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CONTENTS FOR APRIL 1954

THE UNION CENTRE, CAPE PROVINCE Kantorowich & Hope, Architects	22
HOUSE IN SCOTTSVILLE, PIETERMARITZBURG Corrigall, Crickmay & Ellens, Architects	26
THE ARCHITECTS' DILEMMA	28
JORDIAN COURT, JOHANNESBURG Stegmann & Porter, Architects	30
HOUSE PINFOLD, PINE PARK, JOHANNESBURG Carl Pinfold & Betty Spence, Architects	33
CONTEMPORARY JOURNALS	39
CORRESPONDENCE	41
NOTES AND NEWS	42
BOOK REVIEW	43

Cover: A diagram conceived by Le Corbusier representing the sun as the generator of architecture, its one face that of an enemy and its other that of a friend. Cover arrangement by Carl Pinfold.

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4



GARMENT WORKERS' BUILDING C.P.

KANTOROWICH & HOPE, ARCHITECTS

SITE

The site faces Victoria Road, better known as the Main Road from Cape Town to Muizenberg, having a frontage of some 140 feet. The area is mainly developed for clean industries and warehousing, although a brickworks operates not too far away. There is a slope from the front of the site to the street at the rear which while not crippling required careful handling.

ACCOMMODATION

The building was designed to house the administrative offices of the Garment Workers' Union of the Cape Peninsula and other trade unions, and to

provide meeting places for the members of the unions. The original programme called for two halls—

- (1) a large assembly hall, with full stage and dressing-rooms, to seat 1,100, and
- (2) a minor hall to seat 120.

Under the administration wing, a row of shops was to be provided, two of which would be joined to form a restaurant. Tenders were called for on the basis of this accommodation and the value of the work was approximately £100,000.

At this stage the Union decided drastically to revise its building programme and a single minor hall was substituted for both the original halls. This alteration was carried out without altering the form of the administration block and the work proceeded as a variation of the original contract.

PLANNING

The front wing is three storeys high. On the ground floor is a line of shops with a large way through at the Cape Town end leading to the hall and the entrance foyer. A second smaller way through provides service access to the yard. The upper floors consist basically of office space divided up into a modular unit of 4 ft. 0½ ins. The minimum size of office is, therefore, two bays. Over the entrance way, board rooms are planned on each floor. A caretaker's flat is fitted in at the Muizenberg end of the 1st Floor. Provision has been made for a future passenger lift. The hall can seat 225 persons and is approached from a foyer planned on two levels and served by a small kitchen and two green rooms.

CONSTRUCTION

The building is a framed reinforced concrete structure but practically entirely clad with face brickwork. This material was chosen because it was the most economical yet durable finish available. Plaster and paint were rejected after an examination of the disastrous effects of the smoke from the brick-field chimneys upon such finishes.

The construction of the office block rests on columns at 16 ft. 3 in. centres on the ground floor. A deep beam carries the 9 in. × 7 in. columns at 4 ft. 0½ in. centres over. The beams supporting the floor over are also at 4 ft. 0½ in. centres, producing a coffered effect for the ceiling. The ceiling over the second floor repeats this pattern in V-jointed insulation board.

In the corridors, borrowed lights, light switches and conduit and door ways are so arranged that access to offices can be readily provided at intervals corresponding with each alternate bay. The external brick skin is supported at floor levels by a course of quarry tiles which transfers the weight to the concrete frame. The Hall is finished internally in face brickwork in two contrasting colours.

COST

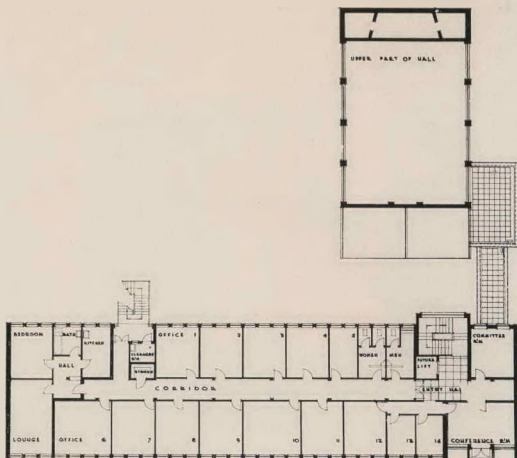
The cost of the completed building was £48,000.



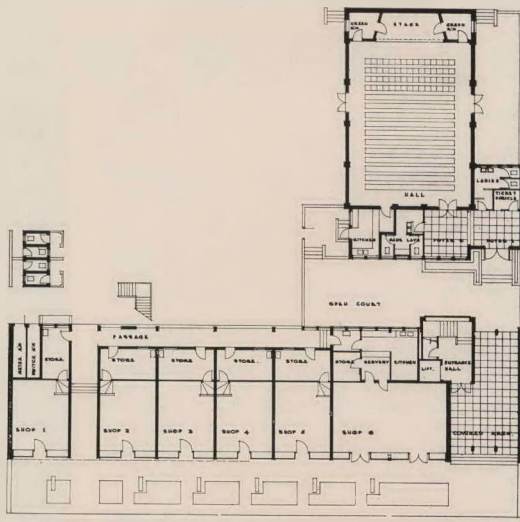
View showing detail of approach to main entrance.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN





Above: View showing link to main hall from covered foyer.

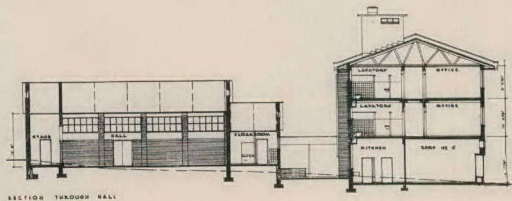
Left: View showing main entrance foyer to offices above and link to main hall.

Below: Detail of staircase window facing court.



Below: View of street from main entrance area.

Photography: John Adriaan



This is the familiar problem of a three-bedroom house on an internal suburban stand of 75 ft. x 150 ft.

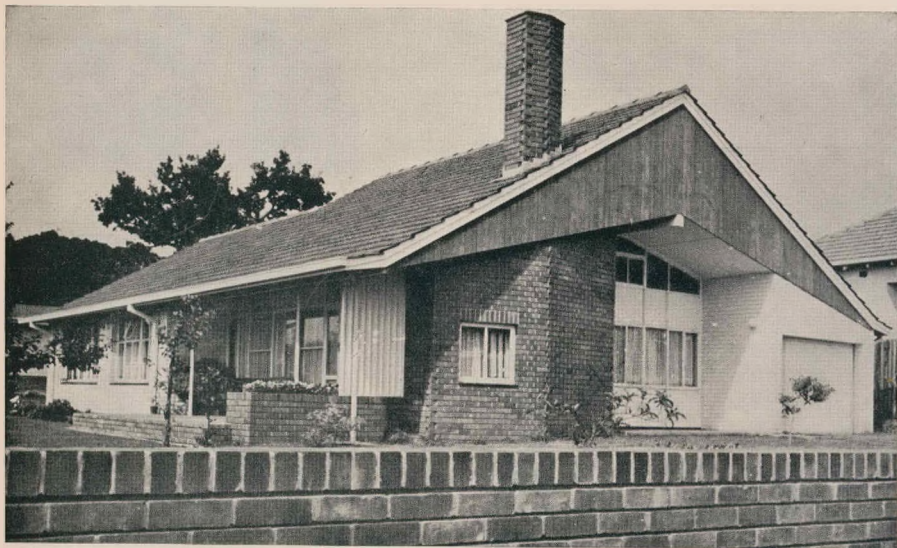
The aspect to the street is north and outbuildings exist at the back of the site which is virtually level. As the house was to be occupied by two ladies it was necessary to have direct access from the garage to the house proper.

Finances were limited and it was decided to try to make as much use of the roof space as possible and the building was consequently roofed with scissors trusses with sloping ceilings laid on the struts. This gives a tent-like appearance to the roof which is simple and not unpleasing. The finishes are good but plain; there are double height cupboards in all bedrooms and a cloak fitting cum bookcase separates the living room from the dining room. The floors in the living rooms are wood block and cork in the bedroom wing, while asphalt tiles are laid in the kitchen, bathroom and W.C.

The total cost of the work including a brick boundary wall to the street was £4,682, and the Contractors were Robert Barras & Son of Pietermaritzburg.

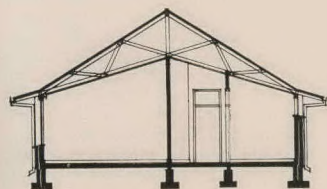
Architects: Corrigan, Crickmay & Ellens

RESIDENCE IRELAND, PIETERMARITZBURG

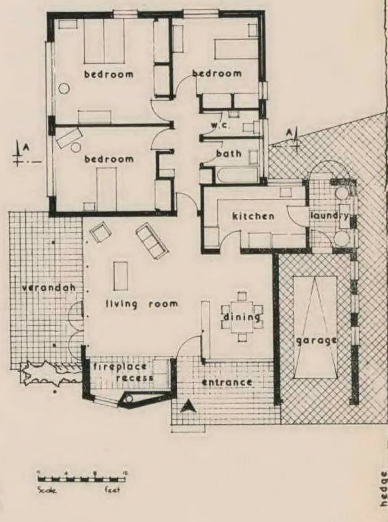




View of dining recess from the living room with the entrance door on right.



section A-A



THE ARCHITECT'S DILEMMA

More architects are practising their profession than ever before in Britain, and the output of qualified young men and women was never higher. The profession is increasing at a rate of over six per cent a year and nearly everybody—at the moment—is getting a job. The proportion of building work that is being planned or directed by architects is increasing encouragingly. It was only five per cent of all building operations before the war, and now it may be 15 or 20 per cent. Architects are working on types of building from which they were previously almost excluded, such as local authority housing and schools. Yet the profession senses an undertone of public criticism of its conduct; it is far from happy about its present fortunes and is uneasy about its future. Controversy invades architectural journals and conferences; a radical wing even questions whether the professional status, built up so laboriously by the Royal Institute of British Architects, makes any sense at all in the postwar world.

The social changes which have taken place since 1939 have overset the traditional order of things for the architectural as well as for the medical profession; moreover, architects are struggling to come to terms with the technological revolution that is slowly overtaking building, despite the opposition of builders. Before the war, architecture—the design of traditional kinds of building with traditional materials—was still mainly in the hands of the private practitioner (so far as it went to architects at all). He made anything from a just tolerable middle-class living to a fair-sized fortune out of it. Only those products of the schools or articulated training who had neither capital nor talent for private practice took the salaried posts that local authorities had begun to offer in growing numbers. Since the war the balance has changed spectacularly. It is the salaried architect who is getting the interesting work, the private architect who is doing the chores.

The reasons are obvious, though few foresaw them. Before the war public bodies and private concerns put out their work to private architects; and so did the well-off and wealthy, who were still building houses, if no longer mansions. But, since the war, building controls and priorities for council housing and schools have put most building into the hands of local authorities, who have expanded their own architectural departments. So have nationalised industries; so have regional hospital boards; so have many large firms. The salaried architect, however underpaid and frustrated, has handled most of this work—and has kept control of even that part of it which has been "put out". The private architect

has had to be content with this overflow from public offices, together with such priority factory or commercial building as has come his way, plus conversions, war damage repairs, exhibitions and suchlike, to fill the gaps.

Meanwhile, the costs of running a private office have soared along with the taxation levied on the profits, if any. To be able to handle a remunerative commission, offices must be reasonably staffed. To carry the overheads between remunerative commissions, all sorts of odd jobs must be accepted. Even so, a private office often proves undermanned to deal with a big job—and any consequent mistakes or delays will draw criticism upon the profession. Big commissions tend to be concentrated upon a minority of large and experienced firms. This is especially true of factories, generally the most remunerative work. It is said that two or three firms have handled all the sizeable factories put out to architects in Scotland since the war. It has become almost impossible to start a new practice, and survive.

Of the 18,000 registered architects in Britain over half are already in salaried employment. They have in many cases found themselves taking instruction from seniors who were hardly regarded as the cream of the profession when they first went into local government service. Their prospects rarely exceed a top salary of £1,800 and a pension. But they have done most of the worthwhile architecture since 1946. Their efforts, not surprisingly, have encountered a lot of criticism—not least from builders, some of whom have the hardihood to declare that whether or not postwar houses are better designed than their forerunners, they are not designed to minimise cost or site delays. Nor has extravagance been confined to houses, as anyone who visits a new power station soon realises.

But the disgruntled private architect is in no position to point the finger of scorn. In his small office he often lacks the resources to tackle large programmes of work or to experiment with new techniques and materials; so much so that group practice has been proposed. He must face the fact that the most remarkable postwar architectural achievement has come from salaried architects. Thus the Hertfordshire County Council first showed in its school building what could be done by pre-planning, modern technology and cost-planning; and from its pioneer work has sprung the schools building programme now organised by a team of architects, engineers and administrators in the Ministry of Education. They have not only

reduced the cost per school place by 45 per cent since 1949, despite a continuous rise in building costs, but have demonstrated a variety of non-traditional methods and materials—and even invented some—within a genre of architectural comeliness which has brought foreign architects flocking to these shores. A bitter pill this for the old school, whose efforts in the interwar years hardly raised a flicker of interest among their questing overseas colleagues, who turned rather to America or Sweden for work of note.

It is clear to almost all architects that the prewar market for their services has disappeared with the last remnants of Galsworthy's England. Even the system of competitive tenders and contracts which the architect supervises is becoming obsolete. Tendering becomes too costly when three-quarters of the bill of quantities is for specialised materials at fixed prices; it imposes a rigidity of design which keeps costs high. The idea of the architect as standing between the owner and the builder is of doubtful relevance to the needs of a new age—which are for economical, standardised, efficiently-designed shelters for families, staff, production-lines or what else. This may be vulgar; it may not leave much scope for what the old school calls architecture; but it does leave scope for a tremendous technological development which the younger school views with undoubted relish.

Circumscribed by the R.I.B.A. code of professional practice—a development of little more than sixty or seventy years—the private architect has tended to hold aloof, concerned at least as much with art as technology, sometimes taking refuge from technology in art; all too often disinterested in close-costing and good administration. In theory the leader and grand co-ordinator of the building team (which includes the quantity surveyor, the surveyor, the structural engineer, the contractor, the builder and other specialists), the architect has, in the opinion of the radical school, all too often been lost in the ensuing babel; and the specialists sometimes have to rescue him from the consequences of his own ignorance. To reassert his leadership, it is held, the architect must again become the master-builder, a man with a technical training adequate to make him practical and at home in modern technical developments.

Immediately after the war, indeed, the R.I.B.A. set up a special committee to advise upon the overhaul of architectural education, and a second—the Architectural Educational Joint Committee—is now working over the problem again. For there is little agreement on how the architect is to be trained for his commanding position. Over a third of young architects still receive their training outside the schools—usually by training in private offices where they make insufficient contact with modern building conditions. Even in the schools, the teachers are often men who

were trained in prewar conditions and have not adjusted their teaching to modern needs, though some schools are radically overhauling their methods. There is a growing feeling that architecture must be integrated with technology in general; it is even suggested that properly remodelled courses in architecture and engineering—civil, mechanical or electrical—would share the same first-year syllabus. Students themselves seem to demand more technology and less art.

Educational reconstruction, however, would not alone solve the professional dilemma. It might provide better technicians for the public offices, where their talents would be used or abused, according to the quality of the senior architect. It should improve every architect's power to deal with builders and specialists. But it would leave the future of undercapitalised and underequipped private practices still in doubt. Many architects hope that easier times and the private client will return, that local authorities and regional boards will disgorge commissions, and that the architect will be restored to his proper place—that of the specialist consultant who in a fiduciary capacity stands between his client and the builder, earning his fees because of his disinterested professional status.

Others see a different future for the private architect. The way in which he can become again the master-builder is, according to this school of thought, to be a part of a firm of contractors or builders—an honest and knowledgeable business man in the best modern professional sense. He should be neither employee nor consultant, but preferably a director. Again, he ought to be fully involved in the many firms who are making building components or developing prefabricated systems. If, it is argued, the architect is not the designer of new materials and methods, he will miss the crucial development in modern building. He will risk becoming the prisoner of other men's design and architecture.

To accept such an argument means, in terms of the R.I.B.A. code, that the architect would change sides. He would become a salesman rather than the guardian of his client's interest. The institute sticks to the view that if the architect is to lead the building team, and even effectively to influence design "at the production end", he must hold fast to his fiduciary status vis-a-vis the client—even if the "client" is a committee of architects and technologists. The radical school thinks this argument unreal. It foresees that more and more work will be done by departments of qualified salaried officials, or by tough "business architects" while private practice shrinks to the hard core of big consulting firms, which, in numbers and organisation, will approximate to the firms of consulting engineers, who form so important,

but numerically so small, a part of the engineering profession.

It is not, for those who appreciate the aesthetic values in architecture, a very comforting prospect; and, indeed, the radicals probably underestimate the strength of the small provincial practice matching the small provincial builder. But if private practice is to be kept alive as a vital, independent and experimental force—and art—amid an increasingly official architecture, the profession must certainly adapt itself, and quickly, for its survival in a changed world.

With acknowledgments to the Economist, July 25th, 1953.

JOLDIAN COURT

This small block of flats is located on an extremely pleasant site elevated above road level commanding a magnificent view across the Orange Grove Valley and the Magaliesberg mountains to the north.

For economical reasons the programme did not demand maximum coverage, and the Town Planning Regulations for this zone limited vertical development to a maximum of three floors above ground level. It was decided, as a result of the abovementioned factors, that the flats be arranged to face north overlooking the street and that south-facing flats or flats facing an internal court be avoided. The rear court therefore only contains a simple car shelter and a laundry and drying yard for the use of all the tenants in the building.

It was originally proposed to place the native quarters in rooms on top of the garage block to avoid the customary location in the sky and the inevitable disturbing noise factor particularly irritating to those tenants occupying flats immediately below the top floor. However, Municipal Regulations at the time did not permit this arrangement, and the boys' rooms have had to be located on the top floor.

The block comprises five two-room flats, one bachelor flat and two three-room flats, each scaled down in size to suit the letting values of the neighbourhood. While they may be conventional in layout the finish has been thoughtfully carried out and the flats are light and airy having large windows to the north to frame the very lovely view to the north.

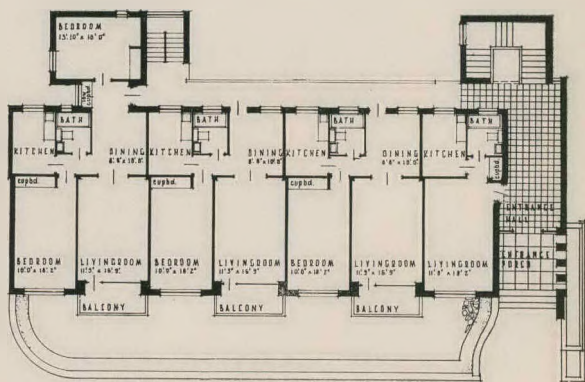
The construction is a simple concrete framed structure finished externally with 2 in. rustic face bricks to the street front and 3 in. facings to remaining facades.



A R C H I T E C T S
STEGMANN AND PORTER



View of flats from road facing west.





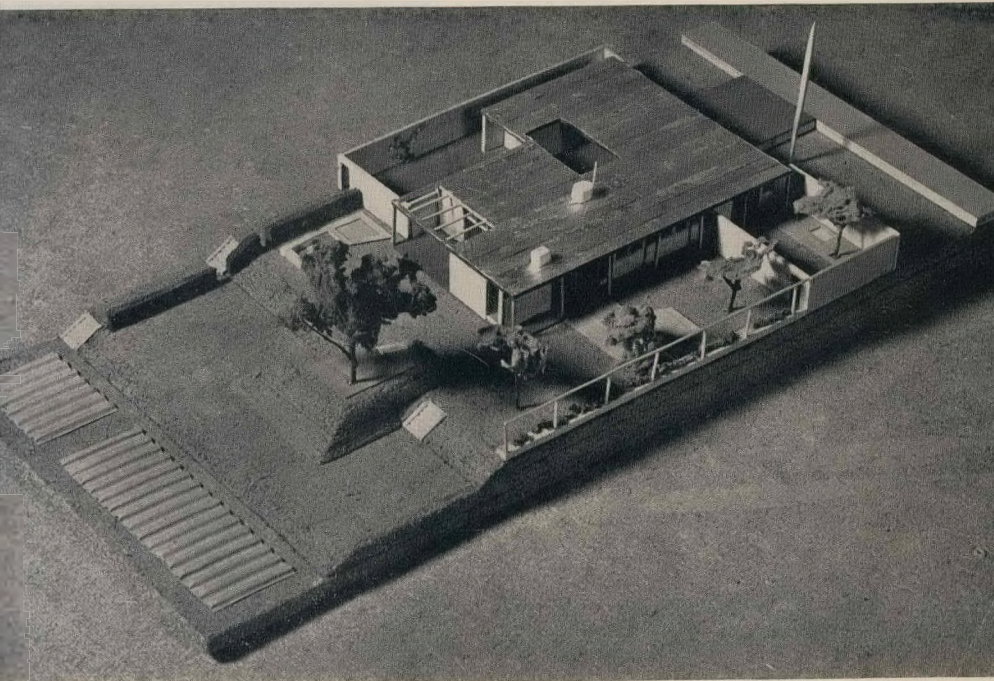
Above: View of lounge looking towards dining recess through large double doors. This flat features the use of contemporary furniture and wallpaper.

Below: View of flats from the street looking east.



HOUSE PINFOLD

ARCHITECTS CARL PINFOLD & BETTY SPENCE



Aerial view of model.

Architects : Carl Pinfold and Betty Spence.

Engineers : Volki Vicci and Groger.

Builder : H. Raisen

Heating : Designed and constructed by the architects in collaboration with the Department of Electrical Engineering, Witwatersrand University.

The Architects wish to acknowledge in general the critical assistance given throughout the design stage by members of the staff of the Department of Architecture of the University of the Witwatersrand and in particular the very helpful advice given by Norman Hanson and Ugo Tomaselli.

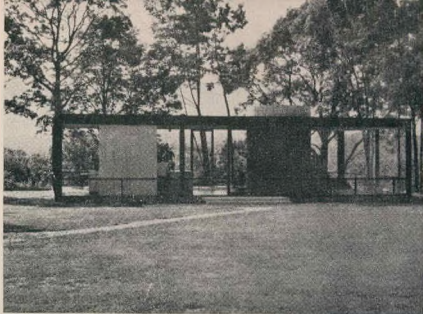
One of the current directions along which modern architecture is developing might be described as an attempt at visual de-materialisation. In some recent dwellings the whole external envelope is made of glass. In these terms the visual interest of the ensuing architecture can no longer be centred in the walls themselves as in traditional architecture, in fact architectural aesthetics as we have hitherto known it, the arrangement of openings and projections on vertical surfaces ceases to have any meaning whatsoever. Beside the shaping and spacing of slender roof supports the exterior walls of these dwellings have only significance in what lies beyond them, the activities within seen from the garden and the activities of nature

outside seen from the interior. Reflections of trees and sky on the glass may play an important part in the external appearance. Since the activities inside the house should only be of interest to its inhabitants, the solid walls which once bounded the house must be moved out to the site boundaries, to afford privacy. The result is a private living space which extends over the whole site and not just the external envelope of the house. If the glass external walls are made moveable, then life may flow from below the roof out to the open with ease. This then is what is meant by the de-materialisation or disappearance of the solid elements which once imprisoned the activities inside a dwelling.

Such a development, within certain limitations, has considerable application in the Transvaal Highveld where many months of the year all that is needed is a roof to keep off the sun and rain and vertical screens for privacy, and in the cool but sunny days of Spring or Autumn only visual privacy is necessary.

The house illustrated here was designed with these possibilities in mind, and now that it has been built and occupied for the better part of a year, it can be said that in this respect there has been some measure of success. True, it is not a glass house in the same total sense that the Johnson or Farnsworth houses are glass houses and although there is a considerable area of sliding glass opening on to the garden, there is also much solid wall in evidence.

Nevertheless the three principal interior zones, the living room, the child's play room and the master bedroom each open on to private, and semi-private outdoor spaces. By making the interior architecture and furnishing very simple the visual accent in all these rooms falls on to the garden outside. When



Philip Johnson's own house in New Canaan.

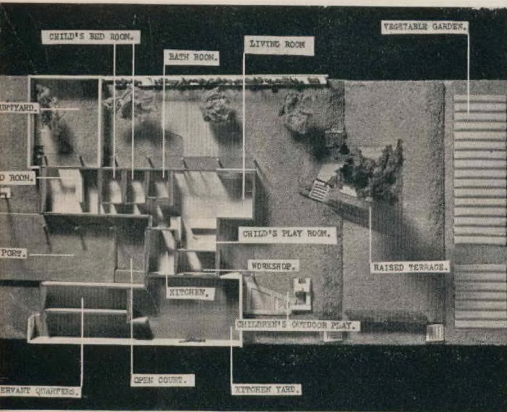
the large glass areas are rolled back into the cavities which receive them, these interior spaces flow easily out to the lawn only two inches below the floor surface.

The living room serves the many purposes of lounging, dining, entertaining, music room, draughting room, and a bedlam for child, dogs and a cat, as well as being used on occasions for dressmaking (cutting-out takes up a lot of floor space) and the larger bits of carpentry involved in completing a house. It opens up some eleven feet on the north side on to a thirty foot strip of lawn bounded by the neighbour's high hedge on the north, a blank wall on the west,

View of East End of lounge showing fireplace and East view window.



Photograph from the model illustrating the plan of the house.



and to the east to a long vista between two neighbouring houses towards Parkhurst and the well-wooded ridges of the Northern suburbs.

This living room is aesthetically divided into two areas, that adjacent to the large sliding glass which is bright and open and the east end which, except for a tall narrow window to capture the view referred to above, is solidly enclosed by a fireplace to one side, a long blank wall on the east and a bookcase wall to the south. The two areas constitute roughly the day and night living zones.

Divided from the main living area by a long draughting desk and a dropped ceiling above it, is the child's play area which may later become the dining space. It opens out eastward to the open portion of the garden through another large sliding glass door. Immediately outside is a brick paved area which will be covered by a light steel latticed pergola carrying creeper for shade. Beyond this room is a small workshop used for various hobbies. It was planned within the house rather than as a shed in the garden, so that owners were not separated during the evenings and could chat while carrying on different activities.

The master bedroom, isolated from the rest of the house along a twenty-foot corridor, has been given special importance in the design. This room, divided by a free-standing wardrobe, into sleeping and dressing zones, opens up along one side on to a totally enclosed garden. The surrounding garden walls are eight feet high, allowing even the most private activities of living to go on in the open or semi-enclosed or totally enclosed space without regard to servants, children, passers-by or neighbours. A jet on the west wall of this courtyard provides for early morning open-air showering, and the sun-filled space is quite different from the usual damp, cold, three feet by three feet sunless cubicle or bathroom shower. A four feet by four feet shallow mosaic pool is planned under the shower for a later stage, but this is considered hazardous at present with the growing-up of young children. At present the courtyard is grassed and there are a few shrubs (fuschia, gardenia, and camellia). A mural is projected for the wall facing the sleeping space.

An interesting problem arose when this bedroom was furnished. The space between the wardrobe and the wall opposite seemed too narrow. By painting the wall black this apparent narrowness was entirely obviated, since the light fittings attached to the wall above the bed and shining away from this wall stand forward and the wall itself appears no more than a dark recess.

The conventional garage has been replaced by an open car-port which combined with the pedestrian ramp leads directly under cover to the front door. The space, large enough for two cars, has proved a boon to both occupants and guests during torrential summer downpours. Small horizontally pivoted

gates lift up from the paved surface and lock to secure cars at night.



View of car port from road with main entrance on the left and the service door on the right.

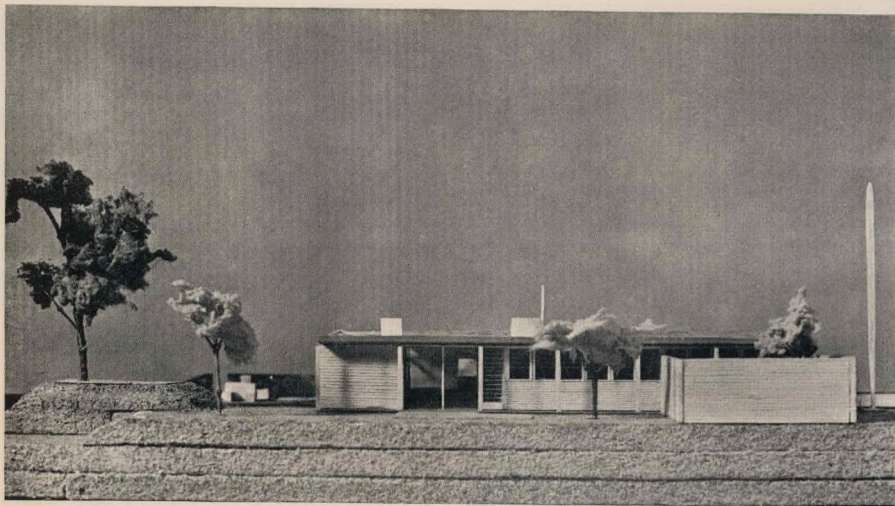
The roof is cut away between the car-port and the kitchen and below the opening so formed is a small garden of lawn and brightly coloured shrubs. From the road the house appears as a series of forbidding blank walls which partially enclose the deep recess of the car-port in dark shadow and beyond this a little garden makes a blaze of light and colour.

There is little more to be said about the planning, except in so far as it affected the construction and general aesthetic appearance. The entire house and garden were planned on a grid of three feet nine inch squares, and there is only one internal wall which does not coincide with this grid, namely, that dividing the kitchen from the child's room. Two modules, seven feet six inches, was considered too narrow, and three modules, eleven feet three inches too wide for convenient kitchen planning.

The main area of the house, including the car-port, but not the servant's quarters and stores, is planned into a rectangle eighteen modules long by ten modules wide. This is divided structurally into two halves, each five modules wide, and the roof spans are across these two equal widths. Planning thus on a strict rectilinear grid gives the elevations a highly disciplined character. The plan modules of three feet nine inches is one of the dimensions of Le Corbusier's "Modulor" and all vertical dimensions are likewise established on the "Modulor". As a result of this control of major dimensions it was possible to obtain on the elevations,

glass and solid areas which are all related to one another by a proportional system, and are mostly squares, double squares, and golden rectangles, thus achieving aesthetic cohesion. The authors of this design have now had multiple experience in domestic planning on both three feet four inch and three feet nine inch grids, and can say without hesitation that the three feet nine inch grid has proved by far the more successful, both practically and aesthetically.

Having in mind what has been done in school buildings at Hertford, England, (the conventional building industry was dispensed with entirely) it was decided not to use the services of a building contractor, but to arrange much of the work as separate direct contracts and to employ a competent bricklayer with his attendant unskilled labour, on a wage contract. With great good fortune a bricklayer of wide experience, unquestionable skill and unusual intelli-



View showing north elevation of house with the radio mast on the extreme right and the raised garden platform on the left.

Of course the major problem confronting the contemporary architect is that of economy. This house, as planned, amounted to some seventeen hundred square feet floor space, four hundred square feet of car-port, two hundred square feet of storage and two hundred and seventy square feet of servants' quarters. Besides this somewhat generous total, expense would be made high by three further rather extravagant requirements, namely the desire on practical and aesthetic grounds to use a flat roof, to fenestrate throughout with sliding steel doors and adjustable glass louvres and to incorporate some form of central heating. A previous house, built in Johannesburg, using large glass areas and some rather out of the way finishes, cost around £3 per square foot. It seems that the average contractor tendering for anything beyond the most conventional building, is apt to price in this range. The present owners' budget was such that the house had to be built for an overall figure of about thirty shillings per square foot.

gence, was found. To obviate the overlapping of labour, and consequent time wastage, the house was detailed in such a way that no carpenter was needed on the job, either for permanent work or temporary shuttering. Such small amount of shuttering which was unavoidable, was so designed that it could be carried out by the bricklayer. Thus floors and skirtings are of brick, doors are set in steel jam linings, hung in two days, but by an itinerant carpenter. There are no lintels, windows being mounted in steel jam linings which slid into place at the completion of the brickwork and all openings are taken to roof soffit, both to avoid situ concrete work as well as to emphasise the free flow of space from interior to the outside.

The roof is a simple flat slab without dropped or inverted beams, except along the central spine of the house where the structural wall is interrupted. This slab is made of five inch wide by three and a half inch deep pre-stressed concrete planks, eighteen feet nine

inches long, precast by Structural Hollow Floors, Pty., Ltd. These beams are spaced at approximately three feet centres and are filled in between with hollow clay tiles. Thus a structural deck is formed on to which is cast an inch and a half of situ concrete to tie the whole together and integrate it with the eight inch edge beam fascia.



An 18' 0" long pre-stressed beam five inches wide and three and a half inches deep, with filler block on right.

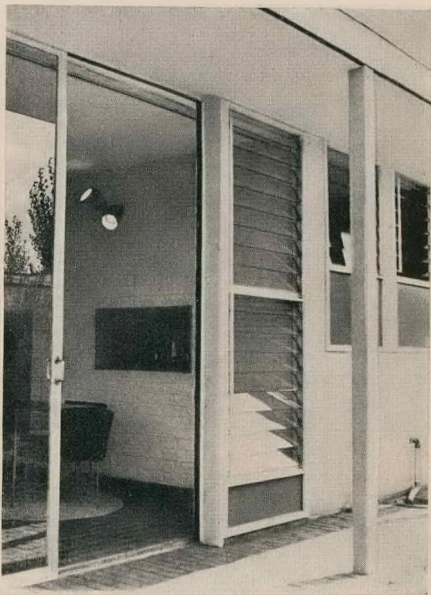
Along the north front and down the central spine are two rows of four inch by four inch precast prestressed columns which actually carry the roof to allow a total panel treatment of fenestration. These columns were cast into a purpose made steel mould hence needing no subsequent plastering.

The roof is graded towards outlets at the heart of the plan and rainwater pipes taken down inside the walls. The grading is a mixture of breeze, vermiculite and ten per cent cement, and is covered with aluminium foil, laid on one layer of two ply malthoid. The latter is only necessary to form a cushion against hail damage (Pine Park is in a severe hail belt).

Besides being an excellent waterproofing membrane the aluminium is a most excellent heat insulator and combined with the insulated grading has provided a cheap roof every bit as cool as thatch. The total cost of the roof structure, together with its covering, came out at about £2 15s. per square yard.

Fenestration as already mentioned, is with sliding glazed steel doors, running on bottom tracks into wall cavities and glass adjustable louvres set in steel jam linings. It is difficult to make these louvres entirely draught proof when using blades of over three feet length as has been used here, there being inevitably some slight whip in the glass. Nevertheless some adjustment since original installation has made them quite as weather-proof as is necessary for comfort and since occasions are rare on which windows are entirely closed, there would seem to be no reason to desire a greater degree of air-tightness. It must be stressed here that it was the owners who insisted on using these louvres at greater than normal or recommended length, rather against the advice of the manu-

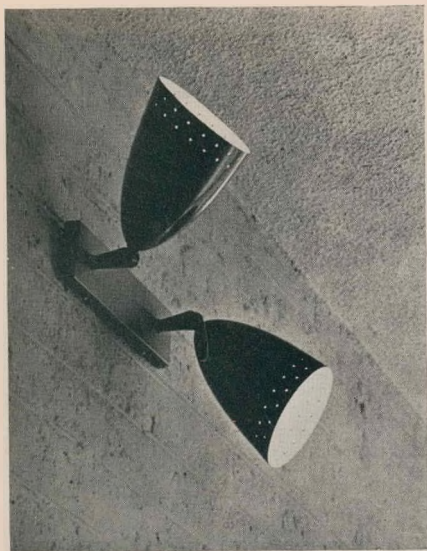
facturer. The control which these louvres give over quantity and direction of ventilation, their ease of operation and the fact that when closed they are entirely burglar-proof, as well as their trim appearance, are sufficient factors to ensure their future popularity.



View from garden looking towards living room sliding doors and louvres.

Lighting and heating are of some interest. A standard bullet fitting for single and multiple adjustable wall lights was designed in collaboration with Dominec. These fittings have been used throughout the house in various bright duco colours, to give a sense of unity throughout at night. The fittings, though purpose-made, were very far from expensive, and their manufacture quite up to imported standard.

Heating consists of fourteen gauge copper wire, zig-zagged at nine inch centres between the brick floors and the two inches of breeze screed which is on top of rammed earth. Along this wire is passed some sixty amps, the system working off a transformer which reduces the two hundred and fifty main voltage to twenty-four volts. The idea is to provide a moderate background radiant warmth throughout winter which can be supplemented by the open fire (a Dudley fire set) in the living room, and portable Thermovent



Above: Light fittings.

Below: View of north terrace from garden.



heaters elsewhere during cold snaps of short duration. As the transformer has not yet been installed, no report of the success of this system can be made.

Initial installation costs including transformer, comes out at about thirty-five pounds. Running costs, however, may prove high, but this will depend upon the system's effectiveness at voltages varying from twelve to thirty-two. A further report will be published later.

As regards finishes, something of a departure has been made from the inevitable tradition of pastel shades variegated on sundry walls. Ceilings are rough cast, painted white throughout. Walls are mainly unplastered, painted mist-grey and middle grey and colours have been used only on small areas such as cupboard doors, light fittings, and furnishings, where without exception they are primaries and black.

Externally the walls and window frames are white, columns grey, and the edge beam fascia royal blue.

All painting and joinery work, except the Model Kitchens fittings have been done by the owners since occupation, and much remains to be done. The garden too, is far from fully developed, and since this is to be so integral a part of the design, it would be unwise to publish photographs of the house itself at this stage. Illustration, therefore, as will be seen, is mainly by drawings and model photographs.

The aesthetic success or failure of this sort of architecture can hardly be gauged from photographs. Where architectural effect is concentrated on openings and projections on the vertical surfaces of the building, photographs have some validity, but where spacial relationships are concerned and questions of overall visual unity, qualities which the architects have tried to achieve here, the three dimensional experience in time continuum is essential for a significant impact.

The owners set out to provide a simple and unobtrusive background for their own activities which are essentially varied and contemporary in their informality. A highly personal requirement.

Many new problems come to light the moment one steps aside from the beaten track in an attempt to influence the course of architectural development. Some of these problems appear at the design stage, some crop up during construction, and still others become apparent while in occupation. It takes more than the building of one house to consolidate the techniques used in a new style. Nevertheless, no severe failures have yet come to light.

LIST OF CREDITS

Windows: Wire Industries and Airlite Louvers.

Roof: Structural Hollow Floors and Reinforced Concrete Industries, aluminium top by African Bituminous Emulsions.

Doors: Raymond Plywoods.

Light Fittings: Dominec.

Contemporary Journals

ARCHITECTURE

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. JULY, 1953. pp. 5-11.

Visitors to Vicenza, by Marcus Whiffen. Vicenza, the show-place of Palladio's talents as an Architect, has always attracted Englishmen with architectural interests, but not, unfortunately, those with literary interests. The most interesting comments are the marginal notes in two copies of Palladio's *Quattro Libri*, one set from the hand of an unknown architect, the other from the hand of Inigo Jones himself recording opinions which could at least have come from men who had met Palladio. Mr. Aldous Huxley wrote in 1925 of the delight to read on the spot impressions of tourists who visited Vicenza a hundred years ago.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. JULY, 1953. pp. 11-17.

Braslian Preview. The contribution which Brazil has made to the modern idiom since the nineteen-thirties continues to flourish both in plastic invention and great scale as the buildings previewed convincingly demonstrate. Amongst the work illustrated is Alfonso Reidy's School in Paraguay which will serve as an experimental teacher-training establishment; a museum by the sea designed by Lina Bo Bardi; Oscar Niemeyer's flats at Rio de Janeiro and at Petropolis. The latter project is on an enormous scale being 30 storeys high and nearly a quarter of a mile long, containing 5,700 apartments and 200 shops and other services for what is, in fact, a small town; and Oscar Niemeyer's hotel in Sao Paulo which will accommodate 3,000 persons, a large cinema, a theatre, a covered shopping concourse, underground parking for 500 cars, a swimming pool, and 600 rentable apartments.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. DEC., 1953. pp. 379-388.

Germany. Modern Architecture under and after the Nazis.

(1) The Hidden opposition by G. Rosenberg. The extinction of modern architecture in Germany under Hitler came into power was never quite complete. Here and there architects continued to build in the modern idiom, though many conspicuous figures capitulated or remained silent. In this article the author reviews these semi-underground activities between 1935-1945 and finds that it was in factory design that interference was least.

(2) Progress since the war by Otto Voelekers. In the new German Republic the conventional battle between modernists and the traditionalists is still proceeding, but the author feels that a diminishing insistence on rigid doctrines, and an understanding view of what has been done in Switzerland, will lead to a new, safer style which will nevertheless be completely contemporary. This may already be seen emerging as the Middle Style of some of the buildings which are illustrated in the photographs which conclude this survey.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. MARCH, 1953. pp. 143-151.

Retreat from Moscow, by H. A. Meek. Modern architecture appears to have been banished from Russia in 1928, and was replaced by a manner of building more in conformity with the principles of Socialist Realism, namely a revival of nineteenth century Neo-Classical standards of scale and decorative procedure. By the nineteen-forties this had developed into a regular school with easily distinguished characteristics which come into collision with reviving local traditions of the "International Style" in the East European countries as they became Soviet satellites.

Mr. Meek traces, by means of documents and published designs, the methods and stratagems employed in the various People's Democracies to make the practitioners of Bourgeois Internationalism see the error of their ways and guide them toward an architecture which should be "National in Form, Socialist in Content".

HOSPITALS

PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE. NOV., 1953. pp. 77-103.

In America there are less than 10 beds per thousand of population, which is well below the minimum recommended of 12 beds



Hotel at Sao Paulo, Brazil.

per thousand. In this issue *Progressive Architecture* illustrates a 170-bed metropolitan hospital in New York; a 100-bed country hospital in Oklahoma; a 51-bed rural hospital in Massachusetts; a 92-bed hospital in New York, and a 29-bed hospital in New York.

PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE. NOV., 1953. pp. 129-136.

Hospital Patients' Rooms. The rooms illustrated were selected for presentation because they exemplify a fresh, advanced approach to interior design in hospitals. While there is a complete absence of the usual institutional or clinical look about the interiors yet emphasis is placed on easy maintenance and upkeep. Centre ceiling lights are eliminated and colour is used extensively.

HOTELS, HOSTELS, ETC.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. JULY, 1953. pp. 17-21.

Hostel for Indian students, Ralph Tubbs, architect. In a criticism of this building H. A. N. Brockman quotes the architect: "The first important consideration in the design of this building was to ensure that its form and scale related successfully to the existing square, two sides of which were designed by Robert Adam." Coping levels, facing materials, certain horizontal lines and the need for a skyline accent were all the result of this basic consideration. Mr. Brockman argues that this building provides further evidence of rationalization in the architectural revolution. In this particular case it is achieved with sensitiveness, assurance and complete architectural integrity.

INTERIOR DESIGN

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. MARCH, 1953. pp. 157-172.

Prestige and Utility. A criticism by Ian McCallum. Office design and equipment in England has neither the support of a tradition, nor the stimulus of a truly contemporary discipline. The architects and designers who were called in for the interior appointments of the new Time Life building had to overcome considerable difficulties in rising to the demand for something rich and dignified, yet not unsuitable for daily use, and their solutions are varied in quality and style. The author assesses the degree of success achieved, particularly in the Reception Room which was the major problem, and also in the smaller rooms and offices, and contrasts the treatment of special offices with the management of bulk work-space which he holds to be

excessively subdivided. The use of modern design and modern art by a client of this standing may do something to shake British Big Business from its torpid conservatism in visual matters.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE. OCT., 1953. pp. 97-111.
Design for Curtain Walls of Aluminium and Stainless Steel. Most technological advances in curtain wall construction have occurred since World War II. Lightweight metal panels can be quickly erected, are permanent and easily maintained and when combined with insulation they provide a wall that has not been surpassed. Articles, illustrated by means of detail sketches and photographs cover the following:—

- 1.—Aluminium curtain wall construction by R. Seery.
- 2.—Type 430 Stainless Steel for building parts by R. Stodgell.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE. OCT., 1953. pp. 120-124.
Branch Library in Denver, Colorado. A library is a centre for learning and at the same time a retreat for quiet concentration and reflection. It would appear therefore that the elements of openness to admit sun and light to facilitate comfort and reading and enclosed walled areas to promote undisturbed study would be essential. In this interesting memorial branch library architect V. Hornbain appears to have effectively employed these two architectural symbols.

SCHOOLS

ARCHITECTURAL RECORD. JULY, 1953. pp. 131-143.
Three schools are presented, one in Brazil and two in widely separated parts of the United States, primarily as architecture. All three are elementary schools for an age group whose requirements are very similar. Even if each school has not a gymnasium and auditorium, at least the classrooms are constant, and with minor exceptions so are the curricula, and spatial requirements, building techniques, equipment and furnishings. Here we have three solutions, each characteristic of the best of its region, each exploiting the best use of lighting, temperature control, acoustics, ventilation, and recognising the importance such standardisation concepts as classrooms, to produce architecture appropriate to its purpose, time and place.

- 1.—New Elementary School in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. E. Silva, architect.
- 2.—Elementary School, Sweeny, Texas. Architects: D. Barthelme and Associates.
- 3.—Manchester Memorial School, Mass. Architects: Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson and Abbott.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. DEC., 1953. pp. 262-272.

- Three interesting schools are illustrated:—
- 1.—School in Essex. Denis Hall, architect.
 - 2.—School in Worcestershire. R. Sheppard and Partners, architects.
 - 3.—School at Southampton. Lyons, Israel and Ellis, architects.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. MARCH, 1953. pp. 173-178.

- Two schools are illustrated:—
- 1.—A secondary school for 450 boys and girls in Lansbury. Architect: David Stokes.
 - 2.—Primary school at Orpington for 350 infants. Architects: E. Lyons, L. Israel and T. Ellis in collaboration with S. H. Loweth.

TOWNSCAPE

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. JULY, 1953. pp. 29-32.

Failure of the New Towns, by J. M. Richards. The author analyses the nature and causes of the failure of the new towns. The most conspicuous fault is the failure to create new towns, the thin, monotonous low-density planning, deficient in the amenities of either town or country, hostile to urban sentiments or pleasures—the source of this failure is the low density of twelve persons per acre, even lower than the garden cities which inspired this type of planning.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. JULY, 1953. pp. 33-36.

Prairie Planning, by Gordon Cullen. In pursuit of the dream of thought outlined by Mr. Richards in the article above, the visual failure of the new towns to look like towns is examined in greater detail by Gordon Cullen, who illustrates the planners' failures to make proper and expressive use of the Urban Vocabulary

at their disposal, and offers in visual form, some suggestions about how things might have been better managed.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. OCT., 1953. pp. 245-250.

Basildon Town Centre, by Gordon Cullen. Unlike most new towns, whose centres have already been designed, Basildon has for its future civic heart only an area of ground and a schedule of accommodation requirements. In this article Mr. Cullen examines first the unavoidable visual consequences of the relation of area designated to area required for various purposes in the Basildon proposals, then draws up an imaginary plan for the town centre and shows with drawings the way it would look if it was built.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. DEC., 1953. pp. 355-361.

Failure of the New Densities. The widespread comment which has been aroused by J. M. Richards' article on "The Failure of the New Towns" has centred around the relationship between urbanity and density. Various letters challenging Mr. Richards' arguments are quoted in this issue. The first letter is a vehement protest by a member of development corporation and the second letter is more critical yet more constructive from an outside observer.

PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE. JUNE, 1953. pp. 71-93.

Architecture of Seattle. This issue of Progressive Architecture coincided with the 85th Annual Convention of the American Institute of Architects in Seattle, Washington. The programme for the convention was planned around the theme, "A New Country—A New Architecture." In the pages that follow Progressive Architecture extends some of the aura of the convention; the architectural aspects of the city of Seattle; and a look at a few of the buildings which form a landmark of the architectural past or a hall mark of current vitality. The current work illustrated includes houses, schools, community centres, museums, apartments, clinic-residence, office buildings.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. AUGUST, 1953. pp. 75-77.

In Defence of the Cliche, by J. M. Richards. In architecture the expression of the artist's personality is normally a secondary consideration—the function of the building comes first, and absolute originality may do more harm than good. A sound case can be made out for the plagiarist and the acquired mannerism in the present state of architecture, and in this article the author examines this fact. The real objection to clichés, he points out, is to their negligent use, for when they are used with understanding, and fully integrated with the design they are not objectionable.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. AUGUST, 1953. pp. 91-98.

The Doctrine of Auguste Perret, by Peter Collins. In the last years of the nineteenth century Perret formulated an aesthetic philosophy worthy of reinforced concrete. He derived his inspiration from his study of half timbered structures with their posts, lintels and filling panels. He refined this basic structured system giving close attention to the shaping of structural members and to the treatment of surfaces—and aimed at buildings which should be pure, unadorned concrete structures both in material and conception. Though his influence has been wide it has often been superficial and he has grown away from the modern movement to which he contributed so much.

TELEVISION STATIONS

PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE. SEPTEMBER, 1953.

Television Stations. A study written and arranged by the Editors of Progressive Architecture with advice of Dr. W. Duschinsky, vice-president of a telecommunication planning organisation and a consultant on television station design. The editors offer a criterion for design rather than a solution to the problem. The article is well illustrated and they cover such items as definitions, background, the design problem, the site, general planning considerations, administrative areas, production areas, operational areas, antenna towers, lighting, acoustics and equipment.

Three television buildings are illustrated:

- 1.—TV Transmitter Station, Washington, D.C. Berler and Abel, architects.
- 2.—TV Station Project, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Architects: Oscar Niemeyer.
- 3.—NBC-TV Studios in California. Designed by the Austin Company and Fordyce and Hamby.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor

Dear Sir,

It is with alarm and trepidation that I take up pen in support of Gilbert Herbert's dirge of disappointment at what is the new gateway to South Africa—Jan Smuts Airport.

For some years passed, on returning from the East Rand along what is now the main road from the airport to Johannesburg, I have never failed to experience a surge of excitement and pleasure at the view of the "Golden City" from the top of Rietfontein Hill. There, stretched across the western horizon and undulating from hill to hill, is a panorama of a "fairy city"—from Kensington on the left and disappearing at Illovo miles across to the right, a sight to enchant the most blasé of travellers. At that distance, Johannesburg holds one spellbound as its skyline climbs to a serrated climax at its city centre and cascades out over the high hills on either side into a regular rhythm of suburban streets.

"That, indeed, is an inspiring introduction to a city," I have always thought and then, indulging in a spot of wishful thinking, my mind wandered to the nearby aerodrome that was alleged to be costing six million pounds. What a wonderful progression of impacts—first, a magnificent arrival point for the air traveller and then this breathtaking panorama of the approach to the largest South African city.

Now, what a ghastly awakening! The Jan Smuts that should have been with fine vistas, exciting proportions and comfortable tasteful amenities; large expanses of uninterrupted glass to afford the exciting view of an aircraft just airborne or the foreign airliner discharging that long awaited friend; easy, direct approaches to a sheltered observation deck or a welcoming snack in a smart restaurant—that is what one expected but what we have is there for all to mourn. And not only we, but the generations yet unborn, will suffer until Jan Smuts Airport itself becomes obsolete operationally in the far distant future.

That is the tragedy. A vast fortune spent on a building designed in such a way that a Marshall Street warehouse could well compete for aesthetic and functional honours!

Enough on what is already, but what of the future? Mr. Herbert rightly ponders the question but suggests no practical answer. In a growing prosperous country such as ours, there will yet be many millions of pounds spent by the Government on all sorts of new, important buildings. Surely it is up to the South African Institute of Architects to boldly urge—nay even insist—publicly and privately that public money should be spent on the best it can obtain. Surely as citizens of this country we have a right to demand that public money spent on buildings should show

the maximum results rather than the minimum. And, if the Government wish to obtain the best, surely the right way is to ask the architectural profession to compete for these buildings. This way they could be assured of the best possible scheme for the money they have to spend.

Lewis Mumford and others claim that buildings are an expression of the age and the people that created them. Never let it be said that our recent public buildings are such an expression. South Africa is an infant state but vigorous and there are many that strive robustly and honestly to help create an even better country.

The architectural profession is in the van of this idealistic band and given the chance, can ennoble South Africa. It is up to those that can, to prevent the abysmal failures of the past. By thus harnessing the architectural profession as a whole, the very best will be obtained for the eternal good of all.

S.A.A.

MORE PROTEST

Dear Sir,

More concentrated poppycock can hardly ever have been condensed into two paragraphs than in the opening sentences of an article "Lighting in Architecture" in the January issue of the *S.A. Architectural Record*.

The broad generalization that "Architects and consultants do not provide adequate illumination in the design of buildings", is followed by the literally staggering assumption that interior illumination should simulate "the daylight conditions of a clear blue sky". Any Architect who attempted this would be justifiably consigned to a madhouse, whatever the intended function of the building in question.

In contrast to this article I should like to commend the dignified and cogent "Protest against the proposed design of the New Catholic Cathedral in Johannesburg" by Cyril Fradan.

On the subject of protest may I perhaps add mine on this subject of the New Rand Airport which insults the memory of Smuts. Having only recently returned from a trip to Europe by air, during which I saw several airports meriting commendation and one at Zurich which I thought to be really superb in design and execution, I was eager to see what South Africa could achieve.

The appearance from the air is unimpressive, and on landing it looks worse. Passengers are immediately sent down to a basement for customs and immigration examination—surely the most psychologically inept solution of the planning problem. The seating here is clumsily designed—looks "heavy" and is covered in the green slippery hide familiar to our travellers on S.A. Railways. On emergence one enters a vast and echoing concourse where the reverberation of natural speech is considerable, and the loud speaker announce-

ments quite unintelligible. (I was quite unaware that my name was called as being wanted for some triviality at the Booking Counter.) Indicator Boards of times of departure and arrival of planes were non-existent—but may by now have been provided. Bilingual signs in a poor style of lettering abound, and one can without difficulty discover the public conveniences. As, however, the loud speakers do not extend to these necessary adjuncts—nor are there electric clocks—one friend of my acquaintance kept the Bulawayo plane waiting till a harassed official discovered his temporary whereabouts.

Myself, having left Salisbury about 7 a.m., I was anxious to find the sort of Buffet which every Continental Airport seems to possess, where one can sit on a stool and drink coffee, freshly made for each person, accompanied by crisp rolls and butter, and generally several kinds of appetising bread or pastries to eat. Those at Zurich and London Air Terminal particularly spring to my mind—the latter a skilful adaptation of one of the Festival of Britain buildings.

Here at Jan Smuts Airport a long corridor leads one eventually to the typical Railway "Cafe" where

one sits—not amicably with fellow travellers at a Buffet Counter, but in genteel isolation at a small table graced with the inevitable stained table cloth. The room had again poorly designed furniture and lighting fittings, and unsuitable curtains.

Finally the Telephone Booths were badly ventilated, even on a cool day, and their illumination would have driven the author of the article first mentioned to even more protests. Could not something have been done about all this in the early stages?

Must buildings of this size and importance, sponsored in fact by the South African Government and paid for presumably by the South African Taxpayer, be entrusted to "official" architects who are completely unaware of what has been achieved in the design of modern airports? Could not a small percentage of the vast sum obviously expended have been devoted to sending such to see what Europe and America are doing—and if possible achieve something better.

Yours faithfully,

A. MAXWELL ALLEN

NOTES AND NEWS

ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

The Administration of South West Africa invites designs in competition from registered members of the Institute of South West African Architects for a Library, Museum and Archives building to be erected in Windhoek at a cost of £75,000.

The Assessor is Mr. J. A. Joel.

Conditions of the competition may be obtained from Mr. H. P. Gous, c/o the Director of Works, P.O. Box 207, Windhoek, to whom final designs must be sent on or before the 16th July, 1954.

The Conditions of Competition have been approved by the committee of the Institute of South West African Architects.

R.I.B.A. EXAMINATION IN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

The next Examination for South African graduates in Architecture will be held in June, 1954, and, depending upon the entrants, at Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria.

Applications therefor must reach the Registrar of the Institute of South African Architects, P.O. Box 7322, Johannesburg, not later than April 30th, 1954. Particulars of the Examination, and a copy of the

previous examination paper, will be forwarded on application.

It must be pointed out that this is not a University examination, but an examination conducted by the South African Institute on behalf of the R.I.B.A. "Additional Design Requirements" leading to Associateship, R.I.B.A.: Substitution of Research Thesis therefor.

The R.I.B.A. has agreed, on the suggestion of the South African Institute, to the following concession in respect of holders of a South African Diploma or Certificate in Architecture, obtained before September, 1951:

The previously required "Additional Design Requirements" may now be substituted by a single Research Thesis, not necessarily confined to Design, on the lines set out in the syllabus for the R.I.B.A. Final Examination.

All persons interested may obtain further information on application to the Registrar, P.O. Box 7322, Johannesburg.

INCREASE IN BUILDING ACTIVITY

The trend in building activity in February 1954 shows a vast improvement over the same period a year earlier. The value of plans passed by the Johannesburg City Council in February this year was nearly double the value of those passed in February 1953. The total value of plans passed this February was £1,355,275 compared with £733,640 passed in the month of February 1953. The increase for houses and factories

represent values of £123,555 and £288,650 respectively. Capital invested in new flats and in new flats combined with shops represent increases of £249,000 and £130,800 as compared with the same period of last year. Only in respect of warehouses has there been a slackening off of building activity the figures for this year being £142,350 as compared with £293,550 last year. A subtle change appears to be gradually mani-

festing itself in Johannesburg. The phenomenal rise in values of business and industrial sites seems to be levelling off, and indications are that if commercial sites are to be fully developed they are capable of accommodating many more Europeans, which in turn would demand a greater influx of Europeans from overseas in order to be able to cope with any new developments.

BOOK REVIEW

Le Corbusier: Oeuvre Complete 1946-1952. Published by W. Boesiger, Zurich, 1953. 246 pages fully illustrated.

A new volume of the *Oeuvre Complète* of Le Corbusier will always cause controversy and, while the popularity of that genius here has perhaps waned somewhat since the death of Rex Martienssen, there are still those who welcome his new works and who find in them new sustenance.

Had this particular volume been published fifteen years ago when interest in Le Corbusier's work was at its peak it would have caused a sensation. Nothing could have been more unexpected than this present turn in his work. To speculate as to reasons for so violent a change is enough food for many evenings thought and discussion.

The change that has occurred can best be defined in terms of sculpture rather than architecture. Forms that were once skin-tight, angular and precise are now far more sculptured, far more organic in the sense that they have changed their geometric articulation for a plasticity usually associated with clay modelling. No longer is there that very French striving for slender elegance.

To some extent this might be accounted for by the fact that in many of the buildings illustrated, reinforced concrete has been replaced by the use of mass concrete with very little steel reinforcement, for economic reasons. Yet this can only be regarded as half a reason and for the complete truth we have to go to the man himself and ask what personal development has led him to choose this medium and its attendant forms.

When the famous Marseilles block was being designed this new development must already have been afoot, for we see it previewed in the revised design for the roof of that building. We see in that building, too, the new preoccupation with surfaces of concrete work and the deliberate use of patterns created by the rather crude French formwork.

In this new volume there is plenty of evidence of this preoccupation with surface and texture and there is a rather sentimental note about the wonders of timber.

I personally do not like the new forms and their crude surfaces, but I suppose that is a limitation of my

own taste. There will be those who like them and those who imitate them.

My own first impressions on reading the new volume were mostly nostalgia for the pure geometry of Le Corbusier's earlier work and rather the feeling that here was another case like Wren and Wright of going on too long. I have in mind Wren's Kensington Park Orangery and Wright's recent house for his son. On closer study I found that the intellect behind this new work and its ability to innovate was as fresh as ever. The earlier work gave us free planning, the horizontal window and freed ground space (the pilotis). Later contributions were the *bris-soleil* and the multi-storied slab. The present work gives us the umbrella roof which is quite enough for modern architecture to digest for the next few years.

There can be little doubt that the work which Le Corbusier is at present doing in India is of the utmost importance. This fact emerges better from Jane Drew's article in *Architects' Year Book No. 5*, which incidentally is full of good fare. One cannot but feel a thrill at the idea of a new nation building a brand new capital in a completely modern way—especially in a country so rich in tradition. The scale of the enterprise is gigantic, bigger perhaps than any other in the past or present.

For those, who, like myself, believe that environment plays a major role in shaping a people's destiny, its ideals and hopes, its contentment and happiness, this venture is exciting. That it should happen in India where contemporary architecture is as yet unsullied by cheap imitation and foul compromise, is a great good fortune.

And so, in recommending this new volume of Le Corbusier's Complete Works to all serious students of architecture, and in urging those who have already briefly glanced at the work and gone no further to delve more deeply into its illustrations and writings, I will predict that, unlikely as it may seem, this volume will become the text book of a new phase in modern architecture.

Carl Pinfold

"*Painting and Architecture*". A lecture delivered to the Manchester Society of Architects, 13 February, 1951. By A. C. Sewter. London, 1952. Alec Tiranti Ltd. 12 pp. Illus.

This little book is no. 1 of what presumably is to

be a series of published Lectures and Essays on Art. In it the author attempts a survey of the historical relationship of painting and architecture from the time of the Renaissance—a subject which, perhaps significantly, always seems to interest the architect more than the painter. Or perhaps it is just that the architect, being of necessity of a more analytical and at the same time more synthetic turn of mind, is anxious to co-ordinate activities whenever possible. Mr. Sewter is, in fact, concerned to show that in those periods of history when the painter was content to remain one of the “trades” organised by the architect a more coherent total result was achieved than during those times when he tended to get “above himself”, and, as it were, arbitrarily remodelled the spatial effects of the architect. The painter of the High Renaissance was perhaps the worst transgressor in this respect, for the Baroque artist returns to a dependence on the total intent of the building, which, while it may destroy or disrupt the visual effect of structural forms, is yet a terrifying sort of integration. The contemporary mural painter, points out Mr. Sewter, is far more tame in his deference to the architect's intention than were painters of the past, though the invitation to him to co-operate is rare.

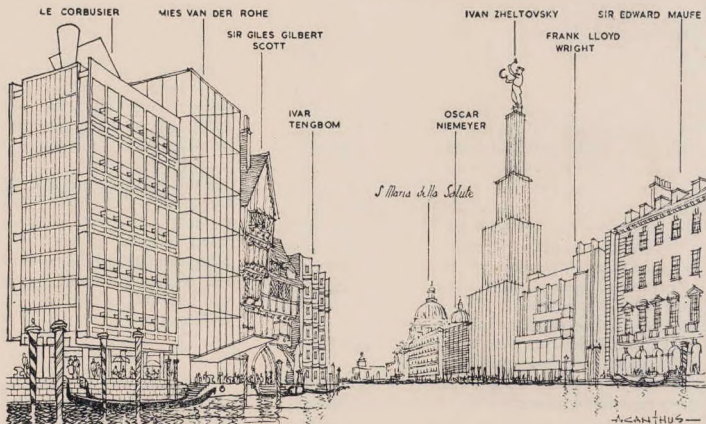
There is perhaps a note of contempt in the author's conclusion—that the business of the painter today is to solve his problems of abstract form and colour by means of the use of what are virtually architects' materials. This is a provocative challenge to painters, and the essay as a whole is a stimulant to the alert contemporary mind.

H.M.

“Building Construction Illustrated”. By Denzil Nield, A.R.I.B.A. Published by E. & F. N. Spon Limited, London, 1952. 148 pages, 175 diagrams, 2 plates. Size 7½ ins. × 9½ ins. Price (in England) 21/-.

Mr. Nield, a former lecturer at the Architectural Association School and at the Regent Street Polytechnic, London, and now lecturer in Construction at the Northern Polytechnic, London, has written this book on Building Construction to cater for the needs not only of architects, but of the many trades and professions associated with building.

According to the foreword by T. E. Scott, F.R.I.B.A., the book makes no pretence to deal exhaustively with the many building processes to which it refers, but rather sets forth the principles upon which they are based. The scope of Mr. Nield's discussion, ranging from the site and foundations to methods of construction, finishes, plumbing and drainage, electrical wiring, and steel-framed and concrete framed buildings, is considerable. To cover this wide range of topics in what is a relatively slight volume, necessitates a high degree of selection of examples, and a very general approach. It serves therefore rather as an overall treatise on construction, giving as it were a bird's-eye picture of the field, than a manual of precise instruction in all fields. It is of most use to the beginner as an introduction to building construction but for the architect would require supplementing if a detailed knowledge of the subject is required. To the specialist in any particular trade, it gives an outline of the work of his colleagues on the building site, and is valuable from that point of view. The text is straight-forward and concise; the diagrams, to which the text constantly refers, are simple, clear and informative.



In view of the Frank Lloyd Wright proposal for a new building on the Grand Canal, the above development by well-known architects is submitted with respect.

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