideas of architecture as the by-product of social development, yet he has never lost sight of the study of the forms themselves.

"Space, Time and Architecture" (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), by Sigfried Giedion, ap-

peared in 1941. Its very title indicates its comprehensiveness and explains the vision of this century. It is a truly great work—in my opinion, one of the most significant volumes on architecture so far produced in this century. It combines an understanding of the visual significance of architecture with its technical and functional development in history. As another critic has said, "it reaches beyond architecture to civilization as a whole," yet it is above all a penetrating book on architecture. Dr. Giedion discusses the role of space in the late Baroque and then relates this to the twentieth century. A continuous thread is spun from the last great historical period to our day; the technical achievements in iron, glass and concrete; the part played by the new country of America; and the relation of painting and sculpture to architecture are all drawn into the pattern in a consistent and meaningful scheme. Finally the theme is expanded to encompass the town and city in a total unity of the arts. The selection of the illustrations deserves an additional word of praise, for in this field Dr. Giedion is an unrivalled master.

That a short book of little more than 200 pages on the history of architecture, published in the midst

of a great war (1943) should have an almost immediate sale of over 100,000 copies is remarkable enough. But it is truly astonishing that it should be kept in print, re-issued in more expensive format in the United States, and be universally acclaimed as a "classic" in its field. "An Outline of European Architecture," by Nikolaus Pevsner, will almost certainly remain one of the classics of this century. Western architecture as the expression of Western civilization is analyzed in a concise and comprehensive study of the Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque and Romantic phases of its history. Pevsner recognizes the complex nature of architecture, but emphasizes its unique position among the arts as the mistress of space. "Thus the history of architecture is primarily a history of man shaping space . . .". Dr. Pevsner is able to cover his subject in such short compass only by an especially careful selection of representative examples which are analyzed at length. They are chosen from those areas of Western culture that most completely express the spirit of their particular age. This is a book packed with solid information presented in a very readable style. In some respects it provides a back-

ground to the material covered by Giedion in "Space, Time, and Architecture," but if I had to recommend just one book on architecture, it would be this "Outline." The later editions of the book have a postscript on architecture in the United States which is of interest to the American reader.

The next book is again different. "Georgian London" (New York: Scribners, 1946), by John Summerson, is the story of building in one city in a limited span of time. Because London is in many respects the archetype of the modern city, the first great city in the West to be affected by the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the middle-class democracy, the study of its development is particularly pertinent today. Mr. Summerson brings architecture, biography and topography together with taste, and the growth of wealth and commerce, into the vision of the world's greatest city in the age of its growth and expansion. War and peace, church and state, and the private builder, are seen as they influence the character of town architecture.

Finally, the last book is another work by Sigfried Giedion, "Mechanization Takes Command"

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1948). In his earlier book Dr. Giedion studied space and architecture in a comparatively limited period. Here movement is studied as it is expressed in what he calls "anonymous history." The everyday things that touch all human life so nearly that they are often neglected as commonplace are as expressive of man's feeling and taste as any product of the major arts. The author's range of interest—from locks to habits of bathing and artificial insemination of animals—may at first seem remote from architecture, but they actually fill the gaps and make complete the ground from which the great monuments arise. More closely related is the study of mechanization as it affects our perception of space and movement. From everyday things we can approach the basic principles expressed in the arts. The chapters on the evolution of the bath and of furniture are among the best of the book. The whole concept of comfort is studied afresh. These studies have an intimate connection with the American way of life. Our ancestors in the nineteenth century were among the pioneer enthusiasts

for mechanized movement in all aspects of life, and we reflect this preoccupation in our abiding concern with gadgets.

If the reader will conscientiously study these books, not necessarily in the order they have been here presented, he will be rewarded with an understanding of the importance of space as the essence of architecture, with the unity of expression in the arts of any one period, and the appreciation of a wonderful and orderly spatial synthesis characteristic of the age in which we live. The Baroque has frequently been mentioned for it is the last fully integrated and completely expressed development of the arts in Western society before our time, and many of these writers have used it as a plane of reference for the study of contemporary tendencies and to generate the basic principles that govern architectural expression. May I also hope that reading from this list will encourage the appreciation and critical judgment of architecture for its architectural qualities rather than on some *a priori* analogy to the nature of man, morality or the machine.

Honors

EDGAR I. WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A., has been elected President of the Municipal Art Society of New York, succeeding Francis Keally, F.A.I.A., in that office.

PAUL G. BURT, a partner in the firm of Fugard, Burt, Wilkinson & Orth, Architects, has been appointed by Governor Stevenson a member of the Illinois Advisory Hospital Council.

LAWRENCE B. ANDERSON, Professor in charge of the Department of Architecture at Massachusetts

Institute of Technology, has been honored by the University of Minnesota Alumni Association with its Award for Outstanding Achievement. The award is made in the form of a medal and citation to former students of the University who have attained signal distinction in their fields.

EARL T. HEITSCHMIDT, F.A.I.A., has been appointed by Governor Earl Warren of California to the State Board of Architectural Examiners, succeeding Winsor Soule, F.A.I.A., of Santa Barbara.

Calendar

November 2-3: 11th Annual Convention of the Texas Society of Architects, Baker Hotel, Dallas.

November 2-4: Annual Convention of the N. Y. State Association of Architects, Syracuse, N. Y.

November 9-11: Annual Convention of the Louisiana Architects Association and Annual Meeting of Chapter Officers of Gulf States District, New Orleans, La.

November 21: Building Research Advisory Board research correlation conference on "Fire Resistance of Exterior Non-Load-Bearing Walls," National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D. C. (Postponed from Sept. 26.)

November 27-December 2: 19th National Exposition of Power and Mechanical Engineering, Grand Central Palace, New York, N. Y., under auspices of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

December 1-2: Great Lakes Regional Seminar, Oliver Hotel, South Bend, Ind. Architects and their wives from Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois and Wisconsin are invited.

January 21-25, 1951: 7th Annual Convention and Exposition of the National Association of Home Builders, Stevens and Congress Hotels, Chicago, Ill.

January 22-25, 1951: American

Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers, Annual Meeting, Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, Philadelphia. *January 22-26, 1951*: 10th International Heating and Ventilating Exposition, Commercial Museum.

January 29-31, 1951: Annual meeting, Society of Architectural Historians, Statler Hotel, Washington, D. C.

September, 1951: Congress on Building Research, to be held during the Festival of Britain, London, with the purpose of reviewing

the progress made in research in relation to architecture, building, and associated branches of civil engineering. Those interested in having further details may address The Organising Secretary, Building Research Station, Bucknalls Lane, Garston, Watford, Herts, England.

November 14-28, 1951: Building Exhibition, Olympia, London. For further details address the Managing Director, 4 Vernon Place, London, W. C. 1.

News from the Educational Field

YALE UNIVERSITY'S Department of Architecture announces the winner of the first prize in the Sargent-Yale competition as Warren A. Peterson, of Jamestown, N. Y. Second prize went to Francis Kwai Hong Mah, of Honolulu, and third to Arnold Mogensen, of Denver, Colo. The competition called for the design of an exposition booth.

YALE UNIVERSITY'S Department of Architecture also announces the creation and initial award of a fellowship designed to stimulate interest in hospital planning—the Magnus P. Hopper Memorial Fellowship in Hospital Architecture. Dr. Hopper spent the last years of a long and distinguished medical

career as Medical Director of the Carson C. Peck Memorial Hospital in Brooklyn. The first recipient of the fellowship is Chia-Yi Jen, Tientsin, China.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON'S School of Architecture and Allied Arts announces as additions to its faculty the following, who will serve as critics in design: Heinrich Waechter, Associate Professor of Architecture; Edmond McCollin, Assistant Professor of Architecture; Donald Sites, Lionel Chadwick and Jan Smekens, Instructors in Architecture.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY'S School of Architecture has announced the appointment of Isadore Rosenfield



CONCRETE HOUSES, DAKAR, WEST AFRICA
WALLACE NEFF, ARCHITECT

Through the Marshall Plan, balloons were brought from the U. S. A. to serve, inflated, as forms on which to apply gunite. One native crew of five men builds one house in two days



THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS AND OTHER GUESTS AT A RECENT LUNCHEON IN THE OCTAGON

Photograph by
Gretchen Van Tassel

Edmund R. Purves is welcoming David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art and chairman of the Fine Arts Commission. Clockwise, from left: Dean Joseph Hudnut, Elbert Peets, H. P. Caemmerer (Executive Secretary of the Commission), Pietro Belluschi, George Biddle, Lorenzo S. Winslow (Architect of The White House), and Felix G. W. de Weldon

as a visiting critic in graduate design, with particular reference to a hospital program.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
announces the appointment of G.

Holmes Perkins as Dean of the School of Fine Arts. Mr. Perkins has been a professor in the Harvard Graduate School of Design and before that taught architecture at the University of Michigan.

How Should Our Cities Grow?

IN THREE PARTS—PART II

By Paul Windels

PRESIDENT, REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION, INC. OF NEW YORK

An address delivered at the Annual Convention, A.I.A.,
Washington, D. C., May 11, 1950

HOW CAN these plans be carried out? The first step is public interest and understanding. We need clarification of our thinking based on general discussion. We cannot expect results until the public has made up its mind what it wants and then compels official action.

We are told that in England national policies to modernize city patterns, which had been sought for years by civic and professional groups, were adopted in record time when houses were being destroyed by enemy action at the rate of one per minute. One atomic bomb dropped on any one of our great cities would, in that tragic moment, irrevocably change the future of every large city in this land. But why should we delay

until we are spurred into action by disaster? We must instead continue, at all times, to compel attention to the facts of our urban problems—a difficult but not impossible task.

To this end, every effort should be made to strengthen citizen organizations for metropolitan planning. Where they do not now exist they should be established. Most progress in government is initiated by citizen groups rather than by public officials. Planning for metropolitan development is no exception.

No nation in the world spends as much of its national income on research as the United States. The great problems of military defense, of conservation of our natural resources, improvement of our agri-

culture, development of our transportation systems, our industrial processes and our business methods are the subject of continuous research and planning by both official and private agencies. Large annual appropriations are made by national foundations for the advancement of the physical, medical and social sciences.

It is a startling fact, however, that the creation of comfortable and efficient forms of city and town life, of supreme importance to our future, is today barely touched by research.

There should be established a National Commission on Urban Population Distribution to study, report and make recommendations on trends in population movement to and within urban areas. Based on such information and advice, we would then be able to formulate long-range policies to guide the evolution of the unplanned and inefficient city of the past century into the planned and efficient metropolitan region of the next century.

As these metropolitan regions become more and more integrated, it is inevitable that new governmental agencies will be needed to meet regional needs. They are now beginning to appear. The

Port of New York Authority, and the newly created St. Louis Bi-State Development Agency, are striking examples. There are others throughout the nation.

The time has come when we should begin to experiment with the establishment by state legislative action of Metropolitan Districts, conforming to the boundaries established by the U. S. Census. These include cities of 50,000 or more which are at the center of an area containing a population of at least 100,000. State-created commissions should be established for each such Metropolitan District with coordinating powers in relation to master planning, zoning, subdivision control and the provision, on a regional basis, of public projects and facilities. To avoid local hostility, probably nothing more should be attempted initially than to have such official agencies act in an advisory capacity to local governments.

In the New York Region are contained 22 counties and over 500 units of local government, each with some power in relation to land use and development. This is an extreme case but the problem is common to every metropolitan region. The need of official coordi-

nating influences would seem to be apparent.

Another instrumentality to which we should begin to give some thought is New Town Development Corporations. Some states have already created agencies known as Urban Redevelopment Corporations to rebuild blighted areas in our central cities. Why not extend the idea to the planning of the new towns which we have proposed as a substitute for urban sprawl? Their purpose would be to correlate the interests of industry and business, builders of housing and financial institutions. Such agencies would be an effective means of channeling toward such organized efforts Federal aid in its various forms which are now, by uncoordinated application, increasing congestion in central cities and adding to urban sprawl.

The danger to all our cities, in the event of war, is indeed very great. Hysteria will not help us in this situation, and apathy would be the last word in national folly. Space and decentralization are said to be the most effective protections against damage by bombing. But clearly we cannot suddenly dismantle our cities and reassemble them in smaller units. The shock to our economy would be suicidal

in its effect even if it were remotely within the physical and financial limits of our powers. Whatever the dangers are we cannot avoid them by sudden changes.

While there is not much we can do in a hurry, we can at least see to it that as we develop our metropolitan regions we move in the right direction. It should be possible, over the years, gradually to improve conditions, thus reducing the temptation to attack and the amount of damage in the event of attack. If there is now a national policy in this supremely important matter of military defense it has been kept a deep and dark secret. Or is it perhaps more accurate to suggest that even at this late date we have not yet reached any conclusion about it?

Decentralization has been termed insurance against war. But insurance only makes good losses after damage has occurred. Decentralization is much more than insurance. It is a powerful deterrent to the outbreak of war.

It is also important to note that national defense policies in aid of reducing congestion are not expendable in the sense that if they are not needed for actual military defense they are wasted. Fortunately, there is no conflict between

long-range defense policies as related to cities, and the desirable peace-time objectives of city planning. The two move in the same direction. Policies urged by planners which were once the subjects of ridicule by alleged hard-boiled realists have unexpectedly become the essentials of military defense of cities. Thus the once scorned greenbelts between communities and neighborhoods are now respectfully referred to as firebreaks. Zoning controls and avoidance of congestion are publicly urged by military experts.

And entirely aside from military defense, few people realize how important a factor the Federal Government has become in the development of the nation's cities. For the past 20 years it has exercised a powerful influence upon the form and character of city growth. It, therefore, has a grave and direct responsibility for the cumulative effect of its policies.

For example, what are the policies which will guide the Bureau of Public Roads in the spending, during the next year, of almost a half billion dollars, including funds for highways in urban areas? Will they make urban concentration greater or will they encourage development toward the

suburbs? Will the Bureau favor new highways which will encourage residential areas free from through traffic or will it acquiesce in the blasting of new highways through existing residential districts?

Again the record will show that literally billions of dollars of Federal funds have been poured into cities for housing which have increased concentrations of population in central city areas and encouraged formless sprawl in the suburbs, both contrary to the military and defense interests of the nation.

At least we see the faint beginnings of Federal policy in the urban redevelopment sections of the National Housing Act of 1949, which call for "positive programs for encouraging and assisting the development of well-planned, integrated, residential neighborhoods (and) the development or redevelopment of communities." This Act also requires the Administrator to encourage the solution of community development or redevelopment problems on a state, regional or unified metropolitan basis and requires that each redevelopment plan conform to a general plan of the locality as a whole.

This is encouraging as a broad

start toward a policy, but what is it going to mean in practice? What kind of "general plans" for cities will be acceptable to the Administrator—those which perpetuate or increase obsolete patterns of crowded living, or only those which reduce the congestion of working and residential population?

It has been said that at present each Federal agency authorizing expenditures for development purposes in urban areas may do so without official knowledge of the related activities of other Federal agencies. And it is only too true that local and regional plans and

policies to which Federal agencies could conform have frequently been lacking. But Federal agencies should at least avoid running counter to our defense needs.

A broad and consistent Federal urban policy is required. Obviously its purpose should be to effectuate local planning subject only to the paramount necessities of national defense. We have a right to expect this much cooperation from the Federal Government in all such matters as highways, housing, urban redevelopment, airports, national parks, Federal hospitals and other types of Federal projects.

The Society of Architectural Historians

By Walter L. Creese

EDITOR, JOURNAL OF THE S. A. H.

THE SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS is this year a decade old and thus has itself become a legitimate subject for historical rumination. It was founded in 1940 by summer students at Harvard University, working under Professor Kenneth Conant. Dr. Turpin Bannister, then of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and at present head of the Department of Architecture at the University of Illinois, was its generat-

ing spirit, serving until 1943 as both president of the Society and editor of its *Journal*. Later presidents have been Rexford Newcomb of Illinois, Kenneth J. Conant of Harvard, Carroll L. V. Meeks of Yale and Buford L. Pickens of Tulane.

No special observations of this anniversary are planned. It is considered a sufficient tribute to its longevity that it has survived at all through one of the most physically

destructive and creatively inhibited periods architecture has known. The magazine has had a number of reverses, alternating between printing and mimeographing as support increased or costs mounted. The years 1946 and 1947 had to be taken at one leap with a single printed issue. At the same time it was found advisable to separate the duties of president and editor. Investigation showing that only one other country, Italy, had any comparable organization, led to the shortening of the title by dropping "American" from it. In spite of these changes, it has remained substantially the same society. Its chief aims, early and late, have been to promote pleasant contacts among those interested in architectural history, to foster an appreciation of architecture of all cultures, to disseminate research and to promote preservation. An annual meeting, normally in the latter part of January—and in 1951 to take place in Washington—and the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, published quarterly, are the major channels of communication. A notation of some of the special issues of the *Journal* yields a convenient, although incomplete, idea of the breadth of its investigations. In 1941 came the "Preserva-

tion of Historic Buildings;" in 1942, "History in Architectural Education;" in 1944, "History of City Planning" and "Medieval Architecture;" and in the one issue of 1946-47, "Latin American Architecture."

Research necessarily takes some time to arrive at the printing stage, and currently, perhaps mainly due to World War II and its elimination of study abroad, a good deal of attention is being devoted in the pages of the *Journal* to American material of all centuries. Probably this preoccupation with native buildings has something to do also with the generally heightened curiosity, developed during the war years and after, as to whether we actually have an "American" culture, and if so of what it may consist. The Society of Architectural Historians was one of the original sponsors of the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings, and plans with the October issue of its magazine to carry a section on American preservationism under the editorship of Charles Peterson of the National Park Service.

No matter what the interests of the moment, however, it is the ultimate purpose of the *Journal* to look upon the development of architecture as a continuous evolution,

striving to give neither more nor less emphasis to one country, century, or architect than is required by the diverse intellectual inclinations of our age. Although The American Institute of Architects has given generous assistance to this cause, the number of architect-readers and writers for the magazine does not bulk as large as might be wished. The fundamental intention that the publication should respond as directly and naturally as possible to the intellectual and spiritual needs of its discipline makes this sort of participation by architects seem preeminently desirable.

Of course architecture is among the most practical of the arts, and immersion in day-to-day problems must plainly limit the opportunities for study and speculation among the active profession. Nonetheless, it may be asked whether the great schism of the 1930's, when many architectural leaders were heard openly and often to imply that history was "the bunk," a Book of the Dead for dead people, did not have a great deal to do with the diminution of historical interest among practising architects. If this is true, then our only answer can be that some of those leaders

were too modest in acknowledging the impetus to their careers arising from early recognition of their worth in the writings of such as Hitchcock, Giedion and Mumford, and in the exhibitions of the Museum of Modern Art. Even if there were sufficient acknowledgment, it would still be extremely difficult to separate the black from the white sheep, to put the historians on one side and the alert critics interested in contemporary developments on the other. For these scholars, at least, have at one time or other concerned themselves with the architecture of centuries previous to the twentieth. Therefore, it is our belief that any sustained anti-historical feeling is out of order, and that the primary task now for architects and historians alike is to work toward an enriched comprehension of a complete past, being confined in the range of their investigations within it only by the time and energy at their collective disposal.

It seems as if it ought to go without saying that *the right to know* is one of the privileges and dignities of a free society in whatever branch of learning it may care to venture. But subordinate or in addition to this general benefit, is it not true that the historian, with

his projection and clarification of larger historical patterns, can help the architect to understand and resolve the balance of values between the pragmatic and the ideal which is the greatest challenge to his creative talent? In the same way, cannot the architect, by his observations and reactions, operating in an atmosphere of cultural awareness, help to keep the historian immediately sensitive to the tempo and temper of his own times and thus competent to accomplish the forever necessary reformation of history? Can escape from a consciousness of the past for architects have any more validity or justification than the attempt to escape from the present, of which the historians are sometimes accused? We think not. We hope not.

(Individual memberships in the Society are \$5, architectural firm

memberships are \$10, and contributing memberships from either source are \$15 or over. All types of membership receive the *Journal*. Checks are payable to the Society of Architectural Historians and should be sent to Mrs. John M. Gilchrist, 286 E. Sidney Avenue, Mount Vernon, N. Y. Articles in the last issue, to which anyone joining this year is entitled, are: "The Origin and Formation of Chinese Architecture" by Clay Lancaster of Columbia University; "Greene and Greene of Pasadena" by L. Morgan Yost, incoming president of the Chicago Chapter of the A.I.A.; "Richardson's American Express Building" by J. Carson Webster of Northwestern University; "Richardson's American Express Building: A Note," by Henry-Russell Hitchcock of Smith College; and "A City Called Beautiful," re-evaluating the Chicago Fair of 1893, by Christopher Tunnard of Yale University. There were 39 pages and 39 illustrations.)

They Say:

Julian Huxley

(In "Population and Human Destiny," Harper's Magazine)

Once we really grasp that our duty and our destiny is to provide and to live a richer life, we shall regard it as socially immoral to build ugly factories, to plan a drab and lifeless housing estate, or to

spend money on vulgar public housing.

Leon H. Keyserling

CHAIRMAN, COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS

(In a radio talk, August 9, 1950)

The only deficiency in public discussion and understanding since

the Korean outbreak is this: The discussion has concentrated so much upon the problem of controls, upon how we can divide what we now have between military and civilian use, upon how we can resist inflation while so doing—and all of these are essential *parts* of our task—that we are in some danger of neglecting the even more important problem of production and more production. The leading principle which should stamp itself upon our national economic policies at this time should be this: We need controls, but we cannot hope to outcontrol the dictators. We can continue to outproduce them, and this above all is what we must do.

Prof. Frank B. Rowley

DIRECTOR ENGINEERING EXPERIMENT
STATION, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*(At the BRAB Conference on
Weather and the Building Industry,
January 1950)*

A great many research projects in housing have been promoted with the sole objective of using more of some specific type of material in the construction of a house rather than to consider the best possible house as the end point. Research projects are needed in which the prime object will be to

obtain the best type of construction regardless of the material used.

Lewis Mumford

*(In "The Sky Line," The New
Yorker, August 26, 1950)*

Already it is fashionable to say that functionalism is dead, but the truth is that many modern architects need heavier doses of functionalist logic.

Dr. Ralph Linton

PROF. OF ANTHROPOLOGY, CHAIRMAN, IN-
STITUTE OF HUMAN RELATIONS, YALE
UNIVERSITY

*(At the BRAB Conference on
Weather and the Building Industry,
January 1950)*

If humans are placed in a tunnel of graduated temperature, like that used in the rat experiments described by Dr. Harrington, I feel sure that the humans would tend to congregate not at the point where the temperature was 70° but at those points which they believed were preferred by persons of social distinction. Human beings can survive very considerable extremes of discomfort, and are willing to suffer discomfort for social reasons. As a result, housing, clothing and other equipment, which is presumably a response to biological needs, al-

ways has a double function. On the one hand, it serves to release biological tensions and provide increased comfort. On the other, these things must be regarded as appliances for impressing the

neighbors. The latter is the reason that we have such monstrosities as Italian villas and miniature German castles along the Chicago lakefront, and Cape Cod cottages in the prairies of Kansas.

Inter-American Fellowships

THE UNITED STATES OFFICE OF EDUCATION, in cooperation with the Department of State, announces the availability of fellowships to United States graduate students as provided under the Convention for the Promotion of Inter-American Cultural Relations.

Two graduate students are exchanged each year between the United States and each of the republics signatory to the Convention. The participating countries, other than the United States, are as follows: Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela. During the next academic year, the following countries probably will receive students from the United States: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nica-

ragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela.

Graduate students in the United States should have the following qualifications before applying for these fellowships: United States citizenship, a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, the initiation or completion of some graduate study, a satisfactory knowledge of the language of the country to which the student wishes to go, good health, moral character, intellectual ability, and a suitable plan of study or a research topic which has been approved by the students' adviser or supervising professor. All other considerations being equal, students under 35 years of age and veterans will be given preference. Currently controversial research projects which would preclude the possibility of successful investigation should not be selected by the applicant.

Transportation to and from the receiving country is paid by the

United States Government. The receiving government pays tuition and monthly maintenance allowance. In some cases a small sum is allotted for books and incidental expenses. It may be necessary for the student to supplement his maintenance allowance from other sources to meet the cost of living expenses.

Students desirous of making application should write to the Division of International Educational Relations, American Republics Section, U. S. Office of Education, Washington 25, D. C. As soon as

a sufficient number of well-qualified candidates have made application, the United States Selection Committee will prepare panels made up of the names of five students for presentation to each currently participating government which in turn will choose two from the five for one-year fellowships. It should be pointed out that several months are required before governments receiving panels are able to make selections. Applications must be received by the Office of Education not later than December 15, 1950.

A Display of Hospital Architecture

By Marshall Shaffer

CHIEF, TECHNICAL SERVICE BRANCH, DIVISION OF HOSPITAL FACILITIES,
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

HOSPITAL HISTORY in the making was on display at the 1950 Convention of the American Hospital Association at Atlantic City, where for the first time a complete section was devoted entirely to the exhibition of hospital architecture. Drawings, models and photographs of hospitals, submitted by private architects, were effectively displayed. More than 60 hospitals submitted by 35 architects furnished a cross-section of present-day hospital construction

ranging all the way from small community hospitals to multi-story, multi-bed medical centers.

The interest that this exhibition had for convention goers was evidenced by the stream of visitors which constantly filled the display area. Architects were in regular attendance, both because of the educational value of the exhibits and because they could always be certain of meeting others of their colleagues there. Hospital administrators and consultants were among

the most faithful and thorough visitors, as were board members and trustees to whom hospital construction or renovation were of major interest.

Too much credit cannot be given to the chairman of the screening jury, Slocum Kingsbury of Faulkner, Kingsbury & Stenhouse, Architects, Washington, D. C. who was responsible for the selection and arrangement of the submissions. Members of the jury who ably assisted Mr. Kingsbury in this task were C. E. Silling of Tucker & Silling, Architects, Charleston, W. Va.; A. N. Kiff of York & Sawyer, Architects, New York City; Dr. A. N. Wilhelm, Director, Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Boston, Mass.; D. A. Andres, Superintendent, Youngstown Hospital, Youngstown, Ohio, and Dr. F. D.

Mooney, Administrator, Buffalo General Hospital, Buffalo, N. Y. The exhibit itself was only made possible through the efforts of Mr. Roy Hudenberg, Secretary to the Council on Hospital Planning and Plant Operation of the American Hospital Association, who promoted and assembled the submissions in collaboration with the A.I.A.'s Department of Education and Research, and A.I.A. Committee on Hospitalization and Public Health.

With surprising participation and interest contributing to a most auspicious beginning, it is evident that this architects' exhibit has made itself a permanent fixture of AHA conventions. With a kindled interest and more time for exhibit preparation, next year's should be a show which few architects interested in hospital design will want to miss.

The Architectural League Gold Medal Exhibition

AGAIN FOR THE SEASON 1950-51 The Architectural League of New York announces a series of exhibitions of limited size with the idea that these may reveal material of Gold Medal quality. Five separate monthly exhibits will be held for, respectively, landscape

architecture, mural painting, architectural works, design and craftsmanship in native industrial arts, sculpture.

As was the case last season, these exhibitions will be conducted in two stages: 1—Preliminary sub-

mission; 2—Monthly exhibition for each art and awards.

It is already too late to enter the first one, the closing date of which was October 13, and the second one, which closed October 27. The exhibition of architec-

tural works is to be received in preliminary exhibition form by November 10. Full details are available in a circular issued by The League, the address of which is 115 East 40th St., New York 16, N. Y.



Architects Read and Write

Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative



AM I STARTED?

By C. E. SILLING, Charleston, W. Va.

DEAN HUDNUT'S "Confessions of an Architect" present his "start" as being that of a church architect. Mine was the more humble and bewildering task of remodeling a bakery, hardly a spiritual undertaking at that time, but likely so in the modern view.

My bakery man was pushing his dough around horizontally thru a mess of contraptions and then into the ovens. I suggested elevating the dough mixing affair to a second floor, so the dough could

dribble down thru the contraptions by gravity. He was willing and my career was launched. They called the stuff "Butter Krust" and still do.

The baker is wealthy and retired. Since my attributes, if any, include neither of these circumstances, I'm left wondering whether I'm "started" or just "practising." Thirty years of confusion is a long time, also a lot of confusion. Can't some smart guy find a moral in this pitiful history?

ALBERT KELSEY, F.A.I.A.

By EMIL LORCH, F.A.I.A., Ann Arbor, Mich.

IN CONNECTION WITH the beautiful tribute to the late Albert Kelsey, by Mr. Grant M. Simon, in the JOURNAL for July last, attention should be called to Kelsey's enthusiasm fifty years ago for

a "progressive" architecture. Although schooled when teaching was very conservative, and living in a region very rich in our early architecture, having colonial and classical examples of the first rank, he

was one of those who sensed the need of revitalizing the art of architecture.

Elected first president of the Architectural League of America, organized at Cleveland through the architectural clubs made up of draftsmen, students and young architects, he published the first Annual of the League and launched the slogan, coined by him, "Progress before precedent," which was both challenging and in some ways prophetic. Here was rank heresy

over which some rejoiced, some were puzzled, shocked or angry, as developed at the following Convention at Chicago in 1900.

At that time it required courage, "force and color" to take such a stand. It proved not only his sincerity but his recognition of the fundamentals then making for architectural change, of which there was increasing evidence in Chicago, and time was to elapse before many architects would fall into line and appear as plumed knights of the new dispensation.

The Editor's Asides

THE BRAZILIANS go a step beyond saying it with flowers; when really enthusiastic about their praise they *sing* it. On the completion of architect Rino Levi's maternity hospital for the University of Sao Paulo, Brazilians were moved to express their feelings in words which Bernard Rudofsky has translated for us from the Portuguese:

"Sings the heart which is open to the noblest sentiments, etc., for everything that is just and beautiful in the person of the Governor Fernando Costa;

"Sings the collaboration of the Administrative Council, synthesized in the person of Dr. Gofredo da Silva Teles, whose help and unshatterable sympathy were the in-

centives to this tribute to the Paulist Mother;

"Sings the University of Sao Paulo and its faculty in the persons of Professors Jorge Americano and Benedito Montenegro, who devoted themselves to the aggrandizement of Brazil, etc., etc.;

"Sings the art of Rino Levi, Cerqueira Cesar e Pestalozzi who crystallized in their marvelous project two milleniums of architectural evolution;

"Sings the Brazilian Mother, etc., etc."

Perhaps there is someone in the audience who would like to say a few words about Los Angeles.

THE FACT that World War II veterans have received nearly \$2½ million in refunds from builders

who overcharged them or failed to meet minimum construction requirements sounds like a very good argument for the indispensability of the architect's service of supervision.

THE BAID PROSPECTUS of its three-year program of design problems prompts one to reach instinctively for a 4B: a chamber of commerce office and information center; a nursery school; a roadside greenhouse and nursery; a wedding chapel; a beach club; a telephone exchange. These are Class C problems, for the 1951 group. Class A problems will have you reaching also for a slide rule: a county building; garden apartments; main deck of a cruise ship; an airport terminal building; a television production building.

ANOTHER MATTER in which our knowledge needs a shot in the arm is the foundation of the basementless house. Is it necessary to carry the perimeter down below the frost line? Will a grade beam suffice instead? The answers may be Yes or No to both questions, depending on where you are standing when you ask.

Small Homes Council of the University of Illinois is trying to

find the answers when weather, water-table depth, soil type enter the picture. Levitt, the Long Island house-builder, has made a research grant to U. of Ill. to help find out how these variables control; it means lower costs if we know instead of having to guess.

With all such problems made matters of scientific knowledge the architect of the year 2000 will probably be designing out of a book again but then it will be a book of figures, not pictures.

THERE HAS BEEN SOME TALK in years past of the visual refinements Sir Edwin Lutyens put into his design for the Cenotaph in London. Now that *The Architect and Building News* has published a plate of the details, we can really gasp at the degree to which Sir Edwin carried his subtleties of design. You will recall that the plinth is only a little more than twelve feet wide by a little more than six feet deep. Yet dimensions indicating amounts of projection read 9 37/80", 1'-2 37/80", 1'-3 13/16" and the like. The height is 35'-1 111/120", and the vertical faces are not truly vertical but converge at a rate that would have the lines of the end faces meet at a point approximately 1000' above

ground. But there is more to come: the horizontals are not straight lines but are cambered with a radius of 900'.

As *The Architect's* commentator, Abner, says: "All jolly subtle, but difficult to appreciate as one whisks by on the top of a bus."

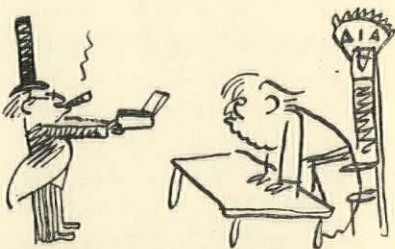
THIS SEEMS TO BE WHERE WE CAME IN, a few short years ago. "When military production based on present authorizations reaches its peak, there will be serious shortages unless civilian production is cut back. This danger is greatest for the critical metals from which the sinews of war must be fashioned.

"We shall need all our resourcefulness and ingenuity in maintaining a reasonable volume of house building without hampering military production. We must develop production short-cuts and find ways to maximize the use of non-critical materials. We must not permit rigidity in building-code requirements and administration to hamper the use of alternate methods or materials which are within reasonable limits of safety. We must find ways within the existing framework of local code administration, to introduce an orderly flexibility into those local

codes where it does not now exist."

So said Richard U. Ratcliff, Director of Housing Research, HHFA, to the Pacific Coast Building Officials Conference, Oct. 3, 1950.

THE INSTITUTE, more and more frequently, is being given something. On one of the days of the recent meeting of The Board, Alfred Bendiner, president of the Philadelphia Chapter, brought us a set of drafting instruments used by Thomas U. Walter in his work on the U. S. Capitol. The late Albert Kelsey, F.A.I.A., had come into possession of the set and had turned them over to the Chapter for transmission to The Institute, where they might finally find a permanent resting-place. In explaining that he wanted to deliver the



set, Mr. Bendiner, as is his habit, turned to pen drawing rather than to mere words on a letter sheet, and anticipated the welcoming reception by President Walker.

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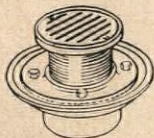
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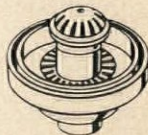
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