

https://dspace.org/

South African Architectural Record: Journal of the Transvaal, Natal and Orange Free State Provincial Institutes of South African Architects and the Chapter of South African Quantity Surveyors

1932

Institutes of South African Architects and the Chapter of South African Quantity Surveyors

http://hdl.handle.net/10539/18872

South African Architectural Record; Journal of the Transvaal, Natal and Orange Free State Provincial Institutes of South African Architects and the Chapter of South African Quantity Surveyors. vol 21:1-12 p 1-328

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

113 Classical or Modern

118 The Thirteenth South African Academy

121 The Cape Provincial Institute

123 The Natal Provincial Institute

124 Letters from Professor Pearse

128 Hellenic Tourists

130 The Orientator

131 Portland Cement

134 Professional Notes and News

137 Correspondence

137 Book Reviews

Building Returns

Acting Honorary Joint Editors

Rex Martienssen

Denys Lefebvre

Business Manager

A. S. Pearse

The editors will be glad to consider any mss., photographs or sketches submitted to them, but they should be accompanied by stamped addressed envelopes for return if unsuitable. In case of loss or injury they cannot hold themselves responsible for mss., photographs or sketches, and publication in the journal can alone be taken as evidence of acceptance. The name and address of the owner should be placed on the back of all pictures and mss. The Institute does not hold itself responsible for the opinions expressed by individual members.

Annual subscription per post 10/6 direct from the business manager.

the south african architectural record

The journal of the Transvaal, Natal and Orange Free State Provincial Institutes of South African Architects and the Chapter of South African Quantity Surveyors.

67, Exploration Buildings, Commissioner Street, Johannesburg. P.O. Box 2266. Telephone 5821.

Volume Seventeen Number Five. May Nineteen Hundred and Thirty Two.



theatre pigalle paris

architect
ch. siclis

classical or modern • fritz berge

It is possible for two persons to speak of classical and modern architecture, each with a different conception of the meaning of these expressions. One can easily understand this, for it is hardly possible to avoid a misconception if the word "classical" is in one case given the meaning of "perfect" or "model", and in another–especially in architectural language–is understood to be the style of the ancients. Which buildings of our time may be called "classical buildings" is a question which will never be unanimously decided. It appears to me to be logical that by classical architecture (though used as a collective expression) is understood a time-limited style which developed, flourished, and ended within a certain epoch of culture. Whatever the reader's opinion may be in regard to this point, I consider it necessary to draw a distinct line between the two conceptions.

It is more difficult to define "modern architecture." It seems logical to understand by modern architecture latest, that is something which changes continually, something which is ever moving onward. Architectural styles are however mostly localised, being always influenced by the peculiarity of local conditions, developments and changes which go on continually throughout the different countries It is quite common that what is considered as "modern" in one country, is looked upon as superseded or obsolete in another.

I think it is in conformity with general opinion to say that the "modern" architectural style is that style which with the West European Continent as its base has its roots in the early beginning of the present century, but became only visible in its effects shortly before the Great War (America showed similar tendencies at that time).

One should, however, realise that "modern architecture" is a collective expression even more comprehensive than "classical architecture." Forms of modern architecture may intrinsically differ more from each other, than does classical architecture from modern architecture.

To free the question which I chose as a heading for this article from ideas about beauty which are usually connected with the words "classical" and "modern" and which are so often prejudiced, it is perhaps simpler and more reasonable to ask : Old or New ?

Before giving an opinion about the one or the other style, or better, before entering a discussion about architecture at all, it is well to ask: "What does building mean ?" If we leave for a moment the smaller field of architecture, we find the following answer to our question : To build is to give shape to vital processes such as we see everywhere visible in nature. Returning to architecture, we may complete the definition which we have expressed so far in the following way : Building means the creation of surroundings in which our vital feelings, thoughts and activities can be expressed and carried out in the most perfect manner.

It is obvious that there cannot exist a uniform style of architecture in the various countries, as culture (expression of life) is always influenced by man's natural surroundings. A style of architecture cannot, therefore, be transplanted without suffering retrogression. And yet, the architectural forms of the moderns seem to be international. For the first time in history, this happens to be the case. Have the vital expressions of man become standardized to such an extent ? One feels inclined to think that they have. On the other hand, it is said that technical science is the cause of the closer resemblance of architectural forms.

One may conclude that it is due to our age which has so often been called the "technical age" and which has produced the "technically

minded man," that technical form is the elementary expression of modern architecture. To my mind, this only confirms that even to-day man's work reflects the state of his soul ; it shows further that architecture can only be conceived in relation to culture in its entirety. The above conclusion has, however, no bearing on the value of technics and its relation to art.

The "Moderns" (these are not to be confused with architects who are still engaged in arguments as to whether the fronts of buildings should be "treated" horizontally or vertically) not only demand that the construction of a building be technically correct, but also insist on the entire absence of embellishment. For the sake of clearness I shall consider architecture as part-expression of culture.

The Moderns say they build objectively. I do not propose to enquire whether this objectiveness actually exists ; as even in cases where architects believe themselves to have designed a building on purely economical and technical lines, a close investigation will show that the work is not totally objective, but that the designer has brought to it certain feelings and inclinations of his own.

Form and construction of a building are the outcome of natural, vital expressions of man, and in its wider sense, objectiveness, therefore, not only embodies a technically faultless, undisguised construction and rational section (with regard to the whole building as well as to the building-elements) but also includes irrational necessities of life arising out of man's soul. Technique is theory and action, that is purely rational. Life, however, as a whole is also irrational.

A well-known German architect (Professor Poelzig) said recently : "Building is the natural inclination to play." This is to suggest that there are forces active in building which he calls the "Eternally Purposeless" something which the reasoning mind cannot conceive, but which can only be expressed by the intervention of the Eros.

Architecture is—like all creative work—symbolic form. Critics of Art go so far as to declare that they distinguish between "technical form" and "purely artistic form." It is hardly possible to comment on these points without speaking about art and technics in general, and this would bring us to philosophies of matter and mind. I shall, however, attempt to make clear the meaning of "symbol" :—

"In Symbol is expressed the law of life. It embodies the law of the future into which the present grows and in accordance with which the present creates its form." (H. Kuenkel). A symbol is the visible expression of what is in man's soul though he himself is not conscious of it. Symbol is independent of man's deliberate effort. Culture is none other than the sum of these symbols whether they are tangible, perceptible only to the ear, or extant in a purely spiritual sense.

One cannot imitate to-day the style, the outward idiom of an epoch, or the forms created by vital expressions of a race or nation, expressions which were uniform in a certain period of time, if in the meantime conditions of life have changed entirely the mode of living. Man cannot be separated from his life expressions. This means that it is not possible to preserve those forces which are determined by law, and act by necessity, and to use them at a later date. It is further amiss to confuse "style," the peculiarity or uniformity of symbols with the symbol itself. And if one would denote symbol by what a man has expressed in some style through his study of classical architecture, it can only be the symbol of a man who has lost contact with the creative source of Life.

It should be easier now to value building ; in fact, building can only be good or bad. There exist, of course, gradations owing to the difference in individuals. One cannot deny what is a logical conclusion : The forms of architecture must change. This is necessitated by the law of human development. It even follows that the quality of architecture is determined by the fact whether the latter is rooted in its time or not, which means that truthful forms of construction and sincerity of material are fundamental characteristics of good architecture.

Readers may here rightly say that every expression of architecture, even the worst, is born in its time and has therefore its justification. This is quite correct for one cannot deny the fact that Life is varying. Looking back to the great epochs it will be recognised

that such an ebb (Tiefstaende) is often the turning point between two epochs. There were always men who were in advance of their time. It was their mission, by searching for the truthful and pure basis of their work, to re-erect the symbol.

We can leave open the question which trend our culture (that of the Occident) is taking. It appears to me that we have reached the turning point ; that we are experiencing a regeneration, and one thing is clear to us ; namely, what culture, what Art and what Architecture are not.

If our ancestors had possessed Steel and Reinforced Concrete, we should not be able to-day to admire their columns. They could only build according to their ideas of their day with the material of their time. Their creations give evidence of something which is typical of all greatness in life. There is something in their expression which lifts the work out of its time and gives its eternal value. If we in this age of technics and machines, have new means and material at our disposal and build classical buildings with material hitherto unknown, the result cannot be called architecture. I hope I will be forgiven if I show the contradiction which is manifest in buildings of those who believe even to-day that they must produce "classical" architecture.

●

We see bold constructions of Reinforced Concrete rising to great heights to which classical fronts are "attached" in the literal sense of the word. "Classical" details of construction are elaborately imitated. We see columns carrying arches with "artistically detailed" keystones, cement-cast in the factory as in the case of the capital and base. To facilitate matters for the Architect, all stone required for this purpose is illustrated and enumerated in a catalogue according to "style," and all that is required is to choose what he needs. The "classical" front is held by the reinforced concrete construction which has been calculated by the Engineer.

Another example : The same reinforced concrete construction. In the fifth or sixth story, "classical columns" rest on reinforced concrete beams ; somewhat wrong in form and a little deranged in proportions ; but that does not matter : The onlooker does not perceive it. Who can claim to know the original? To save weight the columns are built in breeze, but they will eventually be plastered.

Again, bringing us back to the object of this article, is the following :–The architectural style to be chosen is made a question of money. Assuming there is no lack of funds, genuine stone can be used. There is nothing to prevent building "classically." We shall concede that the construction is based on the same static feeling which guided the classic builder at the time (why all this ? As I said before : Money is plentiful, and there are still many classicists). The remainder of the building is entirely made to suit the contemporary man. Only those who have eyes to see will notice the contradiction :–A miserable and banal life is lived behind monumental temple-fronts.

●

It is the spirit of our time–the spirit which together with technics constitutes architecture–which rules here. It is the hypocritical man of the present day, who wishes to appear greater than he is ; who has not the courage to move in rooms which simply and naturally set forth the real value and true habits of life. It is the man who believes he has "built rich" if he has imitated stone and marble. Sometimes, however he only lacks imagination ; he has not understood the technique of the old masters, though he has studied their buildings. It may then occur that he constructs vaults and domes in reinforced concrete thus causing discord between form and material, as the latter, in the hands of the builder, resists such moulding.

Had the old builders ways and means of building other than vaulting their ceilings laboriously stone by stone, thus covering their rooms in the only possible way—for their time—our classicists would have no chance to-day to obtain inspiration from the works of the ancients for their "creative work" when building "Cathedral-Stations." They seem to have lost a true sense of reverence. Otherwise there would be no need for them to hide their poverty of mind under the cloak of sentimental explanations of the "tradition

of form," and to profane the ingenious constructional forms of the ancients by their own senseless imitations.

I return to the cultural interdependence of architecture. As said before: Architecture has an international character. We are living in a technical age which means that the man of our time is a calculating man. Things which satisfy his life-needs are the outcome of rational thought. His expression of life is not the synthesis of mind and matter. His work will therefore hardly rise above temporary value.

Technics may be international in character, but man never. (Perhaps temporarily, but not for long).

The Moderns should be given credit for endeavouring to interpret their time and for using the means and material naturally available. We should not forget that it was the general need which showed them the way. Their honesty in the choice of the building elements and the clearness of their construction indicate a will which must win our sympathy.

I am not speaking of those "Moderns" who believe to have found the "New Style" ; not of those who present themselves as the "new" school of architecture. They too are only copying a form. No, the number of those architects is fairly small. In no case, can those who have not the courage to draw the logical conclusions from the technical progress of time, be counted as such ; nor can those whose views of the world and life are so distorted that they do their business transactions behind church fronts.

●

There are, however, others in opposition to the moderns ; who are not altogether satisfied by pure and clear construction. As long as these moderns remain true to technical construction, the others look back again and again to the works of the ancients. Their dislike is not so much due to lack of adaptability as to their longings ; an indefinable feeling that the constructive form is wanting somehow or other ; that something is absent which gives to all forms an eternal value. And they are right ; but they do not recognise that in a state of stagnation or deterioration they will not be able to resume lost connections.

Above all honesty is needed. We must be true to ourselves and to our time. We should abandon copying the remnants of a great period, but endeavour to understand its spirit, or better, to let this spirit rise anew within us. To "play" like a child, to build with things around us, produced by our time, and to apply them with the modesty and simplicity and imagination of the child. Then warm life will be poured into architectural forms, even if need demands rational building. Then harmony will again come from them as from the works of the ancients, and that is what is needed.

As long as there remains within us a spark of irrationality, it is unwise to prophesy. Nothing can be said of the future trend of architecture, but the existence of an irrational part in man's inner life gives reason to believe that in future again architectural forms will breathe something which, while the intellect may be able to analyse the construction will always remain unjustifiable.

All questions of ornament in architecture are of minor importance. "Adding" or "subtracting" is only a matter of general expression. Greatest Human form seeks simplicity, the old symbol of life. How far this adding and subtracting of ornaments make up the style, is—like the whole of architecture—only a matter of cultural expression. Nobody can dogmatize about what is beautiful and what is not beautiful. Either one feels or one does not. Human persuasive power fails, where man can only understand in Eros.

In conclusion, I would like to mention a point which has no direct bearing on the question : "Classical or Modern."

Since mankind went over to division of labour, there are architects and owners. The building is not only the work of the architect. It is nearly always influenced to a large extent by the owner. He determines the whole idea of the building programme. Therefore, the architect is primarily an engineer, as he gives form to these ideas theoretically and practically. He is also an economist as he has to calculate according to the means at his disposal. These are the material values of the building idea. Both architect and owner should be artists ; for the artist is part of man and not of his profession. It is however, very seldom that both architect and owner are artists to the same extent. The architect often wishes for the reason of vanity

to be solely the artist. In most cases, however, a certain tension develops (if both are honest). And that is right, for out of the centre of the dynamic field of which architect and owner are each one pole, the creation results. As long as the building springs from such a centre of dynamics, its eternal value will be the same as in the ideal case where owner and architect counterbalance one another.

I am speaking only of the artistic quality, that is of the spiritual side of the building idea. The eternal value of a building will be lost if the artistic quality of the one part is counterbalanced by the material value of the other part. The example of the dynamic field does not apply then : The forces work in different planes. Truly great art will always come from personalities standing outside the life of division of labour.

The reader will probably have noticed that I have deviated from the question asked at the beginning of this article ; that, without deciding for one or the other direction, I have dealt with man and his relation to architecture. This was not done unintentionally.

Classical or Modern ? To ask this question at once implies failure to recognise the essential.



Lowveld, Northern Transvaal. J. H. Pierneef.

the thirteenth south african academy.

Some Notes and Impressions by Denys Lefebvre.

Partly no doubt, owing to the depression, partly to other causes to which I shall refer later, the thirteenth Academy was smaller in quantity and, it is to be feared, in quality also than many of its predecessors, and yet there were quite a number of good pictures, mostly from the older artists, but also with a fair sprinkling of excellent work from the juniors.

S. P. Hodge was again prominent. Good drawing and a sense of colour should carry him far, though two of his pictures lacked originality in technique. His "The Donkey Cart," as I have said elsewhere, was so reminiscent of Russel Flint that, to me, it lost a good deal of the pleasure it would otherwise have given. "The Excavation on the site of Heath's Hotel," showed, however, that the artist can think for himself and gave a very interesting and nicely composed subject of a Brangwyn kind that yet somehow had originality. A clever piece of work.

Monica MacIver, a comparative new-comer to Johannesburg is no amateur. I liked the colour and composition of "Elizabeth" and "Red and Gold," though "Sir Herbert Stanley" seemed a little forced. She is not a Sergeant, but paints, at her best, with refinement and delicacy that reminds one of a rather less refined Lavery.

J. H. Pierneef's large oil, "Lowveld, N. Transvaal," was one of the most striking pictures in the exhibition. Hard in colour, its sense of distance and decoration and the realism with which it was painted made one wish it was a little more–not sentimental–but human. Perhaps because one sees so much of the "chocolate box" at local exhibitions.

Sydney Carter had one, the largest of his water-colours that I liked, but the others scarcely represented his best work. He is too good an artist not to take pains. Or is it over production ?

A. E. Gyngell had the largest exhibit (eleven pictures) that, as a whole, represented the highest level of technical excellence. His charming charcoal of his mother was the best of them, but there was some good work among the landscapes which have improved enormously of recent years. But, like Strang, Sergeant and many other artists, he remains at his best a portrait maker–preferably of the faces to which he is attracted, for the personality of his subject obviously exercises a great influence.

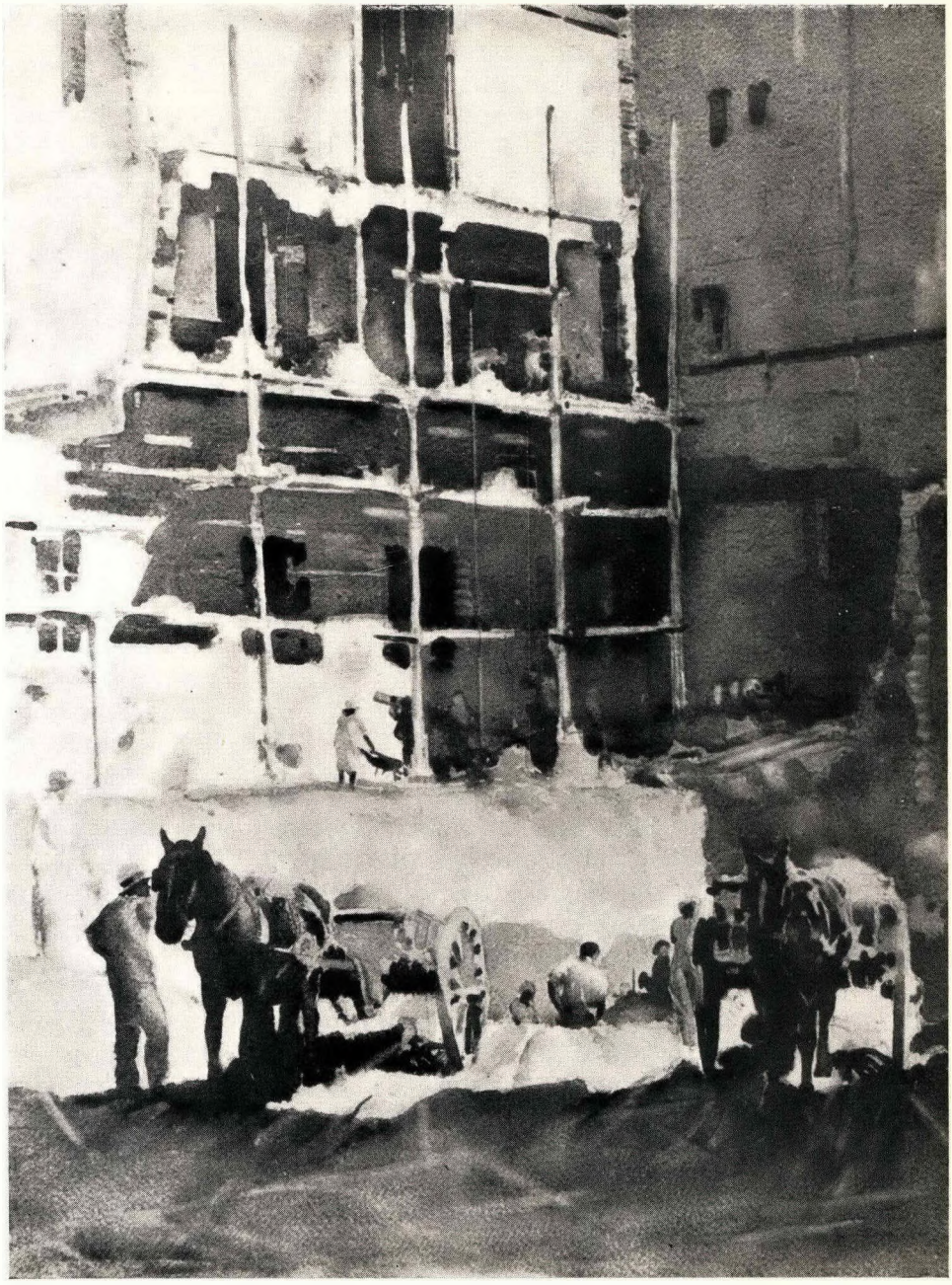
C. Thornley Stewart too seems to suffer from over-production. There was a want of tone in some of his pictures, while composition and drawing seemed now and again neglected. A painter with no little talent, he should use it with discretion.

Powell-Jones in his clever "Pieta," has caught the spirit of devotion. One wonders a little whether a more finished study would have been equally effective. The general effect is certainly striking.

A. Winter-Moore sent a very characteristic water-colour of Grahamstown. I should have liked to have seen more of his work. There is a quality of refinement about it that is not too often seen in South African pictures.

John Lawson had an interesting, but rather unequal oil showing a steady advance in his art. A. Saville Davis had a mine-dump which was well done, but somehow failed to make the appeal of some of his former work. W. H. Coetzer had two portraits and two oils painted with considerable care and skill. He should send fewer exhibits, say half as many, and paint not because he ought, but because he must.

Erich Mayer is becoming somewhat broader in his treatment and has attained to considerable proficiency in his Boer studies. He is such a hard worker that one sympathises, almost perforce oneself, with his work,



Excavation, Heath's Hotel S. P. Hodge

Mary Dutton's sketch in oil, "Evening," gained by a simple treatment of a simple subject. There was something attractive about the attitudes of the natives and the simple outlines. F. W. Armstrong had some colourful water-colours of the Kowie. The Victoria Falls seems to me a subject for a photographer rather than for a landscape painter. Nils Anderssen had a very decorative, if rather artificial, water-colour, "Low Tide." I wish he had sent more, as his work is always worth seeing.

W. M. Timlin was best in a pastel which had nice colour and a sense of atmosphere. His water-colours this year were not up to his usual standard. Jeanette Semple shows individuality and should go further, judging more particularly by the oils.

There were other pleasant studies and a distinct tail, though not perhaps, to the same extent as last year. The mixing of the students work with that of their seniors seemed to me a mistake tending to lower the general effect and putting a handicap on the students themselves. Of course, for the matter of that, we are all learning.

Allerley Glossop still paints with her old skill and in the manner that she has made her own.

Joy Krause had some good water-colours, she should go further. Barbara Mackay, I was glad to see, again exhibiting. Since her departure for the Cape, her art has broadened and mellowed.

Terence McCaw's "Johannesburg after Rain" had good points, but was too derivative. Gwen Vaughan Williams had some clever portraits which suggest further possibilities for her art.

It was interesting to find that several bronzes had been cast in Johannesburg. I understand that a local firm has had the initiative and courage to import a skilled workman from Italy. The effort deserves all success.

Ethelwynne Quail sent a bird-bath and a death-mask that deserved attention. E. J. Macadam had a few interesting native studies. E. Middlemas and T. J. H. Mills secured some excellent likenesses in plaster and bronze. F. J. Kruger had good plaster studies, which, as I have said before, make one wish he could gain experience overseas. He is certainly the most promising of our young modellers, but should make a closer study of proportions and anatomy.

As usual, the architects were modest in the number of their exhibits. D. M. Cowin's charcoal studies and some of the flats by Kallenbach, Kennedy and Furner made most appeal to me personally

The crafts were up to standard and it was pleasant to see an exhibit from Bulawayo. The Ceramic Studios sent interesting stoneware. One of their exhibits contained some modelling by M. Stainbank, the clever Natal sculptor.

Unfortunately, the present tendency to hold individual exhibitions has an influence in cutting down the number and quality of the pictures shown at the general ones. Another trouble, from which I notice the Royal Academy also suffers, is that people with little or no knowledge of art send in pictures that might be fit for a country school fete, but cannot be taken seriously anywhere else. Hence the very large number of rejects at this and other exhibitions. Then, too, another exhibition had been held by the Institute a few months before. Two similar exhibitions within such a short period of time tend to tire both artists and public. On the whole the arrangement was satisfactory, though in an exhibition where much of the work is weak as compared with that of the few professional artists, it seems to me the former principle of dividing up the pictures with screens, added considerably to the effect. The lighting though improved is still very bad, even though the Council has gone to some expense in altering the artificial lights. When we get a hall really adapted for hanging pictures, a great handicap to local exhibitions will have been removed.

In order to make a real effort to attract more artists to contribute both from the Rand and elsewhere in the Union, some changes will have to be made. I hope the whole question will be carefully considered by the Academy Committee at an early date.

the institute of south african architects

The Cape Provincial Institute Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the Thirty-third Annual General Meeting of the Cape Provincial Institute of Architects, held in the Argus Board Room, St. George's Street, Capetown, on 14th March, 1932.

Present.—Messrs. W. Hawke, R. E. F. Hendrikse, W. J. Delbridge, W. G. Fagg, R. H. Jones, H. L. Roberts, J. Lonstein, L. A. Elsworth, L. Marriot Earle, F. M. Bongers, K. V. Commin, C. P. Walgate, R. F. R. Day, J. K. Parker, L. L. Small, G. Bromilow, F. K. Kendall, W. J. H. Gregory, C. H. N. Merrifield and the Secretary. Mr. B. G. L. Mansergh sent an apology for his inability to attend the meeting.

The President, Mr. W. Hawke, occupied the chair.

The Secretary read the notice convening the meeting.

Minutes of the Thirty-second Annual General Meeting held on 12th March, 1931, were read to the meeting, confirmed, and signed by the chairman.

The Chairman at this stage of the proceedings declared the ballot for the incoming committee to be closed, and thereupon Messrs. H. L. Roberts and J. Lonstein were appointed scrutineers. The ballot papers having been verified and dealt with in terms of the regulations, the scrutineers retired to count the votes.

The Chairman in moving the adoption of the report and accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1931. said, "Gentlemen, the annual report covers most of the Committee's activities during the past year, and on the whole I think we have every reason to congratulate ourselves upon the amount of business accomplished and progress made. Our financial position remains sound, thanks to a large extent to the handsome profit derived from the publication of the Year Book.

"It is not my intention to detain you for any length of time, but will ask you to bear with me while I refer to one or two matters of current importance to the profession. I believe I am right in saying that during the two years I have occupied the presidential chair the standing of the profession under the Act has materially improved, despite the fact that protection of practice, which we are all aiming at, has not yet been achieved. Some of you may have heard of the activities of a certain firm of Australian architects, a representative of which recently came over to South Africa with a comprehensive programme of work in the Union, including a set of plans intended to supplant those prepared by the winner of a recent Durban competition. It was due to the provisions of our registration Act that we were able to resist and successfully defeat the attempt to encroach upon our preserves. It is a matter for regret that the builders were not equally successful in resisting the incursion of a constructional firm hailing from the same Dominion to whom, I understand, the schemes of the architects referred to were to have been entrusted for execution. There are, I am sure, many contractors in this country who are quite as capable of carrying out works large or small as any overseas firms, hence our watchword should be 'local work for local people' particularly during the present time of depression when so many of our fellow citizens are unable to find employment. The Building Industry should look into this matter.

"During my visit to England last year I was profoundly impressed with the large number of architects—men and women—that are being launched by the universities and schools throughout the country on an already overloaded profession. What hope these people have of making even a bare living, with thousands now walking the streets in search

of employment, it is difficult to imagine. We in South Africa should see to it that our profession is not similarly jeopardised, and it behoves all of us to exercise the greatest care in giving advice to any enquirers who think of entering it. I gravely suspect that the interest our universities take in prospective Michael Angelos goes little further than a matter of fees and that the question of professional ability to absorb the number of students in training is not sufficiently considered by the authorities.

"I wish to make a brief reference to the recent unfortunate building collapse in Port Elizabeth, in which two of our members are involved. The case arising out of the disaster may very seriously affect the practice of architecture in this country, consequently its legal aspect is being closely watched by your committee and by the Central Council. In the meantime we may at least be allowed to offer our sincere sympathy to the members involved

"During my six months leave of absence, reference to which has been made in the annual report, the presidential duties were taken over by Capt. Elsworth and carried out by him with the utmost care and efficiency. For this service I wish to tender him my sincere thanks. I also wish to pay tribute to Major Duncan, your Secretary, for his untiring services on behalf of the Institute.

"Whilst travelling round Europe with an observing eye, I came to the conclusion that for a small country we are not so far behind in the matter of architecture. Here we are handicapped in having to procure much of the material employed in our structures from overseas, and taking this and other equally serious drawbacks into account I do not think, by comparison with the European practitioner, we have any reason to hang our heads.

"I wish to make passing reference to the question of departmental work undertaken by the Government and other public bodies. I am of the opinion that the country would be the gainer if new works constructed out of public funds were given out to practising architects, or alternatively, made the subject of competition. The latter method is practically the only opportunity our younger men have of establishing themselves and gaining a footing in the profession. It should be the business of the Institute and of its members to use whatever influence they may have to induce the authorities to give serious consideration to this matter.

"In conclusion, gentlemen, I desire to thank you for the honour of being your president during the past two years—an honour I have greatly appreciated."

Mr. R. F. R. Day, in seconding the motion, briefly recapitulated the items of major importance dealt with by the committee in the year under review. He complimented the Joint Practise Committee upon its successful solution of the Master Builders' Endorsed tender Envelope problem, expressed appreciation that the bill contributions had been refunded and hoped that the levy payable to the Central Council would be reduced in the near future.

The adoption of the reports and accounts for 1931 upon being put to the meeting was unanimously carried.

The Scrutineers at this stage of the proceedings reported the result of the ballot to the chairman, who thereupon announced that the following members had been elected as the Provincial Committee for 1932/33 : R. F. R. Day, A.R.I.B.A. ; W. Hawke, F.R.I.B.A. ; W. J. Delbridge, A.R.I.B.A. ; B. G. L. Mansergh, A.R.I.B.A.; L. A. Elsworth, A.R.I.B.A.; C. H. N. Merrifield, A.R.I.B.A.; W. G. Fagg, L.R.I.B.A. ; W. J. H. Gregory, A.R.I.B.A.; J. K. Parker, A.R.I.B.A.

Honorary Auditor. On the motion of Capt. Elsworth, seconded by Mr. Fagg, Mr. B. G. L. Mansergh was appointed honorary auditor for the coming year.

Mr. Delbridge, in thanking the chairman for presiding at the meeting and for his thought-provoking address, to which the members had listened with so much interest, said that Mr. Hawke, during his period of office, had worthily maintained the traditions of the old Cape Institute of Architects. He also added that he was sure members would wish to record their appreciation of the meticulous care and devotion to the Institute's interests displayed by the secretary, Major Duncan. Both votes of thanks were carried with acclamation.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

the natal provincial Institute

Annual General Meeting.

The Fifth Annual General Meeting of Members of the Natal Provincial Institute of the Institute of S.A. Architects was held in the Secretary's Office, 2, Poynton's Chambers, 339, Smith Street, Durban, on Friday, 11th March, 1932.

There were present, the President, Mr. W. S. Payne (in the Chair), Miss Goodricke, Messrs. G. T. Hurst, A. G. Cross, Wallace Paton, G. Le Sueur, B. V. Bartholomew, E. M. Powers, W. B. Oxley, C. S. M. Taylor, L. A. Peyton, Alan Woodrow and the Secretary.

The Chairman referred to the death of Mr. T. Read, a member of the Institute: as a mark of respect members present rose in silence. In moving the adoption of the Annual Report and Balance Sheet for the year 1931, the Chairman said it was a matter for congratulation to know that the Institute was in a sound financial position. The adoption was carried unanimously. On the proposal of the Chairman, it was agreed to add to the Provincial Institute's Investment Account with the Natal Building Society, the sum of £100.

Congratulations were extended to the successful Competitors who received the awards in the recent Hospital Competition held in Natal. Mr. J. E. Duff was re-elected auditor for the ensuing year.

As the result of a ballot nine members were elected on the Provincial Committee for 1932-1933 :—Messrs. Wallace Paton, H. E. Chick, G. T. Hurst, W. B. Oxley, W. S. Payne, E. M. Powers, G. Le Sueur, W. Murray Jones, (Salaried Member) and Alan Woodrow.

The Chairman read a letter from a member the chief complaint being the encroachment of non-qualified persons usurping the functions of legitimate practitioners and officials in the Government and Municipal employ, also Builders preparing building plans, and urged that the Act be amended and made more watertight to prevent all and sundry usurping the funcions of the Architect. He explained that the Act, as it stands, represents the extreme measure of protection Parliament is, at present, willing to give, and it would be futile and impolitic to make any attempt to get the Act amended at the present juncture.

After discussion it was agreed unanimously to recommend to the incoming Committee (with power to act) to approach the Town Council soliciting its sympathy and attention regarding these matters ; and further to make an urgent request to the Town Council to reaffirm the principle of giving out municipal work to private practitioners, and also to reintroduce the "panel" of architects.

With the object of encouraging excellence of design in architecture, Col. Hurst suggested that the Institute consider the awarding annually of a bronze medal for the best example of architecture within the Province of Natal. The Competition to be open to members of the Natal Institute. After some discussion it was agreed to refer the matter to the incoming executive.

The Meeting joined the Chairman in hearty congratulations to Col. Hurst on his election to the Fellowship of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

The new committee for 1932-1933 is as follows :—President, Mr. H. E. Chick ; Vice-President, Mr. W. Paton ; Messrs. E. M. Powers, G. T. Hurst, W. B. Oxley, W. S. Payne, G. Le Sueur, Alan Woodrow and W. Murray Jones.

letters from professor pearse.

New York is a bewildering place and like most huge cosmopolitan cities it is a curious mixture of peoples and architecture. From a distance it is one of the most impressive sights imaginable and from the top of its highest buildings, particularly at night, it is amazing but once in the city it is somewhat disappointing. One wonders continually. There is no cohesion, no sense of scale, just a glorious muddle.

London is bad enough, but there are many delightful places in that city which still remain unspoiled and seem to tie together in a delightful way, but one can find nothing of that sort in New York. I searched out some of the older squares where, I was told, something of old New York could still be seen, but it wasn't so.

Fifth Avenue, at one time the Park Lane of New York, is perhaps the finest street and Park Avenue a street some one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet wide is very good in parts but they don't in any way thrill you.

The buildings, too, are on the whole very disappointing, partly due to the material used, partly to their surroundings and chiefly because they have blackened but have not obtained that crystalline whiteness you get in London.

I looked up many old acquaintances. Mc Kim, Mead and White's Pennsylvania Station, the University Club, the Municipal Buildings, all great scholarly compositions, but frankly disappointing. I visited several of York and Sawyers banks, bold, carefully detailed and full of fine craftsmanship, but they appeared more exotic to me in New York than similar buildings would in London. Again, I think, due to their surroundings.

The city looks so dirty and squalid more particularly so with its hideous elevated railways.

On the other hand some of the recent modern buildings are most interesting possibly because they strike a new note and are still so new. I am not going to commit myself yet by saying I think they are more reasonable or logical—I want to think over them and have another good look on my return.

Raymond Hood's building the "News Building," I frankly didn't like at first, but it appealed more and more as I got accustomed to it. His McGraw Hill building, I didn't like, mainly, I think, because of its mass of somewhat monotonous colour. It is faced with a blue green terra cotta and there is not sufficient interest in it.

The Empire State building is truly fine in mass as well as, to a large extent, in detail. It looks beautiful from any point in the City and especially fine from a distance.

The Lighthouse like finial, I am not yet quite certain about. Some think it should have been taller, others that it shouldn't have been there at all, but it is difficult to know what to suggest as an alternative.

The Irving Trust Building, by Voorhees and Ralph Walker, is a most interesting building and made a great appeal. It has not yet been illustrated, but they have promised to let me have copies of one or two plans and a perspective. It is simple in its general design and mass, but interest has been created by emphasising the vertical and treating the surface with what one might term a rippling motive. The wall surfaces in plan are splayed slightly between the vertical piers which themselves are splayed and the windows are also splayed slightly so that the light catches the glass at different angles. Even the lintols have the effect of movement as they are splayed and the upper part of the splay on the lintols is not horizontal but raised in the centre. This may appear rather vague, but as I have not yet had time to make any sketches or get any illustrations I must wait until my return to explain it all in detail.

Internally it is, in the main, extraordinarily fine, the greatest use having been made of marble, mosaic, metal and different hardwoods for decoration, but treated in the simplest way—very modern in character.

I met most of the leading Architects who were delightfully hospitable and showed me

everything they could in the way of drawings and even took me through their drawing offices.

Voorhees and Walker had no less than three hundred and sixty draughtsmen working; Sawyer one hundred and fifty; and Reinhard, Hood and Co., some eighty odd working on Radio City alone. Each office is a great school of architecture in itself with its superb library and staff of modellers and artists. I spent a day with Schulze, of Schulze and Weaver, who have just completed the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, with its 2,200 bedrooms. After showing me all the drawings, they took me from the top to the bottom of the building, an amazing scheme. Many of the suites had to be period reproductions so they had to work with collaborators in England and France and even used the services of the Victoria and Albert and the Carnavalet Museums. Some of the rooms were decorated by the leading artists in Paris, others by foreign artists domiciled here. I am getting a publication from Mr. Schulze dealing with the building and will send it out.

By the way, I have collected a large amount of literature which is being forwarded to the Department so keep it all together for me, but delve into it as much as you like.

I met Ely Kahn, one of the leaders of the modern movement and Director of the Beaux Art Institute of Design, a wonderful institution based on that in Paris, which issues programmes which are worked to by nearly all the Architectural Schools in the U.S.A. Frank Lloyd Wright I hope to meet, but although liked by most of his confreres he does not appear to be persona grata with the profession. He is rather looked upon as a crank. However I will tell you more about all this when we meet.

●

The Institute of Architects have been most kind to me and the Architectural League of New York have given me the run of their club which is the jolliest, most bohemian place imaginable, the haunt of all the leading architects, painters and sculptors in New York.

I was invited by the Beaux Arts Institute to act on the jury for four of their competitions, one a design for a Mental Hospital (not because they really thought I needed one); an Archaeological project, "A Chinese Pagoda"; an interior decorative scheme "A Restaurant by the Sea"; and a Mural painting project, "An overmantel in an Architects Office." We had the jolliest time working from five p.m. to midnight with a break for dinner in Hood's Beaux Arts apartments—very modern.

Philip Sawyer, of York and Sawyer, one of the old guard took me round quite a lot and showed me many of the finest traditional buildings including Carrere and Hastings Public Library. He is about seventy, but wonderfully youthful and full of good humour. I dined at his house which is built on the roof of a twenty-eight storied apartment and is itself two stories in height and full of attractive things. The offices of the large American firms are interesting and sometimes amusing with wonderful reception rooms got up regardless of expense. Of the Schools of Architecture I cannot say very much at this stage. I have visited four so far, Columbia, New York, Yale and the Massachusets Institute here. They vary in their courses, but are all pretty good and I am going through them all in great detail meeting the instructors in each subject and following through their course with them. It is interesting to see the different approaches to each subject and hear the varying views expressed. New Haven, where Yale is situated, is a restful place after New York. Most of the houses are of wood and many of them, and certainly the most attractive are in the early Colonial style, the weather boarded walls being white, the roof shingled, the windows and their shutters and the doors an attractive green and usually a very attractive entrance doorway. The Town Common or Green was particularly fine with two beautiful old Churches of narrow red bricks with wooden towers or rather spires in the "Wren" manner. The town is set in attractive surroundings and is full of the most magnificent elms and oaks which must be truly gorgeous in spring and autumn.

The University is an extraordinary medley of buildings, a miscellany of Collegiate Gothic, as they call it, Victorian Gothic (really horrid) classical and colonial. It is being almost completely rebuilt regardless of expense in Collegiate Gothic, some of which is really good carried out by Gamble Rogers, of New York. The Sterling Memorial Library is

an amazing building, the entrance hall being the Nave of a huge Cathedral with Aisles, on either side used for cloak rooms or card index cabinets or exhibits. The normal sanctuary of the Cathedral is occupied by the information desk with elaborate Gothic panelling and screens finished in the manner of choir stalls. Thence one passes to a cloister on one side and vast reading rooms on the other. On one side of the cloister are the Librarian's quarters, built in the manner of a fifteenth century house, the idea being as far as I could see, to bluff the future that the house was there originally and has been embodied in the scheme.

Behind the Cathedral like entrance hall rises the great tower of stack rooms to house two million books.

Embodied in one part is the original library of Yale an old Colonial room with its furniture and many of the original books as it existed in 1701.

One of the Colleges known as the Harkness Memorial is rather fine and in one angle is a replica of Wrexham Abbey Tower. The original Elihu Yale died at Wrexham. Sentiment plays a very important part in American life and there is far more flag wagging here than in England or South Africa.

I stayed with a South African family at New Haven, Dr. Loram, who showed me everything there was to be seen and who with his wife was extremely hospitable.

He is a Professor of Education and I was privileged to attend a seminar and hear a discussion by no less than seven professors and twenty-five students.

Education certainly seems to be the be all and end all of existence here and it will be interesting to see the results of the modern developments, now taking place, in the future.

●

I came on to Boston, pronounced Bawston, yesterday afternoon, a comfortable journey through beautiful country and all along the coast. I have hardly got my bearings yet, but this afternoon I happened to see a few parts of old Boston with its delightful red brick Colonial architecture, four storied houses, with white woodwork and charming doorways, but here again as in New Haven the charm of the older parts of the town is completely spoiled by the hideous growth of modern commercial architecture.

I spent the greater part of the day with Dean Emerson at the School of Architecture, an overwhelming classic building.

To-morrow I go to Harvard for the morning and spend the afternoon with Emerson and his staff.

It is an interesting school linked up with a large engineering school and having faced the same problems as we had in our earlier years.

By the way some of Goodhue's ecclesiastical architecture is among the best stuff I have seen. He was an artist to his finger tips. The great Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, not Goodhue, now well under weigh was most disappointing. Scott with his Liverpool Cathedral has left them stone cold.

●

I have been in touch with the American Institute of Town Planning and have collected some interesting documents from them, all of which are on the way to you.

I shall be in Montreal on Sunday next, and it will be interesting to visit a British Dominion and see how far American influence is to be seen in their work and in their schools. I have promises of a very warm welcome there although the country will be under snow.

It is getting colder as I proceed Northwards and everything is frozen here, snow about the streets and skating in the parks. New York was comparatively warm. From Montreal I go to Toronto, thence to Chicago, Illinois, if time permits, Pittsburgh, Washington, Philadelphia, Princeton, Ithaca and New York and sail from there about the beginning of April.

---

boston u.s.a. february 15 1932

In a letter received from Stuttgart, Professor Pearse continues : "I left London on the 19th for Amsterdam where I spent a day or two and then went to Bussum where I spent two very pleasant days with Mr. J. H. Breyer and his wife. Amsterdam was full of interest to me. The old city with its canals, narrow streets, and attractive old houses with their great variety of gables, is fascinating. I met Dr. S othouwer, Professor of Architecture at the University of Delft. He is quite an authority on the old houses from 1600–1800. Modern Amsterdam is also fascinating and the modern work, all carried out in the delightful small bricks of Holland, seems to fit in most harmoniously with the old. Unfortunately I hadn't time for more than a hurried visit to the new suburbs, one afternoon in fact. From Bussum I went with Mr. Breyer to Hilversum, where we were lucky to meet Dudock, the architect of the new Town Hall, and many schools in the town. The Town Hall is really very attractive. Simple in design and mass it makes an appeal chiefly, I think, because of its materials and colouring.

The exterior is mainly of a most attractive small yellow brick with very broad white mortar joints. The base is in a darker brown small brick. Blue and black glazed bricks and tiles are used here and there and occasionally a gold glazed tile to the piers. Throughout the building, blue, green, gold and silver are largely used. The internal doors for instance are a wonderful shade of green set in blue frames with angle iron, protecting the reveals, in aluminium. Red and black occur here and there in the furniture. The furniture throughout all designed by Dudock is some of the finest modern furniture I have seen. It does not appear to be incongruous or bizarre as so much of the modern stuff appears to be.

Dudock it appears was trained as a military engineer and spent a good deal of time, whilst on military works, with Berlage, who was recently awarded the R.I.B.A. Gold Medal.

He is of opinion that a sound engineering training is essential to the modern architect.

We visited one or two attractive little villages in the district, one in particular, Naarden, being an unspoiled little gem. It is the last fortified city in Holland laid out on the plan of a 17th century fortress and has two large moats or canals encircling it on three sides with the Zuider Zee on the fourth. Within the walls lies a compact little village with a charming town hall (1601) and a large Church which has been somewhat ruined by whitewash internally.

I spent a day or two at Cologne and had a motor trip up the Rhine to one or two beauty spots. Old Cologne was very attractive more especially the Old Romanesque Churches. The Cathedral is a dominating mass but did not appeal to me. The boulevards and views of the city across the river are very wonderful.

At Frankfort I saw a good deal of the latest modern work by Mai, who is now working for the Soviet Government in Moscow. His work, however, at Frankfort is somewhat cheap and tawdry and I did not care for it. Old Frankfort is particularly charming. I went round with a University student who is taking History and has made a special study of the old buildings so, I had a wonderful tour. We went in and out of old courts and houses, everyone of which was full of history.

A Society has now been formed of Architects, Artists and University students which has set to work to preserve and restore old Frankfort. The students each give up a day to act as guides to visitors or collect money for the purpose, the Architects and Artists act as advisors and see the work properly carried out. They thus restore two or three buildings a year. I daresay I shall see many old mediaeval towns on my tour, but it will be hard to find anything more charming than this old city.

On arrival here I found that Professor Bonatz, whom I had hoped to meet, was away at Basle, so I had a good look round with an American whom I met on the train. He is from Detroit and has just had a house built by a son-in-law of Saarinen, the modern Finnish architect and is very attracted by some of the latter's work.

I leave for Munich this afternoon and thence for Nuremburg, Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Berlin, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Stockholm and Gottenburg, quite a big job in a limited time. I hope to be back in London about May 24th, and shall have a rest before returning.

hellenic tourists



monastery at daphne

Most people would find an Hellenic tour interesting, but everyone does not go on such a tour with the same motive. Some go to learn more of the wonders of ancient Greece ; some to acquire an extra visa on their passports, and few perhaps for the benefit of their health. And there are always a few spinsters in search of that romantic glamour supposed to be inseparable from a sea voyage.

On such a cruise, in April 1929, we were a fairly representative group. We had with us several of England's leading headmasters, and these learned gentlemen delivered lectures every evening on what we were going to see next day. Under their influence we should have been an earnest group of seekers after pure historical fact, but light relief was provided by a certain cleric of lively brain and original mind, with a puckish sense of humour combined with the most venerable appearance. Bare-headed and with a long white beard this unofficial guide used to leap from stone to stone of the Olympian or Delphic ruins and stride up the Acropolis two steps at a time. Once arrived at the historic spot he would collect his audience around him and, in a stentorian voice, deliver a lecture in his own style. His knowledge was certainly extensive and enriched by personal acquaintance—but he took a wicked delight in sweeping aside most of the historical facts which had been presented to us the night before, and replacing them by racy anecdotes of the ancients. By these unconventional lectures, Dr. W. incurred the wrath of those whose temperament disposed them to prefer facts to fiction. Thus there grew up a kind of feud between two sections of the tourists.

One of the battle-grounds was the memorable field of Thermopylae. There the conventional section of the expedition rallied round the spot where Leonidas made his famous stand against the Persians ; while the unconventionals headed by the energetic doctor of divinity went off to bathe in the hot springs provided by Heracles. We who bathed came out of the hot water to face an icy wind, a drive of sixteen miles in open cars, and a long wait on the quay at the chilly hour of sunset.

At Crete again there was a passage of arms. We had spent the morning exploring the Palace of Minos, then being excavated by Sir Arthur Evans. In spite of a "sirocco" which did its best to damp our enthusiasm, most of us found Minoan architecture a refreshing change after the almost monotonous perfections of Greece. At mid-day we were revived by lunch in the garden of Sir Arthur's villa. Under the influence of a very potent Mediterranean wine, the irrepressible Dr. W. became livelier than ever, and joined in a conversation between one of the tourists and an architect of Cnossos. This lady was anxious to know why Minoan pillars taper towards the base. Dr. W. gave his opinions on the subject and suggested that she should visit the museum at Candia for further information.

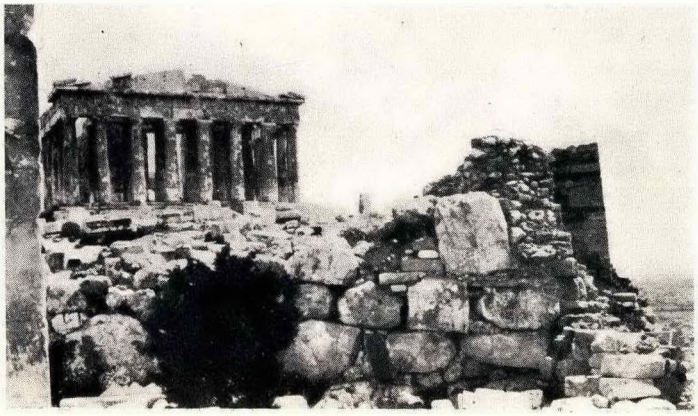
One of the most exciting expeditions was to Troy. Here we were almost prevented from landing by fierce-looking Turkish police who insisted on scrutinizing every passport on the boat. Later we risked our lives by undertaking a twenty-mile drive over shocking roads in vehicles like market carts with motor engines. These cars last only three months under the treatment they receive. Brakes are unknown to Turkish and Cretan drivers, and, in one place, we crossed a bridge which had to be replaced after each car had gone over it. Troy was a great mound concealing the ruins of nine cities. Across a gloomy plain, we saw the waters of the Dardanelles, and the gleaming memorial to the victims of the Gallipoli blunder. And there was Olympia with its tree-sheltered stadium ; Eleusis where the "Mysteries" were held ; Daphne where one almost expected to see Pan peeping through the leaves ; and Delos with its prehistoric shrine.

c. m. h.



palace of minos. crete

parthenon





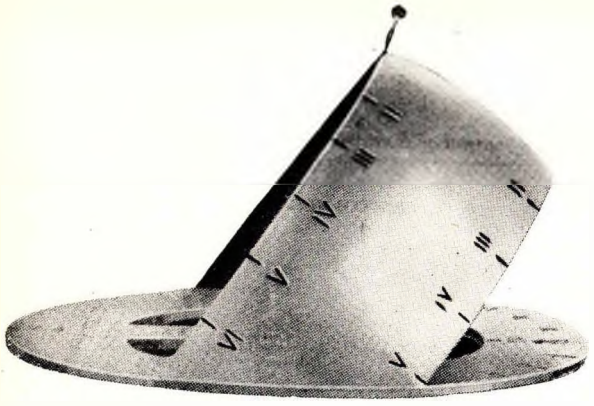


Fig. 1

the orientator.

by W. H. Connell, F.R.A.S.

The efficient illumination of buildings by sunlight has received a good deal of study during recent years both by individual members of the architectural profession as well as by the Scientific and Industrial Research Department of the British Government, and the instrument referred to below appears to meet a felt need.

The amount of sunshine that is available in connection with any building depends upon its orientation and lay-out, and the orientator has been produced to help the architect in preparing plans for buildings, whether such are to be erected near at hand or in some distant country. This instrument readily shows the angle at which the sun's rays strike a window, wall or other feature at any hour of the day during winter or summer.

In use the orientator is placed on the plan with the index mark along the true north line and its centre on the spot regarding which information relating to sunshine illumination is desired. The small ball, which represents the sun, is held in the fingers and the cord pulled tight so that it just touches either the "summer" or "winter" edge of the curved scale. The cord now represents the direction of the sun's rays, and by moving it round the arc a position can be found for every hour of sunshine. Viewed vertically it is perfectly easy to see whether the sun's rays are interrupted by an obstruction, and consequently the period during which the sun's rays fall directly on a window or other opening can be read off immediately. Thus the orientator can assist an architect in deciding positions and heights of windows, walls, verandahs, etc., and—possibly just as important—will enable his clients to visualize the position better. Fig. 2 illustrates the above remarks.

It is well known that the sun's daily path in the heavens changes continuously throughout the year, but probably few people realize the extent and rate of this variation. The extreme simplicity of the orientator is possible because of the fact that for three and a half months during the height of summer the change in the sun's daily path is very slight indeed; then for the succeeding two and a half months of autumn the change is very rapid, followed by a further approximately constant period of three and a half months of winter, again followed by a very rapid change during two and a half months of spring. For all practical purposes then it is possible to take the "summer" and "winter" curves and neglect the short periods of very rapid change.

The sun's maximum declination above the celestial equator at midsummer (23rd June in this country) is 23° 30′ N., whilst on 1st May, one and three-quarter months before midsummer, and again on 12th August, one and three-quarter months after midsummer, the sun's declination is 15° N. Actually the figure of 20° 30′ N. has been selected as the most suitable average for the three and a half months of summer from 1st May to 12th August. Therefore the angle between the celestial equator and the "summer" edge of the hour circle of the orientator is made 20° 30′ N. In point of fact this figure is the sun's exact declination on 23rd May and 15th July, on which days consequently the orientator registers the position of the sun exactly.

Similarly for the winter months, a declination of 20° 30′ S. has been selected as the most suitable average for the three and a half months between 1st November and 6th February, and therefore the angle between the celestial equator and the "winter" edge of the hour circle of the orientator is made 20° 30′ S. This figure is exactly the sun's declination on 24th November and 18th January.

The purchaser of an orientator must state the latitude for which it is required, there being a series of instruments for different latitudes in both the northern and southern hemispheres. For instance Model 52° N. will suffice for the belt between latitudes 50° N. and 54° N. In countries where daylight saving is in vogue the hour scales are engraved to suit this condition.

These instruments are stoutly constructed of duralumin, finished to a pleasing appearance by sandblasting.

Reprinted from the Journal of Scientific Instruments, Vol. VIII. No. 10, October, 1931.

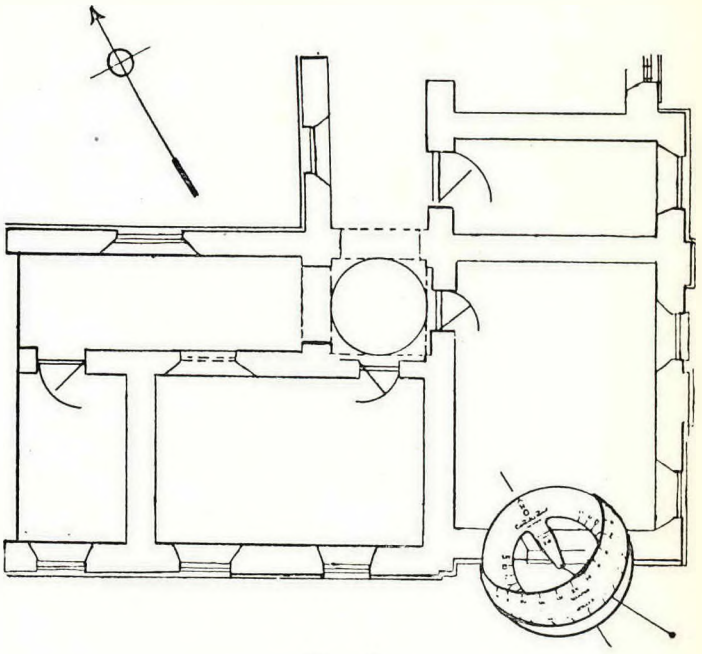


Fig. 2.

portland cement.

A new specification for Portland Cement was published in November last by the British Standards Institution (formerly the British Engineering Standards Association).

The principal alterations are the substitution of British Standard "wire cloths" for the sieves formerly specified for fineness tests (the practical results remaining as before), the modification of the lime-silica-alumina content, the deletion of the neat cement tensile test, and the substitution of three and seven day tests for sand and cement for the previous seven day and twenty-eight day tests, and the reduction of the casting time (in the soundness test) from six to three hours. A further addition to the specification is a stipulation as to the weight of cement in bags, casks, and steel drums. The seven day neat cement test remains as an optional test.

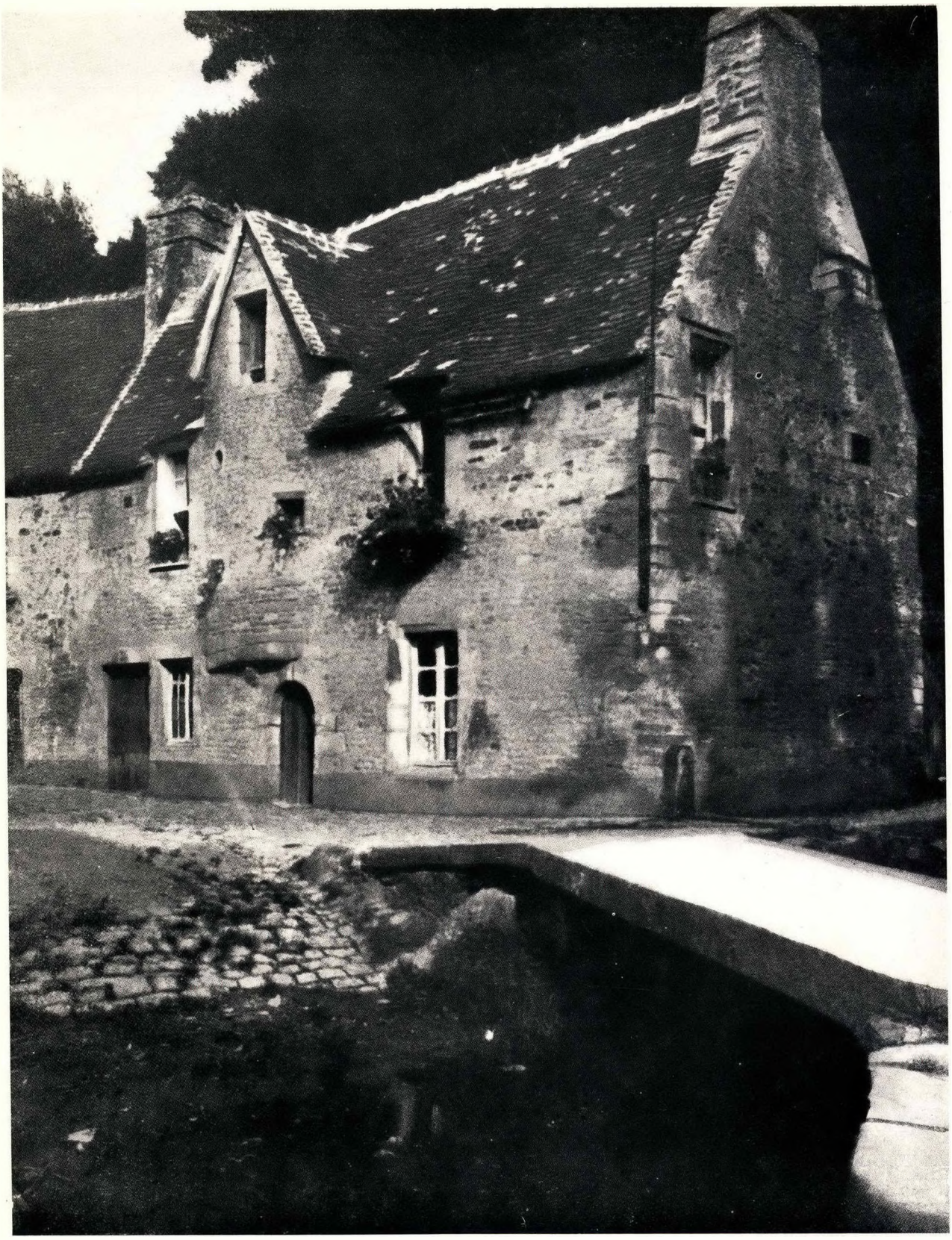
The three day cement and sand test provides for a tensile strength of three hundred lbs. per square inch and the seven day for some increase on the three day test with a minimum of three hundred and seventy-five lbs.

Setting times remain as before, i.e., Normal Setting Cement. Initial set not less than thirty minutes and final set not less than ten hours. Quick Setting Cement. Initial set of not less than five minutes and final set of not more than thirty minutes.

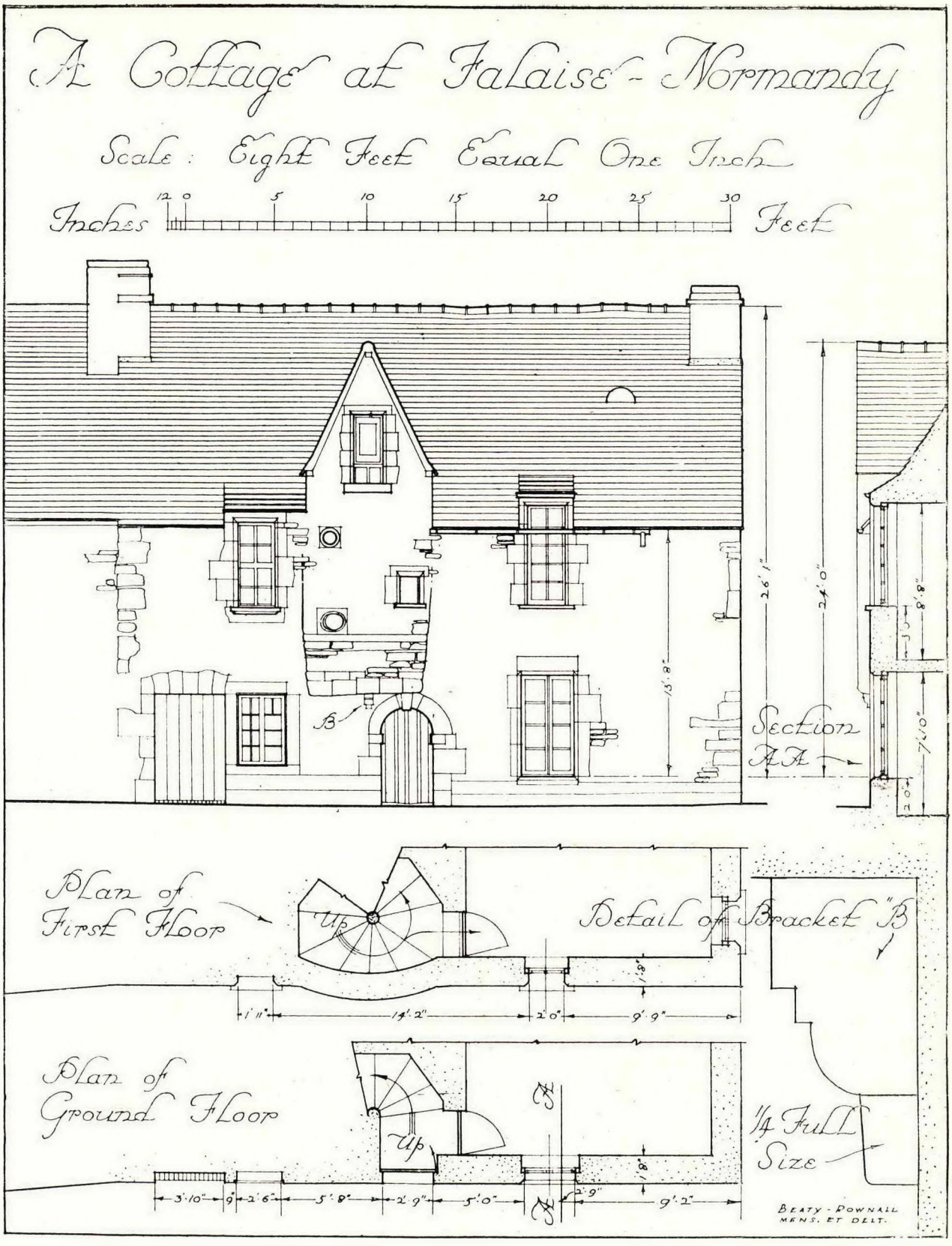
The term "quick setting" cement does not necessarily imply that the cement hardens quickly. In fact the so called "rapid hardening" cement usually has a slower initial set and a quicker final set than the normal.

Certain conditions are given for carrying out tests in hot climates of interest more to the expert tester than the Architect.

H.B.



cottage at falaise normandy


A Cottage at Falaise - Normandy
Scale : Eight Feet Equal One Inch
Inches
Feet
Section A A
Plan of First Floor
Up
Detail of Bracket "B"
Plan of Ground Floor
Up
1/4 Full Size
BEATY - DOWNALL MENS. ET DELT.

see page 135

professional notes and news

Central Council Notes.

At the recent meeting of the 1932-1933 Central Council the following appointments for the year were unanimously agreed to :—

President-in-Chief : Mr. W. S. Payne, A.R.I.B.A., of Durban.

Vice-President-in-Chief : Mr. Fredk. W. Masey, L.R.I.B.A., of Bloemfontein.

Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Central Council : Lt.-Col. W. E. Puntis, M.I.A., F.S.I., O.B.E., of Pretoria.

The Central Council decided to publish in the next issue of the Year Book (which will be available towards the end of June, 1932), "A Brief Summary of the more important activities of the elected Central Council and its Executive Committee" from 1928 to date, compiled by the Registrar.

Several additions to and changes in the Institute's Conditions governing Architectural Competitions have been made by the Central Council, all of which will be contained in the next issue of the Year Book. Inter alia, the Central Council has adopted the principle of having Preliminary Eliminating Competitions for projects estimated to cost £50,000 and over.

Of the the total sum of £3,381 collected and contributed by the Institute's five constituent bodies and their members towards the "Promotion of the Act" expenses, the Central Council has now repaid £3,135. It is hoped to repay the balance of £246 towards the end of 1932.

As the result of further experience, the Central Council has submitted several amendments to the Regulations to the Hon. the Minister of Education. These amendments have been duly gazetted and laid before Parliament and will, it is anticipated, have the force of law as and from June 4th, 1932. A copy of the amendment will be forwarded to every member of the Institute and the Chapter ; moreover the next issue of the Year Book will contain the Act and the Regulations (as amended right up to date).

The Central Council is sending a strong recommendation to the Provincial Institutes that, wherever possible, no pupil be taken into the office of an Architect unless the pupil has had at least two years' tuition at a recognised school of architecture.

The Central Council is issuing an official statement to all concerned that the professions of Architecture and Quantity Surveying in South Africa are becoming overcrowded.

The Central Council has adopted the recommendation of its Executive Committee that a summary of Central Council minutes and activities be published from time to time, if possible monthly, in the "South African Architectural Record" and the "Architect, Builder and Engineer."

The Central Council has decided to utilise, through the constituent bodies of the Institute, a "Propaganda" pamphlet submitted by the R.I.B.A. entitled, "The Adventure of Building." A special leaflet descriptive of South African conditions is being drafted by the Executive Committee for inclusion in the pamphlet, when issued.

The Central Council has agreed to adopt for use in South Africa, a standard brick, following the practice in Great Britain. The size of the brick is eight and seven-eighth inch by two and five-eighth inch by four and five-sixteenths inch (R.I.B.A. 1931-1932 Kalendar, page 784).

Mr. R. Howden has been appointed the Institute's South African representative on the R.I.B.A. Council. As Mr. Howden is at present in Great Britain he will thus be in a position to attend meetings of the R.I.B.A. Council.

The Central Council was advised that all the constituent bodies and local committees of the Institute were unanimously supporting the Architect-Quantity Surveyor charged with culpable homicide in the Port Elizabeth building collapse case.

The Central Council has decided to approach the Hon. the Minister of Interior urging the advisability of co-ordinating the building bye-laws in the various cities and towns of the Union of South Africa.

The Central Council has decided to approach the Union Government pointing out the serious position of the Institute's and Chapter's younger members, and students, and of artisans in the various trades, because of the stoppage of building projects, in the hope that the Union Government may find it possible to take steps to relieve the present distress.

The Central Council unanimously agreed to register Mr. J. S. Lewis (Registrar of the Institute) and Major P. Milne Duncan (Secretary of the Cape Provincial Institute) as Honorary Members of the Institute, in recognition of the services rendered by them to the architectural profession in South Africa.

On the unanimous recommendation of the Board of the Chapter, the Central Council enrolled Mr. J. S. Lewis an Honorary Member of the Chapter.

The Institute of South African Architects.

The Standing Committee on Education & Examinations.

Time Limit re Exemptions from Matriculation.

The Institute's Standing Committee has from time to time received applications for exemption from matriculation, a number of which it is impossible to grant.

Matriculation, or its equivalent, is absolutely essential for those who wish to take up the professions of Architecture or Quantity Surveying.

In the earlier years of the Institute's working, when facilities for Architectural and Quantity Surveying education were not completely organised, consideration had to be given to the cases of certain students who had already embarked on their course of training. For this reason students or pupils who had been employed in the office of an Architect or Quantity Surveyor prior to 1929, and who had attained matriculation standard, were entitled to special consideration.

At its recent meeting the Standing Committee resolved that a time limit must be fixed after which no further "pre-1929" applications for exemption from matriculation will be considered ; that such time limit be December 31st, 1932 ; and that this resolution be published in the "South African Architectural Record" and the "Architect, Builder and Engineer," as notice to all concerned.

J. S. Lewis,
Registrar.

We are advised by the Secretary of the R.I.B.A. that the procedure for the conduct of the competition for the Owen Jones Studentship has been varied slightly. The competition is still conducted in two stages, but instead of it being necessary for the programme for the competition to be sent to the competitors selected as a result of the Preliminary Competition, the programme is printed in the Prizes and Studentships Pamphlet, and a copy should be issued to each competitor. Of course, the Competition is confined to competitors selected as a result of the Preliminary Competition.

Competitors should be notified by the 1st August whether or not they have been admitted to the competition. The competitors are then allowed a period of six weeks within which to complete their drawings. At the end of this period of six weeks the competitors are asked to deliver their designs to The Secretary, The Transvaal Provincial Institute, Institute of South African Architects, P.O. Box 2266, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Among the numerous publications which Professor Pearse has sent out from America is a very interesting series of monographs of European architecture, known as the Tuileries Brochures. These are published by the Ludowici Celadon Company (tile manufacturers) and are an example of American advertising at its best. These booklets which are produced "for distribution among

the members of the architectural profession" are quite free of advertisement matter, and cover a rich field of English and French vernacular work. The example illustrated elsewhere in this issue is reproduced full size, and has been chosen from the brochure on "Falaise—The Heart of Normandy."—R.M.

The fourth annual contest for the Hunt, Leuchars & Hepburn Cup, between the Architects and Builders of Durban, was played at Umkomaas, on May 3rd, in fine weather. In both singles and foursomes the Architects proved too strong for their confreres, winning by eight matches on the day's play.

Singles–

The scores were : T. R. Lee, ¼ : W. A. Simpson, 1 ; A. O. Pitt, 0 : P. W. Wilton, 0 ; H. F. Wade, 0 : G. W. Robertson, 0 ; H. Lea, 1 : A. Johnson, 0 ; O. Grinaker, 1 ; W. L. Ritchie, 0 ; R. N. Jackson, 0 : H. J. Ivens, 1¼ ; E. M. Powers (captain), 0 : A. R. Midley (captain), 1 ; T. S. M. Taylor, 0 : M. Evans, 1¼ ; W. Paton, ¼ : J. J. Smith, 1 ; A. A. R. McKinley, 1¼ : A. G. Wishart, 0 ; H. Holdsworth, 1¼ : B. E. Swinbourne, 0 ; W. M. Campbell, 1¼ : W. J. G. Barnes, 0 ; G. Le Seur, 1¼ : G. P. Lee, 0 ; W. J. Cornelius, 1 : R. M. Kemack, 0 ; W. R. Cornell, 0 : C. Wilton, 1¼ ; W. J. Calder, 1¼ : P. Osborn, 0. Architects' total 9¾ ; Builders' total, 6¾

Foursomes–

Lea and Pitt, 1 : Simpson and P. Wilton, 0 ; Wade and Lee, 1 ; Robertson and Johnstone, ¼ ; Grinaker and Jackson, 1 : Ritchie and Ivens, ¼ ; Powers and Taylor, 0 : Midgley and Evans, 1¼ ; Paton and McKinley, 1¼ : Smith and Wishart, 0 ; Holdsworth and Campbell, 1¼ : Swinbourne and Barnes, 0 ; Le Seur and Cornelius, 1¼ : G. P. Lee and Kemack, 0 ; Cornell and Calder, 0 : C. Wilton and Osborn, 0. Architects' total, 6¾. Builders' total, 1¾. The Architects won by 16½ matches to 8½.

To while away the interval before returning home an impromptu concert was arranged. C. S. M. Taylor gave renderings of sentimental songs and was enthusiastically received, the "Old Dun Cow" being especially appreciated. W. L. Ritchie sang "Happy Daze," while Percy Wilton with "The Prisoner's Song," and "They Wouldn't Believe Me."

Mr. A. D. Lewis writes to the Secretary of the Transvaal Provincial Institute to say it is quite possible he and his family will shortly be returning to South Africa. He refers appreciably to extracts from Professor G. E. Pearse's letter published in the "S.A. Architectural Record" for March. Mr. Lewis himself visited America in 1899 as a student. He says he regrets that Professor Pearse did not mention the internal decorations of the sky-scrapers and points out that in America, architects (other than Carnegieites) belong to all kinds of nationalities. "Some belong to the L'Ecole Beaux Arts, others to the National as British or British or National School in Rome and others to the Paodium Sidium School to which class of architects it has been said I belong. I have always tried to keep before my mental horizon the importance of pioneering, a "Hands across the Sea" style of architecture. God forbid that it should be like the style of the Flatting system in Scalstown or Passelpark or even Machrinish Bay. Whose like us ? nobody except Sanitary Inspectors or Meat Inspectors."

Pretoria Local Committee. Kalendar. June, 1932. Monday 6th : Committee Meeting. Friday 10th : Lecture : "The Act and Regulations in application to the Architect," by T. Moore, F.S.I. Friday 24th : Lecture : "Modern European Architecture," by E. W. Fleischmann. Saturday 25th : Visit to Groenkloof Brick and Potteries, for Students, at 3.30 p.m. All members are invited to these lectures.

Mr. Gordon Leith expects to leave for England early in June and will be away for about four months.

Mr. J. Lockwood Hall is proceeding to England at the beginning of June, and expects to return about the end of October.

Benevolent Fund : The Trustees of the Benevolent Fund gratefully acknowledge contributions from the following : Messrs. B. R. Avery, S. Bowyer, D. M. Burton, J. G. Carmichael, C. J. Strickland Cholmley, Cowin Powers and Ellis, J. N. Cowin, Grace Cowin, N. W. Gallagher, A. Gundersen, S. Gotsche, Gordon Leith, H. W. Nottingham, D. M. Sinclair, Stucke and Harrison, F. Williamson, W. Weightman, E. H. Waugh.

The seventh annual dance of the architectural students of the Witwatersrand University was held in the Wanderers Hall and proved most successful. Great credit was due to Mr. W. de Sanderes Hendrikz as D.C., and Messrs. John Fassler, G. Tudhope Chalmers, B. S. Cooke, G. Glanville Allen, T. du T. Mostert, Monty Bryer and A. R. D. McIntosh as M.C.'s, who were responsible for the arrangements. There was a good attendance and the ballroom looked most attractive with multi-coloured lights playing on the dancers.

Correspondence.

the editor.
south african architectural record •
67 exploration buildings •
johannesburg •

sir /

a number of durban architects are unhappy about the make-up of the record • i am one of them • we think the adoption of the uncapitalized type for titles and captions is a mistake •

it offends one's sense of the proper, the consistent and the complete •

it appears to be a straining after an effect but it, has missed and has fallen flat, resulting in insipidity & affectation — like porridge without salt •

take the issue of april, for instance, pages 100, 102 & others • the titles look like carry-overs from the previous pages •

sir, be distinctive if you like, provided it does not result in typographical false quantities.

with best wishes •

g/t/hurst

---

book reviews.

Academy Architecture & Architectural Review 1931.

B. T. Batsford Ltd. London, price 10/-

We have come to expect a high standard of publishing from Messrs. Batsford, and the work under review is no exception.

Looking back over past issues of this annual one is immediately struck by the fact that the standard of architecture submitted to the Academy, shows little change for the past sixty years, but if anything a slight deterioration.

Some selected Academy exhibits form the introduction while the bulk of the book is devoted to a review of some of the more recent works of Sir Edwin Cooper, A.R.A. Among the former is a design for a Cathedral by Cyril Farey, illustrated by two perspective drawings. This design is reminiscent of Sir Edwin Lutyen's Roman Catholic Cathedral at Liverpool, of which Mr. Farey did a perspective drawing.

In addition there is an excellent photograph of the model of the "little old lady of Threadneedle Street," as redressed by Sir Herbert Baker, A.R.A., in what he presumably considers the latest fashion. Sir John Burnet, Tait and Larne are represented by their designs for the Freemasons' Hospital Ravenscourt Park, and Unilever House, Blackfriars, London. The former is a forced attempt to put a "modern" elevation on a traditional plan, but is, on the whole rather more successful than Unilever House.

Of Sir Edwin Cooper's works, the Star and Garter House, Sandgate, displays an unexpected restraint, while the rest if somewhat rococo, nevertheless contain many finely conceived designs.

Photographs and reproductions, amongst which are some typically delightful water-colours by William Walcott, are excellent, and the book would be a worth while addition to any architect's library.

allen

The Quantity System.

The new edition of Kidder's Architects and Builders Handbook to be reviewed in next month's issue has a very excellent page or two decribing what it calls the "Quantity System." It sets forth the methods employed by Quantity Surveyors and the uses and advantages of having quantities for all works of any importance.

The article sets out very clearly what is involved and evidently considers American Architects would gain very much by adopting the English system. The system in a modified form is used in some parts of the States, but evidently it is becoming increasingly used and will no doubt on its merits before long take the place of the present more widely adopted system there.

The States does not usually look to England (or South Africa) for a lead in business matters, but it seems to be following their lead in this case.

H.B.

The English!

"Here is my beloved London! 'No town on the face of the earth is more brilliant than London in June,' said the 'Daily Express,' on June 12th, 1929, and a few weeks later, on July 3rd, the 'Star,' informed its readers that 'London, as a whole, with its population of nearly eight millions, is the healthiest great city in the world, and we may largely account for this by the uniformly good sanitation and water supply.' Anyone who has compared the dust-carts of Dutch and German cities with the censers that spread their dubious perfumes and germs through the streets of the English Metropolis will share the enthusiasm of the 'Star,' and admire London for remaining, notwithstanding, the healthiest great city in the world."

●

"The English have rebuilt their house in reinforced concrete, but they have left its old thatched roof."

●

"There remains one form of art whose utter decay is a steady reproach to the people of England. Their architecture is the laughing-stock of the Western world. We must remember that architecture occupies a place by itself among the witnesses of culture. It is not merely the work of the artist, but the result of the co-operation of three agents: the architects, the people who commission them, and the public. Of these three agents the last is the most important. Theories of art for art's sake, which are entirely in their place in other arts, do not affect the architect. Unlike other artists he is a professional man; one who, moreover, can only execute his work after he has sold it. This he will never do unless he carries with him the approval of the public. He has to study its taste and must work as it orders him. On the other hand, he has many opportunities for influencing this taste, especially in the course of his contacts with the people who commission his work. In England the public never demands, and the architect rarely counsels, beauty.

A thought which has never entered the heads of those who order, execute or admire buildings, is that local patriotism is not enough, and that there is also a patriotism of the fourth dimension. Is it not true that when we read or think of certain periods of history, we feel glad that we did not belong to them? Who could wish he had been a late Merovingian, a Frenchman of 1816, or an Englishman of 1870? Do we not feel glad that we shall not have to stand bodily before posterity and confess that we belong to the generation of the Great War and took part in its orgies of hatred and folly? Do we not, on the other hand, feel that we should treat with the deepest respect one of the Flemish burghers who built their belfries and resisted the great Kings of France, or the men who ventured across the great unknown ocean to plant the flag of England upon distant shores? Are we not full of admiration for the men who gave England Westminster Abbey or the Churches of London that were built after the Great Fire? For these men have given the things which they themselves conceived they have erected to themselves monuments of character, upon which they deeply impressed the mark of their very own minds.

What will the generations of the future say of Regent Street, of the Corner Houses, and of the theatres of present-day London? How

will they judge the post-war pseudo-renaissance style? Will their psychologists explain the supererogatory columns, stuck as an afterthought against concrete buildings that rest upon their own steel frames, as symbols of a phallic obsession? Will their builders not despise men who, blinded by their ritualistic mentality, worshipped empty forms inherited by their ancestors from earlier ancestors, and were unable to be other than pale reflections, untrue to their own selves, unable to speak a resonant and forceful language of their own?

Even the ants adapt their building to circumstances. But the English still build as though they lived in the year 1800.

Extracts from The English. Are They Human? By G. J. Renier. London. Williams and Norgate. Price 7/6 net.

"The Adventure of Building," is a short and enthusiastic account of the author's experience in realising his dream of owning his own home. He is so delighted with the success of his "adventure" that he feels "an overwhelming desire to spread the gospel of the architect-built house as widely as possible, to prevent other people from making the mistake which I nearly made, and to encourage them to embark upon what has proved in my case, a most stimulating, satisfactory, and profitable adventure."

It conveys just what a man ought to feel about the creation of his own home, and states the case of the architect fairly and conclusively from the layman's point of view. Moreover, it will prove most helpful to the prospective owner of a home, since the writer advises the best course to adopt in choosing the right architect and how to overcome the financial difficulties involved. The booklet may be obtained from the Secretary of the Institute at sixpence per copy. **hendrikz**

Published by the Architectural Press London

Bronze, Stainless Steel and White Metal are being increasingly used in modern architecture, lending richness and distinction to design.

This is exemplified in the South African Mutual Building, Bloemfontein, which was designed by Messrs. Wallace & Stewart, Architects, and the illustration opposite shows the bronze revolving doors, lattice fanlight, lantern and name panels.

All the Bronze Work on this building was manufactured by Fredk. Sage & Co., Ltd., the well-known shopfitting specialists. It is natural that this firm should be entrusted with work of such a type as they have always been ahead in the application of new materials and Art Metals to the Shopfitting industry.

In their development they have installed in Johannesburg a most modern plant for Art Metal Work, and can give of expert service and craftsmanship in all requirements in Bronze, Stainless Steel, White Metal, etc.

Stocks of Metals are always on hand, and the fact that all fabrication of the material is done in their factory at Johannesburg assures the Architect of having his design correctly interpreted in the minimum time.



Fredk., Sage & Co. (S.A.) Ltd.
Shopfitters & Metal Craftsmen

Box 777. Phone 5702/5.
Johannesburg

W. W. WARD,

ARCHITECTURAL MODELLER & CARVER.

Stone, Concrete & Plaster work, etc.

304 Market St., Fairview, Johannesburg.

Phone 2934, Jeppe.

P.O. Box 954. Telephone 351.

Bettini (Pretoria) Slate Quarry, Limited.

PRETORIA.

SUPPLIERS OF ALL CLASSES OF SLATE.

Quotations on application.

A. SINCLAIR, Managing Director.

Box 4966. Phone 33—1327.

GREENWOOD & CO.

Asphalt Contractors & Roofing Specialists.
Basement Lining & Asphalt work of every description.

42/3 London House, Loveday Street, Johannesburg.

Telephone Cent. 3932.

THE RAND SHOPFITTERS

We are specialists in Shop Fronts and all Office and Shop fittings, Joinery, etc. Let us give you a quotation.

18, Troye Street, Johannesburg.

BEAUTIFUL BUILDINGS

WHEN time is the essence of the contract, use

"RAPOCRETE"

the new rapid-hardening Cement. Attains high strength quickly. The 24-hour sand test guaranteed to pass the seven-day requirement of the British Standard Specification for Portland Cement. (Costs slightly more than ordinary Cement.)

FOR the most beautiful and effective light-coloured finishes, use

"PLASTERLITE"

A perfect Cement, carrying the utmost degree of plasticity; for all interior and exterior plastering and decorative work. Has many advantages over lime plaster.

Used throughout Johannesburg's New Railway Station; also by the P.W. Dept., and leading Contractors.

Guaranteed Products Manufactured at Our Factories.

PRETORIA PORTLAND CEMENT

P.O. Box 3811.
Tel.: "CEMENT." JOHANNESBURG.



STRATHEARN MANSIONS, JOHANNESBURG.
(PRETORIA Cement and "Plasterlite" Used.)

14a

Journal of the SA Architectural Institute

PUBLISHER:

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

LEGAL NOTICE:

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the Library website.